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Title
Crafting the Wine and the Cider Routes in Quebec: Exportations in Action Conceptualizations among Stakeholders

I want to submit an abstract for:
Conference Presentation

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Research Question
What are the stakeholders' representations held about initiatives underlying the definition of the vision, mission, and strategy of the Wine Route and of the Cider Route in Quebec?

Methods
Group Concept Mapping, a mixed methods-based approach, in which participants (i.e. wine and cider makers, tourism professionals) engage in representation identification, and in strategic action prioritization.

Results
Spatial analysis of all three stakeholders of the wine and cider routes to display matching patterns, and initiative go-zones to report on perception measures of importance and feasibility ratings.

Abstract
Oenotourism has often been introduced and studied as a lever of regional economic development (Peris-Ortiz, de la Cruz Del Río Rama, & Rueda-Armengot, 2016). Yet, a productive collaborative process among stakeholders of oenotourim or agritourism routes and trails remains an important hurdle in the way of optimizing this opportunity (Brás, Costa, & Buhalis, 2010; Brunori & Rossi, 2000; Cloutier et al., 2016).

As can be observed from available trend data, the situation is not different regarding the Wine Route and the Cider Route of the Monteregie region of Québec, Canada. For both of these routes, there are a number of impinging challenges. Although these challenges are related to the current collaborative process, there is also an opportunity for stakeholders of the Wine Route and the Cider Route to redefine their respective purpose. Hence, the need for a process by which the mission, vision and strategy for both routes could be re-established for these agrotourism

theme routes to act again as engines of regional economic development.

Thus, the objective of this study is to identify and prioritize the set of initiatives to be undertaken by the stakeholders (e.g., wine makers and tourism association; cider markers and tourism association, and tourism professionals) to update the mission, vision, and strategy of the Wine Route and of the Cider Route as two case units. Thus, as such, the relevance is not about contrasting respective trajectories or trends between cases, but rather comparing participants' representations of each case in similar yet distinct systemic circumstances.

To meet the research objective, the group concept mapping (GCM) approach is used as methodological foundations. The GCM is a multivariate mixed methods-based approach (qualitative and quantitative), employed to sort and to prioritize decision-making-oriented statements by research participants evolving in complex systems (Kane & Trochim, 2007). The GCM is a bottom-up participative and facilitated process by which a group of participants is engaged to produce a shared conceptual framework representation based on multivariate statistical analyses (Kane & Trochim, 2007; Rosas & Kane, 2012). The data, information, and knowledge distributed among participants in a group are shared as part of the integrated facilitated process (Rosas, 2016).

The primary research question answered is: What are representations and perceptions held of key initiatives underlying the definition of the vision, mission, and strategy by the stakeholders of the Wine Route and of the Cider Route of the Monteregie in Quebec? Once the representations are estimated and the perception measured, the secondary research question is: How are the representations and perceptions similar and different among stakeholders?

Prior to and in preparation for implementing the steps of the GCM approach, a series of eleven in-depth semi-directed interviews have been conducted with stakeholders of the two routes (three were conducted with representatives of the tourism association in three separate sessions; two were held to collect qualitative data on the Cider Route and on the Wine Route; and one interview was to confront results of the analyses with representative perspectives to ensure results' external validity). The researchers were provided with internal documents related to the management of the routes from the tourism association, and in addition, a series of web-data was independently collected and analyzed to better understand the discourse about the routes from bloggers, researchers, and visitors.

The GCM methodological framework as applied in this study comprises seven steps which imply generating a concept maps as part of a fully integrated research design. To summarize, the first step comprises four facilitated group discussions: members of the Wine Route, members of the cider route, tourism professionals, and visitors.

The second step is an iterative process involving the researchers and members of the steering committees. The ideas collected from the group discussion are formalized and structured into a final list of statements of initiatives to be undertaken.

The third step is the data structuring process and it involves a larger group of participants who are asked individually, using a set of specific instructions, to sort the statements into piles of themes that are related based on a logic that makes sense to them. The participants are also asked to rate each statement using a five-point Likert-type scale for the perceived relative 'importance' and 'feasibility' of each one. In total 16 tourism professionals and 15 winemakers and cidermakers participated into the process.

At the fourth step, a total similarity matrix of the individual participants' binary sort matrix of the mixed data collected from the piles of sorted statements is used to estimate the (x, y) coordinates of the statements on the concept map using multidimensional scaling analysis (MDS) (Kruskal & Wish, 1978). At the fifth step, the results from the cluster analyses (Everitt et al., 2011) are discussed among members of the respective steering committees for each route, and a facilitated group discussion takes place to identify the number of clusters to be retained on each concept maps. At the end of the process, the steering committees debrief on the concept maps.

Sixth, the latent constructs based on the results of the MDS will be identified, analyzed and contrasted to highlight the generating mechanisms within the quadrants of the regions of meaning from the concept maps. The accumulation of the cluster mapping results from the two cases will allow for a synthesis regarding the generating

mechanisms. While the approach used at steps one to five of the GCM method is mainly based on inductive inference, in GCM, the sensemaking (Weick et al., 2005) part of it, which consists in interpreting the results, involves a retroductive (or abductive) inference process which consists in generalizing the results based on available knowledge, literature and participants' experience.

Seventh, a second group discussion open to participants of the Wine Route and of the Cider Route GCM processes takes place to examine the consensus measures, and the research questions are analyzed and answered.

The results have identified eight (8) main concepts to support the crafting of a renewed vision, missions and strategy for the Wine Route and the Cider Route of the Monteregie region. These include: (1) the collaboration in between the route stakeholders; (2) the routes management process, (3) the promotion and media strategy, (4) the promotion actions, (5) the competence development in agrotourism, (6) the governance of the routes, (7) the visitor experience offer, and (8) the strategy and positioning of the routes. A discussion on economic-oriented tourism policy implications is outlined.

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