Connecting Product Attributes With Emotional Benefits. Analysis of a Mediterranean Product across Consumer Age Segments

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CONNECTING PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES WITH EMOTIONAL BENEFITS. ANALYSIS OF A MEDITERRANEAN PRODUCT ACROSS CONSUMER AGE SEGMENTS

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Abstract

Due to a high level of product substitution in the food market, it often proves difficult to strike a balance between supply and demand. This is especially true in sectors with a such high level of competition and product differentiation as the wine producing sector. Faced with the difficulty of differentiating the product in terms of its technical characteristics, quality and price, therefore, a useful alternative is to explore what consumers perceive to be its "emotional benefits", since these have been shown to have a decisive effect on consumer purchasing decisions. For marketing purposes, an understanding of how consumers' personality traits condition their choice of products can help manufacturers to improve their strategic positioning in the market. The aim of this study is to check for the presence of emotional factors in the consumption of wine, a traditional component of the Mediterranean diet, and, if such factors are found, test them for variation across consumer age segments. An understanding of this issue may help the various agents in the distribution chain to differentiate their products, and enable them to set up more effective communication policies to improve their strategic positioning in the market. The study uses the laddering technique to interview wine consumers in Navarra.

Key words: wine, consumer behaviour, laddering, emotions, differentiation

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1. Introduction

International competition has had an impact on all sectors of the economy, the agribusiness sector being no exception. The European market in particular has suffered the consequences of competition from other aspiring agricultural countries. One of several Mediterranean food products that have felt the effects of increased competition in recent years is wine. Up until the 1980s, the wine market was "monopolised" world wide by a group of European countries, especially those of the Mediterranean Basin (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal and Germany), all of them traditional wine-producing and wine-consuming countries. In recent years, however, the world wide hegemony of these countries has been greatly diminished and destabilised by wines from a group of countries in other continents, producers of the so-called "wines of the new world", namely , Argentina, Chile, USA, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

Two different marketing strategies currently co-exist in the wine producing sector. The strategy developed by the emerging countries is based on three basic concepts: very attractive prices, very high quality adapted to consumer tastes and campaigns to raise awareness and promote their own brands and grape varieties (Langreo, 2002; Loureiro, 2003; Mtimet, 2006; Orth and Krska, 2001; Steiner, 2000; among others). This contrasts sharply with the marketing strategy used by the traditional Mediterranean wine producers, which is based on the concept of Designation of Origin. This new scenario has given rise to fierce competition between wine-producing countries, which, together with an overall decline in wine consumption across Europe, has produced a crisis in the European wine sector.

According to data published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2004) both total and per capita wine consumption have been in steady decline since the early 1980s. This has also had a marked impact in Spain, where per capita consumption fell from 46.6 litres in 1987 to an average of 28.4 litres per capita in 2004 (MAPA, 2005). Not all wines have been affected to the same extent, however. Consumption of ordinary table wine has

decreased by 37% over the last ten years, while that of fine wines has fallen by only 7% (MAPA, 2004).

According to various authors, despite wine having long played a basic role in the typical Mediterranean diet, the future generation appears to be adopting new wine consumption patterns (Mtimet, 2006; Green, Rodríguez and Seabra, 2004; among others). Generally speaking, young people drink wine on a more sporadic basis and consumption increasingly takes place outside the home. In a recent study, Mtimet (2006) found that in 2006 more than half the wine consumed by young people was drunk outside the home.

Faced with what might be described as a situation of uncertainty and crisis, producers are exploring different strategies to enable them to stay in the market and remain competitive. One tool that can help them achieve their proposed objectives is product differentiation. Due to their similarity, however, wines are not an easy product to differentiate (Dumaine, 1991; Thackara, 1997). Since there are only minor variations in the technical characteristics, quality and price of wine, differentiation is nowadays very often based on the emotional benefits perceived by the consumer rather than the functional or technical benefits. Bearing in mind how strongly the initial impression of a product influences the decision to buy it (Creusen, 1998), consumers' emotional responses may be a decisive factor in purchase decisions. Given the impact of emotions on consumers' sensations and purchase decisions, it appears obvious that an understanding of how products evoke emotions and an ability to use tools to measure the emotional impact of product design and marketing can make an enormous difference to the task of product differentiation (Havlena and Holbrook, 1986).

According to Fernández (1996) the value of wine lies not only in its functional benefits but also in the fact that it is a status symbol (Edwards and Mort, 1991). Bello and Cervantes (2002) find a social significance in the purchase and consumption of wine. Lauroba (1999) a studies wine consumption using a twofold perspective, focusing not only on the sensory

pleasure of consuming wine at the individual level, but also on the fact that it is a vehicle of self-representation that aids social interaction. Several authors have pointed out the fact that to some extent emotions and values run parallel (Laverie et al., 1993; Rokeach, 1973). Values are basic beliefs manifested in specific behaviour, while emotions are feelings linked to specific behaviour (Gardner, 1985). According to Holbrook (1986), values implicitly involve preferences and are therefore directly associated with emotions. The values expressed in a consumer experience arise from the emotions that go with it.

Apparently, therefore, the traditional perspective alone provides a very limited picture of a product. If the focus is exclusively on physical attributes (Bass, Pessemier and Lehmann, 1972; Bass and Talarzyk, 1972; Lehmann, 1971; McAlister, 1982), the influence of personality on perceived product attributes is ignored. It was an awareness of this problem that helped to spread the idea of the inadequacy of research based on attributes alone. As a result, the benefits symbolised by the attributes began to be taken into consideration (Haley, 1968; 1984). Product definition was later extended to include high levels of abstraction (Gutman and Reynolds, 1979), such as personal values (Homer and Kahle, 1988; Mitchell, 1983; Vincon, Scott and Lamont, 1977). This development was mainly due to strong product and brand competition, which meant that an understanding of the final values pursued by consumers when purchasing any kind of good, particularly agribusiness products, could prove very useful to manufacturers attempting to improve their strategic positioning in the market (Gengler et al., 1995).

Following on from the above, the aim of this study is to determine whether there is an emotional component to the consumption of a traditional Mediterranean product, such as wine, and, if so, whether it varies with the age of the consumer. An understanding of this issue could help the various members of the distribution chain to tackle the product differentiation process. This would enable them to implement more effective communication

policies and thereby attain a more prominent strategic position in the market. As a first step towards this objective, we began by segmenting the wine consumer market in Navarra in order to obtain respondent age categories. We then analysed the consequences or benefits and terminal values obtained through the consumption of this agribusiness product in each of the resulting segments. The aim therefore was to explore the attribute-consequence-value chains ("means-end chain") formed in the minds of wine consumers and see how far purchase decisions and consumption habits are influenced by them.

The remainder of the paper is divided into three more sections. Section two contains a description of the methodological procedure used in the study, beginning with details of the segmentation process and the attribute-consequence-value chains ("means-end chain"), and ending with the data collection. Section three presents the main findings. The fourth and final section is devoted to a discussion of the conclusions, main limitations and possible extensions of the study.

2. Methodology

2.1. Segmentation

Market segmentation is a relatively new practice in the wine sector, mainly because, up until a few years ago, wine producers had very few problems to face. The practice has spread throughout the sector in recent years, however, due to concern arising from falling sales (Spawton, 1991).

One of the first studies to carry out a segmentation of wine consumers was McKinna (1986), who found four wine consumer segments based on product expectations and risk reduction strategies (connoisseurs, aspirants, regular wine drinkers and new wine drinkers). Spawton 1990 reached similar conclusions; while Dubow (1992) distinguished between weekend and daily wine drinkers. Johnson et al. (1991) carried out a market segmentation study in

Australia, where they obtained six white wine and five red wine segments. Sánchez and Gil (1998), who segmented the Spanish market based on geographical criteria, identified the final sale results as the distinguishing feature. Bruwer et al. (2002) developed a wine-related lifestyle market segmentation method that enabled them to identify five segments. Thomas and Pickering (2003) used average number of bottles of wine consumed over a month to identify three groups: a low consumption segment, an average consumption segment and a high consumption segment.

As this overview shows, the main variables in most of the existing segmentations relate to consumer behaviour, consumer involvement, geographical factors, lifestyle, occasions, etc., but little headway has been made in terms of the consumer age variable. This was the motivation for the focus of the present study in which we aim to test for appreciable differences in wine consumption habits across age segments, with a view to detecting possible differences in perceptions or behaviour, as noted earlier.

2.2. The means-end chain

Having completed the consumer segmentation, we progressed to our second objective, which was to identify the attribute-consequence-value chains (also known as means-end chains) formed by wine consumers across the a priori designated segments.

The means-end chain is a cognitive structure linking consumers' knowledge of the attributes of a product to their perception of the consequences and terminal values they personally derive from consuming it. The main principle underlying this theory is that consumer perceptions and attitudes regarding a product or service are stored in the memory in the form of a hierarchically ordered chain of related factors. The main premise is that consumers learn to choose products with certain attributes which they use as tools to achieve their desired ends (Reynolds and Gutman, 1984; Walker and Olson, 1991; Olson and Reynolds, 2001;

Fotopoulos et al., 2003; Costa et al., 2004). Consumers' knowledge of a product may be based on its attributes, the personal consequences derived from its use or consumption and the personal values it is able to satisfy. The higher the level of abstraction, the stronger and more direct the personal link (Olson and Reynolds, 1983).

The means-end chain is usually measured by means of a qualitative interviewing technique known as laddering, which was first developed by Hinkle (1965) (Grunert and Grunert, 1995; Reynolds and Gutman, 1985, 1988, 2001), and later improved and refined by various authors. Laddering interviews are personal, individual, in-depth, semi-structured interviews aimed at revealing the attribute-consequence-value associations made by consumers with regard to a particular product (Gutman, 1982; Nielsen et al., 1998; Brunsø et al., 2002; De Boer and McCarthy, 2003; Fotopoulos et al., 2003; Poulsen et al., 2003; Chiu, 2004; Costa et al., 2004). Laddering is done in three stages: a selection of relevant attributes, an in-depth interview and an analysis of the results. In the first stage, the researcher attempts to identify the relevant attributes of the product in question using various techniques. In the second stage, through a series of questions of the type "Why is that important to you?", subjects are invited to explain why the attributes chosen in the first stage are relevant in terms of associated consequences and values. In the third stage, the concepts emerging from the interviews are divided into a reduced number of categories, and the links are then entered on an implication matrix, from which a hierarchical value map (HVM) can then be constructed (Nielsen et al., 1998; Miele and Parisi, 2000; Brunsø et al., 2002; Poulsen et al., 2003; Chiu, 2004; Costa et al., 2004).

One of the issues to be considered when constructing a hierarchical value map is where to fix the cut-off point, which indicates the number of linkages registered before a connection ceases on the map (Leppard et al., 2004). It is hard to decide which is the most significant or relevant frequency of connections or direct relations between two levels of abstraction that needs to be included on an HVM. A high cut-off level (a high frequency of links) simplifies

the map because it means that it will contain fewer links, and important information may thereby be lost. A low cut-off level (which means that low frequencies are shown on the map) results in a complex map that is difficult to interpret. Previous research has shown various ways to decide the cut-off point (Pieters et al., 1995), most studies agreeing that a good cut-off point is one that enables the researcher to find the solution that yields the maximum amount of information without presenting interpretation problems (Audenaert and Steenkamp, 1997; Reynolds and Gutman, 2001).

There are two types of laddering interview; one is known as “hard laddering”, the other as “soft laddering” (Grunert and Grunert, 1995; Botschen and Thelen, 1998; Miles and Frewer, 2001; De Boer et al., 2003; Poulsen et al., 2003; Costa et al., 2004). In interviews based on the hard laddering technique subjects are asked to establish or confirm links between items on individual ladders at increasingly higher levels of abstraction. In the “soft laddering” technique they are encouraged throughout the interview to keep up a natural, unrestricted, flow of speech, the attribute-consequence-value linkages being reconstructed later in the analysis stage. The idea, which is not possible when using the hard laddering technique (Costa et al., 2004), is to encourage subjects to explain why a particular attribute is relevant to them, or why two attributes are relevant for the same reason. “Association Pattern Technique” or APT is a particular case of hard laddering in which the means-end chain is split into two separate parts, one containing the attribute-consequence links (A-C), and another containing the consequence-value links (C-V).

There are various indices that yield the necessary information to determine the role played by each of the items (attributes, consequences or values) in the structure. Two of the most widely used are the abstractness index and the centrality index. Before defining them, we first need to explain two concepts that intervene in their formulation: the out-degree and the in-degree. The out-degree refers to the number of times an item (attribute, consequence or value) is the

source or origin of a connection with other items aggregated in the ladders, the out-degree of an item being equal to its row sum in the implication matrix. The in-degree refers to the number of times an item (attribute, consequence or value) is the end or receiver of a connection with other objects aggregated in the ladders. The in-degree is the column sum of an item in the implication matrix (Pieters et al., 1995).

The abstractness index is defined as the ratio of in-degrees over the sum of in-degrees plus out-degrees and can therefore range from 0 to 1. The higher the ratio, the greater the proportion of linkages between that item and others. Items with high values on the abstractness index are mainly ends, while those with low values are mainly means. The centrality index is the ratio of in-degrees plus out-degrees of a particular item over the total number of cells in the implication matrix (Knoke and Burt, 1982). It can range from 0 to 1, higher values indicating a higher proportion of connections in the structure. An item may have an index value of 1, which is the value it would take if it were involved in all the linkages in the structure. Centrality is an index of the importance of an individual item within the structure; the higher its value the more often the item in question is linked to others. The abstractness index, meanwhile, is an index of the level, rather than the importance, of the item within the structure. An item may have a high index of abstractness, despite being involved in only a few linkages with other items (Pieters et al., 1995). Next we present the main results of the data analyses.

Of the few studies that have applied this methodology to the wine market one of the main ones is that of Judica and Perkins (1992), who used the means-end chain to segment the sparkling wines market. In 1999, Hall and Lockshin and, later, in 2001, Hall et al., also used the means-end chain to analyse wine consumption occasions in the Australian market, where eight different occasions were found. Similar results were obtained by Fotopoulos and Krystallis (2003), while Hall and Winchester (2000) found four segments, and subsequently

used the means-end chain theory to identify the terminal values of each of these segments on the Rokeach scale.

2.3. Data collection

The data for this study were obtained through personal five-part interviews with employees at the Public University of Navarra in December 2005. The first part focused on the frequency and occasions of wine consumption, while in the second part interviewees were presented with different product attributes and asked to rate their importance as factors to be considered when buying wine. In part three they were presented with the Richins scale of emotions and asked to give a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of them. The laddering technique was applied in part four of the questionnaire, while part five covered demographics. The hard laddering technique was chosen, because, as noted by Russell et al. (2004), it yields higher levels of abstraction than soft laddering, while maintaining the richness and complexity of the data. It is also easier to apply, requires a less lengthy interview and places the respondent under less pressure (Botschen and Thelen, 1998). The proposed technique for this part of the questionnaire was the Association Pattern Technique, better known as the APT, proposed by Gutman in 1982. This technique, as indicated earlier, uses two independent matrices: one relating attributes to consequences, the other relating consequences to values.

The attributes chosen for the attribute-value matrix were drawn from the reviewed literature and consultation with experts through a pilot survey. This yielded the eleven attributes shown in the Annex. In a similar fashion, we drew on our review of the literature on the means-end chain and laddering techniques, especially as applied to wine, to extract the main consequences found in previous research, which provided us with a set of 21 consequences (Annex). Finally, for the values, we employed the LOV (list of values) proposed by Kahle

(1985), and later modified in the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS), which includes the nine personal consumer values shown in the Annex.

The present study used a convenience sample (Gutman, 1985) of wine purchasers and consumers, drawn from among employees at the Public University of Navarra. Vannopen, Huylenbroeck, Verbeke and Viaene (1999) approve of the use of convenience samples in laddering procedures, given the complexity of the process and the fact that respondents are already familiar with the product and therefore have more views to express about it. In this case, the sample was made up of 51 household food purchasers who agreed to a personal interview after being contacted by e-mail. This size of sample is in line with the majority of past surveys using this technique, according to our review of the literature, where it emerged that Costa et al. (2004) recommend the use of hard laddering for samples of more than 45-50 respondents, thus strengthening the rationale for our choice.

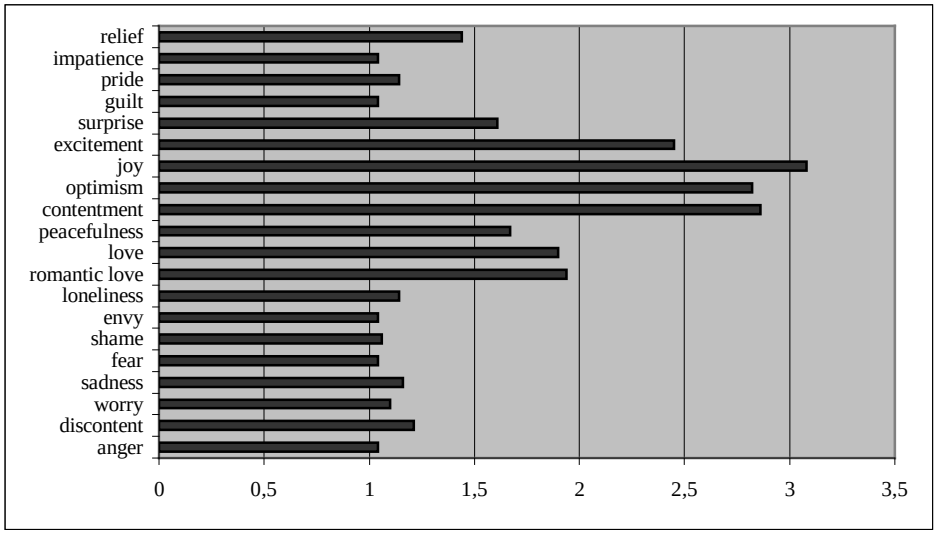
3. Results

As pointed out earlier, one of the aims of the present study was to segment wine consumers on the basis of age. This was done using the k-means method, after which the respondents were characterised on the basis of their answers to questions regarding variables such as their consumption of wines with Designation of Origin, their wine drinking occasions, the importance they attach to attributes when purchasing wine, the emotions[1] they feel while drinking it, and their socio-demographic characteristics.

Before presenting the results of the segmentation, in figure 1 we show our subjects' Ratings on the Richins consumer emotion measuring scale (a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 indicates the highest level of importance). Most of the items can be seen to have scores of around 1 (very

little importance) and only eight of the emotions considered scored higher than 1.5. This was the reason for our decision to reduce our analysis to the following eight emotions (surprise, emotion, joy, optimism, contentment, peace, love and romantic love), in order to obtain more meaningful results.

Figure 1. Ratings on the Richins consumer emotion measuring scale



A principal component factor analysis was performed on the eight emotions mentioned above in order to reduce the data into a smaller number of factors. This left us with three clearly differentiated factors, the first being the feeling of joy derived from drinking wine; the second, emotions relating to love; while the third and last factor focused on two aspects, peacefulness and the surprise factor. These three factors jointly explain 73.76% of the variance in the original data as shown in Table 1.

[1] Our study uses the scale developed by Richins in 1997, which includes twenty emotions as shown in the Annex. The reason for this choice of scale was due its being so far the only one that has been tested with food products (Laros and Steenkamp, 2004 and 2005).

Table 1. Principal component factor analysis of the emotions evoked by drinking wine

	Factor 1 Joy	**Factor 2 Love**	**Factor 3 Peacefulness -surprise**
Emotion	**0.824**	0.136	0.070
Joy	**0.818**	0.205	-0.031
Optimism	**0.731**	0.294	0.252
Contentment	**0.722**	0.246	0.172
Romantic love	0.254	**0.849**	0.080
Love	0.216	**0.833**	0.152
Peacefulness	-0.016	0.281	**0.894**
Surprise	0.547	-0.092	**0.671**
% variance explained	35.15%	21.38%	17.23%

Application of the k-means segmentation method yielded two clearly differentiated age segments among the respondents, as shown in Table 2. Segment 1, which accounts for 32.69% of the sample, is the younger segment, all of its members being under the age of 35. Segment 2 is the older (over 35 year-olds) and larger segment (67.31% of the sample).

It is worth drawing attention to the fact that no significant socio-demographic differences can be appreciated between the two segments, both of which include more women than men and are made up entirely of university-educated middle-income earners. When it comes to the variables considered in the characterisation, however, some relevant differences do emerge. Segment 2 has a significantly higher percentage of consumers of wine bearing a Designation of Origin label (100% versus 82.4% of segment 1). Another relevant feature, which is in keeping with the above, is that brand, Designation of Origin and prestige are all more highly valued by the older segment (segment 2). Its members also attach more value to the custom or habit of drinking wine and to the type of wine.

Table 2. Segmentation of subjects by age

	Segment 1 (32.69%)	**Segment 2 (67.31%)**
Age***	Under 35s	Over 35s
Consumption of wine with Designation of Origin**	82.4%	100%
Wine-drinking occasions		
At mealtimes daily *	6.7%	26.5%
At weekend mealtimes	33.3%	41.2%
When eating out	93.3%	82.4%
When entertaining guests	80.0%	76.5%
In bars	26.7%	35.3%
Importance of attributes when purchasing wine (scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest level of importance)		
Price	3.70	3.53
Brand **	3.52	4.20
Designation of Origin*	4.00	4.40
Sensory quality	2.91	3.13
Prestige (awards,...) *	2.58	3.06
Image of the wine	2.58	3.00
Low in alcohol	2.05	1.80
Vintage (low, medium or high ...)	3.88	3.86
Geographical origin	3.94	4.33
Custom or habit***	2.32	3.20
Type **	3.55	4.33
Emotions evoked by drinking wine		
Factor 1 Joy *	0.3995	-0.1762
Factor 2 Love	0.1884	-0.0830
Factor 3 Peacefulness-surprise**	-0.4884	0.2154
Socio-demographic characteristics		
Household size	2.58	2.94
Educational level		
Elementary	-	2.9%
High school	12.5%	23.5%
Higher education	87.5%	73.5%
Income		
Low	12.5%	20.6%
Medium	75.0%	55.9%
High	12.5%	23.5%
Sex		
Male	29.4%	35.3%
Female	70.6%	64.7%

As far as wine-drinking occasions are concerned, over 75% in both segments have wine when entertaining guests and over 80% drink it when eating out; the least frequent wine-drinking occasion therefore is daily mealtimes. There is a significant difference between the two

groups in this respect, since a much smaller percentage of the younger age group drink wine on a daily basis than is the case in the older group.

To conclude with the emotion analysis, therefore, differences emerge across segments in two of the three a priori designated factors. The younger group value the joy factor more highly than the older group, whereas the reverse occurs with the "peacefulness-surprise" factor (emotions evoked by wine-drinking among older subjects).

Clear differences therefore exist between the two segments. The younger segment appreciate wine more for the feeling of joy it evokes in them and are more willing to drink ordinary wine with no Designation of Origin. The older segment, meanwhile, who appreciate the "peacefulness and surprise" type of emotion, attach a higher value to wines bearing a brand name, DO, or other indications of prestige and also to the wine-drinking custom or habit, the last of which is linked to the fact that they are more frequent consumers of wine on a daily basis than are the members of the other segment.

Having identified and described the segments, the next step was to analyse the data obtained through the laddering interview. As advanced in the methodology section, this study uses APT as a supplement to the laddering interview, which means that we begin by constructing the implication matrices, which show the number of times each item is connected with another item, either directly or indirectly. A direct connection in one that links two adjacent items on the ladder, whereas an indirect connection is said to exist when there is a consequence mediating between an attribute and a terminal value (Poulsen et al., 2003). Tables 3 and 4 give the attribute-consequence and consequence-value implication matrices constructed from the data obtained in the interviews.

It can be seen from Table 3 that in both matrices the two items most often connected by both segments are attribute A1-"price" and consequence C5-"good value for money", which appears in 64.7% of cases in the younger segment and 80% of cases in the older segment. The

other main connections that appear in segment 1 are between attribute A9-“geographical origin” and two consequences: C14-“I am helping to sustain local agriculture” and C15-“I have confidence in local products” (connections made by 64.7% of those interviewed). Members of the larger segment (segment 2) differ from those of segment 1 in the degree of importance they attach to certain items. Thus, in segment 2, the connections between two attributes: A2-“brand” and A3-“has DO”, and consequence C8-“I am consuming a quality product” are the most common (60% make these connections); these are followed by the link between attribute A11-“type of wine” and consequence C4-“appetising and enjoyable to drink” (which is established by 54.23% of these consumers).

Table 3. Attribute-consequence implication matrix per segment

	Segment 1 (under 35s)											**Segment 2 (over 35s)**										
	A1	**A2**	**A3**	**A4**	**A5**	**A6**	**A7**	**A8**	**A9**	**A10**	**A11**	**A1**	**A2**	**A3**	**A4**	**A5**	**A6**	**A7**	**A8**	**A9**	**A10**	**A11**
C1	-	-	1	6	1	4	-	4	2	4	5	2	6	4	13	4	7	3	14	4	12	17
C2	-	-	-	2	-	-	5	3	-	6	5	-	1	4	5	1	-	4	2	3	1	7
C3	-	3	3	8	2	3	1	4	1	2	4	2	3	5	10	5	6	5	7	5	7	11
C4	1	1	2	9	2	2	1	7	1	2	4	4	6	6	13	5	7	3	16	5	4	**19**
C5	**11**	3	4	5	4	3	1	5	3	1	6	**28**	6	10	8	8	3	-	5	4	-	5
C6	-	1	1	1	-	1	7	1	-	1	4	1	4	3	6	2	-	11	7	1	2	5
C7	2	4	6	1	5	2	-	3	2	-	1	1	5	13	6	7	-	5	6	4	2	1
C8	3	7	6	7	5	2	-	6	4	-	4	11	**21**	**21**	11	18	4	1	13	8	1	4
C9	-	6	1	1	-	-	-	2	5	6	3	-	11	8	-	6	-	2	-	9	10	4
C10	-	3	2	3	-	3	-	3	4	4	2	-	4	2	7	1	6	-	4	3	9	2
C11	-	9	3	-	-	2	-	2	3	1	4	3	25	5	-	2	2	-	-	-	5	1
C12	-	1	6	-	2	2	-	2	9	2	2	-	4	7	-	2	3	-	-	9	4	3
C13	3	6	2	1	4	2	-	4	3	-	3	11	7	4	-	8	3	-	4	1	1	2
C14	-	3	7	-	-	-	-	1	**11**	-	1	1	5	14	1	1	1	-	-	17	-	4
C15	-	2	7	2	1	1	-	2	**11**	-	6	1	5	9	1	2	-	-	1	14	2	4
C16	-	2	-	2	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	-	2	3	1	1	1	6	2	2	7	3
C17	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	6	2	1	3	4	2	1	1	5	3	1	3	2
C18	1	1	-	8	1	-	1	3	-	1	5	-	6	5	10	3	2	2	16	2	7	10
C19	-	3	4	1	2	1	-	3	5	-	1	1	2	9	3	2	2	-	2	9	1	1
C20	-	2	5	-	-	1	-	1	4	8	3	-	1	6	1	1	3	-	2	4	6	2
C21	1	3	2	5	1	-	-	1	2	5	2	3	3	4	11	5	1	9	6	5	7	6

On the consequence-value implication matrix (Tabla 4) the highest frequencies are to be observed in the connections between two consequences: C1-“makes mealtimes more enjoyable” and C18-“I enjoy the taste”, and value V2-“gives me fun, pleasure and enjoyment” which appear in 58.82% of the younger segment and just over 75% of the older segment. It is worth noting that special importance given in segment 2 to the connections between two consequences: C4-“it is appetising and enjoyable to drink” and C21-“it makes me feel happy and satisfied”, and value V2-“provides fun, pleasure and enjoyment”.

Table 4. Consequence-value matrix per segment

	Segment 1 (under 35s)									Segment 2 (over 35s)								
	V1	**V2**	**V3**	**V4**	**V5**	**V6**	**V7**	**V8**	**V9**	**V1**	**V2**	**V3**	**V4**	**V5**	**V6**	**V7**	**V8**	**A9**
C1	2	**10**	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	**27**	5	11	4	7	1	3	3
C2	1	2	-	9	3	-	-	4	-	2	6	10	19	6	2	2	5	-
C3	1	9	3	3	2	4	2	1	1	2	26	10	11	4	11	5	3	3
C4	1	7	3	4	-	5	-	-	1	-	**28**	4	6	3	10	1	1	-
C5	2	1	-	6	-	2	1	4	1	2	7	3	12	4	3	1	3	-
C6	-	1	1	8	3	-	-	5	-	-	8	-	**22**	5	1	2	12	-
C7	1	1	3	4	2	1	3	5	2	8	2	2	11	6	1	1	7	2
C8	2	6	1	6	-	1	2	1	1	7	9	2	20	3	6	4	5	3
C9	4	5	1	1	1	1	-	4	1	10	7	5	4	2	10	1	-	-
C10	3	5	1	1	3	4	-	2	1	4	9	2	-	2	19	-	1	-
C11	2	3	1	3	-	3	-	3	1	10	4	1	9	1	5	3	2	-
C12	8	5	3	2	2	-	1	2	-	15	5	7	5	7	6	2	2	-
C13	4	2	1	3	-	2	3	1	3	10	3	3	4	5	3	3	2	3
C14	3	5	1	2	3	2	1	7	-	11	1	1	1	6	4	-	14	-
C15	5	5	1	2	4	1	-	5	-	10	5	1	9	-	2	-	7	2
C16	2	7	5	1	1	1	2	1	2	5	11	16	1	4	3	4	2	7
C17	1	4	5	3	3	1	-	3	1	2	19	4	5	1	5	1	3	1
C18	-	**10**	3	3	2	4	-	-	-	1	**26**	-	2	1	9	-	2	-
C19	3	4	-	3	-	3	1	1	1	7	10	3	5	1	5	1	3	2
C20	4	5	2	-	2	3	-	5	3	11	2	7	-	2	7	3	7	1
C21	1	8	3	2	3	7	1	3	2	2	**24**	3	8	8	13	2	9	2

Having constructed the implication matrices, the next step was to uncover the aggregate cognitive structure by creating a Hierarchical Value Map (HVM) for each segment (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988; Grunert, Grunert and SØrensen, 1995). Figures 2 and 3 give the HVMs for segments 1 and 2 respectively, with a cut-off level of 8, that is, showing connections with a frequency of 8 or more on the implication matrices. Each of the attributes, consequences and values is shown on the maps together with the percentage of links in which respondents included them.

As can be seen from figures 2 and 3, the HVM for the older segment appears more complex than that produced by the younger group. In other words, when it comes to wine consumption, consumers in segment 1 reach higher levels of abstraction than those in segment 2. This is shown by the fact that they mention more consequences or benefits from drinking wine, which they then associate with terminal values. It appears therefore that consumers of different ages build different cognitive sequences in their attitudes towards wine.

If we take the first of the HVMs (Figure 2), that is, the one for the younger consumer segment; we are able to observe that they take nine different attributes of wine into consideration: price, geographical origin, prestige, Designation of Origin, vintage, brand, type, sensory quality and custom or habit. Price is associated with the benefit derived from "good value for money". "Geographical origin" and "designation of origin" are associated with the consequence, "I am helping to sustain local agriculture", in an apparent display of cultural and local attachment. At the same level of importance we find "brand", which is associated with "I am familiar with the brand" and "I am consuming a quality product" (this last benefit is also associated with the attributes "geographical origin" and "Designation of Origin") mentioned earlier, a consequence that is in turn linked to the value "enhances my quality of life and safety". A link therefore appears between brands and quality. This also occurs with the attribute "prestige". "Vintage" and "sensory quality" are linked to "appetising and enjoyable to drink". Similarly "sensory quality" is associated with the benefit "makes mealtimes more enjoyable", as is "type". It is worth mentioning, moreover, that this segment perceives other consequences or benefits from drinking wine, such as "I enjoy the taste", "feels good" which, together with the consequences "makes mealtimes more enjoyable" and "appetising and enjoyable to drink" are linked to the value "provides pleasure, satisfaction and enjoyment". Finally, the last of the attributes "custom or habit" is perceived as being related to the consequence "I am keeping up a tradition".

Five keys emerge to explain wine consumption in this segment. The first has to do with the connection made between the geographical origin and Designation of Origin of wine, both of which are associated with cultural identification. The second is the link between brand, Designation of Origin and prestige on the one hand and the consumption of a quality product on the other, which they see as enhancing their quality of life and safety. The third block centres around the enjoyment derived from drinking the wine. Keeping up tradition by

maintaining a custom of wine drinking takes up the fourth block, while the fifth and last has to do with the price of the product in relation to its quality.

To begin with the analysis of the HVM for the second segment, the number of attributes, as mentioned earlier, is greater and now includes a new one: “low in alcohol”.

In this case, “price” is associated, as before, with the benefit “good value for money”, but the latter leads to the terminal value “enhances my quality of life and safety”. “Geographical origin” is linked to more consequences: “I feel a sense of cultural identity”, “I have confidence in local products” and “I find it traditional and familiar”, which suggests that the connotation with cultural identity is stronger than in the younger consumer segment. As in the other segment, “brand”, “Designation of Origin” and “prestige” are associated with “I am consuming a quality product” and the terminal value, “enhances by quality of life and safety”. Likewise, “vintage”, “sensory quality” and “type” are correlated with the perceptions of an “appetising product” that “makes mealtimes more enjoyable”, has “an enjoyable taste” provides “fun, pleasure and enjoyment” and also “emotion”. The “custom or habit” of drinking wine “brings back memories” which in turn leads to “emotion”; “feels traditional and familiar” and “makes mealtimes more enjoyable”. The new attribute observed on the map for the older segment, “low in alcohol” is associated with “less health risk” and the terminal value “enhances my quality of life and safety”. Finally, some new consequences emerge with respect to the HVM for the other segment, two of the main ones being, “helps me interact socially” which then leads to “improves my relationships with others”.

There are five keys to wine consumption in segment 2 therefore. The first has to do with quality indicators (brand, DO, prestige,…) which are associated with the consumption of a quality product that enhances their quality of life and safety and provides them with fun,

Figure 2. Hierarchical value map for segment 1(wine consumers under the age of 35)

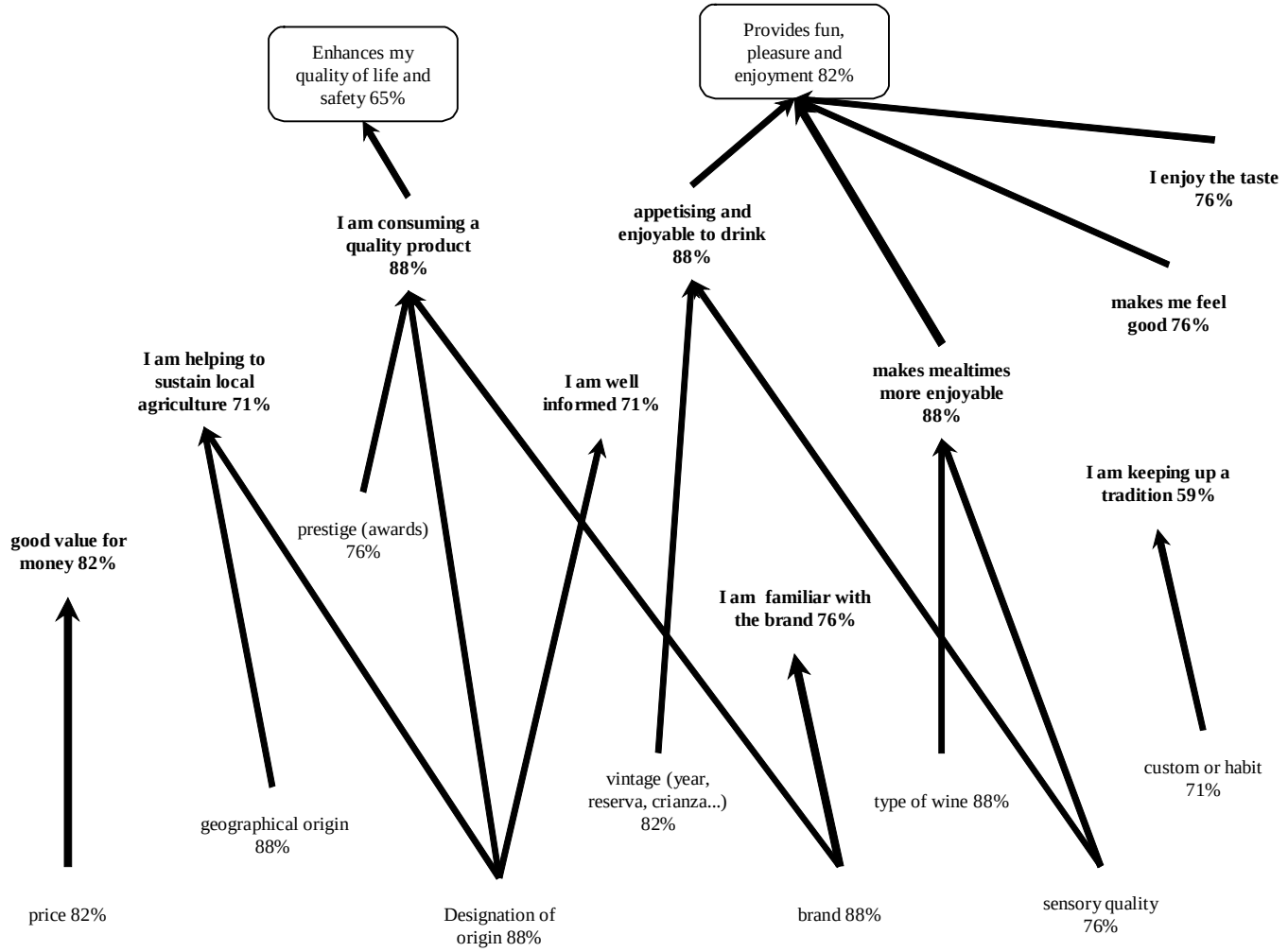
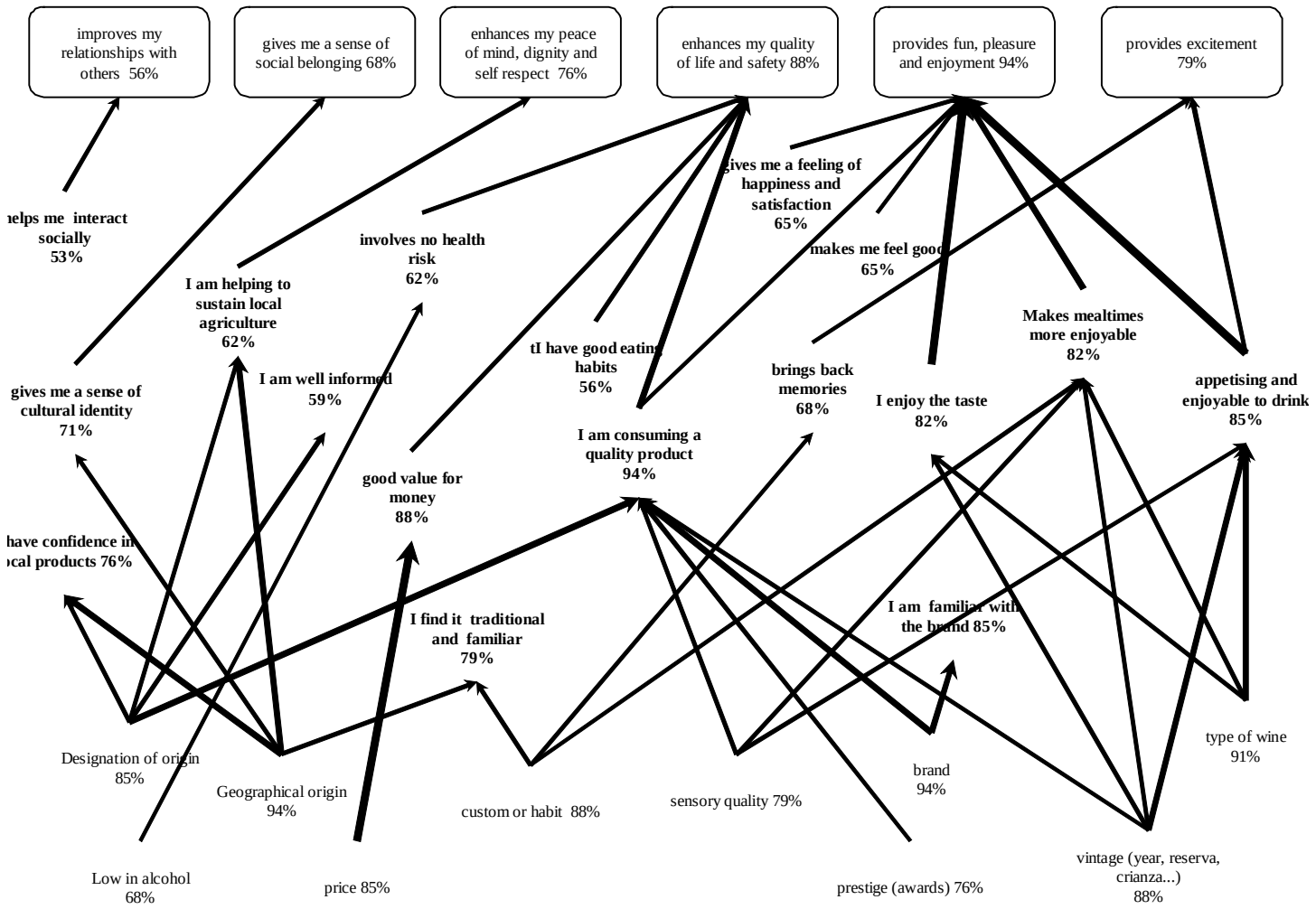


Figure 3. Hierarchical value map for segment 2 (wine drinkers over the age of 35)



pleasure and enjoyment. The quality indicators are also associated with a strong local attachment, which strengthens the sense of cultural identity in these consumers as well as the satisfaction and self respect derived from consuming this product. Thirdly, the hedonistic aspect of wine drinking, that is, the pursuit of pleasure, enjoyment, etc. is present to a greater degree than in the other segment, where it also provides emotion and a re-awakening of sensations. The fourth aspect has to do with price, which is associated with value for money. Finally, a novelty that appears in the younger segment is that wine-drinking takes on a social facet, by being considered as a vehicle of interaction with others.

Older consumers, therefore, prioritise quality indicators (as already seen in the segmentation), a cultural attachment with wine, and its role as a social enhancer and they are generally capable of a higher level of abstraction than those of the younger segment.

Table 5. “Abstractness” and “centrality” indices per segment.

	Segment 1		**Segment 2**	
	Abstractness	**Centrality**	**Abstractness**	**Centrality**
Attributes				
Price	0	0.02	0	0.02
Brand	0	0.04	0	0.03
Having a DO	0	0.04	0	0.03
Sensory quality	0	0.04	0	0.03
Prestige	0	0.02	0	0.02
Low in alcohol	-	-	0	0.01
Vintage	0	0.03	0	0.03
Geographical origin	0	0.03	0	0.03
Custom or habit	0	0.03	0	0.03
Type of wine	0	0.03	0	0.03
Consequences				
Makes mealtimes more enjoyable	0.55	0.04	0.56	0.03
I have good eating habits	-	-	0.49	0.02
Makes me feel good	0.54	0.04	0.55	0.03
Appetising and enjoyable to drink	0.72	0.04	0.60	0.03
Good value for money	0.76	0.04	0.67	0.03
No health risk	-	-	0.50	0.02
I am well informed	0.64	0.03	0.65	0.02
I am consuming a quality product	0.69	0.04	0.65	0.04
I find it traditional and familiar	-	-	0.56	0.02
Brings back memories	-	-	0.56	0.02
I am familiar with the brand	0.64	0.02	0.56	0.02
Gives me a sense of cultural identity	-	-	0.51	0.02
I am helping to sustain local agriculture	0.59	0.02	0.55	0.02

I have confidence in local products	-	-	0.57	0.03
Helps me interact socially	-	-	0.54	0.02
I enjoy the taste	0.60	0.02	0.59	0.03
I am keeping up traditions	0.55	0.02	-	-
Makes me feel happy and satisfied	-	-	0.49	0.03
Values				
Gives me a sense of social belonging	-	-	1	0.03
Provides fun, pleasure and enjoyment	1	0.05	1	0.05
Improves my relationships with others	-	-	1	0.02
Enhances my quality of life and safety	1	0.04	1	0.03
Provides emotion	-	-	1	0.03
Gives me a feeling of peace of mind and dignity	-	-	1	0.02

Next, and to conclude, we present the abstractness and centrality indices for each of the HVMs in Table 5, the purpose of which is to assess the role of each attribute, consequence and value in the structure. In HVMs, the items with highest abstractness indices are the ends, while those with the lowest are the means. It is evident that the ends are the different values that emerge on the two maps. As for the centrality index, the highest value marks the most central item in the structure, which is, in both segments, the value “provides fun, pleasure and enjoyment” (value 0.05). It appears, therefore, that for both segments, the main reason for drinking wine is the enjoyment it gives.

4. Conclusions

European consumer habits are changing. If they are to improve their strategic positioning in the market place, therefore, it is of vital importance for producers to identify and understand how consumers respond to relevant aspects of their own personalities through the products they buy and consume.

The main aim of the present study was to discover whether a typically Mediterranean product with a high level of differentiation and market saturation (in this case, wine) evokes different emotions depending on the age of the consumer. To fulfil this overall aim, we designed a survey using the so-called means-end chain theory, which enabled us to extract attribute-

consequence-value chains from laddering interviews with groups of consumers in Navarra. Respondents were separated a priori into two clearly differentiated segments based on their appreciation of quality indicators and the perceived emotions evoked by the consumption of this product.

The hierarchical value maps, moreover, show that this product has an emotional dimension and that the level of abstraction increases with the age of the consumer. Overall, wine consumers are found to be motivated by various factors. These include quality indicators, geographical origin (which they associate with cultural identity), hedonism or enjoyment, wine as a social enhancer, and, finally, value for money. The most relevant aspect in both groups, nevertheless, is the enjoyment they derive from drinking wine.

In light of these results, wine producers could improve their communication policies by targeting specific age groups, since perceived consumer emotions, benefits and pursued terminal values vary across consumer age segments. This would enhance the effectiveness of policies to improve market positioning and the capacity to stand up to the fierce competition that currently characterises the market.

It should be stressed, nevertheless, that this study could be improved in various ways such as extending the analysis to cover other regions, or working with a larger sample, in order to obtain further support for our findings.

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Annex

Attributes, consequences and values used in the laddering interview

Attributes

1- price
2- brand
3- having Designation of Origin
4- sensory quality
5- prestige
6- image of wine
7- low in alcohol
8- vintage
9- geographical origin
10- custom or habit
11- type of wine

Consequences

1- makes mealtimes more enjoyable
2- I have good eating habits
3- makes me feel good
4- it is appetising, I enjoy drinking it
5- good value for money
6- no health risk
7- I am well informed
8- I am consuming a quality product
9- I find it traditional and familiar
10- it brings back memories
11- I am familiar with the brand
12- gives me a sense of cultural identity
13- a status symbol
14- I am helping to sustain local agriculture
15- I have confidence in local products
16- helps me interact socially
17- I feel more relaxed
18- I enjoy the taste
19- it is genuine
20- I am keeping up tradition
21- makes me feel happy and satisfied

Values

1- gives me a sense of social belonging
2- provides fun, pleasure and enjoyment
3- improves my relationships with others
4- enhances my qualify of life and safety
5- gives a sense of fulfilment and accom
plishment
6- provides emotion
7- I feel more respected by others
8- I feel peace of mind, dignity and self-respect
9- I am more successful

Richins Consumption Emotions Set (SET)

- anger
- discontent
- worry
- sadness
- fear
- shame
- envy
- loneliness
- romantic love
- love
- peacefulness
- contentment
- optimism
- joy
- emotion
- surprise
- guilt
- pride
- impatience
- relief