The Impact of Wine Tourism Involvement on Winery Owners' Identity Processes

ABSTRACT

This paper examines how involvement in wine tourism has affected winery owners' identity processes. Using Breakwell's Identity Process Theory (IPT) as a conceptual framework, we investigate the extent to which place is a part of winery owners' self-identities, thereby giving them senses of belonging, distinctiveness, continuity, and self-esteem. Simultaneously, we find that these senses and feelings influence winery owners' perceptions of the benefits and dis-benefits of wine tourism development in their region. We also discover how personal involvement in tourism can strengthen or threaten winery owners' identities and thereby affect their support or otherwise for wine tourism. Empirical evidence is provided via a sample of twenty-eight winery owners in *Langhe*, Italy, who have recently engaged in various tourism-related activities due to the continuous development of the local tourism industry. Our research recognises that place is an integral part of the identity process.

Keywords: Place Identity, Wine Tourism, Discourse Analysis, Italy

Introduction

The role of place in the development, formation, and maintenance of identity has received increased attention since the early 1980s by both social and environmental psychologists (e.g. Bonaiuto et al., 2002; Proshansky et al., 1983; Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996). The term *place identity* has been defined as a "potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings" (Proshansky et al., 1983, p.60). Bonaiuto et al. (2002, p.636) refer to place identity as "that part of people's personal identity which is based on or built upon the physical and symbolic features of the places in which people live". What seems fundamental in the conceptualisation of place identity is the fact that it is an individual/personal construction, a substructure of one's sense of self (Hauge, 2007), while at the same time it is influenced by social values and beliefs (Devine-Wright and Lyons, 1997). Thus, as individuals start to develop an emotional attachment and become socially and psychologically invested in a particular place, that place becomes part of their sense of self (Anton and Lawrence, 2014) and is a fundamental element to the construction of self-identity (Dixon and Durrheim, 2000). Indeed, the question of '*who am I?*' is inextricably related to questions of '*where am I?*' and '*where do I belong?*' (Cuba and Hummon, 1993; Dixon and Durrheim, 2000). It is clear then, that place has a considerable impact on the development of self-identity (Proshansky et al., 1983).

By applying Breakwell's identity process theory (IPT) we consider how winery owners' identity processes are affected by their involvement and participation in wine tourism. Our research shows that winery owners' identities are intimately related to their specific area/place and that their recent involvement in wine tourism has led to conflicting views and perceptions regarding their support for and future involvement in tourism, while simultaneously impacting on their identity processes.

Our research question therefore is: How are *Langhe winery owners'* identities affected by their involvement and participation in wine tourism? In answering this question, we intend to contribute to the tourism literature in several ways. We contribute to the limited knowledge on place identity theories and their impact on residents' attitudes and support for tourism (Wang and Xu, 2015). We use the case study of *Langhe*, a region still at the growth and development stage of Butler's (1980) tourism area life cycle, to show how winery owners' involvement in wine tourism affects their self-identities, which are guided by the principles of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and self-efficacy. From a practical viewpoint, our empirical evidence shows that local authorities and destination management organisations should take into consideration host communities' attachment to their socio-physical environment and understand which forms of tourism development strengthen their identity, in order to guarantee the success of tourism development.

Literature Review

Wine tourism

Wine tourism is defined as "visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of the grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors" (Hall and Mitchell 2000, p.447). Since the mid-90s there has been a growing interest among tourists to discover wine regions, while simultaneously experiencing and learning about the local food and wine culture (Lopez-Guzman *et al.,* 2011). While wine tourism allows visitors to experience a distinctive product, it also promotes economic and social development at the regional level and provides local wineries with the opportunity to increase their sales and develop tourism-related businesses (Ferreira and Hunter, 2017; Lopez-Guzman *et al.,* 2011). Wine tourism has thus been acknowledged to be an

'extension of the complex relationship between wineries, wine regions and visitors/consumers' (Bruwer & Alant, 2009).

In Italy, wine tourism started to develop during the 1990s, when national and regional associations were formed to promote wine tourism and attract international tourists. Two national associations have been formed to assist in the development and management of wine tourism, namely the '*Movimento Turismo del Vino*' (MTV) association and the '*Associazione Nazionale Città del Vino*'. MTV was formed in 1993 with the aim to promote the Italian wine culture, enhance the image of wine regions, increase the economic impacts for the regions and develop initiatives to attract wine tourists (MTV, 2013). Some further initiatives are for example, the development and promotion of wine routes and the organisation of annual wine-related events, such as *Cantine Aperte* (Open Cellars) in May, the feast of San Lorenzo in August and other events during the harvest and Christmas time (Colombini, 2015). Similarly, the national association *Città del Vino* (cities of wine) coordinates various tourism-related activities, including wine festivals, magazines and research activities.

While most research on wine tourism tended to focus on the motivation and characteristics of winery visitors and/or wine tourists, Hall and Prayag (2017) note that quite surprisingly "given the role of place in consideration of wine as well as tourism, notions of terroir, place and winescape have not been a significant focus of wine tourism research" (p.338). On a more general note, Wang and Chen (2015) also argue that given tourism is such a 'place-based phenomenon' deeper understanding of place identity through empirical work, particularly case study work, can only advance current understanding of the impacts of tourism – especially on senses of place and *inter alia* senses of self (Gu and Ryan, 2008).

Identity Process Theory

A number of studies have drawn on three identity theories to explain the impact of place on identity, notably (1) place-identity theory (Proshansky et al., 1983), (2) social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974), and (3) identity process theory (Breakwell, 1983) (cf. Hauge, 2007). In this particular study, we draw on identity process theory (IPT) as a theoretical framework to help us examine how winery owners' identities are affected by their involvement and participation in wine tourism in their locality. The central idea behind this theory is that individuals' identities are shaped/guided by a number of *principles* of which Breakwell initially proposed three, that is: distinctiveness, continuity and self-esteem – to which he later added a fourth principle, efficacy (Breakwell, 2015). With these Breakwell argues that individuals' have a desire to be distinctive by maintaining a sense of uniqueness while simultaneously differentiating themselves from others (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996). However, they also desire continuity in their self-construction (ibid.) whereby individuals strive "to maintain a sense of connection across time and situation within identity" (Vignoles et al., 2002, p.203). Places are inextricably connected to maintaining and developing that sense of continuity. Self-esteem arises from "a positive evaluation of oneself or the group with which one identifies" (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p.208) and is concerned with an individual's feelings of worth and sense of pride. And efficacy relates to "the motivation to maintain feelings of competence and control" (Vignoles et al., 2002, p.204), whereby individuals develop feelings of efficacy if they are able to manage and function effectively and efficiently in their environment (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996).

Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996), for example, found in their study about attachment to the London Docklands area that participants disclosing a high level of attachment to the area were able to achieve feelings of distinctiveness, self-esteem, continuity and efficacy. Similarly, Knez (2005) found that residents' place-related identity processes of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and efficacy were significantly related to their attachment to the city of Gothenburg.

In a tourism context, Hallak et al. (2015) found tourism entrepreneurs' place attachment to be positively related to self-efficacy. A strong identity is believed to minimize self-doubt and enhance perceptions of competence and control, which in turn increases performance. Similarly, Wang and Chen (2015) reveal that place-based self-esteem and self-efficacy affect urban residents' perceptions of and support for tourism. Places thus contribute significantly to self-identity (Proshansky et al., 1983), thereby giving individuals senses of belonging, distinctiveness, continuity, and self-esteem.

Accordingly, our analysis proceeds on the basis that place is a cognitive sub-structure of winery owners' self-identities (Proshansky et al., 1983) and that involvement in wine tourism can either strengthen or threaten these identities, determining their feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, efficacy and self-esteem and consequently guiding their support for wine tourism development.

Methodology

Local Context

Langhe, situated in the southern part of the Piedmont province (see figure 1), is a region long renowned for its quality wines. It is characterised by 'old world' winemaking practices and traditions where, as in other well-established wine producing regions, its wines and wine producers are identified synonymously with the place itself. Langhe secured its reputation during the early 1990s when *Barolo* was recognised as 'one of the world's great wines' (Rosso, 2014), which led to an increased interest by tourists – initially from central Europe – in visiting these places of wine production. The inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2014 of the Langhe-Roero and Monferrato vineyards further enhanced Langhe's reputation as an internationally renowned tourism destination. In fact, the region continued to attract

enogastronomic tourists from around the world – as demonstrated by an 81% growth of tourist arrivals to the region between 2006 and 2016 (DMO Piemonte, 2017).

[Insert Fig 1 about here]

For the Langhe region, however, this significant increase in tourist numbers may have been somehow unexpected and it could be argued that initially the region, as well as its residents and winery owners, were not prepared – or even unwilling – to accommodate tourists. One reason being that wineries in Langhe get their income from wine/grape sales and wine export and are not dependent on tourism for their economic survival. While this situation initially led to opposition and resistance on the part of winery owners, over the years the region witnessed a steady rise in agritourism facilities, as well as in the number of wineries developing tourism-related activities on site, such as wine tastings, winery visits, cellar-door sales, B&B accommodation and restaurants. Others, however, have resisted wine tourism, seeing it as antithetical to their core activity and identity as Langhe winemakers. The focus on place identity is particularly important in this context because personal and professional identities are embroiled and place specific, and because wine making and tourism are both fundamentally place-based activities with consequently potential synergies and antagonisms between them.

The question therefore is whether winery owners' recent involvement in tourism is likely to strengthen or threaten their place identity and how this affects their support for wine tourism development in the region.

Data Collection

In order to understand, from their own perspectives (Qu and Dumay, 2011), winery owners' attitudes towards wine tourism development in Langhe an interpretivist approach was adopted in the research. Data was collected through interviews with 28 wine producers in the region, which allowed for theoretical saturation to be reached (see table 1). The interviews lasted for an average of 40 minutes, with the shortest one taking 23 minutes and the longest one for about 1 hour 15 minutes. Table 2 features the main research themes addressed during the interviews, notably: wine tourism development, involvement in tourism, and motivations for tourism involvement. Interview questions relating to the theme of 'motivations for tourism involvement' focused on business owners' lived experiences in particular. The majority of participants revealed their motivations for engaging in tourism by narrating stories of personal experiences with tourists during winery visits and wine tastings. Depending on participants' reactions, comments and utterances, subsequent questions were either consistent with other interviews or were changed or dismissed. Crucially, such open questioning allows participants to choose experiences and narratives most important to them in relation to the research topic. In this way we were able to learn about business owners' daily challenges, family histories and traditions as well as their lived experiences of and attitudes towards wine tourism and its development.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Sample

The winemaking system in Langhe is largely based on small-sized, family-owned wineries, with an annual wine production ranging between 30,000 and 100,000 litres. No data is available regarding the total number of wine businesses (both winemaking and grape-cultivating businesses) in the region, although it is estimated that the total number could be as high as 1000.

We adopted a snowballing approach in which a small number of winery owners led us to others through their personal contacts. This approach was very efficient, as it allowed us to

meet and interact with a large number of winery owners (n=28), which we would have been unable to reach on our own. This process also enabled us to build empirical knowledge as each winery was experienced first-hand and the owners interviewed in situ, which meant the depth of our understanding of the issues and local circumstances developed as the research process matured (cf. Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Data analysis

Interviews were conducted in Italian and then transcribed and translated into English. The translated data was ported into the NVivo qualitative data analysis software, which allowed for efficient coding, organizing and recalling of data (Hoover and Koerber, 2011) and facilitated the identification of links, connections and relationships between different themes and sub-themes (Gibbs, 2002). Subsequently, thematic and discourse analysis were used to analyse the data. While thematic analysis revealed the content of participants' discourses and was considered the first step of the analysis process, discourse analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of what was said as it is "the study of language in use" (Gee, 2014, p.17), thereby allowing understanding of participants' multiple realities (Crotty, 2015) with a particular focus on how and why respondents were producing what they said in their particular contexts. This approach is also sensitive to reflexivity and takes into account the fact that the interaction between researchers and participants plays an important part in the construction of discourses (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). This means that the role of researchers is somewhat that of an interlocutor and is therefore crucial in generating knowledge - interpretivist research needs to be mindful of that cooperative social construction (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Langdridge, 2007; Knapik, 2006).

Critically, discourse analysis is interested in "explaining how certain things came to be said or done, and what has enabled and/or constrained what can be spoken or written in a particular

context" (Cheek, 2004, p.1147). Considering the socio-cultural, historical and geographical context of wine producers allows researchers to interpret discourses differently and analyse why certain things have been said. Winery owners' discourses are strongly embedded in their particular contexts. Thus place attachment, the local community, the history of the winery and the family play a major role in how owners manage their winery and how they deal with wine tourism development. Moreover, a strong place attachment and place identity influences business owners' discourses and, as such, social context plays an important part in understanding wine producers' attitudes towards, involvement in and support or otherwise for tourism.

Findings and Discussion

Similar to previous research set within rural contexts, the findings of this study reveal that winery owners' self-identities are intimately related to their specific area/place (see, for example, Cassidy and McGarth, 2015; Cheshire et al., 2013; Downey et al., 2017). It is generally agreed in this literature that communities who live and work on the land develop a strong attachment and identification to that land and place. This is no different for the winery owners in Langhe who have generally grown up there, and who's passion for making wine typically plays a central role in their everyday lives. It is also typical that children help their parents in the vineyards and wine cellars. With this they listen to stories about family traditions and histories in which, for example, tales of ancestors' successes and sacrifices have driven their wine business forward, or stories of the contribution of each generation to the business, as well as the family's secret winemaking traditions and processes, and so on.

Wine tourism, however, provides a new dimension to these on-going (hi)stories and our empirical data shows that the development of the tourism industry in Langhe has led to

conflicting views and perceptions amongst business owners regarding their support for and future involvement in tourism (Petrzelka et al., 2006). Indeed we find that wine producers' involvement in tourism has impacted on their identity processes, shaping their feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy and in turn guiding their behaviour towards wine tourism. In order to understand this behaviour in some detail, in the following analysis we examine each of Breakwell's (2015) principles - distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and efficacy - in relation to our empirical findings. Please note, respondents' identities are protected by the use of pseudonyms.

Distinctiveness

Distinctiveness is the first motivational principle in Breakwell's IPT understood to shape identity (Vignoles et al., 2002). Having a sense of '*who I am*' is only possible when simultaneously developing a sense of '*who I am not*', thus requiring distinctiveness and differentiation (Vignoles et al., 2000). As Wester-Herber (2004) tell us, these feelings of distinctiveness are critical to identity formation, as Marco, case 9, somewhat reveals:

> We were the first to open an agritourism business in 1993. My mother was the first to open this in Barbaresco… The people around here thought she was crazy, because no one would come here to visit this area. But she said they were crazy. Of course people would come to this area.

This response outlines the social comparison of self and other in which pronouns are used to distinguish between 'we' and 'they'. The use of 'we' refers to Marco and his family and 'they' relates to the other winery owners in the area. Marco is keen to differentiate himself and his family from the local wine-producing community, which he depicts as being conservative and not recognising promising opportunities that embracing tourism brings. During the 1990s, when his family took the decision to get involved in tourism by inviting tourists to sample and

purchase their wine on site, tourism was in the initial stages of development then and most winery businesses did not consider it to be a viable opportunity for them to invest in, seeing it as completely separate to their interests. Moreover, wine tourism was generally criticised by the local wine-producing community as a second-rate activity. On the other hand, Marco's involvement in tourism did not only increase his profits but welcoming visitors to his place enabled him to develop strong feelings of distinctiveness/uniqueness.

Marco is not an outlier in this regard, the following response reveals how early involvement in wine tourism has also strengthened Bruno's identity – again, largely through developing and/or maintaining feelings of distinctiveness.

> We were pioneers in relation to wine tourism… at that time it wasn't seen as a good position for your winery, if you were open and sold your wines to the public and you received tourists. Everyone wanted to sell their wines only to importers and only to professionals, not to tourists. We however were always open and therefore other wineries would think of us as having a lower position, because we received tourists (Bruno, case 8).

Here Bruno depicts the wine-producing community as traditional and narrow-minded, and therefore not recognising the benefits of wine tourism development. Conventionally, owners kept their wineries closed and sold their wines exclusively to importers, restaurants and wine professionals, while tourists were never considered a principal target market. Moreover, wine tourism activities - such as offering winery visits, wine tastings and cellar-door sales - were perceived as inferior activities and 'serious' local wineries preferred to keep their winemaking processes secret and away from the prying and intrusive tourist gaze.

Furthermore, winery owners who were involved in tourism were able to develop and/or maintain feelings of distinctiveness in that it provided a means of differentiating themselves from winery owners who were not open to tourists both locally and further afield. Indeed, a

winery owner comparing him or herself this way might not only reinforce personal distinctiveness but could, for some at least, strengthen a sense of national pride:

> Our difference is that we are Italians, and for us Italians from this point of view we are always very open for tourists. We can also see it from the wineries. In Burgundy it would be impossible to go and visit a winery during the harvest. Here, although there is the harvest, we are open to tourists (Elena, Case 15).

By comparing such a placed sense of self with others in other places – especially in other competitor countries it seems - produces a grounded distinctiveness and uniqueness that can only be built on provenance (Vignoles et al., 2000). Moreover, the mention of 'Italians' in the context of 'we' and 'our' refers to a 'special' national character inherited and inhabited, which is not challenged but bolstered by this winery owner's involvement in tourism.

Continuity

An individuals' desire for continuity of the self-concept (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996) relates to the second principle of IPT, whereby maintaining a sense of self is likely to be facilitated through developing a connection between past, present and future. Furthermore, an individual's continued interaction with their local environment provides a reference by which a 'sense of temporal endurance' to their self-identity is anchored (Wang and Chen, 2015; Wester-Herber, 2004). The following responses reveal how places are inextricably connected to maintaining and developing such continuity:

> This is a family that is born here, that started here. Now there are two families that continue to manage it (*the winery*), also with the next generation, which is still a bit small but they will grow amongst the vines... Our mission will be to push them or show them how the attachment to the territory, to our work and tradition, is the success of this company (Marcello, Case 19).

> I have my roots here so for me it would be unthinkable to sell (Marco, Case 9).

> Because we've grown up in these surroundings and we are in love with what we are doing, it's not even work; it's a passion that grows every day… Also during the time I was still at school, I always went to the vineyards in my free time… At the beginning it was a game, which then was transformed into a passion and now it is also a workplace, so perfect for me (Marco, Case 9).

These utterances tell of their speakers' past, present and future in relation to their placed personal and professional lives as they topicalize words associated with business owners' strong place identification, notably '*born here*', '*grow amongst the vines*', '*attachment to the territory*', '*my roots*' and '*these surroundings*'. Their continuous interaction with the environment and place of wine and self-production, from childhood to adulthood, shapes their *passionate* feelings of connectedness, which in turn continuously and intrinsically influences their behaviour and business decisions (Cassidy and McGarth, 2015; Cheshire et al., 2013). As Webster-Herber (2004, p.112) tells us: "places can act as a link to the self-identity, and maintenance of this link can provide a sense of continuity to the identity. Memories of a setting or landscape can serve to link a person to his or her past" and, we might add in this context, link to the efficacy of their placed-based wine and tourism businesses.

For some winery owners in our study however, involvement in tourism seems to threaten their sense of continuity:

> I mean for a small winery like ours, you have to choose what you want to do with your resources. So it, wine tourism, would change our work and it's not really the work we would like to do (Elio, Case 22).

> I wouldn't be able to also run an agritourism business, because that would be too much. I believe that you have to make choices, if you want your work to be done correctly (Elena, Case 15).

Initially, these winery owners believed that offering wine tastings, winery visits, and cellar-door sales would benefit their businesses. Now they are saying they will not be pursuing additional tourist activities because, as they see it, tourism is likely to threaten their place-based

continuity by changing their main (traditional) work and way of life. Such findings chime with Petrzelka et al.'s (2006) study, which tells that residents working in resource-based industries, and who have a highly developed occupational identity, are more likely to oppose tourism development. Interestingly, our findings reveal that older generation winery owners tend to display a stronger occupational identity linked to place attachment and place identity in these conservative ways compared to younger generation owners. We must also consider that wine tourism in Langhe is still relatively young, developing over the past 10 to 15 years, and it would be interesting to see if such attitudes persist, reduce or even die out over time as the younger generations of winery owners embrace tourism further or possibly reject it as many of their forebears have. On this topic, Pietro says:

> So it was very difficult seeing tourists going to a winery, let's say for my parent's generation … they didn't like it. They were even annoyed. But now … the arrival of tourists to the winery, in my opinion, works best, and that you need the most (Pietro, case 17).

This direct reference to the older generation's attitudes towards wine tourism is typically challenged by another young winery owner who says: "*We work to live and it's not that we live to work"* (Paolo, case 20)*,* which infers a change in mentality that is happening across the younger generations of winemakers in Langhe. For some of these younger winemakers who have lived outside the area for a certain amount of time, mostly for educational purposes, a more open and less agricultural sensibility seems to have developed, which is open to outside forces such as tourism. For them, wine tourism benefits the region by providing plenty of entrepreneurial opportunities waiting to be pursued – something which was learned by their own excursions away from Langhe:

> For us it was important to get experience abroad. I've worked in other wineries and in restaurants. I've also worked in London, just to see what could be interesting for the future (Marco, case 9).

> My mentality opened completely. If you stay only here, the problem is that your mentality stays closed. If you start to move a bit, go abroad, discover new things your mind will open (Pietro, case 17).

Indeed, and as our findings demonstrate, winery owners only accrue favourable dispositions towards tourism if they perceive its development to be consistent with and not pose a threat to their identity (Droseltis and Vignoles, 2010; Wang and Xu, 2015). Tourism, then, must not threaten the extant, traditional livelihood that is literally and metaphorically rooted in place, otherwise the authenticity of Langhe as a winemaking region would be compromised. Similarly, the self-esteem of those producers who continue that tradition would be compromised if the balance between authentic winemaking and its commodification through tourism was out of kilter.

Self-esteem

> The more the people come to this territory and try the wines with our food, the more they will start to appreciate our territory and then it becomes easier to offer our products… The more people that come to the area, the more people will start to understand and appreciate our culture" (Cristina, Case 23).

Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) tell us that feelings of worth and self-esteem are developed and maintained the more individuals identify with a place. Likewise, Cristina's response above reveals how feelings of self-esteem are not only underpinned by a strong attachment to winery owners' place of production, but that attachment can be affirmed and enhanced by tourists appreciating the place, its history and ultimately the wine produced from it. With this Cristina's involvement in tourism is assured, as is, it appears, her general support for tourism as good for Langhe as a wine producing region. Another winery owner's response is also telling in this regard:

> People are coming from all the different corners of the world, travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres by plane or car, and then decide to come and visit us … and they want to try our wines … this is the way to make our products known (Tiziana, Case 14).

The fact that people travel great distances to the region to learn about local wines and discover their place(s) of production not only affirms this winemaker's identity, but stimulates feelings of self-worth. Moreover, responses such as this from Tiziana are in line with findings from other studies which report how tourism is likely to strengthen positive feelings of pride in place and, ultimately, self (see, for example, Strzelecka et al., 2017; and Xu et al., 2016).

Another winery owner, Gabriele, speaks of these interconnections in more personal terms by putting himself and his voice right in the middle of the relational scene:

> People come here. It's a nice thing. I'm in the vineyard, but they want to see me, they want to speak to me. So I'm coming back. I'm satisfied they are satisfied. I explain our products. And sometimes I'm taking them to the vineyard, I'm happy. I show you where the product grows, from the vines to the bottle. For us it's important (Gabriele, case 7).

A number of attributes are evident here. First, words such as 'nice', 'satisfied', and 'happy', express Gabriele's positive approach towards wine tourism. Crucially, wine tourism has given him the opportunity to share his passion with numerous visitors, especially by taking them to the vineyards and explaining the wine production process. Secondly, openly saying '*they want to see me*' and '*they want to speak to me*' reveals his enhanced sense of worth and a strong sense of pride through being able to communicate and explain his profession to tourists. Indeed, communicating to tourists from a position of personal authenticity, rooted in place and earth, is both rewarding for Gabriele and the tourists he welcomes (cf. MacCannell, 1973).

Similarly, Pietro considers the arrival of tourists at his winery as resulting in greater personal satisfaction, and he directly refers to tourists' presence at his winery impacting

positively on his self-esteem and sense of pride, which in turn helps to strengthen the bond he has with the locality (cf. Wester-Herber, 2004).

> I'm always trying to attract people to the winery… There is definitely more satisfaction. If someone comes to the winery to have a tour and try the wines that is more satisfying than someone calling to receive two boxes of wine … it is more rewarding; also for the self-esteem (Pietro, case 17).

This level of pride and satisfaction seems to be relative to the level of embodied interaction between host and guest in that the more situated, personal and mutually appreciative the encounter the more rewarding for the host, and no doubt the tourist, it can be.

Efficacy

IPT suggests that individuals develop feelings of efficacy when they are able to manage and function effectively and efficiently in their environment (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996). In other words, living in a controllable environment allows individuals to feel self-efficacious because they are able to carry out their activities on a daily basis, thereby fulfilling a cherished lifestyle (Wester-Herber, 2004).

> We get up at 6am to go to work in the vineyards. At noon we are coming in for our lunch and the doorbell is ringing, tourists asking for a wine tasting. Yes we accept them. Let's go. So yes we are always trying to do the visits (Marco, case 9).

This response reveals how Marco experiences feelings of self-efficacy with respect to his daily functioning in *his* environment. In this instance, his involvement with tourists strengthens his place-based self-efficacy because it enables him to integrate tourism successfully with the daily activities of his winery business.

It is also true, and important to note here that threats to self-efficacy are likely to lead to dissatisfaction and frustration among winery owners. In this regard, some will and do attempt

to minimise the damage to their self-identities by being uncompromisingly hostile to the perceived (and perhaps real) threat of tourism (cf. Vignoles et al., 2002; 2006), as the following responses show:

> Our work is to do with wine not hospitality (Anna, case 10).
>
> This is not a public institution but it is a business (Alessandro, case 18).
>
> Our primary activity, and it is important never to forget that, is winemaking (Beatrice, case 24).

Although these comments are negatively disposed towards tourism, these three winemakers have indeed developed tourism-related activities at their wineries over the past couple of years. They are, however, stressing that this interferes too much with winemaking and therefore constitutes a threat to their self-efficacy. As such, these winery owners now limit the number of tourists visiting their premises and are refusing to pursue further tourism-related opportunities.

Conclusion

This research has sought to answer the question: how are Langhe winery owners' identities affected by their involvement and participation in wine tourism? Built on the application of Breakwell's (2015) Identity Process Theory (IPT), our main objective has been to analyse how wine tourism involvement affects winery owners' identity processes, which are guided by the principles of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and efficacy.

The paper's contribution is to partially fill the gap in extant research that to-date has only paid limited attention to particular community groups, with winery owners being a notable absence (cf. Andriotis, 2005; Kuvan and Akan, 2012; Sanchez-Canizares et al., 2016). Likewise, tourism research conducted from a community perspective has predominantly drawn on Social

Exchange Theory (SET) as a theoretical framework, but by adopting IPT we have expanded the hitherto analytical focus while responding to recent calls for research that provides a deeper understanding of how place identity principles influence residents' behaviour and support for tourism (e.g. Wang and Chen, 2015; Wang and Xu, 2015).

We argue that tourism involvement can either strengthen or threaten winery owners' identities and thereby affect their support for and participation in wine tourism. Winery owners in Langhe, who consistently displayed a strong place attachment and identification, have developed feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and efficacy. Our findings show that these feelings guide their particular involvement, or otherwise, in wine tourism and influence their attitudes towards it at a more general level. Moreover, winery owners' who were actively involved in wine tourism revealed how their involvement strengthened and reinforced their place-based distinctiveness as well as their sense of self-esteem. Firstly, through tourists' first-hand experience of their wineries, these owners were keen to differentiate themselves from other local wineries as well as from wineries in other countries as being more progressively open to outsiders to the region and to the winemaking business itself. Secondly, these winery owners revealed a sense of pride in sharing their passion, products and local culture with tourists - thereby enhancing their self-esteem, which in turn led to their generally favourable attitude towards tourism as well as a willingness to pursue additional tourism-related activities.

However, the findings also revealed how feelings of self-efficacy in relation to wine tourism could either strengthen or threaten winery owners' identities. On the one hand, respondents showed how wine tourism involvement created a strong sense of efficacy, as business owners were able to carry out their principal activities of winemaking on a daily basis while welcoming tourists. Conversely, others saw wine tourism as at least a distraction, and even a threat, to their core business and therefore a threat to their self-efficacy and to their identities. As a

consequence, these (conservative) owners not only refused to pursue additional tourism activities in their wineries, but opposed future tourism development generally in the region.

Finally, tourism involvement was also perceived to threaten the more conservative winery owners' sense of place-based continuity because they saw it as a disruptive rather than an enhancing influence on their on-going personal and business histories. As Wester-Herber (2004) tells us, place-based continuity is achieved through connecting past, present and future events and narratives in a kind of identity making thread. In this instance, and with these owners, wine tourism was seen as too new-fangled and intrusive for a serious winemaking business to be involved in, and thus no compromise and no further involvement with tourism were these winery owners' on-going positions. The more progressive winery owners – who were often younger, had been educated and/or lived outside of the Langhe region for some time – saw well-managed wine tourism as bringing in new income and enhancing their businesses and therefore offering a new chapter in their place's history.

Although coming from a particular case study of wine tourism in a particular locality, these findings are consistent with other studies' empirical findings that show how place-based identity principles of self-esteem, efficacy (Wang and Chen, 2015) and distinctiveness (Wang and Xu, 2015) influence host communities' attitudes towards, adoption of, and support for tourism. However, unlike previous studies, this study shows how feelings and values of continuity have a very strong influence on a host community's identity processes and guide local business owners' willingness to be involved in tourism themselves and influence their support for local tourism development more generally. It also shows that, in the Langhe case at least, a place-based community such as winemakers, is not internally homogenous when it comes to support for tourism and that a sense of identity based on a sense of historical continuity can be a major dividing principle between those who participate in tourism and support its development and those who do not. This, we contend, needs more research in other tourism

development contexts if we are to understand further how and why tourism is accepted and/or rejected by and within local communities.

Practical Implications

We also posit that this study has implications for regional governments and destination management organisations (DMOs) when promoting and presenting tourism development initiatives for rural regeneration (Wang and Xu, 2015). In pursuing economic regeneration, regional governments inevitably aim for social cohesion, sustainability and economic growth. However, and as mentioned, the results of this study have shown that the development of tourism in Langhe has led to conflicting views among winery owners regarding their involvement in and support for wine tourism, even though they might seem to be a homogeneous group sharing similar business and place-based interests. In this instance, tourism planners and DMOs need to take into consideration host communities' attachment to their socio-physical environment (Strzelecka et al., 2017) as well as the complexity of their perceptions and attitudes towards tourism – not least, as we have argued, those complexities surrounding place-based continuity, subjectivities and values. On a broader note, tourism planners and managers would benefit greatly, as would their localities, from understanding which forms of tourism development maintains business owners' feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and efficacy (Wang and Chen, 2015). This is no panacea, but we would argue that the continued - planned (official and objective) and spontaneous (everyday and subjective) - construction of identity would benefit from a greater understanding of how such feelings are developed and operationalised so that unnecessary local conflicts surrounding tourism development can be mitigated or indeed avoided.

Furthermore, in order to achieve the right balance between tourism prosperity and community wellbeing, local authorities and DMOs should offer continuous support and

guidance in terms of training and education programs (Hallak et al., 2015). These education and training programs should provide winery owners with an in-depth understanding of tourists' needs and wants, and how to adapt to a service role, as many winery owners and their families lack the experience of running a tourism business. Especially in a region like Langhe, where winery owners are not relying on tourism for economic survival, and, thus, do not see tourism as a priority/necessity, planners and the local government need to make sure to communicate the positive impacts and gains that wine tourism development can have for the community, locality and winery owners themselves. With these programs, local authorities should aim to give winery owners feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and efficacy in a way that they become tourism ambassadors for their region, and thus strengthen their identities.

Limitations and Future Research

Potential limitations of this study could be attributed to the fact that all participating wineries are actively involved in tourism, through offering at least two tourism-related activities at their winery. Businesses with no involvement in tourism were not included in the research, though multiple attempts were made to contact these wineries. They were simply unwilling to participate, which is an interesting finding in itself, but could be seen as impacting upon participant balance. Notwithstanding these potential limitations, this study has significantly contributed to a deeper understanding of how place is an integral part of winery owners' identities and plays an important role in maintaining or even enhancing the feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Future research could build on these findings, as there is clearly more to learn about the perceptions of winery owners who do not participate in wine tourism even though they have the opportunity to do so, and in particular with regard to how they see tourism involvement in relation to their identities and self concepts. Furthermore, such research could be extended to

other countries to provide a country comparison in these regards. In this instance, Langhe could be compared to other wine regions within old world wine countries (e.g. France, Spain) and they in turn with new world wine countries (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, Canada).

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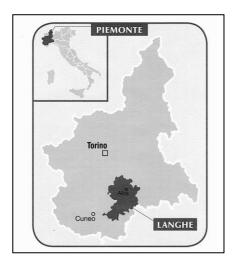
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Figure 1 - Map of Langhe, Italy

Source: Albeisa – La Carta dei Vini di Langa e Roero

Table 1.   **Winery Sample**

Case Number	Location	Foundation of Winery	Current Generation	Annual Wine Production (in litres)
Case 1	Barolo	1919	3rd	30000
Case 2	Barbaresco	1958	2nd	30000
Case 3	Barolo	1885	4th	80000
Case 4	Mondovì	1990	2nd	50000
Case 5	Barbaresco	1978	2nd	70000
Case 6	Dogliani	1924	3rd	65000
Case 7	Neive	1950	2nd	21000
Case 8	Neive	1964	5th	120000
Case 9	Barbaresco	1948	4th	20000
Case 10	Monforte d'Alba	1982	2nd	150000
Case 11	Neive	1965	3rd	65000
Case 12	La Morra	1941	3rd	45000
Case 13	Serralunga d'Alba	1957	3rd	110000
Case 14	Monforte d'Alba	1878	2nd	90000
Case 15	Novello	1991	4th	85000
Case 16	Serralunga d'Alba	1953	3rd	85000
Case 17	Diano d'Alba	1927	3rd	30000
Case 18	Castiglione Falletto	1979	2nd	180000
Case 19	Barbaresco	1971	3rd	50000
Case 20	La Morra	1959	6th	120000
Case 21	Serralunga d'Alba	1896	4th	110000
Case 22	Treiso	1982	3rd	45000
Case 23	La Morra	1878	7th	110000
Case 24	Serralunga d'Alba	1902	4th	75000
Case 25	Neive	1997	1st	8000
Case 26	Barolo	1945	3rd	65000
Case 27	Monforte d'Alba	1975	5th	40000
Case 28	Neive	1970	3rd	350000

Table 2 - Research Interview Guide

Research Themes	Sample interview questions
Wine Tourism Development	Which trends have you witnessed in visits to your winery? - What changes have you noticed? - What are the reasons for these changes? What are the impacts of tourists on your winery? - Can you provide some examples? How do you manage these impacts?
Involvement in Tourism	How did you open your winery to tourists - Can you tell me how it happened? - What exactly did you do? - How did your family feel about this decision? - What kind of financial help did you receive?
Motivations for Tourism Involvement	What happened when you first received tourists at the winery. How do you think tourists experienced your winery. For example, were they appreciative/respectful of your working traditions and way of life? What has been the best thing about opening your winery to tourists? - Can you provide some examples? How do you feel now about the decisions you have made with regards to opening up to tourists? What challenges have you faced/are facing as a winery who has opened up to tourists? How do you see the future for your winery, and is tourism part of that future? How do you feel about further developing your tourism activities?