

**VALERIO SAU**

**“Dalabelos Estate – Local Culture Tourism Experience”**



**UNIVERSITY OF ALGARVE**

**FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**

**2021**

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Masters in Management

Internship Report

made under the supervision of:

Prof. Julio Da Costa Mendes



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**Master in Management (Tourism Specialization) Internship**

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### *Dalabelos Estate – Local Culture Tourism Experience*

#### Work Authorship Declaration

I declare to be the author of this work, which is unique and unprecedented. Authors and works consulted are properly cited in the text and are included in the listing of references.

Valerio Sau

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## I. Dedications and Acknowledgements

The Internship opportunity I had with Dalabelos Estate was a great chance for learning and professional development. Therefore, I consider myself as a very lucky individual as I was provided with an opportunity to be part of it. I am also grateful to meet so many people that gave me inspiration for my future career.

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## II. English Abstract

In times of dynamic change in tourism trends, the island of Crete is facing the imbalance of socio-economic development between the different areas of the island. Numerous studies have shown that tourism cannot alone stimulate regional development, but it can also produce regional imbalances (Bryden, 1973).

Most of the island's tourism businesses are in coastal areas. In addition, 96% of accommodations - representing 98.7% of beds and rooms available - are located on the coast. Indeed, the economy of most rural areas is directed towards agriculture and small industry, with tourism playing a secondary role in their economy.

Dalabelos estate is recognized as a resort located in the rural area of the island of Crete, Greece. The strategic and unusual position of this tourist structure is made by attraction for a specific market segment that prefers cultural immersion during its experience.

Differentiating itself from the standardized mass tourism that dominates the coasts of the island, Dalabelos offers specific cultural activities to its customers and immerses itself in a folkloric atmosphere created by the fusion between the surrounding nature and the design of the hotel complex.

Within this internship report, the internal structure of the Dalabelos estate was analysed, providing structural and strategic details.

This study aims to analyse the value perceived by customers of this local tourist cultural experience. A total of 45 questionnaires were collected and analysed in such a way as to be able to explain the value that Dalabelos brings to its customers, grouping the various experiences into categories that recall the cognitive and affective domain.

Data processing is explained in detail within the results.

A project during the internship was possible, providing strategic improvements in different departments by increasing the efficiency of the Estate.

Key words: Tourism, Culture, Crete Island, Experience, Marketing, Target

### III. Resumo em Português

Em tempos de mudanças dinâmicas nas tendências do turismo, a ilha de Creta enfrenta o desequilíbrio no desenvolvimento socioeconômico entre os diferentes sectores da ilha. Numerosos estudos mostraram que o turismo por si só não pode estimular o desenvolvimento regional, mas também pode produzir desequilíbrios regionais (Bryden, 1973).

A maior parte das atividades turísticas da ilha situa-se nas áreas costeiras. Assim, 96% dos alojamentos que representam 98,7% das camas e quartos estão localizados na costa. A economia da generalidade das áreas rurais está direcionada à agricultura e para as pequenas e médias indústrias, desempenhando o turismo um papel relativamente secundário nestas regiões. Nas últimas duas décadas, uma parte significativa do planeamento e financiamento regional suportado pela União Europeia (UE) tem estimulado e garantido que o esforço do setor público se foque também nas regiões do interior da ilha, que estão menos desenvolvidas do que as regiões situadas na zona costeira. Espera-se que esta mudança na política beneficie bastante o potencial do interior e contribua para melhorar a competitividade geral do setor do turismo da ilha.

Este estágio foi realizado numa unidade hoteleira - Dalabelos - que recebeu recursos financeiros da EU na sequência da apresentação de um projeto de desenvolvimento do turismo cultural no interior da Ilha de Creta. O resort Dalabelos localiza-se na área rural de Rethymnon, na Ilha de Creta, na Grécia. A posição estratégica e incomum desta unidade turística é precisamente a sua localização, a qual constitui uma atração particular para um segmento de mercado específico que privilegia a imersão cultural da experiência turística. Diferenciando-se do turismo de massa padronizado que domina as costas da Ilha, Dalabelos oferece atividades culturais específicas aos seus clientes e mergulha numa atmosfera folclórica criada pela fusão entre a natureza circundante e o design do complexo hoteleiro. O resort é constituído por 10 chalés e 02 vilas, distribuídas por uma área de 03 hectares; a parte restante do complexo hoteleiro é composta por restaurante, estrutura de receção, anfiteatro e piscina, todos cercados por plantações de oliveiras.

A estrutura do Relatório está organizada em cinco partes.

Inicialmente procedeu-se a uma introdução explicativa das razões que presidiram à realização do estágio, aos aspetos motivacionais e às expectativas que foram criadas relativamente à realização do mesmo neste resort da Ilha de Creta.

Em segundo lugar, apresenta-se uma revisão detalhada da literatura, abordando alguns conceitos inerentes ao estudo realizado, de forma a relacionar o estágio com um enquadramento teórico baseado em trabalhos científicos publicados sobre as matérias em análise. Os conceitos abordados estão estritamente relacionados com o fenómeno estudado durante o estágio, tomando em consideração elementos da esfera cognitiva que criam valor agregado na perspetiva do consumidor. Neste sentido, foi analisado o conceito de turismo cultural, com especial enfoque na questão da gastronomia e na forma como esta abordagem pode criar um valor agregado para a experiência do turista e, assim, aumentar a fidelização dos turistas. O último tópico tratado no âmbito da revisão de literatura foi o conceito de experiência memorável do turismo, com particular atenção nos principais elementos que estimulam cognitivamente o comportamento do consumidor, tornando a experiência vivida única. Neste sentido, foi analisado o modelo de Lalith Chandralal e Fredy-Roberto Valenzuela, o qual serviu de referência ao trabalho empírico realizado.

O capítulo seguinte diz respeito à Metodologia e à descrição do local de estágio, da estrutura história da Dalabelos Estate, dos departamentos e das diversas atividades culturais oferecidas aos clientes, uma vez que o estudo tem como objetivo analisar o valor percebido pelos clientes dessa experiência cultural turística local. Foram realizadas entrevistas e recolhidos e analisados 45 questionários com participantes de diferentes nacionalidades e finalidades diferentes, a fim de explicar o valor que a Dalabelos traz para seus clientes, agrupando as diversas experiências em categorias com base nas quatro dimensões definidas por Pine & Gimour: Educação, Entretenimento, Estética e Escapismo, assim como o nível de excitação, a memorização da experiência, a satisfação geral e a vontade de recomendar a experiência. Foram ainda descritas as principais tarefas desenvolvidas durante o estágio e apresentada uma análise crítica da forma como o mesmo decorreu.

Para realizar esse tipo de pesquisa qualitativa, foi necessário desenhar diretrizes para o questionário e as entrevistas a serem realizadas para obter resultados de qualidade inerentes ao estudo realizado.

Os guias foram elaborados para entender a forma como os turistas viveram a experiência ou foram ainda vivenciando na época, dentro do equipamento turístico situado em zona rural e com ênfase cultural, lembrando-o para aproveitar uma comparação, mesmo de experiências turísticas padronizadas anteriormente vivenciadas pelos próprios turistas. As perguntas realizadas tiveram um aspecto informal, após os turistas passarem por um questionário elaborado para avaliar outros aspectos do fenômeno. A quantidade de dados coletados através dos vários métodos foi elaborada usando Módulos do Google para selecionar o material que melhor corresponde ao tema escolhido para este estudo e ter uma interpretação clara do fenômeno e dos achados obtidos. A população alvo do presente estudo foram os hóspedes, principalmente famílias e casais de nacionalidades diferentes e a razão para selecionar tantas nacionalidades diferentes entrevistas encontram bases na melhor compreensão de pontos de vista radicalmente antecedentes culturais. Cada grupo de 15 convidados foi levado todos os meses para os três meses de pesquisa. As entrevistas semiestruturadas, compostas por cinco perguntas, foram antes do questionário, a fim de comprovar a relação entre a experiência vivida pelos hóspedes e a premissa da minha pesquisa.

Um dos critérios mais utilizados para definir os elementos comuns aos diversos abordagens qualitativas referem-se aos procedimentos de análise de dados utilizados: a pesquisa qualitativa adotar procedimentos analíticos que não pressupõem a transformação dos fenômenos estudado em números (ou seja, sua quantificação) e seu tratamento estatístico, mas sim procedimentos mais informais, que contam com a capacidade analítica do pesquisador e recursos, como a conceituação. Para citar a definição mais conhecida na literatura escrita por Denzin e Lincoln (1994 p.2), que descrevem a pesquisa qualitativa como “aquele tipo de pesquisa que adota uma abordagem naturalista em relação ao seu objeto de investigação, estudando os fenômenos em sua contextos naturais, tentando dar sentido a eles, ou interpretá-los, em termos dsignificado que as pessoas lhes dão”.

Posteriormente foram discutidos os resultados do estudo realizado, agrupando-se as várias percepções dos turistas numa tabela que evidencia a frequência do fenômeno percebido pelos participantes em 09 categorias.

Por ultimo foram apresentadas as conclusões e feitas algumas recomendações, nomeadamente em termos de mudanças estratégicas no departamento de Marketing, a

fim de obter maior visibilidade nas plataformas da Web e de melhorar a estratégia de longo prazo da unidade turística.

Palavras-chave: Turismo, Cultura, Ilha de Creta, Experiência, Marketing, Objetivo

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## Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

The realization of this report is part of the Curricular Internship present in the Final Work of the Master in Management specialization in Tourism 2019/2020, at the University of Algarve.

The curricular internship took place at *Dalabelos Estate*, a hi-profile tourism structure located in Crete Island (Greece) surrounded by nature and archaeological heritage of Greek history. It's a different environment from the traditional tourism that predominates the whole island of Crete, characterized by chaotic urbanisation along the coastal zone of the island and a standard touristic offer.

The Internship took place during the Summer from 15 June till 15 September 2019.

The decision to do an internship outside Portugal country was fed by curiosity and thirst for knowledge of other cultures and way of living.

More reasons that brought me to do this curricular internship in Crete were the originality and the history that surround the whole island and the country itself. My goal took me to Dalabelos Estate, located in rural part of Crete, a decision made up to better understand the inner nature and the behaviour of a particular kind of tourism that avoid the standardization of the common services offered by the traditional one.

Being able to understand with first-hand the original Cretan culture in various aspects - thanks to the position occupied during my internship and to a great human contact with all the team of Dalabelos - made my investigation start by observing the Local Cultural Experience given to the guests of the estate and through services and no-conventional contacts with them.

The internship will result in the development of a project that should prove the value of a memorable tourism experience and summarize the strength points of this kind of experience tourism. The "*on-the-job*" experience will be an effective method to acquire new knowledge and new competences, completing the ones acquired in my academic background.

This internship has been structured to achieve various objectives related to the cultural experience lived by the customers during their holidays in the estate.

The main goals are:

- **Identification** of the consumer's perception about services and experiences provided by the Dalabelos Estate tourist complex.
- **Understanding** the added value of the services provided and the social activities that - actively and passively - engaged customers by creating a link to the *four-dimensional pattern of experience* as developed by Pine & Gilmore (1999, p.30).
- **Study** of the social interactions between clients who took part in the same cultural activities provided by Dalabelos Estate.
- **Analysis** of the value perceived by the tourists from a rural and cultural experience in close contact with the locals.

Monitoring was carried out using participant observation technique passively and actively.

The term *passive observation* is meant as a study of the behaviours and reactions had by the various customers without my personal interaction; from the various stimuli to which they have been subjected, such as unique cultural activities that took place within the Dalabelos weekly, to group activities providing interpersonal interaction between various guests of the structure.

On the other hand, the *active observation* recalls the work done during the interaction with the customers throughout their experience, also including a set of 45 tests that have been given to understand the customer's satisfaction and the effectiveness of the activities, helping the qualitative analysis research method to fulfil the purpose of my internship.

## 1.4 Organization of the Study and Summary of Following Chapters

The internship report is divided into five different chapters. It starts with the introduction, referring to the specific objectives of the internship.

The second chapter, literature review, analyses the relevant aspects that need to be taken into consideration when talking about local cultural experience.

Within this chapter there will be an introduction to the concept of *experience*, put at the centre of attention in these last years after the excellent work of abovementioned Pine & Gilmore. *Experience economy* is used as an overarching concept encompassing a variety of industries whose purpose is to create experiences; Pine and Gilmore (1999) wrote about the experience economy as the final phase of an economic progression that has evolved through the stages of commodities, goods, and services economies. In this final phase, there is an emphasis on *staging experiences*.

Then, a focus on what is meant for *cultural tourism* and the peculiarities of this sector which has taken a position within the tourism market in the last decade, establishing itself more and more as an opportunity for enrichment for tourists.

The theme of cultural tourism is strictly linked to the concept of *memorable tourism experience* (MTE), that means providing a higher level of quality and satisfaction in multiple sensory and non-sensory spheres; In particular, the study conducted by Lalith Chandralal and Fredy Roberto Valenzuela (2013) will be analysed, where issues are identified in order to contain meaning and characteristics of the MTE phenomenon.

The third chapter focuses on the hotel unit of Dalabelos, explaining the main physical features of the environments where it is located;

To have an efficient tourism structure, a detailed overview of the hotel concept is provided, explaining the essential departments. Also, a detailed analysis of accommodation area and the F&B department (including a brief introduction to gastronomy tourism, strictly related with cultural tourism and the experience that take place in Dalabelos Estate) are shown.

Afterwards, an internal structure of the firm is explained, including Mission & Vision. At last, will be described the cultural activities that take place in the Dalabelos Estate.

The third chapter is also about the Internship project carried out in Dalabelos estate, explaining the added value, the improving strategies and data collection for marketing department. It contains the research methods applied for this Internship, opting for qualitative method of content analysis because it makes the technique particularly rich and meaningful is its reliance on coding and categorising of the data.

Afterwards, in the fourth chapter, the results and discussion about findings of this internship are shown through the data elaboration, describing the perception of phenomena related with local cultural experience carried on.

At last, Conclusion chapter contains discussion of the findings, explaining the meaning of all elaboration process of data and grouping carried out and the influence of this kind of *Local Cultural Experience* experienced by the customers;

Restrictions of the research are provided to conclude the report.

## Chapter 2 . LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The concept of experiencing

In the general context, the term *experience* is recognized as a mental nature phenomenon that the individual faces in a condition of consciousness during the occurrence of an event or action that will have effect on his mind.

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines an experience as:

*"something that happens to you and affects the way you feel"* and

*"if you experience something, it happens to you or affects you"*.

The two definitions above can be applied within a commercial sphere as *any act of purchase and consumption would qualify as an experience*. In order to have a clearer and sharper vision of the concept, it is necessary to recognize the formula of a commercial experience from other types of consumption. Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.10) wrote: *"While commodities are fungible, tangible commodities and services intangible, the experiences are memorable"*.

Taking up another definition by Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.11) they wrote: *"The offer of experiences just identified occurs whenever a company intentionally uses services as a stage and goods as props to engage an individual"*. While the definition appears elegant and concise, this statement does not yet provide a precise explanation of *business experience*. For a clear picture of the phenomenon of experiencing, a more accurate definition is needed.

Commercial experience can be defined as *"an engaging act of co-creation between a supplier and a consumer in which the consumer perceives value in the encounter and in the subsequent memory of that encounter"* (Poulsson & Kale, 2004, p.276).

The value or utility of an experience arises from the attractive power of itself and the actions in the cognitive field that manage to spring on the consumer. The perceived value in a shopping experience, for example, should be high enough for a consumer to make him pay for it.

*Indirect business experiences* are also to be taken into consideration, where the experience is used as a tool for attracting the consumer to a good or service offered in the form of a free experience, such as a preview, in order to bring and lead the consumer to buy or at least take an interest in the product in such a way that it will ultimately leads to profits. To make this a successful strategy it is necessary that the indirect business experience is convincing enough and produces consensus or prior approval by those who consume it.

With the concept described above, a disassociation is visible from Pine and Gilmore's position (1999) who believe consumers should pay an entrance fee for any worthwhile experience. The so called *experience economy* can legitimately be considered a part of the service sector as it satisfies all the criteria that constitute a service (intangibility, perishable nature, etc.).

However, a distinction must be found between *service* and *economic* experience. The service can be identified as something that is done on/for the person or that creates - in any case - a benefit in most tangible situations, such as a massage at a beauty centre that affects the consumer's body, or a home disinfestation which benefits the owner or better defines him as a consumer, even if the service is not experienced on the person himself; An experience, on the other hand, is a product that is not tangible and that somehow enriches the person effecting, in most cases, the cognitive sphere such as involvement, entertainment, challenge.

The result of the consumption of an experience is identified in an intangible growth on the part of the consumer and creates memories, the true results of the experiences.

Goods, services, and experiences all have a consumption phase, what differentiates an experience from the other two offers is that here the consumption phase itself is the main product.

With an experience, however, what is essential is only what happens between the customer and the experience provider in the phase of extended and intensified consumption, and the memory of the encounter.

*"Experiences are a fourth economic offer, like distinct from services in that services are from goods, but until now largely unrecognized."* (Pine and Gilmore 1999, p.9).

Companies who fail to accept this nascent movement, according to what Pine and Gilmore said in their famous book, will be denounced.

The eventual commodification fails and inevitably becomes victim to ruinous market competition. Make no mistake, say Pine and Gilmore: there is no longer enough goods and services. Experiences are the root of potential economic development; the Economy of Experience is the framework from which managers will continue to shape new performances.

## 2.1.2 The Economy of Experiencing

In the past decade, Pine and Gilmore set out the vision for a new economic era, the *experience economy*, where consumers are searching for extraordinary and memorable experiences. Since then, a rich body of research about applications of the experience economy concepts have appeared in the marketing literature. However, academic investigations about the measurement of tourism experiences are very recent. The purpose of this project is twofold: to identify the underlying dimensions of cruisers' experiences and to investigate the relationships among cruisers' experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. Overall, findings of this study enhance the theoretical progress on the experiential concept in tourism and offer important implications for cruise marketers.

The world economy at the beginning of the 21st century is facing a mutation due to the globalization of products and services. In order to analyse this phenomenon, recent years' studies have been conducted showing the change undergone, in particular the theory developed by Pine & Gilmore which defines the concept of "experience economy". According to the aforementioned, today's economy is experiencing a significant change, based mainly on services, which would lead to providing consumers with a strong emotional experience by acting on the cognitive and sensory sphere of the human being.

Experience is therefore the result of this change in the economy system that points towards the umpteenth form of offer, after raw materials and "ordinary" products, to enhance the experience of the services. It cannot be offered independently but becomes an essential part of a traditional good or service in order to find a competitiveness within the market.

Experience is considered a new value and the main source of consumer satisfaction. The experience economy can be interpreted as a combination of inner status with the process of consumption of a product that brings added value perceived by the consumer, or the widespread creation of experience through modern technologies in continuous dynamic change, giving the possibility to create an individualized and personalized set of the experiences made *ad hoc* for the consumer (the need to adapt them each time to people in order to obtain a unique and memorable experience as a result).

Since they are human resources fields, it is not unexpected that its main branches are the creative industries, along with tourism, in spite of the general expectations regarding the "Experience economy". Behaviour in which the "product" itself is - by definition - the Experience. Cultural organizations and tourist firms are turned into factories for feelings, experiences, enthusiasm, and memories.

According to Tarssanen and Kylänen (2005 p.131), the attention given to the growth of the experiential sphere concerning the economic dimension and of social life is interconnected with a broader transformation that we are facing in the era of postmodernity.

The affirmation deriving from the studies of Binkhorst & Dekker (2009 p.5) shows that this transformation occurred as a result of changes in the social values of the postmodern era, attributable to de-materialization and the need of consumers to be involved in the creation of experiences.

The major cause of this mainstream trend can be partly attributed to the emerging need of the individuals to create their own identity and to enrich their personality with non-material values that can be traced back to the uniqueness of experiences (Hovedstadens Udviklingsråd, 2005 p.4).

Presumably, then, experiences work as a personal source of information for the stories people tell about their life and are important for the perception of themselves.

This view implies the significance of individual satisfaction experiences with a certain product (Hovedstadens Udviklingsråd, 2005 p.4). Furthermore, the observation that people are willing to pay a high price for staged further strengthens this hypothesis.

While discussing experience economy, Pine and Gilmore (1998, p.30) identified four sphere that take place in the customer's experience, called: *entertainment*, *education*, *Esthetic* and *escapism*.

The dimensions mentioned above move differentiated across two axes, *the customer's level of participation* and the *customer's connection* with the environment or surroundings. The customer's participation varies between *active* and *passive* participation. Being active is closely related to define the customer as a "prosumer" (Toffler, 1980 p.281) who both *consumes* and *produces* the service. In these scenario, the production or creation of the experiences will depend on the customer's active participation. With passive participation, however, the customers do not affect the performance at all, having more of a mental presence.

The second axis of experience relates to the extent which the customer relates to the environment or surroundings.

Following the conclusions by Hosany and Witham (2010, 351-364) the first dimension is *entertainment*, which is developed when passive absorption is observed by the customer participating passively to a performance, for instance, going to theatre or to cinema. Entertainment had a strong and significant effect in two of the models. This variable had the greatest effect both on memory and on revisit intentions through memory, both times around twice the magnitude of its nearest rival, escapism. It also had a substantial and significant effect on arousal and revisit intentions through arousal: around twice that of its nearest rival, which was in this case Esthetic.

The second dimension is *Esthetic*, where the customer has a passive participation and immersion in the experience such as Design Hotel experience, iconic landscapes (*Servicescape*) or in arrangements of Art exposure that stimulate human senses. Esthetic experiences had a significant impact on the mediating variable in all three models: arousal, memory and satisfaction, respectively. Furthermore, in the models mediated by arousal and satisfaction, Esthetic experiences had a significant total impact on revisit intentions, although this was not the case with respect to the model mediated by memory. Importantly, however, Esthetic did not have the strongest total effect in either of the first two models, suggesting that while Esthetic is an important component part of the visitor experience it is not the most influential one. (Hosany and Witham, 2010).

The third dimension is *education*, which refers to an experience where the participant actively participates but is in absorption such as snorkelling, scuba diving or ski-schools. Education did not have a significant influence on the mediating variables of memory, arousal or satisfaction in any of the three models estimated; nor was its influence significant in terms of revisit intentions in any of the three models. This suggests that visitors tend to value the stories they encounter as they move through the labyrinth not for their educational content but for other features, such as their spectacle, entertainment value and possibly as a vehicle for escapism.

The fourth and the last dimension is *escapism* which happens when the participant is affecting the actual performances becoming itself part of the experience, the co-creation of added value providing benefits in both way, participant, and organizer. This experience realm, escapism, had the lowest coefficients when arousal and satisfaction

were the mediating variables and only the second highest coefficient when memory was the mediating variable (entertainment had almost twice the effect). Neither of the first two cases found escapism to significantly affect either the mediating variable concerned or revisit intentions through the mediating variable. Escapism did have a significant effect, however, both with regard to memory and on revisit intentions through the mediation of memory. As such, it might be argued that escapism is a secondary factor in terms of making memorable experiences. This is because it has a small but significant effect on memory, and the effect of memory in turn has a significant effect on revisit intentions. This effect is the weakest in size of any of the three models. This finding finds support in Hosany and Witham (2010), who found escapism to be the least influential of the four experience realms, it being only significant in predicting overall perceived quality; Escapism examples are like parachuting experience or best recognizable Act in a Play.

To summarise, it can be stated that entertainment experience is about feeling, the educational experience learning, the Esthetic experience presence, and the escapist experience doing influence customers' emotions and satisfaction levels (Hosany & Witham, 2010).

Following the table of the four-dimension explained from Pine & Gilmore.

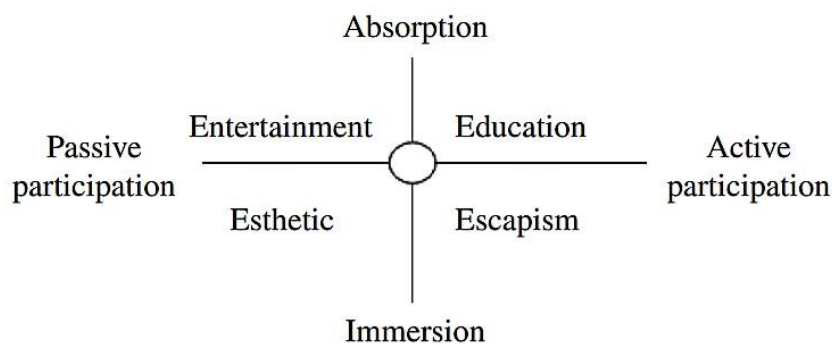


Figure 1 The four dimensions of experience, Source: Pine and Gilmore, 1999, p. 30

As Pencarelli and Forlani (2016 p. 209) explain:

these fields are combined in differing degrees and proportion, depending on the type of experience and guest involved, thus contributing to

the creation of unique and personal events. The level of involvement of the client/guest depends on both the person enjoying the experience (high or low propensity to engage in any given event) and on the organization staging the event (degree of involvement it requires).

Mossberg (2003) proposed a model built upon the assumptions that an experience is a process for a customer, that the staff and fellow customers (social dimension) are part of the context (known as *Experiencescape*), and that interactions taking place between these elements all affect the customer's emotions, absorption, and control. Customers are searching for something extraordinary separate from their everyday experience, something to touch their emotional feelings and senses. The author describes that experiences include an element of surprise and the feeling of getting something extra and unexpected, leading to a "WOW-feeling", an experience separated from an ordinary offering only reaching the level of "OK". The core element of this model is, however, the customer's involvement, suggesting that the customer plays a role in creating the experience in a continuous interaction with the company.

While commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, experiences are addressed as memorable (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Memorable is pointed out as a distinctive and essential characteristic for experiences. In both the definition by Poulsson & Kale (2004 p.267) "*an engaging act of co-creation between a provider and a consumer, wherein the consumer perceives value in the encounter and in the subsequent memory of that encounter*" and in Tarssanen & Kylänen, (2006, p.130) "*a multisensorial, memorable, positive and comprehensive emotional experience that can lead to personal change of a subject person*" and by Pine & Gilmore (1999) "*experiences are memorable, rich in sensations created within the customer who have been engaged on emotional, physical, intellectual and even spiritual level*" the element memorable is to be found. It is also stated that a vital competence needed of an experience provider is the one to create memorable events. (Mossberg, 2003)

## 2.2 A theory of Tourism Experience

According with the study conducted by Ooi, Can-Seng (2005), this chapter will focus on what the tourist experience is and the attention that must be paid to this phenomenon.

Nowadays the tourism sector is highly competitive because it offers *experiences* to its consumers. Tourist destinations and travel operators create complete packages that contain memorable tourist experiences where the consumer feels a certain sense of attraction.

However, it must be taken into consideration that what has been said above is not sustainable if we consider the characteristics listed below:

Experiences are elaborated by people in a different way because they have different cultural and social backgrounds, being precisely the cognitive sphere very different depending on the origin of the person himself, a single experience can and is lived or interpreted in a totally different way by people. Therefore, it is difficult to create a product that can attract all customers equally.

Another consideration to be taken concerns the multiplicity of meanings that an experience can give. An active or passive action resulting from an experience, even if it involves an identical act performed by different subjects, it is experienced in different way, depending on the type of person; This experience can be received as memorable in a positive sense or mediocre in a negative sense by two subjects, because the background, interests, social sphere and cognitive one are different. How can tourists, coming from the same cultural background, live two completely different experiences?

The moral, psychological and physical state also affect the variant of satisfaction of a lived experience, so this element that is extremely fundamental has be taken into consideration, the psychological state of the individual can make the lived experience assume a different result if compared in two different moments of one's life.

To better understand the concept of tourist experience it is appropriate to report different approaches supported by various studies on this phenomenon, each with different points of view on the concept treated.

To begin, *Cognitive psychology of tourism experience*, is based on how the perception of the tourist and how it can influence the experience (Mcintosh & Prentice, 1999). The

preconceptions, the expectations elaborated in the consumer's psyche, are related to how he judges, experiences and is made to the product itself.

In the second approach the tourist activities performed by the consumer lead to it an increase of what is the psychological sphere and well-being, the rediscovery of one's identity, the sense of belonging and the understanding and enhancement of what are the diversity of other cultures (Prentice, Witt and Hamer, 1998, P.24).

Furthermore, a third approach focuses on the experiences that create or bring in the consumer's mind a sense of *optimal experience*, that is an experience that is not only engaging, but thanks to that experience the point of view is revolutionized and the limits of oneself are overcome (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982). They are usually rare, not ordinary experiences.

The *phenomenological approach* denotes the fourth conceptual way of the travel industry experience research. It attempts to catch a scope of individual encounters that are not just extreme and ideal and dependents on various styles of utilization, including vacationer's tendency towards the rebuilding of their very own prosperity, Escape from monotony, their drive for fashionable status and their goal to promote alternative lifestyles.

Li (2000, p.863) provides an observational phenomenological approach to deal with social affair rich interactions in the travel business, reflexive, and close data. Such methodology attempts to depict the promptness of individual encounters.

The Fifth approach focuses on the study of *tourism in contact* with the locals; The tourist arrives in the destination with gaps concerning the knowledge of the territories, uses and customs that only in contact with the locals will they discover and assimilate in their tourist experience that also enriches the cultural adjective

Finally, the last approach focuses on the *staging experience* that - unlike the other approaches - study the interpretation and the way to assimilate a given experience on a personal level; This last approach, strongly supported by Pine & Gilmore (1999), studies the different degrees of interpretation and satisfaction that the product can provide to the consumer among the interaction between the two. The right environment, the right circumstances, create a feeling of deeper experience in the consumer who is led to think that the experience is something tailored to him, a personalized experience is more satisfying.

## 2.3 Memorable Tourism Experience

Several approaches have been adopted to explore positive memorable experiences and several features have been taken into consideration to define these experiences in a thorough way, among these features a prominent role is played by the relationship between emotions and the tourism experience (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, 1380).

Some experiences of consumption directly affect the tourism experience, and the feelings found in the literature of memorable tourism experiences include joy, pleasure, sociability, guilt, irritation, and concern (Kim & Ritchie, 2014, 325). It means that the tourism experience has shifted from rationality and physical elements (Esthetics, tangible aspects of service quality) to the enhancement of subjective perceptions and traveller's emotional involvement (Uriely, 2005, 201). In this sense, the essence of the phenomenon is associated with at least three processes that contribute to the memorability of the visitor experience:

1. Ambiance,
2. Socialization
3. Emotion and Reflection

Regarding the ambiance, it 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, as Kim (2014) indicates.

The ambiance is also a process related to the tourist's personal experience contrasted to the culture and the destination characteristics. This setting can happen before arriving at the destination, through the search for a hotel reservation, photos research, tourist information and other planning steps. In order to attract repeat visitors, it is important destinations go above and beyond to ensure that tourists are highly satisfied with their experience (Prayag and Ryan, 2012, p.344).

However, satisfaction alone might not be enough to make a tourist revisit a destination. Memory and remembered experiences need to be studied to further understand tourists' behavioural intentions.

Memorable Tourism Experience depends on at least two elements:

- 1) the tourism experience in a given space and time;
- 2) a process of generating memories related to the experience or its consumption.

According to the study of Lalith Chandralal and Fredy-Roberto Valenzuela (2013 p.178), it is also possible to find a total of 9 themes emerged as the antecedents of memorable tourism experiences; 8 of them represent the cognitive domain and the last one represents the affective domain.

1. ***Perceived Meaningfulness:***

Referred to lived tourist experiences that have brought a "*personal development*", "*development of relationships*" and an enhanced "*family togetherness*" as reported; there is usually a higher probability of an event that becomes memorable due to the folks, the social events more than just the place alone.

2. ***Perceived Opportunities to Encounter Authentic Local Experiences:*** Related to the memorable experience carried out when tourists get in deep contact with the surrounding authentic local culture of the touristic destination, creating a social contact with locals and acknowledging the cultural rituals and behaviours.

3. ***Perceived Significance:***

Referred to the perceived importance of certain experiences in term of exclusiveness, extremeness or a *dream trip* like, trips which are perceived as once in a lifetime experience.

4. ***Perceived Novelty:***

Novelty may include “*off-the-beaten track*” travel experiences, “*first time*” experiences such as “first visit to Asia” or “first trip in a cruise ship”, staying at accommodation places which are quite different from mainstream touristic hotels, and their exposure to quite different cultures, lifestyles, foods etc.

5. ***Perceived Opportunities for Social Interactions:***

This is an important theme which expresses the social interaction during the experience with fellow travellers, locals and random people met while travelling. Social interactions do not refer to creating any long-term friendships or bonds with others; instead, it’s mostly related to happy interactions with various people they had met during their trips.

6. ***Perceived Local Hospitality:***

Referred to the very positive experience that is possible to have with the Local people, taking in consideration friendliness, helpfulness and generosity of those locals encountered during the trip.

7. ***Serendipity and Surprises:***

Serendipitous incidents are unplanned but positive and memorable experiences that happened during tours. Participants claimed that generally, independent tourism trips tend to provide more serendipitous experiences than organized tours since independent trips provide more freedom to encounter unexpected experiences.

8. ***Perceived Professionalism of Local Guides:***

Describe the significant role played by the local guides to make a trip memorable, highlighting professional guides skills like knowledge of the local attractions, ability communicate in a proper way, ability to be friendly with tourists and their willingness to do extra things to delight tourists.

9. ***Positive Emotions:***

This theme is related to the affective domain of the tourist; it is focused on the personal emotions and the capacity of the human to remember an experience that can cause the outcrop of experienced emotions.

As above mentioned, some experiences of consumption directly affect the tourism experience, and the feelings found in the literature of memorable tourism experiences include joy, pleasure, sociability, guilt, irritation, and concern (Kim & Ritchie, 2014 p.12). Also anger, displeasure, annoyance, sadness, fear, shame, loneliness, romanticism, love, peace, optimism, happiness, excitement, pride, anxiety, and others (Schmitt, 2011 p.8). The last paragraph of this chapter will focus on the cultural tourism, that will complete the reference context where my research developed.

## 2.4 Cultural Tourism

Since the early 1980s cultural tourism has been recognized separately from recreational tourism. However, there has not been a single universally accepted definition of “*cultural tourism*” (Dolnicar, 2002 p3).

Reisinger (1994, p25) defined cultural tourism as a form of special interest and experiential tourism based on the search for or participation in new and deep cultural experiences of an Esthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological nature.

Richards (1996, 346) suggested two different definitions of cultural tourism. His conceptual definition refers to “*the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs*”, while the technical definition states “*all movements of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama outside their normal place of residence*”.

Cusick (1998 p4) defines the idea of cultural contact as “*a predisposition for groups to interact with outsiders - a necessity created human settlement through diversity, pattern, and desire for exchange - and to want to control that interaction*”. Related with these cultural needs, is possible to identify the interaction between the tourists and the local culture through the engagement in activity; According to Prentice (2001) perceived authenticity of the touristic experience is facilitated by engagement with the culture visited in a cultural tourism setting. Visitor engagement commonly refers to visitors' involvement with and commitment to a tourism (Brodie, R. & Hollebeek, L.D., Ilic, A. & Juric, B. 2011, p. 252).

In the field of cultural tourism, higher level of visitor engagement contributes to higher level of tourist cultural contact. Cultural tourists generally exhibit different levels of motivation and interest in experiencing and learning about different cultures (Boyd, 2002, p. 211). Meeting local people is acknowledged as a key motive for cultural tourism (Reisinger, 1994).

A review of existing definitions of cultural tourism by Bonink (1992) identified two basic approaches. The first, the '*sites and monuments*' approach, concentrates on describing the type of attractions visited by cultural tourists, and is clearly related to a product-based definition of culture. A typical list of the types of sites or attractions which are considered to attract cultural tourists is provided by ECTARC (1989):

1. Archaeological sites and museums.
2. Architecture (ruins, famous buildings, whole towns).
3. Art, sculpture, crafts, galleries, festivals, music and dance events (classical, folk, contemporary).
4. Drama (theatre, films, dramatists) language and literature study, tours, events.
5. Religious festivals, pilgrimages.
6. Complete (folk or primitive) cultures and sub-cultures.

These features are clearly orientated towards a concept of cultural tourism as 'high culture', and towards the consumption of cultural products, rather than involvement in cultural processes.

The second approach might broadly be defined as *conceptual approach*. As with tourism in general, conceptual definitions of cultural tourism attempt to describe the motive and meanings attached to cultural tourism activity.

For example, cultural tourism is defined by McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) as comprising all aspects of travel, whereby travellers learn about the history and heritage of others or about their contemporary ways of life or thought. In other words, cultural tourists learn about the products and processes of other

Scope and Significance of Cultural Tourism.

As Karagiannis (2013) indicates:

*“Cultural tourism contributes to the maintenance and rejuvenation of traditional art, creates tourism demand and because of this demand we can observe some changes in the traditional arts. Thus, traditional arts aim at covering the existing tourism demand and so, a folk process of the production of imitations is developed”.*

The same author shows some cultural resources that include, in this case, the characteristics of Greek main touristic attractions, as present and past elements of mentality, sociality and lifestyle.

They are also based on old historical constructions or elements that are related with historical location where crucial social events took place in the past.

The most significant attractions of Greece for tourists are the classical and historical monuments. The Greek culture has different ways of expression when it is about villages, markets, festivities and when it is about hospitality (Hudman and Jackson, 1994).

The following table describes the main cultural resources of tourism.

| CULTURAL RESOURCES   |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| RELIGIOUS RESOURCES  | HERITAGE   | OTHER RESOURCES   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temples</li> <li>Christian</li> <li>Muslim</li> <li>Buddhism</li> <li>Synagogue</li> <li>• Chapels</li> <li>• Tombs</li> <li>• Altars</li> <li>• Shrines</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castles</li> <li>• Fortresses</li> <li>• Historic buildings</li> <li>• Historic houses</li> <li>• Birthplaces of historic persons</li> <li>• Historic locations</li> <li>• Farmhouses</li> <li>• Mansions</li> <li>• Villages</li> <li>• Cities</li> <li>• Folk traditions</li> <li>• Museums</li> <li>Archaeological</li> <li>National</li> <li>Folk</li> <li>Modern art</li> <li>• Natural Museums</li> <li>• Technological museums</li> <li>• Archaeological sites</li> <li>• Ruins of old times</li> <li>• Preservable buildings</li> <li>• Places where fights happened</li> <li>• Ancient roads</li> <li>• Ancient paths</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National festivities</li> <li>• Culture of locals</li> <li>Dance</li> <li>Clothing</li> <li>Language</li> <li>Dialect</li> <li>Food</li> <li>Drinks</li> <li>Music</li> <li>Art</li> <li>Work</li> <li>Industry</li> <li>Home handicraft</li> <li>Pieces of handicraft</li> <li>• Archaeological sites</li> <li>• Places of residence of famous people</li> <li>• Places of filming</li> <li>Films</li> <li>Series</li> <li>• Local folk traditions</li> </ul> |

Table 1: Karagiannis St., (2008). Didactic note for the University of Central Greece, Leviaia, p. 146

A study carried out by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, 1994) concerning tourism strategy and rural development emphasizes the market growth of rural tourism by illustrating key factors that contribute to this growth within the market.

- Increasing levels of Education: Research shows that increasing levels of education related with increased interest in outdoor recreation, eco-tourism, and special interest holidays.

- A growing interest in heritage: Rural areas are especially well suited to heritage interpretation, possessing many historic landscapes, artefacts, and linkages, and fine settings for heritage sites.

- Increases in leisure time: thanks to higher levels of disposable income, there is an increase in the frequency of holidays, giving the possibility of an increase in non-traditional holidays preferring a rural experience

- Transport and Communication: have been improved after the post-war period making now the access to rural areas no longer a problem, like jet aircraft, high speed trains, motorways, and roll-on roll-off ferries have been developed over last years.

This progress is seen as a key attitudinal change on behalf of both the travel trade and their clients. Distance and remoteness have become selling points, rather than barriers.

- Health Consciousness: has grown and is growing steadily and in the concept of healthy living, active recreation plays an important part. Exercise and sport play central roles in healthy living strategies. Rural areas are well placed to provide outdoor recreation of all kinds from walking to cycling, orienteering, skiing and climbing. The countryside is assumed to be healthy, with overtones of fresh air and bucolic wellbeing. In contrast, resort holidays based on the sun / sea / sand formula have been found to offer serious health risks.

- Better outdoor clothing: has helped rural holidays in both a practical and a fashion sense. High performance fabrics enable wearers to stay warm and dry in adverse weather, allowing tourists to enjoy wet weather and out-of-season conditions.

- A growing interest in specialty food: Rural holidays have been able to capitalize on this trend because the countryside is the source of quality non-processed foods. an increase in the trend of gastronomic tourism has certainly facilitated the preference of consumers in opting for a rural tourist experience.

- Green issues: have risen high on most political agendas over the last ten years. This interest has been seized upon by the marketers of many consumer products, including holiday tour operators. Rural holidays, although not necessarily environmentally friendly, can capitalise on the wholesomeness which the countryside is felt to exude.

- Peace and tranquillity: rank high among the requirements of many tourists. This is hardly surprising given the high levels of mental stress experienced by many workers.

- Aging but active populations are becoming the norm across the OECD countries. Early retirement is now commonplace, as are active 70-year-olds.

Effective occupational pensions allow this active but aging population to travel widely: many choose rural holidays for health reasons and to discover new non-urban experiences.

- Real travel (rewarding, enriching, adventuresome and a learning experience) has been noted by many commentators as being a growth area. The many facets of rural tourism are specially placed to fulfil the needs of this growth market.

- Individualism is also a growth market, rejecting the mass activities of the past. Rural tourism, because of the fragmented and small-scale nature of the enterprises involved, is especially capable of exploiting this market trend, although high quality selling and hospitality skills are needed.

- The rural agencies: numerous in most countries, have been quick to express an interest in rural tourism and to offer aid and advice. These agencies include those connected with agriculture, with nature conservation, with community welfare, with the arts and crafts, with National Parks, with economic development, transport - the list is almost endless. Although the agencies rarely co-ordinate their activities, and are rarely organizations with any experience of tourism, they have assisted many collective projects and individual enterprises.

- The next chapter will focus on my internship and the methodology adopted for my research.



## Chapter 3 . METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Dalabelos Estate Overview

As mentioned before, the Curricular Internship was developed at Dalabelos Estate, located near the Angeliana village, very close to the beautiful Panormo, on a hill overlooking the Cretan Sea, 5 km to the north coast of Crete at the foot of the legendary Mount Ida.

The buildings merge harmoniously with the surrounding landscape and visitors are seduced by the serene culture of the Cretan countryside.

The project Dalabelos started 12 years ago, thanks to Vassilis Petrodaskalakis, owner and supervisor for this Internship, that kept the rural land of the family and built the Estate. It could be also possible thanks to the European Union Funds that the Estate received due the project shown by mr. Vassilis, with the idea of emphasize the rural area of the Island of Crete, in particular the Rethymnon, and create a touristic structure that offers a different product and a service mix, being able to persuade and attract a different target of tourist, and build the brand of Dalabelos Estate focused on culture, agritourism, and sustainable lifestyle.

### 3.1.2 Mission and Vision of the Estate

Starting or running a successful business takes planning and focus. Part of the process includes setting goals, running projections, and defining the purpose.

The Business plan is an outline of overall business strategy including marketing, sales projections, target markets and where to place in them, and more.

Two elements that are critical in defining the business objectives and should be included in business plan are the mission statement and vision statement.

A mission statement defines customer critical processes and informs the firm about the desired level of performance. It is about *how* to achieve business goals *while* defining the purpose and primary objectives related to customer's needs and team's values.

It should have the effect of clarifying exactly what the firm do right now that will take the business into the future.

The reason for the Estate to exist is, above all, is to respond positively to the demand of quality services in the region, offering the best of it: the overwhelming landscapes, the local products like grapes, wine, cheese, olive oil etc...

The key to lead the Estate to future achievements of business goal is the sustainable way of thinking , offering only genuine and mostly organic products to the guests, is important to mention that nowadays the Estate count on a self-production of 70% of the food served in the Dalabelos Restaurant, enriching the Local Cultural Experience given to the tourists that have the opportunity to know where exactly the products come from and gain the knowledge about local varieties and technics of cultivation.

The guest's well-being is a must, considering that the Estate is located in a rural area and recognized as a *Agritourism Resort*, the organic products of Dalabelos are able to give this quietness and sense of belonging to the surrounding nature to the guests that prefer an original quiet holiday driven by the Cretan culture.

Regarding the vision statement, it looks forward and creates a mental image of the ideal state that the organization wishes to achieve. It is inspirational and aspirational and should challenge employees. A vision statement does not describe the status quo of the organization's status and actions, rather that is what a mission does. Instead, a vision focuses on the subsequent outcomes after the achievements of the main goals.

The vision of Dalabelos Estate could be exposed as a driven Touristic Structure able to inform, awake, persuade, make conscious all the guests regarding the value of Greek and Cretan culture, giving them an authentic reason to build Loyalty thanks to the experience lived in this Agritourism Resort.

The Estate nowadays is making a lot of efforts in order to spread widely their vision and trying to reach other market segments to attract more tourist from different countries; this topic will be deep explored in the following paragraphs.

## 3.2 Organizational Structure

The organizational structure is a fundamental factor for the success. Some businesses are more suited to a hierarchical structure that adheres to rigid guidelines and procedures, while others benefit greatly from a structure that allows for free-flowing ideas and linear communication styles. The *mechanistic* organizational structure uses a top-down approach to management, while *organic* organizational structure uses a more flexible management style.

An organic organizational structure is a flat organization that allows horizontal communications and interactions. This type of organizational structure is decentralized, giving employees at all levels a chance to participate in business-related decision making. Businesses with an organic structure often encourage group participation and the sharing of work responsibilities. Communication channels are open to employees, managers and business owners and contact between all levels of employees usually occurs on a regular basis. Lower-level employees tend to have more face-time with executives than in a mechanistic organization. The type of communication most often used in organic structures is verbal.

The flat nature of organic businesses allows this type of organizational structure to be more flexible to change if needed. Employees take part in a joint specialization based on the jobs at hand, providing expertise on a wide array of functions within the business. Status is tied to the perceived intelligence and aptitude of the employee rather than their position within the company. In an organic structure, the business is made up of a network of people or teams who work together in varying capacities to achieve the goals of the business.

In the Dalabelos Estate case, it is possible to define the structure as a mixture between the two abovementioned types. Some departments of hierarchical structure are more rigid in terms specialization skills and tasks, so that is not possible the interchange of human resources between those departments; On the other hand, some departments are more suitable for human resources exchange, and being the Estate a moderate capacity Tourism structure, it is possible manage some of those departments with a limited number of employees with high level of tasks flexibility.

Last mentioned departments able to guarantee this flexibility are:

- Accommodation Division
- Maintenance
- Food & Beverage

The rate of interchange is proportionally related with the number of guests present in the Estate at the same moment, with the result of increased work for the employees, but thanks of this structure feature, is possible guarantee an appropriated quality service level.

As follow, organizational chart is provided in order to explain the Dalabelos Estate structure (different colours explain the department structure belonging feature)

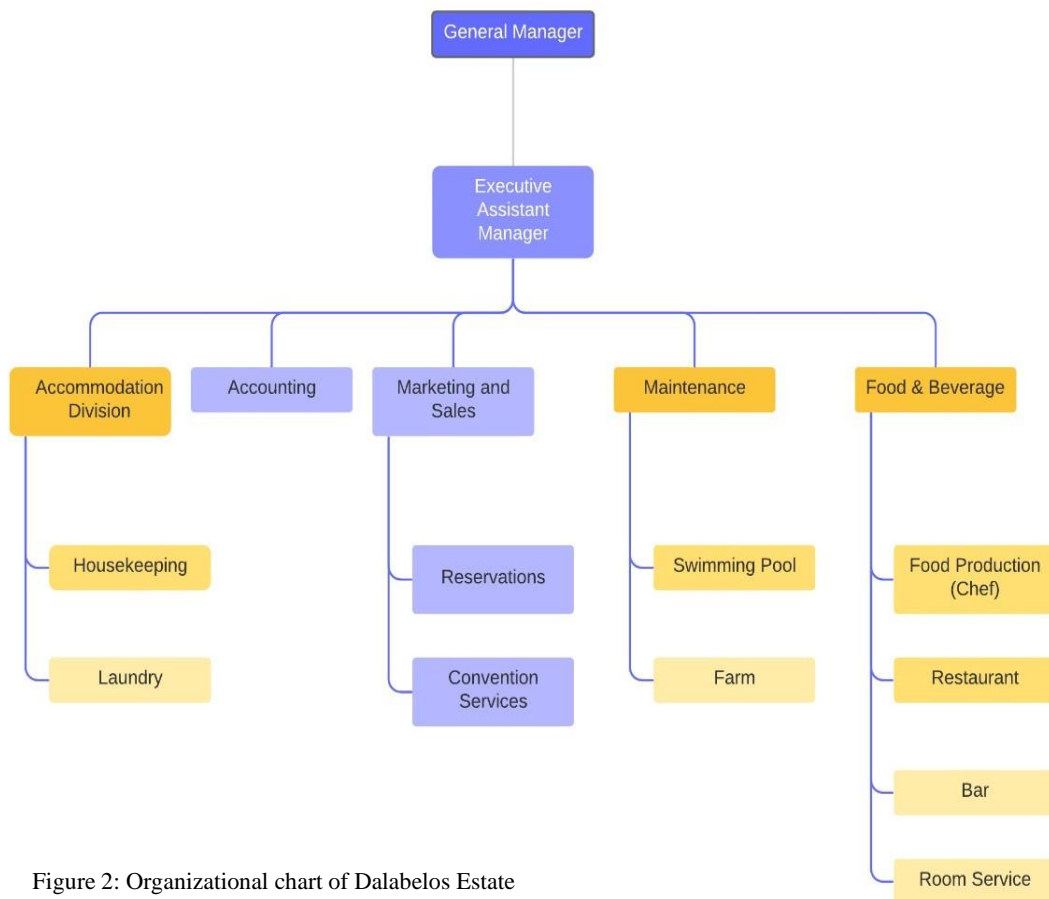


Figure 2: Organizational chart of Dalabelos Estate

### 3.2.1 Services

According to Law Decree 228/2009 of 14 September, Section I - Notions and typologies, Article 2 - Concept of tourism enterprises:

*"Are considered tourist establishments the ones that are intended to provide accommodation, for remuneration, having, for its operation, an adequate complementary structures, equipment and services."* (p. 6290).

The same decree of law, in Section III - Hotel Establishments, Article 11 - Concept of hotel establishment, defines as:

*"hotel establishments the undertakings tourist facilities designed to provide temporary accommodation and other ancillary or support, with or without provision of meals, and aimed at a daily rental"* (p. 6292).

Furthermore, Quintas (volume II, 2006) defines a hotel as *"an establishment primarily intended to provide, for a fee, accommodation to the public, providing, as a rule, other services (food, beverages, animation, laundry, etc.) in an organized and integrated way"* (p. 363), and according to Cabral, Luís, and José Mata (2003) the definition above can be explained as *"an establishment that offers a set of goods and services to satisfy the needs of its customers"* (p.25).

A hotel has a set of services to offer to its customers in order to give them the rightful experience in the tourism structure. This care must be taken to choose their services according to the needs of their customers. Following the idea that a Hotel provides services to its customers, in accordance with Kotler & Armstrong (1999), a service is any act or performance that a party offer the other and which is essentially intangible and does not result in ownership of nothing, whether or not its production is linked to a physical good. Still, in this context, according to Almeida (2010), the service can be understood as a meeting between the provider of the service and the consumer. These are actions that take place in direct contact between the customer and the person who is providing the service. Nowadays the customer increased the capacity of demanding and strictness due the amount of information that is capable to reach and it is necessary for the hotel - in order to satisfy the needs – to manage an appropriate quality service giving to the guest a Memorable Experience exceeding his expectations, as Almeida (2010) says about this, find out what the consumer expects from the service is very important for the company that provides it.

In order for a Hotel to give quality service it must own a planned and properly organized internal structure. The organizational structure of a hotel, according to Quintas (2006, Volume II) comprises a set of functions, all of them with different purposes, but only in together will be able to satisfy customers' needs. These functions are named:

- Hotel Management: responsible for deciding on the organization, that is, setting goals for management and formulate the policies necessary to obtain them, ensure the structures of organization and ensure control of the means used by management and the results obtained by the entity
- Hotel Administration: it is responsible for ensuring the management control of activities administrative and financial, that is, it is in charge of the administrative services, the financial and analytical accounting, billing, secretarial and litigation.
- Marketing and commercial department - promote the sale of products and services of the hotel through advertising campaigns and public relations actions, ensuring, after-sales service. For this to be possible, it is necessary that this department carry out a market research study, in order to select the demand segments, the most convenient distribution channels, the price levels to be practiced and the packages to be create.
- Human Resources Department: responsible for the management of employees at institution, being in charge of all phases of recruitment and selection of employees, as well as their professional evaluation, medical assistance, salary processing and performance awards.
- Maintenance Department: responsible for the conservation and repair of the building, hotel facilities and equipment.
- Production Departments: ensure the performance of functions that guarantee the effective performance of hotel services, such as room service and the food sector and drinks. This department comprises sections such as accommodation, laundry, restaurant, bar, room service, kitchen, pastry, store management, shopping and control.
- Security department - this may or may not be linked to the security department maintenance, depending on the capacity and location of the hotel, is responsible for security of the establishment, with regard to patrolling the peripheral areas of the

building, conservation of surveillance, safety, hygiene, and personnel control equipment.

- Other complementary departments of the main activity such as stores and spaces shopping, leisure and sports facilities, discotheque, hairdresser, garage, workshops. (P.377)

Although a hotel has a structure sub-divided into departments where each employee has its own task, it is necessary for the proper function of the hotel unit, in some cases just subcontracting resources and services. Especially for specific services that require greater specialization in a given area or, in particular, services where more resources are needed, that's called *outsourcing*.

So said, the hotel must define the customer segment that it intends to satisfy and target its services based on specific needs in order to achieve a high degree of customer satisfaction. This market segmentation makes it easier for the hotel to organize its structure in order to provide excellent services to its customers.

### 3.2.2 Accommodation Area

In this paragraph is shown the organization of the Accommodation area of the Dalabelos Estate: The main area of the Estate is structured on 3 hectares of land and comprises 10 stone-built modern and fully equipped studios and 2 luxury apartments in villa.

As follow, the main features of the stone-built studios/cottages and the villas:

**The stone-built cottages** are aligned in such form so that all of them can have the sea view. They are designed and run with special care and respect to humans and nature. They are decorated by local artists and ceramists and are equipped with every modern comfort: up-to-date kitchenettes, fireplaces and modern bathrooms with handmade ceramic showers and washbasins. Thick stone walls, double glazing in windows, expertly insulated roofs and wisely arranged openings provide coolness and warmth, natural light and ventilation and open the interior to a superb view.

Dimension of the cottages: **25** meter/Sq.

Some apartments have the possibility to communicate through a double interior door and be transformed to 2-bedroom apartments with 2 bathrooms and 2 kitchenettes, being able to offer an “Family Cottage” where are suitable 4-5 peoples in a cottage of **55** meter/Sq.

One of these stone-built modern cottages is offered as “*Superior Cottage*” due the exclusive feature of product that include also a Jacuzzi in the private outside space.

**The 2 luxury apartments** are located in a 2 floors villa built 2 years ago, the booking of this apartments can be made separately or is possible to book the whole Villa. as follow the main features of the apartments:

Maria Luxury Apartment: this unit, has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room with fireplace and 2 sofa beds. There is also a spacious kitchen. All the villas are decorated by local artisan products. At the north side of the villa there is a terrace with a hot tub and beautiful panoramic views.

Dimension of the apartment: **134** meter/Sq.

Capacity: 7 persons.

Konstantina Luxury Apartment: this unit is on the 1st floor, has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room with fireplace and 3 sofa beds. There is also a kitchen in the living room. There is a covered terrace on the south side of the villa, and at the north side there is another terrace with beautiful panoramic views. A hot tub hidden amongst the flowers and trees is also available, offering panoramic views.

Dimension of the apartment: **120** meter/Sq.

Capacity: 5-8 persons.

### 3.2.3 Dalabelos Restaurant aka “Taverna”

Several scholars have attempted to define the term *culinary tourism*. In order to give a wide idea of the concept it is possible to define that it is not just food or cuisine, but the experience must be unique and memorable. Long (2004) defined culinary tourism as a way of experiencing other cultures through food, it means a proper field in tourism market that is based on food as a destination attraction and gives tourists memorable experiences.

The local food of a country is related with its culture and image. Food is able to represent a core expression of a destination's intangible heritage, and through its dining experience, tourists can gain a truly authentic cultural experience (Okumus, & McKercher, 2007). As (Quan & Wang, 2004) wrote, sometimes the consumption of food is the main source of motivation for certain tourists to travel to a specific destination; Linking the typical tourism activities with the consumption of food which increases the memorable and impressive visit experience has a strong relationship with tourists' overall satisfaction with the food experience during a trip. In culinary tourism, dissatisfaction with gastronomy would adversely affect tourists' quality perceptions of a destination (Ryu & Jang, 2006; Kivela & Crofts, 2006).

The quality and originality of the food would create an authentic experience for every tourist. As Richards (2002) pointed out, tourists often pay close attention and significance to how they feel in a destination and how they experience what the destination offers, carefully selecting a particular dish that satisfies a personal desire. Dalabelos Estate born 12 years ago thanks to the Petrodaskalakis's Family which is rooted on this land since generations, the main aim, and one of the first activities carried out in this ideal sustainable resort was to spread the authentic and traditional Greek food, Cretan food to be precisely, using all the products that come from the region of Rethymnon, it means to have a direct contact with local shepherds that provided FreeRange meat, cheese and all the sheep-farming products necessary, strong relationship with suppliers that in fact are also friends, with a huge grade of loyalty built during the years.

This activity takes place in one of the most important departments of the Estate, the Food & Beverage department called “Dalabelos Restaurant”.

Before go forward with the description of this department is necessary make a clarification regarding it.

While restaurants usually have an extensive menu and are usually open long hours, *tavernas* often have a limited amount of foods and usually serve what they have available. Restaurants are also looked at as more of a daytime activity, but many are open throughout the day. Tavernas are primarily enjoyed in the evening and often involve entertainment, dancing, and alcoholic beverages, such as local wine. While a restaurant is simply a place that you eat, a taverna provides not only food, but a real experience combining food and culture.

People visiting Greece often use the words “taverna” and “restaurant” without distinction. However, Greeks make a distinction between a restaurant and a taverna. Depending in which area in Greece, tavernas may serve different types of food. They also have limited menus and serve what they have available. For instance, areas that are by the sea may specialize in seafood. In this case, these are usually referred to as “*Psaro*” Tavernas, or Fish Tavernas.

The basic characteristics of the simple taverna are still in place but the main fishes revolve around seafood. Foods that are normally served at tavernas include grilled meats, simple seafood dishes, and various *mezedes*, such as stuffed grape leaves (*dolmades*), Greek cheeses such as feta, and dips and spreads such as *taramosalata*, which is made from fish eggs, and the famous *tzatziki* souce. Dalabelos Food and Beverage department is not a proper restaurant but is more suitable with the concept of taverna, a core of the Estate due the concentration of activity that are performed there fulfilling the senses and gaining cultural knowledge to clients.

This department is characterized by indoor and outdoor area facing to the beautiful landscape of olive trees extended for 5 km till the coast of Panormo.

Usually the outside area is preferred by the guests due this iconic landscape that recalls in their mind sense of belonging to that natural paradise, guests that come from the Estate but also a good flow of reservation for outsiders is present due the well-known reputation that the restaurant has, and also “*Walk-in*” guests (this expression in hotel industry defines a guest without reservation) have a positive impact to the restaurant.

Dalabelos kitchen is a vegetarian’s delight. There are several dishes of organic vegetables cooked in virgin olive oil, wild herbs, salads with fragrant herbs and spices,

all of them prepared in the traditional Cretan way that helps to good health, well-being and long life.

In addition, lovers of good meat dishes are satisfied with traditional meals prepared with rabbit and chicken meat from our farm and neighbouring livestock. Local wine and cheese, as well as fresh fish from Panormo complete the world-wide famous Cretan diet. Except the daily meals served in this department, more activity related to the Cretan diet are carried out for Guests.

### 3.2.4 Dalabelos Cultural Activities

With the development of mass tourism travel and standardization of tourist's services, people have turned to natural, preserved, and clean environment, such as rural areas in search of an authentic experience. The attraction of rural areas for tourists relates to the possibility of satisfying needs for vacations, relaxation, activity holidays, gaining knowledge about the way of living in the country (M. Podovac, M.J. Tončev, 2016). The knowledge acquired by Dalabelos Estate about the dynamic change of tourists trends turning into natural and cultural vacations, leads to the creation of activities set offered by the Estate to the guests gaining their curiosity and interest during their experience in the local area.

The activities offered are based on weekly flexible schedule, with the opportunity of booking also from outsiders through Dalabelos website or directly on *booking.com*.

The main Cultural activities in Dalabelos Estate are:

- **Tour and Farming activities:**

*The olive grove – Olive harvesting*

The harvesting of olives dates back to antiquity, a collective activity carried out by the Cretans during winter with the same method to this day. Since olive trees are very sensitive to cold, rain and damp weather, harvesting is carried out in favourable conditions, on mild sunny winter days.

The olive is the most important agricultural product of the island, its pressing procedure gives out the precious olive oil, which is the basis of Cretan cooking.

*Visiting Dalabelos Farm*

Tour in the organic farm and animals of the extended Estate with a duration of 1.5 hour, includes treats with refreshments, *tsikoudia* (the famous Cretan welcome drink) and other estate products offered during the tour, and discussion groups between all the participants of organic farming sharing experiences. The price is set at 20 euros per person (4-15 persons).

### *The Vineyard – The vine harvest*

Grape picking is the most pleasant collective agricultural activity and takes place by the end of summer. This work is accompanied with songs and goes on as a feast that lasts throughout the pressing of grapes and ends by the time when barrels are filled with the grape must – the prize of a whole year’s work at the vineyards. The visitor of Dalabelos is welcome to participate in olive picking and vintage in order to experience the generosity of Cretan land and the bond of the people to their land and its products.

### *The wine press*

All activities associated with grapes are also a celebration. The clay wine press built in the farm’s courtyard is used to press grapes in order to extract the must. The grapes residue is left to ferment and in October it is transferred to the cauldron to be distilled and produce the famous Cretan “*raki*”. All the Farm Tour and Activities start every Tuesday at 18:00 until the end of September and from 1st of October start at 17:00.

- **Cooking Classes:**

Every Saturday from 15:00 to 18:00 there is a collective cooking class of traditional dishes. The courses included the explanation of ingredients and the preparation of 2-3 seasonal dishes of traditional Cretan culinary and subsequent tasting of them into meal-dinner free of charge. Price of this activity is 45 euro/person, maximum capacity 8 Persons.

- **Cretan Musical Instruments Workshop:**

The activity is organized inside the Dalabelos main building, it offers the explanation and history of various traditional Cretan instruments and musical evolution during the decades. It includes also a live performance by two Cretan musicians showing the most traditional songs played in the Cretan musical history. A free exhibition of Cretan music takes place in Dalabelos Restaurant every Thursday in a proper stage located in outside area during Dinner time, creating a suggestive atmosphere for the restaurant’s guests.

### 3.3 Internship

During the internship, I was able to contribute in many organizational spheres within the structure. Being in contact with customers every day has been certainly the key point of the tasks I performed, so I was able to gather as much information as possible regarding the cultural tourism experience customers were having. Every day I took care of assisting the restaurant department for the administration of breakfasts, lunches and dinners, all meticulously organized with zero-kilometre organic products in order to give guests the best culinary experience. During the performance of the cultural activities mentioned earlier in this report, I had the opportunity to be always in contact with tourists and better understand their feelings in experiencing such a precious moment: from the excursions to the Dalabelos Farm with the explanation of every aromatic plant and the various crops of organic products to the group brainstorming that takes place at each excursion with the presentation of a buffet organized for tourists with products they have just harvested. Also, I took part in the various presentations of traditional musical instruments of Greece and especially of the island of Crete, organizing the event and preparing the room for the guests. Another main job I covered within the Dalabelos Organization was the reception of customers, with the collection of the feed-back to make improvements in the structure. Thanks to the collaboration of the owner, as manager and as supervisor of this internship, it was possible to make strategic improvements regarding the marketing department, collecting useful data to develop a more accurate long-term business strategy. In addition, the outsourced collaboration it was possible to improve the website owned by Dalabelos increasing the usability compared to the older mobile version of the previous. Also, an improvement of the advertising photos and the uploading of videos made with the latest generation drones gave a clearer image and perspective to the customer regarding the Dalabelos complex. Part of the improvements made thanks to the internship project concern the acquisition of useful data for internal development but also for the external visibility of the hotel; This was possible thanks to the willing of customers to give more feedbacks and detailed reviews of their experience in the Dalabelos Estate. The insights gained from the questionnaire and the interviews

worked both for my internship and for Dalabelos management. The project gave immediately positive responses, with an increased feedback rate on various online platforms, thus increasing the visibility of the structure within the tourist market of the island of Crete.

### 3.3.2 Daily Activities

The daily activities carried out during the internship at the Dalabelos Estate will be explained below.

Each activity contains a period of time and the tasks performed.

The activities were planned as follows:

Working days : Monday – Friday

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>9:00 AM – 11:30 AM</p> <p>Monday - Friday</p>  | <p>Food &amp; Beverage : Breakfast</p>   | <p>-Preparation of tables to serve breakfast to customers.</p> <p>-Preparation of food and drink.</p>  |
| <p>11:30 AM – 13:30 PM</p> <p>Monday - Friday</p> | <p>Front Office :<br/>Check-in / Check-out</p> <p>Internship Data collection :<br/>Questionnaire</p> | <p>-Welcoming new customers with check-in procedures and accommodation illustration</p> <p>-Check-out procedures for customers leaving the facility</p> <p>-Administration of questionnaires for the selected samples in order</p> |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   |   | to obtain data consistent with the study methodology  |
| 15:00 PM – 16:30 PM<br>Tuesday – Wednesday – Friday | Cultural Activities:<br>Farm tour , Cooking class ,<br>Presentation Traditional<br>Cretan Instruments , Olive<br>Harvesting | -Guide and support for the farm tour, explanation and illustration.<br><br>-Support for cooking lessons, assistant cook and preparation of the kitchen for the reception of customers<br><br>-Preparation of the hall for the presentation of traditional instruments<br><br>-Support for olive harvesting techniques |
| 20:00 PM – 22:00 PM<br>Monday - Friday              | Food & Beverage :<br>Dinner   | -Preparation of tables to serve dinner to customers.<br><br>-Preparation of food and drink  |

### 3.3.3 Critical Appreciation

After the internship I had the chance to think about strength points and weaknesses of the managerial system that I found in Dalabelos Estate and the activities made up to create an experience of cultural tourism. The virtuous circle “tourism – culture –

experience” was fulfilled with memorable and escapism traits in order to make the guests feel an overall positive vacation.

Since some of the activities are made outside the structure, like Olive harvesting and Wine harvesting, they are strictly connected with a specific seasonal period. This means that visitors coming after the right time for this activities are limited to indoor ones bonded to the olives and wine, missing the direct contact with nature. Also, the activities outside the Dalabelos Estate that should connect the visitor with the locals are not structured in a unique corpus and don’t cover all the age range of the costumers.

Despite these weaknesses, the overall perceived quality obtained by the questionnaire was positive (the three highest scores are around 83% in total) and the Intention to recommend the Dalabelos Estate has 40% for the highest score. The cooking class was the most appreciated activity along with dance class. As outdoor activities the lowest score was given to mountain bike, because the availability of bikes is limited.

My analysis suggests to improve cocking class as everyday activity and to improve outdoor activities with electric scooter so the guests can wander around the island.

## 3.4 Research Development

Over the last three decades, qualitative research methods have been recognized as a valuable tool in the social sciences and in particular management studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Creswell (1998 p.15) shows that qualitative research is a process of understanding social or human problem phenomena based on distinct and methodological traditions of inquiry. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. In this research method the qualitative data is collected by the researcher and analysed using one of the qualitative data analysis methods. Qualitative data are in depth descriptions of circumstances, people, interactions, observed behaviours, events, attitudes, thoughts and beliefs and direct quotes from people who have experienced or are experiencing the phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

To understand the processes or the aim of a given phenomenon, qualitative research provides the necessary in-depth and exploratory tools to achieve a clear picture of the process (Symon & Cassel, 1998). The Qualitative data that are utilized in framework analysis are usually collected in the form of participant observation, focus groups or interviews (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994, 173-195). Participant observation is a process of data collection where the researcher observes participants or is a participant of the event/phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2003). Interviews are typically a face-to-face conversation between the participant and the researcher (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002).

There are three different types of interviews: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. Structured interviews are based on questions that are asked to each participant. There is no variation in the questions between participants.

Unstructured or informal conversation interviews have no predetermined set of questions.

Semi-structured interviews are based on main guideline topic which a flexibility of questions asked to participants (Crabtree and Miller, 1999), the interviewer therefore can make use of cues and prompts to help and direct the interviewee into the research topic area thus being able to gather more in depth or detailed data set (Creswell, 2003). Framework analysis is flexible during the analysis process in that it allows the user to

either collect all the data and then analyse it or do data analysis during the collection process (Srivastava, A. & Thomson, S. B., 2009).

For the research objective, an exploratory research was conducted in order to uncover behavioural outcomes of memorable tourism experiences. A collection of data using a questionnaire and informal interviews (based on semi-structured and unstructured conversation) and also participant observation were carried out to study the phenomena experienced.

The first element to consider is the way to approach the studied "object" (phenomenon, event, situation, person etc.). This object (or case) is seen in its particularity and uniqueness (before examining what it has similar or different than others) and analysed in depth before making general statements (for example applicable to a larger population) or comparative (comparisons with others cases). First, attention is focused on the individual case and then (if the researcher deems it appropriate, which is not always the case it happens, for example, focus on the analysis of an individual case, as happens in the case study) comparisons are made between different cases to develop a typology. What constitutes a "*case*" depends on the theory adopted (eg an individual and his point of view; an interaction that occurs in a place and in a specific moment; a social and cultural context in which it takes place the event). Attention to uniqueness also explains the interest of qualitative researchers in rare or exceptional cases or situations. The studied object is seen in its entirety and complexity: this it implies, on the one hand, attention also for properties/characteristics generally excluded as irrelevant or not scientifically investigable by applying conventional measuring instruments.

Another element that distinguishes qualitative research is the interest in the meanings that the participants in the research attribute to world in which they live. Participants are seen as individuals who in interaction with other people - they develop meanings, transmit them, modify them and act from them. This activity it is mediated by verbal and non-verbal language and communication, by social actions and practices. Language, communication, interaction, action in the physical, social, cultural context, historical etc. they therefore constitute the tools through which we can trace the meanings (in different ways depending on the existing theoretical orientations), and therefore they are the central object of qualitative research.

Framework analysis is a qualitative method that suite for applied policy research. Is possible say that is quite similar to grounded theory; however, framework analysis stands out for better adaption with research that has specific questions, a limited time frame, a pre-designed sample and a priori issues (e.g. organizational and integration issues) that need to be dealt with. Although framework analysis may generate theories, the main concern is to describe and interpret what is happening in a particular environment (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994).

To carry out this type of qualitative research, it was necessary to design guidelines for the questionnaire and the interviews to be performed in order to obtain quality results inherent to the study conducted.

The guides were designed to understand the way the tourists lived the experience or were still experiencing at that time, within the tourist facility located in a rural area and with cultural emphasis, bringing it to mind to take advantage of a comparison, even of standardized tourist experiences previously experienced by the tourists themselves.

The questions performed had an informal aspect, after the tourists undergo a structured questionnaire made to evaluate other aspects of the phenomenon.

To go into detail below are the structured questions used during the collection of data born from the interviews:

i. *"When you booked this property, were you aware to stay in a rural area?"*

The question posed was of vital importance for the purpose of this research; With this question we went to understand if the tourist had the awareness of the holiday/experience expected, thus creating a gap between those who were totally taken aback by the cultural immersion provided to them and those who - instead - had a basic idea and expectations about what they would have by booking in the structure in question.

ii. *"Have you ever had a vacation like this before?"*

This “summarizing” question was made to understand how ready the person being interviewed was to this type of experience or if there was a reason to the choice of returning to live a rural and cultural experience.

iii. *"How significant is it for you to have this journey?"*

This question was made to highlight the tourist's cognition, in order to find a result linked to the significance of the lived experience and to the sense of discovery in immersing oneself in a foreign culture, trying to receive information on what it was the result and whether it made any personal improvements.

iv. *"How did the culture and the locals seem to you?"*

This question is the key point of the interview, in search of direct information about what is the customer's feedback about local life, customs, and social relations with the locals. The answers gave a result not only linked to the visitor's origin culture but also to the degree of hospitality received by the locals. Create a comparison between what they are always used to live and what is exceptional helps to fuel the level of experience lived during their stay.

v. *"Did you get to know the other customers of the structure?"*

Question n.5 emphasizes on the relational aspect of the tourist, not in contact with local people but with other tourists who have lived the same objective experience through the activities organized by the Dalabelos structure. They had the opportunity to socialize and exchange opinions between them in the same structure, bringing a positive or negative result, which in any case affects the tourist experience.

These are the key questions, used as a guideline during the informal interview performed with the clients of the structure after the questionnaire they filled.

Clearly, every informal interview struggles in a circuit of questions that evolves into an infinite number of other relative questions but which in any case have the characteristic of dynamism as each subject is different and each answer is strictly subjective.

With the help of the aforementioned guiding questions, it was possible to collect an adequate result of information in order to have a qualitative result that could be connected with the data obtained from the 45 questionnaires.

The notes were taken most of the cases during the interaction with the sample, collecting both the words the tourist said but also adding notes of what were the perceptions of the tourist while dealing with the chosen topic.

The quantitative research instrument, on the other hand, consists of several rating scales to capture the study's main variables, namely, guests' experience, memory, arousal, overall perceived quality, intention to recommend, and satisfaction. The measures for cruisers' experiences were operationalized using Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung's (2007) tourist experience scale. Following the result of the questionnaire with 45 respondents, some items were reworded to fit the study setting. The four dimensions of experience mentioned in the previous chapter - *education, entertainment, Esthetics, and escapism* - were each represented with four statements (cfr graphics 4.2). Rating for each statement was captured on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. Arousal was measured using four items tapping into respondents' evaluations of how interesting, stimulating, exciting, and enjoyable the cruise experience was on a 7-point scale with the anchors (1) not at all and (7) very much. *Memories* about the experience were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree using the following three items: "*I will have wonderful memories about this experience*", "*I will remember many positive things about this experience*", and "*I won't forget my experience in this place.*" Two items were constructed to capture *Overall perceived quality*: poor or excellent and inferior or superior. *Overall satisfaction* was assessed using two items: extremely dissatisfied or extremely satisfied and terrible or delighted. Finally, respondents' intention to recommend was measured with the question "*Would recommend Delabelos Estate to friends or family members*", rated from (-3) extremely unlikely to (+3) extremely likely. Data were collected from tourists on a two-week vacation. On the last day, while awaiting onward transportation, respondents were approached to participate in the survey. Such a method of data collection enabled us to capture guests' holistic evaluations within less than an hour after the "consumption" has taken place and thus minimize the bias associated with retrospective recall (Podsakoff et al. 2003). A total of 45 questionnaires were collected and the demographic profile was elaborated using Google modules.

### 3.5 Population and Sample

A total amount of 45 questionnaires were conducted with a purposive sample of multinational travellers, .

| <b>Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents Sample (N = 45)</b> |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Demographics (percentage)</b>                                   | <b>Percentage/number cases</b> |
| <b>Gender</b>  |                                |
| Male   | 42,2%                          |
| Female   | 53,3%                          |
| Not Specified  | 4,4%                           |
| <b>Age (cases)</b>   |                                |
| 30 and younger   | 7                              |
| 31-40  | 15                             |
| 41-50  | 6                              |
| 51-60  | 6                              |
| 61 and older   | 11                             |
| <b>Nationality (cases)</b>   |                                |
| Europe   | 28                             |
| United States  | 12                             |
| Other Nations  | 4                              |
| <b>Number of past similar experience (cases)</b>                   |                                |
| No previous  | 26                             |
| 1-2 times  | 9                              |
| 3-4 times  | 6                              |
| More than 4 times  | 4                              |
| <b>Travel companion (cases)</b>                                    |                                |
| Family   | 15                             |
| Partner  | 12                             |
| Friends  | 1                              |
| Alone  | 0                              |

*Table 2 Demographic composition of population*

The amount of data collected through the various methods was elaborated using Google modules to select the material that best matches the theme chosen for this study and have a clear interpretation of the phenomenon and the findings obtained.

The target population of the present study was guests, mainly families and couples of different nationalities and the reason for selecting as much different nationality interviews find bases in better understanding of points of view radically different due cultural background. Each cluster of 15 guests was taken every month for the three months' period of survey. The semi-structured interviews, made of five questions, were taken before the questionnaire, in order to prove the relationship between the experience lived by the guests and the premise of my research.

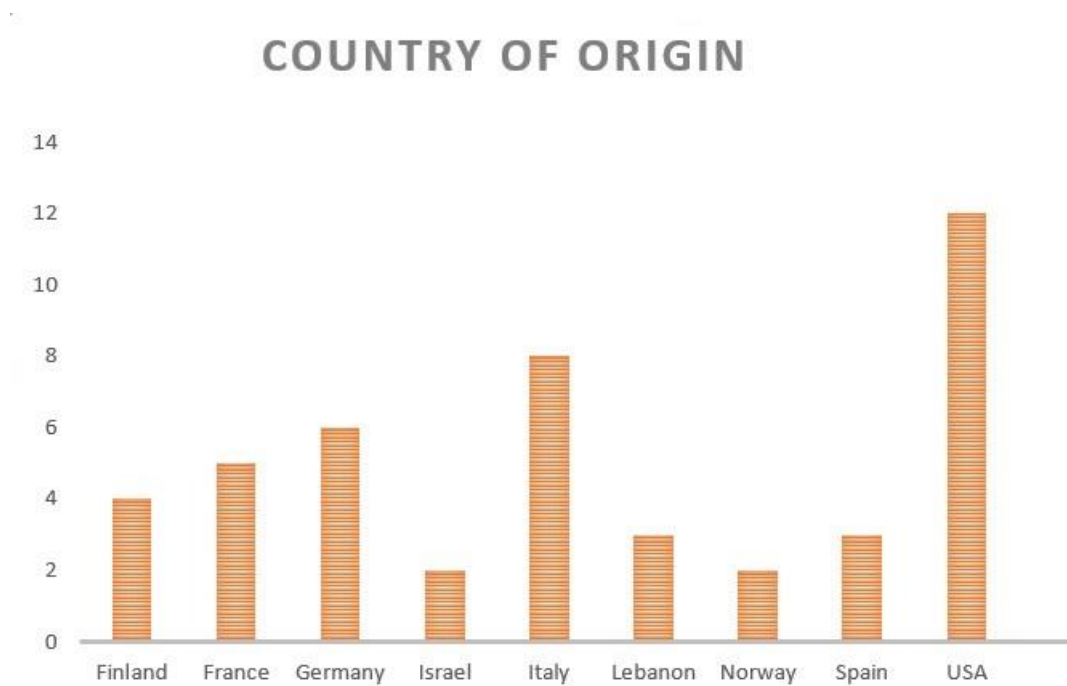
One of the most commonly used criteria to define the elements common to the various qualitative approaches refers to data analysis procedures used: qualitative research would adopt analytical procedures that do not presuppose the transformation of the phenomena studied into numbers (i.e. their quantification) and their statistical treatment, but rather more informal procedures, which rely on to the researcher's analytical skills and resources, such as conceptualization.

To cite the best-known definition in literature written by Denzin and Lincoln (1994 p.2), who describe the qualitative research such as “*that type of research that adopts a naturalistic approach towards its object of investigation, studying phenomena in their natural contexts, trying to make sense of them, or to interpret them, in terms of the meaning that people give them*”. It should be noted that the qualitative approaches are not recent in the social sciences, even though they have established themselves above all in the last few years three decades, after a period that saw them occupy a position often marginal. The testimonies of what some sociologists have defined "qualitative revolution", are visible in the increase of publications on qualitative methods in the past decade, in the increasingly favourable reception that qualitative research finds in scientific journals, and in the development of a wide range of software with support functions for various types of analysis.

## Chapter 4 . RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## 4.1 Analysis of Responses

The data are elaborated following the abovementioned Pine & Gilmore (1998) four sphere that take place in the customer's experience (entertainment, education, Esthetic and escapism) during their stay in Dalabelos Estate in a total number of 45 questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.



Most of the guests were from the United States, followed by Italy and Germany. Only two guests from Israel and Norway.

Some experiences of consumption directly affect the tourism experience, and the feelings found in the literature of memorable tourism experiences include joy, pleasure, sociability, guilt, irritation, and concern (Kim & Ritchie, 2014).

Many of the samples taken under observation, thanks to five questions that were carried out during their tourist experience lived within the structure or in the areas adjacent to it (archaeological sites, rural villages with a high level of craftsmanship) expressed positive outcomes experienced precisely from the point of view of emotional domination.

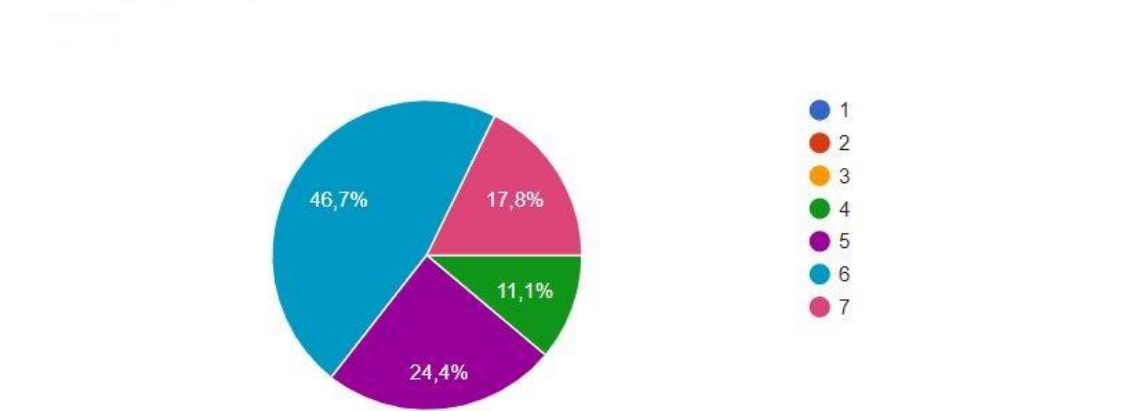
In the elaboration of data acquired, in fact, about 83% of the samples expressed a high level of emotional stimulation, due to the combination of various factors present within their cultural experience. Above all them, the possibility they had to interact with

locals, who proved to be very welcoming and prepared for the reception of foreigners, and the interaction within the Dalabelos structure with other tourists that shared the same cultural experience.

Obviously, the emphasis of this Affective Domain is closely correlated with the Cognitive Domain already analysed in the previous points, creating a general sense of satisfaction and uniqueness of the local tourist experience, as expressed in the related question of the questionnaire:

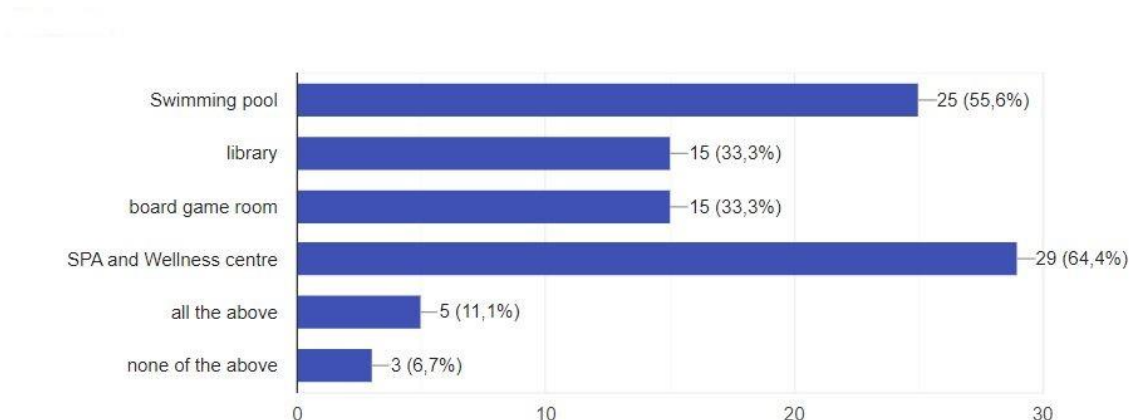
**Overall satisfaction** (1 = extremely dissatisfied 7= extremely satisfied)

How would you define the overall quality of the experience? (1 = extremely dissatisfied 7= extremely satisfied)

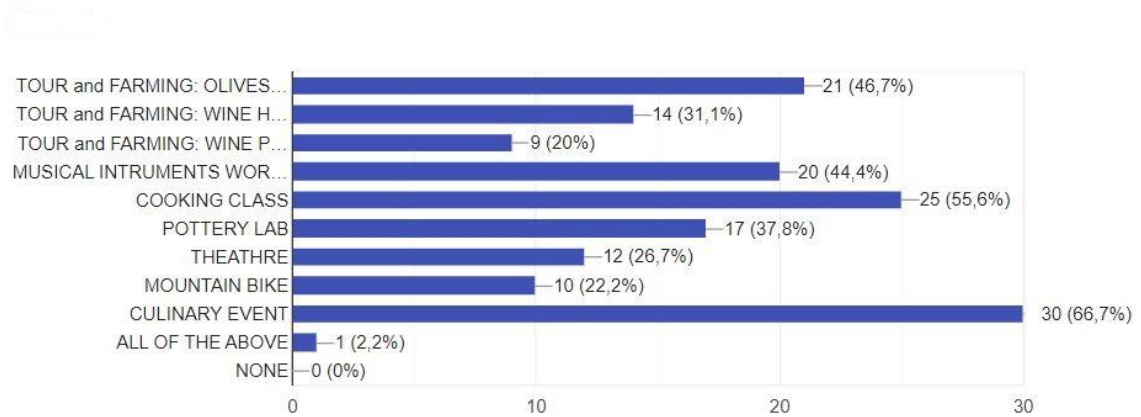


Almost the half of the questionnaires (46,7%) gave 6 on a scale of 7 proving the quality of the offer and the added value by the facilities and the services, as explained by the following two graphics:

Wich facility did you use?



Wich Dalabelos Estate service did you have?



The graphs above move differentiated across two axes, the customer's level of participation and the customer's connection with the environment or surroundings. Every guest had at least one activity and a small percentage had all of them. This shows that involving and surrounding are crucial in the creation of a memorable event and making the difference among competitors in the area.

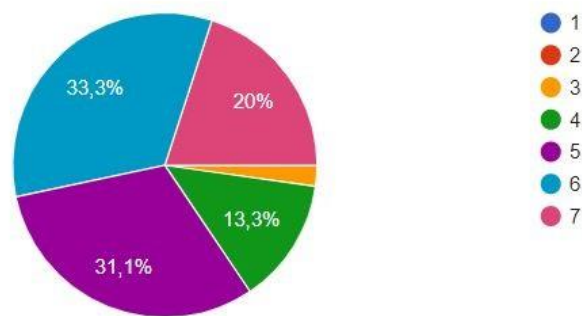
### Quantitative analysis:

The four dimensions were analysed by a questionnaire divided in different section. The first dimension is *entertainment*, which is developed when passive absorption is observed by the customer participating passively to a performance, for instance, watching a musical concert of Cretan instruments or a performance of local dance. Entertainment had a strong and significant effect in two of the models. This variable had the greatest effect both on memory and on revisit intentions through memory, both times around twice the magnitude of its nearest rival, escapism.

***Entertainment*** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

The Dalabelos Estate activities were amusing (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

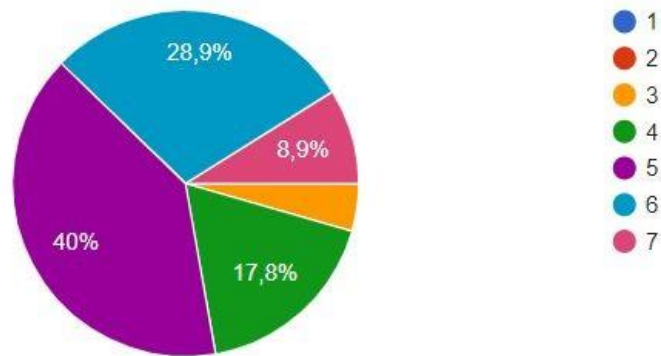
Figure 10



Amuse and captivate guest's interest means make the experience memorable. Entertainment is usually a passive activity; at Dalabelos Estate customers are involved in the activities, from cooking classes to Cretan musical instruments workshop.

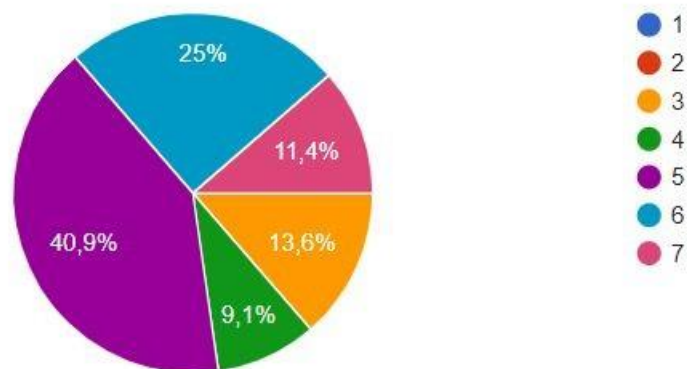
The entertainment was captivating (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 2



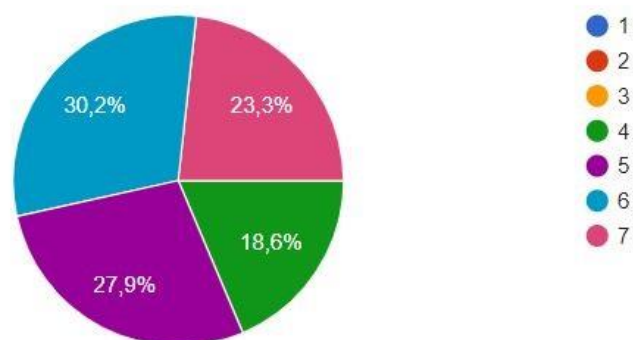
The activities were entertaining (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 3



Activities in Dalabelos Estate were fun(1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 4

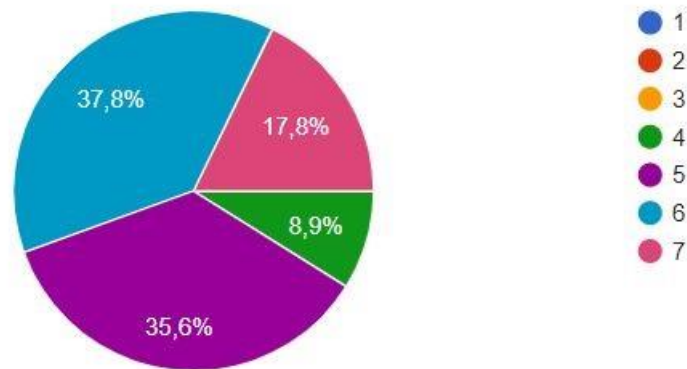


All the four graphs show that the formula adopted to get a high rank on this sphere of experiencing was successful. No answer was below 4/7 and almost 25% gave a full 7 evaluations.

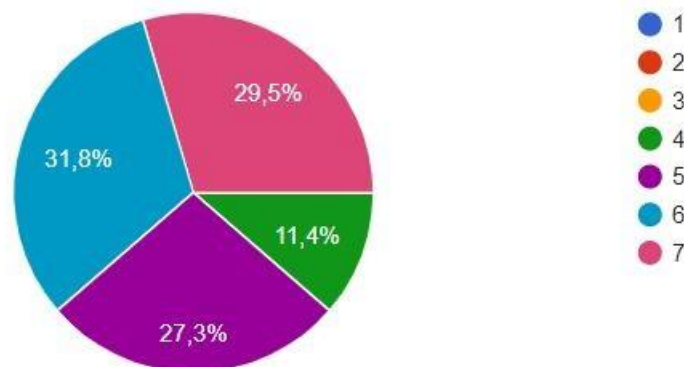
**Esthetics** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

The second dimension is *Esthetic*, where the customer has a passive participation and immersion in the experience such as Design Hotel experience, iconic landscapes (*Servicescape*) or in arrangements of Art exposure that stimulate human senses. Esthetic experiences had a significant impact on the mediating variable in all three models: arousal, memory and satisfaction, respectively. Furthermore, in the models mediated by arousal and satisfaction, Esthetic experiences had a significant total impact on revisit intentions, although this was not the case with respect to the model mediated by memory.

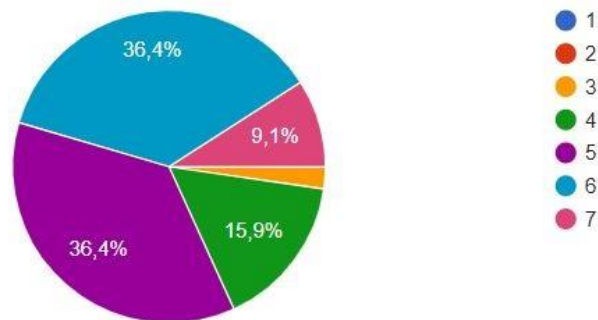
It was pleasant just being here (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



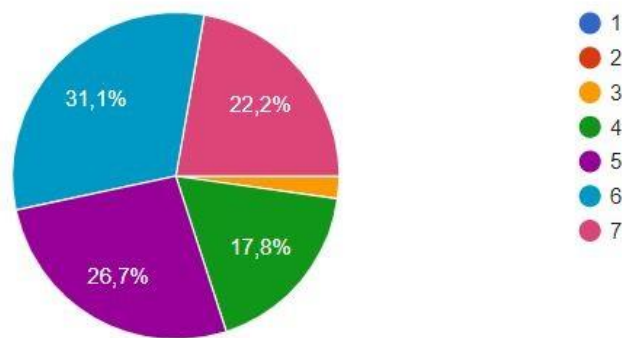
I felt a real sense of harmony (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



The setting of the Dalabelos Estate was attractive (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



The setting of the Dalabelos Estate pays close attention to design details (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

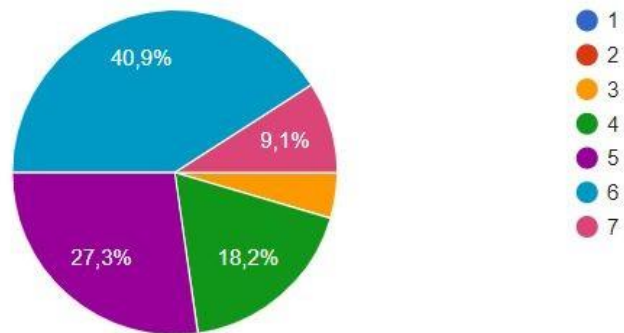


**Education** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

The third dimension is *education*, which refers to an experience where the participant actively participates but is in absorption such as snorkelling, scuba diving or ski-schools. Education did not have a significant influence on the mediating variables of memory, arousal or satisfaction in any of the three models estimated; nor was its influence significant in terms of revisit intentions in any of the three models. This suggests that visitors tend to value the stories they encounter as they move through the labyrinth not for their educational content but for other features, such as their spectacle, entertainment value and possibly as a vehicle for escapism.

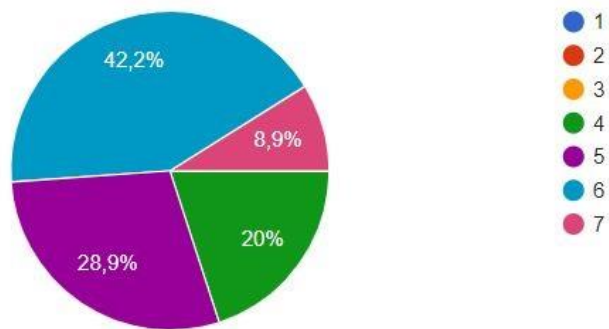
I learnt a lot during this experience (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 27



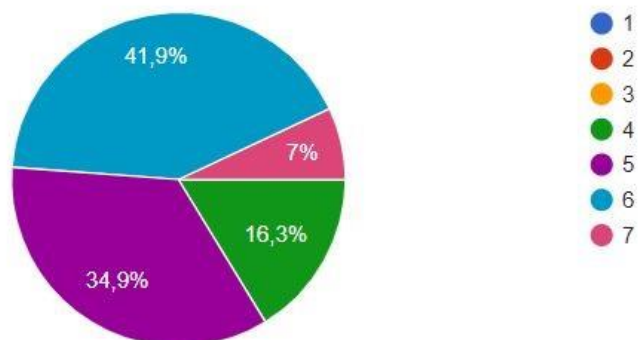
The experience made me more knowledgeable (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 28

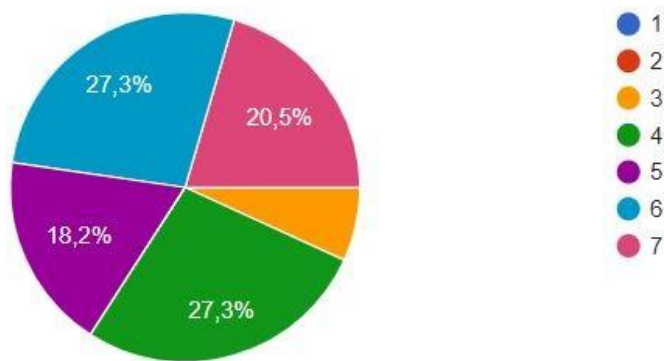


It was a real learning experience (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

Figure 29



It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things



The fourth and the last dimension is *escapism* which happens when the participant is affecting the actual performances becoming itself part of the experience, the co-creation of added value providing benefits in both way, participant, and organizer.

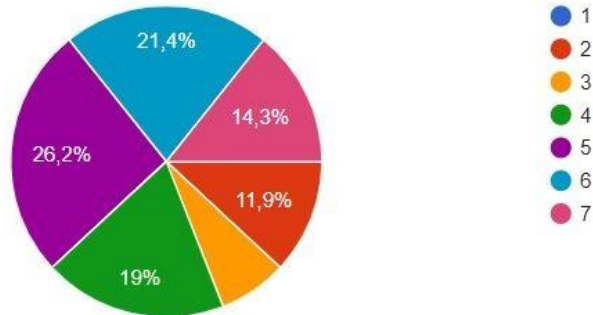
This experience realm, escapism, had the lowest coefficients when arousal and satisfaction were the mediating variables and only the second highest coefficient when memory was the mediating variable (entertainment had almost twice the effect). Escapism did have a significant effect, however, both with regard to memory and on revisit intentions through the mediation of memory.

As such, it might be argued that escapism is a secondary factor in terms of making memorable experiences. This is because it has a small but significant effect on memory, and the effect of memory in turn has a significant effect on revisit intentions. This effect is the weakest in size of any of the three models.

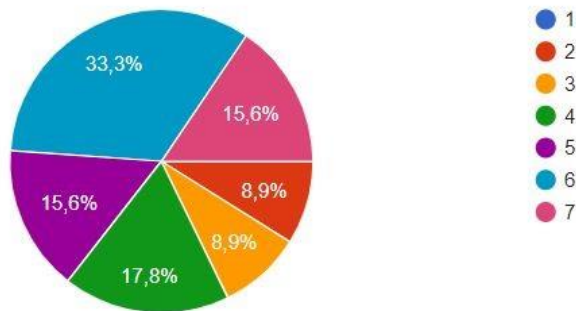
This finding finds support in abovementioned Hosany and Witham (2010), who found escapism to be the least influential of the four experience realms, it being only significant in predicting overall perceived quality; Escapism examples are like hiking experience in the outback of Crete or best recognizable role in a play.

**Escapism** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

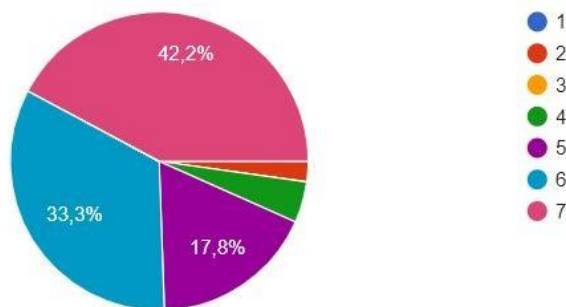
I felt I played a different character here (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



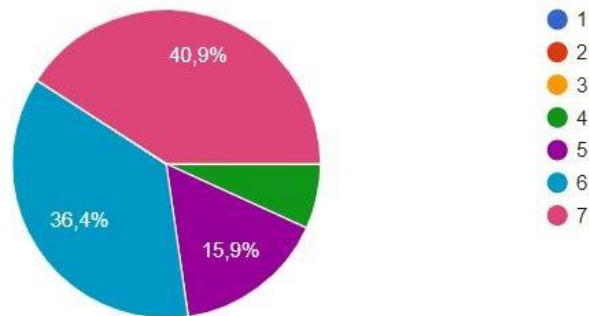
The experience let me imagine being someone else (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



I completely escaped from my daily routine (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



I felt like I was in a different time or place (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



From the questionnaires and the questions is clear that this dimension is a strength point of Dalabelos Estate. More than 40% of the answers gave a 7-point rate, showing how effective is the combination of events and experiences for the perception of “ escape from routine” and “being in a different time or place”.

While commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, experiences are addressed as memorable (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Memorable is pointed out as a distinctive and essential characteristic for experiences.

In both the definition by Poulsson & Kale (2004 p.267)

*“an engaging act of co-creation between a provider and a consumer, wherein the consumer perceives value in the encounter and in the subsequent memory of that encounter”*

also in Tarssanen & Kylänen, (2006, p.130)

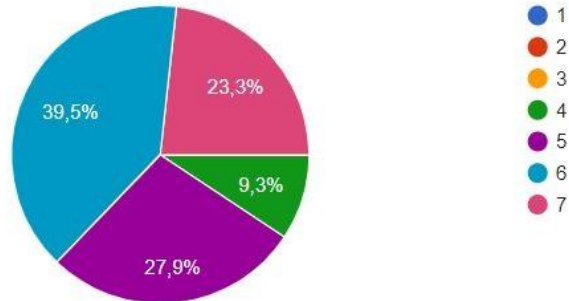
*“a multisensoral, memorable, positive and comprehensive emotional experience that can lead to personal change of a subject person”*

and by Pine & Gilmore (1999)

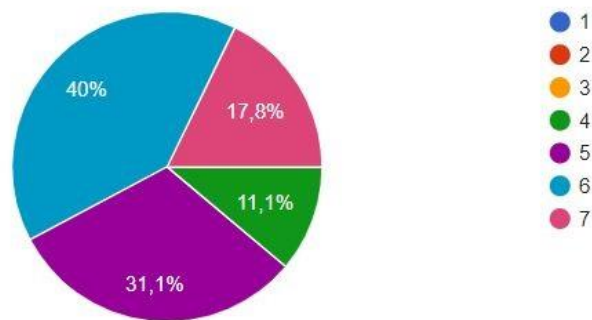
*“experiences are memorable, rich in sensations created within the customer who have been engaged on emotional, physical, intellectual and even spiritual level”* the element memorable is to be found. It is also stated that a vital competence needed of an experience provider is the one to create memorable events. The three questions about memory gave us a clear image of how effective was the combination of commodities and services for the costumers.

## Memory

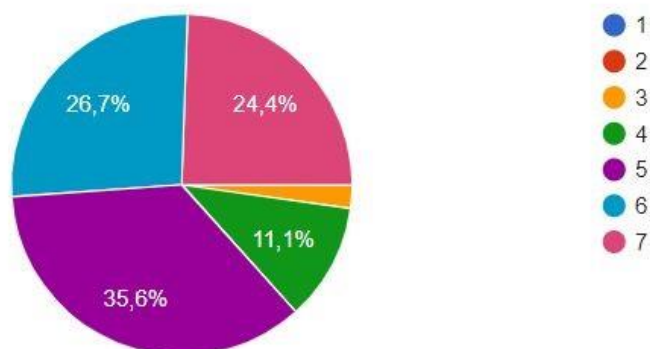
I will have wonderful memories about this experience (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



I will remember many positive things about this experience (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)



I won't forget my experience at Dalabelos Estate (1 = not at all and 7 = very much)



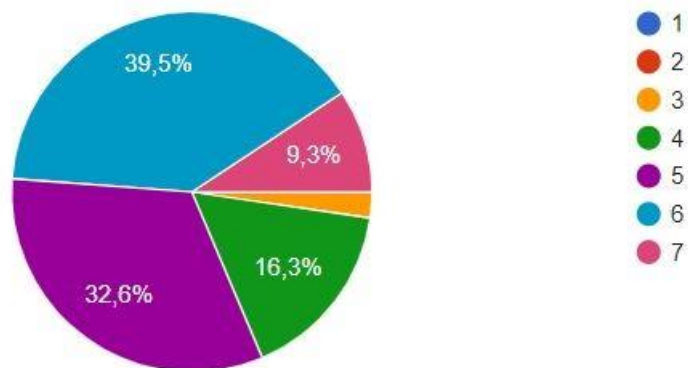
There's no 1-point or 2-point evaluation and the 6 and 7-point evaluation is over 50% of the answers. The goal of Dalabelos Estate has been gained thanks to a combination of Services and events that made this experience memorable.

Arousal and satisfaction have a significant total impact on revisit intentions Oh et al.'s (2007) study on experiences showed the prominent role of esthetics impacting on arousal, memory, overall quality perception, and satisfaction, while the other experience realms did not present any significant impact. Also, there is evidence (see for example Kim, 2012; Mehmetoglu &Engen, 2011) showing that positively arousing tourism experiences can lead to increased satisfaction. It can be easily

**Arousal** c 7-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much

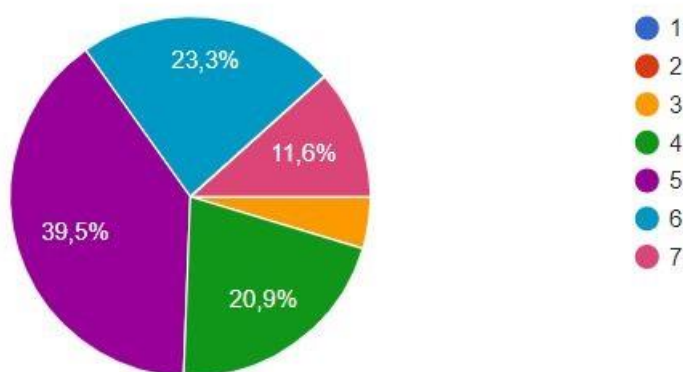
My experience was stimulating (1 = not at all and 7 = very much)

Figure 10



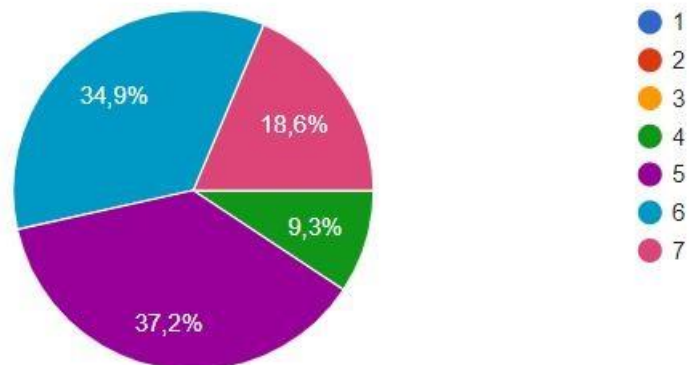
My experience was exciting (1 = not at all and 7 = very much)

Figure 11



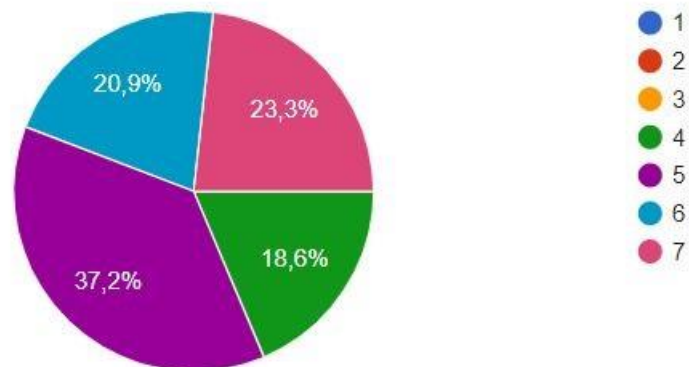
My experience was enjoyable (1 = not at all and 7 = very much)

Results



My experience was interesting (1 = not at all and 7 = very much)

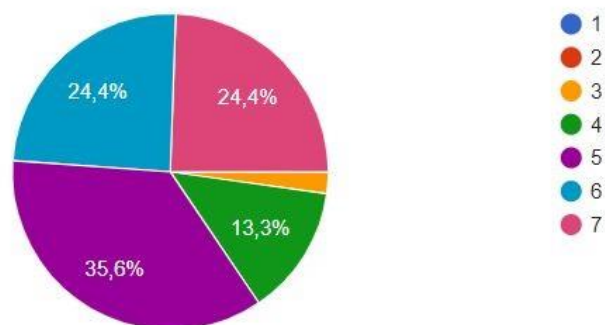
Results



**Overall perceived quality** (7-point scale from 1= Poor to 7 = excellent)

How would you define the experience in Dalabelos Estate? (1 = extremely dissatisfied 7= extremely satisfied)

Results



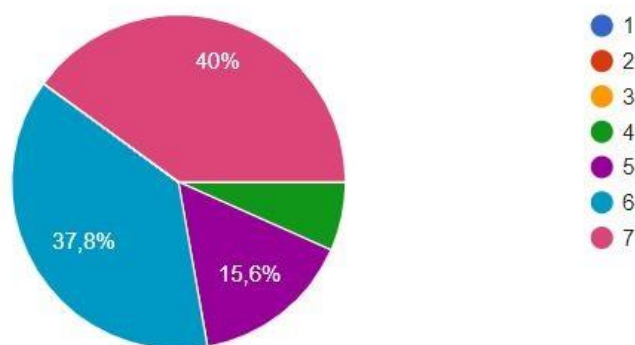
Perceived value is defined as an outcome of overall product or service evaluation against what was sacrificed to obtain the product or service. Although the concept of perceived value can be traced back to pricing literature, the sacrifice a customer makes does not only include monetary transactions but also time and effort. In the tourism-specific context, perceived value is defined as the result of an individual cognitive-affective evaluation of the tourism products or services from the process of tourism consumption based on the benefits against the costs of travel (Peña, A.I.P.; Jamilena, D.M.F.; Molina,

2012). Perceived value is always a vital antecedent in tourist behavioural research, especially in its ability to predict tourist satisfaction and loyalty intentions, connecting this element with the last question of the questionnaire, the intention to recommend.

***Intention to recommend*** (7-point scale, where 1 = Extremely unlikely and 7 = extremely likely)

This is one of the most important question for the Dalabelos management; their focus on making a high-rank quotation based on feedback is the summarize of the effort put to create a local culture tourism experience.

Would recommend Dalabelos Estate? (1 = extremely unlikely or 7 = extremely likely)



## Qualitative analysis:

Due to the Covid-Sars emergency and the following restrictions most of the transcriptions were lost. Nevertheless, the following answers give an additional value to the results obtained from the questionnaires.

The five questions try to connect the different aspects of experience tourism and the dimensions mentioned above that move differentiated across two axes, the customer's level of participation and the customer's connection with the environment or surroundings. The customer's participation varies between active and passive participation, depending on the activity they had.

### **Q 1: "When you booked this property, were you aware to stay in a rural area?"**

- + *Yes, we were aware of coming to the rural area of Crete, thanks to the advice of our friends who were last year, it was strongly recommended to us (Interview 32)*
  
- + *Yes, we checked the website of the Estate in order to figure out the activities it offers (Interview 8)*
  
- + *Not really, I being traveling around the islands here in Greece, then when I arrived in Rethymno I found out this rural area (Interview 23)*
  
- + *Our travel agency offered us an itinerary that offered a complete package with typical culinary activities and excursions in the Cretan hinterland, we were aware of the Dalabelos before we left for our vacation (Interview 17)*
  
- + *My partner wanted to surprise me by keeping the destination hidden from me until the day of check-in it was truly a wonderful surprise, the place is truly suggestive [...] (Interview 20)*

### **Q 2: "Have you ever had a vacation like this before?"**

- + *Honestly we have never been on holiday in such natural areas, being our first time in Europe we decided to focus more on the Mediterranean area (Interview 11)*

- + *Yes, I have preferred this type of travel for a few years now [...] (Interview 3)*
- + *We have had other experiences in rural areas, not in Greece but always in southern Europe (Interview 43)*
- + *Not exactly, but it was a nice surprise to find yourself lost surrounded by small villages (Interview 21)*
- + *Yes I have had other rural experiences, but the combination of this resort with the immersion in Cretan nature is truly something unique (Interview 14)*

**Q3: "How significant is it for you to have undertaken this journey?"**

- + *I need to disconnect from work once a year, I am not a lover of chaos, when I can I prefer to come to relaxing places like this [...] (Interview 4)*
- + *Very very much! the whole family loves coming to Dalabelos, it's not the first time we come to this place (Interview 45)*
- + *We also come from a very similar island, for us it is perfect to spend 1 week in the summer between the sea and Greek cuisine (Interview 17)*
- + *Believe me, this is what I needed, I feel invigorated having spent almost a week here [...] (Interview 19)*

**Q4: "How did the culture and the locals seem to you?"**

- + *[...] it was truly wonderful to immerse yourself in cultural activities and visit the neighbouring villages (Interview 21)*
- + *we had a more than positive experience with the local people, we were impressed by the level of hospitality they provided us (Interview 27)*
- + *I can't complain about the people I met, the Greek culture has always been one of my favourites [...] I especially love the food and the hospitality that you have in these little hidden places inside the island (Interview 5)*

- + *I spent some beautiful days with my family in this incredible place, we come from a different cultural background, finding ourselves making friends with these people in such a natural way was fantastic (Interview 37)*

**Q5: "Did you get to know the other customers of the structure?"**

- + *Mh, no, I didn't have the opportunity. I was here on vacation with my girlfriend for only 3 days, we preferred to have some privacy [...] (Interview 40)*
- + *it was incredible, we took the farm tour together with other guests of the structure, we had the opportunity to meet wonderful families, we even shared a dinner with a table of 10 people! (Interview 38)*
- + *we met an Italian couple during our stay at Dalabelos [...] it was nice to meet them over the weekend (Interview 23)*
- + *We arrived on Friday afternoon, already in the evening during dinner we got to know the other guests of the structure, it was really simple but above all gratifying (Interview 1)*

The five questions above link all the questionnaire goals showing that all the efforts to create a unique and memorable experience was successful. Important elements for enhancing the uniqueness of the rural environment should be considered. These elements act as the primary attractions for visitors. Researchers found that activities while visiting are essential to the overall enjoyment, especially activities that tourists are physically involved in, which are found to leave longer and vivid memories. Previous studies found that tasting the local cuisine, participating in local cultural events, imitating local lifestyle, and adventure activities are among the most highly-rated activities among rural tourists (Kim, J.-H, 2014). Learning and self-improvement are also found to be highlights of rural tours. The opportunity for visitors to learn something new, such as farming methods, modern agricultural science, and technologies, can also contribute to the perceived quality. Communication and social bonding with locals help to engage and integrate visitors with the local communities during a trip. Thus, it can help form a deeper sense of belonging that is important for positive post-visit intentions.

Lastly, rural handicrafts and agricultural products are perceived to be of better value and higher quality at rural locations. Therefore, a pleasant shopping experience for handicrafts and agricultural products can contribute to tourism quality (Kim, J.-H, 2014).

## 4.2 Discussion

Although the study enhances our knowledge of the experiential concept in tourism, it entails some limitations. The study findings are limited to one three-months period and data were collected at a specific time of the year (Summer). Studying at different times of the year, on different waves of arrivals would increase the generalizability of the results. In addition, while respondents were representative in terms of the demographic profile of the guests, the sample size was relatively small. Consequently, findings cannot be generalized to the wider tourist on Crete island. Future research could look at the validity of the experience construct in other service contexts, for instance, package holidays. Moreover, while Pine and Gilmore (1999) as well as Schmitt (2003) emphasize the importance of understanding consumer experiences, their causes have yet to be empirically proven. An area of future research would be the identification of the antecedents of positive and negative experiences. For example, qualitative studies could investigate why some tourists value certain experience dimensions more than others. In this project, the likely impact of Delabelos' service employees' behaviour experiences were not taken into consideration. Delabelos Estate have high staff–guest ratios and the levels of contact between guests and employees are more prolonged. Consequently, this condition offers greater opportunities for interactions (Gibson 2008) and thus might considerably influence guests' overall experiences. Indeed, previous research has established that consumer evaluations of service employees can positively and/or negatively affect perceptions of quality, patronage intentions, and overall evaluation of the service experience (e.g., Sundaram and Webster 2000). Future research could investigate the role of customer contact employees in crafting tourists' experiences. Although our findings indicate that the level of arousal is related to guests' experiences, this study did not investigate the mechanisms of how these experiences can elicit other emotions, such as joy, pleasure, and love. Emotions evoked during the consumption experience influence satisfaction judgements (e.g., del Bosque and Martin 2008), perceived service quality (e.g., Jiang and Wang 2006), and behavioural intentions (e.g., Bigné, Mattila, and Andreu 2008). Additional studies should investigate the effects of experiences (e.g., entertainment) on tourists' emotional states (e.g., arousal and pleasure) and how in turn the latter interact to determine satisfaction levels and behavioral intentions. Furthermore, this study did not take into account the effects of customer (tourist) involvement on the evaluation of overall experiences, satisfaction,

and intention to recommend. The degree of involvement during consumption directly affects the quality of the perceived experience. The concept of involvement plays a significant role in explaining consumer behaviour (Broderic and Mueller 1999). Customer involvement is defined as the level of importance and/or relevance a customer attributes to an object, an action, or an activity and the enthusiasm and interest they can generate (Goldsmith and Emmert 1991). The involvement construct has been applied in various tourism and leisure studies to examine how people engage and participate in different aspects of the consumption process (e.g., Gursoy and Gavcar 2003). According to Pine and Gilmore (1998), escapism and education require active participation, such that consumers play a key role in determining their overall experience. Results indicate that education and escapism dimensions were not significantly related to satisfaction and intention to recommend. Thus, it is possible that tourist involvement might have influenced the magnitude of the relationship between guests' experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. Future research should replicate the study at different levels of involvement (e.g., high and low). Finally, our research has sought to understand the dimensions of tourists' experiences using an existing measurement model. Future studies could develop other items to capture other attributes and aspects of this kind of experience.

## Chapter 5 . CONCLUSION

The initially stated overarching aim of this research was to identify the outcomes that this type of phenomenon can bring to customers involved in this experience, the search for the added value that a local cultural experience is capable to give to the tourist thanks to the combination of cultural activities and the rural/cultural tourism organization present near the analysed touristic structure.

While recognising the analysis limitations, is believed a positive achievement of the topic studied in this internship report.

The theory developed and tested is an outcome matured on research and application on this case studied; this has highlighted important contextual factors, in particular the relation between local tourism experience and the outcome brought to consumer.

It has been identified how important is the relationship between factors as experience economy, MTE and local tourism in order to increase the level of perceived customer's satisfaction, including the identification of several features responsible for this result.

This study lead to specific outcomes about improving the quality of customer satisfaction; However, an overall positivity of feedback received during data collection reported on methodology applied has been identified.

Data collection was conducted by interviews performed to hosts of the tourist structure. Data elaboration of the questionnaires allowed to find a logical connection within all the interviews, leading to the creation of main themes where to place the perceived added values during the experience, they explain how important this cultural sector is within the tourism market.

The experience has led to results related to the sphere of personal growth due to the different vision obtained during contact with a different culture (open-mindedness is mentioned in the interviews), this was also possible thanks to social interactions with different people at the inside the Dalabelos structure, therefore a comparison between tourists from different nationals who found themselves carrying out the same tourist and cultural experience.

Suggestive archaeological sites and natural wonders present on Crete Island have led to an unexpected positive experience for many samples analysed due to the unconsciousness of the presence of certain sites in surrounding area.

It is therefore possible to define that the local cultural tourism, in continuous growth, is a source of enrichment for the possible tourist experiences that can be lived, enriching the personal cultural background, leading to personal growth and as regards the economic sphere of the region, a more equitable distribution of monetary resources deriving from the tourism sector.

## 5.1 Summary

The collection of fundamental data for the purpose of this research was carried out following a defined criterion, in particular the various interviews and the questionnaires were carried out over a total period of 3 months, defined as seasonal months due to the high tourist influx that occurs during the summer on the island of Crete.

The interviews were conducted with samples mainly from the European continent, and a minority from the US, it was not possible to collect interviews from different parts of the world due to the lack of tourist flow to this destination.

The selection of interviews from families and young couples who stayed overnight in the facility for more than 3 days was privileged, in order to have a better quality of data taking into account the phenomenon studied.

## 5.2 Perspective and Future Research

There are a number of gaps in the research regarding the knowledge of the involvement of the full tourism experience that stem from the findings and would benefit from further research.

It is necessary to work using a collection of samples that includes a wider range in terms of origin of tourists including - where it is possible - opinions deriving from tourists who have a cultural background completely different, investigate tourist samples beyond the limits of this research, also taking into consideration different age groups and family status, in order to make a more accurate result by filling in the gaps in this report.

Would also be helpful to capture qualitatively the experiences and perspectives of research partners who have had mixed or negative experiences, since they may be less likely than enthusiasts to volunteer to participate in studies of involvement in research such as this one. Similarly, further research might explore the (relatively rare) experiences of marginalized and seldom-heard groups involved in research.

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## Appendix A: Questionnaire

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Education** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

I learnt a lot during this cruise

The experience made me more knowledgeable

It was a real learning experience

It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things

**Entertainment** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

The Dalabelos Estate activities were amusing

The entertainment was captivating

The activities were entertaining

Activities in Dalabelos Estate were fun

**Esthetics** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

The setting of the Dalabelos Estate was attractive

The setting of the Dalabelos Estate pays close attention to design details

It was pleasant just being here

I felt a real sense of harmony

**Escapism** (7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree)

I felt I played a different character here

The experience let me imagine being someone else

I completely escaped from my daily routine

I felt like I was in a different time or place

**Memory**

I will have wonderful memories about this experience

I won't forget my experience at Dalabelos Estate

I will remember many positive things about this experience

**Arousal** (7-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 7 = very much)

My experience was stimulating

My experience was exciting

My experience was enjoyable

My experience was interesting

**Overall perceived quality** (7-point scale from 1= Poor to 7 = excellent)

How would you define the overall quality of the experience?

**Overall satisfaction** (1 = extremely dissatisfied 7= extremely satisfied)

How would you define the experience in Dalabelos Estate?

**Intention to recommend** (7-point scale, where 1 = Extremely unlikely and 7 = extremely likely)

Would recommend Dalabelos Estate?

### QUESTIONS:

*"When you booked this property, were you aware to stay in a rural area?"*

*"Have you ever had a vacation like this before?"*

*"How significant is it for you to have undertaken this journey?"*

*"How did the culture and the locals seem to you?"*

*"Did you get to know the other customers of the structure?"*

## Appendix B: Additional Tables

Annexes A - The four dimensions of an Experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 30).

