Profiling Tourists who have holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece

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Abstract

This paper aims to profile the tourists who have holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh) in Greece regarding the factors affecting them in choosing their travel destination and sources of information and demographic characteristics. In particular the main factors influencing tourists to choose REMTh as tourist destination were identified. Furthermore tourists with similar buying behaviour were classified into groups; each group of tourists was profiled according to their preferences regarding their holidays and their demographic characteristics. Field interviews were conducted in a randomly selected sample consisting of 265 people in REMTh in summer 2013. Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was performed to identify the main factors that affect tourists to make vacation in REMTh. These factors were: (a) Travel connections and tourist infrastructures (b) natural environment (c) vacation activities, (d) entertainment, (e) culture and (f) value for money. Hierarchical and non hierarchical cluster techniques were employed to classify tourists with similar behaviour. Three groups of tourists were identified: (a) those interested in the vacation activities, entertainment and culture (b) opportunists, (c) those interested in natural environment and (d) those interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money. Discriminant Analysis was performed to assess how the identified main factors affecting tourists to have holidays in REMTh through PCA, could predict cluster membership. A non parametric test was used to profile each group of tourists regarding their holidays and their demographic characteristics.

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1. Introduction

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Psychological factors including escape, prestige and self actualisation; physical factors such as rest and relaxation, medical treatment and health and fitness; enhancement of kinship relation and facilitation of social interaction visiting friends and meeting new people; novelty seeking, culture exploration, adventure seeking and enjoying night life and shopping; information; security provided; choice offered; access; mode of complaint redress, affect tourists in their choice regarding their tourist destination (Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2012). Sun/beach, visiting family/friends/relatives, nature, culture, city trips, sport related activities or wellness/health/spa treatment as well as natural features, quality of the accommodation, cultural and historical attractions, general level of prices, quality of activities or service and hospitality of local people are some other important factors for tourists decision making process regarding the selection of their travel destination (EC 2015, Fuchs and Weinmair 2004). Moreover, Tsourgiannis et. al. (2015) found that Greek consumers choose to go for holidays in Greece motivated by the activities existed on the beach, sports activities, excursions, restaurants, existence on an airport, travel costs, nature, peace, traditional festivals, nightlife, local architecture, historical and archaeological monuments, climate, ecotourism activities, easy coach and train connection. They also argued that Greek tourists who prefer to go for holidays in Greece are not influenced in their decision regarding the selection of their tourist destination by a particular type of thematic tourism. Socio-demographic characteristics including age, education and income found to affect the reasons people go on holiday (Torres-Sovero et al. 2012; EC 2015, Tsourgiannis et. al. 2015).

Tourism sector consists of a powerful developing force and contributes to the Greek GDP to a 16.4% (Greek Tourism Confederation 2013, Proust et. al. 2009). On the other hand, very few studies tried to explore the factors that motivate tourist to have holidays in Greece and more particular to isolated continental Regions such as the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace that have developed many types of thematic tourism. Furthermore, there is no study to the knowledge of the authors that tried to explore if the type of tourism (thematic tourism) influences tourists in choosing their travel destination as well as if the duration of holidays, the information sources and the demographic characteristics of tourists have a significant impact on their decision making process regarding the selection of their tourist destination.

Hence, the current study aims to profile the tourists (Greek and foreigners) who have holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece regarding the factors affecting them in choosing their travel destination. It also contributes theoretically to the understanding of the tourists behaviour towards the selection of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece as a tourist destination and provides managerial implications regarding the marketing policies local stakeholders and key actors of the tourist sector should develop.

2. Methods

2.1. Survey Procedure

The researchers undertook an interview survey to a sample of tourists who had holidays in in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh) in Greece in order to gather data necessary to identify the factors that affect tourists to go for holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece.

The research null hypotheses that this study tests are the followings:

- **Ho1:** Tourists cannot be classified into groups according to the factors that affect them to have holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh)

- **Ho2:** The type of tourism (thematic tourism) that influence tourists in choosing REMTh as their travel destination is not significantly related to particular tourism behaviour.

- **Ho3:** Information sources are not significantly related to particular tourism behaviour.

- **Ho4:** Duration of holidays is not significantly related to particular tourism behaviour.
• **Ho5:** Consumers’ demographic characteristics are not significant related to particular tourism behaviour.

The questionnaire designed to meet the research objectives was piloted in June 2013 to 50 people in Regional Districts of Kavala and Rodopi. The pilot survey indicated that no modification was necessary. Therefore, the main survey was conducted between July and September of 2013 to 265 tourists that had holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh) that period. The researchers based on the methodology presented by Oppenheim (2000), selected at random 30% of the hotels operated in each of the five prefectures (Drama – Kavala included Thassos island- Xanthi – Rodopi – Evros included Samothraki island) consisted the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in order to form a more geographically wise representative sample. Continuously, they decided to form a sample that is consisted of a number of tourists that had holidays in each prefecture. The sample was structured according to the proportion of beds that each prefecture has in comparison to the total number of beds existed in the whole Region (Table 1). Finally, the interviewers surveyed every 5th tourist that approached into the area they were based in each hotel (hotel lobby – reception). Finally the sample found to be consisted of 70% Greek tourists and 30% of foreigners.

### Table 1: The structure of the sample

| Prefecture | Number of Hotels existed in each prefecture | Number of Hotels used in the survey | Number of beds existed in each prefecture | % of beds existed in each prefecture | Number of tourists surveyed in each prefecture | % of tourists surveyed in each prefecture |
|------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Drama      | 21                                          | 6                                  | 1068                                     | 5%                                    | 12                                          | 5%                                       |
| Evros      | 62                                          | 18                                 | 3815                                     | 18%                                   | 48                                          | 18%                                      |
| Xanthi     | 18                                          | 6                                  | 1427                                     | 7%                                    | 18                                          | 7%                                       |
| Rodopi     | 20                                          | 6                                  | 1506                                     | 7%                                    | 18                                          | 7%                                       |
| Kavala     | 241                                         | 73                                 | 13185                                    | 63%                                   | 169                                         | 63%                                      |
| **Total**  | **362**                                     | **108**                            | **21001**                                | **100%**                              | **265**                                     | **100%**                                 |

Compiled data from REMTh (2015)

### 2.2. Statistical Methodology

Multivariate analysis techniques were used to the 265 tourists to reveal the key information contained in the responses, and these analyses were applied in three stages. First, principal component analysis (PCA) was used to identify the variables that accounted for the maximum amount of variance within the data in terms of the smallest number of uncorrelated variables (components). The anti-image correlation matrix was used as well as Bartlett’s test of sphericity and measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) in order to check the appropriateness of the data for subsequent factor analysis. The variables that had a high proportion of large absolute values of anti-image correlations as well as MSA less than 0.5 were removed before analysis.

In this study, PCA reduced the 29 key attitude variables, which relate to various aspects of tourists’ behaviour towards their decision to choose a domestic destination, to a smaller set of underlying factors. An orthogonal rotation (varimax method) was conducted and the standard criteria of eigenvalue = 1, scree test and percentage of variance were used in order to determine the factors in the first rotation (Hair *et al.* 1998). Different trial rotations followed where factor interpretability was compared. These PCA scores were then subjected to cluster analysis to group tourists with similar patterns of scores into similar clusters based on their behaviour regarding the decision to make holidays in Greece. In this study, both hierarchical and non-hierarchical methods were used according to the recommendations of Hair *et al.* (1998) and Punj and Stewart (1983) in order to develop a typology of the tourists’ behaviour towards making holidays in Greece.
Quadratic discriminant analysis was performed to assess how accurately the identified key dimensions that were derived from the PCA analysis could predict and discriminate cluster membership.

Statistical tests based on the outcomes of the multivariate statistical techniques presented above (factor, cluster and discriminant analysis) employed to test hypothesis Ho1. Chi-square analysis, were used to test hypotheses Ho2, Ho3, Ho4 and Ho5.

3. Results

3.1. Factors and attitudes affecting tourists’ behaviour towards making holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece.

Principal components and factor analyses (through a varimax rotation) were conducted to identify the key preference variables, and the latent root criterion (eigenvalue =1), and the percentage of variance were used to determine the number of factors (Table 2). Several different trial rotations were conducted to compare factor interpretability as suggested by Hair et al (1998).

Table 2: Results of Principal Component Analysis regarding tourist’s behaviour towards making holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in Greece

| Component | Eigenvalues | % of Variance | Cumulative Variance |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1         | 11.693      | 40.320        | 40.320              |
| 2         | 2.523       | 8.700         | 49.021              |
| 3         | 1.850       | 6.381         | 55.401              |
| 4         | 1.630       | 5.621         | 61.022              |
| 5         | 1.352       | 4.662         | 65.684              |
| 6         | 1.167       | 4.023         | 69.707              |
| 7         | 0.853       | 2.942         | 72.648              |
| 8         | 0.841       | 2.900         | 75.548              |
| 9         | 0.802       | 2.765         | 78.313              |
| 10        | 0.717       | 2.472         | 80.786              |
| 11        | 0.632       | 2.178         | 82.963              |
| 12        | 0.544       | 1.875         | 84.838              |
| 13        | 0.462       | 1.595         | 86.433              |
| 14        | 0.455       | 1.567         | 88.000              |
| 15        | 0.424       | 1.461         | 89.461              |
| 16        | 0.401       | 1.384         | 90.845              |
| 17        | 0.353       | 1.217         | 92.062              |
| 18        | 0.330       | 1.138         | 93.200              |
| 19        | 0.291       | 1.004         | 94.204              |
| 20        | 0.274       | 0.944         | 95.149              |
| 21        | 0.225       | 0.776         | 95.925              |
PCA identified six key factors that influence tourists in choosing REMTh as their tourist destination (Table 3).

Table 3: The Key Factors affecting tourists in having holidays in REMTh

| Main Factors Affecting Purchasing Behaviour | Factor Loadings |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| **Travel connections and tourist infrastructures** |                  |
| Easy train connection                      | 0.827           |
| East bus connection                        | 0.823           |
| Travel cost                                | 0.741           |
| Driving safety                             | 0.713           |
| Existence of an Airport                    | 0.707           |
| Information kiosks – offices               | 0.678           |
| Easy communication with local people       | 0.658           |
| Safety                                     | 0.620           |
| Restaurants                                | 0.526           |
| Traditional festivals                      | 0.520           |
| **Natural environment**                    |                  |
| Peaceful environment                       | 0.728           |
| Natural environment                        | 0.698           |
| Religious Mosques, Temples and Churches    | 0.507           |
| Hotel’s area and surroundings              | 0.480           |
| **Vacation activities**                    |                  |
| Activities existed on the beach            | 0.855           |
| Ecotourism activities                      | 0.824           |
| Sport activities                           | 0.804           |
| Excursions - walks                         | 0.703           |
| **Entertainment**                          |                  |
| Events organized within the hotel          | 0.727           |
| Night life                                 | 0.667           |
Hotels’ services  0.630
Market – malls- shops  0.536

**Culture**

Local architecture  0.770
Historic – archeological monument  0.679
Hospitality of the local people  0.665

**Value for money**

Value for money  0.800

Costumer service  0.763

KMO MSA = 0.878  Bartlett test of Sphericity = 5,776.388  P <0.001

In the next stage, hierarchical and non-hierarchical clustering methods were used to develop a typology of the behaviour of the tourists towards their attitudes to make holidays in REMTh (Harrigan 1985; Helsen and Green 1991; Hair et al. 1998; and Siardos 1999). Cluster analysis was conducted on the 265 observations, as there were no outliers.

It identified four groups of tourists who visited REMTH that were named according to their behaviour patterns towards their attitudes to make choose a tourist destination (Table 4). These are: (a) the “Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture”, (b) the “Opportunists”, (c) the “Interested in Travel Connection”.

Table 4 : Groups of Greek tourists according to their behaviour patterns towards their attitudes to make holidays in Greece

| Key Dimensions | Interested in vacation activities and natural environment | Interested in cultural issues | Interested in Natural Environment | Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money | P |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Travel connections and tourist infrastructures | -0.05378 | -0.74755 | 0.05083 | 0.97041 | 0.001 |
| Natural environment | 0.05200 | -0.66838 | 0.32038 | -1.59258 | 0.001 |
| Vacation activities | 0.78623 | -0.13013 | -0.54751 | 0.71337 | 0.001 |
| Entertainment | 0.59199 | -0.83833 | -0.10170 | -0.51559 | 0.001 |
| Culture | 0.65848 | -0.59861 | -0.18068 | -0.71180 | 0.001 |
| Value for money | 0.00122 | -1.84754 | 0.30236 | 0.75404 | 0.001 |
| Number of consumers (n=265) | 79 | 28 | 138 | 20 |

In particular, “Tourists interested interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture ” comprise the 30% of the sample. They are mainly influenced in their decision to choose REMTh in Greece as tourist destination by activities existed on the beach, ecotourism activities, sport activities, excursions and walks, events organized within the hotel, nigh life, hotel’s services and existence of stores, malls and market. They also pay attention to local architecture, historic and archeological monuments and the hospitality of local people. The “opportunists” are the tourists who are not influenced by any particular factor in their decision about where to go for holidays and consist of the sample. “Tourists interested in cultural issues” comprise the 52% of the sample. They are mainly influenced in their choice...
to go for holidays in REMTh by the peaceful environment, natural environment and the existence of religious mosques, temples and churches. Finally, “**Tourists interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money**” comprise 7.5% of the sample. They mainly paid attention when they decided to go for holidays REMTh in easy train and coach connection, travel cost, driving safety, existence of an airport and information offices, easy communication with local people, safety, and restaurants and traditional festivals. They are also influenced by vacation activities such as activities existed on the beach, ecotourism activities, sport activities as well as excursions and walks.

Discriminant analysis was conducted to evaluate the prediction of group membership by the predictors derived from the PCA. Initially the normality of the key strategic dimensions was checked. The summary of the cross validation classification derived by the quadratic discriminant analysis is shown in Table 5.

| Actual Classification | Predicted Classification | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture | Opportunists | Interested in natural environment | Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money |
| Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture | 76 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Opportunists | 1 | 27 | 0 | 1 |
| Interested in natural environment | 2 | 1 | 134 | 1 |
| Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money | 1 | 0 | 4 | 16 |
| Total N | 79 | 28 | 137 | 20 |
| N correct | 75 | 27 | 134 | 16 |
| Proportion | 95% | 96% | 97% | 80% |
| N = 265 | N correct=252 | Proportion Correct | 95.1% |

Thus, the twenty nine dimensions could accurately predict and discriminate consumers’ group membership. Therefore, the hypothesis **Ho1: Tourists cannot be classified into groups according to the factors that affect them to have holidays in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (REMTh)** may be rejected.

### 3.2. Attitudes of tourists who have holidays in REMTh towards thematic tourism.

In this stage chi-square analysis performed to explore what kind of thematic tourism prefer each group of tourists who have holidays in REMTh. The analysis indicated (Table 6) the vast majority of each of the identified group of tourists do not prefer any particular type of thematic tourism.

Table 6: Attitudes of tourists who have holidays in REMth towards thematic tourism,
Therefore, research hypothesis Ho2: “The type of tourism (thematic tourism) that influence tourists in choosing REMTh as their travel destination is not significantly related to particular tourism behaviour” may be rejected.

3.3. Exploring the information sources that tourists who have holidays in REMTh use.

Chi-square analysis conducted to explore which information sources each group of tourists who have holidays in REMTh use in order to retrieve information regarding their travel destination. The analysis showed (Table 7) that most of the tourists that: (i) are interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture, (ii) are interested in natural environment and (iii) chose the place they are going to go for vacation opportunistically, prefer to be informed regarding their holidays destination by friends and relatives. On the other hand most of the tourists of the fourth identified groups do not prefer to be informed regarding their travel destination.

| Type of Thematic Tourism | Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture | Opportunists | Interested in natural environment | Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Culture                  | n.s                                                       | NO(78%)      | NO(80%)                          | NO(75%)                                                                          |
|                          |                                                           | (x2=8.333 P<0.01) | (x2=47.891 P<0.001) | (x2=5.000 P<0.05) |
| Religious                | NO(90%)                                                   | NO(89%)      | NO(88%)                          | NO(85%)                                                                          |
|                          | (x2=48.325, P<0.001)                                      | (x2=16.333, P<0.001) | (x2=77.438, P<0.001) | (x2=9.800, P<0.01) |
| Sight-seeing             | NO(78%)                                                   | NO(89%)      | NO(83%)                          | NO(85%)                                                                          |
|                          | (x2=24.013, P<0.001)                                      | (x2=16.333, P<0.001) | (x2=57.818, P<0.001) | (x2=9.800, P<0.01) |
| Therapeutic              | NO (94%)                                                  | NO (100%)    | NO(91%)                          | NO(85%)                                                                          |
|                          | (x2=58.299, P<0.001)                                      |               | (x2=93.204, P<0.001) | (x2=9.800, P<0.01) |
| Agrotourism              | NO (88%)                                                  | NO (85%)     | NO (92%)                         | NO (95%)                                                                         |
|                          | (x2=45.208, P<0.001)                                      | (x2=16.370, P<0.001) | (x2=96.533, P<0.001) | (x2=16.200, P<0.001) |

Table 7: The information sources use the tourists who have holidays in REMTh regarding their travel destination
| Sources of information | Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture | Opportunists | Interested in natural environment | Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Travel Agents          | NO (85%)<br>(x²=39.286 P<0.001)                           | NO (89%)<br>(x²=16.333 P<0.01) | NO (88%)<br>(x²=77.438 P<0.001) | NO (100%)                                                          |
| Friends and Relatives  | YES (57%)<br>n.s.                                         | YES (74%)<br>(x²=6.259 P<0.05) | YES (62%)<br>(x²=7.949 P<0.01) | NO (55%)<br>n.s                                                      |
| Internet               | NO (48%)<br>n.s                                           | NO (78%)<br>(x²=8.333 P<0.001) | NO (70%)<br>(x²=23.059 P<0.001) | NO (55%)<br>n.s                                                      |
| Media                  | NO (89%)<br>(x²=48.325 P<0.001)                           | NO (100%)    | NO (98%)<br>(x²=125.263 P<0.001) | NO (90%)<br>(x²=12.800 P<0.01)                                     |
| Personal experience    | NO (93%)<br>(x²=58.299 P<0.001)                           | NO (88%)<br>(x²=16.333 P<0.001) | NO (92%)<br>(x²=96.533 P<0.001) | NO (70%)<br>n.s                                                      |

Hence, research hypothesis Ho3 “Information sources are not significantly related to particular tourism behavior” may be rejected.

3.3. Profiling tourists who have holidays in REMTh regarding their demographic characteristics and the duration of their holidays.

The profile of each group of tourists who have holidays in REMTh regarding their demographic characteristics and duration of their holidays was developed by performing chi-square analysis.

As Table 8 indicates, most of the tourists who are interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture are between 30-39 years old, free-licensed, hold a university degree and have annual family income between 15.001 – 30.000 euro. Most of the “opportunists” are civil servants, hold a university degree and have annual family income between 15.001 – 30.000 euro. On the other hand, most of the tourists who are “Interested in natural environment” are civil servants. Most of them are middle aged, hold a university degree and have annual family income less than 15.000 euro. Finally, most of the tourists who are interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money have a university degree and family income between 15.001 – 30.000 euro. Furthermore most of the tourists of the first three identified groups stay in the REMTh for holidays less than three nights.

Table 8: Profile of each group of tourists regarding their demographic characteristics and duration of holidays
| Demographic Characteristics | Interested in vacation activities, entertainment and culture | Opportunists | Interested in natural environment | Interested in travel connections, tourist infrastructures and value for money |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Age                         |                                                          |              |                                  |                                                          |
| 18-23 years old             | 7%                                                      | n.s          | 21%                              | n.s                                                      |
| 24-29 years old             | 20%                                                     |              | 12%                              |                                                          |
| 30-39 years old             | 34%                                                     |              | 27%                              |                                                          |
| 40-49 years old             | 18%                                                     |              | 25%                              |                                                          |
| 50-64 years old             | 18%                                                     |              | 10%                              |                                                          |
| >65 years old               | 34%                                                     |              | 11%                              |                                                          |
| Education                   |                                                          |              |                                  |                                                          |
| University Degree           | 60%                                                     | x²=32.228    | df=2 P<0.001                     | 60%                                                     | x²=6.700 df=2 P<0.001 |
| High School                 | 30%                                                     |              | 4%                              |                                                          |
| Primary School              | 9%                                                      |              | 21%                              |                                                          |
| Occupation                  |                                                          |              |                                  |                                                          |
| Civil Servants              | 18%                                                     | x²=30.700 df=8 | P<0.001 | 23%                              | n.s                                                      |
| Private Employees           | 18%                                                     | x²=27.714 df=8 | P<0.001 | 21%                              |                                                          |
| Entrepreneur                | 18%                                                     | x²=27.714 df=8 | P<0.001 | 1%                               |                                                          |
| Free Licence                | 22%                                                     | x²=27.714 df=8 | P<0.001 | 4%                               |                                                          |
| Retiree                     | 4%                                                      |              | 25%                              |                                                          |
| Students                    | 4%                                                      |              | 18%                              |                                                          |
| Unemployment                | 10%                                                     |              | 0%                               |                                                          |
| Other                       | 10%                                                     |              | 0%                               |                                                          |
| Family income               |                                                          |              |                                  |                                                          |
| <15,000€                    | 24%                                                     | x²=58.000 df=4 P<0.001 | 2% | 43%                              | x²=12.467 df=4 P<0.001 |
| 15,001-30,000€              | 48%                                                     | x²=26.880 df=4 | 80%                              | 36%                                                      | 50%                                                      |
| 30,001-50,000€              | 13%                                                     | P<0.001      | 4%                              | 10%                                                      |                                                          |
| >50,001€                    | 4%                                                      |              | 0%                               |                                                          |
| Duration of holidays        |                                                          |              |                                  |                                                          |
| <3 nights                   | 52%                                                     | x²=23, 844 df=3 P<0.001 | 0% | 47%                              | n.s                                                      |
| 4-6 nights                  | 28%                                                     | x²=30.074 df=4 | 18%                              | 34%                                                      |                                                          |
| 7-10 nights                 | 18%                                                     | P<0.001      | 11%                              | 9%                                                       |                                                          |
| >10 nights                  | 2%                                                      |              | 11%                              | 10%                                                      |                                                          |

Hence the hypotheses Ho4: Duration of holidays is not significantly related to particular tourism behavior and Ho5: Consumers’ demographic characteristics are not significant related to particular tourism behaviour may be rejected.

4. Discussion -Conclusions

This study indicated that there was a significant association between the adoption of a tourism behaviour and the factors, that influence them to choose REMTh as a tourist destination. It was found that the current research supports the findings of other studies (EC 2014, Fuchs and Weinmair 2004, Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2012, Tsourgiannis et. al. 2015) according to which consumers are influenced in their decision regarding the selection of their tourist destination by escape and self actualisation, novelty seeking, culture exploration, adventure seeking and enjoying night life, natural features, quality of the accommodation, general level of prices, quality of activities or services. In particular tourists who choose to go for holidays in REMTh in Greece are motivated by the activities existed on the beach, sports activities, excursions, restaurants, existence on an airport, travel costs, nature, peace, traditional festivals, nightlife, local architecture, historical and archaeological monuments, climate, ecotourism activities, easy coach and train connection. This study also indicated that tourists who prefer to go for holidays in REMTh are not influenced in their
decision regarding the selection of their tourist destination by a particular type of thematic tourism. Furthermore it supports the findings of Torres-Sovero et al. (2012), E.C. (2014) and Tsourgiannis et al. (2015) that socio-demographic characteristics affect people to choose their travel destination.

From the managerial perspective, this study can empower the state and regional tourism departments with information about the factors that motivate tourists to visit REMTh for their holidays, so that they can add value to their relationship with the tourist by developing the preferred combination of features. The decision making authorities in tourism sector in Greece can also evaluate the information provided by the study to appropriately bridge the gap between their perception of value and what really motivate tourists by developing the corrective action plans. Although this study focuses on Greek tourist sector, the methodology of the paper and its purposes may by successful implemented by tourism authorities of other national environments.

Furthermore, this study can help tourism stakeholders in REMTh (travel agents, hotels, Regions and Municipalities) to understand how tourists view and choose their destination and hence, make the appropriate market segmentation as well as formulate their marketing and promotion mix focusing on the factors presented above.

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