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Research Article

THE IMPACTS OF DOMESTIC TOURISTS MEMORABLE TOURISM EXPERIENCES IN WINE TOURISM ON THEIR INTENTIONS TO RECOMMEND: CASE OF SYRIAC WINE[**]

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Abstract

In this study, domestic tourists' memorable tourism experiences within the scope of wine tourism and their intentions to recommend are discussed, and in this regard, the primary objective of the research is to determine whether the memorable tourism experiences of domestic tourists participating in wine tourism in the city of Mardin in Turkey have an impact on their intentions to recommend. The study is based on travels to the region where Syriac wines are produced and served. Within this scope, data have been collected from 288 people. According to the results of the study, a significant correlation has been found between the memorable tourism experience and the intention to recommend to others, and it has been determined that the memorable tourism experience according to gender had a significant and directly proportional impact on the intention to recommend to others. Additionally, it has been determined that the data obtained from the Turkish tourist sample is compatible with the theoretical structure of the memorable tourism experience scale for wine tourism. It can be stated that studies should be carried out within the scope of necessary plans, policies and activities in order to highlight wine tourism in Turkey compared to other countries. It is especially important to support regional wines and production techniques, which also show cultural heritage characteristics. In this respect, the study is important in terms of wine tourism being a type of tourism open to travels every month in a year and in terms of managing sustainability in the transfer of cultural elements. From this point of view, this study provides information to the literature and practitioners about consumer experiences in terms of keeping Syriac wines alive and increasing their contribution to the agricultural sector, winemaking industry and wine tourism.

Key Words: Memorable tourism experience, Intention to recommend, Wine, Gastronomy, Culture, Tourism, Travel.

Introduction

As one of the oldest elements of gastronomy, wine has an important place in the socio-economic and socio-cultural field as an alcoholic beverage obtained from the grape fruit. In this perspective, apart from being a beverage and having an economic importance, wine also forms the basis of wine tourism.

It is pointed out that the history of wine production dates back to ancient civilizations. Based on the archaeological excavations, it has been determined that wine, which is thought to have first emerged in Mesopotamia, was produced from wild grapes and other fruits around 3500 BC in the Sumerian and Assyrian civilizations (Doğer, 2004). Today, apart from the fact that wine has gained a place in the industrial and academic fields, it is understood that wine travelers and wine locations have become elements of tourism as a result of travelling of individuals with a focus on wine. In that regard, it is important that wine tourism has emerged in many places in the world (Pratt, 2014).

The concept of wine tourism includes wine tourists, wine routes, vineyards on these routes, wine production and tasting locales and other wine events. Wine tourism refers to the tourism activities that individuals carry out in order to taste a quality and good wine, to buy wine, to find different wines that they have not tasted before, to experience the style and atmosphere of the region where the wineries are located, or to access detailed information about wine (Alant & Bruwer, 2004). In this direction, the issues related to the wine tourism experiences of the tourists who want to experience wine tourism and access wine-specific information have started to take an important place in the literature (Yüncü, 2010). In this respect, studies are carried out on the hosting of tourists by wine routes or production sites, or on the development of products, which deals with tourist experiences from different aspects with different variables such as theory of planned behavior (Sparks, 2007), revisit intention (Byrd, Canziani, Hsieh, Debbage & Sonmez, 2016). Accordingly, especially for tourists, it is an important point to reveal "memorable" experiences for tourism types and activities. In this respect, it is possible that memorable tourism experiences can contribute to wine tourism as a sub-type of gastronomic tourism in recent years. One of the reasons for this is that the concept of "memorable" refers to the existence of strange, more remarkable, distinctive or unusual events that differ from ordinary events. This concept is based on the theory of distinctiveness. On the other hand, it is argued that factors such as coding, emotional differences and priorities that integrate distinctiveness with memory are the antecedents of memorable experience (Schmidt, 1991). Memorable tourism experience stems from the fact that tourists remember their tourism experience later on and attribute importance in this context. Therefore, revealing whether the memorable tourism experiences of tourists have an impact on their decision to recommend the product and the destination, and repurchase will provide insight on the literature and practitioners. Hence, the fact that the places of the producers have become a place of attraction and that the touristic activities are sustainable constitute an important link in the chain of purchasing behavior based on experiences.

Accordingly, it is important to scrutinize consumer behavior and experiences. In this direction, the aim of the study is to examine whether the memorable tourism experiences of the tourists participating in wine tourism among alternative tourism types have an effect on their intention to recommend to others. The study contributes to the literature in terms of examining the wine tourism participant sample and discussing the (Syriac wine) post-experience behavior according to the consumer behavior model, and it is important in this context.

Conceptual Framework

Wine

In the most fundamental sense, wine is defined as a beverage obtained by fermentation of grape juice. Wine, which emerges as an alcoholic beverage, can be produced by fermentation naturally without the need for a special process (Anlı, 2006). It is seen that Socrates defines wine as "the son of the sun from the earth" (Norrie, 2003).

When the definitions of wine are examined, it is seen that they are formed within the framework of the production types and methods of wine, and the wine produced from grapes stands out among these definitions. Accordingly, wine is defined as an alcoholic beverage obtained by fermentation of grapes, which is generally used as the main ingredient. While vinification, which is the fermentation of grapes, expresses the transformation of grapes into wine, the field that exists as vinology is defined as oenology (Koteski, Jakovlev & Soltirovska, 2016). During the fermentation process, the sugar in the grape ferments and transforms into ethyl alcohol. The appropriate ambient temperature and waiting time for the formation of wine have been found as a result of observations and trials. For example, it is reported that if grape juices are kept in containers for a short time, they will not contain alcohol, but if they are left for too long, the wine will spoil and become

undrinkable. From this point of view, fermentation comes out as the most important wine-making element and stage that causes the emergence of different wine types in winemaking (Smith, 2010; Lois-Alba & Kischinevzky-Segal, 2010).

When the history of wine is examined, although the first point of origin is not known clearly, it is stated that it emerged in Mesopotamia in around 6000 BC. As a result of the researches, it has been revealed that wine was a beverage, a literary and artistic element as well as a religious element in Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greek and Persian civilizations (Nowak & Wichman, 2010). On the other hand, in history, wine has become a beverage that is not only tasted by people during their travels for different purposes, but also a traded beverage.

Wine Tourism

Wine tourism, in the most general sense, is a type of gastronomic tourism that deals with wine tourism. Gastronomic tourism is defined as tourists tasting foods and beverages from different cultures (Long, 2004). In other words, gastronomic tourism is defined as an area where activities in the field of gastronomy are organized and where culture, history and research interest are involved (Yun, Hennessey & MacDonald, 2011). Hall and Mitchell (2011) define gastronomic tourism as individuals or groups traveling to primary and secondary places, regions, settlements, food festivals, restaurants and special places created especially for food and beverage, in order to experience the activities there.

Gastronomic tourism is more focused on eating and drinking, and in this context, it also includes the research of the products to be experienced (Steinmetz, 2010). In another definition of gastronomic tourism, it is seen that it is defined as the activities of tourists to go to restaurants in the destination, buy locally produced products and experience foods that are specific to the region (Shenoy, 2005). In the definitions made about gastronomic tourism, it can be stated that the main reason for tourists to travel is food and beverage, and the product that stands out among the beverages is "wine" and special attention is drawn to this issue (Brisson, 2012). In this context, wine emerges as a tourism element and tourism activity rather than just a type of beverage. Because this field of activity creates a special area of interest for consumers in the process of converting raw grape fruit into wine. In this context, wine tourism, which did not attract much attention in many countries in the past, is gradually creating a research area that is taken from different aspects. The reason for this situation is considered to be the increase in people's interest in travel and wine around the world (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002). Besides, factors such as being in touch with nature, examining natural products, etc. are other factors of preference in wine tourism. At the same time winemaking, which also includes cultural features, attracts people's attention with this aspect (Getz & Brown, 2006). In addition, regions with wine tourism and many wineries are located close to the raw material. For areas such as vineyards and orchards where wine is produced, wine tourism has an impact on agricultural and rural areas and also on regional development. The fruits produced in each geographical region and the distinction of the taste of the grapes according to the type and region are also reflected in the naming of the grapes and wine produced for winemaking. In making wine tourism attractive, there are factors such as the vineyards having an aesthetically pleasing appearance, the vineyards being suitable for transportation in tourism due to the warm climate in which they are grown, and the vineyards located in an area close to where there is sea, sand and sun tourism. If all these are evaluated together, it is possible for wine tourism to make some important contributions to the general tourism movements (Getz & Brown, 2006).

It is seen that wine tourism comes to the fore especially in countries such as France and Italy where winemaking is prevalent. In this context, "Champagne, Burgundy and Bourdeux" in France, "Tuscany" in Italy, "Napa and Sonoma Valleys" in the United States, "Paarl, Stellenbosh and Franschoek" in South Africa, and "Hawk's Bay" in New Zealand are shown primarily as examples of wine tourism attraction locations. In addition to the rapid development of these wine tourism areas, their location and proximity to places of interest with historical/cultural values and beautiful scenery also attract attention (Beames, 2003).

Considering the important place of tourism in the world economy, wine tourism has a great importance considering the multiplier effect and contributes to many different sectors and therefore economic activities. For the development of wine tourism, the products produced in the region need to be sold and distributed over a wide area. In addition, along with the trading of wine goes the trading of brands and regional images, which are a particularly important characteristic of wine promotion (Hall & Mitchell, 2001). It is stated that, as in the tourism industry in general, the winemaking industry makes use of geographical, socio-economic values and resources since they operate in the region they are in. Thus, it can be expressed that wine production activity and tourism have the same sources. With the combination of elements such as viticulture, winemaking, travel and accommodation, wine tourism is considered as a whole (Alonso, Cohen & Fraser, 2007). In this regard, it

is a matter of strategically realizing wine production and accordingly creating tourism regions where wine-based experiences can be experienced, or developing existing tourism regions by turning them into areas that offer wine experience (Getz et al., 1999). In this respect, the importance of the wine tourism experience in a broad spectrum emerges. Through their tourism experiences, people show behaviors such as repurchasing touristic products or revisiting, recommending or not recommending them to others (Walls, 2013).

Tourism Experience and Memorable Tourism Experience

The concept of experience is associated with tourists experiencing anything behavioral, perceptual, cognitive or affective in the destination (Oh et al., 2007). It can be said that the tourism experience framework consists of expectations, events and memories, based on the expression "past personal travel-related event that has the power to enter long-term memory" (Larsen, 2007). In addition, tourism experience can also be expressed as the interaction of tourists' emotional, physical and intellectual characteristics with the destination (Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003; Walls, 2013). If factors such as providing quality products and services, cleanliness, comfort, promotional activities, friendliness, being punctual in service can be presented together, it means that an important step has been taken towards making the tourism experience positive and memorable. In this context, it is understood that there are studies on memorable tourism experiences by attributing importance to the memorable part of the experience in recent years (Soyak, 2013). As such, it is seen that the competition in the field of tourism for memorableness is increasing day by day (Pizam, 2010).

Looking at the literature, it is seen that many studies have been carried out about the memorable tourism experience (Morgan & Xu, 2009; Kim, 2010; Schmitt, 2011; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Kim et al., 2012; Sthapit, 2013; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017; Park & Santos, 2017). When the studies are examined, the common element of the definitions about the memorable tourism experience is that the tourism experience should be remembered later. On this point, it is described as "memorable". The reason for this is that tourists form an opinion about the places they go through their experiences. Those who are producers in the tourism industry try to make the experiences memorable by innovating/designing the tourism experience so that these views are especially positive (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015).

The definitions made about the memorable tourism experience focus on the tourists' recollection of their experiences. On this matter, it is stated that the tourists who have a memorable experience go through three stages. These are (Coelho et al., 2018):

Ambiance: The Ambiance evokes the immersion of the tourist in the environment where the activity takes place. It involves the contact with both the destination attractions and basic elements, such as access and tourism infrastructures. The ambiance is also a process related to the tourist's personal experience contrasted to the culture and the destination characteristics.

Socialization: The process of Socialization occurs through interpersonal relationships and can bring people together. These relationships may involve dialogue, physical contact, observation, identification, customer service and other actions. Contact happens via tourist relationships –tourist-travel companion, tourist-tourist and/or tourist-agents.

Emotions and Reflection: One of the most central processes of memorable experience is Emotion. Without tourist's emotions, whether positive or negative, memorable experiences will not happen.

Research conducted within the framework of the memorable tourism experience has revealed that tourists are more likely to remember positive experiences. Negative emotions such as guilt, anger and anxiety are also present in the nature of the experience, however, it is a separate discussion area (Ritchie et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2012; Sthapit, 2013; Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015). Among the studies conducted, Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2012) determined that hedonism, refreshment, local culture, involvement, meaningfulness, knowledge and novelty factors constitute a memorable tourism experience.

According to Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2012), the hedonism factor is "exciting pleasant feelings" (Babin et al., 1994), the refreshment factor is "a feeling of comfort and pleasure without physical activity" (Aziz, 1995), the local culture factor is "local culture and positive impressions of local cultural elements" (Bartlett & Einert, 1992), involvement factor is "level of participation and involvement in the tourism experience" (Bloch & Richins 1983), meaningfullness factor is "sense of worthiness or significance" (Bruner, 1991), knowledge factor is "the level of knowledge of the individual about the tourism experience" (Blackshaw, 2003) and finally the novelty factor is "the sense of novelty felt related to the tourism experience of the individual and the level of this emotion" (Noy, 2004).

Intention to Recommend

One of the most important elements for tourism is that tourists are satisfied with the activities they experience, and this satisfaction turns into a desire to revisit and this desire to recommend to others (Liu et al., 2012). In this context, it is stated that tourists' repeat visits are a very important criterion in understanding whether tourists are loyal to the destination or not (Chen & Gürsoy, 2001). As a result of the studies, it is pointed out that satisfaction is necessary for the revisit behavior to occur (Bigne et al., 2001; Petrick et al., 2001; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). At this point, the "Purchasing Process Model" is important in explaining tourist behavior. In the purchasing process, first of all, a tourist feels a need or a problem arises, so two key intentions are usually encountered in the post-purchase evaluation. These are: repurchase intention and intention to recommend to others (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Repurchase and recommending intentions, which are also considered as behavioral intentions, are important because they constitute a behavioral antecedent. In other words, it is possible that the recommendation serves a planned behavior while revealing the intention to recommend to others.

Memorable tourism experience and behavioral intention are interrelated, and as a result, it helps to take successful steps in the development of the destination. In this context, it is stated that the more positive the tourism experiences, the more likely the tourists will revisit. Consequently, studies can also be examined with service quality scales (Boulding et al., 1993; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Studies have also revealed that the fact that tourists create a positive perception by transferring their positive experiences to others means that the destination offers memorable tourism experiences (Liu et al., 2012).

For instance, Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000) stated that a total of three items are associated with behavioral intentions: making positive recommendations to the people around them, being loyal to the service providers, and spending more money. As a result of their study, it was concluded that the variables of service quality, service value and satisfaction were directly related to behavioral intentions.

In addition, when the results of the studies on similar subjects with this study in the literature are examined, the importance of the subject emerges. Felitti and Fiore (2013) conducted a study in a wine destination. The aim of the study was to determine the correlation between wine tourists' experiences, memories, satisfaction and behavioral intentions towards the destination. As a result, it was concluded that aesthetic experience is important in predicting destination loyalty, and positive memories. Additionally, it was stated that education, experience and memories are very important in creating satisfaction. In a study conducted by Ünlüönen and Işın (2018), it was aimed to determine the behavioral intentions of foreign tourists that are effective in local food consumption. The results show that tourists' attitudes and personal norms affect their behavioral intentions arising from their perceived behavioral control.

All this information sheds light on the study. In this study, examining the effect of a memorable tourism experience on the intention to recommend within the scope of wine tourism will contribute to the literature.

Methodology

Purpose and Importance of The Study

There is a need for studies to develop this type of tourism in Turkey, which has important geographical features in viticulture based on the economic and cultural contributions of wine tourism. Ergo, the objective of this research is to evaluate the memorable tourism experiences in wine tourism and the impact of these experiences on tourists' recommendation intentions. In addition to the fact that the experience is a guiding variable and the memorable tourism experience is a current issue, in this research, the reason for aiming at the consumer's intention to recommend the memorable tourism experience within the framework of wine tourism is the need to determine its influence on the development of wine tourism.

As mentioned in the conceptual part of the study, wine routes and destinations play an important role in the framework of wine tourism. Wine tourism has a great economic importance in the regional and national sense. In terms of economic benefits of tourism in Turkey, it ranks 15th in the world with 29.8 million USD in the year 2019 (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2020). Within this amount, it is possible with the researches that the benefit obtained from wine tourism can reach a position as important as other types of tourism. In this context, developing wine tourism in Turkey has become an issue that needs to be examined in terms of academic field and tourism, rather than only the subject of local wine producers. In this sense, Syriac wine, which is a different type of wine in Turkey, has a great importance in winemaking. This importance emerges both in terms of traditional, cultural and business administration and in the framework of

economy and development at the macro level. Another factor that makes the research important is that Syriac winery contains cultural elements.

Syriac wine is a type of wine that stands out with its traditional features. These wines are produced in the form of white wines and red wines. Grapes called "Mazrone" and "Kerkus" are used in making white wine. In the production of red wine, "Öküzgözü" and "Boğazkere" grapes, which are among the local varieties, are used. In addition to these, it is stated that the grape called "Ĉınve Kome" is also used. Grape quality is very important for Syriac wine, as with other wine types. Therefore, the first stage of winemaking is the cultivation of grapes. This stage, which is directly proportional to the quality of the grape, is very important for Syriac wine (Syriac Wine House, 2020). This research is based on the consideration of the production of Syriac wines in a hygienic environment. In this regard, an enterprise and its branch that produces, serves and sells Syriac wines have been selected.

Sustainability of Syriac wine, which also contains cultural elements and techniques, in wine tourism will be possible by understanding consumer behavior. At this point, stimulating the recommendation intentions of wine tourism participants is another important point. Therefore, in this study, it is aimed to reveal how the memorable tourism experience is related to behavioral intention. At the same time, the construct validity of the data obtained from the Turkish wine tourist sample was tested by confirmatory factor analysis on the basis of the memorable tourism experience scale. In this respect, the study is important.

Research Questions

Gu, Qiu, King and Huang (2019) state that understanding the wine tourism experience is an essential element for the development of a wine tourism destination. In fact, a study by Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009) shows that the motivation to choose a wine region as a tourist destination goes beyond a simple desire to experience wine. A tourist's decision to visit a particular winery is also shaped by a desire to experience the characteristics of the region and participate in other activities or attractions during the visit. Also, in another study (Santos et al., 2019), the impact of the wine tourism experience on visitors' memorable sensory impressions and the effects of these impressions on their intentions to recommend to others and revisit is in line with the issue discussed here. Santos et al. (2019) suggest that research should be conducted on the experiences of tourists who taste wine not only in summer, but also in different seasons, since the demand for wine tourism is also in other seasons. The implementation process of this research was conducted during the winter months. It is also understood that in order to make intercultural comparisons, it is recommended in existing studies (Chen, Cheng & Kim, 2020) to conduct studies on memorable tourism experiences on different cultures and for different tourism types. Based on this information, the research questions are listed below:

- What is the relationship between the memorable wine tourism experience and the intention to recommend to others?
- What impact does a memorable wine tourism experience, by gender, have on the intention to recommend to others?
- How does the current data set obtained from the wine tourism sample relate to the theoretical structure of the memorable tourism experience scale?

Research Hypotheses

The dependent variable of the research is the intention to recommend. While the memorable tourism experience is examined as an independent variable, the gender variable is also discussed in the research.

Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses have been constructed:

H_1: There is a significant correlation between the memorable wine tourism experience and the intention to recommend to others.

H_2: Memorable wine tourism experience by gender significantly and positively impacts on the intention to recommend to others.

Data Collection Tools and Validity and Reliability

Prepared data collection tool consists of three sections. In the first section, there are five questions in total for obtaining demographic information, in the second section there are a total of four questions for the participants to specify their travel information, and in the last section, there are the memorable tourism experience items (24 items), and the items of intention to recommend to others (5 items).

Memorable Tourism Experience scale and Intention to Recommend scale have been used to collect the data of the research. The Memorable Tourism Experience scale was developed by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) and consists of seven factors and 24 items. Scale factors are hedonism, refreshment, local culture, involvement, meaningfulness, knowledge, and novelty. Participants were asked to respond on a 7-point Likert scale (Scale range, 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 4=Neutral, 5= Somewhat Agree, 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree). The obtained data were tested using SPSS and AMOS programs.

As a result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample fit coefficient was 0.8 (0.8<-<0.9) and the Barlett Sphericity Test result was found to be 0,000 (p<0.001). Exploratory Factor Analysis performed within the scope of the validity and reliability of the memorable tourism experience scale, it was determined that the scale items were distributed among seven factors in accordance with their original use, and the total stated variance of the memorable tourism experience scale was 69%. Varimax vertical rotation method was used in the factor analysis, and it was determined that the total number of 24 items overlapping with the original structure of the scale and the distribution of the items to seven factors were the same. Eigen values greater than 1 were used to determine the number of factors to be retained (Kaiser, 1958). Item factor loads ranged from 0.46 to 0.83. For a sample size of 250, factor loading of .40 and above is identifying (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). As a result of the Cronbach's Alpha analysis carried out to determine the internal consistency of the scale, it can be stated that the internal consistency coefficient of the scale is at a high level with a value of .96 (Cronbach, 1951). In order to determine whether the normal distribution assumption is met; the skewness value for the Memorable Tourism Experience shows up as -1.05, and the kurtosis value as 1.65 indicating that the data between the limit levels -2 and +2 meet the assumption of normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Kline, 2011, Garson, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

As a result of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which was carried out to determine the construct validity of the scale, the χ^2 statistic was 743.350, and the model goodness of fit indices were as follows: χ^2/df=3.21 (<0.05); CMIN=3.21 (<5); RMSEA=0.08 (<0.08); SRMR=0.07 (<0.08); GFI=0.81 (>0.80) NFI=0.87 (>0.80); CFI=0.91 (>0.9). Some indices are "normed" so that their values cannot be below 0 or above 1 (e.g., NFI, CFI) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Chau & Hu, 2001; Hair et al., 2010; Simon et al., 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). In this respect, it can be stated that the resulting values are acceptable values. Accordingly, it shows that the data obtained from the Turkish tourist sample, which is based on the field research, is in consistent with the theoretical structure of the memorable tourism experience scale for wine tourism.

When the international validity and reliability results of the items in the measurement tool are examined and compared with the construct validity and reliability results of the memorable tourism experiences scale developed by Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2012), which is the basis of this study, it can be seen that The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample fit coefficient was 0.8 (0.8<-<0.9), and the Barlett Sphericity Test result was found to be 0,000 (p<0.001). In the same study, it was understood that the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.91, the total explained variance value was 75.89%, and the item factor loads were 0.70 and above. The ratio of chi-square (χ^2) to degrees of freedom was determined as χ^2 / df = 1.56. According to the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) result, following results were achieved: RMSEA=0.05, CFI=0.98, NNFI=0.98, IFI=0.97 (CFI=>0,90, NNFI>0.95, RMSEA=<0.08).

The Intention to Recommend scale was obtained by the researcher's adaptation of the scale developed by Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman (1966). The scale developed by the researchers has a single factor and five-item structure. In this study, the participants evaluated the statements on a 7-point Likert scale (Scale range, 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Somewhat disagree, 4=Neutral, 5= Somewhat agree, 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree). As a result of the Explanatory Factor Analysis carried out to determine the structural validity of the scale, the KMO sample fit coefficient of the scale, 0.88, and the Barlett sphericity test result of 0.000 show that the scale is fitting for factor analysis. Varimax vertical rotation method (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis) was used in factor analysis. When the findings are examined, it is understood that the items of the scale were gathered under one dimension in accordance with the original and it consisted of a total of five items, the total explained variance was at the level of 75% and was sufficient, and the factor loads of the items were in the range of at high values 0.75 and 0.89. The skewness value is -1.074 and the kurtosis value is 1.809. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha value shows a high level of internal consistency with a result of 0.91. Considering the construct validity and reliability results obtained by Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman (1996) for the intention to recommend, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for five items was found to be between 0.93 and 0.94 according to the data collected from four companies.

Universe and Sample

The universe of the research consists of Turkish (domestic) tourists participating in wine tourism in Turkey. Convenience sampling method was used in the research. In Turkey, which stands out in the production of Syriac wine, as the sample of the research, the number of tourists, both domestic and foreign, coming to Mardin was determined to be 260,961 in 2019. On the other hand, it is seen that the number of visitors decreased in 2020 (foreign tourists=8,389 persons, domestic tourists=115,715 persons and total tourists=124,104 persons) due to the COVID-19 global epidemic disease compared to 2019 (Turkish Republic, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2020). Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 global epidemic, the application of the study was carried out under restriction conditions. The sample consists of 288 participants aged 18 and over, who volunteered to participate in the research among Turkish tourists who have experienced Shiluh Winery and Syriac wines in Mardin and Mardin-Midyat, the production place of Syriac wine in Turkey.

In this study, the questionnaire was applied to tour groups and other individual domestic tourists visiting Shiluh Winery in Mardin and Midyat in Turkey, after their visit. Necessary permissions have been received from the enterprise for that purpose. In order to obtain the data after the wine tourism experiences of the participants, the application was carried out during the open hours of the business. These processes include a data collection process that takes approximately two months between 01/03/2021 and 05/04/2021.

This study was decided that the study is in accordance with ethical principles by the Republic of Turkey Istanbul Ayvansaray University members of the Academic Research and Publication Ethics Committee (Institutional Review Board) at the discretion dated 09/02/2021 and numbered 2021/01. In addition, the participants declared that they participated in the study with their own consent.

Research Findings

The research findings, including the demographic information of wine tourism participants, travel information and hypothesis test findings of the research, are provided below.

Demographic and Descriptive Findings of The Participants

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage values of the demographic variables of the study, namely Age, Gender, Marital Status, Educational Status and Occupation. When the distribution of the age variable was examined, it was determined that 109 (38%) of the participants were between the ages of 18-28, 132 (46%) were between the ages of 29-39, and finally 47 (16%) were 40 years old and over. The gender distribution of the participants was as follows: 161 of the participants, corresponding to 56%, were female, and 127, corresponding to 44%, were male. The fact that the gender variable creates close ratios is an important finding for comparison. The Marital Status variable distribution was as follows: 160 (56%) participants were Single, 110 (38%) participants were Married, and finally 18 (6%) participants were Divorced. The Educational Status of the Participants was as follows: 10 (4%) participants were primary school graduates, 85 (30%) participants were high school graduates, 163 (56%) participants were university graduates, 23 (8%) participants have master's degree, and 7 (2%) participants were Phd graduates. Professions of the participants were as follows: 57 (19%) participants were Students, 178 (62%) participants were working in the Private Sector, 44 (15%) participants were working in the Public Sector, and 9 (3%) participants were retired (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Information of Wine Tourism Participants

Demographic Information of Participants	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-28	109	38
	29-39	132	46
	40 and over	47	16
Gender	Female	161	56
	Male	127	44
Marital Status	Single	160	56
	Married	110	38
	Divorced	18	6
Education	Primary School	10	4
	High School	85	30
	University	163	56
	Master's Degree	23	8
	PhD	7	2
Profession	Student	57	19

	Private Sector	178	62
	Public Sector	44	15
	Retired	9	3
Total		288	100

Table 2 contains the findings regarding the tourism experience questions of the research. According to the distribution of the Destination Information Source variable, 129 (45%) participants obtained information about the destination through Friends/Relatives/Acquaintances, 25 (9%) participants from Books/Brochures, 121 (42%) participants from the Internet, and finally 13 (4%) participants) the participant obtained information about the destination from television. The distribution of the variable in which the Type of Accommodation Business was examined was as follows: 139 (48%) participants stayed in 4 or 5-star hotels, 54 (19%) participants in 3, 2 and 1-star hotels, 48 (17%) participants with their Friends, 12 (4%) participants in Pensions, 28 (10%) participants in the Hotel and finally 8 (2%) participants stayed at a Campsite. The distribution of the Amount of Expenditure was as follows; 67 (23%) participants spent 2000 TL or less, 151 (52%) participants spent between 2001-4000 TL, 51 (18%) participants between 4001-6000 TL, 11 (4%) participants between 6001-8000 TL and finally, 8 (3%) participants spent 8000 TL or more. The distribution of the People Traveling Together was as follows; 57 (20%) participants traveled alone, 37 (13%) participants with their spouses, 13 (4%) participants with their families, 119 (42%) participants with their friends, 24 (8%) participants with their lover, 34 (12%) participants) participants traveled with the Tour Group, and finally, 4 (1%) participants traveled with Non-Related Persons.

Table 2. Travel Information of Wine Tourism Participants

Travel Information of Participants	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Destination Information Resource	Friend/Relative/Acquaintance	129	45
	Book/Brochure	25	9
	Internet	121	42
	Television / Radio	13	4
Accommodation Type	4 and 5-Star Hotel	139	48
	3, 2, and 1-Star Hotel	54	19
	At a friend's house	48	17
	Hostel	12	4
	Hotel	28	10
	Camping	8	2
Amount spent	2000 TL and less	67	23
	2001-4000 TL	151	52
	4001-6000 TL	51	18
	6001-8000 TL	11	4
	8000 TL and more	8	3
Person traveling with	Alone	57	20
	Spouse	37	13
	Family	13	4
	Friend	119	42
	Lover	24	8
	Tour Group	34	12
	Non-related Persons / Foreigners	4	1
Total		288	100

The mean values of the scale and its sub-dimensions, which were taken as the basis of the research, were also examined. In the findings, it was determined that the sub-dimensions of the Memorable Tourism Experience Scale were very close to each other and had high values close to six (5.9), and the average value of the Intention to Recommend scale was very high, as 6.1. Accordingly, it can be stated that the expressions are understandable.

Analyzes were carried out with parametric tests, which are suitable test methods for testing the hypotheses discussed in the study. The results obtained are presented below. Pearson Correlation Test and Simple Linear Regression Test were used in the hypothesis tests of the research.

Findings of Hypotheses Testing

First of all, statistical analysis was carried out to test the first hypothesis in the research. Pearson Correlation Analysis was conducted in order to determine the statistically significant relationships between the Memorable

Tourism Experience scale and its sub-dimensions and the Intention to Recommend. When the findings were examined, while a significant and directly proportional statistical correlation was detected between the Intention to Recommend and Memorable Tourism Experience (r=0.743; Significance<0.01) and Knowledge (r=0.741; Significance<0.01), one of the sub-dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experience, a moderate, directly proportional, statistically significant correlation was found between Intention to Recommend and Pleasure (r=0.607; Significance<0.01), Refreshment (r=0.581; Significance<0.01), Local Culture (r=0.598; Significance<0.01), Involvement (r=0.695; Significance<0.01), Meaningfulness (r=0.680; Significance<0.01) and Novelty (r=0.587; Significance<0.01). When these relations are examined, it is understood that as the perception of the sample about Memorable Tourism Experience and its sub-dimensions increases, their Recommendation intentions also increase, or when one of these dimensions decreases, the other also decreases.

Table 3 and Table 4 show the results of the Simple Linear Regression test conducted to test the second hypothesis of the research. In order to carry out the hypothesis test, the research sample was handled in two separate groups as Female and Male, and in Table 3 below, the results of the regression test conducted to determine the impact of the Tourism Experience and sub-dimensions of the female sample on the Intention to Recommend are given. When the findings were examined, a statistically significant correlation was found between Memorable Tourism Experience (t=22.069; Significance<0.05) and Memorable Tourism Experience sub-dimensions: Refreshment (t=2.327; Significance<0.05), Local Culture (t=4.004; Significance<0.05), Involvement (t=2.635; Significance<0.05) and Knowledge (t=4.065; Significance<0.05). When the findings are examined, the significant findings detected indicate a directly proportional correlation. The increase or decrease in scale and scale sub-dimensions: Memorable Tourism Experience, Refreshment, Local Culture, Involvement, and Knowledge causes an increase or decrease in Intention to Recommend in the same direction, and the percentage of this increase corresponds to 79%.

Table 3. Impact Analysis Results of Memorable Tourism Experience on Intention to Recommend (Female)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE B	β	t	p
Memorable Tourism Experience	0.973	0.044	0.868	22.069	0.000
Hedonism	0.005	0.081	0.006	0.064	0.949
Refreshment	0.183	0.078	0.180	2.327	0.021
Local Culture	0.256	0.064	0.254	4.004	0.000
Involvement	0.205	0.078	0.200	2.635	0.009
Meaningfulness	0.122	0.068	0.126	1.792	0.075
Knowledge	0.312	0.077	0.302	4.065	0.000
Novelty	-0.076	0.064	-0.078	-1.195	0.234

R2 = 79%

Table 4 shows the results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis performed considering the male sample. In the findings, a statistically significant and directly proportional regression correlation was found between Memorable Tourism Experience (t=7.701; Significance<0.05) and Knowledge sub-dimension (t=3.912; Significance<0.05). When this correlation was examined, it was determined that the increase or decrease in the Tourism Experience and Knowledge sub-dimensions had the same impact on the Intent to Recommend.

Table 4. Impact Analysis Results of Memorable Tourism Experience on Intention to Recommend (Male)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**		
	B	SE B	β	t	p
Memorable Tourism Experience	0.478	0.062	0.567	7.701	0.000
Hedonism	-0.011	0.086	-0.016	-0.124	0.901
Refreshment	-0.078	0.087	-0.124	-0.900	0.370
Local Culture	-0.018	0.080	-0.020	-0.225	0.822
Involvement	0.015	0.120	0.019	0.125	0.901

Meaningfulness	0.187	0.099	0.272	1.897	0.060
Knowledge	0.365	0.093	0.459	3.912	0.000
Novelty	0.058	0.070	0.087	0.829	0.409

$R^2 = 44\%$

When the findings obtained within the framework of the regression analyzes are considered as a whole, tourism experience affects the intention to recommend significantly and positively in both male and female samples, and this correlation is stronger for women (t=22.069) than for men (t=7.701).

Conclusions

Culture itself can be a reason for curiosity, learning, and information seeking when societies interact. Consequently, tourism movements and cultural elements, which are also the subject of gastronomy, have an important effect in these movements. Changing lifestyles have had an impact on the way people spend their leisure time. If wine tourism, which is considered within the scope of gastronomic tourism, is compared with destinations such as France, which stands out in this regard in the world, it can be stated that research is needed for its development in Turkey. In fact, Turkey has rich wine tourism destinations in terms of wine regions. In this respect, it is notable that people's initiatives in terms of wine tourism both create an impact on the recognition of the country and can have effective results in regional development. In order for these effects to be measurable, it is necessary to determine the tourist demand and tourist experience. In light of this information, the aim of this research is to find out the relationship between the memorable tourism experiences of the tourists participating in wine tourism and their intentions to recommend.

The research sample consisted of Turkish tour groups visiting Shiluh Winery, an enterprise located in Mardin and Midyat in Turkey, and other Turkish tourists traveling individually. Convenience sampling method was applied to a total of 288 participants over the age of 18 regarding the experience of Syriac wines.

The data gathered from the participants in the research sample were analyzed with the help of AMOS and SPSS programs. According to the results obtained, the first hypothesis "There is a significant correlation between the memorable tourism experience and the intention to recommend to others" and the second hypothesis "Memorable Tourism Experience according to gender affects the intention to recommend to others significantly and positively" were accepted by testing. When the results of the study and other similar study results in the literature are evaluated together, the results of this research correspond to the fact that there is a statistically significant correlation between emotions such as fun and memorable tourism experiences in the literature and the intention to recommend and word-of-mouth (WOM) (Kim, 2009; Chen, Cehng & Kim, 2020). The inclusion of wine tourism participants in the research sample can be expressed as an important contribution of the study to the literature.

Another result obtained within the scope of the research is the determination of the impact of memorable tourism experience by gender on the intention to recommend to others. When this relationship is examined, there is a directly proportional correlation between the memorable tourism experience and the intention to recommend for both male and female participants, and this correlation is more significant in female participants than in male participants. The result of this research is also supported by the results of the studies in the literature (Kim, Ritchie & Tung, 2010; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015; Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017). The reason for this can be explained as the tendency of women to participate in different kinds of activities compared to men and that they may be more open to learning and innovations from cultural activities than men.

On the other hand, the result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted for memorable tourism experience shows that the data obtained from the Turkish tourist sample is in consistent with the theoretical structure of the memorable tourism experience scale for wine tourism.

Implications

In accordance with the results of the study, it should be noted that wine tourism may also have an important effect on the increasing share of Turkey in the sector of tourism. This research reveals that supporting wine tourism in Turkey can yield positive results. Corresponding to the fact that experiential consumption has an important role in wine tourism (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012), it is an important result to find the impact of memorable tourism experiences of domestic tourists participating in wine tourism on their intentions to recommend.

Not only domestic tourists but also foreign tourists will be affected by the wine tourism experiences, and their involvement in tourism activities within the country will contribute to the achievement of economically successful results. Moreover, it can be emphasized that local wines are considered in the transmission of cultural heritage. The integration of wine tourism destinations in the routes for gastronomic tourism, cultural tourism and agricultural tourism will be among the essential steps to be taken. The growth of vineyards that will boost wine tourism is another crucial step. Examination of the eating and drinking culture and revealing the similarities and differences will also cast light on the historical development and cultural transmission. For this purpose, it is recommended to bring out the production process of different regional wines. Furthermore, it is recommended to conduct studies on tourists visiting different wine tourism destinations and to investigate the motivations of tourists particularly visiting wine destinations.

Research limitations

The limitations of the research are provided below:

• The research sample consists of 288 people who could be reached during the COVID-19 restrictions and volunteered to participate in the research.

• The research sample is limited to the sample selection method and the participants who can be reached.

• The research is limited to the answers given to the research scales for the intention to recommend and the memorable tourism experience.

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