



**DOES THE TOURIST'S PROFILE MATTER?  
DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCES,  
SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS  
ON THE 'FIESTA DE LOS PATIOS' IN CORDOBA,  
SPAIN**

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the differences and similarities in perceptions, experiences, satisfaction, and behaviour intention of travellers who engage with, and appreciate Intangible Cultural Heritage, according to the sociodemographic profile of these travellers. Literature concerning Intangible Cultural Heritage tourists' profile is still scarce, being important for World Heritage Site destinations or places with Intangible Cultural Heritage recognition to identify the tourists attracted by culture and heritage. Thus, the work presented intend to cover the gap identified in this sense, taking as reference the results obtained from fieldwork consisting of a structured questionnaire which was administered to a representative sample of tourists who participated in the *Fiesta de los Patios* event in Cordoba (Spain), which is recognised as Intangible Cultural Heritage asset. Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests are used to compare groups of the sample according to the sociodemographic profile of the tourists, revealing statistical differences among these groups. The results enable us to analyse the post-COVID tourist, and determine to what extent they are satisfied with the new worldwide situation. This research could be useful both to public agents of tourism promotion and private businesses, whose target audience are tourists attending this type of event. The research unpacks the profile of the visitor, relating their gender, age, educational level, and income to their experiences, perceptions, satisfaction, and behaviour intention. This enables the tourist offer to be adapted, making it more attractive to the potential client.

## KEYWORDS

Cultural Tourism; Tourist Profile; Heritage; Event; Experience; Perception

## ECONLIT KEYS

C1; Z1; Z3

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The designations of the World Heritage Site (WHS) and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), imply a strong draw for tourists (Adie, 2017; Io, 2019) interested in culture and heritage. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit almost all economic sectors and the tourism sector is one of most affected (Nepal, 2020; Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2020; Sharfuddin, 2020). Simultaneously to the recovering from this vulnerable situation, the present study intends to offer new insights into this type of tourism.

A recurrent line of research in the literature is to identify which of the visitors to these places are people really interested in heritage, tangible or intangible; that is to uncover who 'heritage tourists' really are. Therefore, following Nguyen & Cheung (2014), WHS destinations or places with ICH recognition must identify which tourists are attracted by culture and heritage. In addition, it is also necessary to establish the relationship between tourism, heritage, and culture (Park, 2022).

*Fiesta de los Patios* is one example of cultural heritage event that has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This event is a contest to determine the most beautiful *patios* of the year. A patio is a courtyard set in the centre of traditional houses in the south of Spain, and it is decorated with flowers during the blooming period (May). The *fiesta* is celebrated on the first half of May every year (within 14 days) in the city of Cordoba, Spain. This event was registered as an asset of ICH in 2012 (González Santa Cruz, Moral Cuadra & López-Guzmán, 2019), recognised as one of important WHS by the UNESCO (UNESCO, 2008), was one of the first event held amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and was subject to strong restrictions on both movements between territories and capacity.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was estimated that the number of tourists to the *Fiesta de los Patios* was between 85,000 and 90,000, with the percentage of nationals being the 60% (González Santa Cruz *et al.*, 2019; Roldán Nogueras *et al.*, 2021). However, there is a significant decreasing on tourist arrival in 2020, where the estimated number of tourists was 40,000, it can be stated that there was a loss of 95% of foreign tourists and 20 to 25% on national tourist as a result of the mobility restrictions enforcement at the time of the celebration.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a change in tourist behaviour. One of the main changes produced is that tourists prefer to carry out tourist activities near their places of origin, as well as in outdoor places and not so crowded of people (Zhu & Deng, 2020). In addition, there are studies that show that tourism demand is more inclined towards independent or wellness travel, although in the case of heritage tourism, many tourists prefer to hire tour guides to show them the heritage of that place (Crespi-Vallbona, 2020).

One of the aspects that tourists value when they are deciding the destination is the existing security in the destination, including both citizen security and access to health services. In this way, companies and tourist destinations must try to show an image of a safe destination as a way to attract new tourists (Sharma, Thomas & Paul, 2021). Thus, it is crucial to investigate the current state of differences and similarities in perceptions and experiences of tourists who engage in this event based on the sociodemographic profile.

Prior study in cultural heritage tourism has been conducted on several aspects of interest. To name few: cultural tourism (Richards, 2018; Van der Ark & Richards, 2006);

tourist wellbeing (Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2012; McCabe & Johnson, 2013); digital heritage tourism (Bapiri, Esfandiar & Seyfi, 2020; Bear, Avieli & Feldman, 2020; Fusté-Forné, 2019; Lew *et al.*, 2020; Singh, 2020). Meanwhile, a small number of studies research satisfaction on heritage tourism (Crespi-Vallbona, 2020; Liro, 2020), especially on post-COVID tourist (Crossley, 2020; Gössling *et al.*, 2020; Halder & Sarda, 2021; Nepal, 2020). Precisely, previous studies on *Fiesta de los Patios* have been conducted in 2014 by González Santa Cruz *et al.* (2019) and in 2017 by Roldán Nogueras *et al.* (2021). However, study on ICH tourist's profile is still scarce in this setting, especially concerning relevant differences on tourist profiling factors such gender, income, age, educational level and labour situation.

Thus, this study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the differences and similarities in perceptions and experiences of travellers who engage with ICH recognition, such as the *Fiesta de los Patios* in the city of Cordoba, Spain (which was registered as an ICH asset in 2012), based on the sociodemographic profile of these travellers. Literature concerning ICH tourists' profile is still scarce, especially concerning relevant differences in the group of these considering gender, income, age, educational level and labour situation. Thus, the work presented intend to cover the gap identified in this sense. This is important for WHS destinations or places with ICH recognition to identify the tourists attracted by culture and heritage.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1) CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM**

Cultural tourism is described by the United Nations World Tourism Organization as a “type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination” (UNWTO, 2018). In this way, cultural tourism will allow the tourist to access to the expressions of the culture of a certain place, as well as to know its traditions, and this will be what will mark the tourist’s decision to visit a certain place. In other words, this is what will shape the motivation to travel (Leite & Ruiz, 2013). That is why cultural tourism should be used by local communities to bring the characteristics of a place to tourists through the interpretation of its heritage (de Santana, Maracajá &

Araújo Machado, 2021). Indirectly, the cultural tourism will be a way to make continuous improvement in the cultural resources of a place to attract tourists (Leite & Ruiz, 2013).

The definition of cultural tourism as going to cities with considerable heritage interest is not a recent phenomenon, as since the 17th century young people belonging to the English nobility made their first foreign trips, called the 'Grand Tour', to get to directly know landscapes and heritage sites in Europe in order to improve their intellectual and personal training before joining, on their return, the social and intellectual elite of the moment. However, this cultural tourism has been democratised, and been made generally available in recent decades with a continuous increase in the influx of people who visit heritage sites, which are currently the most visited places (Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2013), highlighting especially the places designated by UNESCO as WHS.

Within the concept of cultural tourism, the typology of heritage tourism appears, which analyses the link that exists between the tourists and the monumental and artistic heritage of a destination (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014). This tourism typology consists of visiting places and having certain experiential feelings there, entailing the existence of significant visitors' influx.

This implies, following Poria, Reichel & Biran (2006), that visiting WHS places could not only be a leisure experience, but could also be a tourist rediscovering their cultural heritage. In this sense, it would also imply an understanding and learning of the patrimonial significance that the place in question has for each of the individuals, as well as of the meaning of cultural inheritance. A tourist's awareness of a destination as part of the patrimonial heritage of the visitor is linked with the patterns of their visit (Poria, Butler & Airey, 2003). Thus, those people who consider that the place they visit is associated with their culture and history tend to behave differently from others.

Heritage tourism refers to the activities derived from visiting a certain place and the experiences obtained from it, regardless of whether the experiences are in cultural or natural settings, and whether they are located in urban or rural places (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014). This infers that the visitor is searching for a connection to their roots and with their patrimonial heritage (Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014). Sometimes, the designation as being a WHS means a global recommendation to visit this destination (Adie, 2017), as tourists travel looking for authentic experiences and different places (Park, 2014).

In fact, heritage tourism has shown enormous growth in recent years, which has implied the need to carry out an analysis of the different sub-areas that this concept addresses (Bhowmik, 2021). The *Report on Tourism and Culture Synergies* (UNWTO, 2018) has recently reaffirmed this type of tourism as one of the most significant types of international tourism. This report pointed out some important changes in the relationship between tourism and culture, as a shift from tangible to intangible heritage in cultural tourism consumption and production or fragmentation of cultural tourism into a series of niches, such as heritage tourism, art tourism, gastronomy tourism, film tourism and music tourism (Richards, 2021).

Consequently, understanding the latter is useful in studying the behaviour of tourists, for the better management of destinations, and for defining the corresponding strategies of both private companies and public authorities. Likewise, it is essential to analyse the experiences that tourists have in these places (Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2021) and the impact it could have on developing countries (Hosseini, Stefaniec & Hosseini, 2021).

Within heritage tourism, more and more tourists choose to visit places declared WHS by UNESCO. Thus, although with the publication of these lists the objective of UNESCO is to conserve and preserve these places and experiences, in most cases it implies a prominent rise in visitor numbers in these geographical areas, especially foreign tourists, and an income growth derived from the latter, as well as a change in the environmental management and business of the zone (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014). Consequently, there is an evident association between tourism and heritage endorsed by UNESCO (Lourenço-Gomes, Costa Pino & Rebelo, 2014).

In fact, Adie (2017) defines this typology as tourism in WHS, which could be considered a subgroup within heritage tourism. The scientific literature that has analysed the relationship between WHS and tourism (Vong & Ung, 2012; Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014; Antón, Camarero & Laguna-García, 2017) indicates different lines of research in fields, such as consumer behaviour or socioeconomic and environmental management of the location (Al-Tokhais & Thapa, 2020).

In this sense, some studies analyse the relationship between heritage and tourism, focussing, above all, on WHS and cultural heritage. Thus, in relation to WHS, studies can be found from Israel (Poria *et al.*, 2003), Macao (Vong & Ung, 2012; Io, 2019), Vietnam (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014), Portugal (Carreira, González-Rodríguez, Díaz-

Fernández & Moutela, 2021), China (Wang, Huang & Kim, 2015), Portugal (Ramires, Brandao & Sousa, 2018), Poland (Szromek, Herman & Naramski, 2021), and Ecuador (López-Guzmán *et al.*, 2019).

However, there are not many academic studies carried out yet regarding ICH, due to the fact that a large proportion of the studies on tourism and cultural heritage are associated with physical places (González, 2008), and it is quite complex to carry out investigations of the ICH, as in most instances it does not correspond to a certain place. However, it is possible to highlight different studies that analyse the relationship between tourism and the ICH, such as the research carried out by Schmitt (2008) which focussed on the Jemaa el Fna Square in Marrakech (Morocco); an analysis of the connection that exists in Cuenca (Ecuador) between tourism and ICH, such as the toquilla straw hat elaboration (Prada-Trigo *et al.*, 2016); or the study by Gómez Schettini, Almirón and González Bracco (2011) which analyses tango as a tourist resource in the city of Buenos Aires. The present work aims to reinforce the research that relates to ICH and tourism. In addition, it also reinforces the research that is being carried out on post-COVID tourism.

The segmentation of the type of tourists who visit a WHS is essential to correctly manage a destination and design different types of tourism products that can respond to different demands (Muñoz-Fernández *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to identify the typologies of heritage tourists, their motivations, their behaviours and their perceptions (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014). In this way, it is possible to differentiate who is the heritage tourist or, following Adie and Hall (2017), identify who is the tourist attracted by the recognition as WHS that this place has, simultaneously differentiate it from those other travellers who are in the place as mere visitors (Saipradist & Staiff, 2007).

Recently, the concept of heritage and cultural inheritance has evolved along two different directions (Del Barrio, Devesa & Herrero, 2012): first, the WHS analysed as tourist destinations have increased. Thus, from an initial restriction to archaeological sites, historical buildings, or monuments, the option has been opened for other cultural perspectives, such as landscapes, gardens, forms of production, and rural environments. Second, another range of elements has been incorporated that aims to recognise different collective identities such as oral traditions, folklore, and traditional habits that are also the cultural heritage of the population. This has caused the

connection between WHS, tourism, and culture, both tangible and intangible, to become an increasingly widespread scientific typology that allows for sustainable cultural and tourist development (UNESCO, 2008).

## **2.2) DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES**

The attributes of a destination are formed by the set of elements that attract the visitor, and the attraction of tourists will depend on the ability of tourists to perceive whether they will obtain certain individual benefits by themselves. Therefore, the attributes of the destination become the main components of the experience of the place, being essential to offer the visitor a memorable experience at the destination (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Kim, 2014). However, in order for a good experience to be obtainable at a destination, there is an essential set of features, such as heritage, cultural exchange, facilities, public safety, gastronomy, and shopping opportunities (Kim & Brown, 2012). A good assessment of the attributes of the destination ensures satisfaction to travellers, loyalty to the destination, and good promotion of the place (Ozdemir *et al.*, 2012).

However, not all attributes confer a competitive advantage to the same extent. Thus, some scientific studies help to understand how attributes generate satisfaction, and create an image of the destination. In this sense, gastronomy and public safety stand out (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Kim, 2014).

## **2.3) EMOTIONAL PERCEPTION**

Emotion is considered as customers' feelings about situations they experience (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989). Emotions have been featured as a central element of the tourist experience. Specifically, tourists' positive emotions influence a range of post-consumption behaviours, such as revisit. Many studies of tourism are related to emotions (Nawijn & Biran, 2019, Chang *et al.*, 2020). Tourists tend to remember positive emotions more than negative emotions and it has a positive effect on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Hosany *et al.*, 2017; Su & Hsu, 2013).

Based on the evidence that feeling emotions enhance the motivational attractiveness of a tourist destination, the questionnaire includes different items to

measure tourist emotion and perception towards their participation in the *Fiesta de los Patios*. Particularly, explore how the visit to the *Fiesta de los Patios* helps the tourist to relax, thrill them or even contribute to increasing the knowledge about the culture and traditions of the city.

## **2.4) TOURIST SATISFACTION**

The satisfaction of the tourist is configured as an essential aspect of the place, as the trip then remains in the memory of the person. Likewise, satisfaction is an antecedent of loyalty to destination (Sato *et al.*, 2018; Park, Choi & Lee, 2019).

Satisfaction can be explained as the global assessment that the customer makes of the service they have received compared to the expected service. In this definition, the cognitive component of satisfaction is highlighted, but simultaneously it is necessary to point out the strong emotional component that the satisfaction variable also has (Prayag, Alrawadieh & Alrawadieh, 2021).

Several reasons make tourist satisfaction relevant. First, it makes it possible to know how the attributes and elements of the destination are perceived, in addition to investigating what is being transmitted through the image of the destination to strengthen and maintain the attributes or components of the destination. Second, satisfaction can be configured as a precedent for visitor behaviour, which allows the prediction of their future conduct and loyalty (Yuksel, Yuksel & Bilim, 2009). This loyalty future behaviour or post-visit behaviour of tourists is reflected in the form of revisit, recommendation and positive word of mouth (Cong, 2021).

Satisfaction with the destination is directly related to the motivation to travel (Romao *et al.*, 2015), although the visitor's sociodemographic profile is also a key element in determining satisfaction with the trip (Romao *et al.*, 2015).

## **2.5) BEHAVIOUR INTENTION**

Behavioural intention is concerned as one of the factors behind an individual's intention to carry out a behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). It is the most important construct in predicting whether an individual will carry out a behaviour (Arteaga Sánchez *et al.*, 2017) and it is considered as a prominent determinant of consumer behaviour in

services marketing (Li & Cai, 2012) and tourism and hospitality literature (Tajeddini et al., 2022).

Customers' perceptions and attitudes from previous consumption experiences shape behavioural intention (Zeithaml, 1988; Li et al., 2021). Customers who identify high value from their past experiences are increasingly willing to repurchase and become loyal, demonstrating positive behavioural intentions. In the present context, tourist behavioural intentions have been predicted by tourist motivations and their overall satisfaction (Bayih & Singh, 2020). Specifically, motivations have a strong positive relationship with both satisfaction and tourist behavioural intentions (Bayih & Singh, 2020). Thus, those people with a greater cultural motivation find greater satisfaction when they visit destinations with a strong historical-artistic heritage.

## **2.6) SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE TOURIST**

For the managers of a destination, both public and private, the knowledge that can be obtained about the sociodemographic profile of tourists is essential to carry out efficient management of a tourist destination. For this reason, one of the topics most addressed by the academic literature is the characterisation of the sociodemographic profile of the tourist who visits a destination distinguished by heritage.

From this perspective, whether the gender of the visitors is a key element in terms of attracting tourists to a certain destination has been analysed. However, the empirical evidence does not indicate conclusive results in this case. Thus, various studies find evidence that it is women who most prefer these cultural places (Vong & Ung, 2012; Nguyen & Cheung, 2014; Remoaldo et al., 2014; Ramires et al., 2018). Others show the opposite, and conclude that it is men who are most attracted to these destinations (Correia et al., 2013; Antón et al., 2017; Adie & Hall, 2017; Chen & Huang, 2018).

On the other hand, the controversy is also present according to age, another of the variables that has been analysed in this type of study. Thus, the empirical evidence indicates different age ranges: for instance, Chen and Huang (2018) identify a tourist who is between 21 and 35 years old. Antón et al. (2017) indicate an age range between 30 and 44 years, and Remoaldo et al. (2014) find that ages range from 26 to 45 years. Huh, Uysal & McCleary (2006) reveal that the age ranges between 38 and 47 years.

Correia *et al.* (2013) and Ramires *et al.* (2018) establish the age to be greater than 45 years.

With regard to educational level, it should be noted that the academic literature indicates that visitors who go to destinations where an artistic and monumental heritage predominates, have attained the level of university academic training, and this group are the most representative (Huh *et al.*, 2006; Correia *et al.*, 2013; Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014; Adie & Hall, 2017; Antón *et al.*, 2017; Ramires *et al.*, 2018;). In the same vein, Chen and Huang (2018) mention that another important group of tourists who visit these destinations should be taken into account, namely students.

Likewise, most empirical studies (Chen & Huang, 2018; Antón *et al.*, 2017; Ramires *et al.*, 2018) indicate that the level of income of the visitors who go to places with an important historical heritage and artistic is medium and medium-high. These findings are complemented by the results found regarding the level of academic training that characterises this group of tourists (Huh *et al.*, 2006; Correia *et al.*, 2013; Bright & Carter, 2016; Antón *et al.*, 2017; Chen & Huang, 2018; Ramires *et al.*, 2018).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1) SURVEY DESIGN**

This research is based on the results obtained from fieldwork consisting of a structured questionnaire which was presented to a representative sample of tourists who participated in the *Fiesta de los Patios*. Among the options available to obtain the information, the design of a closed-ended questionnaire was chosen to be self-administered. The formulation of the items is based on different previous investigations in order to guarantee the validity of the questionnaire (McKercher, 2002; Poria *et al.*, 2003; Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004; Yuan & Jang, 2008; Devesa, Laguna & Palacios, 2010; Correia *et al.*, 2013; Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014). Several corrections were made to the provisional design of the questionnaire through a pre-test developed through two different phases: first, a researcher specialising in tourism analysed the proposed items; second, the resulting questionnaire was reviewed by several people in charge of tourism management in the city of Cordoba. The people who reviewed the questionnaire are those who manage tourism in the city of Cordoba and, therefore,

experts in heritage tourism. Likewise, a pilot study was carried out on an initial sample of 20 tourists.

The definitive version of the survey aimed to achieve the easiest understanding of the questions, and the best fit possible of the answers to attain the objectives set out in the research. The questions were also designed to have the maximum possible specificity so as not to excessively lengthen the time it took to complete the survey. All these previous steps are necessary to achieve quality results and avoid problems in data collection (Moore, Harrison & Hair, 2021).

The survey is divided into two sections. The first includes a set of questions, measured on a seven-point Likert scale, which analyse the perception that tourists have of the city of Cordoba as a tourist destination and the assessment of their participation in the *Fiesta de los Patios*. The second section in the questionnaire is related to the sociodemographic profile of the traveller interviewed, such as gender, age, educational level, employment situation, and family income.

### **3.2) SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION**

Convenience sampling was used, which commonly employed in this type of research where tourists are available to be surveyed in a given space and time (Finn, Elliott-White & Walton, 2000). The sample was not stratified by gender, age, education or by any other variable as there were no previous studies to support this stratification. The rejection rate of the questionnaire was low and not significant according to any variable. The time it took to fill out the survey was not more than ten minutes. The questionnaires were carried out at different points of the *Fiesta de los Patios*, that is, during the first half of May 2021, specifically between May 3 and 16, 2021, with the premise that the surveyed tourist had already visited at least two patios and, therefore, could give an informed opinion (Correia et al., 2013; Remaldo et al., 2014). A total of 391 surveys were collected, of which 379 were correctly fulfil. The questionnaires were carried out in different places where the *Fiesta de los Patios* took place, on different days, and at different times to try to collect the widest possible range of people and situations.

Given that attendance at the *Fiesta de los Patios* in 2021 was 40,000 tourists, and that 379 valid surveys were carried out, the sampling error, as an indication (if it were

a simple random sampling and not a convenience sampling) would be approximately 5%. Regarding the number of visitors estimation to the *Fiesta de los Patios* in 2021, there is no data provided by the City Council of Cordoba, organizer of this event. The only data provided by the City Council is that the total number of visits to all the Patios was around 400,000 visits. Therefore, and based on this data, the authors of this research considered that each person visited an average of four patios. Therefore, the total number of visitors was 100,000 people. Following this criterion, and taking into account the answers in the fieldwork carried out in this investigation, since the first question was whether or not the person who was answering was a resident of the city of Cordoba, approximately 40% of the people indicated that they were not residents of the city of Cordoba. Consequently, the number of tourists who participated in the *Fiesta de los Patios* in 2021 was estimated to be around 40,000 tourists.

### **3.3) METHOD OF ANALYSIS**

The SPSS Statistics v28 program has been used to perform the statistical analysis of the data. First, to confirm the reliability of the measurement scale, Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) is used in each of the subgroups of the questionnaire questions (Cordoba as destination, opinions, perceptions, satisfaction, and behaviour intention, see Table 1). The results obtained in this regard (from Q01 to Q015=0.908; from Q16 to Q26=0.871; from Q27 to Q30=0.871; from Q31 to Q33=0.856; from Q34 to Q37=0.949, respectively) are well above the values indicated by reference authors (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), and therefore the reliability of the scale is confirmed.

Subsequently, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Kolmogorov, 1933; Smirnov, 1948) and Shapiro-Wilk (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965) normality tests were applied to the questionnaire, confirming in both that the sample did not come from a normally distributed population for all questions ( $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ), and therefore it was convenient to use non-parametric contrasts. Thus (given the independent samples), the suitability of using the Mann-Whitney (MW) U test was accepted so as to compare the two samples (Mann & Whitney, 1947), and in the cases of more than two samples, the Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test was used (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952). In the latter, an additional analysis consisting of the U (MW) test of all the possible pair combinations of the samples presented was

carried out. MW and KW tests are commonly used to compare statistical significative differences between datasets group divisions according variables.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1) QUESTION SET AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE TOURISTS**

The set of seven-point Likert-type questions posed in the survey, together with their mean and standard deviation, is presented in Table 1. These are grouped by common topics: destination attribute, experiences, perceptions, satisfaction and behaviour intention. Higher means are referred to the beauty, conservation and maintenance of the patios (Q18, Q19 and Q20, respectively). Broadly, a high level of positive considerations is detected in almost all the questions, with the average evaluation always above 5, except for Q26, which reflects the waiting time. Although COVID-19 has reduced the number of visitors in the tourism sector (Cardenete, Delgado & Villegas, 2021; UNWTO, 2020; UNWTO, 2020a) and has changed the tourist's travel behaviour (De Vos, 2020; Pahrudin, Chen & Liu, 2021; Sánchez-Cañizares *et al.*, 2021), the results of this study are in line with previous research before Covid-19 (Medina-Viruel *et al.*, 2019; Romao *et al.*, 2015; Yuksel *et al.*, 2009), stating that satisfaction and behaviour intention was greatest among tourists who were most interested in heritage.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
<b>Cordoba as destination</b>			
<b>Q01</b>	Historic quarter and monuments	6.43	0.862
<b>Q02</b>	Monumental and artistic heritage conservation	6.13	0.975
<b>Q03</b>	Beauty of the city	6.47	0.791
<b>Q04</b>	Accessibility to iconic buildings and monuments	5.7	1.219
<b>Q05</b>	Touristic information	5.23	1.368
<b>Q06</b>	Quality of restaurants and taverns	5.92	1.094
<b>Q07</b>	Quality of the tour guides	5.63	1.332
<b>Q08</b>	Diversity and quality of local gastronomy	6.16	1.061
<b>Q09</b>	Opportunity to shop for handicrafts and traditional food items	5.83	1.235
<b>Q10</b>	Complementary leisure offer	5.21	1.341
<b>Q11</b>	Citizen security	6.09	1.051
<b>Q12</b>	Maintenance and cleanliness of the city	6.11	1.058
<b>Q13</b>	Resident hospitality	6.3	1.034

<b>Q14</b>	Public transport services	5.49	1.263
<b>Q15</b>	Value for money of the city	5.78	1.196
<b>Experiences regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>			
<b>Q16</b>	Accessibility to patios and surrounding spaces	5.51	1.566
<b>Q17</b>	Patios owners' kindness and hospitality	6.33	1.028
<b>Q18</b>	Beauty of the patios and their surroundings	6.51	0.865
<b>Q19</b>	State of conservation of the patios visited	6.58	0.742
<b>Q20</b>	Maintenance and cleaning of the patios	6.67	0.744
<b>Q21</b>	Restaurants and taverns available in its surroundings	5.7	1.313
<b>Q22</b>	Diversity and variety of patios that can be visited	6.16	1.071
<b>Q23</b>	Tourist information spots and signposts	5.27	1.522
<b>Q24</b>	Opportunity to make interesting purchases: handicrafts, etc.	5.64	1.268
<b>Q25</b>	Security during the visit	6.37	0.918
<b>Q26</b>	Waiting time to start the visit	4.04	1.999
<b>Perceptions regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>			
<b>Q27</b>	During the patios' visit I felt part of the cultural and patrimonial heritage of Cordoba	5.7	1.413
<b>Q28</b>	The visit to the patios has especially thrilled me	5.63	1.369
<b>Q29</b>	The visit to the patios has contributed to increasing my knowledge about the culture and traditions of the city	5.57	1.528
<b>Q30</b>	The visit to the patios has helped me to relax	5.5	1.7
<b>Satisfaction regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>			
<b>Q31</b>	I had a high level of satisfaction with the patios' visit	5.84	1.323
<b>Q32</b>	I made the right choice visiting the patios	6.04	1.357
<b>Q33</b>	Cordoba is a quality tourist destination	6.41	0.899
<b>Behaviour intention regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>			
<b>Q34</b>	When I talk about the patios, I will say positive things	6.29	1.143
<b>Q35</b>	I will encourage my family and friends to visit the patios	6.22	1.289
<b>Q36</b>	After my experience. I think I will visit the patios again in future editions	5.88	1.573
<b>Q37</b>	I would recommend visiting the patios if someone asked me for advice	6.22	1.334

Table 1. Set of questions.

Source: Own elaboration.

The sociodemographic profile of the respondents is displayed in Table 2. Existing parity in terms of gender, a large majority of university graduates and people with employment are shown. In the age range, people under 35 years old stand out, and almost all of the respondents are under 55. Family income is mostly medium-high and high. The average profile corresponds to an employed female university graduate, who is under 35 years of age and who has a medium-high income.

The results obtained according gender reinforce a greater presence of women in these destinations, although it is an element that is widely debated in the scientific literature (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014; Ramires *et al.*, 2018; Remoaldo *et al.*, 2014; Vong & Ung, 2012). Likewise, in terms of age, the results indicate a profile of a young tourist, with an average age of 35-40 years. This is similar to what obtained by Correia *et al.* (2013), Huh *et al.* (2006), and Ramires *et al.* (2018). The third result points the high educational level of the participants in the *Fiesta de los Patios*. This result is consistent with what obtained from the scientific literature in the line that most visitors to WHS and ICH have a university degree (Adie & Hall, 2017; Antón *et al.*, 2017; Ramires *et al.*, 2018).

<b>Gender (GEN)</b>		<b>Age (AGE)</b>	
Male	47.76%	18–35 years old	58.05%
Female	52.24%	36–55 years old	30.08%
		More than 55 years old	11.87%
<b>Educational level (ELV)</b>		<b>Monthly household income (MHI)</b>	
Primary/secondary education	20.05%	Less than 1000 €	20.58%
Degree/Postgraduate/PhD	79.95%	1001–2500 €	46.17%
		More than 2500 €	33.25%
<b>Labour situation (LAB)</b>			
Employee	77.04%		
Unemployed, student, retired	22.96%		

Table 2. Sociodemographic profile of the respondents.

Source: Own elaboration.

#### **4.2) DIFFERENCES BASED ON SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE ITEMS: SIGNIFICATIVE QUESTIONS PRESENTED**

The questions that present significant differences by gender are shown in Table 3. To ease establish differences, its median is also presented, and following a criterion of including questions that presented a p-value of 0.05 or less. Although there are a high number of them, it is worth highlighting those referring to gastronomy (Q08), diversity of patios (Q22), and information and signposts at them (Q23), feeling that they had made the right decision when participating in the *Fiesta de los Patios* (Q32) and the desire to return (Q36); all of this was more valued by women, contrary to the feeling of emotion with participation (Q28), which was more shared among men.

Code	Male (median)	Female (median)	p- value*	Code	Male (median)	Female (median)	p- value*
<b>Q03</b>	7	7	0.024	<b>Q23</b>	5	6	0.011
<b>Q05</b>	5	5	0.039	<b>Q24</b>	6	6	0.018
<b>Q07</b>	6	6	0.028	<b>Q27</b>	6	6	0.042
<b>Q08</b>	6	7	0.012	<b>Q28</b>	7	6	0.016
<b>Q09</b>	6	6	0.007	<b>Q29</b>	6	6	0.037
<b>Q10</b>	5	5	0.017	<b>Q32</b>	6	7	0.007
<b>Q18</b>	7	7	0.023	<b>Q33</b>	7	7	0.025
<b>Q19</b>	7	7	0.004	<b>Q34</b>	7	7	0.024
<b>Q20</b>	7	7	0.04	<b>Q35</b>	7	7	0.015
<b>Q21</b>	6	6	0.038	<b>Q36</b>	6	7	0.016
<b>Q22</b>	6	7	0.03	<b>Q37</b>	7	7	0.01

Table 3. Mann-Whitney's U test of the questions compared by gender.

\*Statistical significance at p&lt;0.05.

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding age, Table 4 highlights a lower perception of the quality of tourist information in Cordoba (Q05), tourist guides (Q07), and residents' hospitality (Q13), among the younger profiles. In the same vein, the perception of a longer waiting time (Q26) in the youngest respondents is remarkable. Table 4 follows similar criteria as Table 3, with the exception of made a previous KW test to determine the statistical differences among the groups (as they are more than two), and later make a MW pairwise test analysis.

Code	18–35 years old (median)	36–55 years old (median)	More than 55 years old (median)	KW p- value*	MW analysis	MW p- value*
<b>Q05</b>	5	6	6	0.001	Only differences between 18–35 years and 36–55 years old	0.003
<b>Q07</b>	6	6	6	0.04	Only differences between 18–35 years and 36–55 years old	0.046
<b>Q13</b>	7	7	7	0.028	Only differences between 18–35 years and more than 55 years old	0.03
<b>Q16</b>	6	6	6	0.016	None	-
<b>Q21</b>	6	6	6	0.042	None	-
<b>Q26</b>	4	5	5	0.003	Only differences between 18–35 years and 36–55 years old	0.01
<b>Q34</b>	7	7	7	0.022	None	-

Table 4. Kruskal-Wallis' test and Mann-Whitney's U test pairwise of the questions compared by age.

\*Statistical significance at p&lt;0.05.

Source: Own elaboration.

On the differences between non-graduates and university graduates (Table 5), those referring to transport services in the city (Q14), the provision of information and signposts in the patios (Q23), the waiting time (Q26), and the intention to return (Q36) stand out. In all of them, the non-graduates made a more positive assessment. It should be noted that there was no Likert-type question which resulted in statistically significant differences comparing the employees with the group of unemployed, students, and the retired. Table 5, as comparing only two groups, follows same criteria as Table 3.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Primary/secondary education (median)</b>	<b>Degree/Postgraduate/PhD (median)</b>	<b>p-value*</b>
<b>Q04</b>	6	6	0.015
<b>Q09</b>	6	6	0.032
<b>Q14</b>	6	5	0.049
<b>Q16</b>	6	6	0.002
<b>Q23</b>	6	5	0.044
<b>Q26</b>	4.5	4	0.034
<b>Q31</b>	6	6	0.016
<b>Q36</b>	7	6	0.017
<b>Q37</b>	7	7	0.02

Table 5. Mann–Whitney's U test of the questions compared by educational level.

\*Statistical significance at  $p<0.05$ .

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 6 presents the questions that showed significant differences in terms of the monthly family income of the respondents. As in Table 4, a more than two groups analysis require a previous KW test to determine questions and later a MW pairwise test among them. The results show a feeling of having made the right decision when visiting the patios (Q31), as well as a greater willingness to attend again (Q36) and to recommend (Q37) among the profiles with the lowest income.

Finally, as a summary, Table 7 synthesises the list of questions that were relevant in the study, relating them to those items of the sociodemographic profile in which the divisions made among groups offered significant differences. The gender (GEN) as the determining factor in the most of the questions highlights (Table 7). On the opposite, the labour situation (LAB) does not appear as significant in any of the questions. It is also worth mentioning how the monthly household income (MHI) appear as relevant only in the satisfaction and behaviour intention section, precisely the most important

group according satisfaction, re-visiting and recommendation and consequently promotion and recognition of the event, and profitability of the business related.

Code	Less than 1000 €	1001 - 2500 €	More than 2500 €	KW p- value*	MW analysis	MW p- value*
<b>Q31</b>	7	6	6	0.019	Only differences between less than 1000 € and more than 2500 €	0.016
<b>Q36</b>	7	7	6	0.008	Only differences between less than 1000 € and more than 2500 €	0.007
<b>Q37</b>	7	7	7	0.014	Only differences between less than 1000 € and more than 2500 €	0.011

Table 6. Kruskal–Wallis' test and Mann–Whitney's U test pairwise of the questions compared by monthly household income.

\*Statistical significance at  $p<0.05$ .

Source: Own elaboration.

Code	Question	Differences in*
<b>Cordoba as destination</b>		
<b>Q03</b>	Beauty of the city	GEN
<b>Q04</b>	Accessibility to iconic buildings and monuments	ELV
<b>Q05</b>	Touristic information	GEN, AGE
<b>Q07</b>	Quality of the tour guides	GEN, AGE
<b>Q08</b>	Diversity and quality of local gastronomy	GEN
<b>Q09</b>	Opportunity to shop for handicrafts and traditional food items	GEN, ELV
<b>Q10</b>	Complementary leisure offer	GEN
<b>Q13</b>	Resident hospitality	AGE
<b>Q14</b>	Public transport services	ELV
<b>Experiences regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>		
<b>Q16</b>	Accessibility to patios and surrounding spaces	AGE, ELV
<b>Q18</b>	Beauty of the patios and their surroundings	GEN
<b>Q19</b>	State of conservation of the patios visited	GEN
<b>Q20</b>	Maintenance and cleanliness of the patios	GEN
<b>Q21</b>	Restaurants and taverns available in its surroundings	GEN, AGE
<b>Q22</b>	Diversity and variety of patios that can be visited	GEN
<b>Q23</b>	Tourist information spots and signposts	GEN, ELV
<b>Q24</b>	Opportunity to make interesting purchases: handicrafts, etc.	GEN
<b>Q26</b>	Waiting time to start the visit	AGE, ELV
<b>Perceptions regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>		
<b>Q27</b>	During the patios' visit I felt part of the cultural and patrimonial heritage of Cordoba	GEN
<b>Q28</b>	The visit to the patios especially thrilled me	GEN
<b>Q29</b>	The visit to the patios contributed to increasing my knowledge about the culture and traditions of the city	GEN
<b>Satisfaction regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>		
<b>Q31</b>	I had a high level of satisfaction with the patios visit	ELV, MHI

<b>Q32</b>	I made the right choice visiting the patios	GEN
<b>Q33</b>	Cordoba is a quality tourist destination	GEN
<b>Behaviour intention regarding <i>Fiesta de los Patios</i></b>		
<b>Q34</b>	When I talk about the patios, I will say positive things	GEN, AGE
<b>Q35</b>	I will encourage my family and friends to visit the patios	GEN
<b>Q36</b>	After my experience, I think I will visit the patios again in future editions	GEN, ELV, MHI
<b>Q37</b>	I would recommend visiting the patios if someone asked me for advice	GEN, ELV, MHI

Table 7. Questions presenting significant statistical differences by sociodemographic profile items.

\*GEN (gender), AGE (age), ELV (educational level) and MHI (monthly household income).

Source: Own elaboration.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Introducing the theoretical implications of the study, and relating the questions asked in the survey with the different items of the sociodemographic profile, although some do not show marked differences such as those referring to restaurants, security and cleanliness, it is observed how gender is the determining factor for a greater number of questions, in which issues of a more rational and detailed-oriented type (gastronomy, variety of patios, information) are prevalent among women. On the contrary, those of the emotional type are highlighted among men, such as feeling of emotion with participation. Regarding age, more critical behaviour is detected in younger profiles, in matters such as information and tour guides, residents' hospitality, and waiting time. The findings of this research are consistent with the results obtained in Stojković *et al.* (2020) where significant effects of age were found in the residents' attitudes towards environmental impacts and physical impacts. In the case of perception of environmental impacts, older residents expressed lower perception of tourism impacts than younger ones.

University graduates were also more critical than non-graduates, especially in factors shared with younger visitors, such as information and waiting time, and in others unrelated to the latter, such as public transport and willingness to come back to the destination. In these questions, non-graduates make a more positive assessment than university graduates. It is noteworthy that no differences were shown in any of the questions dividing the sample into subgroups based on the employment situation of the respondent.

Regarding income levels, it was revealed that the only questions affected come from the patios' satisfaction and behaviour intention sections, in which gender and

educational level also play a prominent role. In this section, it is especially important to note the level of satisfaction and the possible intention to return to the place and/or provide a recommendation, which is a key factor in promoting the destination. Precisely this predisposition has started in profiles with lower income; thus, public and private agents must investigate the reasons for this, while also trying to attract visitors with greater purchasing power, hence promoting business profitability. In this line, Sinha and Nair (2021) point out that high earners were more aware of “health and hygiene” and history of low COVID-19 incidences (HLCI) destination selection factors. In contrast, their low-income counterparts were highly influenced by “accessibility and discounting” factors, despite the global health emergency.

According sociodemographic characteristics of those attending to the *Fiesta de los Patios*, it can be concluded that the average profile are university graduates, under 35 years old and with a medium-high income, not finding great differences in terms of gender, although the attendance of women is slightly higher than men. This way, comparing the sociodemographic profile of the tourist at this event with the literature addressed, this research confirms that the tourists of a destination where an artistic and monumental heritage predominate are mostly tourists with university academic training and whose family income is medium-high. Another of the findings of this research is that tourist interested in heritage show higher levels of satisfaction and behavioural intention, although this does not represent a change with respect to pre-COVID research.

Thus, this research can be useful for both public agents at the local, regional, or national level of tourism promotion, as well as to private businesses whose target audience is tourists attending this type of event (accommodation, restaurants, taverns, tourist guides). This research has aimed to analyse the differences into the profile of the visitor, relating their gender, age, educational level, and income to their experiences, perceptions, satisfaction, and behaviour intention, thus enabling tourism professionals, both public and private, to better adapt the tourist offer, making it more attractive to the potential client. This will affect a greater number of tourists, and result in a possible improvement in business profitability.

One limitation of this study is that it requires a limited stratification of the sociodemographic profile data (reduced to a maximum of two or three subgroups) for a not excessively extensive and more approachable analysis of the data. Also, the

sample size is not large enough to take into consideration the effect sizes. As a future line of research, extending the methodology developed in this study is suggested, based on surveys carried out in other similar cultural tourist events, in order to establish comparisons and highlight similarities and differences among these works. Specifically, in the province of Cordoba, we propose as a future line of research, the analysis of the relationship between tourism and flamenco, also declared ICH. In addition, to continue improving the knowledge about tourists in the city of Cordoba, for the next editions of the *Fiesta de los Patios* event, it is proposed research in the line to discover if this event is the main motivation of tourists to visit the city and also if these tourists have attended previous editions of the *Fiesta de los Patios*.

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