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Mapping the wine visit experience for tourist excitement and cultural experience

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine and estimate the relationships between wine involvement, cultural experience, winescape attributes, wine excitement and sensorial attraction in two different wine tourism destinations and the antecedent role of wine involvement as the starting point that enhances the other dimensions. Survey data was analysed using structural equation modelling. Results reveal a direct relationship of wine involvement, winescape attributes, and sensorial attraction in the cultural experience and wine excitement of wine tourists. Furthermore, the mediating role of winescape attributes and sensorial attraction was identified in the relationship between wine involvement cultural experiences. These results allow wine marketers and decision-makers to map the different stages in a wine tourism experience and to combine the use of these five different wine tourism dimensions to deliver a superior cultural experience.

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Wine tourism; wine involvement; wine marketing; winescape attributes; wine excitement; sensorial attraction

Introduction

Wine tourism has evolved over the last few decades because of the competitiveness between the wine producing destinations. Although the first definitions mentioned that wine tourism was more than a simple visit to the vineyards and wine producers (Hall et al. 1996; Hall and Macionis 1998), wine tourism has extended its offer with complementary services such as wine festivals, wine shows, wine museums, winery architecture, gastronomy, accommodation, and leisure activities within the winery facilities and in a landscape related to wine (Bruwer and Rueger-Muck 2019; Kruger and Viljoen 2021). This growth of wine tourism as a lever for wine producing regions has aroused great interest among researchers, considering the amount of scientific work dedicated to this theme in recent years (Gómez, Pratt, and Molina 2019; Leri and Theodoridis 2019; Thanh and Kirova 2018).

The context where this research was conducted was in two of the main Portuguese fortified wine appellations. Porto wine is produced in Douro valley, but most of its

cellars are in the city of Porto, both considered world heritage by UNESCO. Madeira wine is produced on one of the most beautiful islands in Europe, also recognized as world natural heritage by UNESCO, which was awarded the World's Leading Island Destination last year by the World Travel Awards (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020).

Wine tourism as an object of study has been examined with a focus on the consumer, as a regional strategy for the development of wine tourism destinations and from a wine business perspective (Getz and Brown 2006; Ferreira and Hunter 2017). Regardless of how wine tourism is approached, there seems to be a consensus among researchers today that experience is the motto for this diverse set of activities related to wine culture (Pikkemaat et al. 2009; Quadri-Felitti and Fiore 2012). In fact, although wine is the main attraction for this type of travel, wine tourists end up having a holistic experience, which includes entertainment, educational, escapist, and aesthetic activities, framed in a winescape (Pine and Gilmore 1998; Bruwer and Alant 2009). Wine tourism is, therefore, a multidimensional hedonic experience, based on the exploration of the senses, which goes beyond the obvious, that is, the tasting and purchase of wines in a wine setting (Pelegrín-Borondo, Olarte-Pascual, and Orueza-bala 2020). This holistic experience will only be achieved if the winescape attributes are aligned with the visitors' expectations to provide wine involvement through sensorial attractions (Bruwer and Rueger-Muck 2019; Santos et al. 2019).

Wine involvement has been addressed from a behavioural perspective of wine tourists, where the level of knowledge is related to involvement during the visit (Bruwer, Prayag, and Disegna 2018; Madeira, Correia, and Filipe 2019). Although this approach is pertinent, a broader reflection should nevertheless be made, where the escapist context of the visit is related to the surroundings where it occurs, that is, the winescape (Thomas, Quintal, and Phau 2018).

Wine sensory experience (WSE) is a wine tourism and marketing construct validated by the scientific community, which has boosted scientific investigation about this issue (Santos et al., 2021). This phenomenon is due to the potential that wine itself has a role as main attraction in wine tourism destination. WSE relates the intersection between wine tourists and winemaking activities. WSE is conceptualized as a need to experience wine tourism attracting current and potential visitors, totally covering the wide spread of wine tourism destinations both in the Old World and New World, and is growing worldwide. WSE is mainly described in terms of colours, smells, sounds, textures, tastes, flavours, sight and touch, empowering simultaneously these interplays in hedonic and holistic ways, occurring mainly in the context of a winery (Santos et al., 2020). Thanh and Kirova (2018) highlighted the holistic perspective focused on the visitors' experience in relation to wine tourism activities and wine regions.

Wine tourists undoubtedly seek appealing, exclusive, and memorable wine sensory impressions in the wine tourism settings. Wine potentiates an amalgam of multisensory experiences engaged in wine tourism activity. It also co-creates a higher value enriching a higher WSE level and boosting behavioural intentions during the visits. It has been determined that wine tourists expect the best wine sensory appeal experiences (Santos et al. 2021). Within this context, wine tourists are predominantly wine consumers looking for pleasurable wine senses. Wine sensory stimulation originates in tasting wines and the appreciation of its main characteristics: the wine smells nice, tastes

good, looks nice, and therefore activates these sensory stimuli. This incites a total engagement in greater novelty and sensory activities, which are of paramount importance to the success in a winery visit experience (Santos et al. 2019). Given this, WSE is a useful construct that has become vital to sustained success, and has to be seen as a key concept of wine tourism management and marketing in the future and in wine tourism related-travel.

Some wine regions, however, are more appealing than others, due to the position they have achieved in the mind of wine lovers, and to the wines they produce and their history (Bruwer and Gross 2017). Regarding these more established wine regions, the tourist begins to 'feel' the visit, creating specific expectations, even before it happens, which makes him more open to the experiences that await him (Bruwer and Alant 2009). Thus, winescape must be seen as a scenario where all the components fit, in the sensory narrative with which it is intended to involve the visitor, through the winery and its architecture, the surrounding vineyards, but also the region's heritage, normally framed in a rural context (Mitchell, Charters, and Albrecht 2012). This relationship between the role of winescape as a mediator of sensory attraction and wine involvement is not yet fully explored in the literature. Theoretically, it is highly knowledgeable wine tourists that expect the best wine visits experiences (Santos et al., 2020; Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2019).

This study aims to examine and estimate the direct and indirect relationships between wine involvement, cultural experience, winescape attributes, wine excitement and sensorial attraction in two different wine tourism destinations. It also proposes to develop a model that evaluates the role of wine involvement as the trigger/antecedent of the aforementioned dimensions derived from wine visit experiences. Hence, there is an emerging need for advancing novel insights that follows this research. This is the first study that empirically addresses the combined used of wine visit experience dimensions through a hedonic and holistic way in two different wine tourism settings, including one of the most renowned worldwide. The Porto and Madeira wine regions, apart from producing two of the most famous fortified wines in the world, are also two wine terroirs with a unique landscape that attract many visitors.

The paper is structured as follows: firstly, a theoretical background based on wine attributes and dimensions on wine tourism experiences is provided; then the development of the hypotheses is proposed; this is followed by the methodology; then the results of the model assessment are given; and finally, the results, discussion and conclusions, including managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions, are presented.

Literature review

Definition of constructs

In their review on the literature background about constructs domain in a global wine tourism extended perspective, Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung (2007) and Schmitt (1999) pointed out that the wine tourism on-site experience comprises sensing, feeling, thinking, acting and relating, ensuring a memorable experience to wine tourists (Tsaur, Chiu, and Wang 2006), as well as stimulating visitors' five senses (Agapito, Mendes, and Valle 2013).

Table 1. Definition of the constructs.

Constructs	Definitions from the dominant literature	References
Wine involvement	Wine involvement is a motivational state of mind of a person with wine or wine-related activity, reflecting the extent of personal relevance of the wine-related experience	Brown, Havitz, and Getz (2007); Bruwer and Huang (2012)
Sensory appeal	A need to experience tourism through sensation or feeling by tourists, perceived through specific sense modes, such as touch, smell, taste, sight, hearing or the sense of balance	Dann and Jacobsen (2002); Urry (2002)
Winescape attributes	The winescape refers to attributes of a grape wine region interplaying vineyards, wineries and other physical structures, wines, natural landscape and setting, people and heritage, towns and their architecture and artifacts within them	Johnson and Bruwer (2007); Peters (1997)
Cultural experience	Gaining knowledge such as learning about history, understanding different countries and authentic experience related to new and unique experiences of travelling	Crompton and McKay (1997); McIntosh, Goeldner, and Ritchie (1995)
Wine excitement	Seeking an exciting experience, created through the medium of undertaking activities involving unknown risks or unusual outcomes	Mayo and Jarvis (1981)

In order to achieve a clear definition of the main constructs related to wine experience, an intensive literature review was conducted (Table 1).

Development of hypotheses

Wine involvement and wine experience

Wine tourist involvement is an emotional state of interest or enthusiasm in relation to wine, which ends up influencing an experience in the destination (Barber, Ismail, and Dodd 2008). Wine involvement is essential for the wine lover to decide to visit a certain region, in order to have a fuller experience of immersion in the winescape, not only through the wine tasting, but also through all activities related to wine culture (Brown, Havitz, and Getz 2007; Sousa 2020).

The involvement of consumers/tourists with the region and its wines is directly linked to their level of knowledge. That is, those highly involved with wine culture intend to be emotionally more engaged and excited with the winescape and its attributes than those with less knowledge (Lockshin 2003; Yuan, So, and Chakravarty 2005). It has been widely demonstrated that emotions among winery tourists, both the Old and New World wines, are a way to directly establish intensity and engagement in wine tourists visiting wineries and wine regions, depending on whether the wine destinations were in the new or old wine world (Pelegrín-Borondo, Ortiz, and Meraz-Ruiz 2019). Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) also suggested that involvement was one of the antecedents of a memorable tourist experience. Prebensen et al. (2013) found that involvement and tourist knowledge were two of the antecedents, but on the context of perceived value of a holiday.

Regarding dimensions applied to a wine tourism experience emotions, Santos et al. (2020) found that wine experience dimensions are influenced by four dimensions: wine storytelling, wine tasting excitement, wine involvement and winescape, which can measure the holistic behaviour of wine tourists (Santos et al. 2021). WSE involves wine tastings and the cellar, wine houses and wine museum visits. Currently, and in the future, WSE has provided and boosted the creation of genuine and unique wine sensory appeal, more differentiated and tailor-made services, mainly provided by

wine tour guides/wine storytellers/winemakers/wine producers strictly about wine, e.g. wine bottles/wine brands/wine families/wine estates/winemaking (Gu et al. 2020). Also to Santos et al. (2021), wine tourists seek other kinds of wine-related activities such as dining, shopping, recreational and cultural outlets, and these components should be additional parts of the wine tourism supply chain. Hence, the hypotheses are as follows:

H1a: Wine tourist involvement is positively related to winescape attributes

H1b: Wine tourist involvement is positively related to sensorial attraction

H1c: Wine tourist involvement is positively related to wine excitement

H1d: Wine tourist involvement is positively related to cultural experience

Winescape attributes and wine experience

The attractiveness and authenticity of winescape plays a crucial role in generating wine tourism demand (Kim and Bonn 2016) because wine tourists need to get involved with both the wines of the region and also with the terroir where they are produced and their landscape, cultural and heritage attributes (Bruwer and Alant 2009). The very particular nature of wine tourism depends on sensory involvement, through all the tangible and intangible aspects of winescape (Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2019). The wine landscape is also determinant, through its multidimensional characteristics, in the perception of the unique sensory and tactile characteristics of a wine, which can be related to a wine region, or wine terroir (Famularo, Bruwer, and Li 2010).

To Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu (2019), wine tourists lend great value to multisensory wine-related artifacts. Their results identified the main concepts associated with the five senses, most of them linked with sight and taste, followed by hearing, touch or smell, namely: wine, view, staff, room, hotel, food, restaurant, pool, service, Douro, delicious (food and wine) and comfort. Wine is the central product of wine tourism and has an experiential dimension, which is strongly connected with a hedonic perspective, evoking feelings through the different senses: taste, smell, touch, sight and hearing (Santos et al. 2019). In fact, it occurs when these senses meet the stimuli in a wine tourism context, not only when they taste the wines but also during the visits to the vines or the buildings and hearing the descriptions of how the wine is made and the stories associated with them.

The context and all the sensory inputs in which the wine is tasted affect the consumer emotionally, establishing a mental and emotional liaison between the region and its wines. Tasting in an historical building or in a beautiful landscape will induce a higher level of sensory stimuli. Also, regions with a richer history and heritage have an advantage over a less renowned one (Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen 2013; Andrade-Suárez & Caamaño-Franco, 2020). Highly renowned regions such as Burgundy, Bordeaux, Tuscany, Porto or Madeira are part of the wine lover's imagination for their wine appeal (Getz and Brown 2006). Drawing on these premises, the hypotheses are as follows:

H2a: Winescape attributes are positively related to wine excitement

H2b: Winescape attributes are positively related to cultural experience

H2c: Winescape attributes mediate the relation between wine involvement and wine excitement

H2d: Winescape attributes mediate the relation between wine involvement and cultural experience

Sensorial attraction and wine experience

Experiences are the result of situations that provide sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, relational, and functional stimuli that trigger a constant flow of fantasies, feelings and fun (Pikemaat et al. 2009; Pina and Dias 2021). Wine tourism allows experiences that involve the senses and emotions and provide pleasure to wine lovers in a rural setting (Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2019). Stimulating the senses is therefore strategic in involving visitors emotionally with the wines of the region and its landscape, cultural and heritage context (Pine and Gilmore 1998; Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2019). In addition, sensory tourist experiences in rural areas tend to have more lasting consequences and endure in the minds of visitors (Kastenholz, Marques, and Carneiro 2020). These multisensory stimuli must be applied to all wine region attractions, in order to be as comprehensive as possible and to help create memorable experiences, which will endure in the minds of the visitors and thus be positively linked to the destination and influence future visit intentions (Chandralal and Valenzuela 2013).

The sensory dimension applied to tourism experiences has increased the interest and focus of researchers highlighting multi-sensory stimuli and impressions in understanding that tourist experiences should be attracted towards destinations by visual elements (Agapito 2020). According to Santos et al. (2021), the five senses receive sensory data from the environment and affect perception, memory and emotions, but in this specific context, the idea is oriented towards people–place interactions that involve multisensory moments (Chemli, Toanoglou, and Valeri 2020; Imamovic, Azevedo, and Sousa 2020). Given this, Agapito (2020) attested that the sensory dimension of tourist experiences is essential, due to these arguments: (a) human senses are crucial to the individual's perception of the world; (b) sensory stimuli influence consumer behaviour; and (c) places and environments, such as destinations, are multi-sensorial, providing multi-sensorial encounters. Moreover, results of Rachão et al. (2020) reveal that co-creation of food-and-wine experiences towards in tourism are a combination of seven categories: social interaction; novelty; creativity; social sustainability; environmental awareness; enjoyment; and memorable experiences. Consequently, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3a: Sensorial attraction is positively related to wine excitement

H3b: Sensorial attraction is positively related to cultural experience

H3c: Sensorial attraction mediates the relation between wine involvement and wine excitement

H3d: Sensorial attraction mediates the relation between wine involvement and cultural experience

Method

Data collection and sample

The data was gathered from the sample of international wine tourists visiting Madeira and Porto wine cellars, between July and September 2019. This period was chosen because it directly coincides with the period that has the greatest flow of wine tourists to this kind of wine tourism product and destination. The questionnaire was multilingual, in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. All the questionnaire versions were first translated and

then reverse translated to obtain a higher accuracy in the language used. The questionnaire was pretested with a small sample of 55 tourists from English, Spanish, French and Portuguese speaking countries (nine, eleven, eight and twelve, respectively). These initial responses were eliminated from the database to eliminate biases. To provide additional accuracy, the scales were evaluated by two tourism academics for content validity. Based on the responses from the tourists and academics, some wording was revised for the final version. In total, 1025 valid and usable self-administered questionnaires were obtained (511 in Madeira and 514 in Porto) in order to obtain a sample that was large enough to overcome the fact that it was obtained from a convenience sample (DeVellis 2003; Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003). These questionnaires were obtained on an immediate post-visit setting and were collected in 10 days in Madeira and 10 days in Porto.

Regarding the sample profile, the sample is quite balanced in terms of gender, with most coming from the United Kingdom, France, Portugal and Germany and the majority being adults aged between 25 and 54. They have higher education and a medium to high-standard of jobs, as shown in Table 2.

Measures

Measures were adapted from validated scales. As such, twenty-eight items derived from six constructs mentioned before (Table 1) were selected, as shown in Table 3, in which only a few items needed to be slightly adapted to the wine tourism context. Included in the questionnaire were: wine involvement, cultural experience, winescape attributes, wine excitement and sensorial attraction.

The cultural experience measure includes the recommended dimensions (Kim and Eves 2012), namely learning knowledge including the recognizing different cultures or contact with new products or experiences, and authentic experience (e.g. lifestyle, unique experience).

Results

To test our conceptual model, we used structural equation modelling (SEM) by means of partial least squares (PLS). More specifically we used SmartPLS 3 software (Ringle, Wende,

Table 2. Sociodemographic set profile of the sample.

Whole data (n = 1025)				
Gender	Age	Education level	Country of origin	Job
Male (49.7%)	18–24 years old (7.1%)	Less than high school graduate (3.7%)	Portugal (8.3%)	Business person/manager (16%) Freelancer/self-employed (17.9%)
	25–34 years old (21.3%)	High school graduate (18.5%)	Spain (5.6%)	Middle/senior employed management (17%)
Female (50.3%)	35–44 years old (21%)	Degree (43.8%)	France (24.7%)	Civil servant (11.4%)
	45–54 years old (27.8%)	Master's degree (27.2%)	Germany (7.7%)	Worker (17.3%)
	55–64 years old (16%)	Doctorate (6.8%)	United Kingdom (25.9%)	Pensioner/retired (4%)
	65 or > years old (6.8%)		Other countries (27.8%)	Domestic/unemployed (1.5%) Student (6.5%) Other (8.3%)

Table 3. Variables scale adjusted to wine tourism experience.

Constructs	Items adapted to wine tourism experience	Sources
Wine Involvement	(1) I wish to learn more about this wine	Brown, Havitz, and Getz (2007); Bruwer and Huang (2012)
	(2) I like to purchase wine to match the occasion	
	(3) For me, drinking this wine gives me pleasure	
	(4) I enjoyed these wine activities that I really wanted to go to	
	(5) For me, these wine tastings are a particularly pleasurable experience	
	(6) My interest in this wine makes me want to visit these wine cellars	
Sensorial attraction	(1) It is important to me that this wine I drink smells nice	Dann and Jacobsen (2002); Urry (2002)
	(2) It is important to me that this wine I drink tastes good	
	(3) It is important to me that this wine I drink looks nice	
	(4) It is important to me to touch the wine bottle that I drink from	
	(5) Tasting this wine results in the activation of my sensory stimuli	
Winescape attributes	(1) This wine scenery is attractive	Thomas, Quintal, and Phau (2018)
	(2) This winery landscape has a rural appeal	
	(3) These buildings have historic appeal	
	(4) There is a wine old-world charm in this wine cellars	
	(5) This wine cellars offers spectacular views	
	(6) This architecture gives the winery character	
Cultural experience	(1) Experiencing this wine gives me an opportunity to increase my <i>knowledge about different cultures</i>	Kim and Eves (2012); Poria, Reichel, and Biran (2006)
	(2) It is important to me to taste this wine in its original region	
	(3) Experiencing this wine enables me to learn what it tastes like	
	(4) Experiencing this wine allows me discover something new	
	(5) Experiencing this wine makes me see the things that I don't normally see	
	(6) Experiencing this wine helps me see how other people live	
Wine Excitement	(1) Experiencing this wine in its original wine cellars makes me excited	Pizam et al. (2004)
	(2) Tasting this wine on holiday helps me to relax	
	(3) Tasting this wine makes me feel exhilarated	
	(4) When tasting this wine I have an expectation that it is exciting	
	(5) Tasting this wine on holiday makes me not worry about routine	

and Will 2015), a variance-based SEM technique. PLS-SEM has gained increasing popularity in tourism and hospitality research (Henseler, Müller, and Schubert 2018) and is a recommended technique in exploratory studies (Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2011) and for testing research models with hypothesized complex relationships (Chin 1998), such as the present one.

To evaluate the quality of the measurement model we tested the following indicators: reliability, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). The reliability of each construct was validated using a two-step approach. First, the standardized factor loadings of all construct items were above 0.7 (ranging from 0.705–0.922) and significant at $p < 0.001$ (Hair et al. 2017). Second, the Cronbach's alphas and composite reliability (CR) values of the constructs surpassed the cut-off of 0.7 being all between 0.847 and 0.941 (Table 4) (Hair et al. 2017) which provided evidence for the individual indicator reliability.

We used three tests to confirm the convergent validity. First, all items loaded positively and significantly in each construct, as previously indicated. Second, CR values for all the constructs were above 0.70. Third, the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs is higher than 0.50 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). The discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell and Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion (Hair et al. 2017; Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015). According to the Fornell and Larcker criterion, the construct square root of AVE is larger than its biggest correlation with any construct (Fornell and Larcker 1981), which corresponds to the values presented in the diagonal with bold values in Table 3. The HTMT ratios are lower than 0.85 (Hair et al. 2017; Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015), thus providing evidence of discriminant validity.

Regarding the structural model, its quality was tested using the magnitude of the coefficient of the determination R^2 value for each endogenous variable. The R^2 of the four endogenous variables of winescape attributes, sensorial attraction, wine excitement, and cultural experience were 60.7%, 55.7%, 67.6%, and 67.5%, respectively. The R^2 values are higher than 10% (Falk and Miller 1992), providing evidence of the model's predictive accuracy. We also estimated the values of Stone-Geisser's Q^2 to evaluate the model's predictive relevance as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). The Q^2 values for all endogenous variables (0.38, 0.37, 0.53, and 0.42 respectively) were above zero, showing the predictive relevance of the model. We also estimated the SRMR (standardized root mean square residual) indicator, corresponding to a value 0.064 which is below the threshold value of 0.08 (Hu and Bentler 1999).

Finally, we also checked for collinearity following the suggestion of Hair et al. (2017). As such, we analysed the VIF values which ranged from 1.00–3.31, which was below the threshold of 5 (Hair et al. 2017), indicating no collinearity. To test the hypothesis, bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was used to evaluate the significance of the parameter estimates (Hair et al. 2017).

The results in Table 5 and Figure 1 show that the wine involvement has a significantly positive effect on winescape attributes, sensorial attraction, and cultural experience ($\beta = 0.779$; $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.747$; $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.364$; $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.283$; $p < 0.01$, respectively). These results provide support for H1a, H1b, H1c, and H1d. Winescape attributes have a significantly positive relation with wine excitement and cultural experience ($\beta = 0.196$; $p < 0.05$; 0.348 , $p < 0.001$), which supports H2a and H2b, respectively. Sensorial attraction has a significantly positive effect on wine excitement and cultural experience ($\beta = 0.334$; $p < 0.001$; 0.261 ; $p < 0.01$).

To test the mediation hypotheses (H5a–H6b), we followed the recommendations of Hair et al. (2017, 232). Thus, we used a bootstrapping procedure to test the significance of the indirect effects via the mediator (Preacher and Hayes 2008). Table 6 presents the results of the mediation effects, and the confidence intervals.

Table 4. Composite reliability, average variance extracted, correlations, and discriminant validity checks.

Latent Variables	α	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
(1) Winescape Attributes	0.894	0.919	0.654	0.809	0.841	0.798	0.849	0.844
(2) Sensorial Attraction	0.847	0.897	0.687	0.782	0.829	0.832	0.841	0.818
(3) Wine Excitement	0.941	0.955	0.809	0.740	0.758	0.899	0.848	0.814
(4) Cultural Experience	0.886	0.914	0.640	0.772	0.744	0.783	0.800	0.820
(5) Wine Involvement	0.933	0.947	0.750	0.779	0.747	0.766	0.749	0.866

Note: α – Cronbach's alpha; CR – Composite reliability; AVE – Average variance extracted. Bold numbers are the square roots of AVE. Below the diagonal elements are the correlations between the constructs. Above the diagonal elements are the HTMT ratios.

The indirect effects of wine involvement on wine excitement and cultural experience via the mediator of winescape attributes are significant with ($\beta = 0.152$; $p < 0.05$) and ($\beta = 0.271$; $p < 0.001$), respectively. These results provide support for the mediation hypotheses H2c and H2d, respectively. In the same vein, the indirect effects of wine involvement on wine excitement and cultural experience via the mediator of sensorial attraction are significant with ($\beta = 0.249$; $p < 0.01$) and ($\beta = 0.195$; $p < 0.01$), respectively. Thus, H3c and H3d are supported.

Discussion

This research demonstrated that wine involvement is a clear antecedent of all the other constructs of the proposed model, giving further evidence that the level of engagement and knowledge favours the overall outcome and value of the experience. This is in line with other research that found that involvement is one of the most critical antecedents of the touristic experience (Santos et al. 2020; Coudounaris and Sthapit 2017; Prebensen et al. 2013; Yuan, So, and Chakravarty 2005; Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick 2012; Lockshin 2003). The strongest path coefficients found, between wine involvement and winescape attributes and sensorial attraction, are also in consonance to what was found by previous research (Kim and Bonn 2016; Bruwer and Alant 2009; Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2019). These results corroborate that involvement is not only an antecedent of the wine touristic experience, but that it helps create the right predisposition that sets the mood for the overall experience outcomes. It also makes sense to have this sequence of hypothesis in the model, because they seem to explain the part of the logical flow in a wine visit/tasting. First the initial level of involvement and measuring how it affects the relationship with the sensory stimuli, both physical and on a landscape level, to finally access how they all relate with what should be the expected outcomes of the experience: excitement and cultural enrichment. These will act as an expectation enhancer for future experiences to come as described in the literature review (Bruwer and Alant 2009) both on a sensory and landscape perception level. Winescape attributes and sensorial attraction also help this reinforcement by mediating the relationship between wine involvement with the dependent variables of wine excitement and cultural experience. It was found that they both act as consequences of wine involvement and as antecedents and mediators of the consequences of the wine visit, representing the desired outcomes both from the consumer and the winery perspective. A visit should, therefore, result in a higher level of cultural experience and wine excitement. The fact that the wine involvement is confirmed as the precursor of the experience, as in previous similar recent research (Santos et al.

Table 5. Structural model assessment.

Path	Path coefficient	Standard errors	t statistics	p values
Winescape Attributes → Wine Excitement	0.196	0.096	2.041	0.042
Winescape Attributes → Cultural Experience	0.348	0.095	3.657	0.000
Sensorial attraction → Wine Excitement	0.334	0.095	3.528	0.000
Sensorial Attraction → Cultural Experience	0.261	0.092	2.834	0.005
Wine Involvement → Winescape Attributes	0.779	0.039	19.926	0.000
Wine Involvement → Sensorial Attraction	0.747	0.039	19.370	0.000
Wine Involvement → Wine Excitement	0.364	0.102	3.564	0.000
Wine Involvement → Cultural Experience	0.283	0.101	2.796	0.005

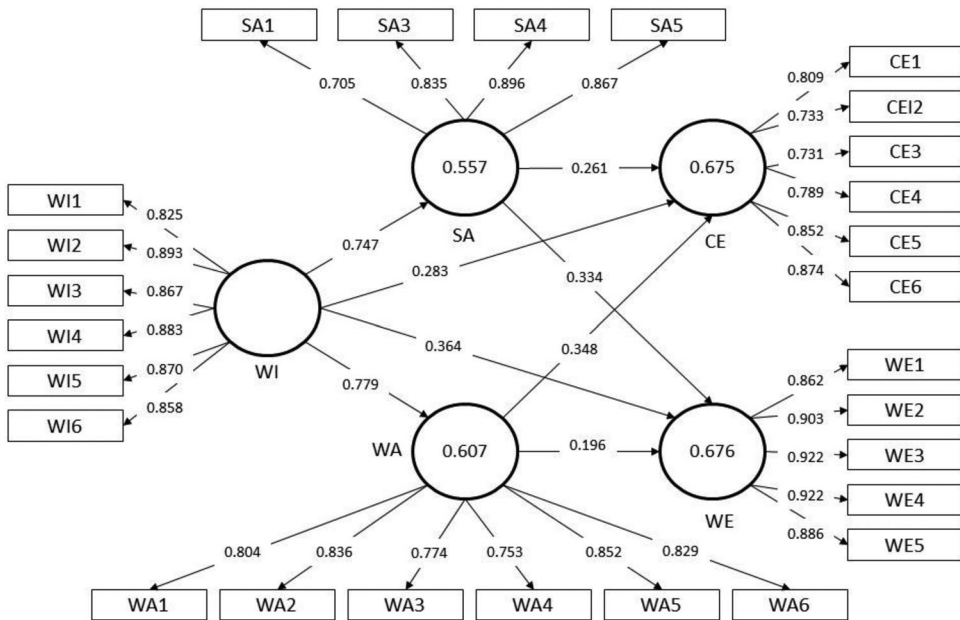


Figure 1. Path model.

2020, 2021), emphasizes the need to adapt the winery visits and tours according to different levels of wine involvement and knowledge. This calls for an assessment of the level of involvement of the visitor before visiting. This will also help avoid some gaps found between the supply and demand sides that occur in the wine sector due to a lack in consumer knowledge (Ramos, Martins, and Barandas 2011, 2012).

Conclusions

Theoretical contributions

The study of the behaviour of demand has received the attention of various academics in the areas of (wine) tourism marketing and marketing management, at a time when competitiveness is increasing, and it is becoming decisive to make a difference in comparison with other competitors. This calls for an increase in competitiveness between and within tourist destinations (specifically in the case of wine cellars contexts). In an increasingly global reality, in which competitiveness and change tends to predominate (e.g. the

Table 6. Bootstrap results for indirect effects.

Indirect effect	Estimate	Standard errors	<i>t</i> statistics	<i>p</i> value	2.5%	97.5%
Wine Involvement → Winescape Attributes → Wine Excitement	0.152	0.076	2.010	0.045	0.038	0.286
Wine Involvement → Winescape Attributes → Cultural Experience	0.271	0.080	3.390	0.001	0.154	0.428
Wine Involvement → Sensorial Attraction → Wine Excitement	0.249	0.071	3.493	0.001	0.132	0.377
Wine Involvement → Sensorial attraction → Cultural Experience	0.195	0.069	2.818	0.005	0.100	0.337

pandemic context in 2020), the difference is often the ability to create discontinuities in the external environment (e.g. cultural or innovation). The purpose of this research was also to understand the role of behaviour dimensions in wine tourism experiences (i.e. the case of the Madeira and Porto wine cellars). A total of twenty-eight variables derived from five constructs already mentioned before were selected, and included in the questionnaire were: wine involvement, sensorial attraction, winescape attributes, wine excitement and cultural experience.

The wine tourist is considered as producer of her/his own experience, from a holistic perspective focused on activities and places dedicated to wine tourism, reinforcing an immersive experience to offer a 'sweet spot' to potential visitors (Yozukmaz, Bekar, and Kiliç 2017). It is noteworthy that wine tourists appreciate experiencing wine sensory impressions due to multiple interactions with other wine visitors and staff during the wine activity in a wine tourism context (Brochado, Stoleriu, and Lupu 2021). To sum up, the wine sense experience is mainly described through textures, tastes, flavours, colours, smells, sounds, sight and touch, results of the sensory inputs selected, organized, and interpreted in a perceptual process by the wine tourist. The attractiveness and authenticity of the winescape plays a crucial role in generating wine tourism demand because the wine tourist needs to get involved with both the wines of the region and also with the terroir where they are produced and their landscape, cultural and heritage attributes (Sigala 2020).

This research highlights the relevance of all these eight dimensions of the wine sensory experience to provide and guarantee an immersive experience to offer a 'best wine sensory experience' to wine tourists and potential wine tourists and visitors. The development of digital solutions (e.g. in the promotion and commercialization of wine and experiences about it) and strategies to react to the post-pandemic context (e.g. covid-19 and the safeguarding of conditions of security and social distance) will be two challenges for the wine sensory experience in the coming years (Bausch, Gartner, and Ortanderl 2021). It is necessary to invest in creative solutions to enhance the wine sensory experience in order to convert some challenges into business opportunities and consequently (Lubowiecki-Vikuk and Sousa 2021) promote greater satisfaction and loyalty among consumers in this segment or market niche. The global wine cellar context should be able to develop marketing strategies around emotions and behavioural intentions (with the local community) as a competitive differentiation.

Managerial implications

This research helps in the understanding the sequences of a wine visit/tasting experience and what is the critical starting point that conditions the whole visit: wine involvement. Different and customized experiences should be made according to different levels of wine involvement and perceived wine knowledge. This may not have to imply the use of a formal questionnaire, but just some simple initial questions about the main motivations that draw the visitor to that experience. Most wine tours are made for those with a low level of previous knowledge on the specifics of the wine. As such, the cultural experience is enhanced in its two dimensions (learning knowledge and authentic experience). Both Porto wine and Madeira have a high level of complexity in their categories and terminology. Simple questions to the tourists before the visit like 'how knowledgeable about wine are you?' and 'Why did you come on this visit?' can help separate visitors

into different levels and adjust the experience accordingly. When with a group with different levels of knowledge, the guided tours should try to adjust the language, and at the same time, by asking some questions or entering into some of the specifics of wine-making, they will not alienate those with a higher knowledge, but also make them part of the experience. It is of equal importance to give attention to the sensorial aspect of the wine but also to the surroundings and context of the tasting. One should not be emphasized over the other. The major outcomes will still have to be a higher level of wine excitement and the cultural enrichment of the visitor who will have a story to tell others, potentiating further visits to the winery.

Limitations and future research

In future research, it will be pertinent to develop research of a qualitative nature (i.e. interviews and focus groups) with stakeholders and the local community. From an interdisciplinary perspective, this study presents inputs in the tourism area (wine tourism), marketing (segmentation) and hospitality management. It will also be useful to future research to establish and develop some of the outcomes of the different levels of involvement and develop on some other possible outcomes of the visit regarding the gap between the pre-existing level of wine knowledge and involvement and satisfaction with the visit. Future researchers should establish and develop some of the outcomes of the different levels of involvement and develop some other possible outcomes of the visit regarding the gap between the pre-existing level of wine knowledge and involvement and satisfaction with the visit.

Some of the key limitations are typical in a cross-sectional convenience sample and only in a single business environment, which can limit generalization to other contexts. Likewise, the sampling method can bias some of the results. The data collection period (July and September 2019) does not allow results to be generalized to a semester, year or season, and the fact that the data collection only occurred in two wine destinations that are associated with a specific type of wine (fortified wines) can limit the generalization to other contexts. Another limitation is related to the use self-reported questionnaires, which may present a natural bias.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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