Stellenbosch 2023 Abstract Submission

Title
Explaining consumer purchase predictors for South African old vineyard wines

I want to submit an abstract for:
Conference Presentation

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Keywords
Wine consumer behaviour, resonance, proneness, consumer quest, purchase probability.

Research Question
Whether, how and why resonance influences the probability of consumers to purchase South African old vineyard wines?

Methods
Tested scales were refined, adapted, and presented to 265 wine drinkers via an online survey. PLS-SEM computed the relationships between four latent constructs: consumer proneness, resonance, quest and purchase probability.

Results
Psychological proneness (predictor) positively influences consumer resonance (mediator) which positively influences the purchase probability of OV category wines (outcome). Higher levels of quest (moderator) strengthen resonance’s influence on purchase probability.

Abstract
Purpose and context: This study explains the relationships between implicit needs, cognitive wants, affective desires, and presumptive purchase for an emerging wine category, advancing wine consumer behaviour literature. In 2018, old vineyard criteria were formally standardised in South Africa through the introduction of the Certified Heritage Vineyard (CHV) seal, verifying that 85% of the vines producing the wine were 35 years or older. In the process, boundaries around the old vineyard (OV) category were sharpened and it emerged as a legitimate, albeit nascent wine category. Subsequently, the Old Vine Project (OVP) membership increased from 8 in 2018 to over 100 members by 2021, with 233 wines bearing the seal by that stage. While Prilaid & Steyn (2020) show that producers assign a premium to OV-related cues and that an emerging category was formed, it is unclear whether...
consumers resonate with and are likely to buy wine in this category. By way of redress, we ask: whether, how and why resonance influences the probability of consumers purchasing South African old vineyard wines?

Method: Using Churchill’s (1979) marketing scale development method, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) (n=40) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (n=52) refined several tested scales presented in an online survey instrument presented to a further 173 wine drinkers. Owing to restrictions on liquor sales in South Africa during the COVID-19 lockdown, this was collected in two stages. The sample mostly identified as male (56%), were well-educated (48% tertiary education), and in a mature age bracket (mean=54). Additionally, the sampled respondents were involved (80%), experienced wine drinkers (66% > 20 years), who drank wine mostly at home (57%) multiple times a week (50%) and 65% felt their financial well-being was the same or better than before lockdown. Worth noting is that 16% bought wine through online retailers, compared to 22% from a liquor stores and 21% virtually or in person through the celler door (perhaps an effect of lockdown and location). A partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) computed the constitution and relationships between four latent constructs. First, proneness (TEND) refers to the predisposition of consumers to prefer products with traits congruent with their self-concept. This comprised tendencies to prefer scarce and unique products. Second, resonance (RES) refers to the actual relational appropriation of certain traits in OV category wines, recognising their quality, connection between their own identity and that of the category, perceived rarity, and alignment between the values of OV producers and their own i.e., transcendent value. Third, quest (QUEST) refers to involved, quality conscious consumers actively seeking out OV category wines because they are familiar, knowledgeable, and experienced with the category. Fourth, purchase probability (PP) is a measure of purchase certainty. For this, the 12-point Juster scale (1966) was regarded as a more efficient predictor of actual purchase than purchase willingness and / or purchase intention scales. Nonetheless, to improve the measure, Chandran & Morwitz’ (2005) purchase likelihood and chance of purchase scales were incorporated as additional indicators. In the final modelling, two statistically insignificant indicators, (1) proneness to nostalgia and (2) financial well-being, were eliminated. We hypothesised that TEND (independent variable) positively influences RES (mediating variable) (H1) which in turn positively influences PP (dependent variable) (H2). We further proposed that consumer QUEST acts as a moderator in influencing the strength of the relationship between RES and PP for the South African OV wine category (H3).

Findings: Cronbach’s alphas (α) and composite reliability (CR) scores for all first and second order constructs exceeded the 0.7 benchmark, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency / reliability while average variance extracted (AVE) scores surpassed the 0.5 benchmark in support of adequate discriminant validity. Additionally, Fornell & Larckers’ (1981) and Henseler Ringle & Sarstedts’ (2015) heterotrait-monotrait ratio tests for discriminant validity yielded satisfactory results. Therefore, all constructs empirically measured what they intended to measure and were distinctive from other constructs. Having confirmed the satisfactory performance of the measurement model, we turned to the structural model. A positively significant path at the p<0.05 level was confirmed between TEND and RES (β = 0.639; t = 16.978; p = 0.014), and between RES and PP (β = 0.481; t = 8.449; p = 0.000). RES acted as a mediator between TEND and PP, explaining how buying behaviour took on internal psychological significance. These results are satisfactory as TEND explains 40.8% (R2 = 0.408) of the variance in RES and in turn RES explained 51.7% (R2 = 0.517) of the variance in PP. While QUEST had a negative impact on the relationship RES --> PP (β = -0.109; t = 2.160; p = 0.031), the value of PP at a given level of RES was higher for respondents with higher levels of QUEST than for respondents with lower levels thereof, supporting a moderation effect.

Discussion, contribution, and managerial implications: By way of interpretation, psychological tendencies make consumers prone to resonate with South African OV category wines, significantly increasing their probability to purchase them. Additionally, higher levels of consumer quest for OV category wines strengthen resonance’s positive influence on purchase probability. The study therefore appears to confirm that TEND variables are psychological needs comprising deep-seated necessities, while RES variables resemble an array of cognitive wants amounting to personal, and wishful preferences based on beliefs. Additionally, consumer QUEST is a desire reflecting purposeful and emotional passions and PP is presumptive behaviour. So doing, the study offers a robust model to explain and predict how submerged predispositions become performative of cognitive, affective modes of wine consumer behaviour and ultimately purchase. Apart from segmentation data, the investigation provides practitioners with a process model to explain how relatively nascent premium product categories gain consumer traction, offering a useful tool for those considering introducing new products or extending product ranges to include an old vineyard category wine.
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Psychological needs

- Uniqueness
  - β = 0.77; t = 44.91
- Scarcity
  - β = 0.32; t = 23.70

Affective desires

- Involvement
  - β = 0.35; t = 14.30
- Perfectionism
  - β = 0.57; t = 11.91
- Familiarity
  - β = 0.32; t = 6.05; p = 0.00

Cognitive wants

- Quality recognition
- Self-Category Connection
- Perceived Rarity
- Transcendence

Presumptive behaviour

- Likely
  - β = 0.92; t = 17.38
- Chance
  - β = 0.78; t = 27.81
- Juster
  - β = 0.35; t = 14.30

H1

α = 0.93; CR = 0.94; AVE = 0.64
Proneness (TEND)
β = 0.64; t = 16.98; p = 0.014

H2

α = 0.94; CR = 0.94; AVE = 0.53
Resonance (RES)
β = 0.48; t = 8.50; p = 0.00

H3

α = 0.88; CR = 0.90; AVE = 0.55
Purchase Probability (PP)
β = 0.68; t = 29.83

Mod: β = (-0.109); t = 2.16; p = 0.031