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THE ROLE OF TEMPORARY
INVOLVEMENT WITH APPELLATION OF
ORIGIN IN THE PURCHASE OF WINE

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Abstract

Studying the involvement variable is key to explaining consumer behaviour. The aim of the current research is to analyse the effect that the individual's temporary involvement with the appellation of origin has on the process of the decision to purchase agro-food products. It is proposed and confirmed a measurement of the consumer's temporary involvement by three properties defining its cognitive base: number of associated values, centrality of these values and intensity of the relation. To examine the influence of the temporary involvement, we consider the cognitive, affective and behavioural responses that make up the decision process. Here, the analysis focuses on the product category of wine.

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Studying the involvement variable is key to explaining consumer behaviour. The aim of the current research is to analyse the effect that the individual's temporary involvement with the appellation of origin has on the process of the decision to purchase agro-food products. It is proposed and confirmed a measurement of the consumer's temporary involvement by three properties defining its cognitive base: number of associated values, centrality of these values and intensity of the relation. To examine the influence of the temporary involvement, we consider the cognitive, affective and behavioural responses that make up the decision process. Here, the analysis focuses on the product category of wine.

Keywords: Temporary involvement, cognitive perspective, wine appellation of origin

1. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The influence of the involvement construct on consumer behaviour has generated the interest of many researchers in this area. Thus, this variable has formed part of the explanatory processes of attitude changes (Sherif and Cantril, 1947; Sherif and Hovland, 1961; Petty and Cacioppo, 1981a); search, perception and processing of information (Bloch, Sherrell and Ridgway, 1986; Krugman, 1965, 1966-67; Rothschild, 1979; Kardes, 1988; Celsi and Olson, 1988); complexity and extensiveness of purchase decision process (Robertson, 1976; Houston and Rothschild, 1978; Chaiken, 1980; Engel and Blackwell, 1982); attributed importance and brand loyalty (Agostini, 1978; Jacoby, 1971; Rothschild and Ray, 1974; Robertson, 1976; Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979; Assael, 1981; Engel and Blackwell, 1982); and opinion leadership (Corey, 1971); among others.

Many of these studies examine involvement without making it clear whether the construct refers to the enduring involvement or the temporary involvement with the stimulus in question.

In the current work, we analyse consumers' *temporary* involvement, investigating the influence of this state on the decision process that develops in a purchase for a special occasion. As an example, we investigate the purchase of wine with an appellation of origin.

Moreover, rather than undertake a partial analysis, we aim to examine the consumer's decision process describing the whole series of responses on which involvement exerts a significant effect.

At the same time, we take a deeper look at the consequences of a state of enduring involvement, explaining its influence on the temporary responses produced during a particular purchase.

The various conceptual and/or operational definitions of involvement proposed throughout the literature attribute different contents to this variable, at times equating it with other related concepts (such as attitude or importance), elsewhere including factors in the definition that are more properly antecedents or consequences of this construct. On many occasions, however, although the authors defend a conceptualisation founded on the intrinsic base of the variable, this is not reflected in the measurement finally used.

In this current research we adopt a different approach to the operationalisation of the consumer's temporary involvement. Thus, this variable is framed within a broadly-defined concept of motivation, defining it as a state of arousal experienced by the individual. For its measurement, we propose to use the cognitive base that underlies this state. The cognitive base of the variable is defined as the personal temporary relevance that the individual perceives in the stimulus – in this case, the appellation of origin (AO).

Laurent and Kapferer (1985) introduced the concept of involvement profile, proposing to consider the bases defining the state of involvement, and offering a more detailed approach to analyse this variable. They distinguish five dimensions in the construct, which compose the involvement profile: perceived importance, perceived risk (perceived importance of negative consequences derived from a poor choice and perceived probability of mistaken choice), symbolic or sign value and hedonic value. The approach proposed here adopts this same position, although we aim to identify the ultimate bases of the state of motivation represented by this variable, since we consider that in the dimensions proposed by these authors there is a mix of causes (the perceived importance), determining factors of these causes (the symbolic and hedonic values, as values that could be associated with the stimulus), and other related concepts (the perceived risk). Only the analysis of the base of the construct provides the information that is required when decisions have to be made about how to act on this variable.

In the literature that addresses involvement, the concept has been applied to explain reactions to advertisements (Krugman, 1965, 1966-67; Ray, 1973; Wright, 1973; Petty and Cacioppo, 1981b; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984), products (Howard and Sheth, 1969; Hupfer and Gardner, 1971; Engel and Blackwell, 1982), and the communications media (Krugman,

1971), and to explain purchase decisions (Clarke and Belk, 1979; Belk, 1982) or brand choice (Mittal, 1983). There have been few analyses of involvement in relation to a particular brand (except Varela *et al.*, 1996, 1998a, 1998b). Another contribution of our work is that we extend the range of analysis of the construct to the brand level, where our particular application is Appellations of Origin (AO). Companies from the agro-food sector are focusing on attaining competitive advantage by adding value through AOs as labels of quality for the consumer. In this respect, it is essential to analyse the consumer's involvement with the AO, as a derivation of the perceived value of this label, or its positioning in the mind of the individual, is a determinant of the behaviour and of the cognitive and affective processes developed in response to it.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cognitive base of involvement

Starting with the first references to the involvement variable in the field of social psychology (Sherif and Cantril, in their 1947 work *Psychology of Ego-Involvement*), various definitions of this construct have been advanced, with the authors taking different approaches in terms of the variable's content and nature.

Thus, some definitions place the object, issue or situation at the centre of the variable (Houston and Rothschild, 1978, in their "situational involvement"; Smith and Beatty, 1984), while others follow an approach which appears to be the most appropriate and commonly accepted now: conceptualising the individual as the centre of this construct¹ (Bloch, 1981; Cohen, 1983; Antil, 1984).

Within this approach, some authors define the concept on the basis of the causes affecting this state (the expectations or rewards derived from the stimulus, as described by Apsler and Sears (1968) and Bowen and Chaffee (1974), respectively), with others equating it with the consequences resulting from the state (Zimbardo, 1960; Krugman, 1966-67; Robertson, 1976; Houston and Rothschild, 1978, with their "response involvement"; Leavitt, Greenwald and Obermiller, 1981; Stone, 1984; Leigh and Menon, 1987; Lehto, 2000; Hsu and Lee, 2003).

¹ Previously it can be pointed out a distinction considering the stimulus with respect to which the involvement is analysed, but we ignore this in the interests of brevity and clarity.

Finally, we can distinguish a third approach in which the essence of the variable is stressed, differentiating content from its antecedents and consequences. In this approach, the motivational or activation character of the variable is addressed (Mitchell, 1979, 1981; Bloch, 1981; Mittal, 1983, 1989; Cohen, 1983; Rothschild, 1984; Park, Assael and Chaik, 1985; Andrews, 1988; Ratchford and Vaughn, 1989; Hawkins, Best and Coney, 1992), although some conceptualisations are limited to the cognitive level underlying the state of involvement (Sherif and Cantril, 1947; Engel and Light, 1968; Day, 1970, Hupfer and Gardner, 1971; Wright, 1973; Houston and Rothschild, 1978, with their “enduring involvement”; Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979, with their “normative importance”; Tyebjee, 1979; Petty and Cacioppo, 1981; Antil, 1984; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Park and Young, 1986, with their “cognitive involvement” and “affective involvement”; Peter and Olson, 1987; Patterson, 1993; Solomon, 1997; Broderick and Mueller, 1999; Lee, 2002; Coulter, Price and Feick, 2003). In our view the motivational plane is decisive, given the nature of the activation and directional nature of the construct. Thus, the concept of involvement that we use in the current work is defined as follows:

The state of the individual's motivation or arousal deriving from the perception of the personal relevance of the stimulus. This state results from the connection that the consumer makes between the perception of the stimulus and a higher order mental structure of knowledge of the ego (e.g. the structure of values), influencing the individual's affective, cognitive and behavioural processes.

Thus, we use a conceptualisation of involvement as a motivational state that has a series of consequences on consumers' behaviour. This state of motivation is founded on the individual's perception of the personal relevance of the stimulus (in this case, the AO), insofar as certain central values, goals or needs are expressed (at times unconsciously) in the purchase and/or consumption of the brand.

Temporary vs. enduring involvement

We distinguish first between temporary and enduring involvement, depending on the temporal extension of the state of motivation – i.e., depending on whether it is limited to a specific situation or extends over time, representing a more regular predisposition. This temporal distinction is very important, given the different effects of these two types of

involvement. Many authors have explored this distinction, using different terms to refer to these states (Houston and Rothschild, 1977; Bloch, 1981, 1982; Bloch and Richins, 1983; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Richins and Bloch, 1986; Higie and Feick, 1989; Richins, Bloch and McQuarrie, 1992).

In this respect, in enduring involvement we could mention intrinsic causes when we describe the base of this state, insofar as the personal perception of certain intrinsic attributes of the stimulus are linked by the individual with some of their fundamental values.

In contrast, temporary involvement has a more limited duration, being linked to a particular situation, so that many authors refer to this variable as situational involvement². This temporary state of arousal derives in part from an enduring involvement with the stimulus, and in part from certain causes that could be labelled situational, and which refer to: the “construction” of certain associations in response to communications revealing characteristics of the stimulus that are either novel to the individual or highlight previously unperceived associations between the stimulus and the values of the individual; the creation of certain temporary links not deriving strictly from the nature of the stimulus (in this case the AO), but from particular marketing actions linked to it (e.g., promotions, cause-related marketing actions, etc.); the presence of specific needs or goals in a concrete situation that are associated by the individual to the stimulus; or the perception of the importance of certain situations or activities, such that the individual’s involvement with the situation or activity induces an involvement with the stimulus, by means of a transference of the personal associations between the situation and certain values, to associations of these values with the stimulus.

In this study we analyse the consumer’s temporary involvement with the appellation of origin. To measure this temporary involvement we have considered: the purchase decision as the temporal period of analysis of the involvement, the wine as the product towards which to measure the consumer’s involvement, and a special occasion, such as a dinner with friends or relatives, or a business meeting as the specific situation of the purchase.

Purchase decision process

References to the involvement variable in the field of consumer behaviour can be traced back to 1958, with the work of Bayton, and studies analysing the mediating role of this

² In this work, we adopt the term “temporary involvement” to highlight its limited duration and to avoid confusion with involvement with the situation.

variable took off from the 1970s (Ray, 1973; Rothschild and Ray, 1974; Robertson, 1976; Rothschild and Houston, 1977). The concept has been applied in the explanation of: processing of information (Krugman, 1965, 1966-67; Rothschild, 1979; Kardes, 1988); complexity, extensiveness and relevance of purchase decision process (Robertson, 1976; Houston and Rothschild, 1978; Chaiken, 1980; Engel and Blackwell, 1982); weight attributed to the brand in the evaluation process (Agostini, 1978); self-confidence in decisions about alternative brands (Day, 1970); brand loyalty (Jacoby, 1971); brand “commitment” (Rothschild and Ray, 1974; Robertson, 1976; Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979; Assael, 1981; Engel and Blackwell, 1982); and opinion leadership (Corey, 1971).

In this work, we analyse the consumer’s decision process during the purchase of an AO wine. In this context, as the consumer’s temporary involvement with the AO becomes stronger, the decision process adopted in the purchase of the wine – a product certified by this sign – will be affected in its different stages and elements.

In the description of the consumer’s purchasing process we have adopted a broad perspective, breaking it down into the different response elements that can be distinguished within it, analysing the influence that the consumer’s involvement with the AO exerts on the cognitive, affective and behavioural responses making up the process. The elements or consequences that we analyse are outlined in a later section, where we describe the measurement scales.

We propose the following hypothesis:

H1: The consumer’s temporary involvement with appellations of origin explains the affective, cognitive and behavioural responses in the purchase process

The affective, cognitive and behavioural responses analyzed are listed in table 1.

We also propose an effect of the enduring involvement with the AO on the particular process adopted by the consumer in the specific purchase. This relation has been postulated in previous works, although only for certain consequences in the decision process (Houston and Rothschild, 1978; Stone, 1984; Lastovicka 1979; Petty and Cacioppo 1981a, 1983; Newman and Dolich, 1979; Robertson, 1976; Houston and Rothschild, 1977; Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979; Bloch, Sherrel and Ridgway, 1986).

H2: The responses that the consumer has developed with regard to wine appellations of origin as a consequence of an enduring involvement with this sign have a significant effect on the affective, cognitive and behavioural responses in the purchase process

The responses considered are listed in table 2.

Another aim of this study is to specify the involvement concept, differentiating its content from that of other variables with which it is associated. Thus, in the literature on this construct involvement has been equated with other concepts such as perceived risk, knowledge or experience.

In this respect, Laurent and Kapferer (1985) propose perceived risk as one of the five dimensions that they identify in the involvement profile. For our part, we propose a correlation between temporary involvement with the AO wine and the perceived risk in its choice and purchase, but at the same time we maintain these concepts as two different constructs.

This relation is justified since the more extensive and/or intensive the link between the individual's value system and their knowledge or perception of the AO (that is, the more individual values are linked with the AO and/or the stronger these links are), the greater the risk in the purchase, mainly through the perception of the importance of the consequences of a bad choice.

We define perceived risk following the conceptualisation of Bauer (1960) – the first author analysing the variable, subsequently developed by Cox (1967), and generally accepted by various authors (e.g., Peter and Ryan, 1976; Sheth and Venkatesan, 1968). According to this definition two components are distinguished in this concept: the perceived importance of the negative consequences of a bad choice, and the subjective probability of such an error.

The following hypothesis concerns the perceived risk:

H3: There is a correlation between the risk perceived by the consumer in the purchase of an appellation of origin wine and their state of temporary involvement with the sign.

With respect to the knowledge consumers believe they have about AOs, Celsi and Olson (1988), in their analysis of the consequences of *felt involvement* on the processes of attention and comprehension of the information, also consider the influence of the “domain knowledge”. They find that this is associated with the intrinsic sources of personal relevance (ISPR), although they stress that both exert independent and separable effects.

Thus, in this study we differentiate the knowledge variable from involvement, postulating a correlation, expressed in the following hypothesis:

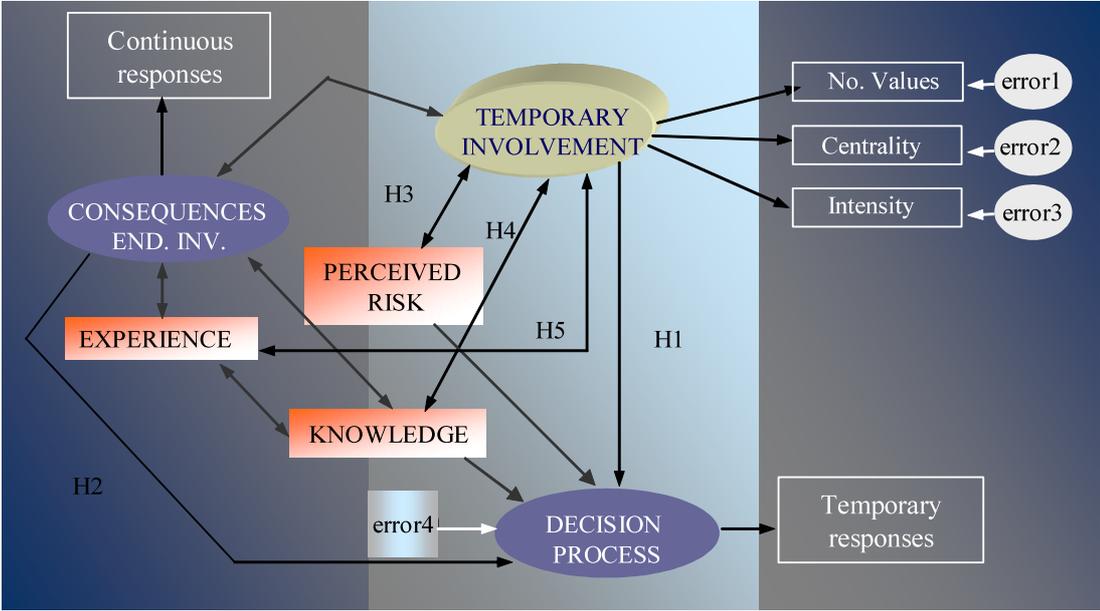
H4: The consumer’s temporary involvement with wine AOs is correlated with their knowledge about them.

Finally, in the model specified in this study we have included the experience variable, defined as the frequency of consumption of wine with an appellation. In this respect, Mittal (1983: 97) highlights the difference between this concept and involvement, arguing that this latter concept should be conceptualised and measured in such a way that it is not confused with the concept of previous experience.

Hence the final hypothesis advanced in this work is as follows:

H5: The consumer’s temporary involvement with wine AOs is correlated with their experience with them.

Fig. 1. Diagram of associations of temporary involvement in the decision process.



3. RESEARCH METHOD

Measures

In table 1 we describe the operationalisation of the constructs of the model. We shall now outline in more detail the indicators proposed for the latent variables: temporary involvement, consequences of enduring involvement and decision process.

As we mentioned when defining the variable, the perceived risk is measured by means of two items following Bauer's definition (1960): the perceived importance of a bad choice of AO wine ("The consequences of a wrong choice are important"), and the probability of such an error occurring ("The choice of an AO is difficult").

In turn, the knowledge that the consumer declares they possess with respect to the wine AOs is evaluated by means of an ordinal scale, from *very high* to *very low*. The experience is defined as the frequency of consumption and it is measured on a scale from *every day* to *occasionally*.

Temporary involvement

The most appropriate approach to measure the involvement construct is to consider its base, which, in the conceptualisation presented here, involves analysing the content and structure of knowledge activated in the individual's mind in response to the stimulus – in this case the AO. This is the cognitive base that underlines the state of arousal represented by the variable. In this way, providing that certain central values are linked with the purchase and/or consumption of appellations by the consumer, this individual will experience a state of involvement with the sign.

This cognitive formulation in the analysis of involvement has been proposed by other authors, but only in their definitions of the construct. Ostrom and Brock (1968), following earlier work by Rosenberg (1956), feature an ego-involved attitude describing "The individual defines himself primarily in terms of that "distinct constellation of social and personal values" he has acquired. The closer the relation between his attitude and these values and the more central these related values are, the higher the degree of attitudinal involvement" (Ostrom and Brock, 1956:375). They propose three structural properties in their cognitive model similarly to Rosenberg (1956): centrality, relatedness and number of values.

Tyebjee (1979) in his definition of the product involvement proposes also these properties, pointing out that product involvement “depends on the number of values engaged by a product, the centrality of these values, and the product’s relatedness to these values (Tyebjee, 1979: 99). Celsi and Olson (1988), in their work defend “[...] a consumer’s level of involvement with an object, situation, or action is determined by the degree to which s/he perceives that concept to be personally relevant”, defining the personal relevance of a product as “represented by the perceived linkage between an individual’s needs, goals, and values (self-knowledge) and their product knowledge (attributes and benefits)” (Celsi and Olson 1968: 211).

As a major contribution Laaksonen (1994) has conducted an empirical application investigating both the content and structure of knowledge underlying product involvement through in depth interviews with the laddering procedure, on the base of which she proposes an index of product involvement.

We try to generalize the cognitive base theorized for the involvement variable through a quantitative approach.

In this work, we measure temporary involvement by measuring the following elements of its cognitive base:

- *number of values* associated with the appellation of origin;
- *centrality* of the associated values, according to the hierarchical system in which the individual organises them; and
- *intensity* of the relations, referring to the strength of the associations.

In this way, we describe not only the consumer’s state of involvement, but also the bases upon which this state is founded. In our development of this measure we drew up a list of values potentially associated with the AO sign by the consumer. The development of these values was based on focus groups. In these groups, in addition to identifying the participants’ knowledge structures, we tested other associations based on a literature review of:

- the lists of general values proposed (Rokeach, 1973; Kahle, 1983; Mitchell, 1983; Richie, 1989), particularly from Schwartz’s (1992) contribution;
- the knowledge structures proposed in different studies that apply laddering or other techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, in relation to the wine product category, as well as to other food products and other products with which the sign could share

part of the cognitive structure, in terms of its association with, for example, certain symbolic or sign values.

From this information we drew up several provisional lists that were subjected to successive empirical tests, as well as evaluation by various experts on the question,. This process resulted in a list of 46 values as the potential upper level of the knowledge structure of the consumer in relation to the AOs.

This list was used in the subsequent quantitative stage. Thus, in the structured questionnaire used to this effect, we instructed the consumers to evaluate:

- the importance attributed to these values. An itemised 5-point scale was employed, from 1-Not important at all to 5-Very important. From this evaluation the indicator *centrality* was derived.
- the link between the values and their personal consumption of AO wine. For this evaluation a 5-point Likert-type scale was used from 1-Totally disagree to 5-Totally agree, obtaining the *number of values* associated with the consumption of AOs and the *intensity* of the associations.

Consequences of enduring involvement

This variable is defined as the *continuing responses* resulting from an enduring involvement with the AO.

Thus, we drew up a list of the effects of enduring involvement, made up of 13 response elements: affective predisposition towards AOs; proactive predisposition and preference for AOs; consumption of AOs; knowledge about AOs; active search for information about AOs; active receptivity towards information about AOs; perception of the differences between the AO and others; preference for one or various AOs; predisposition to try new AOs; link with certain behaviours; opinion leadership; carrying out activities linked with AOs; critical position and post-purchase feelings.

Table 1. Measures.

	Indicators	Questionnaire question	Measurement scale	Item	Indicator description	Examples of items
Temporary involvement	No. values	Association list values with AO	Composed Likert (5 points)	46	Number of scores 4 and 5	- A link with a particular geographic region - A culinary pleasure - Try a product typical of the area I'm visiting - A style and sophistication - Enjoy time with family and friends
	Intensity	Association list values with AO	Composed Likert (5 points)	46	Sum of scores of new variable (4 = 1, 5 = 2)	
	Centrality	Personal importance list of values	Composed itemised from Not important at all to Very important (5 points)	46	Sum of scores of new variable (4 = 1, 5 = 2)	- The geographic roots - The culinary pleasure - The tourist curiosity - The style and sophistication - The time with family and friends
Consequences Perm. Inv.	Continuous responses	Evaluation statements with respect to continuous responses	Composed Likert (5 points)	34	Sum of scores	
					<p style="text-align: center;">Continuous responses</p> <p>1. Affective predisposition towards AOs 4</p> <p>2. Active predisposition and preference for AOs 6</p> <p>3. Consumption of AOs 1</p> <p>4. Knowledge of AOs 4</p> <p>5. Active search for information 1</p> <p>6. Active reception of information 3</p> <p>7. Perception of differences between some AOs and others and preference for one or various AOs 3</p> <p>8. Predisposition to try new AOs 1</p> <p>9. Link with certain behaviours 2</p> <p>10. Opinion leadership 1</p> <p>11. Carry out activities linked with AOs 5</p> <p>12. Critical position 2</p> <p>13. Post-purchase feelings 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Items</p> <p>- AOs are important to me</p> <p>- I tend to notice if the wine I am buying has an AO</p> <p>- On most occasions I drink wine, it has an AO</p> <p>- I could explain what the AO sign represents and means</p> <p>- I look for information to learn more about AOs</p> <p>- I don't pay attention to the posters or ads for wine AOs*</p> <p>- There's no great difference between one AO and the other*</p> <p>- When a new AO appears I tend to try it</p> <p>- I enjoy speaking about AOs</p> <p>- My opinion is highly valued among my family and friends when choosing an AO wine</p> <p>- I usually go to AO wine fairs and expositions organised in my province</p> <p>- I tend to be critical of the information I receive on this issue</p> <p>- I am not usually annoyed if I make a bad choice of AO*</p>

Decision Process	Temporary responses	Evaluation statements with respect to temporary responses	Composed Likert (5 points)	25	Sum of scores	Temporary responses	Items	
						1. Consideration of an AO in evoked set	1	- I consider the possibility of buying an AO
						2. Irreversibility of decision	1	- If, when I decide to buy an AO wine, I receive negative information stick to my decision
						3. Affective predisposition towards AOs	2	- I show great interest in AOs
						4. Predisposition and preference for AOs	5	- I am not bothered if the brand I choose has an AO or not*
						5. Attitude with which decision process adopted	2	- When I choose an AO I try to make the best choice
						6. Intensity of decision process	2	- I spend a lot of time and attention on the choice of an AO wine
						7. Search for information	2	- I ask for advice from experts or acquaintances and friends
						8. Active reception of information	3	- I pay attention to posters advertising AOs
						9. Complex evaluation of alternatives (evoked set and attributes valued)	2	- When making a decision I take various of the AO's characteristics into account
						10. Preference for one or various AOs	1	- I am not bothered which AO I buy*
						11. Consumption of AOs	1	- I always drink wine with an AO
						12. Place of purchase	1	- I prefer to buy AO wine from a specialist store
						13. Critical position	1	- I don't tend to be very critical when I drink the chosen AO*
						14. Post-purchase feelings	1	- If I make the wrong choice I feel very annoyed
Perceived risk	Evaluation importance and probability bad choice	Composed Likert (5 points)	2	Sum of scores				- The consequences of a wrong choice are important - The choice of an AO is difficult
Knowledge	Evaluation on ordinal scale from <i>very high</i> to <i>very low</i>							
Experience	Evaluation of frequency of consumption on ordinal scale from <i>every day</i> to <i>occasionally</i>							

* Reverse score.

Decision process

As a manifest variable we use a list of *temporary responses in the consumer's decision process*, as follows: consideration of an AO wine in the evoked set; irreversibility of the decision; affective predisposition towards AOs; predisposition and preference for AOs; attitude brought to the decision process; intensity of the decision process; search for information; active reception of information; complex evaluation of alternatives (evoked set and attributes valued); preference for one or various wine AOs; consumption of AOs; place of purchase; critique position and post-purchase feelings.

To formulate the items we referred to the literature, and made use of our knowledge on the question and previous exploratory studies.

Data collection

Qualitative phase: focus groups

We organised two focus groups with eight and ten consumers of AO wines. The first group was made up of students in the final years of their degree in Market Research and Techniques, this being a segment of consumers of AO wine of considerable importance at present.

In the second focus group the participants came from different age ranges, professions and spending powers. The aim was to diversify the opinions and positions among the different consumers.

The main aim of these focus groups, apart from analysing consumer behaviours in response to these signs, was to climb in the structure of knowledge that the individual maintains about the AO, raising the level of abstraction of the responses provided, until we obtained the values, goals or needs associated with the purchase, consumption of, and/or knowledge about, this sign.

Quantitative phase: surveys

In the quantitative phase of this research we adopted a survey technique. Table 2 reports the technical specifications of this study.

Table 2. Technical specifications of survey.

Universe	Consumers of wine with appellation of origin over 18 years
Scope	Spanish metropolitan area over 100,000 inhabitants with long wine tradition
Sample size	400 valid questionnaires
Sampling error	$\pm 5\%$ ($p=q=0.50$)
Confidence level	95.5% ($K=2$)
Sampling method	Multi-stage random sampling, stratified in proportion to sex, age, profession and area of residence
Selection	Random system by assigned crossed quotas

We should point out that in order to arrive at the profile for the population universe, we referred to various empirical studies carried out both at the national level by public bodies – Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food – and at the regional level by various private organizations.

Data analysis

To test the model proposed here, we employed structural equation modelling based on covariances.

Initially, we evaluated the normality of the model variables by analysing the asymmetry and the kurtosis, with some of the variables showing non-normal indices in one or both analyses (with a t-value outside the interval -1.96 to 1.96). In turn, in the multivariate analysis, the high value obtained in the Mardia test (23.162, $t=18.311$) leads us to suspect a positive kurtosis and a lack of normality.

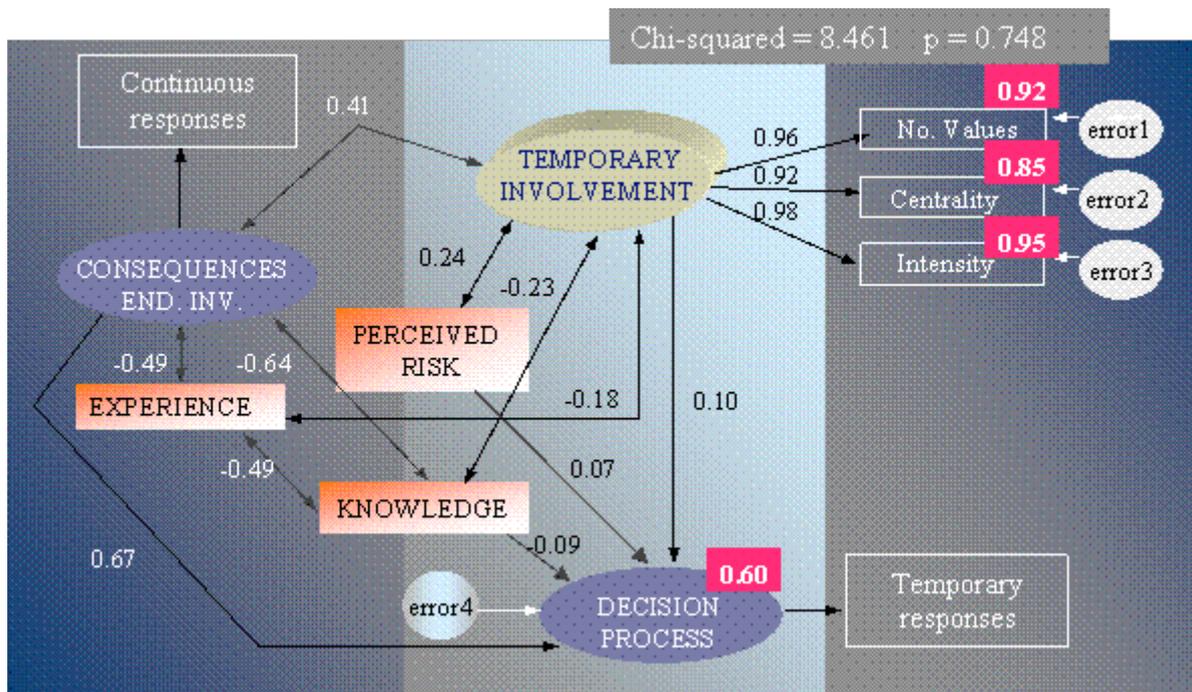
In view of these results, and following the procedure recommended by various experts (Barrio García and Luque Martínez: 2000) when there is an absence of normality, the estimation method employed was maximum likelihood (ML), using the variance-covariance matrix. The results obtained were subsequently compared with those obtained from the application of the asymptotic distribution free function method (ADF), in order to ensure that the results were not affected by the distribution of the variables. From this comparison we obtained an equally satisfactory goodness of fit ($\chi^2=7.761$, $p=0.804$). We should mention that the standard errors of the estimated parameters are robust, as is verified from this comparison, as well as from applying the bootstrap method (requiring in this analysis 1000 iterations).

The bootstrap methodology was also employed to evaluate the discrepancy of the population for the ML and ADF methods. In all the cases the maximum likelihood method obtained the least discrepancy of means.

4. RESULTS

Estimation of the proposed model results in some high goodness of fit indexes (chi-squared =8.461, d.f.= 12, p=0.748; RMSEA =0.000, PCLOSE=0.989; CFI =1.000; MECVI=0.144). Figure 2 shows the estimates of the parameters of the relations tested³.

Fig. 2. Estimations of parameters tested in model.



In the following sections we analyse the measurement model and the structural model individually.

Measurement model

In this study we measure temporary involvement with the AO sign on the basis of the properties describing the cognitive base of that variable: *number of values* associated with the sign, *centrality* of these values and *intensity* of the relation.

³ Estimations of the other relations present in the model have not been discussed in the interests of brevity and clarity in the presentation of the results.

The confirmatory factor analysis of these indicators shows that these variables make up one single factor. The loadings of the temporary involvement construct on the cognitive properties proposed are significantly different from zero ($t > 1.96$), with values of 0.961, 0.921 and 0.977, for *number of values*, *centrality* and *intensity* of the relation, respectively.

The reliability of each indicator in isolation is superior to 0.5 (Sharma, 1996: 163), with a composite reliability of 0.9640 as a most relevant result. The Cronbach alpha (0.9576) equally confirms a high internal consistency.

Finally, the variance extracted offers a positive analysis, with a value of 0.8994.

The perceived risk has been defined following the conceptualization of Bauer (1960), developed afterwards by Cox (1967). In this definition two components are distinguished: the perceived importance of the negative consequences of a bad choice and the subjective probability of such negative consequences. This proposal of two components for perceived risk has been accepted by authors such as Peter and Ryan (1976) or Sheth and Venkatesan (1968), among others.

The consequences of enduring involvement and the decision process have been defined as a formative constructs as changes in the measures are hypothesized to influence changes in the underlying construct and it is not assumed that the measures are caused by this single construct (Jarvis, Mackenzie and Podsakoff, 2003). Moreover, the criteria established by Jarvis, Mackenzie and Podsakoff (2003) and Freeze and Rasche (2007) have been followed in order to define these variables as constructs with formative indicators.

Table 3. Evaluation of measurement model.

EVALUATION	RESULTS	
Measurement model	Factorial analysis: 1 single component Significance of loadings of latent variable on each indicator: 0.961, 0.921 ($t=38.406$), 0.977 ($t=51.471$) Reliability of each indicator: 0.923, 0.848, 0.955 Composite reliability: 0.9640 Cronbach alpha: 0.9576 Variance extracted: 0.8994	Test
		Supported

Structural model

All the structural parameters are significant, and these estimates are reported in Table 4.

Thus, the hypothesis of the mediating role of temporary involvement with the AO in the purchase process of a product such as wine is confirmed ($\gamma_{11}=0.095$, $t=2.594$), so that we can say that a consumer's greater involvement with this sign will result in a more active process towards this sign in the decision to purchase the wine.

Also significant is the effect on the decision process of the consequences of an enduring involvement with these quality indicators ($\gamma_{12}=0.666$, $t=14.962$) (e.g., a continuing interest in AOs, the search for information about them, a critique position in response to this information, the consumption of appellations, the position as opinion leader, etc.).

In this respect we should mention the value of the squared multiple coefficient of correlation, 0.600, which represents a satisfactory fit of the structural equation.

With regard to the relations postulated between temporary involvement and the concepts perceived risk, knowledge and experience, the tests of these hypotheses allow us to confirm significant correlations for all three variables. Thus, we have confirmed a positive relation between perceived risk of purchase of an AO wine and the temporary involvement experienced by the consumer with that sign (0.244, $t=4.963$).

As for the postulated relations of temporary involvement with the consumer's knowledge and experience about AOs, there is a direct correlation in both cases (-0.233 , $t=-4.610$; -0.178 , $t=-3.564$, respectively).

Table 4. Evaluation of structural model hypothesis tests.

EVALUATION	RESULTS			H	Test
		Coefficient	<i>t</i>		
Structural Model	TEMP.INV. → DEC.PROC.	0.095	2.594	H1	Supported
	CONS.PERM.INV. → DEC.PROC.	0.666	14.962	H2	Supported
	TEMP.INV. ↔ PERC.RISK	0.244	4.963	H3	Supported
	TEMP.INV. ↔ KNOWLEDGE	-0.233 ⁽¹⁾	-4.610	H4	Supported
	TEMP.INV. ↔ EXPERIENCE	-0.178 ⁽¹⁾	-3.564	H5	Supported
	Coefficient of reliability of structural equation =0.600				

⁽¹⁾Negative sign due to reverse direction of the scale.

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In recent years there has been a proliferation of studies on the involvement construct, with this being analysed particularly with regard to reactions to advertisements or product categories. In the current study the involvement construct has been applied to the appellation of origin as a brand, in view of the increasing use of AOs and their extension to various agro-food products, in what is the main differentiation strategy currently used in the sector.

A review of the literature examining the involvement construct shows a substantial diversity of conceptual specifications. In this research involvement is defined as the consumer's state of arousal with respect to the stimulus with which involvement is analysed – in this case the AO. For its description we have considered the cognitive base upon which such a predisposition is founded.

This state is conceived as the expression, at the motivational level, of a feeling of the personal relevance of the stimulus, being described as the activation in the individual's mind of a series of connections between the perceived attributes of the stimulus – the AO – and certain fundamental values and goals maintained by the individual as an expression of their "ego".

Based on this conceptualisation, we suggest that the consumer's state of temporary involvement with the AO can be described by three properties defining its cognitive base: number of associated values, centrality of these values and intensity of the relation.

These indicators were validated, so that three courses of action can be distinguished for increasing temporary involvement with the AO:

- strengthening the relations of this sign with certain values central to the consumer,
- intensifying the relations already formed in the individual's mind between this sign and their value system, and
- a more complex action aimed at modifying the importance attributed to these values.

This represents an important contribution to the literature on involvement, insofar as it allows us to determine not only the consumer's level of involvement, but more importantly the basis of involvement, providing the information required to be able to act on it.

As another contribution, we have analysed the consumer's temporary involvement with the AO in the framework of the decision process adopted in the purchase of wine for a special occasion (such as a dinner with friends or relatives, or a business meeting).

Thus, many authors have defended an effect of this construct on certain aspects of the consumer's behaviour. In this study we analyse the influence of the temporary involvement

with the AO on the process adopted by the individual in the purchase of a wine, describing this process on the basis of the cognitive, affective and behavioural responses that make it up. This mediating role has been confirmed.

We have also analysed the effect of the consequences that result from enduring involvement with AO on the way in which the individual handles the decision process in the purchase of a product such as wine, confirming a significant influence.

Another contribution of this study is the nomological network proposed for the involvement construct and related variables. A positive relation between the state of temporary involvement with the AO and the perceived risk of purchase of a product certified by this sign – in this specific case a wine – was found. Thus, the more an individual is involved with the sign, the greater the risk they perceive in the purchase of a wine of this appellation. The two variables, on the other hand, are confirmed to be two distinct concepts.

Finally, other concepts such as the knowledge and experience the consumer has with appellations have also proved to be correlated with the individual's state of involvement. A consumer's greater temporary involvement with AOs is associated with greater knowledge about them. Also, more experience in terms of frequency of consumption is directly correlated with the individual's state of involvement with this sign at a specific moment in time.

As a direction for future research, we would like to suggest to apply the model to different segments of consumers. This segmentation will allow us to identify groups of consumers with different structures of knowledge with respect to this sign, exhibiting distinct schemas in relation to the number of values associated with the sign, the centrality of these values and/or the intensity of these relations, as well as conceivably in the category of values linked to the sign.

Another possible extension of this research would be to apply the approach proposed here to an analysis of enduring involvement, thereby allowing the consumer's states of enduring and temporary involvement to be compared. For this analysis, however, it would be essential to select stimuli for which the temporal specificity of their consumption or relation with the consumer does not interfere with the consumer's global evaluation and perception of them.

This is indeed a limitation of this current work, given the link between the purchase and/or consumption of the AO wine and a specific and one-off occasion. This limits the reliability of the consumer's responses in their global evaluation of the AO. The strong connection between the AO consumption and a particular situation means that the consumers generally bring these consumption occasions to mind when evaluating the AO sign, describing relations – of the

appellation with certain values – that in fact derive exclusively from the situation. Hence, to measure enduring involvement, it would be necessary to select stimuli for which this connection does not exist, and with which the consumer maintains a more regular contact.

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