

Thriving in a World of Giants: Craft Breweries' Workings in a Major Tourism Destination

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Abstract

Major tourism destinations depending on iconic resources to draw tourists are seeking to diversify their offerings. Building upon neolocalism, craft-beverage tourism has emerged as a diversification strategy. Such a strategy requires establishing a vibrant craft-beer industry that, according to the resource partitioning theory (RPT) requires applying four mechanisms (location, anti-mass production sentiment, customization, and conspicuous status). Since it is unknown how the RPT unfolds in tourism destinations, we interviewed 21 producers in Cusco (Peru), a major destination with an emerging craft-brewery industry, to identify the strategies they are utilizing to position their products when juxtaposed with tourism and neolocalism. We identified 17 actions that local craft-brewers apply and a strong tourism-neolocalism intersection, which altogether enriches the RPT. Findings suggest that craft-brewers build upon local places and culture to differentiate from, rather than fight against, their competitors. Findings can also guide agencies seeking to diversify the tourism offerings through craft-beverage tourism.

Keywords

Cusco, craft-beverage tourism, destination management, neolocalism, resource partitioning theory

Introduction

Major tourism destinations, especially in developing countries, are often dependent on their iconic resources, notably heritage sites, to draw tourists in (Becken, 2005). Such a dependence creates major disruptions in the destination, especially because it concentrates tourists around certain “hot spots” and limits the economic benefits to the suppliers who can position their businesses (e.g., restaurateurs and artisans) in those locations (Wang et al., 2022). Cusco (Peru) exemplifies how destination icons, like Machu Picchu and other archeological sites, are the pull attractions for inbound international tourism; at the same time, these icons prevent tourists from venturing beyond their well-known surroundings. Thus, these icon-dependent destinations seek to diversify their offerings by developing new experiences, especially in adjacent locations, to expand the spatial distribution of tourists. Doing so can entice tourists to extend their stay, repeat their visit, or recommend these new experiences to their families, friends, and social media followers (Bachman, Hull, & Haecker, 2021; Oates, 2016).

Diversifying the tourism offer in peripheral areas should target a group of people who are willing to move out of their comfort zone to seek unique experiences. Visitors embracing neolocalism may fit such a group as they pursue products and services that embrace distinctive features of a locale,

such as family eateries and bars; in doing so, they also look for contributing to local economies (Graefe et al., 2018; Karafolas, 2021; van Dijk et al., 2018). Small businesses are fueling neolocalism by consciously creating and delivering products that allude to a sense of localness (Flack, 1997; Schnell, 2013; Schnell & Reese, 2014). More than producing and consuming local products, neolocalism is a way to entrench people back to their cultural roots and to foster a sense of place (Schnell, 2013; Schnell & Reese, 2003). Since such a sense of localness can be extended to visitors (Gotham, 2005), neolocalism is shaping tourists' behavior and preferences, motivating them to look for unique, novel, and home-grown products and services when traveling (Schnell & Reese, 2003; van Dijk et al., 2018).

The emergence of neolocalism is encouraging the spatial spread of tourism attractions and entrepreneurial development

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in peripheral areas, notably through craft-beer tourism (Karafolas, 2021; Taylor & DiPietro, 2019). Several destinations worldwide are including an extensive offer of craft-beer activities, such as ale trails or festivals, that respond to tourists' demand for experiencing local food and drinks (Kline et al., 2014; Rogerson & Collins, 2015). Drinking craft-beer allows experiencing unique brews that embrace local culture in tangible (e.g., use of native ingredients) and intangible (e.g., storytelling) ways (Schnell, 2013; Schnell & Reese, 2003), which can ultimately develop or reinforce the appreciation or attachment to a place (Bachman, Hull, & Marlowe, 2021; Holtkamp et al., 2016). Yet, the first step to developing craft-beer destinations requires more than brewers' passion for producing a distinctive beer (van Dijk et al., 2018) because the beer market is dominated by large corporations.

Breaking into dominated markets, according to the resource partitioning theory (RPT), requires targeting specialized segments that are longing for innovative and diverse products (Carroll, 1985; Carroll et al., 2002), which holds true for the craft-beer industry (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000; van Dijk et al., 2018). However, to the extent of our knowledge, it is yet to be known how the RPT works in the tourism context that is increasingly experiencing a neolocalism presence. Craft-beer tourism provides an opportunity to examine such an RPT-neolocalism interaction because small craft-beer companies build upon local resources to strategically enter an oligopolistic market (Schnell & Reese, 2003, 2014). Doing so also attracts tourists holding neolocalism attitudes who are seeking a sense of localness (Francioni & Byrd, 2016). Although this study pioneers the evaluation of the RPT into the scholarship of tourism by diving into the craft-beer scene of Cusco, its application can be extended to a variety of niche markets (Dobrev et al., 2001). For example, study results can guide entrepreneurs in the arts sector (e.g., artisans and chefs) to coexist, rather than vanish, when their industrialized counterparts (e.g., global galleries and fast food chains) settle and steadily grow as destinations increase their popularity.

Given the documented capacity of craft-beer tourism to diversify the destination offerings (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; van Dijk et al., 2018) and contribute to the economy of developing countries (Garavaglia, 2020; Wojtyra et al., 2020), we interviewed craft-brewers from Cusco to identify the strategies they are utilizing to position their products when juxtaposed with tourism and neolocalism. In doing so, this study contributes to the growing literature on craft-beer and its intersectionality with tourism and neolocalism (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021; Francioni & Byrd, 2016; Gómez-Corona et al., 2016; D. W. Murray & O'Neill, 2012). By elucidating on the meanings and operationalization of location (e.g., traditional festivities), anti-mass production (e.g., uniqueness), customization (e.g., native ingredients), and conspicuous status (e.g., sense of pride) that craft-brewers use to position their products in a destination that has a strong industrial beer presence, we provide insights that destination

managers and marketers can use to diversify their tourism offer, targeting those seeking for neolocalism experiences.

Literature Review

Given the study purpose—examine the juxtaposition of craft-beer, tourism, and neolocalism—this section first elaborates on the RPT to frame the emergence and growth of small firms when and where large corporations tend to rule, which is suitable to understand the craft-beer industry development. We then delve into craft-beer tourism, emphasizing its potential to diversify destinations' offerings and its relationship with neolocalism, the latter as a growing social movement driving consumers to seek for specialty products (e.g., craft-beer) and services that small firms (craft-brewers) offer and the growth of craft-beer tourism.

Resource Partitioning Theory (RPT)

Hailing from organizational ecology research, the RPT challenges the notion that a market dominated by large corporations does not allow for the emergence of small businesses; rather, it posits that there is a parallel growth trend between large firms and small specialized ones (Carroll, 1985; Carroll et al., 2002). Since then, the RPT has guided research on the emergence of small businesses that respond to the unmet demands of niche markets that reject generalist products and services offered to the masses; and craft-beer has become central to this type of research (Rogerson & Collins, 2019; van Dijk et al., 2018; Wojtyra, 2020). Four mechanisms produce resource partitioning: location, anti-mass production sentiment, customization, and conspicuous status (Carroll et al., 2002), all of which are noticeable in craft-beer.

Regarding location, generalist companies seek to sell their products and services in places where there is a major concentration of the masses, whereas micro businesses choose adjacent areas that allow them to gradually move closer to the center as they increase profitability (Carroll et al., 2002). Location is especially important for craft-beer entrepreneurs as they tend to share their feelings about their home place with consumers by adopting local places' names, stories, and imagery in their branding (Feeney, 2017; Holtkamp et al., 2016; Schnell & Reese, 2003, 2014). In this way, craft-brewers consciously show their rootedness in a locality that fosters a sense of place among residents and tourists seeking to experience the local (Flack, 1997; Holtkamp et al., 2016; Schnell & Reese, 2003, 2014).

The anti-mass production cultural sentiment is strong for niche markets that value identity, tradition, and authenticity of the products they consume (Carroll et al., 2002). Craft-beer consumers associate lower production volume with higher quality and authenticity, although this may not objectively hold true (Frake, 2017; Wojtyra, 2020). Craft-brewers' anti-mass production sentiment is so strong and genuine that renowned generalist beer firms have failed to foray into the

craft-beer sector when emulating its characteristics due to a lack of authenticity (Baldacchino, 2010; Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000), which has converted the craft-beer industry into a protest against large beer corporations (Frake, 2017). Tourist flow may also influence the production volume of craft-breweries, especially in places where craft-beer tourism is already developed and tied to traditional festivities (Rogerson & Collins, 2019). Thus, Garavaglia (2020) calls for investigating the link between tourism and the proliferation of craft-breweries.

Customization refers to the personalization of products to satisfy the demands of specific segments with unusual or changing needs (Carroll et al., 2002). Craft-beer entrepreneurs usually start their businesses at home with a small-scale production (up to six million barrels annually) which gives them flexibility to experiment and innovate at low financial risks (van Dijk et al., 2018). Thus, a key strategy for innovation has been the production of specialty beers with added native ingredients, such as local fruits and spices (Schnell & Reese, 2014). By doing so, brewers respond to the demands of craft-beer drinkers, either their customary local clientele or the tourists, known for their continuous search for new varieties of beer styles and flavors (Garavaglia, 2020; Simoes Ferreira et al., 2021; Taylor & DiPietro, 2019). This constant creation of new beers is a way for craft-brewers to express the passion that drove them to this business in the first place (Rogerson & Collins, 2019).

Finally, conspicuous status speaks about the prestige of small firms and their specialty products in comparison to generalist firms (Carroll et al., 2002). Brewers and consumers feel proud for producing and/or consuming craft-beer because this enhances their social status (Schnell & Reese, 2014; Toro-González et al., 2014). This conspicuous status creates an ethos as both, consumers and producers, are proud to be recognized for their advanced knowledge of craft-beer (Koch & Sauerbronn, 2019), making craft-beer consumers recognizers of its superior quality (Aquilani et al., 2015). Conspicuous status is associated with the formation of elite groups and strong social networks composed of craft-brewers, consumers (locals and tourists) and suppliers, that support each other for the greater good (Knollenberg et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2017; Mathias et al., 2017). Conspicuous status is very important for millennials as they use their social media networks to share their experiences and inform their own decisions (Boley et al., 2018), which has promoted the emergence of craft-beer online social networks and apps (e.g., Untapped) where consumers recommend beers to each other.

Craft-Beer Tourism: Its Diversification Potential Through Neolocalism

Craft-beverage tourism is traveling for the primary purpose of tasting and learning about beverages (Cavaliere, 2017). The amalgam of activities composing craft-beverage tourism (e.g., guided visits to breweries, festivals) supports the

destinations' social fabric and environment beyond economic gains (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017; Melewar & Skinner, 2018). This form of niche tourism enhances the attractiveness of destinations and supplements their main offer, such as cultural or natural resources (van Dijk et al., 2018). Thus, developed countries with a strong wine tourism offer (e.g., Italy, Spain, and France) are trying to diversify their offerings by attracting craft-beer tourists, recognizing their potential contribution to the country's economy (Garavaglia, 2020; Wojtyra et al., 2020). Likewise, destinations with a strong reputation for their gastronomy, such as Peru, are seeking to expand it through craft-beverage tourism (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021).

The craft-beer tourism market has evolved over the years from a stereotypical white male hipster to a more ethnically diverse group with a greater presence of women wanting to try beers that resemble the variety of flavors they typically find in wines and cocktails (Chapman et al., 2018). Age-wise, millennials—especially those between 31 and 40 years old—are the main drivers of craft-beer consumption (Reid et al., 2014; Taylor & DiPietro, 2019), an attractive market for craft-beer tourism considering they travel more than other generations (Gelfeld, 2016). Craft-beer aficionados tend to visit breweries' taprooms to access exclusive beers that are only available on-site or within the geographical limits of the brewery (Reid, 2021), thus adding to the sense of place and freshness (Simoes Ferreira et al., 2021). Visiting breweries also gives visitors the opportunity to socialize with local people (Bachman, Hull, & Haecker, 2021) and to satisfy their desire for conspicuous status when sharing their trip experiences on social media (Boley et al., 2018).

Craft-beer aficionados' quest for tasting on-site exclusive products that reflect particular attributes of the local culture indicates a connection with neolocalism, as these are conscious actions that allow the creation and maintenance of an attachment to a specific place (Flack, 1997; Schnell, 2013; Schnell & Reese, 2014). Craft-brewers convey that sense of place by naming their beers with words evoking local stories or places, using symbols in their designs that display the place's history, or incorporating the flavors of local products in their recipes (Melewar & Skinner, 2018; Schnell & Reese, 2003). Worth noting, people with neolocalism attitudes maintain their behavior while traveling (Francioni & Byrd, 2016). As such, the neolocalism tourists' desire to connect with the local culture through their senses and emotions (Flack, 1997) has bolstered the number of microbreweries (Garavaglia, 2020; Schnell, 2011, 2013) and the development of craft-beer tourism (Reid, 2021) in major destinations.

Neolocalism is also enhanced by the tourists' most primitive quest for authentic experiences when visiting a destination (MacCannell, 1976). But rather than a full immersion in cultural authenticity, many tourists prefer having glimpses of the locals' ways of living (Robinson, 2001), which craft-beverage tourism can provide (A. Murray & Kline, 2015). Thus, tourists

provide entrepreneurs, craft-brewers in this case, the opportunity to embed elements of the local culture into their products, resulting in an emergent authenticity process in which tourists and suppliers co-create experiences (Cohen, 1988). Such co-creation is very pronounced in the development of craft-beverage destinations as key stakeholders interact to modify recipes and incorporate ingredients according to consumers' preferences (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021). Through that constant interaction, tourists can consume the place and its culture through their senses, which in the case of craft-beer tourism reinforces place attachment (Bachman, Hull, & Marlowe, 2021).

In brief, research on craft-beer and the implications of neolocalism for the development of craft-beverage tourism has evolved but is still in need of further investigation. Specifically, the extant literature indicates that craft-beverage tourism contributes to the preservation of local traditions (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017; Sidali et al., 2015) and it offers an opportunity for entrepreneurial diversification and expansion of the tourism offer, which both ultimately contribute to community development (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; Knollenberg et al., 2021; van Dijk et al., 2018). However, more research is needed to inform craft-brewers on how to differentiate their products from their industrial counterparts while forging their relationship with tourism industry initiatives (Cavaliere, 2017; Gil Arroyo et al., 2021). Therefore, informed by the RPT, we analyzed the mechanisms that craft-brewers in Cusco apply to compete and position themselves in the local market while capitalizing on the tourist influx of the destination and neolocalism trends.

Research Methods

We investigated the extent to which craft-brewers in a major tourism destination (Cusco) apply the RPT mechanisms to enter and thrive in the local market dominated by a national industrial beer corporation by capitalizing on the tourism industry and neolocalism. To do so, we addressed three questions: (1) What actions are craft-brewers applying to differentiate their beers from their industrial counterparts? (2) How do craft-brewers' actions align with neolocalism? (3) How does the tourism influx influence the craft-brewers' actions? To answer those questions and interpret the answers, we used qualitative methods that combined deductive (theoretical) and inductive coding (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022). Such combination allowed us to identify emerging sub-themes through "filling in" and "surfacing" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to expand the understanding of the specific actions that craft-brewers apply to each mechanism.

We conducted this study in the city of Cusco given several reasons. First, Cusco is home to one of the largest national industrial beers (Cusqueña) that beyond being an emblematic regional product, it has a prominent standing in the national beer market and a global reach (Flanders Investment & Trade, 2018). Second, the strong cultural heritage of Cusco, from pre-Inca to colonial times, makes it suitable to

investigate whether cultural features are embedded into the craft-beer offerings in connection with neolocalism. Third, Cusco's prominence as a major tourism destination (over 2 million visitors in 2019, pre-COVID pandemic) makes it suitable to understand how (if so) local craft-brewers are capitalizing on the destinations' tourist influx to support their growth. Lastly, Cusco has a strong brewing tradition since pre-Inca times (e.g., corn-based *chicha*), which could be revived because of the emerging demand for local original products.

Sampling, Data Generation, and Data Analysis Procedures

We drew the study sample upon referrals from local food and beverage businesses (e.g., bars) and the president of the Asociación de Cerveceros Artesanales del Sur (ACERARTE SUR), a community formed in 2018 to promote craft-beer consumption in Cusco. We identified 25 craft-breweries operating in Cusco; we invited one of their representatives, either the general manager or (co)founder, to participate in the study given their profound knowledge of the business. We first e-mailed an invitation to them, outlining the study purpose and objectives, duration of the interview, confidentiality commitment, and our contact information. We then followed up by phone because we did not obtain responses to the initial e-mails. Twenty-one invitees agreed to participate in the study; the remaining invitees were no longer in operation (3) or unreachable (1).

We conducted semi-structured interviews to garner data following an interview guide, drafted by the authors and reviewed by an external researcher specialized in craft-beer, composed of two sections. The first section gathered general information about the brewery (e.g., story behind the brewery's name, number of years in operation, and types of beers produced). The second section was organized in four topic areas focusing on each of the RPT mechanisms: (1) location (e.g., connection with a particular place and incorporation of local culture into branding); (2) anti-mass production sentiment (e.g., business growth expectations and production volume); (3) customization (e.g., use of local ingredients and production of limited editions); and (4) conspicuous status (e.g., sense of pride and knowledge levels across craft-brewers). We used probing questions about the link between craft-beer, neolocalism, and tourism across the interviews, as pertinent.

We garnered data from November 2021 to February 2022. Due to COVID-19 national guidelines (e.g., travel bans and social distance), we originally planned to interview all participants virtually via Zoom. However, unfamiliarity with virtual platforms or preference for in person interviews among some brewers made it necessary to use a combined interview method (18 virtual; 3 in-person). On average, interviews lasted 45 minutes (ranged 18–85 minutes). While interviewing participants, the principal researcher took notes

and wrote reflexive memos afterwards to register information about physical or emotional reactions to certain questions to enrich the participants' verbal data provided (Flick, 2014). The use of memos helped us to identify response patterns and notice similar reactions to certain questions. Once we finished collecting data, we removed any identifier and assigned a code to each participant composed of the letter B (for brewer) and a number.

After the interviews were transcribed verbatim, we first familiarized ourselves with the data. Informed by the extant literature on the RPT and evidence of its application in the craft-beer sector, we developed an initial codebook of four themes. We then used a combination of theoretical and open coding (Flick, 2014) to contrast data with the RPT mechanisms and to identify sub-themes, particularly on tourism related statements. During data analysis, we constantly used peer debriefing (Spillett, 2003) until reaching consensus on themes and sub-themes (Charmaz, 2006) to enhance trustworthiness and achieve validity. We made minor grammar and narrative corrections (e.g., removed conversational fillers and inserted punctuation marks) in the original quotes (Supplemental Appendices A and B) to increase clarity in the translated words.

Participants' Profile

Most participants were male (16 out of 21) and seemed to be between 25 and 45 years old. A slight majority (14) were natives of Cusco; the remainder were either from Peru's capital city (Lima; 3) or foreigners (e.g., Argentina, Australia; 4). They all were either general or operations managers, and in most cases, they shared responsibilities with someone else, usually the company co-founder. Therefore, most were decision-makers in the company management (e.g., sales, marketing) and beer production. The professional background of participants was quite diverse, including sociology, archeology, hospitality management, industrial engineering, among others. Yet, they all considered that their previous disciplinary knowledge and work experience have helped them to operate in their current occupation.

Only a few of the participants (6) had worked in the beer sector (either industrial or craft-breweries) before they started their own business. As such, most have trained themselves in the art of brewing through online instruction with international master brewers and a few had the chance to travel abroad to take on-site courses as brewing education is very limited in Peru. Nevertheless, all participants mentioned that they mainly learn from their own experimentation and often from the experiences shared by their fellow competitors. On average, participants have been working in their current brewery for 5 years, which concurs with the average age of their companies (ranging from 1.5 to 10 years). However, there were a few experienced brewers among participants, who had up to 20 years of experience in the brewing sector.

Findings and Discussion

The thematic analysis of interviews yielded 17 actions that participants considered key to positioning their craft-beers in a major tourism destination with a competitive beer market; these actions were mostly embedded in neolocalism and evidenced an explicit effort to approach tourists. Consistent with the RPT, these actions fit within its four thematic mechanisms: location (six actions), anti-mass production sentiment (four actions), customization (two actions), and conspicuous status (five actions). Altogether, these actions extend the existing conceptualization of each mechanism and provide a robust understanding of the RPT in the context of craft-beer in tourism destinations.

Location

All the participating craft-breweries communicate, in various ways, their connection with Cusco (e.g., Cusco beer company), the greater Andean region (e.g., Andes Pride), or a particular place or feature within these geographic areas, such as a town (e.g., Yucay) or a mountain (e.g., Karmenka). However, the connection with the location transcends geographic markers and incorporates the place's identity, history, and culture into their beers:

We definitely think that we added value when we bet on this idea, for having chosen this idea. This concept that is focused on our culture, something that for us is very easy to tell because it is our daily life, we did not have to rummage around; we had to read to further our knowledge, but it was not so complicated. (B7)

Participants' effort to add meanings to the geographic location through stories and imagery infused into their product branding can increase sense of place, which is critical to attract tourists traveling to experience the local culture, especially those influenced by the neolocalism trend (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022).

Our analysis indicates that craft-breweries incorporate location markers through Geographic delimitation (two actions), Culture (two actions), and Engagement (two actions; Table 1). In terms of *Geographic Delimitation*, craft-brewers purposely chose a specific location and made it a focal element of their branding (e.g., name and labels) because of their own connection with the place:

Yes, it [the brewery] is in fact linked to Urubamba, or the Sacred Valley, but definitely Urubamba. Urubamba is a place where the people who establishes there become very passionate about it, so really, it is a gripping place for people who feel comfortable there, that are practically all people who establishes there. (B15)

Our analysis delves into a breadth of reasons behind brewers *choosing a particular place* beyond strategic market positioning (e.g., customers' age), a business opportunity (e.g.,

Table 1. “Location”: Power Quotes of Emerging Actions Grouped by Themes.

Emerging actions by theme	Power quotes
Geographic delimitation	
Choosing a particular place	“Urubamba is a place whose settlers become fervent of it, so it really is an exciting place for people who feel comfortable there, which are practically all its settlers.” (B12)
Remaining peripherally touristic	“What we want is to bring people into [location removed] and show them that this was the last place of the Inca’s resistance and also a place that does good things, with knowledge and mastery.” (B16)
Culture	
Branding culture	“From the start I developed a recipe choosing what to incorporate and when, aiming that every beer would contain Peruvian culture in and outside of the bottle.” (B3)
Brewing culture for pride and identity	“The truth is that it [the beer] does contain the typical features of [location removed], like the flowers, mountains, colors, textiles. . .” (B15)
Engagement	
Celebrating festivities	“In the beginning, just like any other adventurer, we wanted to show the brand, we attended every event we were invited at or that we could go (. . .) But also with this monopoly, it is increasingly restrictive for our brands [to participate]. So if you want to participate they will not let you or they will bother you, so in the end it is a lot of effort for what you can earn.” (B14)
Stimulating local wellbeing	“We decided to buy biodegradable products for social responsibility.” (B7)

fewer competitors), or resource availability (e.g., water quality) that are commonly cited in the literature (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; Wojtyra et al., 2020). Also emerged in our analysis that participants chose their location as a way to connect with their family roots (e.g., “I am from Cusco, my family is from Cusco”—B10) and because the place combined historic, cultural, and landscape values that offer them the possibility to attain a work-personal life balance: “We wanted to have a brewery so as we could maintain our lifestyle and keep our peace of not living in a city or producing in an industrial area” (B12). The latter reason fits a draw for travelers looking for neolocalism offerings, thus producers should consider using it as a narrative discourse in their branding (e.g., labeling) or informal chats with tourists when the opportunity arises.

Our findings challenge the assertive notion that small businesses tend to choose peripheral locations at their onset but aspire to move closer to areas with a major concentration of masses as they grow, as the RPT postulates (Carroll et al., 2002). However, we found a divergence among breweries. On the one hand, those few located in the adjacent areas of Cusco city stated their desire to *remaining peripherally touristic* because they want to focus on the local clientele. Their strong emotional ties with their chosen place, and even forgoing the allure of tourism influx and revenues, make them reluctant to move. Still, they were seeking to bring tourists into their location. On the other hand, most breweries are located in high-transit tourist areas, supporting the link between tourism and the proliferation of craft-breweries (Karafolas, 2021; Knollenberg et al., 2021; Wojtyra et al., 2020):

What we want to do is bring people into [location removed] to show them that this is the last milestone of Inca resistance as it is also a center where good things come out, with knowledge, with a lot of mastery. (B16).

In terms of *Culture*, most breweries have purposely incorporated elements of the local heritage since the creation of their business idea. In line with the extant literature, such cultural reliance has strong marketing purposes (Gatrell et al., 2018), either to make the product attractive (e.g., incorporation of cultural graphics in their labels) or to entice tourists’ consumption: “Evidently, we planned from the beginning the branding of our project based on the history [of the place] so that we could cling to tourism, that is highly exploited in Cusco” (B16). Specifically, participating brewers reported *branding culture* in different ways, notably by incorporating images and names of folkloric and religious characters, iconic natural sites, and traditional colors and patterns of local textiles into their labels. Their images and texts also convey the local lifestyle, historic passages, religious rituals, and traditional songs. And, very often, the names of the beers are in the native *quechua* language, such as *inti* (sun), *tayta* (father), and *apu* (lord) Chicón, cultural representations that tourists embrace when visiting Cusco.

Participating brewers emphasized they were *brewing culture for pride and identity*. Although pride has previously been reported among local producers of craft-beverages and local consumers (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017; Gundlach & Neville, 2012), we found that pride enticed brewers to utilize their beers to share the local culture.

National and foreign tourists visit a place because they want to learn a part of its culture, they want to learn more about that place (. . .) so our concept has a great quantity of information about that, it helps us to promote it, promote part of our culture (B20).

Beyond cultural sharing, participants’ strong pride in their location is critical to build personal and collective identities with the destination, especially in the context of food and

rural tourism (Sidali et al., 2015), which can ultimately entice word-of-mouth referrals and repeat visitation (Bachman, Hull, & Haecker, 2021).

Participants also brew cultural identity into their products by using ingredients with a heritage meaning in the Andean culture, such as coca leaves used in daily life and spiritual rites. A participant explained the purpose of using coca leaves:

We have [a beer] with coca because we consider that it is a sacred leaf and there is a misunderstanding behind it. For example, the tourist thinks that they will rub the coca leaf and they will obtain a white powder. (. . .) And what we want is for our beer to be tasted, not for the alkaloids it may contain but because of what coca leaf means to the Andean men. . . . That we, every time we work, we always ‘*chacchamos*’ (chew) coca [leaves] because it invigorates us, it relaxes us, it gives us strength for work. (B3)

Some brewers also incorporated traditional techniques, notably ancestral fermentations of corn to prepare *chicha*, confirming the extant literature (Feeney, 2017; Holtkamp et al., 2016; Schnell, 2013; Schnell & Reese, 2014). This cultural embeddedness shapes the uniqueness and local representation of Cusco craft-beers, which is determinant to provide an exceptional tourism experience (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017).

A high level of craft-brewers’ *Engagement* with their location, absent in the RPT but explicit in neolocalism (Gatrell et al., 2018; Holtkamp et al., 2016), emerged in our study. Specifically, we found that craft-brewers sought to participate in local festivities and were concerned about the social and environmental impact of their operations. *Celebrating festivities* reflects brewers’ commitment to support events that are meaningful to the local community. In doing so, many mentioned the difficulties they encounter accessing these events, especially major festivities drawing tourists, because of the long-standing presence and economic power of their industrial counterpart. Such a challenging context has incentivized craft-brewers to organize their own festivals to capitalize on the tourism influx that peaks up during major holidays. Doing so can also help craft-brewers to expand their cooperation with stakeholders (e.g., event organizers and local authorities) which can increase their competitiveness and pull capacity (Duarte Alonso & Sakellarios, 2017; Rogerson & Collins, 2015).

A few brewers expressed their community engagement by *stimulating local wellbeing*, an action that people seeking neolocalism highly appreciate (Gatrell et al., 2018) and absent in the RPT. Specifically, some mentioned operating in ways that are environmentally friendly (e.g., using biodegradable products) or supporting the socio-economic development of the community (e.g., buying from local producers) as a matter of social responsibility. Combined, these actions are in line with the sustainable development goals and reaffirm the suitability of craft-beverage tourism to foster

sustainable community development (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017; Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; World Tourism Organization, 2017). A brewer explained:

One portion of the profits from the sale of a bottle goes to those [local] families. And if we can secure this community, at least these five initial families, we will accomplish our mission. And, the larger the project gets, the better the impact we create. (B17)

Anti-Mass Production Sentiment

The production volume of participant craft-breweries ranges between 20 and 850 barrels per year, which is far below the official limit of 15,000 barrels for a microbrewery (Brewers Association, 2018). Yet, our participants did not use their production volume to define themselves as micro-breweries, but rather their anti-mass production sentiment. That is, participants considered themselves micro or small businesses because of their limited number of employees (oftentimes themselves and a support staff during busy times), or their family-run status where all family members are somehow involved, supporting that most breweries start as home experiments (D. W. Murray & O’Neill, 2012). Our analysis yielded four actions that expand the meaning of anti-mass production sentiment in terms of Production Volume (two actions) and Authenticity (two actions; Table 2).

Determining the *Production Volume* is critical for craft-brewers to balance profitability with a sense of craftsmanship (van Dijk et al., 2018; Wojtyra, 2020). Such balance was evident among our study participants who reported *embedding emotions into growth* as they sought a mix of business and sentimental objectives when setting their production levels. In line with the literature (Rogerson & Collins, 2019), several mentioned refining market segments (e.g., expanding regionally) or changing their production or sales capacity (e.g., expanding production plant) to guide their growth. Tapping into craft-beverage tourism by opening taprooms or targeting tourists was a salient business objective. Yet, participants’ narratives yielded an encroachment of sentimental desires into their business decision-making, such as establishing a family tradition to transcend generations or increasing their prestige and recognition as craft-brewers. Although such business-emotional mix of factors driving their production relates to craft-brewers’ desire to build a long-term company that retains authenticity, identity, love, and passion for brewing at their core (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021; Rogerson & Collins, 2019), it is not comprised in the RPT.

Participants also stressed *riding the tourism influx* to regulate their beer production. Rather than producing high volumes of beer to reap the economic savings of mass production, craft-brewers purposely brew small batches to deliver a fresh and innovative product to meet the demands of tourists in two ways. First, they produced a variety of styles for tourists, especially foreigners (e.g., “The foreign clientele asks for maltose beers”—B10), arguing that they

Table 2. “Anti-mass Production Sentiment”: Power Quotes of Emerging Actions Grouped by themes.

Emerging actions by themes	Power quotes
Production volume	
Embedding emotions into growth	“That is what I would aspire to as a company, having four or five generations that can produce a high-end beer with an optimal quality, beyond achieving sales of four thousand liters per day.” (B10)
Riding the tourism influx	“Our product, just like many others in the area, is linked to the tourism peaks and the high tourism seasons. Basically, January and February are the lowest months here.” (B15)
Authenticity	
Offering unique products	“Sure, all beers are unique because even if I give you the same recipe I use, you won’t make it the same because of the altitude, water, fermentation temperature. . . So it will never be the same.” (B2)
Ensuring high quality	“We are a brewery that does not produce many styles, instead we produce less [variety] but of good quality.” (B14)

Table 3. “Customization”: Power Quotes of Emerging Actions.

Emerging actions	Power quotes
Unveiling consumers’ preferences	“First of all, I am always at the Taproom, at least once or twice per week. It is almost a customized treatment and we are always in contact with the client, either through online sales, phone sales or when they visit our venue.” (B3)
Experimenting with local ingredients	“When we see a product that we like, some fruit, some herb, we always think of how it would taste if we incorporate it in a beer.” (B20)

tend to have a more ample taste on beers. Secondly, they increased the production volume of the specific types of beers that are most preferred by tourists during high tourism season, which is in line with similar tendencies noticed in other major tourism destinations (Rogerson & Collins, 2019). A brewer explained the effect of the peak (July–August) and low (January–March) tourism seasons in Cusco in the local craft-beer production:

Some businesses close during this season. January, February, March, that tells you how strong the low season is. July is a great month, July and August are awesome, you produce more and sell more because there is obviously more tourists and tourists consume more craft-beer. (B15)

According to Carroll et al. (2002), the *Authenticity* of a product reflects the anti-mass production sentiment. Our participants acknowledged that *offering unique products* is a must for craft-brewers as they are responsible for producing an inimitable product.

Every brewery has its own personality, its own soul. Why? Because of the person who makes it. The beer says a lot about the person behind its craft, so I think that [our] beer is unique. . . similar to others, but unique. (B21)

In defining the authenticity of craft-beers, most consumers do so in terms of craftsmanship (Frake, 2017; Gundlach & Neville, 2012). Yet, our participants considered that craftsmanship was not sufficient but emphasized that *ensuring*

high quality was a differentiating element from the industrial beer sector as “they are more concerned with producing beer at a lower cost” (B16). This finding supports that product quality is the main attribute and competitive strategy to participate in the tourism sector (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021), an attribute that the RPT also contemplates (Carroll et al., 2002).

Customization

Our participants were constantly customizing their products to respond to the desires and needs of the craft-beer clientele. However, given their aforementioned quest to balance their business (e.g., profitability) and emotional (e.g., pride) desires, participants explained that they sought customization not only to satisfy their clients but also themselves (“What satisfies me, as a craft-brewer, is to provide a broad offer of beers to awe people and to allow them to try new things”—B4), indicating a variation of this RPT mechanism. Such self-motivation leads craft-brewers to create new beers, which is critical to satisfy travelers seeking neolocalism (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022; Taylor & DiPietro, 2019). As one producer stated: “Honestly (I create new beers) driven by my own passion at that very moment. And then I take them to others for tasting, after which I accept criticism. . . [But] initially I create them based on my own taste” (B21). The customization mechanism was possible through two actions (Table 3) that go beyond commonly used practices, chiefly producing limited-edition beers to commemorate special events (Schnell & Reese, 2014).

Participants put special effort into understanding the interests and needs of their clientele, who they described as both locals and tourists, predominantly young (25–40 years old) with high acquisitive power and slightly more men than women. They also mentioned their consumers being interested in natural products, the outdoors and the environment, food and drinks lovers, with an increasing knowledge about beer, all of which match features identified in the literature (Holtkamp et al., 2016; Simoes Ferreira et al., 2021). Participants explained how they constantly observe their clientele's behavior at the bars and even engage with them in conversations as ways for *unveiling consumers' preferences*. They also match the information gathered with the outflow of each beer to determine customers' preferences. Such an "intimate" producer-consumer relationship also allows craft-beverage producers to share information about the production process and the origin of ingredients, which is highly valued by consumers (Cole, 2017).

Seeking to satisfy the changing needs of craft-beer consumers (Garavaglia, 2020), all participants were *experimenting with local ingredients*. In line with the literature (Schnell & Reese, 2014), participating craft-brewers incorporated a large array of local ingredients in their beer recipes. But distinctively as elsewhere reported, brewers in Cusco were intentionally incorporating native ingredients known for their health and cultural value. For example, they were using superfoods, such as *quinoa* and *kiwicha* that have very high nutritional goodness, as well as medicinal herbs, such as *muña* (Andean mint) which is widely used in the Andes to ease digestion and alleviate stomachache. Such native-based innovation blends into the holistic cultural product that the country portrays to attract international tourists through the gastronomic-archeological mix (Cole, 2017). To cover the costs of constant experimentation (van Dijk et al., 2018), study participants reported releasing small batches: "When we have new projects we create a recipe, we polish it and when we think it is ready to go out on the market, we release small quantities to test its acceptance and see how the market reacts" (B20).

Conspicuous Status

The sense of higher status that craft-brewers perceived over their industrial counterparts emerged through Self-assessment (three actions) and Drawing Distinction (two actions; Table 4). *Self-assessment* started with craft-brewers *humbling their expertise*. Most participants emphasized they did not consider themselves as experts and were still in a learning path despite their vast knowledge of technical (e.g., fermentation process) and historical (e.g., craft-beer evolution) aspects. One participant, holding the longest experience in brewing (25 years), stated:

I am not an expert. I have a certain level of knowledge, and that is only because I keep studying and searching for more information. But you will never be able to fill your knowledge and give it an end. No; you will always keep learning. (B11)

Despite stating their skills limitations, participants also were *taking pride* for what they do, who they are, and what they have, which has been reported among this and other types of craft-beverage producers (Barbieri & Baggett, 2017; Gundlach & Neville, 2012; Rogerson & Collins, 2019). Importantly, craft-brewers were "happy for having the opportunity to communicate the history of the place I love, [named removed], to people that do not know it. Communicating that is a great satisfaction for me" (B1). Such proud communication is the branding core in the process of attracting craft-beverage tourists (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021).

Participants' self-assessment led them to reflect about their social networks and how they were *engaging in coope-tition*, the interplay between competition and cooperation (Mathias et al., 2017). Coopetition is a salient characteristic of the dynamics of the craft-beverage business where its members, although competing in the same market, collaborate with each other and support new entrants, which facilitates its venture into craft-beverage tourism (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; Knollenberg et al., 2021). For most participants, coopetition meant increasing the chances of success for them all: "We are a very tight group, we do not envy each other or anything like that. For example, my beer has improved thanks to them [other craft brewers]" (B2). Nonetheless, some participants did not share the need for coopetition nor had such a sense of cohesion. This finding, deserving further inquiry, may be associated with cultural values as Duarte Alonso et al. (2021) found similar sentiments among craft-brewers throughout Peru.

Altogether, actions related to self-assessment signal empowerment, making craft-brewers' potential agents of social and economic change in their communities through the creation of transformative tourism experiences (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022). Humbling their expertise by engaging in constant learning, taking pride of their product and locality, and negotiating power relations through coopetition also speak for Scheyvens's (1999) psychological, social, and political empowerments.

Participants also displayed conspicuous status by *Drawing Distinction* amongst them and with their industrial counterparts. They started by *recognizing the industrial's functionality* that provides a cheap and light beer that people can drink for extended periods of time, that suits situations like local festivities where people celebrate and drink for several consecutive days. Participants also recognized that customers associate industrial beer with certain foods, similar to the coke-and-popcorn pairing that has resulted from long-standing, expensive, and targeted marketing strategies of large corporations. One participant explained that mental association related to craft and industrial beers:

For example, when you eat ceviche, it makes you want to drink [industrial beer brand]. There are things you cannot change. But if you are looking for enjoyment and new experiences, like something to pair with a culinary proposal, I think you should go for craft beer. (B18)

Table 4. “Conspicuous Status”: Power Quotes of Emerging Actions Grouped by Themes.

Emerging actions by themes	Power quotes
Self-assessment	
Humbling their expertise	“I am still on a learning path, and I read every time I can, or enroll in a class. There’s many specializations and I hope one day I can call myself an expert.” (B21)
Taking pride	“People enjoy drinking a beer that was made by you, head to toes. And when they say it’s good, well, that fills you with pride.” (B10)
Engaging in coopetition	“In the end, what I look for [from other brewers] is not their approval, like ‘hey, your beer is nice and cool’. If they say so, great! But what I look for, most of all, is to know if the beer is right, showing no signs of contamination, no off flavors, a beer without issues.” (B4)
Drawing distinction	
Recognizing the industrial’s functionality	“The only bad thing is that they [local people] are used to having parties that last for two or three days, so they are drinking, and drinking, and drinking, so they need a lighter beer. So the consumption of craft beer in that realm is quite low because of the cost, so they drink industrial beers that allow them to keep drinking for the couple of days that the party lasts, holding a stable alcohol level.” (B10)
Embracing distinctiveness	“There is no good or bad [beer] in this story, the thing here is that you should take care of the product’s quality and it is really easy to break away from the standard. In fact, craft beer is a product that has more life. It is like eating fast food at [franchise name] rather than going to a restaurant where the chef prepares a dish that offers more sensations, more feelings, and in this dish you will discover many things. And that is what happens with craft beer, it is not only about the alcohol, but it is about emotions and sensations and everything it can transmit through the smell and sight because beer is about looking at the foam, looking at the color. And there are so many things about it, it is a product that is much more alive.” (B16)

Such distinction also supports how craft-beverage and culinary resources can be paired in the diversification of iconic-dependent destinations (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021).

Participants were *embracing distinctiveness* given the ensemble of values (e.g., time, effort, constant training, passion, and attention to detail), the high-quality ingredients used, and their diverse offer of flavors released in small quantities, which altogether support the prestige and exclusiveness of the product (“I do not have anything against industrial beer, but it does not have what makes craft-beer special”—B2). Although participants seemed reluctant to bluntly admit the superiority of craft-beer over the industrial one (“I would not use the term ‘better than’ because there are different beers for each client’s taste”—B1), many used eloquent analogies reflecting their inner thoughts (“We are a freshly squeezed orange juice while they [industrial beer] are a juice box”—B14).

Craft-brewers’ reluctance to compare themselves with their industrial counterparts may be a sign of snobbism that characterizes the craft-beer elite, both producers and consumers around the world (Simoes Ferreira et al., 2021; Toro-González et al., 2014). Yet, such snobbism, especially when shared through social media, is important to engage tourists in the co-creation of craft-beer experiences (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022). Emerging tourism destinations may especially benefit from craft-brewery snobbism as snob tourists prefer to visit off-the-beaten-path places and engage in unique tourism activities that offer them a high level of cultural

capital (Russell et al., 2022). Thus, snob craft-beer tourists may become strong influencers in promoting travel to adjacent areas in search of specialty beer.

Conclusions

Framed within the RPT, we identified the set of actions that craft-brewers in Cusco are applying to succeed in this major tourism destination despite the dominating presence of their industrial counterpart. The 17 actions we identified, comprising seven themes, fall within the four RPT mechanisms: location (3 themes and 6 actions), anti-mass production (2 themes and 4 actions), customization (2 actions), and conspicuous status (2 themes and 5 actions). By incorporating neolocalism into the discussion of findings, we have expanded the extent of the RPT by elucidating how each mechanism is applied (i.e., actions) beyond describing its meaning, as found in the extant literature. Additionally, we identified actions that either support, deepen, or challenge the RPT mechanisms when craft-breweries operate in a major tourism destination. Altogether, our findings contribute to the extant knowledge of craft-beer tourism that can help inform the development of this type of niche tourism. Doing so is especially important for major tourism destinations that are seeking alternative avenues to decrease their tourism dependence on iconic resources and to preserve aspects of their culture, which craft-beer tourism appears suitable to do (Sidali et al., 2015).

Scholarly Contributions

In terms of scholarly contributions, our findings expand (either identifying new actions or challenging others) the RPT applicability to the tourism context by elucidating on the set of actions that craft-breweries apply to position themselves successfully in a major tourism destination. For example, producing small badges of high-quality beer to reflect craftsmanship and authenticity (Frake, 2017; Gundlach & Neville, 2012) was directed to meet the tourists' preferences, especially during peak tourism seasons. In the process of creating close—yet spontaneous—encounters with their tourist clientele to understand their taste and preferences as Lee et al. (2017) suggested to forge a strong craft-beverage industry in relationship with neolocalism, we found evidence of co-creation of the craft-beverage tourism experience, an emerging element, which can entice memorability (Galvagno & Giaccone, 2019).

Although this study confirmed that maintaining an authentic product requires constant innovation that is rooted in the brewers' insatiable search for new flavors (Wojtyra, 2020), we found that both authenticity and innovation in a rich cultural destination manifested in two distinct ways, which contribute to the extant literature. First, Cusco brewers were using native ingredients that have a strong mystical value because of their nutritional or medicinal goodness (e.g., *kiwicha*, coca leaves). Secondly, they were incorporating the native spirituality, a syncretic worldview resulting from the mix of Andean and Catholic beliefs. Combined, the incorporation of local cultural elements into their products was beyond branding purposes (Feeney, 2017; Holtkamp et al., 2016) and sought to create a deep connection with their place, a strong neolocalism trait.

Plausibly, the strong and recurrent cultural narratives among study participants may reflect the strength that spiritual and mystical elements have in attracting tourists to Cusco (Yetimoğlu & Çınar, 2021). Yet, we found they were mostly seeking to entice a sense of place attachment, which is critical to inspire consumers' willingness to contribute to cultural preservation. Strengthening place attachment among tourists can make them evoke powerful emotions, such as increased satisfaction, which ultimately can translate into positive word of mouth (Hosany et al., 2017), an element that craft-beer tourism should emphasize. The strong collective identity and pride that shaped Cusco craft-brewers' conspicuous status deserves a deeper examination in view of the social return that craft-beer tourists may seek and obtain when communicating their identity and status through social media (Boley et al., 2018).

Our findings indicate that neolocalism can serve as a vertex that brings together craft-brewers' desire to uphold their values (e.g., remain authentic and seeking quality) while applying RPT actions to compete with their industrial counterparts in tourism destinations and appeal to tourists. Although neolocalism in the craft-beer context may be

questioned in locations (e.g., Peru) that do not produce their key ingredients (hops, barley, and yeast), we found that incorporating local ingredients with strong cultural value (e.g., *muña*) may provide comparable authenticity and sense of place-based associations. Moreover, one brewer's experimenting efforts to substitute hops with a native ingredient following ancestral Andean techniques could represent an emergent authenticity process (Cohen, 1988), which could enhance the destination appeal for craft-beverage tourism.

Neolocalism is also about forming strong bonds with the surrounding community, supporting their wellbeing, and contributing to the local economy (Holtkamp et al., 2016), which our participants displayed in several ways (e.g., buying from local suppliers and using local ingredients). At the same time, participants capitalized on the tourism influx when applying actions related to each RPT mechanism (e.g., regulating production based on tourism seasons). Another scholarly contribution resulting from the neolocalism-tourism interplay is our participants' desire to remain peripheral to attract tourists into their hometowns, which contradicts RPT's call for moving to central market areas (Carroll et al., 2002). Worth mentioning is that despite brewers' efforts to capitalize on the tourist influx, we found that their strong passion for producing high quality beer decelerated, rather than stimulated, their desire for growth, a tourism-neolocalism intersection that can strengthen the appeal for craft-beer tourism.

Practical Implications

Craft-beer tourism, as a tourism diversification strategy within icon-dependent destinations such as Cusco (Sidali et al., 2015), requires the ability of craft-brewers to pull tourists into their establishments (e.g., breweries and taprooms). With that aim, our study findings suggest that it is critical that craft-brewers differentiate from, rather than fight against, their industrial competitors. Considering that craft-beer firms tend to start as home experiments with limited resources (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021; Wojtyra, 2020), they can build upon the neolocalism trend to appeal to tourists seeking a local sense of place and to experience the local culture (Taylor & DiPietro, 2020). They can do so, as study participants indicated, by celebrating local festivities, experimenting with local ingredients, and stimulating local wellbeing, which does not require large resource investments. These actions are also suitable for destinations undertaking managerial approaches, such as geotourism, creative placemaking, or regenerative tourism, that place locals' wellbeing and heritage conservation at their core.

The potential of craft-beer tourism as a diversification strategy can only happen when craft-brewers intend to remain peripheral to touristic areas, such as some of our participants indicated, and draw tourists to their place. Yet, developing branding and promotion efforts with the strength to drive tourists away from iconic sites should consider

promoting cultural values (e.g., use of native superfoods and mystic elements) and a sense of pride (Cole, 2017; Gil Arroyo et al., 2023) that can convey a neolocalism appeal beyond the “small batch high quality production” discourse, as our participants indicated. It is advisable that craft-brewers communicate these values to the public to convey their comparative advantage through individual (e.g., brewery’s social media) or group (e.g., marketing campaigns) efforts to attract new customers and to increase customers’ loyalty.

Finally, strong craft-beer tourism development requires orchestrating efforts among stakeholders at different levels (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021). To compete successfully it is important that craft-brewers adopt the co-competition model to increase their capitals (e.g., shared knowledge and cohesive advocacy message) and bargaining power (e.g., purchase of ingredients at lower prices and group marketing). Given that associations have a pivotal role in fostering such cohesion (Knollenberg et al., 2021), it is advisable that local brewers’ association (ACERARTE SUR in the case of Cusco) fortifies such a role. Supporting agencies (e.g., destination marketing/management organizations) can also assist with craft-brewery industry development (Duarte Alonso & Sakellarios, 2017), especially by supporting thematic routes around specific (e.g., ale trails) or complementary (e.g., local foods and beverages) offerings that can increase the pull capacity of outskirts destinations (Cole, 2017; Xu et al., 2016).

Final Remarks

When interpreting our findings for transferability to other contexts it is advisable to take in mind a few potential limitations. First, we chose Cusco mainly because of its established standing as a major tourism destination, yet dependent on its iconic heritage resources, as well as the incipient stage of its craft-beverage industry. However, different political (e.g., degree of political stability and rigor of alcohol-related policies) and tourism (e.g., level of resource-dependence and globalization levels) characteristics in other destinations may not be suitable for the exact transferability of findings. Secondly, data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic which pushed shifting planned in-person to virtual interviews. Although the principal investigator created rapport with interviewees with a preliminary on-site visit and/or phone calls, issues with internet connection and reduced familiarity with virtual platforms may have altered the natural flow of participants’ expressions. It is also worth mentioning that although the field researcher traveled to Cusco to identify and recruit all formally established craft-breweries in the area, it is plausible that other craft-breweries exist in adjacent places. Finally, travel restrictions during data collection may have diluted the tourism narratives of study participants.

In view of the aforementioned study contributions and limitations, our findings call for further investigation of the craft-brewery industry as a strategy to diversify the tourism

offer especially in major destinations with high levels of dependence on iconic tourist resources. In doing so, it is critical to account for the cultural values of the local providers as these can permeate craft-beverage tourism offerings (Duarte Alonso et al., 2021). For example, more investigations are needed to identify the pull capacity of a mix of local foods and beverages (e.g., pachamanca and pisco) and native ingredients (e.g., *muña*, guinea pig) with strong cultural values to draw visitors to peripheral areas to expand rural development.

Our evidence on how neolocalism enables craft-brewers to succeed in a highly competitive market, calls for further investigating the role of neolocalism in driving tourism diversification beyond craft-beer tourism. In doing so, it is advisable to investigate activities offered upon co-creation (e.g., hands-on activities) and intangible resources (e.g., storytelling) especially related to the agrifood production (e.g., agritourism and culinary tourism) given their suitability to benefit locals directly, their affinity with neolocalism, and their rapid global growth (World Tourism Organization, 2017). Doing so can increase destinations’ managerial readiness to facilitate the coexistence of small local initiatives along industrial ones, which can reduce overcrowding and gentrification (Tao et al., 2017). By pioneering the analysis of the neolocalism-RPT-tourism interplay, our study contributes to the scholarly and practitioner knowledge toward developing craft-beer tourism.

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Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

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