

THE BUYING EXPERIENCE AND IMPACT OF THE EXPERTISE AN EXPLORATORY APPROACH (REFEREED)

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Abstract

After having shown the importance of the store for the product buying, the wine purchasing can be regarded as an experience and this more especially when consumption becomes increasingly occasional and is attached to a weaker expertise concerning the wines. If the decisions of buying make it possible to differentiate the groups of consumers, we think that the buying context, the buying experience make it possible to build a classification based on various forms of experiences. These are organized by thematic field: the product knowledge, the sensory experience, an associative thought, buying context. These emerged from an thematic analysis which wants to be exploratory. From these fields, we elaborate a typology of buying behaviours. These types (the conservatives, the novices, the aesthetic discovers) release from the differences on the level of the expertise.

The store chosen to distribute its products plays a role in the perception of the product and its evaluation. Indeed, the consumers will use information on the buying environment to evaluate the product (Jacoby et Mazursky 1994, Grewal and Baker 1994). Indeed, if the store is positively well evaluated on these intangible attributes, it will associate positive emotions to him which will generate a positive image. The latter leads the consumer to choose the store in an intentional way and to stay much more time. On the contrary a negative emotion leads to flee the store and to deteriorate its image. Moreover these negative emotions will have more consequences on image than positive emotions. The effects of these two types of emotions seem different. Indeed, the theory of the effects asymmetry shows that negative information has an effect more significant than positive information in the formation of the evaluations by the consumers. When the consumers are satisfied with their store, they develop loyalty which leads them systematically to visit this store in priority to carry out all their purchases (Osman, 1993). This loyalty, associated with satisfaction, is used to establish a true relation between the consumers and their store.

Finally according to this image, the consumers will decide to continue to buy or not in this shop. The image of the store corresponds to a set of tangible elements (design, social, environment and offer) which memorizes the consumer.

- Design of the store (Grewal et Backer, 1994), corresponds to the various functional elements (organization,...) and aesthetics (architecture, colours). The image of the store will be much better than its design is positively perceived by the consumers.
- Social dimension gathers the whole of the people who interact with the consumers in the store. The staffing exerts a great influence on the evaluation of the store and the formation of the store image by the consumers (Mazursky et Jacoby, 1986).
- The atmosphere dimension corresponds to the basic elements which exert an influence on the consumer at an unconscious level. A pleasant atmosphere influences perceptions of the consumers favourably, and contributes to the formation of a positive image.
- The offer of the store corresponds to the set of goods in term of quality, brands and price, but also in terms of services proposed to the consumers. The store is perceived much better than it proposes a great choice, and thus it has more chance to be preferred by the consumers.

These tangible dimensions generate emotions (intangible element of the image) which are integrated into the image of the store. These emotions are also memorized and form an emotional pattern which generates cognitive reactions (Babin and Attaway 2000).

When he thinks of a store, the consumer remembers what the store means for him in terms of experiences, of determinants characteristics and of emotions. It is a question for the store of having an own image and a positioning perceived by the consumer as being different from another store. Indeed the image gives in the spirit of the consumer a place suitable and different from that occupied by the other stores (Ries and Trout 1981). Concerning the wine retailing (Lokshin and Kharimanis 1997), this positioning is defined at the same time by tangible or functional attributes as the variety seeking and by emotions like the employees' availability or a fast service. These characteristics made it possible to position the various wine stores in two dimensions: the first, variety seeking and the second tasting, car park and staffing. Moreover, the consumers can react differently to various experiences and

dimensions for the same store. But concerning the wine, do the context and the place, be significant to differentiate the buying behaviours?

The buying context: element of differentiation

Recent studies tend to propose the buying context as determinant element of the wine consumer's behaviour and making it possible to segment the behaviours (Hall et al. 2001). The importance of the attributes which defines the wine depends on the type of purchase and the context which surrounds the buying decision. Sanchez and Gill (1998) consider that it is the type of retailing which makes it possible to differentiate the wine consumers' segments. By applying the life styles to the wine consumption, Bruwer et al.. (2002), considers five types by accounting in particular manners of making shopping (search for variety, confidence, impulsiveness, effectiveness oriented, occasion oriented), which are:

- The enjoyment oriented social wine drinkers have a consumption which is defined by the pleasure and of the demonstrations of good mood (bar with wine and pub). But they can also drink at home to release themselves.
- The fashion/image oriented wine drinkers are concerned with their own image and they drink because it is fashionable.
- The ritual oriented conspicuous wine enthusiasts show that they know as a practitioner of consumption's ritual and are very implied in their very ostentatious consumption. Indeed, they will discover new wines which enable him to be filled with enthusiasm.
- The purposeful inconspicuous premium wine drinkers have a regular consumption without ritual and planned their purchases.
- The basic wine drinkers have a level of implication and weak knowledge in the wine and are occasional consumers.

Following this work, Trent (2003) elaborate a typology of consumer using shopping experiences of Bruwer et al.. 2002 and adding two dimensions: packaging and information search. Certain groups are in two typologies (basic wine drinkers and enjoyment oriented social wine drinkers). Certain groups change (the ritual oriented conspicuous wine enthusiasts → the image oriented knowledge seeking wine drinkers, the purposeful inconspicuous premium wine drinkers → the conservative knowledgeable wine drinkers). A new group appears the experimenters highly knowledgeable wine drinkers. For each group, it is given information on how is made

the buying decision. Indeed, **the experimenters highly knowledgeable wine drinkers** take risks and test the wine. For that, they ask councils and are in the search of information. But they can be impulsive and are not confident in any brand. **The enjoyment oriented social wine drinkers** seek the diversity of the offer which it associates an occasion. They test and are very impulsive and are influenced by the shape and the label of the bottle. **The image oriented knowledge seeking wine drinkers** take account into recommendations and have an aversion with the risks and they think that more the expensive, better is the wine. **The basic wine drinkers** have some brands for which they have confidence. The occasion and the search for information are not used to make their buying decisions. **The conservative knowledgeable wine drinkers** take account of the occasion. They make their decisions according to their own knowledge, their beliefs and purchases. They do not seek the diversity of the offer nor the experimentation. Moreover, these groups gather consumers who have different levels of knowledge:

- The experimenters highly knowledgeable wine drinkers have the level of expertise more raised,
- The conservative knowledgeable wine drinkers and the image oriented knowledge seeking wine drinkers have levels of average expertise,
- The enjoyment oriented social wine drinkers and the basic wine drinkers have the levels of the weakest expertise.

The expertise differentiating the buying behaviours in wine

The majority of consumer's typologies even if they are not explicitly built expertise dimensions, find these categories of consumers: novices and experts. So if the expertise does not explicitly discriminate the groups, we find in the denomination the theme of expertise. Generally, these types of consumers are elaborate through scale measure. The question is to know if knowledge is real or if the expertise is obtained when you answer at the questionnaire. The question is how the person acquires the knowledge in a specific field, here the wine. The questionnaire seems to not appropriate to capture the expertise. For that we prefer an qualitative data collection. The differences between novices and experts would come from observable differences in the cognitive processes and the structures of knowledge. Those are rules to select, evaluate and combine knowledge to give judgements and to make decisions and in particular those concerning the products (Alba and Hutchinson 1987).

In terms of cognitive structure, one of the major differences would be that the beginners would have a more intuitive knowledge, more stereotyped and sensitive of the wine while the experts would be more analytical, would use more structured information. Also, the novices have a experiential behaviour while the experts would have a behaviour oriented less by the pleasure than by the effectiveness of their decisions (Mathwick et al.. 2002).

In terms of process (Spence and Brucks 1997), the experts structure the problem according to their knowledge or make analogies while the novices will make simplifications of the problem. Because of their knowledge, the experts will select, combine and interpret relevant information to solve their problem and the novices would not do. The experts would vary less than the beginners and would have more confidence in their decision. The novices would improve their decision with an external assistance.

The decisions' performance in wine would be function of the confidence in buying decision (Seriex and Morot 2001). One can identify two types of orientation in term of confidence which will guide the consumer. First is related to the human relations (the relation with the salesmen, the request for council), the second with indicators of quality (the origin of the product and the brand to reinsure, the chateau and the property in terms of traceability). Confidence takes three forms: the confidence based on cognitions, the confidence based on the emotions and the confidence based on the personal proximities. The confidence based on cognitions exists since individual chooses with reflection the brand for which the person places one's confidence in the product. The confidence based on the emotions results from the emotional implication of the people engaged in the relation. Confidence thus corresponds to the emotional bonds which are established between the individuals, here between the consumer and the wine maker. Lastly, the confidence based on the similarities and the individual proximity results from the tendency of the individuals to have confidence in council of person who are culturally and socially closed.

The expertise could be defined by the cognitive dimension (competence) and individual proximity dimension of confidence (you are expert because your relations say that you are an expert). The expertise concerning the field of the wine will be measured by a scale of four items (Perrouy et al.. 2004):

- Among my friends, I am perceived like a wine expert
- The wine, it is a subject to which I do not understand anything
- Compared with the others, I know little about the wine
- The wine it is a subject on which I feel qualified

From a score, this scale made it possible to categorize in three homogeneous classes: novices, the fairly expert ones and the very expert ones. By carrying out an analysis in principal components, we checked the unidimensionality of this construct which represent 66.8% of the variance with an acceptable reliability of 0.88 (α of cronbach). The degree of expertise has an average value of 2.83 on a scale with 6 positions. This construct is defined by the following items:

	Component 1
The wine, it is a subject to which I do not understand anything	-0.87
Among my friends, I am perceived like a wine expert	0.84
The wine it is a subject on which I feel qualified	0,79
Compared with the others, I know little about the wine	-0.77

Methodology

The object of this research is to study the buying behaviour not in a general way but compared to buying context and present and last buying experiences (Groves et al.. 2000). Here the wine will be seen under experiential aspect (Ali-Knigt and Pitt 2001). They use the model of Prick and Gilmore (1999) to categorize the shopping experiences in the wine. The experiences are categorized by two axes: active or passive, immerse or absorb. They elaborate four types of experience: the spectacle, education, aesthetics, escape. This experience helps the consumer to attain certain objectives as making a gift. But it can also be pure pleasure without intention at the beginning. This experience is related also to what the person does (to handle the object or any other sensory activity) and how the person reacts to a product or to an marketing environment. This set of dimensions creates an experiential value of the buying decision in retailing environment (Hoolbrook and Hrischman 1982, Mathwick et al.. 2002).

This experiment will be collected through narratives stories created freely by the participants in the study. The consumer writes a story on how the product is bought. This story will be analyzed by how the purchaser defines his buying experience.

These writings have an unstructured form and answer to the following question "How do you buy a wine in retailing environment? ".

These texts are structured by thematic analysis. Initially, a word counting analyzes the co-occurrences which will make it possible to release the main themes of the texts. We determine after some group of theme. These regroupings were based on linguistic aspect (words having the same linguistic root) and semantic aspect (take+taster+look+talk →feel). These words were gathered by taking account of the context. For example "surface" was associated with great which is seen like a synonym of great distribution. This is why the words surfaces and distribution were gathered. On the other hand, cave and "caviste" are not synonymous for the participants in the study. Indeed the "caviste" is a distribution channel while the cellar makes it possible to guard the wine. This thematic analysis was made by using Modalisa software. The narratives stories were re-coded by these themes. The set of the themes is based on a lexicon of 257 words. Within sight of our size of sample, the expressions or other repeated segments were not analyzed.




The sample is composed individuals taking part in an executive formation not specialized in the wine. The characteristics of the sample are as follows:

	size	%
women	15	28.3%
men	38	71.7%
Total	53	100,0%

	size	%
Less than 28,7	14	26.4%
Between 28,7 and 33,3	15	28.3%
More than 33,3	24	45.3%
Total	53	

Concerning the expertise, we calculated an average score based on four dimensions.

The levels of expertises on the sample are as follows:

	size	%
Less than 2,75	 16	30.2%
Between 2,75 and 3,25	 23	43.4%
More than 3,25	 14	26.4%
Total	53	

On a scale from 1 to 6, the novices will have a level of expertise of less than 2.75. The fairly expert one will have a level between 2.75 and 3.25. The very expert ones will have a level higher than 3.25.

Results

The thematic analysis made to release 47 themes. Some were gathered because of the low sample size. First of all, the table following present the topics relating to the characteristics of the product.

	size	%
price	40	75.5%
bottle	33	62.3%
origin	29	54.7%
product	25	47.2%
color	24	45.3%
château	18	34.0%
millesime	16	30.2%
wine maker	16	30.2%
Total/answers	53	

The first three main characteristics relate to the price firstly, the bottle and the origin of the wine. These elements seem significant to differentiate the offer by the consumer. Then we gathered the words which could characterize how made the buying decisions.

	size	%
choice	33	62.3%
knowledge	28	52.8%
feel	26	49.1%
test	26	49.1%
preference	21	39.6%
council	20	37.7%
consumption	17	32.1%
Total	53	

Choice, Knowledge, Feel and Test are associated to the two types of experience: analytic side (the first ones) and sensory side (the others). These characteristics are shared by the majority of the consumers. Also we have a set of topic which gathers various situations of consumption.

	size	%
meal	24	45.3%
occasions	20	37.7%
friends	13	24.5%
dishes	11	20.8%
Total	53	

Any consumption experiences aren't shared by 50% of the respondents. We have to remove the topic friends. By analyzing the context, it meant two things: asked council to a friend and to offer wine for a friend. After having to analyze the situations of consumption, we analyzed the places of purchase.

	size	%
Unspecialized stores	30	56.6%
Promotion	19	35.8%
Counter	18	34.0%
Specialised stores	13	24.5%
Brand	7	13.2%
Total	53	

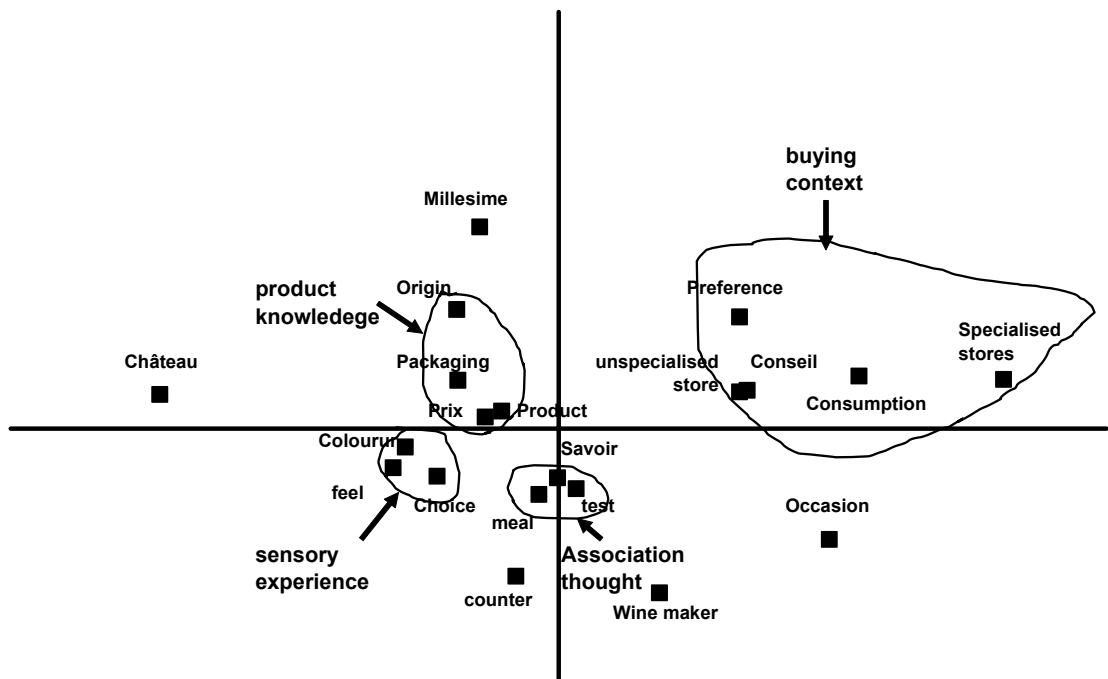
A place arises: Unspecialized stores. It seems that the consumers take into account the total image of the store and not only the perception of the counter and the wine in France is bought in unspecialised stores. A perceptual map will be built to know the similarities and the differences between themes by the factorial analysis of the correspondences (Benzecri 1973). The themes brand, friend and promotion as fear were removed and that improves the quantity of information restored by the axes. We defined 5 axes:

- Factor 1 accounts for 33.6% of the variance and is defined positively by the items Unspecialized stores, Specialised stores and château and negatively by the items feel and colour. This factor defines a distribution which does not make it possible to the consumers to have sensory experiences (unsensory distribution).
- Factor 2 accounts for 13.6% of the variance and is defined positively by the items origin and millesime and negatively by item the counter. This factor

defines behaviour of variety seeking (millesime and Origin) but not in front of the counter.

- Factor 3 accounts for 12.0% of the variance and is defined positively by item meal and negatively by item product. The wine is not associated to the meal.
- Factor 4 accounts for 8.9% of the variance and is defined positively by item the château and negatively by item preference. I don't prefer this wine because it comes from a specific chateau.
- Factor 5 accounts for 7.6% of the variance and is defined positively by item wine maker and negatively by the items knowledge and council. The knowledge and the council do not concern the wine maker.

The perceptual map on the two first axes is presented in figure 1.



The map makes it possible to define four lexical fields: the product knowledge, the sensory experience, an associative thought, buying context. These fields take part of an experiential behaviour rather than behaviour defined by goals. The experience associates the environment according to two dimensions: the store and the counter. The counter is the place of sensory experiment and association resulted from a consumption experience. The store seems to be the place where the consumer interacts by asking council and where their preferences are formed. The consumer

would come with an aim of consumption or conservation but the goals aren't more precise.

These characteristics of the buying behaviour lead to a typology in 3 groups ¹ by the method of the K-means (Hair et al.. 1992):

- The first type (18.9%) gathers consumers who do not have sensory experience in distribution. They do not have a knowledge related to the wine makers and do not associate the wine for any occasion but they research different types of wine. This expertise which on average is 2.875 is strongest and related to the products (their millesime and their origin). They need councils and they go more to the specialised retailing than the other groups. Also they will be called the conservatives.
- The second (34%) gathers the consumers who do not choose the wine with millesime and origin in front of the counter. They have little knowledge on the wine because the level of expertise is lowest. Those are them which would go more in wine counter without any intention. Also, they will be called the novices.
- The third (47.2%) gathers consumers who have sensory experiences in the form of tasting but not in retailing. They seek different wines and they associate the wine with the meals. They use the fairs to discover new wines. Those are aesthetics discovers.

The impact of the expertise on these groups is indeed significant ($F=0,253$, $p=0,086$). Also the expertise makes it possible to differentiate the buyers' behaviours.

¹ The description of the groups amounts crossing with at the same time the themes and the variables of identity. Concerning the sex and the age, there are no differences between the groups. Concerning the consumption experiences (meal and occasions), there are differences.

$K\chi^2=7,34$ $df=2$ $p=0,025$ (theoretical value $< 5 = 1$)

	meal	occasions	Total
Conservatives	4	7	11
Novices	16	11	27
Aesthetics discovers	15	2	17
Total	35	20	55

Concerning the places of purchase, there are differences.

$K\chi^2=8,22$ $df=4$ $p=0,083$ (Valley theoretical $< 5 = 6$)

	Conservatives	Novices	Aesthetics discovers	Total
Specialised retailing	6	6	1	13
counter		14	4	18
promotion	4	7	8	19
Total	10	27	13	50

The boxes in grey represent the main practices of the groups

Conservatives	10	2.88
Novices	18	2.79
aesthetics discovers	25	2.83
TOTAL	53	2.83

Conclusion

If the occasion is an element which makes it possible to differentiate the consumption behaviours, it is considered that the experience is in the heart of the wine consumption. This experience must move in the field of the buying decisions. These decisions made it possible to work out typologies of consumers who release 5 groups. These groups are defined on an axis to knowledgeable /pleasure but also preferencing/discovering. The expertise seems to be in the heart of classifications in wine. Initially, the narratives speeches were studied to define the buying behaviours by a thematic analysis. This type of analysis seems to be relevant when you want to make emerge buying experiences. These experiences define the themes of the analysis. Four fields (sets of themes) are defined: the product knowledge, the sensory experience, an associative thought, buying context. From these themes, a typology was worked out and is described in the following table:

Conservatives	Novices	Aesthetics discovers
18.9%	34%	47.2%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No the sensory experience in retailing No knowledge related to the wine growers Non associative thought Seek different wines knowledge about the products Search for councils Unspecialised retailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice in front of the counter The year and the origin are not criteria of choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensory experiments in the form of tasting Seek different wines Associated with meals Spirit of discovery Importance of the fairs

2.88	2.79	2.83
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The majority of the consumers have an experiential vision of the wine buying. It is an aesthetic vision of the experience. It needs to be immersed in an environment of the fairs to look at, to carry out discoveries. When on the level of expertise, it is different from one group to another. However the perceptual map of themes and classification is applied on a sample of reduced size. This study wants to be exploratory and related to the context of the study (participant in an executive training). Also, this study should be generalized with other populations because this population is surely more inclined to adopt an experiential attitude than other populations. Also, our operationalisation of the expertise doesn't take account of the type of information (sensory or not) and of the type of expertise (intuitive, knowledge, experience) They seem that the novices have an intuitive knowledge while the conservatives have an analytical knowledge and the aesthetics discovers have an experiential knowledge of the wine as heuristic mode.

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