

Choice of Burgundy red wines: Difference between stakeholders and consumers

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CHOICE OF BURGUNDY RED WINES : DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSUMERS

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Abstract

The present study was carried out in Burgundy (France). Two stakeholders' categories of the Burgundian wine-producing sector (the upstream & the downstream ones) and consumers were surveyed. Forty Burgundy red wines were presented to both panels. The study focus on 1) the criteria used by the stakeholders to make their own choice before providing wines for the consumers, 2) the criteria used by consumers to choose the wine. Two criteria were studied: intrinsic and extrinsic. The aims are i) study the degree of consensus or disagreement of professional among their representation of Burgundy red wines, ii) study the wine's preferences of consumers and iii) check if the wines judged to be good examples by professional are liked by consumers, and vice-versa. Sensory tests were carried-out in order to measure the typicality judgment of professionals and consumers preferences. Finally, a conjoint analysis was used to measure the importance of the extrinsic attributes for the stakeholders in the differentiation and the commercial positioning of wines and for consumers in the buying wine.

The study shows that for intrinsic attributes, the position of professionals in the wine industry has an influence on the sensory answer. For consumers, differentiation of wines is difficult. For extrinsic attributes used when selecting wine, the respondents have basically the same choice, whatever their position in the wine industry or consumers.

Keywords: red wines, upstream/ downstream stakeholders, typicality judgment, conjoint analysis, Burgundy, consumer preferences.

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Introduction

Wine is being a complex product wich is characterized by a multitude of attributes. During their decision-making process, the consumers have to pay attention to several and different information when they choose a wine, especially when they don't have the opportunity to taste before buying. In certain cases, they need and ask seller for advices to take their decision. The stakeholders have an important role So, It has become for them to identify the choice attributes wich are considered important by consumers when choosing wine. So that what is offered is presented on the appropriate way. We investigate which factors are acting when making decision to select wine to buy. Two criteria were chosen: the intrinsic (sensory characteristics) and extrinsic ones (labelling, brand ...). This study focus on two different categories of wine stakeholders, namely those who work in the upstream stages of the wine

industry (involved in production) vs. those who are working downstream (finished product), and will study their representation and selection of wine for their supply. Previous research investigates the attributes more important when choosing wine, but there is not comparison between professional and consumers. The purpose of this study is to answer these questions: 1) which attributes are considered as important to professionals? Is there a difference between the two categories of the stakeholders? 2) which attributes are considered as important for consumers when choosing wine?

Materials and methods

The present study was carried out in Burgundy (France) in July 2012 and 2013. Forty Burgundy red medium range wines, illustrating as far as possible the diversity of the supply were selected. Forty professionals of Burgundy wine industry (20 from upstream and 20 from downstream) and 296 consumers participated in the study. They were not preliminary trained. Professionals were asked to mark the level of exemplarity of wines, at first visually, then, independently, based on aroma and taste. This holistic sensory approach is worked-out by Ballester *et al* (2005). Consumers were asked to mark their appreciation for wines (6 wines/ person/ session) in the same condition. Finally, all participants have to rank 16 cards issued from a conjoint design in order to estimate the relative importance of extrinsic attributes.

Results and discussion

The results of the ANOVA on both visual, smell and taste evaluations, highlight a significant interaction between the job status in the wine industry and the wine tasted. The location of their job (upstream vs. downstream) has an influence on their image of Burgundy red wines. So, the sensory results of the two categories of professionals were studied separately.

Intrinsic attributes: Bipolarisation of wines

Fisher's LSD was used and wines are ranked in order to ascending mean exemplarity and preference scores. Differences can be observed between each mode of evaluation and participants. For visual evaluation, the amplitude of mean exemplarity scores were much more diversified (from 1.85 to 8.15) and therefore better discriminated with upstream than downstream professionals (from 2.27 to 7.98) . For consumers, the mean preference scores were less diversified (3.33-6.82). All participants (professionals and consumers) are agree of the wines noted as a poor exemple of Burgundy red wines. They less agree of the good exemple.

For smell and taste evaluation, the mean scores were less important for each category of professionals, and for consumers, differentiation between wines is impossible. The plurality of the sensations relative to the smell and taste evaluation participates in the disparity of the judgments of exemplary, and make difficult to consumers to choose between wines.

Extrinsic attributes for wine selection

The results from conjoint analysis were computed separately for each category. The table1 represent the importance of each attribute for upstream, downstream position and consumers. The most important attribute for upstream judges, downstream judges and consumers is the brand name (respectively 41%, 36% and 27%), then the price (21%, 24% and 24%). The less important attribute is the appellation for upstream judges but for downstream judges and consumers the grape variety is less important. These results show that, for extrinsic attributes used when selecting wine, the respondents have basically the same choice, whatever their position is (upstream vs. downstream) in the wine industry. This result is shared by consumers.

Table 1: Value of relative importance of extrinsic attributes of wine

| | Upstream | Downstream | Consumers |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Appellation | 6.23 | 12.972 | 14.699 |
| Grape variety | 11.038 | 9.979 | 11.013 |
| Price | 21.53 | 24.091 | 24.748 |
| Brand name | 41.311 | 36.422 | 27.434 |
| Award | 19.891 | 16.536 | 22.106 |
| Average score of importance | | | |

Conclusion

The results of this study focus on the local wine actors (Burgundy), it would be interesting to compare these results with other wine stakeholders from different regions

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