Recognizing cultural value in food

Case study of Pike-Perch in Hjälmaren & Mälaren, Sweden

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Abstract

Food culture emerges as a social culture and can be summarized through its historical development process. The exploration of socio-cultural analysis of food with sociological approaches has emerged in research due to the increased awareness of modern societies' motivations to discover other cultures through food. However, in the context of Sweden, limitations exist in analyzing the continuous ongoing process of a food product's cultural value and its potential 'added value to local cultural expression. This research focuses on evaluating Pike-Perch's culture value through its historical developed process and how utilization of the product has established present brand identity. By targeting the local stakeholder community, the perception of Pike-Perch's recognized cultural value could be captured and utilized as added value for local cultural expression. The stakeholder's perspectives were collected via interviews and observations through the geographical boundaries connected to the lakes of Mälaren and Hjälmaren. The findings point towards a recent transformation of Pike-Perch market value, giving the fish a new sociological appearance. As a result, a change of traditional utilization has reinvented/reproduced Pike-Perch with a different positioning within its socio-cultural setting. The stakeholders acknowledge the success in its development process that has established present identity; however, to the cost of preserving its intangible heritage. In return, the traditional food culture appeared fragmented. By reintroducing traditional elements from the past that satisfy the imaginations and need for visitors to acknowledge its distinctiveness, the brand could be strengthened and potentially justify its new market position. This research contributed to understanding the value of food culture from a stakeholder perspective and how post-modern societies influence its potential for sustainable destination development.

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Introduction

Food serves a central role in the present time that emerges through social, cultural, and historical settings in our societies. Therefore, food represents a fundamental attribute in our daily lives. People construct identity and meaning through food, both as individuals and through groups that have been created through shared values (Everett, 2016). In post-modern society, food and drink engagement is rising as we explore the role of food, in our own process of constructing a 'sense of place' and how it might teach us something about ourselves (Everett, 2016). Much as our social lives are centered on the dining experience, the motivations of new experiences occur both at home and away as we are constantly seeking knowledge through food. This has established a new increased awareness of local cuisines globally. Because of the increased awareness and motivations of food primarily through other cultures, the rise of food tourism has developed. Among researchers, a progressive body of literature on the topic has provided multidimensional strategies and recommendations for its potential development centered around the experience (Sims, 2009; Everett, 2016; Stone et al., 2019).

In the present time, increased demand for local products and local consumption movements has also been acknowledged (Sims 2009, Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016; Kumar & Smith, 2018) and could be utilized in regional development by introduction promotional strategies included tourism activations. In success, its utilization could improve the local economies and host community, all by sustainable practices contributing to the support of local food. This local food initiative can generate benefits for visitors through tourism activation and residents alone (Sims, 2009).

In the case of this specific study, Pike-Perch is a commonly recognized fish but obtains a small market share compared to the competitors. Despite the market, Pike-Perch's economic value positions itself above most commercial fish in Sweden. One factor for the increased market value could be national legislation for its protection or the relatively new MSC-Certifications recognized as a sustainable, trustworthy choice by consumers and the market trend for *green certifications* within seafood (Svanberg et al., 2016). Nonetheless, to sustain its cultural value rather than proclaim its economic importance, one must first determent its historical development through the culture that has brought it to today. In the context of regional development, the communication of local culture culinary attributes is a fundamental field for its cultural expression. The European parliament has emphasized traditional food

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culture since the '90s and helped to influence politics due to its potential for 'added value to local cultural expression to promote economic and rural growth (Tellström et al., 2006). These political influences can be recognized by the legislation of food protection, such as determining 'origin-of-food' (Tellström et al., 2006; Rinaldi, 2017). Here, the social-economic value arises from consumers' capability of tracing back individual producers. And it motivates a short supply chain empowered by consumers' demand for local food *(*Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). The effect, to some degree, could transform into an independent local economy that thrives by values and not the global market law of profit. This new formation driven by food referred to place-embeddedness presents oneself through culture and social responsibility as a community (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016).

The purpose of this research is to identify the role of Pike-Perch among the local stakeholders in the present time through its historical development within the region. By doing so, identifying key parameters could benefit the regional distinctiveness and motivate action through food tourism. Stone et al. (2019), who argue that destination identity from the host and stakeholder community is a critical element in the region's brand image and development process. Therefore, the stakeholder's perspective includes the perception of Pike-Perch's known brand identity and its recognized cultural value and individuals' understanding of Pike-Perch through its historical development process and how utilization of the product has established present identity. Culture, however, is not a static entity high above the masses, but an ongoing continuous change of appearance, emerging from the perception of its appearance constructed through historical settings (Goujon et al. 2014). Food culture can be summarized through its historical development process and how utilization of 'food' has established its production, consumption, traditions, etc. as well as the intangible factors of cultivation, preparation, expression, production where food emerges as a social culture and represents more than the process of consumption (Goujon et al. 2014).

Aim and Objective

This study aim to raise understanding of Pike-Perch cultural values in Swedish and, by doing so, investigate its potential contribution to destination development through food tourism. The influencing range of factors determining Pike-Perch cultural value will be collected cross-locale Mälaren and Hjälmaren by analyzing stakeholder's perspectives and relationships with Pike-Perch.

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Research Question

- How do local stakeholders recognize Pike-Perch as an asset through the perception of its cultural value in the present time?

Through this research, the objective is to investigate underlying factors that have contributed to stakeholder's perspective of Pike-Perch in the present time, to be able to identify specific parameters which could contribute to the research aim. The understating of its potential role of contribution to destination development can be motivated by doing so. Objectives could therefore be presented as:

1. Examine local stakeholders and small-scale fisher's perspective on Pike-Perch by collecting qualitative data.
2. Identify critical factors of post-modern food consumer culture related to Pike-Perch consumer's behavior and evaluate its contribution to the present perception of the products culture value.
3. Evaluate local stakeholders' perspective on Pike-Perch as a regional asset in the present time and motivate recommendations that could contribute to the development of the region and its food identity

Background

Sweden, in general, is a relatively small fish industry. The most important species are Sprat, Herring, Cod, Mackerel, and Shrimp (Svanberg et al., 2016). Sweden has a long coastline and rich in fish along with example Kattegat and the Baltic sea, but also some freshwater fishing is found in the largest lakes of Sweden, such as Vänern, Vättern, Hjälmaren, and Mälaren, among others. Here national rules regulate, and a license is required for professional fishing (Svanberg et al., 2016; Hav & Vatten, 2018), where some of the fish is consumed locally, while some amount is exported (Svanberg et al., 2016; INT1; INT.3). But the dominant consumed fish in Sweden is farmed salmon and other marine fish (Svanberg et al., 2016).

Case Study of MSC Certified Pike-Perch in Sweden

Pike-Perch in Sweden

In the case of Pike-Perch. Its development from a quite unknown fish to one of Sweden's most attracted sport and food fishes, also seen as the Pike-Perch cures, due to its exclusiveness (Andersson, 2019). Today, fishing occurs as commercial fishing, self-sufficient households,

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and sports fishing (Hav och Vatten, 2018). The Pike-Perch (Sander lucioperca) belongs to the Percidae family, and its closest kin is the perch itself (Perca fluviatilis). The Pike-Perch is fished globally but occurs as different species and characteristics embossed to its ecological adaptation to its region. Pikeperch is a well-developed predatory fish who hunts in the dark, turbid water (Hav och Vatten, 2018) and thrives in more giant lakes such as Hjälmaren, Mälaren, and Vänern. Pike-Perch eats other fish and crustaceans. The Pike-Perch has both sharp teeth and fish fins. A fully grown fish should be a minimum of 45 centimeters but have been statistically caught up to 130 centimeters. Today's commercially sold Pikeperch lies closer to 45 and weighs a couple of kilos (Ekengren & Persson, 2011; Hav och Vatten, 2018).
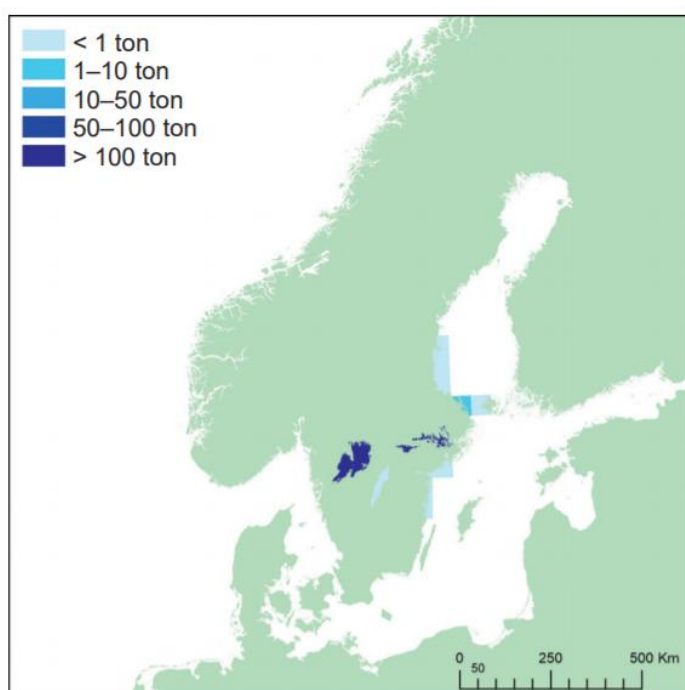
The immigration of Pike-Perch had happened from the east when the last ice age still influenced the Swedish landscape. The water level was higher, and today's Baltic sea was historically an inland sea with sweet water. However, the limitation of statistics and genetic mapping brings uncertainty in details of the immigration of Pike-Perch. However, in late 1800 a more significant data collection of the Pike-Perch existence in Sweden was made, and locations were found covering most of Sweden. The data collection shows the natural colonization of Pike-Perch in Swedish lakes, mainly in the south of Sweden (Andersson, 2019).

Picture 1 - Distribution of caught Pike-Perch geographical, 2017

During the 1960s, the annual catch of Pike-Perch was 400 tons but dropped at the beginning of the 2000s. With a sustainable development of fishing regulations, the annual catch has once again increased and has an average of 480 tons annually (Hav och Vatten, 2018). No traditional local fishing techniques are recognized today due to a constant change in the marine environment's advantages or disadvantages of the Pike-Perch. The continuous development of fishing techniques occurs, and different areas within the lakes are utilized for fishing, depending on its purpose and time of the year. But the season of Pike-Perch is all year around (Hav och Vatten, 2018). This research focuses on

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commercial fishing across the geographical area covering lake Hjälmaren and Mälaren in the south of Sweden.

Today, public influencers, such as health experts, recommend fish 2-3 times a week and are strongly in favor of increasing fish consumption (Livsmedelsverket, 2020). However, the majority eat less fish than recommended; one influencing reason is that the industry is not seen as a sustainable production today; FAO estimated that one-third of the world's fish stock was overfished in 2015 (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2018). Despite the market, Pike-Perch's economic value positions itself above most commercial fish in Sweden. One factor for the high market value could be national legislation for its protection or the relatively new MSC-Certifications recognized as a sustainable, trustworthy choice by consumers and the market trend for *green certifications* within seafood (Svanberg et al., 2016). All participants fishermen in this study are certified with MSC to ensure long-lasting future fishing for coming generations. In Sweden, green certifications, just as MSC, have become more critical for consumers. At the same time, farmed fish such as salmon has had a larger market share, which is not a sustainable fish to consume, and here, freshwater fish can offer an alternative (Svanberg et al., 2016), just as Pike-Perch.

MSC; Marine Stewardship Council, is an international non-profit organization whose aim is to protect oceans and safeguard seafood supplies for the future (MSC, 2021). Marine Stewardship Council is a dominating actor on the market for 'sustainable fish' and certification system. MSC has successfully grown in numbers of fisheries certifications and uptake on the consumer market. It has promoted market demand for sustainable fish by having large retailers, distributors, restaurant chains, and food service companies carry MSC-certified products (Ponte, 2012). Their present mission can be presented by quoting their own market communication:

"Our mission is to use our ecolabel and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognizing and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with our partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis"

(MSC, 2021)

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Hjälmaren & Mälaren

There are old stories printed in books to preserve the fishermen's stories of Pike-Perch and generations of fishing. In the middle of Hjälmaren is a small island called Valen that seems to have great value for Pike-Perch fishing and preserves many traditions yet not valuated. Not just for the fishermen but local people. Some traditions come from secrets of understanding the Pike-Perch behavior. Björn Eriksson shares one of these traditions in the book *Fångad av en Gös* (Ekengren & Persson, 2011). He explains that as a child, he got told that depending on where the moon was located in the sky, the Pike-Perch will be found on deeper or more shallow waters. So, he would move his net following the pattern of the moon. At the same time, other traditions come from environmental conditions that decide when, where, and how to catch the fish.

Hjälmaren covers 483 Kvm2 and is Sweden's 4th biggest lake. It is a very shallow lake with rich fishing habitat, and therefore the most typical lake for Pike-Perch fishing (Hav och Vatten, 2018). Here, the Pike-Perch is fished with either net or hoop net. Both general traditional fishing equipment's for catching Pike-Perch (Andersson, 2019). The annual catch has varied incredibly over time, and commercial catch 1960-1977 was only 30 tones. But since the early 2000s, recovered and has 2013-2017 an average commercial catch of 180 tones.

Hjälmaren is historical always been utilized to provide fish for local societies. The region itself has medieval findings proven of a rich fish-oriented community, dependent on dried fish. It also has family trees of fishing, dated back to the 1400 century (Ekengren & Persson, 2011). In modern days, since 2006, Hjälmaren has had the enormous pride of MSC-certified Pike-Perch, which means that Hjälmaren was the first freshwater fishery in the world to do so. Together with the MSC certification, Hjälmaren is now limited to 25 active fishers at once (Ekengren & Persson, 2011), which means the next generation in the family traditions, according to Interviewee 3 has to wait until there opens up a new spot, that commonly occurs through previous generations of fishermen's retirements.

Next to Hjälmaren is lake Mälaren, which is 1140 kvm2 and is the third-largest lake in Sweden. It is long and extends across the geographical area from Köping to Stockholm. Here also commercial fishing is done by either net or hoop net to catch Pike-Perch., Mälaren has approximately 30 fishermen who fish for Pike-Perch and are commonly the primary source of income throughout the year for all fishermen even though some other minor season occurs.

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The annual catch in Mälaren 2007-2011 was 161 and has had in general since the 1960s a more stable yearly commercial catch. Since 2017, Mälaren has the pride of MSC-Certification as well. These certifications and being the leader for the rest of Europe have had great value and success for Mälaren and Hjälmaren, and the work is an ongoing process to sustain long-lasting fishing. Future recommendations for the annual volume of catch should not grow in either Mälaren och Hjälmaren to maintain a healthy fishing (Hav och Vatten, 2018).

Post-Modern consumer behavior and its transformation

By evaluating Pike-Perch's present market opportunities through its cultural and market value, the historical development of food consumption behavior must be understood and our relationship with food.

Food serves a central role in the present time that emerges through social, cultural, and historical settings in our societies. Therefore, food represents a fundamental attribute in our daily lives globally. People construct identity and meaning through food, both as individuals and through groups that have been created through shared values (Everett, 2016). In the age of globalization, food development emerges from a continuing process balancing between innovation and heritage (Manniche & Sæther, 2017; Grimldi et al., 2019). This development tends towards transformation, which traditional is accountable for significant structural change, balanced on the other hand with the individuals' essential need of the society in the present stage, as we see it now (Grimldi et al., 2019). This actualizes the potential for successful product promotion activities with modern values in the present stage, including traditional structure (Grimldi et al., 2019).

In the last decades, the change of consumption behaviors demonstrated an increased interest in local food (McEntee, 2010, Eriksen, 2012; Grimaldi, 2019). This increased local food market demand emerges due to the decreased consumer confidence in the conventional food sector (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016; Kumar & Smith, 2018). One potential reason for its existence is the consumer's emotions towards alienation from modern-day food production (Sims, 2019; McEntee, 2010) and consumers' perception of health and safety issues that might arise with the loss of combining local food production-consumption (Kumar, & Smith, 2018). However, individuals' phenomena of 'local food' tend to be perceived differently based on unique priorities, goals, and individuals' values. This is a result of misusage of the term local, as it does not specify 1) where the products are grown, 2) where its produced, 3) where it is prepared for production and consumption-, and therefore not easily defined by consumers.

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Therefore, the perception of local food varies and can refer to the individuals' local area, where the product has been produced by others, or the same country it is consumed (Eriksen, 2012). As the term is not easily defined, as does not refers to where the products are grown, produced, or prepared for consumption. This flaw, taken advantage of as a marketing strategy by retailers utilizing a defuse definition of 'local,' in its turn, creates confusion for consumers around the meaning of 'local food' (Eriksen, 2012).

Nonetheless, market demand for local food is one of the fastest-growing trends in the United States and has a current growing market in Europe (Eriksen, 2012; Kumar, & Smith, 2018). Scandinavian has especially taken advantage of this transformation of breaking loose of 'modern-day production,' moving towards the ideology of 'new nordic cuisine. This ongoing transformation strives towards where incidence and produce whose characteristics are particularly excellent in our Scandinavian climate are the attributes of modern societies' consumer culture (Manniche & Sæther, 2017). Perceived as a new culinary offering, the ideology of 'new nordic cuisine' has become an identity maker and components in place-branding destinations and regional 'terroir' qualities of food in Scandinavia (Manniche & Sæther, 2017). However, Modern chefs in the restaurant industry, who has been very successful in developing modern Swedish cuisine, have so far, in general, shown minimal interest in freshwater fish (Svanberg et al., 2016).

Local, translocal, food culture, and its authenticity, what does it mean?

With this new perspective on local food, it is vital to understand the phenomena of food culture. Culture is not a static entity high above the masses, but a contentious change of appearance, emerging from the reperception of its appearance constructed through historical settings (Goujon et al. 2014). Food cultures are constantly in conflict with other foreign characteristic food cultures (Zeng & Sun, 2014). Therefore, even the new culinary offering, such as 'new nordic cuisine' has become an identity marker-, the recognition of its development must be recognized as an ongoing process. Summarization of food culture is the process of developing and utilizing food based on elements such as its production, consumption, traditions, etc. But also, the process of cultivation, preparation, expression, production where food emerges as a social culture (Goujon et al., 2014; Almansouri, 2021).

By breaking down food culture; *Place*,- defined as a 'perceived value center,' is the known carrier of cultural and social significance, while locality is the key difference to what differentiates one place from another. Here, Culture helps a *place* to form its locality through

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people giving meaning to the space and perspective of its uniqueness (Goujon et al. 2014). As for the age of globalization, large quantities of immigration of people and enterprises specific cultural fashions are inescapable (Goujon et al., 2014; Zeng & Sun, 2014). Due to the perception of previous established boundaries differing *places* from one another, that has previously specified its cultural significance, has transformed. As a result, 'translocation' has developed, and food cultures are no longer confined to their previous identified boundaries and are now seen as a place of ongoing social process constantly communicating with other cultures (Goujon et al., 2014).

Authenticity, on the other hand, is associated with "genuineness" (Almansouri, 2021) and reflects shared memories and origins that support the feeling of belonging to a territory (Bessière, 2013). These aspects are valuable in a sense to feel attached to a specific place or area (Almansouri, 2021). Authenticity is also often seen as a kind of performance of reality. In the case of tourism perception, authenticity refers to the connection of the local culture. It is essential to be aware of the complexity of authenticity, and its concepts vary (Goujon et al. 2014). Nonetheless, in the context of translocal development of food culture, the consumers' perception of authenticity needs to be in focus. Namely, tanslocal food culture production is how the producers and consumers continue to interact to maintain a stage of stability (Goujon et al. 2014). A long-term accumulation and ongoing interaction of people's identity and the culture helps a *place* form its locality. This is based on local market demand and producers' continuous interaction. In other words, when people give meaning to space or service, locality can be created (Zeng & Sun, 2014). A constant balance between the authenticity of food culture and implementing standardization of food culture development (Zeng & Sun, 2014), in return, connects a place identity where space and time transform into the definition of new narrative language that contemporary societies seek. This new narrative language in its locality would be based on awareness of roots, land, and themes such as environmental protection, ecology, and social sustainability, culture cycle in addition to food (Grimaldi et al., 2019).

Food Culture & Rural Development

Food cultures as presented can be identified as a set of material and immaterial elements that combined defines a food heritage, and its shared legacy is often typically related to agricultural products or raw materials, the majority connected to rural areas. 'Authenticity' in food culture is defined by the distinctiveness of intangible elements of origin, its preparation,

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preserved traditions, cultural consumer behaviors, but also cultural objects like symbolical material or physical objects (Almansouri, 2021).

In rural development, export-led growth markets have been developed due to the ongoing globalization and political conditions that depend on production activities that sell products outside the original region. In modern society, food consumption is made invisible in the industrialized process. Therefore, one side of the consumer no longer feels the necessity to reflect upon the origin of food production. As a result, 'local actors' have noticed a new difficulty to keep traditions alive as modern society moves away from local 'natural' traditions and values. Food culture could face challenges in this transformation, for the already known difficulty preserving local knowledge as its highly variable and non-universal and loses its understanding in long-standing export-led growth solutions (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). This non-universal knowledge of food culture is the intangible heritage that particularly relates to food practices such as gestures and words. Grimaldi et al. (2019) argue for the risk of losing one of the most important cultural heritages if the stories of the elderly disappear with them, due to the artistic process taught by generations verbally and transmitted the formulary of recipes through forms and practices, this intangible heritage of food culture cannot be recovered without the support of an overall organic sense of the orality. Supported by Almansouri (2021) highlights food heritage as a representative to the broader context of how the food is prepared and who prepares it.

Here, the idea of localism of food systems has become a critical paradigm shift in rural development. The reconnection between food and consumers is a reaction to the historical loss of 'food' and its culture due to the export-led growth and industrialized process (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). This localism transformation also serves as an economically defendable argument due to the less economical margins with supermarket and industrial development processes. With the relocation of food that is emerging, the sociological attributes also need to be recognized. The relationship between local knowledge and local food is essential to examine social, historical, and institutional bridges where the concept 'culture knowledge' develops (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016).

By relocating food and providing consumer products with the availability to trace back to individual producers due to the short supply chain, the consumer enables a feeling of trust that empowers local society (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). This Socio-economic dimension, as a result, demonstrate that close interactions between consumers and producers can have a

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significant impact on the rural community as the effect to some extend is constructed independent local economy that thrives by values and not global 'market law' based on profit (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). This place-embeddedness and empowered local society is driven by food present oneself as culture and social responsibility, as a community (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). A potential outcome of re-location of food is a 'new shining light' boosting the revisiting food traditions of an origin. Traditional food is preserved mainly in rural geographical areas and can be products and actors of one area (Bessiere, 1998).

Food tourism in destination development

Since the 70s, the global tourism industry has been changing and characterized by numerous developments such as globalization, technologies, and consumer culture and behavior preferences, with the last-mentioned aspect, renewed awareness of the environment and an urge to rediscover local identities emerging. This has now been defined as the post-tourism area and set a crisis in mass tourism. This post-tourism area seeks spiritual and cultural dimensions of their travels, and it is fed by demand for verity, quality emotional experiences. In this light, consumers appear to be co-creators of social value and actively create social ideals. Consumers seek activities where he or herself transform into an active protagonist in their own experience (Calzati & Salvo, 2017). Countries, regions, and communities can be divided into smaller geographical areas defined by build-in characteristics such as native species, flora, and fauna. Defining its barriers by its distinctiveness rather than geographical boundaries could contribute to destination development featured by tourism planning based on the true nature of that place (Forristal & Lehto, 2009). In the present time, the increasing competition between tourism destinations has led to more advanced strategies to stay relevant in the tourist market. Therefore, due to the many possibilities of food, many destinations have utilized its local characteristics as it is the source to strengthen their tourism marketing (Lin et al., 2011; Andersson & Mossberg, 2017), and sustainable marketing competitiveness can be formed (Fox, 2007; Yin, 2011). Additionally, for its recognition of benefits and its rising interest, food tourism has become a 'distinct sector' in tourism and not just an inconsequential holiday necessity (Everett, 2016; Stone et al., 2018).

In post-modern society, food and drink engagement is rising as we explore the role of food, in our own process of constructing a 'sense of place' and how it might teach us something about ourselves (Everett, 2016). Much as our social lives are centered on the dining experience, the motivations of new experiences occur both at home and away as we are constantly seeking knowledge through food. This has established a new increased awareness of local cuisines

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globally (Sims, 2009; Everett, 2016; Stone et al., 2019). There are numerous definitions of food and drink tourism, and Everett (2016) finds it unlikely that we will ever agree upon one as a good thing. Food and drink tourism play a global role, and one single definition cannot be established without overly simplify the true nature of this multi-faced phenomenon and would undermine its complexity. Food and drink tourism plays a global role, and a sea of research have been published, studying the relationship between tourism destinations and food, such as culinary tourism, food tourism and, food culture (Zeng & Sun, 2014; Yin et al., 2014; Corvo & Matacena, 2017, Guan, & Zhang, 2019). Most terms and aspects of food and drink tourism overlap, even though they cover slightly different aspects (Everet, 2016). The increased popularity could be the fundamental central role foods place for a given community or geographical, viewed as a culinary heritage emblem. This often resembles under the same umbrella inhabitants recognize themselves linkage the food traditions are integrated to their culture (Bessiere, 1998; Forristal & Lehto, 2009). Food has somehow always been a motivation asset for cultural experiences; it has never represented such a central part of tourism demand as now. *Food Tourism* interlink with many areas such as gastronomic tourism, gourmet tourism, culinary tourism and has been defined as 'the pursuit and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and drink experience, bot near and far' (Stone, 2019). This experience range from gourmet to simple (Everett, 2016, Stone et al., 2018), as well as local and not local. The element of 'extraordinary, seemed more important to create a memorable experience (Stone et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the post-modern new "culinary tourist" is understood as someone who seeks the value of authenticity in food (Corvo & Matacena, 2017) whose rate of success in 'memorable experience' was elements of location or setting, occasion, touristic elements, and its companion (Stone et al., 2018).

Further details of 'authentic in food' beyond its previous definition could be explained as farming traditions interplay with local culture, shape the tastes of places, and individuals' behavior habits provoked by the process. Therefore food becomes an essential characterization of a location (Zeng & Sun, 2014). This identification of food authenticity could capture the interest of consumers (Tellstrom et al., 2006; Forristal & Lehto, 2009). Travelers could be drawn to particular destinations for their local specialties or dining experiences as local food attractions. To what extent this could lure travelers to one specific destination are discussed by many, nonetheless still arguable for added value through food heritage due to the authentic and traditions tourism seek (Sims, 2009; Forristal & Lehto, 2009; Bessiere, & Tibere, 2013), and its market demand keeps rising (Corvo & Matacena, 2017;

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Almansouri et al., 2021). For example, Rural tourism has developed internationally in recent years due to the increased interest in preserving local traditions and cultural values protecting the environment by participating in the traditional food activities of the locals (Sorcaru, 2019). The economic value in food heritage and its social and cultural function has made the object of conservation a place of project, action, and mobilization of development (Bessière, 2013) as well as the direct economic impact, as food expenditures seem to account for 25-35% of peoples travel expenses (Stone et al., 2018). Identifying the distinctiveness of culture or authenticity of food could be an effective tool to sustain rural tourism and its community (Almansouri, 2021) additionally could strengthen the link between the place (*territorial/geographical dimensions)* and the people (*cultural dimensions*) (Forristal & Lehto, 2009; Rinaldi, 2019).

Over the past decade, utilizing food as a promotional tool for destinations' marketing strategies has increased. Many destinations are now using food to extend the tourism season (Everett, 2016). Yin et al. (2011) highlight some successful case studies in Australia, Canada, and Wales where the promotion of local food had boosted the hospitality industry. The provided examples demonstrate that food is (directly and indirectly) connected with destinations identity that strengthens tourism encouragement to taste the region's cuisine. Additionally, the success of promotion where the power to create a rich, clear identity is built on many key elements that help tourists reflect the destination's characteristics. It was once widely suggested that names, logos, symbols, slogans, and packaging are the key element for brand identity. Food has a strong connection to a place. It carries large numbers of symbolic meanings and can represent key elements to create distinctiveness concerning a place and values of that destination's identity (Yin et al., 2014). Specific food can be signed for symbols, communion, particular areas within a destination barrier, and food is a sign of class marker and status (Bessière, 1998; Yin et al., 2014). Previous research has demonstrated that food- and food-related industries can be central to regional identity information, sustaining the theoretical link between identity and food (Everett and Aitchison, 2008).

However, to some extent, a common mistake made by destination organizations focuses on promotional strategies without actively being closely involved in resource conservation and planning. This approach has been discussed to have potentials severe consequences for a destination's sustainability (Jung & Miller, 2014). Consideration needs to be given to nature and the development of their tourism product in turn of food to its marketing. Local stakeholders need to establish a clear identity by recognizing and celebrating their unique

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qualities to improve the local economy, protect local culture, and support local traders (Jung & Miller, 2014). Marketing is of fundamental importance for destination managers as much as the requirements for a sustainable approach to tourism development. As food plays an increasingly important role in the lens of 'authentic,' local food for the tourists might significantly impact the culture and economic sustainability of a destination while benefiting visitors and the host community (Sims, 2009; Jung and Miller, 2014).

To understand Pike-Perch's potential contribution to destination development for the region as 'tourism product, key theoretical approaches will be applied to the analysis. This will help investigate underlying factors that have contributed to the stakeholder's perspective of Pike-Perch and how these influencing factors could be used to highlight its authenticity.

Theoretical Frameworks

Throughout the research process, various theoretical frameworks approaches were analyzed and considered to tackle the main research questions. One perspective that was very present but later on deselected opposed the study investigating the ideology of slow food movements' perspective. However, due to the previous studies criticizing the movement for its inequitable and majority target those with above-average financial means (McEntee, 2010), changing the framework was chosen to avoid a possible result benefiting a social inequality conclusion. Nonetheless, the idea of alternative food networks, such as slow food movement, will not be ignored but still taken into consideration of knowledge when discussing the research result.

Instead, the chosen approach was Heritagization, with similar discussed flaws; however, these flaws have been acknowledged and taken into consideration. Changing theoretical approach lies in the advantage of theory build framework, rather than rhetorical sociology build ideology, such as The Slow Food Movement.

Exploring the idea of Food Heritagization

The conceptualized packaging and reproduction of authentic traditional food through its perception of distinctiveness among others in present time, called food heritagization, is far from a technical development process and more a social process (Guan & Zhang, 2019) Heritagization refers to the conversion, discussion conflict, and compromise of cultural resources and their mass customization into globalized products. In other word's heritagization is not all about the past and its protection but rather the usage (*and potential abuse*) of the past to educate the public in the present (Krishenblett-Gimblett,1995; Poria &

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Ashworth, 2009). The heritagization process aims to make inhabitants in a region feel that particular cultural heritage is more relevant to them than others. The process is done by reintroduces/redevelop previous ideas and values (*its social culture*) by making them relevant once again (Poria, & Ashworth, 2009; Nilsson, 2018). It is a process that places value upon places, people, things, practices, histories, or ideas as inheritances from the past (Krishenblett-Gimblett,1995). This process emerges from a functional place, developed by ethics or social conditions towards an ideal situation characterized by traditions that might be more or less outdated (Nilsson, 2018; Guan et al., 2019). Therefore, the past belongs to present inhabitants, who have captured historical values and can choose how to interpret and utilize it to their advantage. Cultural objects need to be seen as socially constructed and not only for their meaning but also for its material process by which they are produced. Material objects are embedded in specific cultural contexts. These things can be utilized by people to objectify social relationships (Everett, 2016). For this reason, fake objects can be a tool for the cultural enrichment of the individuals' perception and experience (Poria, & Ashworth, 2009) as material goods can evoke and influence tourism behaviors (Everett, 2016) Meaning, the political process of heritagization can be seen by the tourist's perception of the authenticity of the heritage. If tourists care less about the social-culture aspects, the likelihood is that they instead will be influenced by tangible representations of the authenticity experience. This gives local tourism stakeholders and administrators opportunities to use cultural heritage for political purposes or promote special interests (Nilsson, 2018).

The narratives surrounding traditional food products share the information that we are consuming a product of a unique system surviving in a world of mass production. These products are primarily generated from sustained commercial activities, regulation systems, and international trade agreements. Therefore, a substantial part of heritagization is the political and social aspects. The local actors mark the identities and define the product specifications to market and the competitions (Bowen& Master, 2011). Therefore, the regional actors can seek and access the opportunity that emerges from heritagization in a social process to articulate certain foodstuff as a heritage for their own benefits (Guan & Zhang, 2019). However, the balance lies within the whole society for the heritagization processes to work. The host society needs a matter of strengthened self-esteem and developed perception of one's own identity, while the impact from tourism lies in providing a broad spectrum of attractions to perceive a cultural heritage experience (Nilsson, 2018).

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The idea of heritage tourism is the experience of space that presents both intangible and intangible elements perceived by the visitors as part of their heritage. In a general notice, Heritagization is when various pasts are constructed in the present to need, issue or circumstance. In other words, Heritagization is where Heritage is constructed. In culture, this allows the discussion and perspectives around conservation, restoration, and protection of a phenomenon and therefore become a collective choice and debate of what is actually heritagizable (Krishenblett-Gimblett,1995) Heritagization is the core of heritage tourism and can be utilized both for global and local heritage. Compared to, conservation and preservation are the core of cultural tourism and focuses on -saving and protecting – 'a real objective past' (Poria, & Ashworth, 2009).

In heritizagtion process of food often interlink with contemporary 'local food' also known as relocalism. This innovation is associated with the middle and upper class, as a potential outcome is the lack of availability for everyone. 'The traditional local food' is motivated and affordable food for everyone within a community and guided by the motivation to obtain fresh. On the other hand, alternative food networks and 'Contemporary local food' are associated with the middle or upper class (McEntee, 2010). Some researchers explain it as a social process, where different actors seek to articulate certain foodstuff as a heritage for its own benefits. Therefore, the access to opportunities from food heritagization (Guan & Zhang, 2019) and the contemporary local innovation (McEntee, 2010) may not be equally available for all. Contemporary local food is not built on the ideology of being available for all, but has surfaced based on the exact change of consumer demand based on thee feelings of beeing alienation from modern-day food production, similar with alternative food networks (Sims, 2009; McEntee, 2010). Examining these forces initiative to counteract the imbalance (Ecological, social and economic) of an increasingly globalized supply chain. These movements have different vital characteristics of motivation such as organic, sustainable agriculture or fair-trade, etc. (McEntee, 2010).

Consumer Culture Theory

As previously mentioned, traditional food consumption has been linked to the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social, and environmental), while contemporary local food is not built on the same ideology. By examining post-modern food behaviors and identified parallels of traditional food & contemporary local food from a consumer culture perspective within the fieldwork, a possible understanding of traditional values in Pike-Perch geographically connected societies might be 'measurable' or better understood.

The theory of consumer culture is not a grand unified theory. It refers to a family of theoretical perspectives. Nonetheless, this family of theories a standard theoretical orientation towards the study of cultural complexity that addresses the role between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings. This relatively new theory represents twenty-year research on consumer culture within different areas of research addressing sociocultural, symbolic, and ideological aspects of consumption (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Garanti & Berberolu, 2018). Consumer culture emerges from where the social arrangement of the relationship within social resources and lived culture occurs. The material resources they depend upon for their meaningful view of life within that sequence. The distinctive difference of consumer culture theory (CCT) that it takes on more than identifying the existence of homogeneous culture shared by certain groups. It additionally analyzes the diversity of cultural meaning in contemporary society, marked by globalization and the hegemony of capitalism (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Fonseca, 2008). CCT conceptualizes culture as the very fabric of experience, meaning, and action (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Fonseca, 2008). To build a framework on the theory mentioned above, Arnould & Thompson (2008) proposed four main research categories 1) *Consumer identity projects* is where consumers are seen as an identity seeker and maker. The marker offers consumers various kinds of consumer positions that consumers can choose to inhabit or not (Arnould & Thompson, 2008, Andersson & Mossberg, 2017; Arnould et al., 2019). 2) *Marketplace Culture* is how individuals consume to create an identity based on the social context of their sphere and how the common culture contributes to different types of consumption behavior. 3) *Socio-historical patterning of consumption* explores how sociological categories are performed, maintained, and transformed through consumption such as gender, class, and ethnicity influence on marketplace behaviors (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Arnould et al. 2019). Finally, 4) *mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies* seek to understand consumers' ideologies and identities influenced by economic and cultural globalization and how its cultural product system orient consumers towards a specific identity (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Arnould et al. 2019).

In relevance to food and CCT, leisure-related activities can provide consumers with a social identity that might not be possible through other limited spheres such as work. These activities can be a part of a consumer's lifestyle or represent a consumer's majority of social identity. Two distinct ways for consumers to do is 1) through Material such as clothing and souvenirs and 2) through integration with an object (Arnould & Thompson, 2008; Garanti &

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Berberolu, 2018). This case of food is a marker for place and a marker of class that also motivates our social identity, and meals, therefore, become a part of who we are. For example, previous authors have applied 'food' among several studies found in this family-based theory, arguing for its extraordinary, simple yet ritualized, present in daily life representative, as an essential topic of consumer culture theory (Fonseca, 2008). By applying CCT, Garanti & Berberolu (2018) concluded analyzing post-millennial consumers in traditional cheese, pointed towards a study result revealing trust in traditional food is based on memories, the rituals of preparing, the identity it is built upon, allowing people to feel a sense of belonging. Additionally, they argue for traditional food products are a choice of emotions rather than rational or behavioral. These emotions mark how we want to be seen by others and how we want to see ourselves. Each consumer is a part of one or several communities, each with a common interest and often with its own behaviors, traditions, and social norms. In food, the creation of identity helps a shared community to feel a sense of belonging or strengthening the divides between others (Arnould & Thompson, 2008). Consumption of traditional food is based on multiple factors of influence all related to the four previously mentioned research categories. Nonetheless, according to Garanti & Berberolu (2018), these factors or motivations are far beyond the economic and psychological known by traditional consumer behavior literature.

Applying CCT to a stakeholder's perspective will provide depth of Pike-Perch Consumer culture known today and the motivating factors that have developed its food culture. Better yet, by shining a light on the potential authenticity of Pike-Perch as a product for the region and its distinctiveness to others, this research could potentially provide meaningful insight into its current cultural value beyond more than its attributes for heritizagtion but how its consumer behavior interlinks within it. It is known today that heritagization efforts have been involved in the preservation process of constructing meaning and values for a specific 'heritage' without acknowledging the actual process of heritagization (Kirshenblett-Gimblett, 1995). For the research field, this theoretical framework combination provides a new angle of analysis of cultural value, as the aim is to research its potential rather than studying the phenomenon of a case that has already been identified as a cultural heritage for a destination.

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Methodology

Choice of Method

The choice of which method to apply depends on the nature of the research problem itself. To study the phenomenon of real-life contexts as culture is, a qualitative study approach is ideal for investigating an in-depth a chosen topic. A case study design was ideal within the qualitative study with an inductive research process. Being one of the most common methods in social research (Noor, 2008; Bryman, 2016, 66-72), case studies are widely used to study a location, community, or organization and can be used in several ways, with a combination that interplay both qualitative and quantitative methods, but primarily associated with qualitative research (Bryman, 2016, 66-72). Case studies are often an empirical inquiry investigating a phenomenon within its real-life context using a mix of methods to source evidence.

A typical combination of mix-methods is semi-structured interviews with observation. The researcher argues for the apprehend of this specific methodology-mix, as it might gather data collection from both 'what people say' and 'what people do,' that might different and create dimension to its case (Noor, 2008; Yin, 2014). As I aim to understand cultural values, both previously mentioned data collections add value to my result, and therefore, this mix-mythology was enhanced as semi-structured interviews, and the second methodology was direct & participant observation.

Yin (2014) argues for multiply case studies, where two or more case studies are replicated and executed in the same precise way. The result can afterward be cross-analyzed, and or generalization of the case can be argued for. To approach this methodology strategy, two case study locations were chosen as mentioned above with similar characteristics where thorough investigation could occur for similarity in data collection. Cross-analyzing could support a generalization within the result. However, due to COVID-19 limitations and unexpected obstacles that occurred early in the research process, a change of approach was done and enhanced an even more inductive method to create flexibility within the fieldwork collection. Cross-analyzing was removed as a methodology, as it became an obstacle rather than a strength. Another changed approach was to add a second approach to observation. Non-Participant observation worked as a supplement when participant observation was not an option. Non-participant observation rarely participates in what is happening but studies the social setting on what is going on (Bryman, 2016, 431-466).

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Qualitative semi-structured interviews

One of the aims of this time-limited research is to attempt to grasp the shared understanding across sub-categories of the chosen study groups of stakeholders. As Michrina & Richards (1996) explains, members of one culture learn definitions, emotions and values, and attitudes that the culture attaches to objects, behaviors, statuses, and relationships. As the subject is complex oral discourse is the best source of data in the hunt to understand the shared meanings of others. Therefore, interviews were the top acknowledge candidates for gathering field data. The choice of semi-structured interviews provided flexibility to approach respondents differently but still cover the same data collection space. Structure interviews limitations the researcher in follow-up questions that could provide valuable data for its chosen cases (Yin, 2014). A semi-structured interview supports the researcher in using a more open mind so concepts and theories can emerge from collected data instead of vice versa (Bryman, 2016, 97-127)

Participant Observation & Non-Participant Observation

Observations are where researchers collect information by observing phenomena of interest in the environment studied. This information helps to relate and provide information not obtained by other methods. Observations generate insight and a better understanding of the phenomenon studied and link to its physical setting in which the studied hypnosis took place (Yin, 2014). Enhancing participant observations doing social science and other methods enhances the quality of data collection. It encourages the formulation of new research questions and hypotheses grounded in the moments of participant observation in the field (Musante, 2015). For this reason, one could argue for it comprehend in a more inductive approach of mythology, as it enhances and develops a new perspective to one aim.

Research Process

The first stages of the research were comprehensive a general literature reviews on the subject. Additional discussions with academic supervisors and external organization partners were also conducted to extract valuable information to create a framework. The following part of the process was selecting case studies in different geographical areas. Participants of chosen cases were based on the organization's recommendation and guides of additional professional staff within chosen research topic.

Designing research questions was conducted later, once the spread of participants was mapped out. Most of the fieldwork involved semi-structured interviews with various

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respondents from participant organizations and field data collection with the researcher as a participant-observer. However, due to COVID-19 limitations and unexpected obstacles that occurred early in the research process, a change of approach was done and enhanced an even more inductive method to create flexibility within the fieldwork collection not only for the ongoing pandemic but for the need to change focus during the early interviews, as recent events have changed the direction of the group. As Michrina & Richards (1996) mentions in *Person to Person*, this is a normal part of the study process. The design being sculptured over time by participants, allowing the investigator to dig deeper into a narrow rather than limit oneself. Other changes, as previously mentioned, were the cross-location-analyze was cut out for the limitations of detailed investigation between case studies. Instead, the data collection developed into a more inductive process to embrace depth and flexibility to each participant and case. To address the potential misunderstanding or formulation of interviews, pilot semi-structured interviews were used beforehand to avoid error in data collection. The first draft of interviews can be found in *Appendix 3 – Semi-Structured Interviews.*

Literature Review Strategy

A literature review is to gain an impression of a chosen topic within the area the research expects to understand and study (Bryman, 2016, 97-127). The documentary evidence acts as a method to cross-validate information gathered from other methods, such as interviews and observations (Noor, 2008). In qualitative research, a narrative literature review tends to be most suitable, as it is more wide-ranging in scope than a systematic review. In case studies and interpretative analysis, reviewing the literature on a particular subject is done to generate an understanding more than accumulating knowledge, and therefore is a narrative approach more suitable in this case. However, a narrative literature review with a systematic thematic search was chosen to enhance some exclusive findings (Bryman, 2016, 97-127). These key terms were the literature database of Google Scholar and Educational center of Uppsala University and only peer-reviewed articles in academic journals and books. The terms used commonly used were: Culinary* Heritage* Rural* Sustainable* Development* Brand Identity* Culture Value*

Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview questions were carefully designed to provide adequate coverage for the study. The main questions were formulated in the form of general statements. These leading questions were developed as open-ended questions to stimulate the participant to give more information than yes or no (Michrina & Richards, 1996)

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Before using the semi-structured interview, several pilot interviews were carried out to detect potential errors or pitfalls in the data collection. These pilot interviews clarified the wording of questions and structure changes to provide the aspired adequate coverage, also offered some confidence in the role as a researcher. Examples of clarification of wording were simplifying terms that were common for someone specialized within the studied topic, but unknown for outsiders.

As time is the main limitation to one study, it is essential to eliminate some variabilities as soon as possible. So as recommended by Michrina & Richards (1996) in *Person to Person,* within the fieldwork, three prominent 'voices' were chosen to investigate, to represent that 'under the category of stakeholders. This was 1) the voice of the commercial fishermen, 2) representative of regional development, and 3) representative from the Food and Beverage industry + Others (F&B Industry) who use Pike-Perch within their business, also known as a handful of Pike-Perch Stakeholders. The researcher recorded all interviews to secure accurate information of the conversations and prevent data loss during the interviews, as not everything can be written down (Noor, 2008; Yin, 2014). The recording also supports the researcher's focus on the interview rather than taking notes. Once recorded, every session was numbered and labeled with the names of the participator to avoid complications.

Some interviews took place over chat-platform zoom while ideal, and most interviews were done in the participant natural settlement to implement participant observation within the fieldwork collection, to grasp real-time behavior of interviews natural environment.

Table. 1 Respondent Profile

No.	Gender.	Age.	Identity Information
INT.1 / Interviewee 1	Male	40+	Fisherman
INT.2 / Interviewee 2	Male	50+	F&B + Others*
INT.3 / Interviewee 3	Female	30+	Fishermen
INT.4 / Interviewee 4	Male	50+	Fishermen
INT.5 / Interviewee 5	Male	50+	F&B + Others*
INT.6 / Interviewee 6	Male	40+	F&B + Others*
INT.7 / Interviewee 7	Male	30+	Fishermen
INT.8 / Interviewee 8	Male	50+	Governance
INT.9 / Interviewee 9	Male	40+	F&B + Others*

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INT.10 / Interviewee 10	Female	40+	Governance

*Others refers to mixed professionals related to F&B Hospitality Industry, Lodging, entrepreneurs, restaurant owners, deli shop, retail, farmer, etc.

Participant & Non-Participant Observation

The primary gathering of data was collected with semi-structured interviews. At the same time, the participant observation occurred during, after, and before the interviews, as a second source of obtaining potential information that could empower the stakeholders' understanding and contribute to the research questions. In the circumstance of chat-platforms-based semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations were influenced by the participant's source of information. This gave an upper hand of data collection in times limited due to COVID-19, to collect data without participating in the phenomenon being studied, but still add value to the result.

Participant observation was first chosen as it is a defining method of ethnographic research and most fundamental in cultural anthropology. Participant observer takes part in the daily activities and interaction of the people being studied. This helps the understanding of both their life routines and culture. It puts the researcher where the action is (Musante, 2015). Even though semi-structured interviews might support a more open mind in collecting data, interviewees might find it challenging to articulate what something makes us feel. At the same time, participant observing can include that emotional response to a place or situation. As for a reason, participation in the context around allows us to gain insight into these phenomena (Musante, 2015). Field notes are the primary source to capture data within this method. How that is done can be anything from audio, video, or photographs. At any rate, Musante (2015) argues for the importance of field notes. That writing field note is a vital part of participant observation because it is fundamentally different from transcribed narratives. The transcribed narrative focuses on the description of the events rather than behavior. As virtually everything described within the ethnology study will come from field notes / reflective journals (Michrina & Richards, 1996) and therefore overwhelming amount of time was taken into embracing this, to speed up the learning process of the ethnology mindset in the field. Bryman (2016, 431-466) & Michrina & Richards (1996) recommend that field notes and other data collection should be entirely written up at the very latest at the end of the day, but preferable as soon as possible after field data collection because of the frailties of human memory. Therefore, each participant observation moment got entirely written up by the end of the day to ensure as rich data as possible. Within the observation, the visual material such as

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photographing was also used as a field collection tool, where the pictures become a component in the researcher's field notes (Bryman, 2016, 431-466)

Analyzing

After performing standard interview transcription and translations, one of the most typical approaches to qualitative data analysis is searching for themes within these transcripts (Noor, 2008; Price & Smith, 2021). Themes are identified in the frequency of certain words, phrases, or specific incidents linked to one phenomenon. Here, the inductive thematic analysis approach has been the base for extraction of key themes within the qualitative semi-structured interviews, enhancing the collective data to be the tool for defining themes, rather than addressing the analysis with already pre-decided themes.

Coding occurs in first-order coding and second-order coding. First-order coding involves identifying phrases in the transcripts that might indicate the absence or presence of particular ideas, actions, or perceptions. The second-order coding is done to categorize the patterns identified in the first step to establish findings between each other (Price & Smith, 2021).

By recognizing oneself as a researcher as a dynamic process within the analysis, one has to reflect upon is one social distinction, as one is trying to get close to a participant's world. This cannot be done entirely, and therefore the researchers own conception is required to make sense of that participant's world through a process of interpretative activity (Smith & Osborn, 1999) to grasp the meaning of a person's behavior, to see things from that person point of view (Bryman, 2016, 18-42).

Ethics

The ethical position has played a central role in the execution of the research to ensure credibility within the result of the research work. It has been essential that the performance and data collection have correctly taken place as the reliability of qualitative social studies is reputedly questioned due to limiting generalizability (Bryman, 2016, s. 129-154). As social science invests complex problems that consist of legal, cultural, social, and economic phenomena, transparency must ensure the research process and findings are reliable (Vilma, 2018). In most cases, the standard of ethics are nine main principles in social science. All have been taken into consideration during the process of this research, these are 1) Honesty and integrity 2) Objectivity 3) Carefulness 4) Openness 5) Respect for intellectual property 6) Confidentiality 7) Responsible publication 8) Legality 9) Human protection (Vilma, 2018).

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Implementing Ethics in Interviews

As recommended, the four research ethical principles have been considered and used to carry out interviews. That meant 1) the participation had been informed of once rights to access information of the research purpose and were allowed to cancel its participation whenever 2) as its contribution to the interview were by the participation free will and are in charge of that decision 3), also their personal information is treated with conditionally and 4) no collected information will be used in other purposes than the study (Bryman, 2016, s.129-154). This participant agreement and information can be found in *Appendix 2 – Participant agreement and research information for the participant.*

Implementing Ethics in Observation

Participant observation raises a different ethical question as compared to other methods. For those being interviewed and recorded, the data collection is more transparent for the participant, while data collection through participant observation is less clear or for companions who participate in the activities (Musante, 2015). Additionally, the traits of participant observation are for the community participants to become comfortable enough to share insight and information that insiders only would know (Musante, 2015). Hence, the research role and ethics balance is a fine line. However, due to time limitation within this research fieldwork, most likely, that level of comfort would not have been reached between researcher and participants, and therefore the decision to be orally extra clear over the research role was provided rather than ignored.

Methodology Discussion

In general, an inductive approach and analysis are to some stage seen as a rather diffuse approach as its few principles are agreed upon in defining the core themes of once collected data (Bryman, 2016, 564-588). Building a case is essential to highlight the diversity in the data. Evidence not supporting the position of theory still adds value to the result. Presenting all sorts of data gives each participant its voice heard even though it might weaken the study's statements. It is recommended not to follow the consistency of preferred data collected and the flaws for avoiding a one-sided result (Michrina & Richards, 1996).

Interviews & Participant Observations

In interviews, the influence of interpretive ideas and phenomenological analyses is cruising the 'problem of meaning.' Human communication draws, in this case, to presume that interviews and respondents share the exact meaning of terms that researcher and participant

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discuss. The problem of meaning implies that the possibility of responded and researcher might not share the precise definition of terms, and therefore miscommunication and wrongly interpretation might occur (Bryman, 2016, p246-267). Here, to some extent bringing the participant stakeholders to a less explored topic, the potential of miscommunication must be acknowledged in some interviews, where the topic of choice was notably a new phenomenon for the participant. However, by providing more open questions, respondents can answer in their terms that allow unusual responses to be derived. By allowing open answers, the respondent's level of knowledge within a topic can be trapped, and the level of the salience of the issue from the respondent can be explored. This supports respondents to provide their natural view on the topic of matter (Bryman, 2016, p246-267). However, a greater understanding of the studied phenomena would have been possible if the participant observations had been less limited due to COVID-19.

Limitations of research

An ethnographic study must consider the logistics involved within the fieldwork design and limit one phenomenon's scope. Michrina & Richards (1996) recommends no more than twelve lengthy interviews where at least two of these should be followed up discussions. This recommendation is, however for undergraduates, but refers to 1-2 semesters, which is comparable similar time scope as this research. Additionally, limitation of time and access through the studied culture and culture and community, the researcher acknowledges the potential weakness of in-depth data collection. Nonetheless, genuine dialogues of records of participant interviews gave very insightful information, but the studied field can be explored even more.

Role as a researcher

To acknowledge general the role of a researcher in ethnology study is that personal preferences in social and political matters, that researcher has strong feelings upon, will color the data collected from participant and observations. To face these potential preconceptions and feelings, reflection through journal writing helps to pick up a pattern of emotions. This also helps to understand the role of power within the data collections with participants and how one's own feelings can 'lead' the information's towards our preconceived notions (Michrina & Richards, 1996). By acknowledging this angle of potential influence, one can observe these patterns. It is also essential to highlight the natural behavior of individuals. In hermeneutics studies, it is necessary to stay open. If the researcher does not stay flexible enough, keeping a watchful eye and ear detective where the research will go, the study's rig

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becomes forced and results in a redundant or dull result. Therefore, the idea as an ethnology researcher is to have a certain amount of faith in the original idea but have matching confidence in recognizing when a plan must swap and remember to seek guidance and support from instructors and other supports that matters. But also accept mistakes and concede them as a route to learning 'how and when to sculpt your study (Michrina & Richards, 1996). In this specific study, the aims, objects, and research question constantly tweaked as the researcher acknowledges flaws between the studied phenomenon and the original approach and the limitations of methodology performance.

Findings

The thematic analysis provided several families of codes. Each family of codes was reformed into themes and are presented below in three parts, supported with subthemes. Each part is combined with the participant and non-participant observations and the researcher's interpretive perspective. Part 1) Pike-Perch Culture Value: Stakeholders Perspective, Part 2) The Pike-Perch Dilemma, Part 3) Pike-Perch Brand Identity Today.

Table. 2 Overview findings

Pike-Perch Culture Value - Stakeholders perspetive	The Pike-Perch Dilemma	Pike-Perch Brand Identity
The profession built upon generations upon generations	The stakeholder's perception ofn modern consumer behaviors effect on Pike-Perch	Pike-Perch as a food tourism strategy and brand identity
The Traditions of Pike-Perch on the plate	Whose belly consumes the fish today? A window to the outside world.	Absence of tangible instruments across regions
The fire of local pride across stakeholders		
More than just a fish		

Part 1. Pike-Perch culture value; Stakeholder's perspective

The profession built upon generations upon generations

Due to the regulated limitations of the lake's total number of potential active fishers, the individual market share is not built upon competitiveness that forces an increased rate of

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fished volume. The limitation contributes instead to development through generations by 'passing on the fishing opportunity to the next of kin in line' or, in some cases, to another fishermen's family member. The typical expression of heritage was 'Generations of fishermen' by highlighting the family legacy. One participant's family had fished through the 17th generation. For the active fishermen today, a shared perception of the relationship and common recognition of Pike-Perch had not changed with time and seemed to be preserved similarly through generations. As Interviewee 3 explained, "We have always valued the fish the same. For us, it is a source of income; even if the status and market value has changed, it is still the same fish that puts food on the table food for us".

Nevertheless, the growth of market value and its improved symbol status has provided opportunities for the fishermen that previous generations did not have. Historical, Pike-Perch was the typical food for the fishermen's household and local community, while fish with higher market values were distributed into the cities. Pike-Perch was seen as a less valuable fish and only fished once absolutely needed (INT.1). Due to the international attention of the fish on markets such as Holland and Germany, the market value of Pike-Perch has increased dramatically. "The economic standard has shifted approximately from 30kr to 100kr per kg over a short period" (INT.1). This shift has transformed new potentials and limitations in market opportunities. With the increased price per fish, fewer fish need to be caught for the same economic result.

Potential limitations, however, seemed to occur consumer target market. The dramatical increased market value can no longer serve the same diversity of consumers from different financial backgrounds. The market prices are too high, which inhibits the local customer market. As interviewee 5, frustrated explained, "The older generation nearly fished and purchased it for free in their youth, and they now call the price a robbery."

Examples of the changed values could be grasped upon in participants' descriptions. One participant shared rich storytelling of his grandpa, eating Pike-Perch for breakfast every morning, with plain boiled potatoes, as a 'poor man's food.' He highlighted the sadness of loss in the simplicity of Pike-Perch due to the change of its economic value (INT.4). A general undertone was shared between the stakeholders, referring to the status symbol Pike-Perch aligns with today. Even though *status* was often not directly mentioned during the interviews, participants, however, brought up stories and examples to explain certain

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situations or back up an answer that indicated a sign of class marker and status, such as 'money,' 'fur jacket,' 'Michelin-restaurant,' 'holiday-homes in expensive areas,' etc.

On the other hand, the fisherman highlighted the positive environmental development this new market value had created and the socio-economic benefits through the daily life of the fishermen. "Today's generations don't have to fish just as hard; we can fish *lagom.* As a result, it puts less pressure on the fish stock and ecosystem" (INT.1). But also, the equality for their social life has increased as their working conditions have improved. *Lagom* is a typical Swedish expression for 'just right' or 'just enough.'

The Traditions of Pike-Perch on the plate

The legislation of actually fishing Pike-Perch is not, like other local products, limited to a short season. Besides Pike-Perch, most of the region's fishermen go through different fishing seasons for alternative income. For example, in the summer month, an intensive shrimp season occurs. With Pike-Perch, the calendar year is bound to the weather. For instance, fishing during winter relies on strong ices. The spring season depends on the melting of the ice. Something else that can have an enormous effect on the fishing possibilities is the algal blooms of diadom, which clings upon the fishing net and makes it impossible for the fishermen to fish effectively. With that said, Pike-Perch is somehow always available to some extent but known to have its the purest flavors, once caught in the colder half of the year (INT.1). The consumer pattern of Pike-Perch varied between the participants across sectors. The fishermen would prepare it with standard cooking techniques once cooking daily. These top choices were influenced by other cultural foods (national and international) instead of the 'the traditional plate' of Pike-Perch. For instance, Interviewee 4 highlighted the 'magical' combination of Pike-Perch with the northern Swedish cheese *Västerbotten Ost.* Other examples were Pike-Perch Pasta (INT.3) or Fish Gratin (INT.1).

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A more jointed view came to Pike-Perch in the forms of special occasions, including invitations of outsiders in the dining experience. This special occasion preparation often included crispy pork, mushrooms, and white wine sauce (INT3; INT.4; INT.7). Surprisingly, regarding the utilization of Pike-Perch connected to holidays celebration, a few participants mentioned the option of Pike-Perch instead of herring when preparing *sill* to the Christmas table (INT.3; INT.6; INT.7). At the same time, some disagree entirely and argued, quoting his grandpa, "Pike-Perch can be consumed every day of the year, except Christmas" (INT.4). *Sill* refers to pickled herring that plays a vital role in Swedish food and is the first course of a traditional Swedish Christmas dinner.

Picture 2- Last ice has just melted, the first net within the following days will be put out¨

Besides the divided consumption patterns in the present time, a common understanding of how Pike-Perch have been displayed traditional through consumption was aligned. The Pike-Perch appear timeless in its simplicity; when breaded and fried, served with varieties of potatoes. "Sometimes not even breaded, just butter, salt, and pepper" (INT.4).

On the other side, the interpretation and display of Pike-Perch on a plate in the hospitality industry were less straightforward. Those whose profession is to provide excellent skills in preparing and presenting food had utilized somewhat differently.

But an agreement of success between most participants was the Pike-Perch served at Katrinelund Sjökrog, which somehow symbolized the window to the region through food.

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Here, varieties of Pike-Perch were displayed with more than just the food, but through cooking techniques, consumption techniques, and meals referring to different types of class marker. As Interviewee 6 explained, "…helps to take it down a nod, for example, Pike-Perch Fish & Chips. It does not matter if you arrive by helicopter or by bicycle. It suits all wallets and mouths".

While searching for the fish on other restaurant menus, the more traditional attributes kept coming back. "The timeless restaurants found in the region, normally hold on to a version of 'Pike-Perch a la Cajsa Warg'" (INT.6), referring to the book of Cajsa Warg, dated back to the year 1755, and can be found in the cookbook museum in Grythyttan, Sweden. A Swedish copy of this writing can be found in *Appendix 1 – Cajsa Warg.*

The fire of local pride across stakeholders

A strong sense of pride existed. Reviewing the regionals geographical conditions and its food assets, many production locations and big farmers surround it. Also, highlighted by Interviewee 8, "The volume of this fish is small compared to other local products such as carrots and potatoes. However, the pride is greater and more outstanding than any other."

Commonly, the fishermen were first present with this pride from childhood through studying and learning from the older generations. For others, it was a pride developed with acknowledging Pike-Perch over time through relationship-building with the fish through regional engagement and time spent with the fishermen. The pride included the strong statement of being the first MSC-Certified lake fish globally, showing the way for others, and pride also included keeping the cultural values alive through generations. Interviewee 3 romantically pictured the relationship with the fish and the region referring to the lake. "My ancestors have fished the ancestors of the Pike-Perch, whom I fish today, a circle of life. This is how we see it. So, I need to fish in a way to make sure my children can fish the children of the Pike-Perch today".

Orally, across Hjälmaren, the word 'Pike-Perch' was never discussed alone but well printed in the vocabulary of the local as 'Hjälmar-Pike-Perch' *(Hjälmar-Gös)*. It is uncommon for nicknames to be longer than the original name by taking that extra vocal effort. During the observations, the written documentation of 'Pike-Perch' through symbols of books, news

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articles in majority well worldly printed with 'Hjälmar-Pike-Perch' rather than "Pike-Perch."

Picture 3 - Fresh Pike-Perch in Local Fish Shop

More than just a fish

The professional title of a 'fisherman' explains very little for the general public. The work duties include considerably more areas of expertise than just the fishing in itself. During participant observations in the environment of INT.1 & 7, both demonstrated their nets and explained the time-consuming manual preparation and restoration they need annually. "There is no standard solution fits all," interviewee 7 describes. His ancestors even weaved and tied the cotton yarns before later utilizing them for crafting fishing nets.

Additionally, the weather channels are checked regularly during the fishing season, and often decision making based on gut feeling, trying to grasp the behavior of wind and weather, constant gambling with the weather. As interviewee 3 said, "I've been a fisherman for a decade, and finally feeling I'm starting to get a hold of my job." Behind the scene, or as interviewee 7 explains it, "The daily challenges of being a mechanic and engineering in my port." The job includes many risks and suffering. No fishermen spared me from stories of the broken bodies, the intensive weeks in high seasons. and even some incidents with fatal endings. "I have in my heart such a huge respect for the fishermen, or all producers generally, it is *real* you know" (INT.6), trying to grasp the hard work they overcome.

Part 2) The Pike-Perch Dilemma

The stakeholder's perception of modern consumer behaviors effect on Pike-Perch

Pike-Perch is in the majority purchased fresh as a market product and cannot be seen in the frozen section. Commonly offered fresh through local stores fish counters, or less commonly

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pre-packed fish selection of local stores or supermarket. As a result, highlighted by interviewee 8, "You need to be a foodie or have eaten Pike-Perch since early years, to sit on the knowledge knowing how to cook it to be willing to buy it for home-cooking, as you have to *walk the extra mile* to find it."

The majority of the stakeholders' perception of current food consumption and consumers' relationship with food was recognized as a negative development that affected the local consumption and customer culture behavior. "Food-sector is struggling with the western-world view on foo; Chicken, fish etc, it needs to be delivered, flawless, blood-free, bone-free, feather-free, skin-free, etc." (INT.5). A majority of the participant agreed on a decreased knowledge of cooking in general, and the consumption of pre-made food was constantly increasing. "I think people love their Hjälmar-Pike-Perch, but people do not know anything about food anymore" (INT.5). This dilemma of decreased knowledge of food had consequences for the Pike-Perch due to a general lack of understanding of preparation techniques. Interviewee 3 explained, "People are not good at taking care of the fish and fillet it themselves. As a result, consumers want it prepped. That is time-consuming for me. Time, I don't have.". Pike-Perch were I general, not sold or found in fillets, which in this case would hold back the consumer of purchase it.

With that said, the general view and the modern dilemma was that the view of the fish has not changed over time. It is the consumption that has changed. The older generation would typically have been the one requesting Pike-Pech at the fish counter, for those are the ones with the skills to prepare it, but this had decreased with the younger generation. As a result, the perspective of Pike-Perch has turned it into a restaurant product rather than something that can be found in an individual's home. This seemed, however, to be common with Pike-Perch and not fish in general, as the perspective of fish consumption in another region is more active, for example, on the west coast.

Whose belly consumes the fish today? A window to the outside world.

Previously mentioned, the increased economic value of the fish came partly with the international acknowledgment of the Pike-Perch. Due to great marketing strategies, the demand for Pike-Perch has over time increased internationally. Therefore, its market value went up as a chain reaction, especially with today's substantial export to Holland and Germany.

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With post-modern consumer demand for local products, the acknowledgment of the elephant in the room had to be raised, local vs. international market demands, and Pike-Perch export-led growth. Together with a major fish auction house whom many of the participant fishers used through partnership, was included. The little data available for public appearances were a stable annual export, only increasing 1-2% compared to previous years (between 2017-2019). However, the general number known by the fishermen was, approximated was 60% of the annual catch of Pike-Perch was exported international (INT.1). Interviewee 5 stated it "One could argue that consumption of Pike-Perch by locals should be a lot more, compared to the strength of the brand identity." However, the general understanding of where and by whom the fish was caught and consumed, vice versa, was lacking.

Stakeholder's perspectives, theories of 'national consumption' and, a weak brand identity outside the region could be connected to the preconception of 'lake fish' and the constant comparison with west coast fish. "National level, people don't know Pike-Perch. At least on the west coast, no one has heard about it. Fish and seafood are more present on the west coast, in general, more than here, I have reflected upon that many times" (INT.8). It was a typical pattern between participants to consume fish from the west coast over the choice of lake fish. Some had never prepared Pike-Perch themselves.

Part 3) Pike-Perch Brand Identity Today.

Pike-Perch as a food tourism strategy and brand identity

During the travels across Hjälmaren and Mälaren, no sense of 'fishing region' 'fishing town' caught the attention in the observation. Very few tangible signs of its fish culture were perceived. Today's initiative of using Pike-Perch as an asset for regional identity by different public parties seems absent. For this reason, commonly understood, people inside the region knew it was a delicacy, but the evident absence outside was unmistakable. The public sector already acknowledged this issue, whose area of expertise in developing these strategies for development.

While on the other hand, an acknowledged frustration between other stakeholders was identified. A miss-communication between levels of stakeholders accrued, and as a result, the region's food identity was presented as a week or completely absent. Some EU-Funded projects were taking shape in the region to change this, but public and semi-public initiatives were more required. Additionally, the option of experience Pike-Perch through tourism activations was low. Sportfishing trips were identified and seemed to be an offer to some

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extent (INT.10) but more as a nature-based recreational experience rather than food tourism. Some attempts had been made, mainly with initiative from fishers, to offer outsiders activities such as Pike-Perch Fishing, including preparation and consumption. But no established tourism enterprise managing this seemed to exist in the present time.

Some communication issues were noticed between the stakeholders and the approach of Pike-Perch brand identity. Some stakeholders identified Pike-Perch as the main ingredient in the region and should be the symbol for branding (INT.6), while others explained that this mitch-match of communication came from the different working processes in the public and private sector had to relate to. As Interviewee 10 illustrated, the regional process needs to consider a lot before jumping into a decision process and action. "It is more than just the fish that contribute to the identity of the region" (INT.10).

Absence of its intangible cultural heritage

Symbols and other sources of information preserving Pike-Perch traditions were low across the region. The primary marketing attempts to highlight, Pike-Perch traditions accrued at restaurants displayed on menus. Also, on food festivals or other public celebrations, the Pike-Perch could occasionally be highlighted. However, this initiative contributed by restaurants or other entrepreneurs was not centered around the marketing of Pike-Perch but the restaurant/business itself (INT.3). When asked about the symbolic appearance of Pike-Perch and its existence in the region, the majority agreed it did not exist at all. Interviewee 3 highlighted some online marketing strategies push had occurred online, in case of highlighting the Pike-Perch, but understood as not active anymore. The primary active strategy known and mentioned by many participants stakeholders was Katrinelunds Sjökrog and their storytelling around the table. Also, acknowledge by most stakeholders as a success, using the physical fisherman as marketing told, by displaying fish delivery straight to the restaurant's dock, during peak hours, so all the customers could in action experience how local and fresh the fish really was.

Additionally, a common understanding was the known market gap, yet not captured or taken advantage of. This market gap included development and 'ownership' of the brand identity of Pike-Perch. The participant stakeholders from the public both expressed, the brand had not yet been claimed, and the possibility for using Pike-Perch as a symbol for the region existed and a possibility for destination identity development.

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The positive energy from different private stakeholders regarding the possibilities and ideas of utilizing Pike-Perch as a tool for the region were overwhelming "YES, of course, we should have a Pike-Perch-Food-Fair!" (INT.6).

Observations showed slight hints of tangible instruments that just seemed to be forgotten, as not mentioned by anyone when orally extracting information through the fieldwork. The providence of Sweden all has Providence Coat of Arm and Province Animals with subcategory Providence Fish. The provience of Västermanland, which included both Hjälmaren and Mälaren, has the Pike-Perch as their official symbolic county fish. Also, across Food and Beverage industry, fishing equipment was used as furnishings, for summer seasonal restaurants, as a part of the restaurant concept.

Discussion

Local cuisines and local produce have altered into a key concept in the contemporary debates, as food and drinks are increasingly recognized as a possible crucial element for regional development to contribute to the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of places (Tellström et al., 2006; Everett and Aitchison, 2008; Sims, 2009, Everett, 2016; Rinaldi, 2017). In this context, consumers' behavior is affected by many external elements, such as today's economic and political conditions influencing the market force and by social values, for instance, food-health authorities' recommendations and ongoing transformation of communicative eating habits influenced by trends. Widespread food trends are the growing demand for local products (McEntee, 2010, Eriksen, 2012; Grimaldi, 2019) and the environmental concern, additionally the rise of green certifications for conscious consumers (Svanberg et al., 2016).

This study explored the cultural value of Pike-Perch in the context of present times consumer culture and the mechanism of 'food heritagization' in the regions of Hjälmaren and Mälaren. The research, led by reviewing the stakeholder's perspective of public and private's utilization of the product associated with being "local," "traditional," and" culture value," and how the interpretation of present food from the' past' implied as an element of distinctiveness in local resources. The overall aim could be summarized by evaluating the recognition of Pike-Perch cultural value and its potential ability to represent the region as a food tourism destination mechanism to straightening the brand image of the studied geographical area. Identifying critical parameters of the product's authenticity could also nourish the region's attractiveness

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and competitiveness because of the strengthen idea of the place's distinctiveness (Everett, 2016; Rinaldi, 2017).

In considering of post-modern behavior of food consumption and the human fundamental cognitive need of society in the present stage, with traditional structure (Grimldi et al., 2019), the consumer culture perception of Pike-Perch by stakeholders and today's known initiative towards protecting yet highlighting its cultural value could help to analyze Pike-Perch in new forms of perspective, to formulate motivations for change. With that said, it is essential to understand that culture is not static above all, but in constant change effected by many elements (Goujon et al., 2014; Everett, 2016), and therefore is crucial to take into consideration that Pike-Perch cultural value in this context, interlinks and overlaps across many fields and due to its everchanging, multi-faced activity.

The present transformation of consumer culture

Indications demonstrating a decline in Pike-Perch's cultural heritage's daily role of involvement around the local community were notable. Not for the shortage of popularity but its status transformation due to the product's increased economic value, adapted market, and change of consumers behavior. This transformation of Pike-Perch consumption had alternated from preparation and consumption usual home to a product consumed in more social settings, such as restaurant visitations, public events, alternative infrequent, prepared for special occasions at home, but still included outsiders not classified as its *daily inner circle of* social exchange. Arnould & Thompson (2008) refers to this consumer culture behavior as M*arketplace culture*, how an individual creates an identity based on the social context of their sphere. But also, *Consumer identity projects* where consumers are identity seekers and makers which affect the consumers choice in public based on a certain degree of how the consumer's wish others to acknowledge their identity. In this case, this identity choice of Pike-Perch would be connectable to its high standard and increased social status. The oral interaction that included Pike-Perch appeared in various intangible patterns that commonly illustrated the present perceived high status of the product, instead of attributes connected to its traditions and cultural heritage. The previously mentioned increased status symbol signifies the modernization of the fish is perceived by the market and could be acknowledged as a beneficial improvement for the product's brand identity. The redeveloped versions of the Pike-Perch positioning itself through restaurants could party satisfy that market need of constantly seeking new experiences, that opportunely could trigger the awareness of local cuisine (Sims, 2009; Everett, 2016

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However, the rising enthusiasm for local food has triggered advanced methods for stakeholders to increase those places' attractiveness and competitiveness on the market. By doing so, the critical social indicators of' heritizagtion' might be lost as the balance between preserving heritage and innovations is moved. A fundamental cultural process is transmitted in the form of food practices in the kitchen, passed on from generations, taught, and transmitted the formulate of preserved recipes. Grimaldi (2019) highlights the general risk of losing this, seen as one of the most considerable forgotten heritage, if stories of the elderly disappear with generation change without transmitting its practical meaning. To summarize the general consumer culture change of Pike-Perch and the present time food preparation knowledge and behaviors, one can argue for the necessity to preserve the existing traditional knowledge before it risks of being lost. The majority of stakeholders seem to have encountered the potential issues of the present absence of preparation skills of Pike-Perch within the public. Some had by own initiative tried to restore the already existing knowledge gap by educating the public through social media and seemed to be well received by the consumer audience. As Siebert & Laschewskil (2016) highlight, due to the globalization and political conditions that depend on production activities that sell products outside the original region, similar to the case of Pike-Perch, creates a challenge of preserving the 'local knowledge. Therefore, close interactions between consumers and producers significantly impact as 'knowledge' is highly variable and non-universal and loses it is acknowledged in long-standing export-led growth solutions (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016). The high social-economic value of the capability to trace back individual producers (Tellström et al., 2006) is not thoroughly utilized in the case of Pike-Perch. This could be influenced by unaffected variables such as urbanization and globalization, additionally operational advancement such as the high usage of external partners. But also, uneven knowledge between producers understanding of local advantage. Nonetheless, this could potentially, over time, put the original culture at risk. A long-term accumulation of culture and the present identity of the people help a place to form its locality. This accumulation emerges from a balance of local market demand where consumers and producers continue to interact to advance its relationship. In other words, when people give meaning to space or service, locality can be created (Zeng & Sun, 2014). Therefore, one could argue that from the perception of the present strategical approach of promoting the product, the imbalance between preservation and innovation needs to be adjusted.

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Retracting to the agreed frustration across stakeholders regarding the negative consequences of consumption change could be connected to current market activity undervaluing the interactions between consumers and producers and the general loss of current 'knowledge in cooking.' Relating this to Zeng & Sun (2014), the balance between protection and innovation will always have to be considered when reviewing the development of local food. Therefore, promoting a gastronomic production in the form of 'knowledge' leads to reproducing a history along with creation and innovation (Bessière, 2013), and the balance previously mentioned can be restored without losing its attractiveness and competitiveness. Moreover, it is vital to highlight the advantage of the Pike-Perch due to the national rules regulating the professional fishing industry, the limitation of outsiders' possibility to interfere with the market. These regulations and constraints of outsiders' influence protect the skills of the producers and can be transmitted through generations, including stories and practical meaning. Just as the participant fishermen's honor was clearly stated, it is the legacy of generations they represented through time. To some extent, the 'shorter' supply chain was identified as an option for some stakeholders and mainly was the selected choice of service. As Siebert & Laschewskil (2016) point out the standpoint, the choice of service potentially could have come from acknowledging the local economy that thrived by values and not the global market law of profit. This small community, driven by the food referred to as place-embeddedness, presents oneself through culture and social responsibility as a community (Siebert & Laschewskil, 2016), but its recognition by the public seemed less embraced.

Heritagization involvement of Pike-Perch

The notion of heritage is commonly defined as the past in the present. Here, heritagization refers to the process whereby various histories are constructed in the present to address a contemporary need, issue, or circumstance (Guan et al., 2019). This is after reproduced or reintroduced by acknowledging previous ideas and values (Poria & Ashworth, 2009). Throughout the geographical areas surrounding Mälaren och Hjälmaren Pike-Perch, stakeholder perception of the fish ideas and values is reproduced to some extent. The majority of Stakeholders recognized the recreation visibility demonstrated through food menus across regions. Common characteristics of these menus seem to present themselves as an interpretation of historical consumption attributes redeveloped with influences of modern cuisine, understood as a tool to position themselves on the market and distinct oneself by redeveloping traditional practices. Agreement of success was captured in the culture-fusion interpretation of the product who had activity developed a situation characterized by traditions

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and captured it to its advantage while redeveloping its previous ideas and values, as a culture-fusion interpretation of the product, with rich storytelling. Just as Grimldi et al. (2019) explain, this potential success is the narrative richness, which tends towards transformation, that measure in which tradition is subject to significant structural change but on the other hand, society's need the present stage, now. This oral framework of intangible heritage of time and space contributes to promoting and enrich the product's value and its identity. By acknowledging the activation process for cultural heritage, heritagization allows for the discussion and perspectives around the forms of protection, better yet, the restoration of one heritage. It can be seen as the process of value construction as cultural heritage is a result of one collective choice that involves discussion, selection, and compromises upon people, places, and practices and its perception from the past (Guan et al., 2019). Additionally, as Zeng & Sun (2014) explain, a commutative parallel is the age of globalization and cultural-fusion that it emerges from. How the culture system the constant 'communication' with foreign characteristic food cultures creates a new 'variation' of the original culture, as a result, opens possibilities of a new perspective on 'traditional food.' The cases of success discussed above could be seen as a development process of' heritizagtion' (subconsciously or not), that not only acknowledge the cultural heritage, yet contributes in rural context to the sustainability of the village, as a rural tourism destination, due to the culinary success that fosters the economy in the development of the rurality.

Reviewing the theoretical approach of heritagization and how parallels of its utilization can be drawn. The fish involvement in the region occurred both public and private through social events, where its value in the present time was showcased. Additionally, some public and private funded projects had been implemented to promote Pike-Perch; these included the rich storytelling of the producers and their legacy of generations of fishers. But compared to other successful food culture production that has pulled through in present times, it is essential to see its success, that adapts the involvement, not only for residents but the public and even the translocal production process (Goujon et al., 2014). In the case of Pike-Perch, lack of strategies for implementing Pike-Perch in its regional development was evident due to the absence of its cultural value outside the local community.

Pike-Perch, food tourism activation?

The general revenue that tourist consumption directly contributes to (Everett, 2016) could improve the economy and environment due to the tourism industry and, together with host communities' advance sustainable practices supporting local food. Additionally, in times of

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the rising popularity of food tourism-, acknowledging the authenticity within a food product, it can be utilized for destination marketing through distinctness (Everett, 2016; Sims 2019) and target individual seeks authenticity in food (Corvo & Matancena, 2017).

However, Pike-Perch's traditional cultural values perceived by stakeholders were recognized, but lack of knowledge on how to bring this to life seemed to be shared. In many instances, disapproval toward the low activities from the public sector for the public revitalizations of Pike-Perch, both rural and urban, was formulated. Some stakeholders indicated the absence of prioritizing the Pike-Perk alone in promotion, rather than the second choice of motivations. Here, a rethink focal point to the product itself could help stimulate the understanding of Pike-Perch by educating and highlight its authenticity to distinct oneself on the market as a food destination. As research has displayed, highlight local resources supporting distinctiveness could strengthen the link between the place (territorial/geographical dimensions) and the people (cultural dimensions) (Forristal & Lehto, 2009; Rinaldi, 2019). Additionally, as Jung & Miller (2014) argues, destination organizations need to be closely involved in recourse conservation and planning, so recognition and celebration of a product's unique qualities and identity could improve the local economy and protect its culture.

Foods' many advantages are acknowledged by destination management organizations to successfully market themselves, for example, using seasonal products to market a destinations tourism off-season (Everett, 2016) which align with ongoing trends preferencing seasonal products (Svanberg et al., 2016). For Pike-Perch, the absence of an identified season displays itself as a disadvantage. The Pike-Perch season is influenced by several variables that affect the fishing year. This makes Pike-Perch seem accessible most of the year. But because of market limitations in physical locations, it is not accessible enough and could be neglected and inhibit its brand identity food tourism development. As participant stakeholders also highlighted, consumers must walk the extra mile to purchase Pike-Perch, which only occurs outside the norm of behavior. However, a surprisingly high amount of engagement burst from stakeholders once scratched the topic's surface to stage or redevelop the absence of the season and celebrations.

In the case of demonstrating the heritagization process for destination development 'bringing the past to life' and constructing its contemporary meanings and values, the tourism' authentic experience is seen as a performance of reality whom they connect to local culture (Goujon et al., 2014). Successfully promoting its intangible heritage, logos, symbols, etc., can be used to

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advance the tourist experience and offer something more to reflect upon (Yin et al., 2014). Pike-Perch tangible attributes were missing primarily throughout the region, but once utilized especially in rural areas, it was perceived as a success.

Limitations of research

The studied area covers a large geographical area; therefore, the possibility of varieties of stakeholder's perspectives of Pike-Perch cultural values can exist within each micro-community. This could be studied by in-depth cross-locate data collection and cross-locate-comparison to get a fairer result presentation of participants perspective. Now, the possibility of some participant's opinions might have been subconsciously overlooked.

Also, a significant limitation was the possibility to analyze the distinction between rural and urban stakeholders' perspectives. Here a more significant number of participant stakeholders could have created that possibility.

It is also important to acknowledge that the participant stakeholders are influential individuals of the studied phenomenon to the region. However, only a fragment of involved stakeholders whose perspective could have added value to the study were included due to the limitation of time. There is still a lot to explore within the field of Pike-Perch cultural value. Future research could include previously mentioned limitations or study the phenomenon from consumer communities that would include the resident's perspective more.

Conclusion

Hjälmaren and Mälaren might be on the list of Sweden's biggest lakes, with some of the top-ranking modern cities of Sweden surrounding the area, for example, Örebro. But in general, it lacks a unique brand identity for its food which was a common impression for stakeholders along with the researcher's individual perception. In the present time, Pike-Perch is a commonly recognized fish, but obtain a small market share compared to the competitors. Despite the market, a recent transformation of Pike-Perch market value has put itself above the majority of commercial fish in Sweden and has, because of that, it has developed a new sociological appearance as a symbol of high-status. As a result, a change of traditional utilization has reinvented/reproduced Pike-Perch with a different positioning within its socio-cultural setting. The stakeholders acknowledge the success in its development process that has established present identity; however, to the cost of preserving its intangible heritage. Another influencing factor is globalization that has helped it to transform it to its current state of

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identity where the residents acknowledge of traditional practices seems to face. In return, the traditional food culture appeared fragmented. By reintroducing traditional elements from the past that satisfy the imaginations and need for visitors to acknowledge its distinctiveness, the brand could be strengthened and potentially justify its new market position. By identifying critical elements of Pike-Perch's unique characteristics, one can argue for its potential competitiveness on the market as a tool for tourism activation. However, an in-depth understanding of its food culture needs to be captured and utilized as added value for local cultural expression, including its historical development process of production, consumption, traditions, and the intangible factors of cultivation, preparation, expression,

On the other hand, some sort of formation driven by food seemed to be established where co-creation between producers and entrepreneurs occurs. These are mainly detected through offering dining experiences expressing the present cultural value of Pike-Perch. The stakeholder community cross-category presented itself strongly with shared perceptions of Pike-Perch cultural value additionally its potential as an asset for the region. By preserving its heritage, destination management organizations can utilize it for destination marketing and reposition oneself through food and strengthen its identity. Additionally, reintroduce its community central attribute to increase its presence in *daily life* to enhance the local relationship with the community through local food.

This research contributed to understanding the value of food culture from a stakeholder perspective and how post-modern societies influence its potential for sustainable destination development. Also help to of food heritagization from a stakeholder perspective where food culture contributes to destination development by shining a light on its historical development process through consumer culture values in present time.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Kajsa Warg cookbook, year 1755

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Appendix 2 – Participant agreement and research information for participant

GÖSENS KULTURELLA VÄRDE

Detta informationsblad redovisas studiens syfte och vad ett deltagande innebär.

Jag som genomför undersökningen studerar Hållbar destinationsutveckling vid Uppsala Universitet. Som masterarbete genomför jag en undersökning i sammarbete med MSC med fokus på Mälaren och Hjälmaren som kommer koncentrera sig på gösens kulturella värde för regional utveckling.

Syfte och Bakgrund

Syftet med studien är att undersöka och försöka lyfta fram gösens kulturella värde och potential som verktyg till regional utveckling inom hållbar måltidsturism för glesbygden.

Att delta i studien

Deltagarna i studien kommer att anonymiseras och inga andra än studieutförarna kommer ta del av angivna uppgifter. Den insamlade informationen kommer inte användas i annat syfte än för att utföra examensarbetet.

Deltagandet är frivilligt! Ett samtycke måste fås från den deltagande och forskningen kommer inte påbörjas innan kravet är uppfyllt. Du som deltagare har rätt att avbryta studien när som helst om medverkandet inte skulle kännas rätt. Om ett avbrytande skulle göras kommer inte några negativa följder att medföras.

De fyra forskningsetiska principerna

De fyra forskningsetiska principerna utgörs av:

- Informationskravet
- Samtyckeskravet
- Konfidentialitetskravet
- Nyttjandekravet

Studien kommer att följa de forskningsetiska principerna, vilket inbakade har förklarats i ovanstående text.

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Appendix 3 – Semi-Structured interviews, first draft

Stödfrågor inför intervju

Del 1. Få förståelse om dig som person och din bakgrund.

- Vart kommer du ifrån ursprungligen och hur länge har du varit verksam kring hjälmaren?

- Vilka är dina huvudsakliga sysselsättningar / yrke?

- Berätta om platsen och verksamheten

- Din erfarenhet av gösfiske privat men även inom yrket (handlar direkt av lokala fiskare, fiskar själv, stockolm fisk auktion etc etc)

Del 2. Din uppfattning av gösen

- Hur skulle du beskriva din anknytning / relation till gösen? *(vuxit upp med, äter aldrig etc etc.)*

- Hur skulle du beskriva gösens betydelse lokalt?

- Till vardags, i vilka sammanhang skulle gösen kunna komma på tal? (*Lokala råvaror, tradition, evenemang etc).*

- Finns det några viktiga traditioner som anknyter gösen till Mälaren och Hjälmaren, tycker du?

- Under ett kalender år, under vilka omständigheter skulle gös ta form i olika sammanhang?

Del 3. I kommunication med utomstånde

- I vilket sammanhang skulle du nämna gösen när du beskriver regionen för icke-invånare?

- Vem har starkast intresse för gösen när du träffar människor?

- Enligt din mening, skulle du påstå att intresset för gösen har ökat eller minskat över tid?

- Uppfattar du att det finns en lokalt intresse att bibehålla, eventuellt utveckla gösens anvädningsområden?

- Ditt absoluta bästa rekomendation, till hur man ska äta/tillaga/avnjuta gösen

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