Indigenous Food and Tourism for Community Well-Being: A Possible Contributing Way Forward

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Abstract

Indigenous food has been recognized as a strategy to enhance community well-being; however its usage is decreasing due to a number of factors. At the same time indigenous food has been linked to issues such as biodiversity, and tourism. Indigenous food link to culinary arts is seen as possible way to revive the usage of indigenous food to enhance community well-being and tourism development. Using these issues as a background this paper aims to propose a possible strategy to contribute to community well-being by using indigenous food as a leverage and pivotal force. This is done by proposing a Teaching and Learning centre for indigenous food and cultural tourism to be developed within a tertiary education institution. Hospitality and tourism students are seen as future personnel that can contribute to the revival of indigenous food. The paper is based on the analysis of available literature that covers and connects the various matters discussed in the analysis such as indigenous food, culinary art and tourism.

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As food tourism is a growing tourist attraction, hotels and tour agencies can promote certain cuisines at certain countries by organizing regular tours focusing on cuisine. For instance, Four Seasons Hotel in Hangzhou, China, runs a private dinner and tour where tourists will be taken to the local food market where they can enjoy authentic Shanghainese and Cantonese cuisine. Social media plays a role in driving the interest and enthusiasm in food experiences. Hence food tourism is massively popular among millennials, who share their food experiences on social media sites such as Facebook, Twit... Some food bloggers have a massive online following, which would contribute to increasing a hotel or a restaurant’s publicity. Indigenous food link to culinary arts is seen as possible way to revive the usage of indigenous food to enhance community well-being and tourism development. Using these issues as a background this paper aims to propose a possible strategy to contribute to community well-being by using indigenous food as a leverage and pivotal force. This is done by proposing a Teaching and Learning centre for indigenous food and cultural tourism to be developed within a tertiary education institution. Hospitality and tourism students are seen as future personnel that can contribute to the revival of indigenous food. Promotion of local communities where the tourist sites exist. Service industries that stand to benefit include: Hospitality services such as hotels and resorts. Beaches are a major attraction for tourists and increased rainfall affects water level of beaches. Rainy seasons also make commuting unpleasant and causes flooding. The political elite and well to do in Nigeria are constantly travelling abroad for medical attention, painting the picture of an unreliable health care system in the country. Health is a major concern for people of all classes and if travellers are not convinced of good medical treatment if the need arises, it deters them from coming to Nigeria.