

## Tbilisi 2022 Abstract Submission

### Title

Gender of producer and wine consumers: Results from a randomized online experiment

### I want to submit an abstract for:

Conference Presentation

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### Keywords

producer's gender  
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### Research Question

How does the information about the gender of the winemaker affect the way consumers evaluate a wine (willingness to pay and hedonic liking)?

### Methods

We designed a between-subject randomized online experiment and collected data from 1500 French speaking respondents.

### Results

Male products, produced in a male-typed industry, are favored by male consumers; female products, produced in a

male-typed industry, are disadvantaged by female consumers.

## Abstract

The name of the producer can be used to differentiate goods, like when the winemaker's name or the winery owner's name appear as a sign on the label. The producer's gender can often be inferred from the phonology of his or her first name, especially when grammar rules reflect the assigned gender. When the industry is gendered, like the wine industry that is male-dominated, one can wonder how the consumer behavior is affected when he has the ability to identify if the wine is provided by a male or a female producer. As gender stereotypes can give rise to biased judgments and decisions, transactions on product markets can also be affected. This is what this article investigates: how does the information about the gender of the winemaker affect the way consumers evaluate a wine (willingness to pay and hedonic liking)? In a set of regressions, we analyze the extent to which survey participants are open to gender diversity in the wine industry.

Our contribution is twofold. On the first hand, willingness to pay for the characteristics of wine has been widely investigated. Recent research has focused on CSR characteristics of wine but essentially from the environmental perspective, mostly organic and other environment-friendly certifications, seen as the most prominent characteristic of sustainability. Social aspects of sustainability, including gender equality and combatting discrimination, have not been investigated yet, and to the best of our knowledge, the valuation of the gender of the wine producer has not been studied so far. On the other hand, research about women in the wine industry is limited and relatively recent. While it is often assumed that wine prestige and reputation require a strong male identity, women are gaining authority and recognition. More empirical evidence is needed, as most of existing research is qualitative.

## Empirical strategy

We developed an online experiment and collected data from 1500 respondents from France and Belgium. Participants were French speaking respondents, as French is a gendered language. French grammar rules distinguish nouns by gender, most of them are associated with a male or female gender tag and everything attached to them (pronouns, adjectives, verbs) reflect the assigned gender. Vigneron is the French noun for a male winemaker while it is vigneronne for a female one: the writing as well as the pronunciation are different. We designed a 2 (2 kinds of labels, traditional vs. modern) x 5 (5 sets of information about the producer, including no information about the producer as control condition) (i.e. 10 conditions as a whole) between-subject randomized online experiment.

The fictitious and realistic labels used for the experiment contain all the exact same information (winery's name, appellation of origin, vintage and other mandatory information) with the exception of the information related to the winemaker. Each label (except the controls) appears with one sentence stating who has made the wine. Conditions 1 (traditional label, like for conditions 2, 3, 4 and 5) and 6 (modern label, like for conditions 7, 8, 9 and 10) are the control conditions as no information about the winemaker is provided. In conditions 2 and 7, the winemaker is Georges Cadieux while in conditions 3 and 8 the winemaker is Nathalie Panetier, both chosen from a list of randomly generated names. The first names Georges and Nathalie are, respectively, masculine and feminine in French. Moreover, their phonetic structure suggests a male vs. female personality, respectively. In conditions 4 and 9, the sticker Fémivin, a coalition of female winemakers only, indicates that the wine has been made by a female winemaker. No such coalition exists for male winemakers only. However, Vignerons Indépendants is a winemaking trade association encompassing the French noun for "male winemakers" in its name (vignerons), even if not dedicated to male winemakers only. We use its sticker in conditions 5 and 10 as a mirror of the female winemaker coalition.

The survey took place from March 25, 2021 to April 2, 2021, under almost normal circumstances (i.e. no strict lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic in France and Belgium). Respondents from Belgium and France have been randomly drawn from a panel of consumers selected by the company Respondi, a professional panelist that sends out survey links by email. Respondents are rewarded, only if they fully complete the survey, with points that are transformed into gift cards usable in several stores. The average time for completion of the survey was 16 minutes, with no extreme value. A screening question allow to select respondents that have consumed wine over the last 3 months. Each respondent was assigned randomly to one of the 10 conditions. The final sample consisted of 1000 French and 500 Belgian respondents with a distribution among experimental conditions that ranges from 9.7% to 10.3%.

The survey starts with the randomized experiment: they see one bottle of wine only and have to assess the quality on a 5-point scale; then, cheap talk is used right before the valuation question to mitigate the hypothetical bias,

where respondents are invited to give their willingness to pay, in euros, for the same bottle of wine. We also measure willingness to taste, hedonic liking and purchase intention. Some items are used to measure the opinion of respondents about women in the wine industry and about women in the Society. Socio-demographics as well as wine-related characteristics and opinions of respondents are asked in a final section of the questionnaire.

#### Preliminary results for WTP

To analyze the effect of the information about the winemaker on the consumer's willingness to pay, we estimate a series of regressions where the declared willingness to pay is a function of the characteristics of the wine presented as well as of socio-demographic and wine-related characteristics of respondents. Given that WTP is here a left-censored variable (respondents declare 0 euro if they are not willing to pay for the bottle of wine), we estimate a Tobit model.

Model 1 focuses on the information about the winemaker provided on the label, with no interaction with the label style. Here a dummy variable captures the effect of an original label vs. a traditional one. Compared with no information about the winemaker, the coalition of female winemaker only appears as significant: The marginal effect is negative and high (-1.4 euros). Model 2 interacts the label style and the information about the winemaker and confirms a negative effect of the coalition of female winemakers, in particular when presented with an original label (-2.2 euros). The wine industry is still a male-dominated industry, and it seems that collective strategies supporting women are not appreciated by consumers. In model 3, we interact the information about the winemaker with the gender of the respondent: compared with a neutral label regarding the winemaker (no information, i.e. conditions 1 and 6), while male respondents provide a price premium to the wine made by a male winemaker (+1.5 euros), female respondents associate a price discount with the wine made by a female winemaker (-1.8 euros). Our result is in line with previous evidence, but for women respondents only: male products, produced in a male-typed industry, are favored by male consumers; female products, produced in a male-typed industry, are disadvantaged by female consumers. Women judge gender incongruence more severely than men.

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