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Influence of local food attributes and perceived benefits on post-tasting responses through tourists' local food consumption

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Abstract

This study aims to identify experience of international food tourists in Hong Kong. More specifically, it was to analyze the functions of local food attributes and benefits from local food consumption on satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. The adopted methods used to achieve the objectives were impact-range performance analysis (IRPA) and impact asymmetry analysis (IAA). After undertaking a survey using a sample of international tourists in Hong Kong, a total of 1,184 questionnaires were employed for data analyzes. Results of exploratory factor analyzes generated three domains of local food attributes and two domains of benefits sought from tasting local foods. Unlike multiple regression analyzes, IRPA and IAA produced various results for marketing implications. For example, epistemic benefit was classified as a “satisfier,” whereas food novelty attribute, emotional benefit, and food quality attribute were labeled as “dissatisfiers.” In addition, restaurant quality attribute was considered a “frustrator.” Thus, the three dependent variables have different roles in explaining local food attributes and consumption benefits.

KEYWORDS

attribute, benefit, consumption, food tourism, IA, IRP, local food

1 | INTRODUCTION

The number of “culinary tourists” or “gastronomic tourists” who place importance on tasting the cuisines of a destination is rapidly increasing (Correia, Moital, Da Costa, & Peres, 2008; Hall & Sharples, 2003; Mitchell & Hall, 2003; Okumus & Cetin, 2018). Local food refers to a tourism attraction that offers the pleasure of traveling at an unusual tourism destination and enhance tourism satisfaction. Thus, it helps determine the outcomes of heightening tourists' experiential quality, such as favorable memories of the travel (Sims, 2009; Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018; Tsai, 2016), purchase of local foods as a souvenir (Swanson, 2004), recommendation to others (Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour, 2015; Choe & Kim, 2019), and intention to return to the tourism destination (Choe & Kim, 2018; Horng, Liu, Chou, & Tsai, 2012).

Thus, local foods represent one of the key attractions in a tourism destination.

Apart from the individual-level impacts of local food, the local food business also has economic impacts on various local food industrial sectors, including agricultural businesses, dairy businesses, restaurants, cooking companies, hotels, retailers, and souvenir shops (Cheung, 2013; Mak, Lumbers, Eves, & Chang, 2012). Local foods also act as an image enhancer of the tourism destination (Kivela & Crotts, 2005; Tsai, 2016) and a symbol of the country/city (du Rand & Heath, 2006; Fox, 2007). A national food is regarded as a country's cultural ambassador because it penetrates foreign cultures and bridges cultural barriers (Eves & Cheng, 2007; Mak et al., 2012). Local foods help determine the image of a destination and ameliorate a regional or national brand (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Kim, Agrusa, & Chon, 2014).

To keep pace with industrial trends, various topics regarding food tourism have been researched to investigate the typology of food tourists (Getz, Robinson, Andersson, & Vujicic, 2014; Mkono et al., 2013), role of food and wine in destination marketing (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; du Rand & Heath, 2006; Hwang, Kim, Choe, & Chung, 2018), links between supply chains and local food systems (Hall & Sharples, 2003; Smith & Xiao, 2008), motivations of tourists' local food consumption (Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010; Cheung, 2013; Kim & Eves, 2012; Kim, Eves, & Scarles, 2009; Mak et al., 2012), food globalization (Hwang et al., 2018; Kim, Kim, & King, 2016; Mak et al., 2012; Scarpato & Daniele, 2003), and revisit intention or fortification of loyalty to the place (Chi, Chua, Othman, & Karim, 2013; Horng et al., 2012; Kivela & Crotts, 2005, 2006).

The most common statistical methods applied in local food research to explain dependent variables, such as future intention or perception of an image or satisfaction, are multiple regression (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Choe & Kim, 2019; Horng et al., 2012; Kivela & Crotts, 2005, 2006) or structural equation modeling (Choe & Kim, 2018; Kim et al., 2014; Ryu & Jang, 2006). The mere use of multiple regression or structural equation model is limited given that the level of influence of independent variables on each dependent variable is currently assessed based on the statistical significance level (*p*-value), and thus, the information generates insufficient insights into how these variables affect the formation of dependent variables (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2008). In addition, the information accruing from regression or structural model cannot showcase the relationships of independent and dependent variables through dimensional figures on quadrants. Thus, this study is designed to adopt impact-range performance analysis (IRPA) and impact asymmetry analysis (IAA), which can solve these limitations.

Hong Kong is selected as the study setting because it is internationally popular as a food tourism destination that offers unique and diverse local food (Choe & Kim, 2019; Kivela & Crotts, 2005). In addition, Hong Kong acts as a flagship region where international tourists can encounter Guangdong foods which are one of the major Chinese regional cuisines.

The research question is specified as follows. How can we understand the effects of local food consumption attributes and their benefits on satisfaction, future intention, and destination familiarity using IRPA and IAA methods? Results contribute to the understanding of post-tasting responses regarding local food attributes and benefits sought by international tourists. Hence, this study is driven by three objectives. First, it identifies the roles of local food attributes and benefits sought on satisfaction with local food consumption. Second, it investigates the roles of local food attributes and benefits sought on behavioral intention. Third, it assesses the roles of local food attributes and benefits sought on familiarity with a local food tourism destination. These objectives were achieved by employing IRPA and IAA.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

The main concepts adopted in this study include local food attributes, benefits sought, satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination

familiarity. As shown in Figure 1 a tourist experiences local food attributes at the exotic tourism destination and then seeks benefits. As extended consequences, the tourist perceive satisfaction and future intention and familiarity with the destination. The relationships are linearly linked as cause-effect. Therefore, the following literature review concentrates on elaborating each concept and reasoning their relationships which were depicted in hypotheses.

2.1 | Effects of local food attributes and perceived benefits on satisfaction through local food consumption

Local food consumption theory (Choe & Kim, 2018; Kim et al., 2009; Mak et al., 2012) posits that local foods tasted at a foreign tourism destination affect the tourist's quality of experience and diverse behavioral intentions. First, the perceived local food attributes of a tourist represent features of local cuisines and ambiances in a unique destination (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010). In addition, a tourist who dine in a destination incorporates the consumption of social activities, cultural assets, and experiential quality of the local food. The attributes of local foods constitute diverse aspects such as food quality, food novelty, and restaurant quality. Local food quality-related attributes are composed of multidimensional features such as "attractiveness" (presentations), "sensory appeal," "various tastes," "freshness," "appeal," "taste," "spiciness," "cleanness," "food quality," "food diversity," "enjoyment," "color," "health," "inexpensiveness," and "nutrition" (Back, 2012; Chi et al., 2013; Jiménez-Beltrán, López-Guzmán, & González Santa Cruz, 2016; Kim & Evans, 2012; Kim, Kim, Agrusa, & Lee, 2012; Mynttinen, Logrén, Särkkä-Tirkkonen, & Rautiainen, 2015).

During foreign travels, food attributes determine tourists' satisfaction with local food consumption (Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Kauppinen-Räisänen, Gummerus, & Lehtola, 2013; Mynttinen et al., 2015; Smith & Costello, 2009; Stanley & Stanley, 2014). For example, local food attributes, such as "food and beverage price" and "food taste," exhibit a remarkable effect on culinary festival attendees' satisfaction with a barbecue event (Smith & Costello, 2009). Tasting authentic and unusual local food contributes to a satisfying tourism experience (Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2013; Stone & Migacz, 2016).

A local restaurant's service quality, including kindness of staff, friendly dining environment, hygiene issue, and acceptable price lead to tourists' satisfactory gastronomic experience (Correia et al., 2008; Ling, Karim, Othman, Adzahan, & Ramachandran, 2010). Tourists consider exotic ambiance as one of the important quality attributes of local restaurants because they want to experience another culture that is different from their own (Stanley & Stanley, 2014). The design, decoration, and interior of a restaurant have also been examined in food tourism research (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Stone et al., 2018).

Benefits from consuming local foods refer to the gain or advantageous improvement to a tourist after he (she) experiences local foods in a foreign destination (Chang et al., 2010; Correia et al., 2008; Kim & Eves, 2012). The diverse array of benefits includes new knowledge

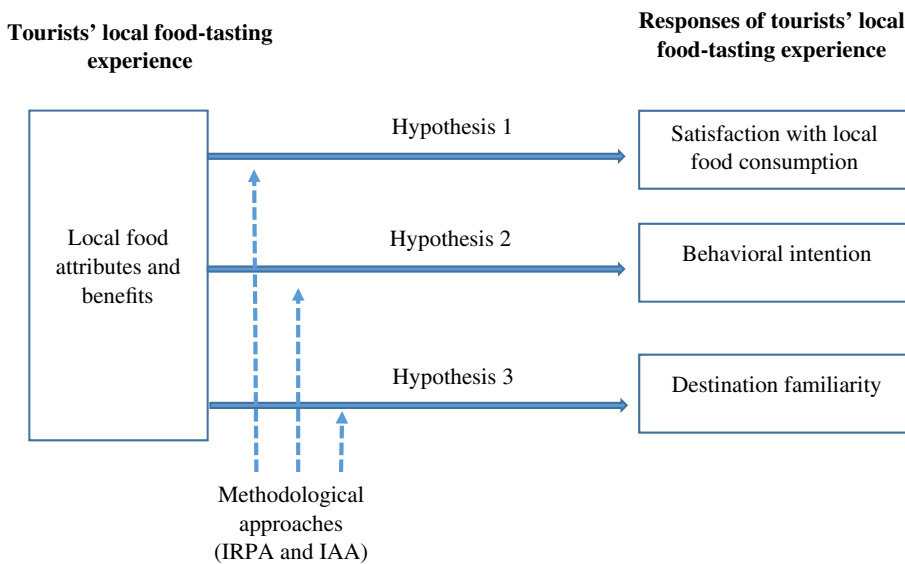


FIGURE 1 Conceptual framework [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

about local foods, novel experiences, social benefits, prestige, perception of quality, and hedonic pleasure (Adongo et al., 2015; Choe & Kim, 2018; Kim et al., 2009; Mak et al., 2012). These perceived benefits that foreign tourists perceive at the tourism destination exceed by satisfying a physiological benefit because tasting local food is an enjoying activity during overseas travel (Okumus & Cetin, 2018). Such benefits can be largely classified into two types, namely, emotional and epistemic benefits. First, emotional benefit refers to the desirable feelings or affective state after a product or service is experienced (Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez, & Moliner, 2006; Williams & Soutar, 2009). Therefore, emotional benefits are relevant to rejoicing emotional pleasure from discovering exotic/unusual dishes, experiencing prestige, or socializing with other diners (Koc, 2013; Tsai, 2016). The hedonic benefits from eating local food in a new place offer special and unforgettable memories, generate positive emotions, and naturally lead to satisfaction by consuming local food (Stone et al., 2018). Gyimóthy and Mykletun (2009) investigated tourists' experience of tasting *smalahove*, or the Voss sheep's head meal, a traditional West Norwegian cuisine. The respondents in their study expressed various feelings from being scary to being interested, and the result contributed to the total dining experience. Tasting local foods while traveling is a good storyline to boast one's dining experience to others, and thus self-expression benefits can augment satisfaction level (Choe & Kim, 2018; Mynttinen et al., 2015).

Seeking curiosity, novelty, and knowledge is relevant to epistemic benefits in nature (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Therefore, epistemic benefits are linked to consuming local foods during foreign travels. Examples of these benefits include gaining knowledge, learning new cultures, experiencing novelty, and fulfilling curiosity through local food consumption (Choe & Kim, 2018; Fields, 2002; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016; Long, 2004; Meretse, Mykletun, & Einarsen, 2016; Stanley & Stanley, 2014). Several researchers (Fields, 2002; Long, 2004) have posited that visitors learn and explore the history of different cultures, cooking methods and ingredients used, and traditions when they consume local foods. Similarly,

satisfied tourists who are knowledgeable about a local food culture tend to demonstrate gastronomic satisfaction (Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1. *Perceptions of local food attributes and benefits sought positively influence satisfaction with local food consumption.*

2.2 | Effects of local food attributes and benefits sought on behavioral intention

Behavioral intention is necessary before an actual action takes place (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In the food tourism context, tourists' behavioral intentions are to recommend the local food and visit the destination for food tourism in the future (Hornig et al., 2012). Previous studies consistently show that a positive perception of savoring local foods leads to increased behavioral intentions (Adongo et al., 2015; Hornig et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2012; Stone et al., 2018; Tsai, 2016). For example, Stone et al. (2018) argue that the major senses of sight, smell, and taste and the positive emotions induced by experiencing local foods are linked to a desire to return to the destination. In a similar vein, according to Kim and Evans (2012), sensory appeal is one of the most significant determinants that stimulate local food consumption in the destination.

Benefits from tasting local foods lead to future food tourism intention or other promotion activities (Adongo et al., 2015; Hornig et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2009; Mak et al., 2012; Tsai, 2016). Kim et al. (2009) conceptualized that tasting local foods stimulates intention to consume local foods at the destination. Adongo et al. (2015) explored the effect of tourists' experiential factors with local foods in Ghana and found that cultural dimension is the most significant factor that affects tourists' behavioral intention to recommend local foods. In a similar context, international tourists who had an authentic local food experience, learned history and preparation methods of new foods, and felt that eating local foods is a once-in-a-lifetime

experience showed a high intention to recommend the local foods to others (Canetti, Bachar, & Berry, 2002; ***Horng et al., 2015). Some studies (Choe & Kim, 2019; Tsai, 2016) investigated that learning local cultures, gaining new knowledge, and engaging in positive emotions through local food consumption are important benefits influencing tourists' willingness to revisit the destination and recommend the place to others. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2. *Perceptions of local food attributes and benefits sought positively influence behavioral intention.*

2.3 | Effects of local food attributes and benefits sought on familiarity with a local food tourism destination

An ethnic food affects the choice of a destination before a trip because food is one of the most important tourism attractions (Horng et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2018; Lee, Lee, & Huh, 2011; Lu, Chi, & Liu, 2015). Similarly, food tourists visit a destination with the main motive of eating local foods (du Rand & Heath, 2006; Fields, 2002; Hall & Sharples, 2003). For example, as a culinary destination, Hong Kong is well known for unique food offerings, namely, siu mei, noodles and congee, and cha chaan teng (Cheung, 2009; Cheung, 2013; Kivela & Crofts, 2005). Thus, potential tourists are attracted to visit a foreign country to savor and favor local delicacies.

Moreover, the experience of tasting local foods during travels increases tourists' familiarity with the place (e.g., Choe & Kim, 2018; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016; Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Ritchie & Zins, 1978; Silkes, Cai, & Lehto, 2013; Tsai, 2016). The familiarity with the food tourism destination is of significance from the view of destination marketing as the following literature illustrates. For example, Kivela and Crofts (2006) found that tourists' local food restaurant experience significantly contributed to the overall tour satisfaction and destination familiarity while visiting Hong Kong. Silkes et al. (2013) reported that the exploration of cultural assets and emotional pleasure by consuming local foods fortified the connectedness with the tour destination. Tsai (2016) identified that tourists' level of attachment to the destination increases when they had favorable local food consumption experiences through immersion into local food tradition and culture. Similarly, Choe and Kim (2018) identified a strong positive relationship between attitude toward local foods and food destination image using a large sample of overseas tourists to Hong Kong.

In sum, through local food consumption, positive experiences are likely to determine tourists' sense of familiarization with the destination. In accordance with the above discussion, the following hypothesis is posited:

Hypothesis 3. *Perceptions of local food attributes and benefits sought positively influence familiarity with a local food tourism destination.*

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that depicts three hypotheses. Local food attributes and benefits are the independent variables, while satisfaction with local food consumption, behavioral intention and destination familiarity are the dependent variables. Moderating variables or control variables are not applied.

3 | METHODS

3.1 | Measurement

The items used to measure local food attributes, benefits, satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity were developed through a comprehensive literature review, pretest, and pilot test. A pool of items for each construct were then derived and modified to fit the context of local food tourism. First, after a pool of 15 initial items that elucidate local food attributes was derived from reviewing previous food and food tourism literature (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Chi et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2014; Kivela & Crofts, 2006) they were modified in this research context. Second, a collection of nine items was operationalized by reviewing previous studies to demonstrate the benefits gained out of consuming local foods in a destination (Fields, 2002; Ha & Jang, 2013; Kim & Eves, 2012).

After two items which were selected to measure satisfaction with local food consumption (Choe & Kim, 2019; Kim et al., 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009) they were a little bit revised to fit into the context of this research. In addition, four items were singled out to manifest future intention after experiencing local food were adopted from previous studies (Horng et al., 2012; Kim & Evans, 2012; Kim et al., 2014; Kivela & Crofts, 2006). Three items derived to describe familiarity with a local food tourism destination were also pooled out of previous studies (Horng et al., 2012; Tsai, 2016) and adapted to match the purpose of this study. The items for these constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 3 = "neutral"; and 5 = "strongly agree").

To secure the face validity of the items, a pretest was conducted using 50 graduate students who were researching hospitality and tourism. In accordance with their suggestions, words "authentic" and "dumplings, noodles, and rice" were included to specify the characteristics of Hong Kong local cuisines. A pilot test encompassed a pool of 94 respondents who were traveling from different countries or regions: 20 from Mainland China, 25 from Korea, 20 from the U.S.A. and Europe, 19 from Japan, and 10 from Taiwan. In response to a comment suggesting the inclusion of visual pictures of local foods, photos were included to offer a comprehension of local foods, such as porridge, wonton soup, sea food, barbeque, and dim sum. After the original version of the questionnaire was developed in English, it was then translated to Chinese, French, German, Korean, Japanese, and Thai. Two groups of translators were involved in the translation process: professional translators working in a translation company and professors in hospitality management who spoke their mother tongues and English. They were requested to back translate versions of the questionnaire in different languages to English and

then called for a meeting to compare two versions. The final versions were then confirmed for the main survey.

3.2 | Data collection

The data collection for the main survey was conducted at the Hong Kong International Airport for 8 months. Surveys were performed on weekends and weekdays because tourists showed different demographic or travel-related features during weekends and weekdays. Prior to assisting data collection, 13 undergraduate students were trained regarding screening questions, target samples, purpose of the study, explanation of local foods, and writing of respondents' names on each questionnaire. Two screening questions were used to select respondents who are suitable for the main survey: experience of tasting local foods during the travel and the level of importance of eating local foods at the tourism destination. Thus, respondents who experienced local foods once or above and those who responded "important" on a three-point Likert-type scale ("1" = "unimportant," "2" = "neutral," "3" = "important") regarding tasting local food during their travel in Hong Kong were regarded as potential respondents.

In selecting measurement items, the concern of common method biases accruing from the specific items, scale type, response format, and the general context (Bagozzi & Yi, 1991) should be considered. Podsakoff and MacKenzie (2003) explained that the concerns of common method biases are closely related to selection of items (e.g., vague wording, context-induced mood, double-meaning words, social desirability, wording length, intermixing of items) and measurement context effects (e.g., simultaneous measurements of dependent and independent variables and their measurement in the same location) (Kim & Kim, 2018). The approaches to minimize common method biases items were chosen through literature review, pretest, and pilot test. In particular, a pretest involving graduate students heightened face validity.

Interviews with actual foreign tourists helped to develop items that reflect their perceptions that are beyond the literature review. In the interview they were asked to understand their perceptions of Hong Kong local food attributes, benefits sought, their attitude and behavioral intention. This procedure helped to identify items which could be missed in the pool of items. Several items were reversely worded to evade consistency motif bias, and a main survey was undertaken to immediately dissipate a concern of transient mood state bias at the airport prior to experiencing local food and departing Hong Kong. In addition, screening questions that offer interest in this survey helped to mitigate item context effects bias. The results of running exploratory factor analyzes and reliability tests were conducive to checking because they helped assess whether the measurement is accurate (Babbie, 1995).

Questionnaires attempted to be allocated to tourists from diverse countries or regions to reflect their perceptual differences in terms of local food culture. Surveys were administered to those who were awaiting at the counter of each country's national carrier or at the assigned gate of airlines. As a token of appreciation, each respondent received one gift, such as a fridge magnet, postcard, bag tag, or supermarket shopping bag. Although a total of 1,392 questionnaires were

collected, 69 questionnaires containing insincere answers and 139 questionnaires including multiple missing values on items of key constructs used as independent or dependent variables were eliminated. As a result, a total of 1,184 questionnaires were employed for further data analysis.

3.3 | Analytic methods

This study employed IRPA and IAA to analyze the role of local food consumption attributes and benefits on satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. The methods were initially developed by Mikulić and Prebežac (2008) who aimed to ameliorate the defects of importance–performance analysis. This analysis is involved with arbitrary decisions on the cutoff points of the importance–performance gridline, vagueness of the importance concept, and validity and reliability of importance measures (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2008). IRPA and IAA approaches have been adopted by previous studies in the hospitality and tourism industry (Coghlan, 2012; Mikulić & Prebežac, 2008, 2011, 2012; Ye, Fu, & Law, 2016).

In this study, three constructs, namely, satisfaction with local food consumption, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity, were regarded as dependent variables. Each of the five independent variables, that is, three domains of local food attributes and two domains of consumption benefits, created two different variables to manifest reward indices (RIs) and penalty indices (PIs). RIs indicate the unstandardized regression coefficients of the dummy variables with high performance, whereas PIs refer to the unstandardized regression coefficients of the dummy variables with low performance. For example, one of the domains of local food attributes, that is, "food novelty attribute," developed two variables. One variable to specify RI was coded as "1" = 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree) and "0" = others, whereas one variable to measure PI was coded as "1" = 2 (disagree) or 1 (strongly disagree) and "0" = others.

As suggested by Mikulić and Prebežac (2008), a figure of the IRPA was divided into four quadrants in accordance with the grand mean values of performance and impact range. A figure of the IAA was divided into three impact groups to interpret the output of RIOCS, which explains the magnitude of RI and PI. The variables are distributed as follows: "high impact attributes or benefits" (higher than [highest RIOCS–lowest RIOCS]), "medium impact attributes or benefits" (higher than [highest RIOCS–lowest RIOCS/2] and [highest RIOCS–lowest RIOCS] or lower) and "low impact attributes or benefits" ([highest RIOCS–lowest RIOCS]/2 or lower).

The IAA results explain tourists' satisfaction with local food consumption in terms of five independent variables. In accordance with Mikulić and Prebežac's (2008) typologies, such variables were also grouped into five: "delighters" (IA index >0.4), "satisfiers" (0.4 ≥ IA index >0.1), "hybrids" (0.1 ≥ IA index ≥ –0.1), "dissatisfiers" (–0.1 > IA index ≥ –0.4), and "frustrators" (IA index < –0.4).

In the same manner, the IAA results, which aim to explain behavioral intention, produced five groups: "advocators," "recommenders,"

“hybrids,” “hesitators,” and “dissenters.” Furthermore, the IAA outcomes, which aim to explain destination familiarity as a dependent variable, generated five cohorts: “intimators,” “familiarizers,” “hybrids,” “defamiliarizers,” and “distance-maker.” The ranges of IA indices on behavioral intention and destination familiarity were the same as those used to classify five groups created in accordance with tourists' satisfaction with local food consumption.

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Profile of the respondents

Regarding the demographic and travel-related profiles of 1,184 respondents, approximately 63% of them were tourists from 16 Western countries or regions, including the U.K. (8.5%), U.S. (6.5%), Australia (5.7%), France (5.2%), Germany (4.7%), and Canada (4.0%). Likewise, 37% of them were from nine Asian countries or regions, including Mainland China (6.3%), India (6.0%), Taiwan (5.9%), Korea (4.1%), and Japan (3.9%). Half of the respondents were males, whereas 50.5% were married. We also identified the distribution of age: 30s (29.6%), between 18 and 29 (28.0%), 50s or older (20.4%), and 40s (17.1%). The majority of the respondents (approximately 67.4%) were college graduates or above.

Respondents reported that they were protestants (32.9%), Catholic (10.6%), Muslim (6.0%), and Buddhist (5.7%) and have no religion or

others (31.4%). As a response on the annual household income, the highest percentage was found on the salary brackets of US\$70,001 or more (23.6%), US\$10,001 to 25,000 (16.3%), US\$25,001 to 40,000 (14.3%), and less than US\$10,000 (14.0%). Those who visited Hong Kong twice or more accounted to 59.3%, whereas first-time visitors accounted to 40.7%. Regarding occupation, company employees accounted for 29.8%, followed by self-employed individuals (13.0%) and professionals (10.9%). Regarding a main purpose of their trip, 59% of them came to Hong Kong for vacation/leisure, whereas approximately 17% visited Hong Kong for business and the rest answered visit to relatives/friends or unclear purposes. Most of them were independent travelers (63.9%), followed by package travelers (18.8%).

4.2 | Exploratory factor analysis

A series of exploratory factor analyzes using principal component extraction and varimax rotation methods were conducted to identify the underlying dimensionality of constructs, including local food attributes, benefits, satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. First, the results of the factor analysis using 15 items of local food attributes produced three factors, which exceeded an eigenvalue of 1.00. However, three items were eliminated because of a low level of communalities and/or factor loadings, that is, lower than .45 and .40 minimum criteria, respectively (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Stevens, 2002). A factor analysis was rerun after the

TABLE 1 Exploratory factor analysis of local food attributes

Items and domains of local food attributes	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
Food novelty (eigenvalue = 2.57; explained variance = 21.40%; $\alpha = .78$)			
It was an opportunity to taste unknown foods.	.68	.81	3.70
It was an opportunity to taste exotic ingredients.	.67	.79	3.59
It was an opportunity to taste authentic Hong Kong foods.	.58	.61	3.93
It was an opportunity to taste local foods with local people and foreign tourists.	.50	.57	3.81
Food quality (eigenvalue = 2.46; explained variance = 20.51%; $\alpha = .77$)			
It was an opportunity to taste delicious foods.	.69	.77	3.99
It was an opportunity to taste rice, noodles, and dumplings.	.58	.72	3.98
It was an opportunity to taste good-quality foods.	.66	.70	3.86
It was an opportunity to taste various menus and ingredients.	.54	.67	3.91
Restaurant quality (eigenvalue = 2.27; explained variance 18.88%; $\alpha = .74$)			
It was an opportunity to experience good hygiene conditions of local restaurants.	.68	.81	3.53
It was an opportunity to experience a high level of service quality of local restaurants.	.65	.77	3.57
It was an opportunity to experience value for money of local restaurants.	.48	.61	3.54
It was an opportunity to experience exotic ambiances of Hong Kong local restaurants.	.58	.50	3.69

Note: Responses were measured as “strongly disagree” (1), “neutral” (3), and “strongly agree” (5).

Items and domains of benefits sought from local food consumption	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
Emotional benefit (eigenvalue = 2.96; explained variance = 32.90%; $\alpha = .85$)			
I could build a good memory by tasting Hong Kong local foods.	.71	.77	3.84
Tasting Hong Kong local foods helped me relax.	.57	.75	3.42
I could boast about tasting Hong Kong local foods.	.63	.73	3.68
I liked to talk to families and friends about my Hong Kong local food experiences.	.63	.73	3.83
Tasting Hong Kong local foods in their original place made me excited.	.63	.65	3.84
Epistemic benefit (eigenvalue = 2.86; explained variance = 31.82%; $\alpha = .83$)			
Tasting Hong Kong local foods allowed me to discover something new.	.70	.80	3.88
Tasting Hong Kong local foods served by local people in their original place helped me understand the local culture.	.69	.78	3.79
Tasting Hong Kong local foods enabled me to learn what these cuisines taste like.	.63	.75	3.81
Tasting Hong Kong local foods increased my knowledge about a different culture.	.64	.72	3.86

Note: Responses were measured as “strongly disagree” (1), “neutral” (3), and “strongly agree” (5).

Items and domains of satisfaction with a local food consumption	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
Satisfaction (eigenvalue = 1.69; explained variance 84.59%; $\alpha = .82$)			
I was satisfied with the quality of Hong Kong local foods.	.85	.92	3.83
Overall, I was satisfied with Hong Kong local restaurant.	.85	.92	3.81
Items and domains of future intention			
Behavioral intention (eigenvalue = 2.58; explained variance = 64.47%; $\alpha = .81$)			
I would recommend Hong Kong local foods to my family and/or friends.	.66	.84	3.82
I would visit a Hong Kong local food restaurant after I return to my country.	.71	.81	3.65
I would visit Hong Kong to explore diverse Hong Kong local foods within the next 5 years.	.59	.79	3.72
I would leave positive reviews of Hong Kong local foods on social media (e.g., Facebook, blogs, video clips, and messenger).	.62	.77	3.51
Items and domain of destination familiarity with a local food tourism destination			
Destination familiarity (eigenvalue = 2.24; explained variance = 74.69%; $\alpha = .83$)			
I became familiar with Hong Kong after tasting Hong Kong local foods.	.74	.86	3.55
I felt positive about Hong Kong after tasting Hong Kong local foods.	.75	.87	3.71
I felt that I gained additional knowledge about Hong Kong after tasting local foods.	.75	.87	3.68

Note: Responses were measured as “strongly disagree” (1), “neutral” (3), and “strongly agree” (5).

TABLE 2 Exploratory factor analysis of benefits sought from local food consumption

TABLE 3 Exploratory factor analysis of satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity

TABLE 4 Result of the impact-range performance analysis and impact asymmetry analysis to predict satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity

Independent variables	Performance (mean)	RI	PI	RIOCS	SGP	DGP	IA	Factor
Regression model to predict satisfaction with local food consumption (adjusted $R^2 = .38$)								
Food novelty attribute	3.76	-.01	-.02	.02	.33	.67	-.35	Dissatisfier
Food quality attribute	3.93	.37***	-.72***	1.09	.34	.66	-.31	Dissatisfier
Restaurant quality attribute	3.58	.01	-.34***	.35	.03	.97	-.94	Frustrater
Emotional benefit	3.72	.26***	-.47***	.73	.36	.64	-.29	Dissatisfier
Epistemic benefit	3.84	.22***	-.11	.33	.67	.33	.33	Satisfier
Regression model to predict behavioral intention (Adjusted $R^2 = .38$)								
Food novelty attribute	3.76	.05	-.03	.08	.63	.37	.25	Recommender
Food quality attribute	3.93	.23***	-.38***	.61	.37	.63	-.26	Hesitator
Restaurant quality attribute	3.58	.12	-.21**	.33	.35	.65	-.30	Hesitator
Emotional benefit	3.72	.49***	-.68***	1.17	.42	.58	-.17	Hesitator
Epistemic benefit	3.84	.26***	-.16	.42	.63	.37	.26	Recommender
Regression model to predict destination familiarity (Adjusted $R^2 = .34$)								
Food novelty attribute	3.76	.02	-.15*	.17	.12	.88	-.76	Distance-maker
Food quality attribute	3.93	.25***	-.20*	.45	.56	.44	.12	Familiarizer
Restaurant quality attribute	3.58	.13	-.07	.20	.65	.35	.31	Familiarizer
Emotional benefit	3.72	.40***	-.64***	1.04	.39	.61	-.22	Defamiliarizer
Epistemic benefit	3.84	.29***	-.27**	.55	.52	.48	.04	Hybrid

Note: RIOCS = |reward index| + |penalty index|; SGP = |reward index|/RIOCS; DGP = |penalty index|/RIOCS; IA = SGP – DGP.

Note: Frustrater < Dissatisfier < Hybrid < Satisfier < Delighter.

Note: Dissenter < Hesitater < Hybrid < Recommender < Advocate.

Note: Distance-maker < De-familiarizer < Hybrid < Familiarizer < Intimator.

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, and * $p < .05$.

Abbreviations: RI, reward indices; PI, penalty indices.

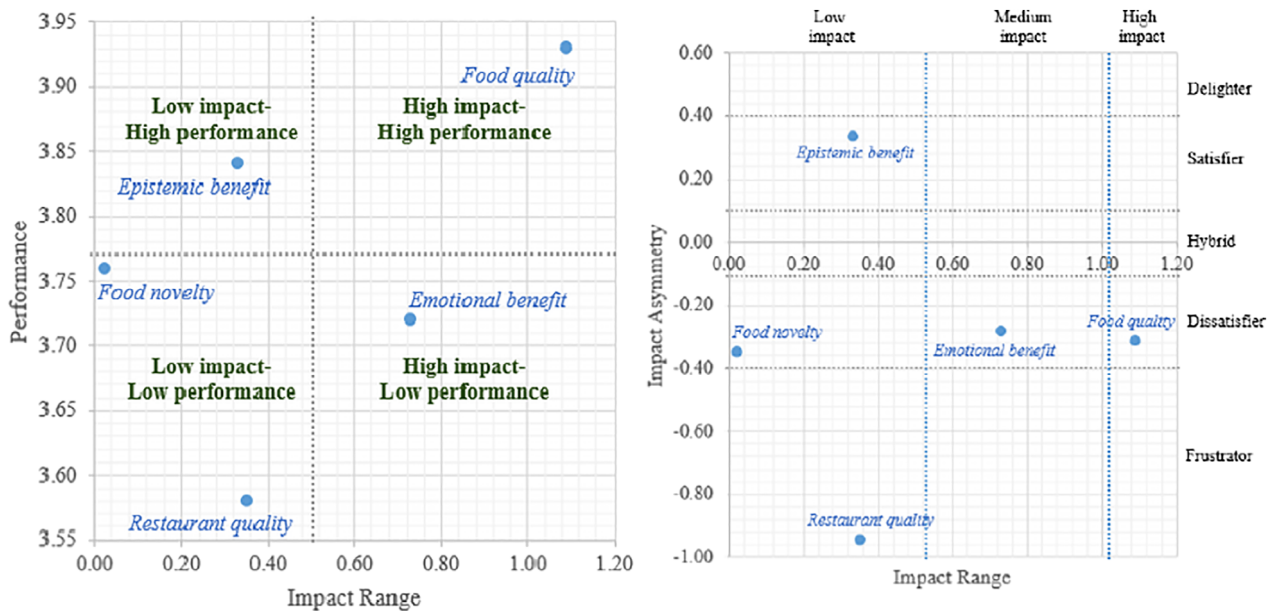


FIGURE 2 Results of the impact-range performance analysis and impact asymmetry analysis to identify the impact of local food consumption attributes and benefits on satisfaction [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

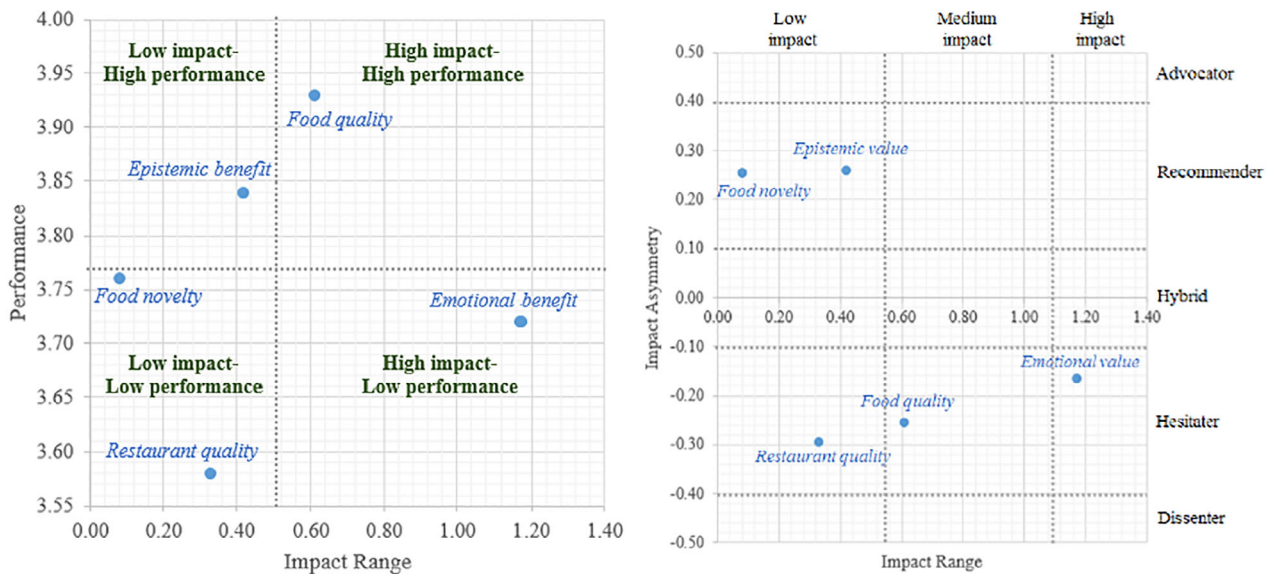


FIGURE 3 Results of impact-range performance analysis and impact asymmetry analysis to identify the impact of local food consumption attributes and benefits on behavioral intention [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

three items were deleted. Because each factor accounted for 21.40, 20.51, and 18.88% of the variance, the total amount of the explained variance was 59.79%. Accordingly, the reliability alphas (.78, .77, and .74) on the three domains surpassed the .70 criterion of Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The values also showed satisfaction with the internal consistency among items within each domain. The retained factors were “food novelty attribute” (Domain 1), “food quality attribute” (Domain 2), and “restaurant quality attribute” (Domain 3).

The factor analysis for the nine items indicating benefits sought from local food consumption resulted in two factors greater than an eigenvalue of 1.00. The magnitude of the variance explained by the two factors was 32.90% and 31.82%. Communalities and factor loadings on all items exceeded the .45 and .40 minimum criteria, respectively (Hair et al., 2010; Stevens, 2002). The reliability alphas on the two factors were .85 and .83, which showcased the internal consistency of items with each domain. The factors were labeled “emotional benefit” (Domain 1) and “epistemic benefit” (Domain 2). Finally, the factor analyzes for satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity generated single-factor models where each factor exceeded an eigenvalue of 1.00. The amounts of the variance accounted for by each single-factor construct were 84.59, 64.47, and 74.69%. The reliability alphas for the three constructs were .82, .81, and .83, which demonstrated a high level of reliability. The results of all the factor analyzes are reported in Tables 1–3.

4.3 | Influence of local food attributes and consumption benefits on satisfaction with local food consumption

The results of the IRPA and IAA are presented in Table 4 and Figure 2. Prior to undertaking multiple regression analysis using five

independent variables to predict each of the three dependent variables, multicollinearity was examined by identifying variance inflation factors (VIF). The VIF was lower than 1.60 in the regression model; hence, the results of the regression analysis alleviated multicollinearity issues because the value is less than 10.0 (Hair et al., 2010). The adjusted R^2 value in the regression equation was .38, predicting satisfaction with local food consumption. Thus, 38% of the variance on satisfaction was explained by the independent variables.

RI scores are shown in Table 4. Food quality attribute (.37), emotional benefit (.26), and epistemic benefit (.22) contributed to formulating satisfaction with local food consumption. By contrast, food novelty (−.01) and restaurant quality attributes (.01) were uninformative explanatory factors that induce satisfaction. Based on the PI scores, low performance on food novelty (−.02) and epistemic benefit (−.11) did not strongly contribute to bringing out dissatisfaction with local food consumption, even though other independent variables strongly resulted in dissatisfaction.

The incremental changes of each dependent variable are shown in Table 4. A high RIOCS value indicates a high impact in the case of extremely high and extremely low performance. The highest RIOCS value was found on “food quality attribute” (1.09), followed by “emotional benefit” (.73), “restaurant quality attribute” (.35), and “epistemic benefit” (.33).

As shown in Figure 2, the results of the IRPA reported that the food quality attribute fell into the high impact–high performance cell. Epistemic benefit belonged to the low impact–high performance quadrant, whereas emotional benefit was in the high impact–low performance category. The two attributes were in the low impact–low performance category. In Figure 1, which pictorially shows the results of the IAA, epistemic benefit was located as a satisfier because it shows a positive impact asymmetry. Food novelty attribute, emotional benefit, and food quality attribute were named “dissatisfiers” because

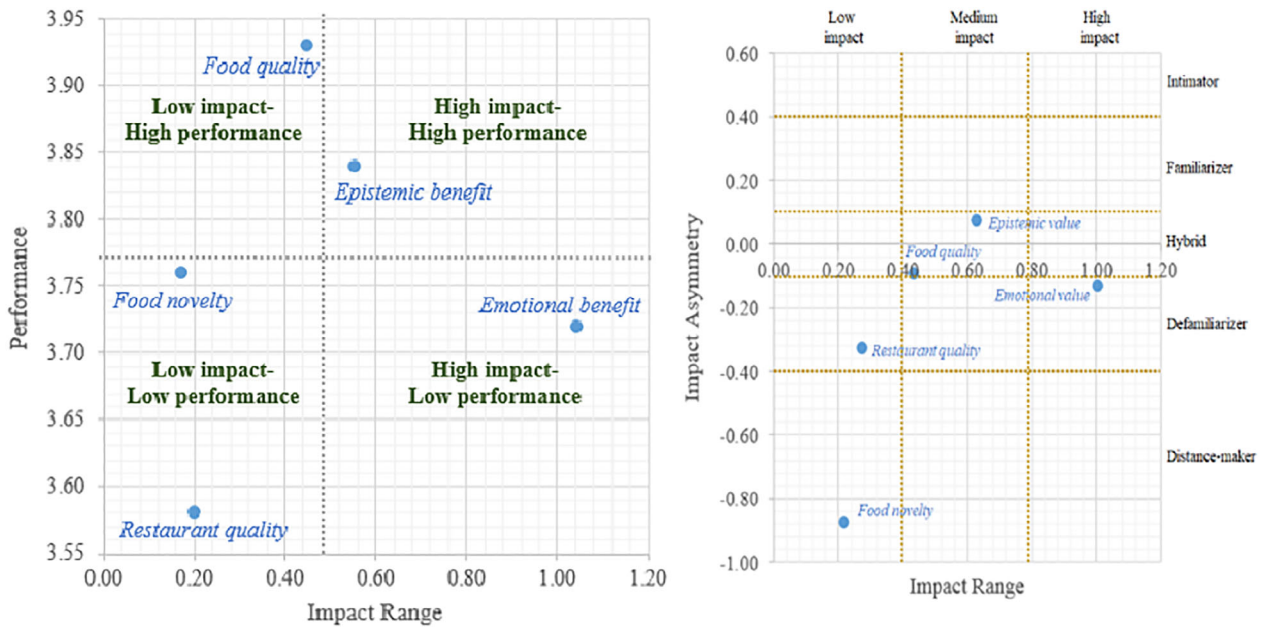


FIGURE 4 Results of the impact-range performance analysis and impact asymmetry analysis to identify the impact of local food consumption attributes and benefits on destination familiarity [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

they show a negative impact asymmetry. Restaurant quality attribute was regarded as a “frustrater” because it reveals a very negative impact asymmetry.

4.4 | Influences of local food attributes and consumption benefits on behavioral intention

The multiple regression model revealed an adjusted R^2 value of .38. Thus, 38% of the variance on behavioral intention was explained by five independent variables. An examination of the RI scores revealed that emotional benefit (.49), epistemic benefit (.26), and food quality attribute (.23) contributed to explaining behavioral intention. By contrast, food novelty (.05) and restaurant quality attributes (.12) did not significantly contribute to explaining behavioral intention. The findings generated by the assessment of PI scores showed that emotional benefit (−.68), food quality attribute (−.38), and restaurant quality attribute (−.21) strongly led to the dissent of behavior intention. However, food novelty attribute (−.03) and epistemic benefit (−.16) were insignificant. A close investigation of RIOCS revealed that emotional benefit (1.17) was the most significant independent variable in predicting behavioral intention, followed by food quality attribute (.61), epistemic benefit (.42), and restaurant quality attribute (.33).

As shown in Figure 3, food quality attribute is in the high impact-high performance category, whereas emotional benefit is in the high impact-low performance category. Epistemic benefit fell into the low impact-high performance group, whereas food novelty and restaurant quality attributes were in the low impact-low performance group. According to the results of the IAA, epistemic benefit and food

novelty attribute were allocated in the “recommender” category where the two determinants assisted in stimulating behavioral intention. By contrast, emotional benefit, food quality attribute, and restaurant quality attribute were located in the “hesitator” zone. Accordingly, these factors led to hesitating behavioral intention.

4.5 | Influences of local food attributes and consumption benefits on destination familiarity

The multiple regression model revealed an adjusted R^2 value of .34. Thus, 34% of the variance on destination familiarity was explained by five independent variables. As reported in Table 4 and Figure 4, the results of RI score analysis revealed that among the five independent variables, emotional benefit (.40) had the highest contribution to destination familiarity, followed by epistemic benefit (.29) and food quality attribute (.25). By contrast, the PI score assessment indicated that emotional benefit (−.64), epistemic benefit (−.27), food quality attribute (−.20), and food novelty attribute (−.15), except for restaurant quality (−.07), strongly assisted the dissipation of destination familiarity. That is, these attributes or benefits strongly determine defamiliarity if they are not highly performed.

The outcomes of identifying RIOCS showcased that emotional benefit (1.04) was the top contributor to explaining destination familiarity or defamiliarity, followed by epistemic benefit (.55), food quality attribute (.45), restaurant quality attribute (.20), and food novelty attribute (.17). In Figure 3, which visually shows the results of the IRPA and IAA, epistemic benefit is in the high impact-high performance category, whereas emotional benefit was in the high impact-low performance category. Food quality attribute fell in the low impact-high

performance group, whereas food novelty and restaurant quality attributes were in the low impact–low performance group.

Based on the results of the IAA, restaurant quality and food quality attributes fell into the “familiarizer” zone. The two attributes were expected to act as familiarizers on local food consumption destination. Epistemic benefit was included in the “hybrid” zone, indicating that it did not contribute to facilitating familiarity with the food region. Emotional benefit was located in the “defamiliarizer” cell, where a poor performance on emotional benefit function reduced familiarization with the destination. Figure 4 illustrates that food novelty attribute is plotted in the “distance-maker” cell. Thus, those who were dissatisfied with food novelty attribute tend to dislike the local food tourism destination.

5 | DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of the IRPA and IAA reveal useful practical information about the role of each local food attribute and benefit with respect to local restaurant and destination marketer. First, “emotional benefit” showed high impact on satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity but low performance. Thus, “emotional benefit” should be given particular attention by local food providers because it performs below average but has RIOCS above average. Similarly, “emotional benefit” was one of the most impactful factors in the IAA for all three cases (Figures 2–4). However, this factor was considered a dissatisfier, hesitator, and a defamiliarizer.

Therefore, “emotional benefit” acts as a fundamental factor for local food consumption. If they perceive a low level of “emotional benefit, tourists are likely to be dissatisfied with local foods, reluctant to recommend local food, and unfamiliar with the destination.” This finding is consistent with that of previous studies, which address that gaining pleasure and fun and creating unforgettable memories through local food consumption are important (Koc, 2013; Stone et al., 2018; Tsai, 2016). Moreover, food intake and emotions are highly related to each other (Canetti et al., 2002), particularly in the context of tourists' local food consumption. Thus, local restaurants attempt to offer enjoyment and unique experience to the foreign tourists by designing local culture-embedded interior, decoration, and exterior.

Second, according to the results of the IRPA, “food quality” has high impacts on satisfaction and behavioral intention and high performance. Thus, Hong Kong local food providers can keep up the good work. In terms of destination familiarity, “food quality” was identified in the low impact–high performance group. Strictly speaking, “food quality” is not a very strong impact factor in the creation of destination familiarity. However, the IRPA identified relative levels of the performance because it uses the grand mean of RIOCS to judge between low and high impact. Given that international food tourists take food quality for granted at the overseas travel location, local restaurants must develop remarkable local food that exceeds simply tasteful features. For example, a restaurant may develop very authentic Hong Kong local foods which are rarely found in a restaurant, such as Poon Choi (Chinese casserole in a basin) and stinky tofu.

Third, “food quality” ranged between high impact and medium impact according to the IAA. Thus, it is an influential factor to make tourists satisfied with their local food consumption, recommend local food to others and come back to the destination, and be familiar with the destination. In addition, “food quality” was identified as a dissatisfier and hesitator but a familiarizer. These results are similar with those of previous research, which found that food quality is the most fundamental and basic element that diners will seek during their meals (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012). However, the current study provides additional information and implications as tourists perceive “food quality” as a basic element. Thus, they may be dissatisfied and unwilling to recommend the local food and come back to the destination if the food quality is low. However, “food quality” is a familiarizer. Thus, tourists can feel familiar with the destination when the performance is good. This result seems to be contradictory to the previous results of the IRPA. “Food quality” was located at the low impact factor to form destination familiarity. It is also very close to the borderline between the low and high impact range in the IRPA and between the low and medium impact in the IAA. Therefore, local food marketers should further investigate the effectiveness of food quality on destination familiarity.

Fourth, the performance of “epistemic benefit” for satisfaction and behavioral intention was high, but its impact was low. To make tourists satisfied with their Hong Kong local food experience and be willing to recommend the local food to others and come back to the destination, low priority should be assigned to “epistemic benefit” because their RIOCS is below average and their performance is above average. However, the performance and impact level of “epistemic benefit” was high for destination familiarity. Thus, gaining knowledge, learning new culture, experiencing novelty, and fulfilling curiosity make tourists feel more familiar with the destination as previous research found (Choe & Kim, 2018; Fields, 2002; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016; Long, 2004; Meretse et al., 2016; Stanley & Stanley, 2014). According to the results of the IAA, “epistemic benefit” acts as a satisfier and recommender. Thus, satisfaction and behavioral intention will be high when the performance is high. However, again, the impact ranges of “epistemic benefit” on satisfaction and behavioral intention were located at a low impact in the IAA. The IRPA and IAA results provided the same recommendation. In terms of destination familiarity, “epistemic benefit” was identified as a hybrid in the IAA. As a result, it has equal potential to create destination familiarity and unfamiliarity. Thus, local restaurants must expound hidden stories pertinent to local food and embody the meaning into the food. One example is story-telling of local food menu.

Fifth, previous studies demonstrated that having high-quality restaurants is one of the important quality attributes that tourists consider in a destination (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Stanley & Stanley, 2014; Stone et al., 2018). Interestingly, however, the results of the current study show that “restaurant quality” was a low-priority factor. According to the IRPA, “restaurant quality” had low impact and low performance in satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. Based on the findings of IAA, “restaurant quality” was a frustrator and hesitator. Hence, tourists will be strongly dissatisfied

with their local food experiences and hesitant to recommend and come back to the destination if they perceive that the quality of local restaurants is low. This low rating is affected by the hygiene condition, service quality, and value for money of the restaurant, and ambiances of the local restaurants. These elements are considered the basics of any restaurant (Back, 2012; Liu & Jang, 2009). Diners will not be necessarily satisfied even though these performance indicators are high. They will be very frustrated if these performance indicators are not provided. In addition, “restaurant quality” attribute was a destination familiarizer. Thus, tourists can feel familiar with the destination when the quality of the local restaurant is good. Results advocate that restaurant quality keeps close distance with the destination. Therefore, destination marketers should capitalize on local food for destination promotion.

Sixth, the performance and impact of “food novelty” for satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity were low in the IRAA. This result is slightly different from that of previous studies, which stated that food novelty attribute is one of the most important local food attributes. Food novelty attribute provides an intensification of daily life experiences by offering novel and original features of the local food in a destination (Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2009; Long, 2004; Stone & Migacz, 2016). However, in the current study, the result shows that novelty attribute was not a very strong factor for tourists in a food tourism place to create satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. Tourists' perception of food novelty performance was also low. One of the reasons for such a problem is that Hong Kong and Mainland China share similar food culture in terms of food component and ingredients. Consequently, Chinese tourists may not consider Hong Kong local foods as very novel, fresh, and new cuisines. Therefore, Hong Kong local restaurants should develop new menus to satisfy a segment who are not reluctant to taste mesophilic food, which is different from conventional Chinese food. This approach is feasible in the context of holiday tourists because their consumption values are different from domestic diners (Kim et al., 2009).

Seventh, although the impact of “food novelty” was low, it is found to be a dissatisfier and a distance-maker in the IAA. Thus, tourists can be dissatisfied and feel strange about the destination if the local destination does not provide their own traditional, authentic, and exotic cuisines. Another interesting finding is that “food novelty” is a recommender. In sum, tourists might not be satisfied and become familiar with Hong Kong when the performance of “food novelty” is low. By contrast, they might be willing to recommend the destination and return to the destination when the performance of “food novelty” is high. Given that Hong Kong is a society that is integrated with Asian and Western cultures, local restaurants should offer their unique food menu or ambience to international tourist groups with different cultural backgrounds.

This study contributes to theoretical development in several aspects. Study results shed beneficial and practical implications through diverse interpretation. Local food attributes and benefits significantly influence tourists' experience with post-tasting outcomes. Furthermore, results of this study showcase the influential attributes

and benefits that affect tourists through assessing the relative magnitude of their effects. They are more informative than the outcomes generated from IP (importance–performance) analysis, which has been widely used to measure performance. In addition, this study dissects satisfaction level into satisfier and delighter, while it subdivides dissatisfaction level into frustrater and dissatisfier. Together with them attributes or benefits can be differently interpreted in explaining dependent variables. For example, emotional benefit was rated as dissatisfier in predicting satisfaction level, as hesitator in explaining behavioral intention, and as defamiliarizer in accounting for destination familiarity. It is an advantages whereas it can be disadvantages because interpretations are somewhat confusing.

6 | CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The findings of the IRPA and IAA show the roles of local food attributes and benefits on satisfaction with local food consumption, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity. Although previous studies were limited to the understanding of the role of attributes on customers' satisfaction, the current study was extended to behavioral intention and destination familiarity. Interestingly, a comparison of three IRPA and three IA figures showcased similarity or dissimilarity, which identified the impact on the three dependent variables. Patterns of location of local food attributes and benefit factors on IRPA figures in predicting the three dependent variables showed similarity, whereas their patterns on IA were different. Food markets want to obtain diverse marketing insights. Accordingly, researchers need to offer the findings of analyzes using diverse research methods.

Furthermore, now that satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination familiarity are outcomes of experiencing local food attributes and gaining benefit these constructs likely to be similarly considered. However, the results of this study show incoherence. Future studies are needed to measure these dependent variables and test the efficacy of local food attributes and consumption benefits sought in predicting these dependent variables. The adoption of these methods will assist a clear understanding and theoretical advancement.

Although the results of this study are abundant, suggestions for future studies are still proposed. First, the results can be distinctive in terms of food culture (Cheung, 2009; Choe & Kim, 2019; Eves & Cheng, 2007; Peštek & Činjurević, 2014; Rahman, Zaman, Hassan, & Wei, 2018; Ruetzler, 2008; Verbeke & Poquiqui López, 2005). Thus, future studies need to compare the results in terms of food culture and examine if the findings are similar. Second, food tourists' responses can vary in terms of their experience level (Canetti et al., 2002; Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Mak et al., 2012). Thus, a comparison of first-time experiencers of local foods with repeat experiencers can shed managerial implications, such as factors that influence satisfaction or familiarity to the local food tourism destination. Lastly, a similar study must be conducted in different food cultural countries or regions to identify if the results are heterogeneous or homogenous. Such efforts can help enhance generalizability and transferability of

the current work. In particular, a need to identify perceptual differences between mainland Chinese tourists and other Western tourists to Hong Kong is evident because of their various food cultures.

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