

PRODUCT INVOLVEMENT AND SINGLE-SERVE WINE CONSUMPTION METRICS IN USA RESTAURANTS

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Introduction

The business opportunity the single-serve wine-by-the-glass (WBG) strategy offers the restaurant industry has to date been largely underutilised (Frost, 2015; Yoon & Stacy, 2015). From an academic perspective, there is a paucity of research in this specific field, despite an attempt to develop a WBG risk perception scale (Bruwer, Palacios-Arias & Cohen, 2017). A need, therefore, exists for a ‘baseline’ study to examine if and how constructs, specifically product involvement and in-restaurant consumer behavioural variables, are interrelated.

Literature review

Consumers’ involvement with a product category is widely accepted as being instrumental in their consumption of and associated behaviour of the product. From early on, wine has been regarded as a product category well suited to involvement research (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Research on wine has therefore identified product involvement as an important variable that has an impact on consumer behaviour (Bruwer, Chrysochou & Lesschaeve, 2017; Bruwer & Cohen, 2018; Bruwer & Huang, 2012). The restaurant environment, specifically wine in single-serve format, has previously not received any research investigative attention (Bruwer et al., 2017; Terrier & Jaquinet, 2016). Our study provides baseline insights towards bridging this gap in the literature base.

Research purpose

This research explores inter-relationships between wine product involvement and consumer behavioural variables of USA restaurant dining patrons, i.e. dining frequency, dining group size, and WBG-specific variables such as method of ordering, decision factor importance, and willingness to pay price(s) for different WBG wine type offerings. The overall aim is to determine some baseline metrics, whether differences exist between these variables, and their relationship with socio-demographic variables.

Research methodology

An online survey was executed in the USA by a professional consumer-panel company involving people of legal drinking age (21 years and older) who were wine consumers and had dined out at least once in the past month at any of the restaurant categories where they consumed wine on that occasion. An online survey eliminated the logistical issues and invasion of diners’ privacy faced when having to collect information *in situ* in restaurants, and had the added advantage of sampling across the USA and its different restaurant categories (as in Canziani et al., 2016). A total of 532 surveys could be utilised for further analysis.

Preliminary findings

Preliminary findings indicate that dining patrons’ involvement level with wine shows highly significant differences (at 0.01 level) between dining out frequency, group size, prices patrons are willing to pay for different WBG wine type offerings (i.e., red wine), quantity consumed,

amount spent on WBG purchases, and gender and age generations. Similar patterns could not be found for method of ordering and importance ranking of the decision factors.

Conclusions and recommendations

The wine product involvement construct has predictive ability and can discriminate between dining patrons on various key metrics concerning their engagement with WBG purchasing when dining out in restaurants. A behavioral model predicting these relationships between the product involvement construct and these variables can be postulated and withstand empirical scrutiny. Future research should examine these further and incorporate them into such model.

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