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# Developing a multidimensional framework for wine tourist behavior: Evidence from Greece

Maria Alebaki<sup>a,\*</sup>, George Menexes<sup>b,1</sup>, Alex Koutsouris<sup>c,2</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 54124 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>b</sup>Laboratory of Agronomy, Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Environment, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 54124 Thessaloniki, Greece

<sup>c</sup>Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Agricultural University Of Athens, Laboratory of Agricultural Extension, Agricultural Systems and Rural Sociology, Iera Odos 75, 118 55 Athens, Greece

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## Abstract

In response to the need for a better empirical understanding of the multiple factors that drive the demand of wine tourism, this paper serves a twofold objective: first, to test the distinctiveness of motivations for visiting a wine region along with a winery; and secondly, to explore whether geographical distance between tourists' place of origin and the wine region can add to the ability of other wine consumer/tourist variables (product involvement; product knowledge; wine tourist identity; past experience) to predict specific aspects of wine tourist behavior. In doing so, quantitative survey data were collected from 381 visitors of 12 wineries located in Northern Greece. Results from Principal Component and Multiple Hierarchical Regression Analyses indicate that travel distance predicts wine purchasing at the cellar door as well as the motivational factors associated with 'Socialization' and 'Destination attractiveness'. Further, the study proposes a conceptual framework for wine tourism motivation.

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**Keywords:** Wine tourism; Motivations; Travel distance

## 1. Introduction

Since the late 1990s, wine tourism has been enjoying increasing popularity in both traditional and emerging viticultural regions, with various private and public stakeholders combining their efforts to maximize the mutual benefits that can arise from potential inter-sectoral synergies (Wade and Pun, 2009). Towards this goal, understanding why people travel to a wine region along with the forces that influence their behavior has been acknowledged as a critical step in

developing successful marketing strategies (Ku, 2011; Lam and Hsu, 2006). Recognizing the aforementioned linkage, a fairly steady stream of academic research has sought to answer the question 'who is the wine tourist and what does he/she want?' posed initially by Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) and more recently by Getz and Brown (2006).

Despite the significant progress made over the past decade in terms of exploring the profile of actual and potential visitors, the diversity of factors that affect consumer behavior leaves the field still unexplored (Gómez et al., 2015; Molina et al., 2015). In addition, research on demand-side aspects of wine tourism has been hampered by a lack of empirical data, particularly in the so called Old World, i.e. Europe (Charters and Menival, 2011; Mitchell and Hall, 2006). This paper responds to this gap, by providing evidence on the role of travel distance and other consumer variables in predicting wine tourism motivations.

\*Corresponding author. Tel.: +30 2310 827835.

E-mail addresses: [mariale@auth.gr](mailto:mariale@auth.gr) (M. Alebaki), [gmenexes@agro.auth.gr](mailto:gmenexes@agro.auth.gr) (G. Menexes), [koutsouris@aua.gr](mailto:koutsouris@aua.gr) (A. Koutsouris).

<sup>1</sup>Tel.: +30 2310 998605.

<sup>2</sup>Tel.: +30 210 5294721.

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## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Wine tourism motivations

The wine tourism experience extends beyond the mere drinking of wine (Roberts and Sparks, 2006). Mitchell et al. (2000: 86) made a first distinction between ‘primary’ (wine tasting and purchasing) and ‘secondary’ or ‘peripheral’ wine tourism motivations (i.e. events and festivals; local culture and gastronomy). Within the framework of Push–Pull Theory (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1981), wine tourism incorporates a bundle of benefits (Getz et al., 2008), which are linked, not only with intrinsic needs, namely push factors, but also with particular attributes (pull factors) that draw the visitor to the wine region or the winery (Mitchell et al., 2000: 126) and shape the attractiveness of each destination.

Alant and Bruwer (2004) developed a theoretical framework which incorporates three sub-dimensions of motivation, namely: 1. the Visitor; 2. the Wine Region; and 3. the Visit Dynamic, i.e. first time or repeat visitation phenomena. Getz and Brown (2006) examined the relative importance of various regional features in influencing potential wine tourists' destination choice behavior. Exploratory factor analysis revealed three critical components of wine tourism. Several studies since then have adopted the same methodology to test the multidimensionality of wine tourism motivation from an experiential point of view. Table 1 presents a summary of findings.

### 2.2. Travel distance

So far, there is a lack of consensus on the specific direct impact of distance on destination choice, specifically whether it serves as an attraction (lending positive utility) or as a deterrent factor (restriction) (Nicolau and Más, 2004). According to the Distance Decay Theory (Greer and Wall, 1979), which has largely informed the field of tourism geography,

people tend to prefer nearby rather than far-flung resources (Yan, 2011). Consequently, tourism demand “varies depending on whether travel distance increases or decreases” (Lee et al., 2014: 126), “rising to a peak at some distance relatively close to a source market and then declining exponentially as distance increases” (McKercher and Lew, 2003: 159).

With respect to wine tourism, Bruwer (2003) argues that geographical distance between tourists' place of residence and the wine region (proximity) is considered to be one of the factors that affect the selection of a particular destination. Previous research efforts have also shown that the tourists' place of residence has an impact on both the evaluation of winery services (Jaffe and Pasternak, 2004) and post-visit wine purchase (Mitchell and Hall, 2004). Further, Bouzdine-Chameeva and Durrieu (2010) and Smith et al. (2010) have pinpointed differences between ‘proximity’ versus ‘passage’ wine tourists and ‘local wine visitors’ versus ‘wine tourists’ respectively, in terms of tourists' motivations and behavior.

### 2.3. Wine product involvement

Bruwer and Huang (2012: 463) define wine product involvement as “a motivational state of mind of a person with wine or wine related activity... which reflects the extent of personal relevance of the-wine related decision to the individual in terms of one's basic values, goals, and self-concept”. Several studies suggest that the level of involvement with wine affects not only consumer behavior (Lesschaeve and Bruwer, 2010; Wilson and Schamel, 2010), but also wine tourism pursuits (Brown et al., 2007; Getz and Carlsen, 2008). Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) have detected a sequential relationship between tourists' level of interest in wine and their motivations for visiting wineries, while other empirical findings reveal that wine involvement can predict purchases at the cellar door (Kolyesnikova et al., 2007). However, more research is still needed to clearly identify the links between wine product

Table 1  
Underlying dimensions of wine tourism motivations/experience in literature. Source: International literature compilation.

Authors/research area	Participants	Method	Motivational factors
Yuan et al. (2005), USA	Wine festival attendees	25 motivational items, Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation	'Wine', 'Festival and escape', 'Family togetherness', 'Socialization'
Getz and Brown (2006), Canada	Long distance, potential wine tourists	Exploratory factor analysis	'Core wine product', 'Core destination appeal', 'The cultural product', 'Variety', 'Tourist oriented'
Sparks (2007), Australia	Potential wine tourists	Principal Axis Factoring	'Destination experience', 'Personal development', 'Core wine experience'
Galloway et al. (2008), Australia	Actual wine tourists	Principal Component Analysis	(1) <i>Wine and winery related features</i> : 'Reputation', 'Learning', 'Value for money', 'Staff knowledge' (2) <i>Broader features of the region</i> : 'Infrastructure', 'Aesthetics', 'Accessibility' (3) <i>Visit experiences and emotions</i> : 'Self-knowledge', 'Stimulation', 'Indulgence', 'Relaxation'
Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009), Israel	Potential wine tourists	Principal Axis Factoring	'Winery atmosphere', 'Cultural activities', 'Family activities'
Clemente-Ricolfe et al. (2012), Spain	Potential wine tourists	Principal Component Analysis	'Interest in wine', 'Leisure', 'Cultural Heritage'
Marzo-Navarro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2012), Spain	Potential wine tourists	Principal Axis Factoring	'Winery Services', 'Extra Activities', 'Core Destination Appeal', 'Touristic Development', 'Cultural Product'

involvement and the different aspects of wine tourism behavior (Bruwer and Huang, 2012).

#### 2.4. Wine product knowledge

Product knowledge has generated research in diverse disciplines of social science (Lee and Lee, 2009), including wine marketing. More specifically, the level of consumer's wine knowledge has been associated with monthly wine expenditures (Mitchell and Hall, 2001), as well as the frequency of wine consumption (Forbes et al., 2008). Previous studies have also shown that wine knowledge is an indicator of wine tourism (Mitchell and Hall, 2003), influencing winery visitors' motivations (Alant and Bruwer, 2004).

Most of research efforts have focused on subjective rather (i.e. how much a consumer perceives or thinks that s/he knows, (Brucks, 1985) than on objective knowledge, since the former has a stronger connection with experience-based knowledge (Dodd et al, 2005; Park et al., 1994); motivational aspects of product knowledge (Selnes and Grønhaug, 1986) and is easier to be assessed – not by some sort of tests but rather by standardized scales (Forbes et al., 2008; Kolyesnikova, 2006). Therefore, the type of 'subjective knowledge' has been selected as one of the possible predictors of wine tourists' motivations and purchasing at wineries in this research.

#### 2.5. Wine tourist identity

The concept of identity derives from the multiple and differentiated roles an individual plays in society (Lynch, 2007). Thus, identity is inextricably interwoven with the set of meanings that define who one is when s/he is an occupant of these roles (Burke and Stets, 2009). On these grounds, Identity Theory maintains that identities are hierarchically organized (Callero, 1985; Stryker and Serpe, 1994), while individuals work in order to develop a self-structure that reflects this organization (Stets and Serpe, 2013). This hierarchy is based on a personality variable termed as 'identity salience' (Stryker, 1980), describing "the (differential) likelihood that identities will be invoked in a variety of situations" (Serpe and Stryker, 2011: 233).

The above definitions propose that, – under specific circumstances – certain identities become more salient than others (Sharma, 2011). Bringing the concept of identity into the discipline of wine tourism, Kolyesnikova et al. (2007) argue that a person who places more importance on his/her wine consumer identity is more likely to dedicate time and money to wine related activities, including visitation to wineries, vineyards, wine festivals and so on. These authors (p. 244) define wine tourist identity as "a behavioral characteristic that represents commitment to a wine tourist role".

#### 2.6. Past wine tourism experience

The tendency of individuals to maintain behavioral persistency (Lam and Hsu, 2006) adds a 'habitual' or 'motivational'

aspect in human behavior (Song et al., 2014). A number of studies on wine tourism also confirm the influence of past experience on motivations (Alant and Bruwer, 2004; Hall et al., 2000); destination choice (Hall et al., 2000); and purchasing behavior (O' Mahony et al., 2006). More specifically, Marzo-Navarro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2012) state that people who have already experienced wine tourism may have a greater desire to visit their preferred wine regions. In addition, Alant and Bruwer (2010) found that past experience in a particular wine region affects the choices of wine tourists. They further suggest that previous positive experiences is interrelated with repeat visitation and the social context of wine tourism.

Although existing literature has linked each single construct with motivations separately, no comprehensive study has so far analyzed their interconnections as a whole. Against this background, the current paper aims to put the discussion on the factors that affect wine tourism motivations into a wider framework. In particular, this piece of work is set with a two-part purpose:

- First, to empirically identify the crucial attributes of wine tourism experience, sought within a motivational context. In doing so, primary data from a winery visitor survey conducted in Northern Greece are used.
- Secondly, the study goes on to investigate the role of several variables as possible predictors of wine tourists' behavior. In particular, the paper provides an exploration of whether travel distance between tourists' place of residence and the wine region, along with other consumer characteristics (product involvement; product knowledge; wine tourist identity; and past wine tourism experience), can predict wine tourism motivations, as well as expenditure patterns of winery visitors.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Sample and procedure

In order to meet the objectives set out for the present study, quantitative methods and techniques were utilized. Between December 2010 and May 2011, fieldwork with wine tourists was conducted in the area of Northern Greece, which was selected for both its diversity of traditional winemaking regions and its reputation as a developing wine tourism destination (Alebaki and Iakovidou, 2010). Empirical data were obtained with the use of a structured questionnaire, while the respondents were approached via a Mall Interception Technique (Zikmund and Babin, 2010: 160).

In particular, 10 trained interviewers intercepted visitors in 12 wineries located in the research area (via a systematic random sampling scheme of every fifth person). Each respondent completed the questionnaire independently when leaving the cellar door (exit survey); however, a member of the research team was present to respond to questions. Complete and usable questionnaires were received from 381 wine

tourists, who were all above 18 years old, the legal minimum drinking age in Greece.

Following Charter and Ali-Knight's (2002) recommendation, the fieldwork period of six months was chosen because it provides ample time to achieve a large and representative sample. The distribution of questionnaires was mainly carried out during weekends, since they are the busiest days for most wineries (Alonso et al., 2007; Wade and Pun, 2009). Wineries were selected according to a wide range of criteria: size; age; geographic location; level of regional tourism development; and visitation traffic volumes, as noted in previous studies (Bruwer and Alant, 2009; Kolyesnikova and Dodd, 2008).

### 3.2. Questionnaire

The survey instrument consisted of six sections and included both closed- and open-ended questions regarding visitors' socio-economic and trip-related characteristics; aspects of the cellar-door visit; wine tourist behavioral traits; and motivations for engaging in wine tourism. It was originally developed in Greek, based upon previous similar studies (see next sections), as well as on discussions with wine tourism academics and practitioners. A pilot test with a group of 30 winery visitors was used to assess the internal consistency and feasibility of the research tool. The mean time to fill the questionnaire was, on average, 15 min.

### 3.3. Measurement of predictor and dependent variables

A five point, Likert-type scale of 23 items (Table 3), all extracted from literature, was developed to measure respondents' motivations for visiting the wine region along with the winery (i.e., Alant and Bruwer, 2004, 2010; Getz and Carlsen, 2008; Shor and Mansfeld, 2009). Purchasing at wineries was measured with the use of a two-item scale, in accordance with Kolyesnikova et al. (2007) approach. In particular, wine tourists were asked to indicate the total number of Euros spent (a) on wine and (b) on items other than wine during their cellar door visit.

With respect to the travel distance, respondents were asked to indicate their place of residence. Geographic Information System (GIS) was then used to identify the distance (in kilometers) between the reported area and the winery. The scales used to assess the other four predictors are shown in Table 5.

### 3.4. Data analysis

SPSS (v.18) was used for statistical analyses. Descriptive analysis aside, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with VARIMAX rotation (Hair et al., 2010) was applied to explore the dimensionality along with the structure of the scale used for the measurement of wine tourists' motivations. Hierarchical Multiple Regression was selected to examine the incremental power of distance as a predictor of wine tourism motivations and purchasing at wineries (Cohen et al., 2003).

Table 2  
Respondents' profile (N=381).

	Number	(%)
Gender	Males: 206 Females: 175	Males: 54.1 Females: 45.9
Age	Mean=41.5 18–25: 32 26–35: 114 36–45: 116 46–55: 52 56–65: 47 65+: 20	8.4 27.8 32.0 24.2 12.3 5.2
Marital status	Married: 206	54.1
Employment status	Employed: 169 Self-employed: 134 Retired: 27 Unemployed: 13 Other (student, home economics, etc.): 51	44.4 35.2 7.1 3.4 9.9
Education (highest level completed)	High School: 57 College: 41 Technological Educational Institute/University: 161 Post-Graduate (MSc/PhD): 107	15.0 10.8 42.2 28.1
Personal income	Under 750 Euros per month: 64 750–1000: 48 1001–1500: 102 1501–2000: 54 2001–2500: 47 2501–3500: 27 3500+: 39	16.8 12.6 26.8 14.2 12.3 7.1 10.2
Place of residence	Thessaloniki: 166 Athens: 60 Other place in the Region of Macedonia: 100 Other Greek region: 50 Abroad: 4	43.7 15.8 26.3 13.1 1.0
Distance traveled to visit the winery (each way)	Less than 30 km: 97 31–100 km: 149 101–200 km: 43 201–300 km: 9 301–500 km: 19 More than 500 km: 63	25.5 39.2 11.3 2.4 5.0 16.6

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Profile and motivations of wine tourists in the region of Northern Greece

Table 2 presents the socio-economic characteristics of the sampled population. In terms of their place of residence, almost 44.0% of the visitors to Northern Greek wineries were residents of Thessaloniki (the vice capital of Greece), with the majority of them (64.5%) having traveled less than 100 km to visit the wine region.

As shown in Table 3, the speculation that 'wine tasting' constitutes the primary motivating factor for engaging in wine tourism is confirmed (Mean=4.0). Furthermore, and in line with what has previously been reported (i.e. Bruwer and Lesschaeve, 2012), 'landscape/ beautiful scenery' ranked second in terms of importance (Mean=3.8).

Table 3  
Motivating factors for wine tourists.

Please rate the importance of each of the following factors in your decision to participate in wine tourism activities	1: Of no importance (%)	2	3	4	5: Very important (%)	Means	SD <sup>a</sup>
2. To taste the winery's products	2.9	7.3	16.8	36.7	36.2	4.0	1.0
19. To escape routine	7.6	7.6	17.3	32.3	35.2	3.8	1.2
11. To enjoy the rural landscape and scenery	4.2	9.4	19.7	33.9	32.8	3.8	1.1
18. To relax	7.9	9.4	18.1	33.3	31.2	3.7	1.2
3. Prior product knowledge or familiarity	9.4	11.5	21.8	27.0	30.2	3.6	1.3
10. To increase my knowledge on wine and viticulture	5.5	10.8	26.5	30.7	26.5	3.6	1.1
8. To learn about the winemaking process	6.6	9.4	28.6	29.7	25.7	3.6	1.2
22. Positive recommendations by acquaintances	12.1	12.6	16.0	31.0	28.3	3.5	1.3
14. The wine region is easily accessed	11.0	12.6	19.9	29.1	27.3	3.5	1.3
9. To learn how to appreciate wine	7.3	15.5	27.3	30.2	19.7	3.4	1.2
4. To taste rare/fine wines	12.3	18.9	22.0	21.3	25.5	3.3	1.4
15. To be with friends/family	22.6	12.9	16.0	20.7	27.8	3.2	1.5
21. Prior positive experience	22.0	13.6	14.4	27.3	22.6	3.2	1.5
20. To participate in a new and different activity	7.9	26.5	24.4	23.1	18.1	3.2	1.2
7. To have a tour through the vineyards	11.0	19.4	28.6	23.1	17.8	3.2	1.2
1. To purchase wines	12.6	14.4	27.8	28.1	17.1	3.2	1.3
17. To socialize	22.6	12.9	16.0	20.7	27.8	3.0	1.4
6. To meet the winemaker	25.2	15.0	15.2	20.2	23.4	3.0	1.5
16. The rest of the group influenced my intention to visit the winery	25.5	16.8	18.6	21.3	17.8	2.9	1.5
5. There are many wineries in the region	22.0	24.7	19.9	17.1	16.3	2.8	1.4
12. To dine at the local restaurants	28.3	23.4	23.1	15.2	10.0	2.6	1.3
23. Positive reviews in media	34.9	21.5	15.5	17.6	10.5	2.5	1.4
13. To stay in local hotels/guesthouses	31.8	31.2	20.2	9.4	7.3	2.3	1.2

<sup>a</sup>SD: Standard Deviation.

#### 4.2. Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

According to the pre-analysis testing, the sample size was higher than the various rules of thumb suggested in the factor analysis literature, and thus adequate for performing the PCA (Hair et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2010). Both the eigenvalue greater-than-one and the scree-test criteria were used for determining the significant components (Hair et al., 2010). Component loadings greater than 0.50 (in absolute value), mean factor scores, as well as reliability indices (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) are summarized in Table 4<sup>3</sup>.

VARIMAX rotation was run to compress the twenty three variables of the initial scale into seven best composite descriptors (factors, see Table 4), which sufficed to explain 60.8% of the total variance in the original descriptor set.

#### 4.3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Direct predictors of the criterion variables were divided in two sets, on the basis of conceptual differences amongst them (Kolyesnikova et al., 2007):

- The first set consisted of four independent variables that represent wine consumer personal traits (Table 5).
- Destination-place of residence distance was included in the second set, since this variable is neither related to the

centrality of wine in a consumer's daily life nor associated with previous visits to wine regions. It rather indicates a travel characteristic, unconnected to wine lifestyle. Thus, respondents may have covered long or short distances to visit the winery, notwithstanding their relationship with wine.

In terms of the relationships between dependent and independent variables, results showed that wine purchasing at the cellar door is significantly and positively correlated only with product involvement ( $r=0.152$ ,  $p=0.002$ ), while, apart from F5, all factors extracted from PCA are significantly correlated with all explanatory variables.

A set of complementary measures (Eigenvalue Analysis of the correlation matrix, Tolerance values and Variance Inflation Factor, VIF) revealed no signs of multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Finally, residual scatter plots and histograms were examined to confirm that homoscedasticity and normality assumptions for model's residuals are satisfied (Thompson et al., 2006); and there is no presence of outliers.

Following, Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to examine whether travel distance – entered in Step 2 can add to the ability of all other predictors – entered in Step 1- to explain each one of the eight criterion variables selected for this study (Table 6).

As presented in Table 6, distance makes a unique contribution to predicting not only cellar door purchases, but also four out of the seven tourism incentives (F1, F2, F3, and F4). In all of these cases,  $R^2$  change from the first to the second set has been statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ . In addition, the

<sup>3</sup>Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin's measure of sampling adequacy: 0.682–Bartlett's test of sphericity:  $p < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2=2469.5$ ,  $df=253$  – Cronbach's  $\alpha$  and Discrimination measure for the total scale: 0.78 and 0.29 respectively.

Table 4  
Principal Component Analysis of wine tourism motivations.

Motivation scale items (see Table 3)	F1 (Educational experience)	F2 (Socialization)	F3 (Destination attractiveness)	F4 (Core wine product)	F5 (Vineyard aesthetics)	F6 (Familiarity)	F7 (Reputation and novelty)	Communalities
8 (learning about winemaking)	0.875							0.789
9 (learning about wine appreciation)	0.846							0.766
10 (increasing knowledge)	0.832							0.740
7 (tour through the vineyards)	0.577							0.627
17 (socializing)		0.739						0.602
15 (being with friends/family)		0.736						0.577
16 (rest of the group influence)		0.692						0.577
12 (dining in restaurants)			0.763					0.680
13 (hotels/guesthouses)			0.762					0.657
5 (many wineries)			0.409					0.597
1 (purchasing)				0.741				0.606
2 (wine tasting)				0.712				0.616
3 (prior product knowledge)				0.620				0.512
4 (rare/fine wines)				0.562				0.585
11 (rural landscape)					0.665			0.562
18 (relaxation)					0.598			0.641
19 (escape routine)					0.539			0.574
6 (meeting the winemaker)						0.671		0.547
21 (prior positive experience)						0.662		0.581
22 (positive recommendations)							0.765	0.667
20 (new and different activity)							0.492	0.553
23 (positive reviews in media)							0.445	0.561
Variance explained (%) after VARIMAX	13.0	10.7	8.5	8.5	7.5	6.8	5.8	
Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient (components)	0.87	0.77	0.70	0.76	0.63	0.62	0.60	
Discrimination measure (components)	0.665	0.488	0.403	0.428	0.509	0.202	0.262	
Mean factor score	3.4	3.0	2.6	3.5	3.8	3.1	3.1	

Table 5  
Direct predictors entered at the first step of the regression model.

Construct/scale	Items	Means and reliabilities ( $\alpha$ ) <sup>a</sup>
<b>Product involvement</b> Atkin et al. (2005), Atkin and Sutanonpaiboon (2007) Cohen et al. (2003)	<b>5-point Likert scale, from 1 ‘Strongly Disagree’ to 5 ‘Strongly Agree’</b> I have a strong interest in wine  Wine is important to me in my lifestyle Drinking wine gives me pleasure	$\alpha=0.849$ Mean=4.0 $M=4.0$  Mean=3.6 $M=4.0$ Mean=4.3 $M=4.0$
<b>Subjective knowledge</b> Kolyesnikova (2006) and Park et al. (1994) Famularo et al. (2010)	<b>7-point Likert-type scale, from 1 ‘Very little’ to 7 ‘Very much’</b> How much do you feel you know about wine? Compared to your friends and acquaintances, how much do you feel you know about wine? Compared to a wine expert, how much do you feel you know about wine?	$\alpha=0.890$ Mean=3.9 $M=4.0$ Mean=4.2 $M=4.0$ Mean=2.5 $M=2.0$
<b>Identity</b> Kolyesnikova (2006) after Callero (1985)	<b>7-point Likert scale, from 1 ‘Strongly Disagree’ to 7 ‘Strongly Agree’</b> Visiting a winery is something I rarely think about (reverse coded) For me, visiting a winery means more than just drinking wine Visiting wineries is an important part of who I am I really don’t have any clear feelings about visiting wineries (reverse coded)	$\alpha=0.707$ Mean=3.3 $M=3.0$ Mean=5.6 $M=6.0$ Mean=3.6 $M=4.0$ Mean=2.5 $M=3.0$
<b>Past experience</b> Geide et al. (2009) and Grybovyeh et al. (2006)	<b>Open-ended question (numeric variable)</b> Approximately, how many different wineries have you visited in the past two years (the present company included)?	Mean=5.2 $M=3.0$

<sup>a</sup>Reliability was tested through Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ )  $M$ =Median.

Table 6  
Analysis of distance as a predictor of wine tourism motivation and purchasing at the cellar door.

Predictors	F1 (Educational experience)	F2 (Socialization)	F3 (Destination attractiveness)	F4 (Core wine product)	F5 (Vineyard aesthetics)	F6 (Familiarity)	F7 (Reputation and novelty)	Purchasing at the cellar door
Step 1 $R^2$	0.094	0.041	0.023	0.169	0.022	0.096	0.037	0.032
<b>Step 2</b> <b>Standardized <math>\beta</math>, <math>R^2</math>, F change and ANOVA p</b>								
Product involvement	0.189*	0.120*	0.071	0.365**	0.142*	0.174*	-0.064	0.194*
Subjective knowledge	-0.116*	-0.103	-0.051	-0.033	-0.092	0.013	-0.047	-0.058
Past experience	-0.191*	0.004	-0.142*	-0.034	-0.085	0.137*	-0.171*	-0.046
Identity	0.262**	-0.175*	-0.010	0.139*	0.003	0.073	0.073	-0.041
Distance	-0.038	-0.152*	0.197**	-0.074	0.021	-0.009	-0.002	0.183**
$R^2$	0.095	0.064	0.062	0.174	0.022	0.096	0.037	0.065
<b><math>R^2</math> change</b>	0.001	0.023	0.038	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.033
Significance ( $p$ )	0.449	0.003	0.000	0.119	0.677	0.862	0.972	< 0.001
F change								
ANOVA $p$	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.134	< 0.001	0.016	< 0.001

\*Result is significant at 0.05 level.

\*\*Result is significant at 0.01 level.

regression coefficient values were used to evaluate contributions of each predictor to the dependent under consideration variables (Standardized  $\beta$ ).

#### 4.3.1. Distance as a predictor of wine tourism motivations

Empirical findings (Table 6) reveal that travel distance significantly explains the variance of the following motivating factors: ‘Socialization’ ( $R^2$  change=0.023,  $p < 0.001$ ); ‘Destination attractiveness’ ( $R^2$  change=0.038,  $p < 0.001$ ); and ‘Core wine product’ ( $R^2$  change=0.005,  $p < 0.001$ ). In the case of ‘Educational experience’ the inclusion of travel distance in Step 2 resulted in change of  $R^2$  ( $R^2$  change=0.001,  $p < 0.001$ ). Moreover, the values of standardized beta ( $\beta$ )

indicate that travel distance has the most important effect in ( $\beta=0.197$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) in ‘Destination attractiveness’.

#### 4.3.2. Distance as a predictor of purchasing at the cellar door

The four variables entered at the first step accounted for 3.2% of the purchasing variance ( $R^2=0.032$   $F(1, 374)=3.060$ ,  $p=0.017$ ). The inclusion of travel distance at the second step of the regression resulted in a statistically significant change in the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$  change=0.033,  $F(1, 374)=13.258$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, travel distance explains 33.0% of the unique variance in wine purchasing at the cellar door. A further examination of the coefficient matrix suggests that product involvement is the most influential predictor of

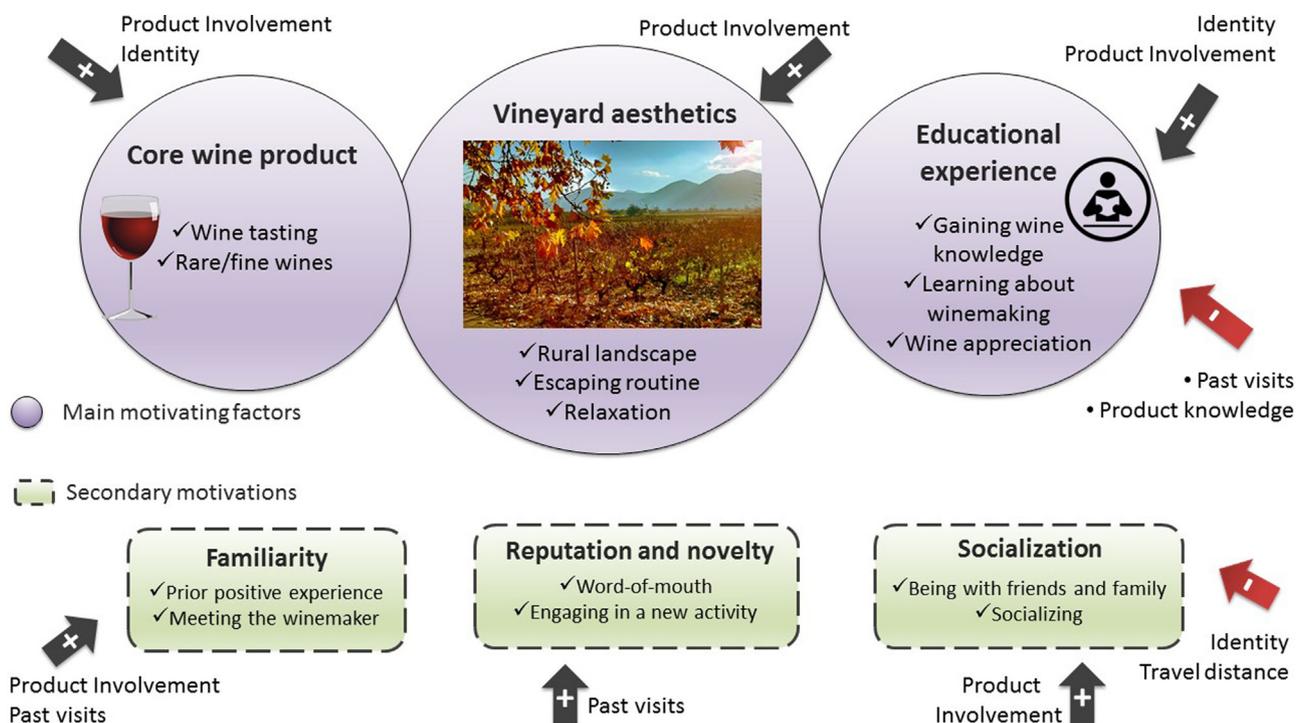


Fig. 1. A proposed framework for wine tourist motivations.

purchasing ( $\beta=0.194$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), followed by travel distance ( $\beta=0.183$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Key dimensions of wine tourist motivations

Results confirm the multifaceted nature of wine tourism motivations (Park et al., 2008), demonstrating that the desire to visit a wine region or a winery arises from both push and pull factors (Yuan et al., 2005). Some of the dimensions revealed in this paper (i.e. 'Destination attractiveness'; 'Socialization'; 'Core wine product') indicate similarity to motivating factors extracted from PCA Analysis in previous studies (see Table 1).

'Vineyard aesthetics' received the highest ranking among the seven components. This finding is consistent with Carmichael's (2005: 189) assertion that the "romantic, nostalgic view of the rural landscape fits in well with some of the needs of wine tourists". 'Core wine product' and 'Educational experience' ranked second and third respectively. It may therefore be argued that the key drivers of wine tourism are associated with the winery experience per se, rather than with the social context of the visit or with general regional characteristics.

Empirical results reported the emergence of two new motivational dimensions, namely 'Familiarity' and 'Reputation and novelty', emphasizing consumers' need for a peak tourist experience (Quan and Wang, 2004), which involves the chance to meet the winemaker in person, and not just a broker or a representative (Thach and Olsen, 2006). Opportunities to look behind the scenes or acquire firsthand information on how

famous wines are produced are of particular importance in a motivational context, especially for urban dwellers disconnected from rural surroundings and livelihood (Ecker et al., 2010).

### 5.2. Antecedents of wine tourist motivations

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses revealed that geographical distance between the visitors' place of residence and the wine region was positively related to the incentive 'Destination attractiveness'. This finding supports the significance of distance in influencing consumers' decisions to travel to a specific wine region (Brown and Getz, 2005). In particular, results indicate that tourists who travel longer distances to visit a wine region attach more importance to destination attributes (pull factors) compared to short-haul travelers.

Travel distance was negatively associated with the importance of the incentive 'Socialization', implying that, compared to long haul travelers, visitors who live close to the winery tend to primarily focus on the social benefits of wine leisure activities. Similarly, Bouzdine-Chameeva and Durrieu (2010) showed that, in France, local winery visitors seek for friendliness and pleasure, while passage tourists put a greater emphasis on the discovery component of wine tourism. Notably, as shown by the regression results of the present study, individuals motivated by 'Socialization' were highly involved with wine, despite that they did not consider themselves as "serious wine tourists" (Jago et al., 2000).

A significant and positive relationship was found between 'Product involvement' and five out of the seven incentives extracted from PCA. These findings provide further evidence that, as suggested by Charters and Ali-Knight (2002), the level of interest in wine constitutes the best predictor of visitors' motivations, thus confirming studies that have identified distinct segments of highly involved wine tourists (i.e. 'Wine Lovers'; 'Wine Interested', Hall, 1996).

Another interesting finding concerns the statistically significant association between 'Educational experience' and the predictor variables 'Identity' and 'Past visits' (positive and negative, respectively). Thus, the more salient the identity attached to the wine tourist role, the stronger the desire to learn about wine. On the contrary, as the number of past visits to wineries increases, individuals are less inclined to gather knowledge about the product and more interested in other aspects of wine tourism, such as the interaction with the winemaker ('Familiarity').

This argument is further supported by the negative relationship between 'Educational experience' and 'Subjective knowledge'. In line with Kolyesnikova's (2006: 24) suggestion, consumers who perceive themselves as highly knowledgeable are less likely to visit a winery in order to obtain information about the product or the winemaking process. This may be related to the fact that the research sample mostly consisted of proximity wine tourists, who are probably already aware of the region's wine industry. Finally, the incentive 'Reputation and novelty' is negatively affected by the number of past visits to wineries, thus supporting the argument that the perception of novelty is related to the currency and duration of exposure to a stimulus (George and George, 2004).

### 5.3. Antecedents of purchasing at the cellar door

Despite that the inclusion of travel distance at the second step of the regression added to the predicting ability of the model, product involvement remained the most influential independent predictor of purchasing. Travel distance was the second most important predictor of this criterion variable, while no statistically significant relationship was observed between purchasing and product knowledge, identity or past experience. Besides product involvement, there was no significant relationship between any of the independent variables and wine purchases at a bivariate level.

These results indicate that wine consumers who exhibit higher levels of product involvement and live further away from the wine region are expected to spend more money at the cellar door. Due to the different predictors used in the regression models, it is difficult to compare the empirical findings of this study with those of Kolyesnikova et al. (2007) work. However, it is interesting to note that product involvement proved to be an important predictor of wine expenditures in the Texas case as well. Another noteworthy observation concerns the fact that, while wine tourist identity was found to be important to visitors in both studies, in none of the two cases was a significant association between identity and purchasing observed.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1. Theoretical implications – towards a conceptual framework of wine tourist motivations

The current study sought to examine the distinctiveness of wine tourism motivations as well as address possible predictors of wine tourists' behavior. Based on previous conceptual work by Getz and Brown (2006), this paper proposes an integrative theoretical framework attempting to encompass the multidimensionality of what visitors seek when engaging in wine tourism (Fig. 1).

The original contribution of this work consists in utilizing the combined results of both Principal Component and Regression analyses. Aside from illustrating the different components (factors) of tourists' motivations, the current model catches the nature of interrelationships between each factor and its direct predictors. In particular:

- Circles represent components that ranked number one, two, and three in terms of importance by visitors (main motivating factors, in descending order).
- Rounded rectangles depict motivating factors with lower mean scores, ranked fourth, fifth and sixth.
- Each shape comprises items significantly loaded on their assigned factors.
- Arrows show the individual influence (positive or negative) of explanatory variables that were statistically significant in predicting the six motivational components (product involvement, product knowledge, identity, past experience and travel distance).

Due to the very low mean factor score of 'Destination attractiveness', this dimension was not included in the conceptual framework of wine tourism motivation.

Research findings confirm Getz and Brown's (2006: 155) proposition that "a consumer's very perception of what constitutes a wine region for travel purposes will be based on much more than the simple presence of vineyards and wineries". Nevertheless, with respect to the Greek case, despite the fact that motivations comprise both wine-related aspects and social or emotional needs, winery visitors in Northern Greece do not appear to be attracted by other regional amenities. On the contrary, Getz and Brown (2006) found that Calgary wine consumers prefer destinations that offer unique accommodation with regional character as well as gourmet restaurants. As discussed in Section 5.1, a possible explanation for this discrepancy lies in the demographics of the Greek sample.

### 6.2. Practical significance of the results

This work may have important marketing and managerial implications, helping wine tourism stakeholders acquire a better understanding of what visitors pursue from a wine tourism experience. For instance, destination marketing organizations need to address experiential elements of the natural

landscape that reflect urban citizens' needs for escape and rest. It is vital that promotional materials highlight winery visitation as a relaxing activity taking place in an enjoyable and comfortable environment. At the same time, each region's unique landscape may constitute the basic element for the development of a wine tourism destination brand (Bruwer and Alant, 2009).

It is also recommended that learning/tasting activities form a basic part of any marketing campaign. Newsletters, e-mails or social media could be used as tools to communicate that wine tourism provides several education opportunities, including discovering and tasting rare and unique wines; attending special events or wine courses; interacting with like-minded people and meeting the winemaker (Galloway et al., 2008). Within this context, both tangible (quality of wines) and intangible elements of the wine tourism product (service standards; professionalism, knowledge, courteousness of the winery staff) are crucial in promoting an integrated educational experience at the cellar door (Alonso et al., 2013).

Taking into account the notion that no stereotypical wine tourist exists (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002), the current study could further serve as a framework for market segmentation. The proposed model may assist winery managers and operators in designing differentiated strategies tailored to the needs of specific types of wine tourists. For instance, customized tourism services focusing on social aspects of wine appreciation is expected to attract the local populace. Similarly, core product attributes and learning occasions are assumed to have greater appeal for highly involved and knowledgeable consumers. The level of past experience or the dynamic of the visit provides another distinction point when developing specialized marketing messages.

Finding ways to enhance consumers' level of wine involvement could boost wine tourism. In this respect, a positive experience at the winery has the potential to turn a curious tourist into a wine lover (Barth and Salazar, 2011). However, an individual's initial desire to visit a wine region generally comes from response to stimuli received from other sources as well (i.e. urban wine shows and exhibitions; wine clubs; wine websites and magazines). Therefore, wider synergies among various stakeholders are necessary to promote moderate consumption of wine (Silva et al., 2014).

### 6.3. Limitations and further research directions

A major implication of this work concerns the positive link found between travel distance and wine purchasing at the cellar door. Yet, it has to be stressed that the overwhelming majority of visitors to Northern Greek wineries (83.4%) had travelled less than 500 km to visit the wine region, a distance approximately equal to that between Athens and Thessaloniki. This may represent a limitation upon the extent to which observed relationships among these two variables can be generalized with respect to larger regions or other wine tourism destinations in the southern part of Greece and/or abroad. It is plausible that international tourists or even domestic visitors who take longer trips may prove reluctant to buy wine from the

cellar door, due to shipping issues (cost and regulation). Therefore, additional empirical evidence is needed to explore whether any distance decay effect exists in terms of tourists' purchases at wineries.

In the current paper, the total number of kilometers between visitors' origin and destination was selected as the exclusive indicator of 'real' distance. This raises a second limitation to this study. Additional indices, i.e. time invested in displacement; travel cost or perceived distance; (Kemperman et al., 2000; Nicolau, 2008) could be further used to better estimate the effect of distance on wine related travel. Future research could expand the proposed model, incorporating the interaction of other constructs that may influence consumer decision-making process towards wine tourism. Furthermore, more refined and in-depth investigation to discover whether wine tourists' motivations change over time is deemed necessary.

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