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ANALYZING ZEN-C TOURIST ENGAGEMENT AND WINE TOURISM GROWTH AT SULA VINEYARDS AFTER THE PANDEMIC

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SUMMARY

This study analyzes the influence of Zen-C tourist engagement, a behavioral framework combining mindful, wellness-oriented travel preferences (Zen Factor) with post-pandemic safety and mobility adjustments (C Factor), on wine tourism growth at Sula Vineyards, India. Employing a quantitative cross-sectional design, primary data were collected via a structured survey from 285 domestic tourists who participated in vineyard activities. The relationships between the Zen-C constructs and tourism growth outcomes were evaluated using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The visitor base was mainly young and middle-to-high income bracket professionals (25-44 years) in middle and mid-career. The largest percentage of 75.4% of the people used personal vehicles, which showed that they mostly preferred regional staycations. Analysis with PLS-SEM proved that the Zen Factor ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$) and C Factor ($\beta = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$) have a very high degree of influence on destination loyalty and readiness to pay a premium. These constructs together contribute to 58.4% variability in the outcome of tourism growth ($R2 = 0.584$), and the model fit measures are high (SRMR = 0.061). The contemporary tourists of the viticulture industry require a combination of the psychological rewards of mindfulness, nature, and sustainability with the practical opportunities of hygiene and the drive to places. The factual confirmation of the Zen-C model underscores the business imperative of agritourism participants to have a strategic approach involving the inclusion of both wellness and safety attributes to appeal to the core post-pandemic markets.

Key words: *zen-C framework, wine tourism, post-pandemic travel, sustainable tourism, PLS-SEM.*

INTRODUCTION

The world tourism has witnessed a drastic change following the COVID-19 pandemic. The destinations and experiences preferred by tourists have been redefined due to travel limitations, health, and shifting consumer lifestyles. Among the most telling behavior changes, one must mention the introduction of the Zen-C tourist behavior, as it is an expression of both mindful and wellness-seeking travel behavior (Zen) as well as post-pandemic behavioral change (C) [1][2]. Here, travelers are becoming more interested in peaceful, sustainable, and wellness-oriented experiences, health safety, open spaces, and local travel

experiences, including staycations. Based on this, it shows a new interest in wine tourism, these new types of travel [3]. The vineyards offer nature relaxation, open landscapes, culture, and local cuisine, thus appealing to the tourists. It provides meaning and secure leisure activities. One of the most visited wine tourism destinations in India is the Sula Vineyards particularly after the pandemic [4]. Sula Vineyards in Nashik, in the wine capital of India, provides wine tours, wine tasting, outdoor activities, environmental friendliness, and wellness-based experiences that are very attractive to the new way of Zen-C travel. The increased willingness of tourists to slow tourism, sustainable experiences, and nature -based recreation, which is a direct benefit of wine tourism destinations, has emerged after the pandemic. The incorporation of vineyard landscape, culinary, and local culture, and wellness activities has made wine tourism one of the major components of experiential tourism. Nevertheless, the role of Zen-C behavioral preferences in tourists and their role in the expansion of wine tourism is a relatively new field of research [5].

The main aim of this research is to examine how Zen-C tourist interaction will impact the expansion of wine tourism in Sula Vineyards following the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the proposed study will focus on the following objective: investigating the relationship between mindful travel preferences, sustainability awareness, wellness orientation, and post-pandemic safety considerations and tourist participation, satisfaction, and revisit intentions in vineyard tourism. Also, the research aims at assessing the importance of the Zen-C engagement in sustaining the development of wine tourism destinations.

Though other research has been conducted to find the development of wine tourism, tourist experience, and post-pandemic tourism recovery, few studies have been conducted on the concept of Zen-C tourist engagement and its contribution to tourism demand in vineyard destinations [7]. The idea of Zen-C tourist engagements implies that contemporary tourists are more interested in mindful and sustainable tourist experiences, as well as wellness-related ones, and are also more concerned with safety and open spaces post-COVID-19. Following this view, it is assumed that there is a significant impact of the Zen -C engagement on the interest tourists have in vineyard tourism. Tourists who value mindfulness, relaxation, and wellness activities are more likely to participate in wine tourism experiences such as vineyard tours, wine tasting, and nature-based leisure activities [9]. Furthermore, post-pandemic behavioral changes have increased tourists' preference for destinations that provide open spaces and safe travel environments. These variables will have a beneficial effect on tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions. Also, the sustainability activities and experiential services in the vineyard destinations like the Sula Vineyards could improve the interest of tourists in their destinations and their appeal. Subsequently, it is postulated that the involvement of the Zen-C tourists will have a positive impact on the tourist involvement, satisfaction, and the general development of wine tourism during the post-pandemic era [10].

The study has made a contribution to the tourism and hospitality literature in a number of significant ways. On the one hand, it presents a new concept of Zen-C tourist engagement that is a modern model of interpreting post-pandemic tourism behavior, which incorporates an element of mindfulness, sustainability, wellness, and safety. Second, the research has an empirical contribution to the development of wine tourism, especially in the emerging tourism markets like India, through these behavioral changes. Third, the research presents a viable case study by focusing on Sula Vineyards, which contributes to tourism recovery and sustainable development after the pandemic. Lastly, the results can guide the tourism managers, the vineyard operators, and the policy makers to develop wellness-based, sustainable, and safe tourism experiences that will meet the new expectations of the tourists in the post-COVID travel environment.

This study examines the impact of Zen-C tourist behavior on wine tourism growth at Sula Vineyards. The introduction outlines post-pandemic shifts toward mindfulness, sustainability, and safety-driven travel in Section 1. Section 2, the literature review highlights experiential tourism trends and emerging research gaps in Zen-C engagement. In section 3, a quantitative methodology using survey data and PLS-SEM analysis is applied to assess relationships between Zen and C factors and tourism outcomes. Results confirm significant positive effects on satisfaction, loyalty, and revisit intentions in Section 4. The discussion interprets behavioral shifts toward wellness and safe travel in Section 5. In section 6, the conclusion emphasizes integrating sustainability and safety to enhance tourism growth in Nashik.

LITERATURE SURVEY

The development of the global tourist industry in the post-pandemic period has triggered a significant change in the direction of experiential travel, a more conscious attitude to the human psyche, and environmental awareness. The Zen aspect of contemporary tourism is based on more general Eastern spiritual and mindful traditions of a slow, plunge-like relationship with nature [1][2]. When applied to the viticultural sphere, it means that travelers will be interested in visiting places where they can enjoy both natural scenery and an environmentally friendly environment, and experience [12]. To satisfy these high demands, wineries are more and more integrating the principles of sustainable entrepreneurship and the circular economy into their core business [3][13]. This development reflects a larger shift towards experience-based luxury in which extreme customization and a re-entry into the human-factor traits characterize the high-end tourism product [11].

At the same time, the factor C signifying the behavioral changes as a result of the pandemic has fundamentally changed the logistical tastes of wine tourists. COVID-19 brought significant upheaval, but rural wineries demonstrated remarkable resilience and made use of their natural benefits as an open -space setting and a remote location [19]. Despite lingering uncertainties regarding wine consumption habits post-pandemic [17], empirical evidence indicates a sustained consumer intention to visit wine tourism destinations that can guarantee health security, hygiene, and safe regional accessibility [15][18]. Economic shocks have, therefore, created new business opportunities that enable wine regions to rebrand themselves as safe, wellness retreat locations [4]. It is a strategic adjustment and renaissance of the viticulture in the countryside that is increasingly being recorded in various world settings that necessitate detailed frameworks to chart the global wine tourism system [8][14][16].

This conscious consumption and safe travel nexus in emerging markets is an attractive macroeconomic opportunity [5]. The emerging and fast-evolving culture of food and beverages in India is indicative of the increasing local consumption of localized and high-end gastronomic delights [20]. The viticultural hub of the country, Nashik, is in the process of seeking its path through the intricate urban and cultural changes to absorb this flourishing industry [6]. Therefore, Sula Vineyards is the decisive point of consideration of how the clash of sustainability-focused mindfulness and the post-COVID safety measures fuels destination loyalty. Although the individual elements of wellness tourism and pandemic recovery are well-reported, the synergetic effect of the ZencC framework on the targeted tourist engagement and income increase in the leading Indian vineyards is an evidently important field of empirical synthesis.

The existing literature has mostly concentrated on the conventional wine tourism motives, including wine tasting, cultural exploration, and tourism leisure, and neglected the recent changes to the traveler mindset of wellness, mindfulness, sustainability, and post-pandemic safety. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical studies that can investigate the connection between Zen-C behavioral patterns and the development of wine tourism in the emerging market like India. In particular, there is limited evidence on how these behavioral changes influence tourist engagement and destination competitiveness at major vineyard destinations like Sula Vineyards. In emerging markets like Nashik, wineries such as Sula Vineyards can enhance destination loyalty by combining eco-friendly practices with wellness-oriented experiences. This indicates that the ZencC framework has strong potential to improve tourist engagement and economic growth in the viticulture sector.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The paper will use a quantitative research design to address a research question that will establish how the Zen-C tourist engagement contributes to the expansion of wine tourism in the post-pandemic era. Primary data regarding Sula Vineyards tourists are collected through a cross-sectional survey type. The research design will enable the systematic analysis of perceptions, behavioral preferences, and participation behaviors of tourists on mindful, sustainable and wellness-based tourism experiences. The

article employs statistical modeling analysis and structural survey data to evaluate the contribution of Zen-C behavioral qualities in the accumulation and the sustainability of vineyard tourism.

Study Area

The empirical study is Sula Vineyards, found in the Nashik district in Maharashtra, India. The vineyard is located at 19.9975° N latitude and 73.7670° E longitude. Nashik city is well known as the wine capital of India, and the city is defined by good climatic and geographic conditions for viticulture. The scenic landscape, open spaces, and nature-based tourism of the vineyard make it a perfect location to study the post-pandemic Zen-C engagement of tourists and wine tourism development.

Data Collection Instrument and Questionnaire

Since the behavioral dimensions of the Zen-C tourism model needed to be captured, a structured, self -administered questionnaire was used as a way of primary data collection. The survey tool will start with the collection of categorical data in terms of the demographic profile of the respondents, including their age, gender, and income level, among other general traveling aspects such as the frequency of visiting the country and their favorite means of transportation.

The main part of the questionnaire is used to measure the Zen-C constructs and tourism growth variables on a standardized five-point Likert scale with 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The element of Zen measures the mindfulness, environmental concerns, and closeness to nature that tourists seek during their traveling activities. The C element reflects the changes in behavior due to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically, the need to have open spaces, assurance of hygiene, and preference for types of staycations at the regional level.

The last part of the questionnaire will measure growth indicators of tourism, which include satisfaction levels of the visitors with the destination, premium readiness, and loyalty to the destination. These measures will assist in the establishment of the effect of Zen-C engagement on the intentions of the tourists to revisit and refer the destination.

Measurement Constructs

Table 1. Measurement items for zen-C tourist engagement and wine tourism growth

Construct Category	Item Code	Measurement Statement (1–5 Likert Scale)
Zen Factor (Mindfulness and Sustainability)	ZEN1	I actively seek travel experiences that promote mental well-being and psychological relaxation.
	ZEN2	The vineyard's visible sustainable practices positively influenced my decision to visit.
	ZEN3	I feel a strong sense of mindfulness and connection with nature while walking through the open vineyard landscape.
C Factor (Pandemic Impact and Safety)	COV1	The availability of expansive open-air spaces makes me feel safer compared to indoor tourist attractions.
	COV2	After the pandemic, I prefer driving to regional staycation destinations rather than traveling internationally.
	COV3	Visible hygiene and sanitation protocols enhance my comfort and enjoyment during the wine-tasting experience.
Tourism Growth and Loyalty Outcomes	GRO1	The combination of wellness, safety, and wine makes me willing to pay a premium price for accommodation here.
	GRO2	I am likely to recommend this vineyard experience to friends and family seeking a safe and holistic getaway.
	GRO3	My satisfaction with the slow tourism experience encourages me to revisit within the next twelve months.

The Zen-C model used in this study consists of three main construct categories: the Zen factor, the C factor, and tourism growth outcomes. The Zen factor is used to gauge the needs of tourists concerning mindfulness, sustainability, and nature-oriented experiences. C factor indicates post-pandemic

behavioral choices in terms of safety, spatial distancing, and local travel. Some of the outcomes considered in the tourism growth construct include satisfaction, loyalty, and readiness to pay more to achieve a better experience of tourism. Table 1 indicates the measurement statements that are used to measure these constructs.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The research employs purposive sampling to select the respondents who have been directly involved in the vineyard tourism activities when they visited the company in question. This will make the participants have relative experience with the destination and will be able to give significant information about Zen-C engagement and tourism outputs. The survey took a period of approximately 250-300 valid responses, which can be described as sufficient to model the statistics and analyze the structural equation.

Data Analysis Plan

Statistical software, such as SPSS and SmartPLS, was used to analyze the data collected. Primary analysis was done using descriptive statistics to generalize the demographic profile of the respondents and general patterns of traveling. The data screening processes were carried out to overcome the missing values and identify possible outliers.

To determine the consistency in the use of the Zen-C questionnaire, the score of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability was determined to ascertain the internal consistency of measurement constructs. The subsequent steps were exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis in order to determine the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs.

Lastly, the structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the hypotheses proposed and study the directional relationships between study variables. Structural equation modelling can be especially well achieved in this study since multiple independent and dependent constructs can be simultaneously analyzed, which will give an opportunity to determine the role of Zen-C tourist involvement in satisfaction, loyalty, and overall development of wine tourism in the post-pandemic tourism context.

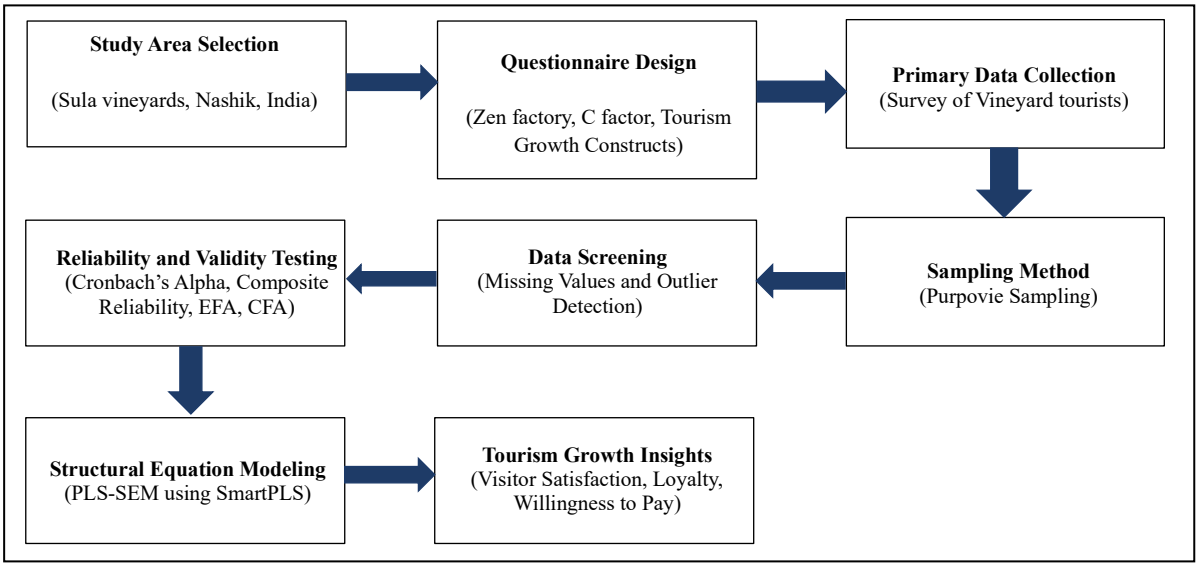

Figure 1. Research methodology and data analysis workflow

The sequential workflow of the research methodology shown in figure 1 starts with the selection of the study area and the design of the questionnaire, followed by data collection, sampling, and data screening. Before the application of PLS-SEM is done, reliability and validity tests are conducted to test the relationships between Zen-C tourist engagement and the outcomes of wine tourism growth.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

This led to a total of 285 valid responses obtained during the data collection phase amongst domestic tourists visiting Sula Vineyards after screening of the data and elimination of incomplete questionnaires. It can be seen in the demographic analysis that the gender distribution is rather balanced, with a slight majority of males. The share of the number of respondents who are aged between 25 and 44 years old is large, as they can be classified into the group of young professionals and middle-income travelers practicing leisure tourism and short recreational trips rather often.

The travel behaviour information also indicates the post-pandemic tourism trends. A big percentage of visitors stated that they used personal vehicles as their main way of transportation, and this supported the assumption of the C factor, which holds that tourists are increasingly favoring regional, drivable destinations over those that can be easily accessed by air. This tendency suggests increased significance of staycations and short-haul tourism experiences when it comes to the recovery of the wine tourism industry.

Table 2. Demographic and travel characteristics of respondents (N = 285)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	152	53.3%
	Female	133	46.7%
Age Group	18–24 years	45	15.8%
	25–34 years	118	41.4%
	35–44 years	82	28.8%
	45 years and above	40	14.0%
Income Bracket	Low	35	12.3%
	Middle	165	57.9%
	High	85	29.8%
Transport Mode	Personal Vehicle	215	75.4%
	Public Transport / Cab	70	24.6%

Table 2 shows the demographic and travel features of the 285 sampled tourists in Sula Vineyards. The gender balance of the respondents is fairly equal, with a small majority of males, 53.3%. The data suggests that the niche of the audience is composed of young to middle-aged adults, out of which 25-34 (41.4%) years old and 35-44 (28.8%) years old age groups make up more than 70 percent of the sample in total. The large percentage (57.9% and 29.8%) of middle and high-income tourists, which is in line with the high-end pricing policy of wellness-focused wine tourism and boutique hotels, is economically dominant. It is important to note that 75.4% of the respondents used personal vehicles to get to the destination. This massive demand for personal transportation supports, in its empirical terms, the C (COVID-19 impact) aspect of the Zen-C model to emphasize a lasting behavior pattern change of moving to safe and accessible regional staycations as opposed to using transit facilities or flying internationally.

In figure 2 contains a two-panel demographic dashboard, which is a summary of the important characteristics of the tourists visiting the vineyard destination. The age distribution of the respondents according to gender, as represented in panel figure 2(A), is depicted using a grouped bar chart. The findings reveal that most of the visitors are aged between 25 and 34 and 35 and 44, which means that the young and middle-income workers constitute the biggest segment of the tourist population. The patterns of distribution of both male and female respondents show similarity in the age divisions. Figure 2(B) shows a donut chart of the mode of transportation preferred by the visitors. The graph shows that there is a strong inclination towards owning personal vehicles (75.4%), over using public transport or cab services (24.6%). This trend supports the idea of drive-based regional tourism, which implies that tourists would become more willing to travel to those destinations that lie within easy reach by road. On balance, the visual dashboard presents a brief illustration of demographic and mobility features that assist in the interpretation of the study on the new staycation and short-haul travel patterns.

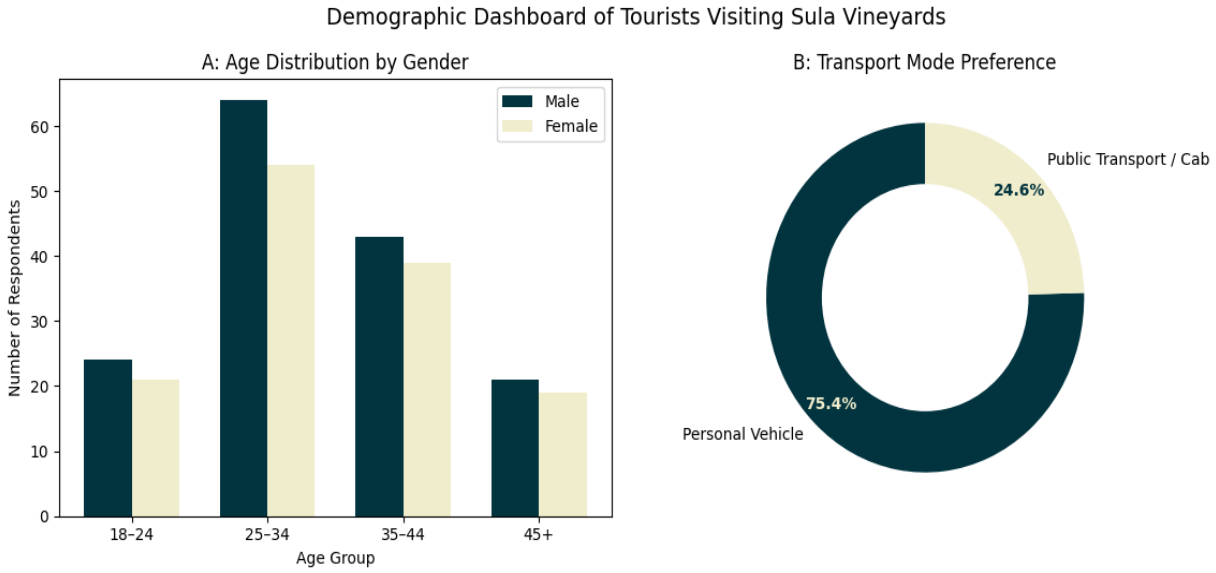

Figure 2. Demographic dashboard of tourists visiting sula vineyards. 2(A): age distribution by gender. 2(B): transport mode preference

Measurement Model Assessment

Before examining the structural relationships among the constructs, the measurement model was evaluated to confirm the reliability and convergent validity of the Zen-C constructs. Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were used to test the internal consistency reliability. According to the results, all constructs are above the suggested value of 0.70, which is a strong internal reliability.

Convergent validity was tested on the basis of the factor loading and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All the standardized loading of all measurement items were higher than the recommended standard of 0.70, which means that the items sufficiently measure the respective construct. Moreover, the AVE values in each construct were over the threshold value of 0.50, which shows that the constructs should be used to explain a good amount of variance in the measurement indicators.

Table 3. Construct reliability and convergent validity

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Zen Factor	ZEN1	0.842	0.815	0.891	0.732
	ZEN2	0.865			
	ZEN3	0.859			
C Factor	COV1	0.795	0.788	0.875	0.698
	COV2	0.852			
	COV3	0.858			
Tourism Growth	GRO1	0.881	0.854	0.912	0.775
	GRO2	0.895			
	GRO3	0.865			

Table 3 shows the test of reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model of the three main constructs of the Zen-C framework. In order to measure internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha as well as Composite Reliability (CR) were computed on the Zen Factor, C Factor, and Tourism Growth. All the Cronbach Alpha values (between 0.788 and 0.854) and CR values (between 0.875 and 0.932) are well above the spreadsheet minimum requirement of 0.70, and this is a sign of high internal reliability of the survey instrument. Furthermore, convergent validity was confirmed through the examination of standardized factor loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The item-level factor loadings are highly robust, ranging from 0.795 to 0.895, indicating that the indicators strongly reflect their corresponding latent constructs. Table 3 shows the test of reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model of the three main constructs of the Zen-C framework. In order to measure internal

consistency, Cronbach's alpha as well as Composite Reliability (CR) were computed on the Zen Factor, C Factor, and Tourism Growth. All the Cronbach Alpha values (between 0.788 and 0.854) and CR values (between 0.875 and 0.932) are well above the spreadsheet minimum requirement of 0.70, and this is a sign of high internal reliability of the survey instrument.

Discriminant Validity Assessment

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion to ensure that each construct is empirically distinct from the others. By this criterion, the square root of the AVE of each construct must be larger than the values of correlation of this construct with other constructs in the model.

Table 4 results confirm the statement that the values in the diagonal of the square root of AVE are higher than the off-diagonal values of correlation. It means that the constructs of Zen Factor, C Factor, and Tourism Growth are statistically different and assess different theoretical dimensions of the Zen-C tourism framework.

Table 4. Discriminant validity (fornell–larcker criterion)

Construct	Zen Factor	C Factor	Tourism Growth
Zen Factor	0.855		
C Factor	0.412	0.835	
Tourism Growth	0.528	0.615	0.880

Table 4 provides the analysis of the discriminant validity using the known Fornell-Larcker criterion, which is required to ensure that the latent constructs of the Zen-C framework are empirically differentiated. In this methodological criterion, the square root of the AVTE of a particular construct, as indicated by the diagonal values, must be larger than the maximum correlation of that construct with any of the other constructs in the model. As can be seen in the matrix, the diagonal values of the Zen Factor (0.855), the C Factor (0.835), and the Tourism Growth (0.880) are dominantly superior to the respective off-diagonal inter-construct correlations of 0.412 to 0.615. This statistical difference proves the fact that the variables efficiently measure unique and non-overlapping phenomena in the post-pandemic tourism scenario and, as such, create a high level of discriminant validity and permit sound structural hypothesis testing.

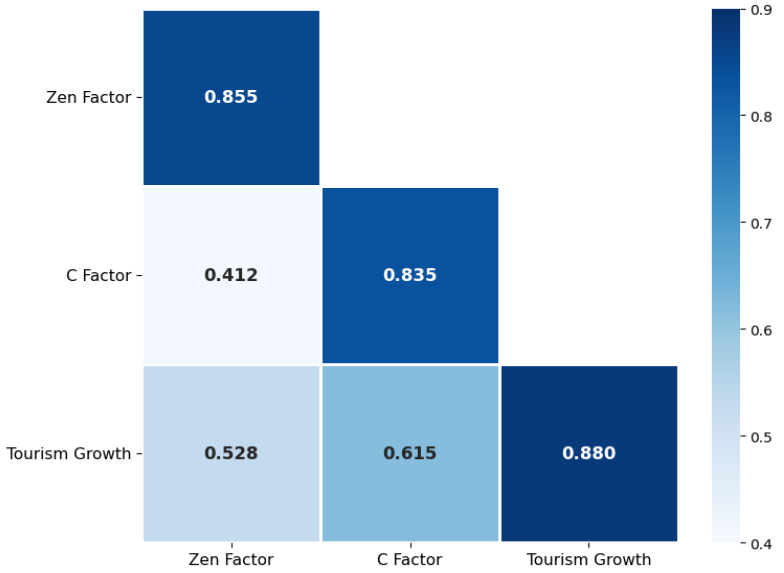

Figure 3. Correlation heatmap of discriminant validity (fornell-larcker criterion)

The figure 3 makes a graphical confirmation of the discriminant validity of the Zen-C measurement model. The dark diagonal cells represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each latent construct. Since these diagonal values (0.855, 0.835, and 0.880) are clearly bigger than the

corresponding off-diagonal inter-construct correlations, it empirically demonstrates that the Zen Factor, C Factor, and Tourism Growth are used to measure dissimilar, non-overlapping dimensions in the research framework.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Following the validation of the measurement model, the structural model was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). A bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples was conducted to determine the significance of the path coefficients.

These findings reveal that the Zen Factor has a substantial impact on the outcomes of Tourism Growth. The directional coefficient demonstrates that mindfulness, environmental sustainability, and nature-based experience-seeking tourists are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction, destination commitment, and revisiting intentions to vineyard destinations.

Similarly, C Factor has positive correlation with the results of Tourism Growth, which is also very positive. This finding implies that the perception of safety, standards of hygiene and accessibility of open spaces are important factors that define tourism behavior after the pandemic. The structural model is highly explanatory with the independent variables explaining a considerable percentage of the results of tourism growth.

Table 5. Structural model results and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis Path	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Zen Factor → Tourism Growth	0.345	0.070	4.892	$p < 0.001$	Supported
C Factor → Tourism Growth	0.472	0.074	6.315	$p < 0.001$	Supported

Table 5 shows the findings of the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) that was used to test the hypothesized relationships in the Zen-C framework. The prediction variance is large, and the coefficient of determination indicates that the combination of the two Zen-C constructs represents 58.4% of the variance in the result of tourism growth ($R^2 = 0.584$). Besides, the path coefficient test statistically significantly proves both hypotheses. The findings indicate that the Zan Factor has a positive and significant influence on the Growth of Tourism ($\beta = 0.345$, $t = 4.892$, $p < 0.001$), thus proving the hypothesis according to which mindfulness and sustainability programs in Sula Vineyards directly affect tourists in terms of loyalty and money spending. Similarly, the C Factor demonstrates a powerful, highly significant positive effect on the performance of Tourism ($\beta = 0.472$, $t = 6.315$, $p < 0.001$), and the fact that post-pandemic safety measures and large open spaces, as well as regional staycations, are significant factors predicting destination performance. Consequently, the two hypotheses are wholly justified, and this stresses the empirical validity of the Zen-C model in the motivation of contemporary viticulture tourism.

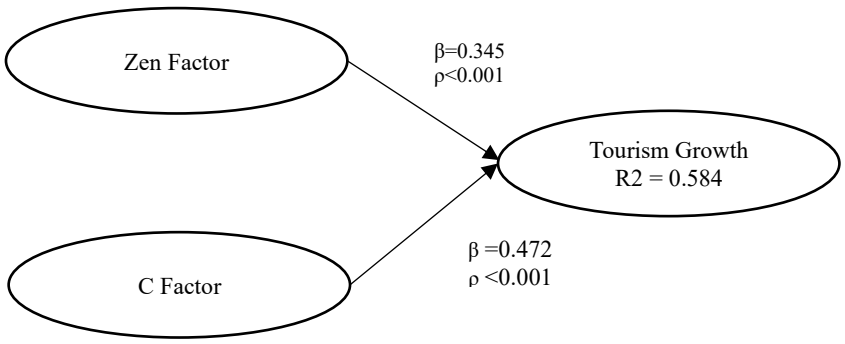

Figure 4. Structural equation model (SEM) path diagram of zen-C factors influencing tourism growth

The structural equation model (Figure 4) shows how the Zen Factor and C Factor are the antecedents of Tourism Growth. The table shows the standardized path coefficients (β) and the levels of significance as a result of the SEM analysis. Both constructs exhibit significant but positive impacts on the growth of tourism, with C Factor ($\beta = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$) exhibiting more powerful effects than the Zen Factor ($\beta =$

0.345, $p < 0.001$). The model accounts for 58.4 percent of the difference in growth of tourism ($R^2 = 0.584$), which means that the proposed structure can account for a significant part of the variation.

Model Fit Assessment

To substantiate the sufficiency of the structural model, a number of model fit indicators were considered. These indices are a testimony that the model exhibits a good degree of both fit and predictive relevance in the study of the correlation between engagement in Zen-C and expansion in wine tourism.

Table 6. Model fit indicators

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold
SRMR	0.061	< 0.08
NFI	0.912	> 0.90
RMS Theta	0.102	< 0.12

Table 6 proves that the model meets the suggested criteria of structural equation modeling, which means that the proposed Zen-C framework is sufficient to explain tourism growth and tourist engagement in vineyard destinations.

DISCUSSION

This paper has examined 285 valid answers of the tourists in Sula Vineyards to prove the Zen-C framework. The demographics indicated a visitor population that was mostly made up of young and middle-career (25-44 years) professionals in the middle to high income groups, with 75.4% using their personal vehicles. The PLS-SEM analysis established that the Zen Factor ($\beta=0.345$, $p<0.001$) and the C Factor ($\beta=0.472$, $p<0.001$) have a highly significant impact on the Tourism Growth, which is positive. These constructs collectively account for five-eighths of the variation in tourism growth outcomes ($R^2=0.584$) and are indicated by strong model fit measures (e.g., SRMR = 0.061).

The findings have shown that wine tourism is extremely dependent on travel restrictions and preferences that are determined by the post-pandemic period. The overwhelming impact of the C Factor proves that the visitors attach a high level of importance to such aspects as safety measures, large open spaces, and accessibility to the region. The mass appeal of personal vehicles proves a behavioral change towards secure and drive-off staycations. At the same time, the massive Zen Factor demonstrates that the modern tourist is seeking mindfulness, sustainability, and nature-based experiences, which directly provide loyalty and satisfaction to destinations.

These results are empirical support of the validity of the Zen-C model as a predictive instrument in contemporary viticulture tourism. To stakeholders of the industry, the findings highlight the commercial imperative of integrating wellness and sustainability (Zen), with high hygiene and ready to drive regionally (C Factor). The adjustments of infrastructure to these particular needs are the key to accessing the profitable middle- and high-income tourist groups.

Although statistically significant, the results are based on one destination (Sula Vineyards), and thus the study cannot be strictly applicable to the prospects of the international wine regions or other forms of tourism, which involve the extensive usage of personal vehicles and regional travel.

To further prove the bigger picture through the application of the Zen-C framework, future studies must be conducted in other agritourism sectors and cross-cultural wine regions. It is also proposed that longitudinal studies would be required to trace whether the strong influence of the C Factor will go down as the pandemic-related travel anxieties are fully overcome, or whether the tendency of choosing regional staycations is a lasting behavior change.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to answer the above question by empirically testing the Zen-C framework, namely, investigating how the demand for mindfulness and sustainability (Zen Factor) and the impact of the

pandemic-related travel behaviors (C Factor) on the tourism development at vineyard destinations. Testing 285 valid responses obtained in Sula Vineyards, the findings indicate that a majority of 75.4% of tourists tend to use personal vehicles, which establishes the focus on regional staycations. Both the Zen Factor ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$) and the C Factor ($\beta = 0.472$, $p < 0.001$) have a significant effect on destination loyalty and growth as confirmed by structural equation modeling. Together, these constructs predict a significant amount of positive tourism outcomes of 58.4%. The key conclusion is that contemporary viticulture tourists require an ambivalent experience. They pursue both the psychological goodness of wellness and nature (Zen) and pragmatic guarantees of health measures and convenient and drive-to destinations (C Factor). Vineyard resorts should combine these two aspects strategically to appeal to their target market, which is the youthful middle to high-income worker. Further research would be necessary by generalizing the Zen-C model to other international agritourism industries in order to create more cross-cultural validity. Furthermore, longitudinal research is needed to determine whether the strong preference for regional, drive-to staycations is a permanent behavioral paradigm shift or a fading pandemic artifact.

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