



Research Article

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The Fiesta of the Patios: A Heritage Tourism Resource in the City of Cordoba, Spain

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Abstract

The patio houses of Cordoba, Spain, are the expression of a traditional form of life and conviviality. Since the designation of the Fiesta of the Patios as Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2012 by the UNESCO, the patios have become an important tourism resource with a significant economic impact on the city. This article analyzes the Fiesta of the Patios from the viewpoint of the people that reside in the patio houses. A survey was carried out among the patio owners and managers to determine their opinion on various aspects related to the festival. The results show that despite the wealth generated in the city by the Fiesta of the Patios, the event has a scarce economic impact on the owners and managers of the patios. Moreover, important issues must be addressed such as the lack of coordination between the stakeholders involved in the management and organization of the festival. Without a doubt, it is necessary to better rationalize resources in benefit of the patio residents, since the festival would not be possible without them.

Keywords: Patios, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Cordoba, Cultural Tourism, Fiesta of the Patios

1. Introduction

Heritage, gastronomy, popular festivals and pilgrimages, among others, form part of the culture and idiosyncrasies of peoples and places. Such cultural expressions become tourist attractions because of people's desire to come in contact with other ways of life and the traditions that they entail. In a globalized world where tourism has become one of the major expressions of the globalization process (Monreal, 2002), it is necessary to promote cultural heritage as a factor of identity in the face of globalization processes (Treserras, 2013) by marketing the culture and all its associated elements as a tourism product. From a socio-economic perspective, cultural tourism is a positive instrument for local and regional development as it permits the equitable distribution of benefits in the host communities (Toselli, 2006). Cultural tourism also allows maintaining heritage which would

otherwise be lost, such as the case of old factories or mines that are no longer in operation, but which are conserved thanks to industrial or mining tourism.

Cultural tourism has gradually become one of the most developed tourism segments (Rypkema & Mason, 2011; Caro et al., 2014) and demonstrated its capacity to increase competitiveness, create employment opportunities, curb the rural exodus, generate income to invest in conservation, cultivate a sense of pride and self-esteem in host communities and even rejuvenate urban areas and historical quarters. In this sense, tourism can serve to resurrect and revive a culture (García & García, 2016).

According to early studies carried out in several European countries, cultural tourism demand began to expand in the 1990s, although the manner in which cultural tourism is supplied and consumed is changing. Today, the new cultural tourism focuses on integrating production and consumption and strengthening the links between suppliers and consumers. Instead of passive consumption, cultural tourists take a proactive approach to satisfy their needs and want to actively participate in creating experiences during the trip (Jovicic, 2014). In addition, this type of tourism offsets the marked seasonality in mass tourism (Cisneros-Martínez & Fernández-Morales, 2015).

Located in southern Spain, the city of Cordoba has a population of 327,362 inhabitants and an average per capita income of €23,720 in 2015, which is below the national average (€24,600). The economy of Cordoba is dominated by the services sector, particularly tourism-related services. The city has 97 hotels and inns and 6,513 hotel beds (IAE, 2015). Due to its numerous Roman, Arab and Christian monuments, among them the Mosque-Cathedral which was inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1984 and the historical quarter of that was designated a World Heritage Site in 1994, the main visitors to the city are cultural tourists (Bojollo et al., 2015; Ruiz & Casas, 2017). In addition to these two major tourist attractions, the Fiesta of the Patios was declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012. This designation has had a positive impact on the number of tourists who visit the city, who now number over one million per year. This new tourism resource is the object of this research.

All the city's inhabitants collaborate and participate in the Fiesta of the Patios to varying degrees as they consider the festival to be the most important of the city's events and perceive it as an integral part of their identity. However, the residents who dwell in these patio houses are the most involved as they are responsible for maintaining and transmitting this tradition. Indeed, they spend the whole year organizing and preparing for the festival and caring for their patios, plants and flowers for the visitors to admire.

This article analyzes the Fiesta of the Patios from the viewpoint of the residents of the patio houses given the crucial role they play in the preparation and celebration of this event and without whom the festival would not be possible.

The paper is structured as follows. In section 2 the patios as an architectural element are discussed. The evolution of the festival is then analyzed in section 3. In the following section, the methodology is described. Finally, the results and conclusions of the study are presented in the last sections.

2. The Patio: An Architectural Element

The courtyards or patios of certain dwellings in Cordoba are envisioned as a space for socializing. They have evolved from the Roman period to the present day to become an important tourist attraction (Colmenarejo, 2015). These patio houses are mainly located in the historical quarter of the city where there are more than 14,000 dwellings. Of these, most are small with a floor area of 150 to 200 m², about 2,200 are single-family dwellings and the rest are multi-family dwellings with an average of 5 houses per building (City Council of Cordoba, 2009).

The courtyards were originally designed to provide ventilation to the rest of the rooms of the house. The location and form of the courtyards depended on the architectural style of the dwelling and the historical period in which it was built. In the Greco-Roman era, for example, the courtyards were open-air spaces with a peristyle (García, 2003) surrounded by a colonnade where daily life was conducted and visitors were received. Upon the arrival of the Arabs to Cordoba, numerous innovations were made to the dwellings. The façades were kept simple in the form of a blank wall,

while decorative elements were reserved for the inside of the homes and the interior courtyards were embellished with tiles, lattice and brick or cobblestone paving. Water was a key element of the courtyards, with reflecting pools, water fountains and channels abounding so that flowers and fruit trees could be grown in imitation of the Muslim paradise. It was in the Arab period when the courtyards began to take on an important social function as a space for conviviality and leisure and where relatives and neighbors could talk freely in the open air and enjoy nature without having to step outdoors (Priego et al., 2014). Following the Christian conquest of the city by Ferdinand III (1236), few formal changes were made to the layout of the dwellings. The Mudejar style prevailed until the sixteenth century, when Plateresque and Renaissance decorative elements were incorporated into the courtyard openings, the façades were enhanced and square-shaped patios with porticoes were built on the ground floor, while covered galleries with balconies were built on the upper floors. According to Hernández (1999), at the end of the Middle Ages these *casas de vecinos*¹ were widespread in Cordoba. Also known as “neighboring houses”, “patio houses” or “neighboring patios”, these dwellings made use of other buildings—in particular convents and stately homes—which, when compartmentalized, could house different families in small accommodations and housing units which shared communal spaces such as the kitchen, bathroom and washroom. In the nineteenth century, the traditional cobblestone flooring was substituted for stone or marble floors, while hydraulic floor tiles were used in the more modest dwellings. The courtyards became more austere and flowers were planted in pots rather than flowerbeds, with the decoration being a mixture of a variety of archaeological elements. During the Romantic Period, the old Baroque wooden doors were replaced by iron gates. It was a century in which the classical style merged with Middle Eastern elements, giving rise to an eclectic architecture that is very characteristic of Cordoba. This architectural style survived throughout the twentieth century, at which time the *casas de vecinos* appeared. These were unoccupied palaces or buildings that were refurbished for people with scarce resources mainly from rural areas. The courtyard became the organizational center or meeting place of their inhabitants since it was where the communal cooking areas, bathrooms and washing areas were located, all of which were adorned with potted plants and fruit trees.

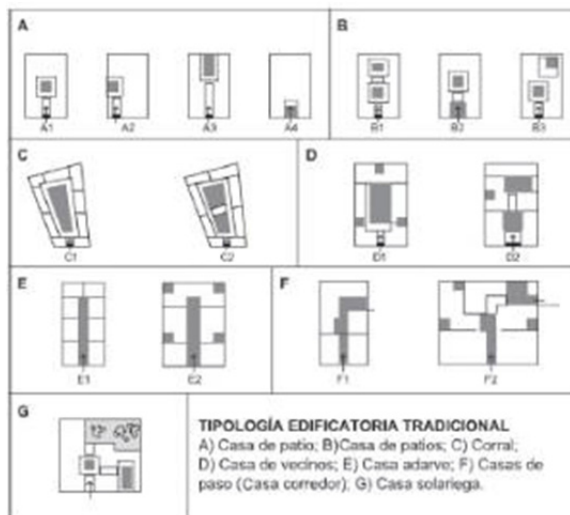


Figure 1: Traditional building typology of the patios of Cordoba

Source: City Council of Cordoba

¹The term “casas de vecinos” refers to multi-unit patio houses where several neighbors or vecinos reside around a shared courtyard.

Over time, the traditional lifestyle of the patio houses began to disappear as apartment blocks were built in the city's outskirts, although it survived as some of these dwellings still remained. These patio houses represent a very unique way of life and are the mainstay of one of the most popular festivals in the city, alongside the Festival of the Crosses and the Cordoba Fair celebrated to mark the feast of Our Lady of Good Health, all of which are held in the month of May. The inscription of the Fiesta of the Patios of Cordoba on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of the UNESCO marked a milestone for a popular festival that stands out for both the habitat in which it is celebrated (the patio houses in the historic quarter of Cordoba), as well as the way of life of those who are the pillar of the fiesta, the residents of these unique dwellings.



Figure 2: Traditional patio of the Viana Palace. Out of competition
Source: Authors

3. Evolution of the Fiesta of the Patios

In spite of the precarious living conditions of these dwellings and the impoverished situation of their residents—many of whom were laborers unable to access the basic resources needed to live with dignity until well into the twentieth century—this popular festival to celebrate spring in the urban environment has been possible thanks to the cooperation and efforts of the inhabitants of the patio houses. The courtyards, which are the key element of the festival, are adorned with a multitude of flowers planted in flowerbeds and pots that are hung on the walls or placed on the typical cobblestone paving next to wells or fountains to create a beautiful image in which water, light and plants merge in a clear reflection of the city's Arab past. To further embellish the patios, the owners often decorate them with antique furniture, iron cooking utensils, column shafts and capitals or other archaeological remains. In order to promote Cordoba's courtyards, the City Council organized the first Courtyards, Balconies and Window Displays Competition in 1921; the forerunner of what is today the Fiesta of the Patios. Three prizes of 100, 75 and 50 pesetas were awarded to the only patios that competed in the event. Given the general lack of interest, the City Council did not hold the competition again until 1933. However, an old tradition of Cordoba was recovered during this time: the setting up of crosses in the courtyards, which was last celebrated in 1929 coinciding with dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera's visit to the city.

Following the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the competition was interrupted again and

would not be held until 1944 under the mandate of Mayor Antonio Luna Fernández (1944-1951). During this time, the first criteria for evaluating the patios were established, which took into account the courtyards' architecture, decoration and traditional character.

To promote the courtyards as a tourist attraction and encourage participation in the contest, the City Council created a municipal housing company to conserve the patio houses and increased the number and economic endowment of the prizes. The first prize was increased from 3,000 pesetas to 8,000 pesetas in 1962 and subsidies were granted to all the competing patio houses in order to compensate for the costs incurred and the effort of their caretakers.

At the same time, two initiatives were launched to promote the contest: the Patios Festival of Cordoba and the Queen of the Courtyards competition. The first, which is still held today, was organized in 1956 as a parallel section of the classical and flamenco music festival in the courtyards of old monuments and the gardens of the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos (Fortress of the Catholic Monarchs), while the Queen of the Courtyards was a beauty contest that was held from 1962 until 1983.

In 1974, the Asociación Amigos de los Patios Cordobeses (Friends of the Patios of Cordoba Association) was founded to ensure that the tradition (the patio competition) and passion for one of the most popular expressions of Cordoba did not end up being lost or become a legend.

From 1975-1982, it was established that the courtyards should be decorated solely with seasonal flowers, the installation of bars was prohibited and flamenco performances were no longer judged in the competition. The City Council also included other assessment criteria in line with its desire to ensure that authenticity prevailed over artificial or cliché elements and increased the prize money and subsidies.

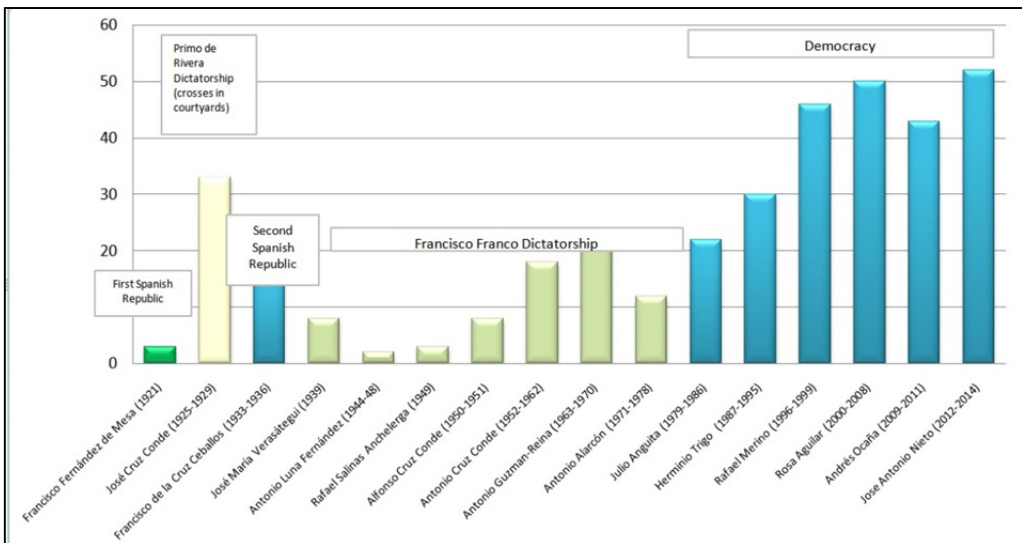


Figure 3: Evolution of competing patios (Colamenarejo, 2015)
Source: Colamenarejo, 2015

It was not until 1988 when the competition rules specified the ornamental aspects to be assessed by the jury: flower varieties, care of flower pots and flowerbeds and natural lighting, although different categories of prizes were not established until practically a decade later. The courtyards were distinguished as “traditional” or “modern” architecture and prizes were awarded according to specific aspects such as architectural conservation, natural decoration, the residents' effort or the artistic use of water.

Due to the historical evolution of the courtyards, the architecture of each is unique and it is a

difficult task to establish a typology. In broad terms, however, the courtyards are classified into two basic groups:

Monumental and stately courtyards: These courtyards are found in old palaces once belonging to the local aristocracy or notable religious buildings, such as the Patio de los Naranjos (the Orange Tree Courtyard) of the Mosque-Cathedral and the courtyards of the synagogue and the Santuario de la Fuensanta (Sanctuary of Fuensanta), which do not usually take part in the competition. Among the stately courtyards, Viana Palace stands out for its twelve interior courtyards of different architectural styles.

Competing courtyards: This category includes all the courtyards that have participated in the competition from its origins in 1921 until today. The courtyards can compete in two categories: those with traditional architecture and those with modern or renovated architecture. The first were built until the sixties and retain their main structural features, while the second type belong to new dwellings built following the demolition of a previous one or have undergone such extensive changes that their most significant elements have been lost.



Figure 4: Traditional architecture

Source: Authors



Figure 5: Modern architecture

Source: Authors

Both the City Council of Cordoba and the Regional Government of Andalusia have taken measures to protect and promote the Fiesta of the Patios. The regional government has adopted various normative measures to safeguard the fiesta as intangible heritage. Finally, since Spain signed the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2006, the inscription of the Fiesta de los Patios on the Representative List of Intangible Heritage obliges the Spanish government to consider this festival as a heritage element subject to the new Spanish Law on the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, whose preliminary draft was approved on 24 October 2014 by the Council of Ministers.

In spite of this, or precisely for this reason, the Fiesta of the Patios has become a fundamental resource for the city's economy due to the growing interest in the festival in both national and international tourism markets. The organizers of the competition that have worked to protect and promote the festival for the last eighty years, the City Council and the inhabitants of the patio houses together share responsibility for its success.

In the last Fiesta of the Patios, held 2-15 May 2016, a total of 63 patio houses took part in the event. Of these, 50 courtyards distributed along 6 routes through the historic quarter of the city participated in the competition (27 in the traditional architecture category and 23 in the modern architecture category), while 13 belonging to the category of monumental or stately courtyards participated but did not compete as they usually belong to official buildings (i.e, the city hall, the headquarters of the provincial government or museums). The City Council allocated €38,400 for the first prizes and €145,000 for the second prizes.

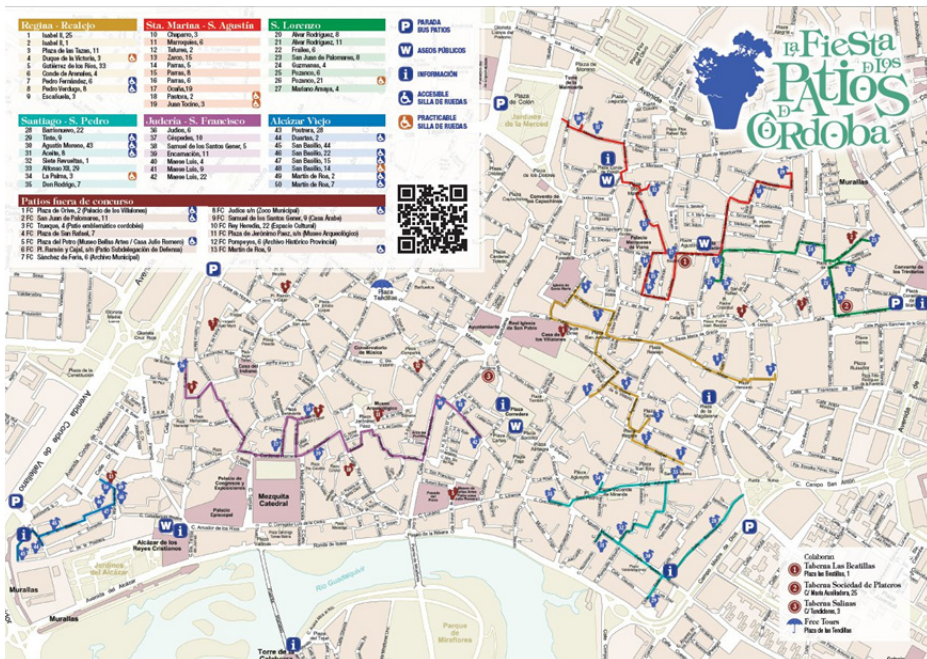


Figure 6: Map of the patios competing in May 2016 and patio routes
Source: City Council of Cordoba

Today, the Fiesta of the Patios faces to two challenges: the intense tourist activity on the days the event is celebrated in May and the safeguarding and protection measures that aim to preserve and maintain this heritage resource so it does not lose interest as a tourist attraction. The coordination of these two apparently opposing forces should be the objective of those who aim to design a management plan for the festival, as the UNESCO places greater emphasis on the capacity of the site to develop a good management tool in order for it to remain on the Representative List of Intangible Heritage.

4. Methodology

During the last Fiesta of the Patios of Cordoba held in May 2016, a total of 133,000 people made 467,000 visits to the patios (i.e., each person visited, on average, three and a half patios), representing an increase over the figures for 2015 (93,000 visitors with a total of 323,440 visits). Since the designation of the Fiesta of the Patios as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, this increase in visitors has had a positive impact on the local economy. According to the most recent study on the economic impact of the festival, the event generated somewhat more than €4.5 million in revenues in 2013, representing a 50.91% increase over the year 2012 (Martín, 2013).

Table 1: Patios route, 2016

| Patios taking part in the competition | | |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Route | No. of patios | Patios with disabled access |
| Regina-Realejo | 9 | 2 (22.2%) |
| Santa Marina-San Agustín | 10 | 2 (20.0%) |
| San Lorenzo | 8 | 1 (12.5%) |
| Santiago-San Pedro | 8 | 4 (50.0%) |
| Juderia-San Francisco | 7 | 0 (0.0%) |
| Alcazar Viejo | 8 | 7 (87.5%) |
| Total no. of patios in competition | 50 | 16 (32.0%) |
| Patios not taking part in the competition | | |
| No specific route | 13 | 5 (38.46%) |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF PATIOS | 63 | 21(33.3%) |

Source: own elaboration

Table 1 and Map 1 show the different routes, as well as the number of patios that participate in the competition. As can be seen, only 32% of the competing patios and 38.6% of those that do not compete have disabled access. Accessibility is therefore a problem that needs to be addressed.

In order to determine the involvement of the patio owners and managers as well as their opinion on the tourism offering—which in this case includes both the patios taking part in the competition and those that do not—the stakeholder methodology has been used. This method is widely accepted as valid for its application in tourism and cultural management. Many authors argue in favor of recognizing the role of the local community as a focal stakeholder in tourism management projects that affect the life of the community (Aas et al., 2005; Andriotis 2002; Byrd & Gustke, 2004; Byrd et al., 2009; Ioannides, 1995).

The most widely accepted definition of the term “stakeholder” was formulated by Freeman (1994), who considers a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives” (Freeman, 1994: 24). Given that the decisions and policies adopted by an organization are key to the achievement of its objectives, this definition points to a sense of reciprocity between stakeholders and with it the necessary and inevitable relationships and communication that arise. A company or organization that takes this approach goes beyond the strict monitoring of economic performance (Tuleja, 1987) to adopt ethical and normative approaches that “allow us to understand that among the different stakeholders that form the company a series of relationships is established that can be understood from the perspective not only of the legal contract or the social contract, but also of the moral contract” (González, 2007: 209).

This approach to the concept significantly broadens the spectrum of stakeholders involved, that is, those individuals that a company or organization can consider as stakeholders, since it is no longer only concerned with its own interests, but with its social and moral duty and responsibility. Following this approach, this work adopts the definition of de George, who considers that “those towards whom the company has any moral duty are collectively called stakeholders of the corporation” (de George, 1995: 133).

The possibility and urgency of extending this theory to non-business spheres has been recommended particularly for non-profit and public institutions (Phillips et al., 2003; Saz, 2008) and,

more specifically, when a strategic vision of long-term management is adopted (McAdam & Scott, 2005).

According to Colmenarejo (2015), the stakeholders theory is adequate for the efficient and effective management of heritage through a managerial approach that requires identifying the different interest groups affected in order to simultaneously attend to their legitimate interests with a view to striking a balance between the objectives of the public sector and the various stakeholders. Doing so implies identifying the stakeholders' involvement in the organizational structure, defining policies and involving the stakeholders in decision-making processes according to the argument that the stakeholder theory is supported by its descriptive accuracy, instrumental power and normative validity (Donaldson & Preston, 1995: 66-69).

As regards the Fiesta of the Patios, a specific group of stakeholders (the tourists who visit the courtyards) have been studied to determine their profile and the motives for visiting the courtyards (López-Guzman & Gonzalez, 2016). However, no studies have analyzed the main stakeholders, that is, the owners and managers of the courtyards. This study tries to fill that gap. By means of field work, the owners and managers of 44 patios that participated in the 2016 competition (88% of the 50 patios), in addition to two patios that did not compete (15.38% of the total out of 13), were analyzed. Specifically, the owners and managers were interviewed from June to September 2016 using a survey consisting of 29 questions grouped into five blocks. The first block consists of questions related to information about the owners or managers of the patios (training, reasons for showing the courtyard, etc.). The second contains questions about the patios itself (architecture, size, hours dedicated to caring for the patios, costs incurred, etc.). The third block includes questions about the current situation of the patios (opinions on the management of patios by public bodies, the creation of a board of trustees, etc.). The fourth block deals with the tourists who visit the patios, while the fifth includes questions about the patio management and the public administration (barriers, assessment of the routes, etc.).

The questionnaires consisted of 4 types of questions: open-ended questions where respondents could give their opinion, questions scored on a Likert scale, numerical questions and yes/no questions. The objective was to determine the opinions and concerns of the owners and managers of the patios; the key people that make the Fiesta of the Patios of Cordoba possible. Using the data from the questionnaires, a descriptive univariate analysis and a bivariate analysis were performed to determine correlations between variables.

5. Results

With the data obtained from the questionnaires, a descriptive analysis of the results was performed. The analysis showed that most of the patio houses are privately owned by a single family (58.7%) unlike the origins of the Fiesta of the Patios when the patio houses participating in the competitions were inhabited by several families (*casas de vecinos*) (Márquez, 2014). As a result, the courtyards are also smaller, with 41.3% having a floor area of 51-100 m². Moreover, due to their smaller size, one to four people care for them (89.1% of the patio houses).

At present, the profile of the patio caretaker does not always coincide with that of the owner. Many of the old *casas de vecinos* are now single-family homes or rental properties. Nevertheless, the social group that finds a sense of identity in the Fiesta of the Patios and whose customs and practices are being protected are the patio caretakers, regardless of whether they own the dwelling or not. This group considers that their customs and practices linked to the courtyards and the value of this communal space are characteristic goods of their way of life, which can be identified as intangible cultural goods (Cejudo, 2014); a category that includes social practices, rituals of all kinds, festive events or ancestral knowledge (Muñoz, 2015).

As regards type of architecture, 65.2% of the courtyards compete in the traditional architecture category. However, the number of courtyards competing in this category has gradually declined (ten years ago traditional courtyards accounted for more than 80% of those entering the competition), while those in the modern or renovated architecture category have increased (Comenarejo, 2015). The smaller number of traditional patios is due to the disappearance of the *casas de vecinos*, which are being replaced by apartment buildings or single-family dwellings with modern courtyards.

The UNESCO recognizes the important role the local community plays in the production, safeguarding and maintenance of heritage. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage defines intangible cultural heritage as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003). Therefore, the owners and managers of the courtyards are key to ensuring the proper development of the Fiesta of the Patios. During the interviews, the respondents stated that learning to care for the courtyards is a family tradition (54.3%) and that the main reason for showing them is not so much because they are an intangible good (15.2%) but because it is a tradition that was passed down to them from their ancestors (46.5%). However, 63% indicated that they participate in the Fiesta of the Patios in order to contribute to the intangible culture of Cordoba.

One of the main problems raised by the owners and managers is the high maintenance costs of the courtyards, which amount to more than 3,000 euros per year (48.8% of the respondents). They also stated that they spend from 11 to 20 hours a week caring for the courtyards without receiving any compensation, since 93.5% do not charge for the visit and the subsidies granted to them by the City Council for participating in the festival cover less than 50% of the costs.

The majority of owners and managers (64.4%) also stated that they are dissatisfied with how public bodies, the City Council and the Regional Government of Andalusia manage the Fiesta of the Patios due to their lack of coordination. In contrast, the patio owners positively assess their own management (89.1%), recognize that the patios are an important element for attracting tourism to the city (93.3%) and that the established routes to visit them are good (78.3%).

The public administration is considering the possibility of keeping the courtyards open to tourists every day of the year and not just the 15 days that the Fiesta of the Patios normally runs. However, 63% of the owners and managers reject this initiative and do not open their courtyards to the public, as they believe that the privacy and charm of living in a patio house will be lost. Moreover, they consider that it is unsustainable to have a private life with public exposure 365 years of the year rather than the 15 days on which the festival is held.

The possibility of creating a patios museum and a board of trustees or foundation is also being considered. In this case, 58.7% of the respondents agree with these initiatives provided that they are involved in them, since they want to participate actively in making policy decisions that may affect their patios.

Table 2 Results of the univariate analysis of the survey of patio owners and managers regarding the patios competition of Cordoba

| Block | Questions | Classification | Percentage |
|---|---|--|------------|
| A. Questions regarding the owners and/or managers of the patios | How many people care for your patio? | 1–4 people | 89.1% |
| | | 5–9 people | 6.5% |
| | | More than 10 people | 4.3% |
| | How did you learn to care of your patio? | It's a family tradition | 54.3% |
| | | I taught myself | 45.7% |
| | Why did you decide to open your patio to the public? | To show others a traditional way of life | 8.7% |
| | | For economic reasons | 4.3% |
| | | To keep the tradition alive | 46.5% |
| | | Because of the intangible value of the patio | 15.2% |
| | | Others | 15.2% |
| | Would you be interested in receiving training on the patios, how to care for plants and welcoming tourists? | Yes, if it's free | 65.2% |
| | | Yes, whether it's free not | 2.94% |
| | | No | 15.2% |
| Do you speak English, French, German or any other foreign language? | No, I do not speak any foreign languages | 76.1% | |
| | I speak one | 21.7% | |
| | I speak two or more | 2.2% | |

| Block | Questions | Classification | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| B. Questions related to the patios | In which category does your patio compete? | Traditional architecture | 65.2% |
| | | Modern architecture | 30.4% |
| | | Out of competition | 4.3% |
| | Who owns the patio? | Single-family | 58.7% |
| | | Residents or managers | 32.6% |
| | | Public organization | 8.7% |
| | What is the size of your patio? | Less than 25 m ² | 6.5% |
| | | 25-50 m ² | 39.1% |
| | | 51-100 m² | 41.3% |
| | How many hours do you spend caring for your patio? | Less than 10 hours a week | 8.7% |
| | | 11-20 hours a week | 43.5% |
| | | 21-40 hours a week | 39.1% |
| | How much do you spend each year on the conservation and maintenance of your patio? | More than 40 hours | 8.7% |
| | | Less than €500 | 2.3% |
| €500-€1000 | | 7.0% | |
| €1001-€2000 | | 4.7% | |
| Do you open your patio for visits at other times of the year outside the competition? | €2001-€3000 | 37.2% | |
| | More than €3000 | 48.8% | |
| If your patio does not participate in the competition, do you charge for the visit? | Yes | 37.0% | |
| | No | 63.0% | |
| C. Questions and opinions on the current situation of the patios | Please assess the public administration's management of the patios | Yes | 6.5% |
| | | No | 93.5% |
| | | Good | 13.3% |
| | Please assess the owners and managers' management of the patios | Fair | 15.6% |
| | | Poor | 71.1% |
| | | Good, we care for the patio and attend to tourists | 89.1% |
| | Why do you participate in the Fiesta of the Patios? | Fair | 6.5% |
| | | Poor | 4.3% |
| | | For strictly economic reasons, including the subsidy | 4.3% |
| | What is your opinion about the structural conditions of the patios? | To show the patio to tourists | 30.4% |
| | | To contribute to the intangible culture of Cordoba | 63.0% |
| | | Optimal in most patios | 45.7% |
| | What is your opinion about the public administration creating a board of trustees or foundation? | Optimal in only a few patios | 52.2% |
| | | Not optimal in all the patios | 2.2% |
| I agree if I am involved | | 58.7% | |
| D. Tourism-related questions | Do you think a limit should be placed on the number of visitors to the patios? | I agree even though I am not represented | 34.8% |
| | | I disagree | 6.5% |
| | | I don't think it's necessary to limit the number of visitors | 58.7% |
| | | Not if it entails extra costs | 8.7% |
| | Do you keep track of the number of visitors to your patio? | Yes, through prior reservations | 13.0% |
| | | Yes, through tickets sold directly at the patios or online | 19.6% |
| | Are the patio caretakers familiar with the gastronomic routes of Cordoba to guide tourists? | Yes | 17.4% |
| | | No | 82.6% |
| | At your patio do you recommend other patios and monuments to visit? | Yes, all the caretakers | 69.6% |
| | | Yes, some of the caretakers | 17.4% |
| | Do you think the patios are a good selling point to attract visitors to the city and province of Cordoba? | No | 13.0% |
| | | Yes | 95.7% |
| | Where are the visitors to your patio from? | No | 4.3% |
| | | Yes | 100.0% |
| Mainly from Cordoba | | 13.0% | |
| | From Andalusia, except Cordoba | 4.3% | |
| | From other parts of Spain | 34.8% | |

| Block | Questions | Classification | Percentage |
|--|--|---|------------|
| E. Patio management and the public administration | What is your opinion about patio managers being responsible for charging for visits? | Foreigners | 47.8% |
| | | I agree | 28.9% |
| | | I agree, but think that the public administration should be responsible | 53.2% |
| | What is the greatest barrier to the patios competition? | I disagree | 17.8% |
| | | Lack of coordination among public institutions | 64.4% |
| | | Lack of interest by public bodies | 24.4% |
| | | Lack of local, private-sector initiatives | 6.7% |
| | | Others | 4.4% |
| | Do you participate actively in the decision-making processes and territorial planning of the courtyards? | Yes, through an association | 56.5% |
| | | Yes, through the city council | 4.3% |
| | | Yes, as a private citizen | 8.7% |
| | | No | 30.4% |
| | Please assess the appeal of the patios for attracting tourism | High | 93.3% |
| | | Medium | 6.7% |
| | | Low | 0.0% |
| | Please assess the possibility of including your patio on a permanent cultural route throughout the year | Very positive, if I can charge for the visit | 44.4% |
| | | Positive | 37.8% |
| Neutral | | 17.8% | |
| Please assess the established routes for visiting the patios | Good | 78.3% | |
| | Fair | 13.0% | |
| | Poor | 6.5% | |

Source: own elaboration.

In order to analyze the respondents' opinions in greater depth, a bivariate analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the variables. A strong relationship was found between patio ownership and the category in which the patio competes ($\chi^2 = 29.803, p = 0.00$). Given that single-family patio houses are new dwellings, they tend to participate in the competition's modern architecture category. Many of these homes are located on plots which 40 years ago had a multi-family dwelling inhabited by 20 families, but where only one family currently lives. These new owners do not want to lose the essence of the courtyard as a space for relaxation and leisure. The communal patios (*casas de vecinos*) usually compete in the traditional architecture category.

As regards the creation of a board of trustees or foundation, the communal or multi-family patios are most interested, while the single-family patio houses are more reticent to do so, since they think they would not be able to participate in their governing bodies ($\chi^2 = 9.78, p = 0.04$).

A relationship was found between the reason for participating in the festival and type of architecture. Tradition is the primary reason for the patios that compete in the traditional architecture category, while the patios out of the competition participate due to their intangible value (these patios are mostly publically owned). In contrast, the patios that compete in the modern architecture category do so mainly for the pleasure of showing visitors their patios or because the residents think their patios are beautiful and want tourists to see it ($\chi^2 = 20.12, p = 0.01$).

As discussed above, the public administration is considering the possibility of opening the patios to tourists every day of the year instead of only the 15 days on which the festival is held. In this regard, a relationship was found between patio ownership and opening times ($\chi^2 = 7.53, p = 0.02$). Patios belonging to public bodies are open all year round, while the patios of single-family dwellings open only on the days of the competition.

6. Conclusions

The patios, a traditional space for socializing (González de Canales, 2014) and coming in contact with a small oasis, have become an important tourist attraction for the city of Cordoba thanks to the Fiesta of the Patios, which provides tourists the opportunity to appreciate this intangible heritage.

In line with Priego et al. (2012), this study has shown that the traditional customs and lifestyles represented by the patios are a tourist attraction that has increased in popularity since they were designated as Intangible Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO. The courtyards of Cordoba are a unique environment for social interaction within neighborhoods and a space that provides residents all they need to achieve a high degree of personal development and well-being. As such, they must be shown and shared with visitors.

The results of the study have demonstrated that the owners and managers mostly choose to show their patios for reasons of tradition (56.5%) and because they consider it an intangible value (15.2%). This is in line with González and Lopez-Guzman (2016), who indicate that the local community that recreates the Fiesta of the Patios must build a symbiotic relationship between the festival's economic value (mainly from tourism) and its heritage value as a cultural practice that provides a collective sense of belonging. However, based on the study, the Fiesta of the Patios must be properly managed to avoid the denaturalization of a lifestyle that has produced a cultural dynamic which is one of the economic motors of the city. To this end, a board of trustees or foundation should be created with the active participation of the patio owners and managers.

As an expression of the culture and way of life of the traditional and modern citizens of Cordoba, the Fiesta of the Patios is very interesting for cultural tourists. Undeniably, the cooperation and involvement of the patio owners and managers are essential in ensuring the fiesta's continuity. However, this group is somewhat neglected by public bodies, as it receives little return on the time and money invested in the care and maintenance of the patios. The subsidy they receive for participating in the festival is small, while the hotels, restaurants and shops near the patios are those that benefit most.

Based on the study, we advocate the rationalization of resources and more support for the patio owners and managers either through income (subsidies or financial aid) or property tax exemptions given that the Fiesta of the Patios would not exist without those who make it possible.

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