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Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Module: Qualitative Research

(SBPD7002)

Part 2: Proposal / Data Collection / Analysis

**Topic: Perception of Consumer Purchase Wine based
on Brand Recognition, Label Design, Critic's Grades,
and Winery Marketing**

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Abstract

The wine market in Hong Kong presents tremendous opportunities for growth and expansion of business for wineries and marketers. An extensive research is critical in understanding the characteristics of the market. The primary purpose of the proposed study is to examine the perceptions of wine purchase among the consumers. The paper investigated the consumers' attributes towards brand recognition, label design, critic's grade, and winery marketing. Fundamentally, the study aimed to establish the impact of aforementioned factors on the purchase behaviours of the consumers in Hong Kong. Focus group interviews and a questionnaire were administered to 15 respondents to identify their perceptions towards wine purchase. The sample composed of two focus groups of consumers of the product who are also be recipients of quarterly and monthly wine newsletters. The suggested study expects to find the four independent variables (influential factors) as important in informing the choice and purchase of wine among the subjects. Moreover, it is vital to note that the proposed study are immensely contribute the research of wine consumer behaviours, thereby helping marketers and wineries to position their brands in Hong Kong market.

Research Question

- Which consumer perceptions influence the purchase of wine?
- What is the relationship between the four identified cues and the consumers' wine purchasing behaviors?

Aims and Objectives

Primary objective

- To examine the perceptions of consumer wine purchase based on brand recognition, label design, critic's grades, and winery marketing.

Specific objectives

- To identify the perceptions of the consumers towards the purchase of wine.
- To establish the relationship between the identified four influential factors and the purchasing behavior of wine consumers in Hong Kong.

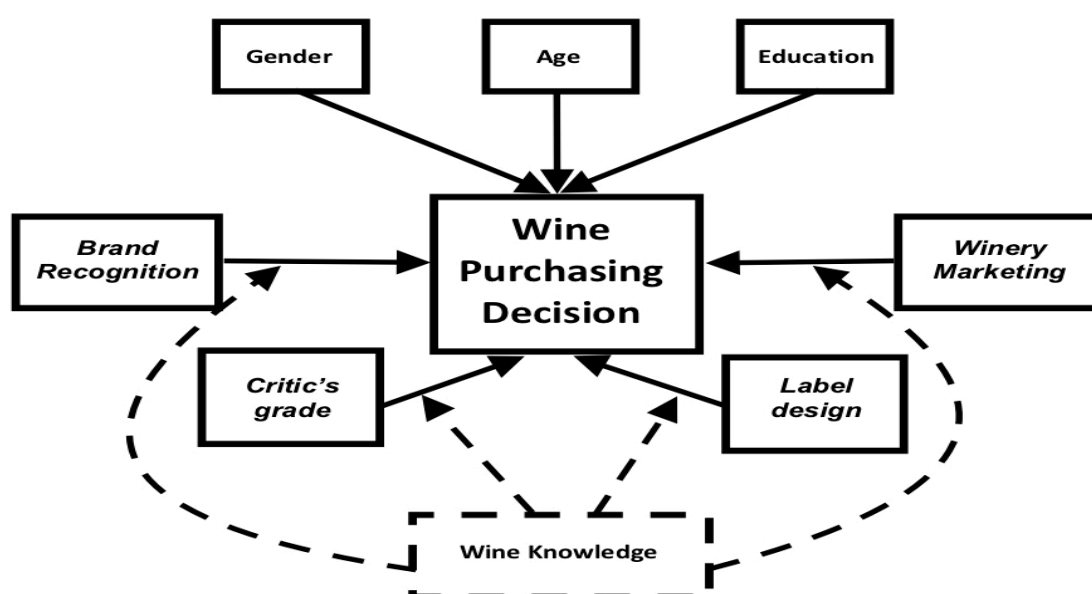
Research Philosophy

The investigation of the subject will be grounded on the expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) which is referred by many scholars as the best suit model for understanding post-purchase behaviour, consumer satisfaction, and service marketing. The theory was first developed by Oliver (1980) who argued that the purchase intentions of customers are largely intertwined with satisfaction, an attribute that acquired through expectation and perceived performance of the products. In the consumer behaviour literature, anticipations are conceptualized as predictions or beliefs about products or brands having preferred attributes.

The adaptation level theory support the tenet of ECT by stating that "human beings perceive stimuli relative to or as a deviation from an adapted level or baseline stimulus level" (Diddi, 2014). The psychological traits of the

persons experiencing the stimulus as well as the situation or the context influence the “adapted level.” Acceptance expectations play a critical part in the process of making purchase decisions. These anticipations mainly depend on the information obtained from external players, such as mass media or friends. From the proposed study, these sources are expected to impact on the perceptions of the consumers towards brand recognition and label design. Other factors such as critic’s grades and winery marketing strategies also play a fundamental role in patronizing businesses and informing the consumers’ decisions (Diddi, 2014). The wine buyers are exposed to a vast pool of information regarding the label designs and brands which sway their purchasing options. Marketing has helped the wineries create a positive image of the product. The increasing technological advancements have made it difficult for companies to control the data that reaches the consumers. Therefore, buyers have been capacitated to form varied expectations towards the firms’ practices.

Figure 1. A wine purchasing decision model



Literature Review

Introduction

According to Kelley et al. (2015) and Brochado et al. (2015), the decision-making process, buying behaviour, and client perception in the wine market have a robust relationship with critics grading, label design, recognition, and winery marketing. The prominence of most wine companies has mainly been pinned on strong brand image that resonates well in the consumers' mind. The four factors mentioned above have been greatly associated with the variation in consumer behaviours in regards to purchasing of wine. The literature review section insightfully evaluates the scholarly works that support the subject matter of the proposed study. The reviews are majorly focus on the four marketing factors – brand recognition, critic's grade, label design, and winery marketing – and their influence on wine buyer perceptions.

Brand recognition

A study conducted in the green wine sector of Portugal by Brochado et al. (2015) to determine the link between consumer perception and brand recognition found that the latter greatly depends on the knowledge of a customer regarding a particular product. The scholars described brand recognition as the ability to identify or spot a certain product from a variety of commodities based on its design components and features. Brochado et al. (2015) further realized that developing an awareness system and a robust brand recognition have become increasingly important for corporate bodies in their bid to sustain the public brand image. Besides brand recognition, Heslop

et al. (2010) found personality trait as another factor that influence the perceptions of the consumers as regards to their readiness to buy the product.

Critic's grade

The study by Chocarro and Cortinas (2013) investigated the effect of reviews by experts on the customers' buying decisions for red wines. The researchers discovered that the information from the experts eases the judgment process of the customers based on the existing brands. The responses of the consumers to the expert reviews differ and, therefore, it is important for the marketers to align their products with the shoppers' attributes for easy identification. The findings of Chocarro and Cortiñas (2013) have been supported by Carsana and Jolibert (2017) who argue that critics and expert opinions greatly inform the decision-making process of the shoppers. Some of the aspects highlighted by experts and critics and considered significant by the customers include sensory definitions, expert grading, star quality ratings, and consistent awards.

Label design (LD)

According to Hirche and Bruwer (2014), the colour and the appearance of the packaging materials are some of the brand awareness cues that cannot be ignored as being influential in changing consumer perceptions. The cues have been given a general term – the label design. Wine manufacturers tend to modify the appearance of wine bottles to attract the shoppers. Captivating label designs increase the buyers' probability of purchasing certain commodities. LD is commonly applied to communicate or reveal the

uniqueness of the product to the customers. Some of the LD features that attract the attention of the shoppers include the manufacture date, ingredient variety, techniques of consumption, and the winery's history. The study conducted by Hirche and Bruwer (2014) revealed that the packaging design (PD) was one of the critical determinant factors that impacted on the buying patterns of wine shoppers. The researchers narrowed their study to specific elements of PD – the bottle design as well as the back and front label. These features have been integrated into the marketing strategies of firms as they facilitate the differentiation of products. According to Heslop et al. (2010), the use of wine among the millennials is mainly triggered by LD components, such as flavour, alcohol volume, vintage, available ingredients, and the history of the manufacturer.

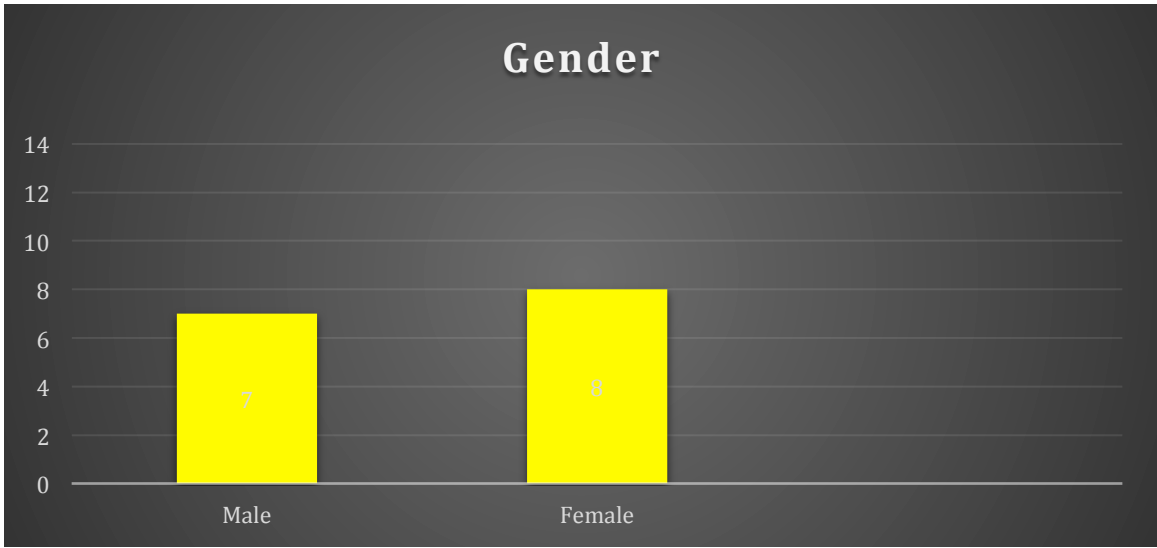
Winery marketing

Bruwer and McCutcheon (2017) investigated the relationship between the winery-marketing concept and the variations in preferences for brands among the customers. In their study, the scholars discovered that the rate of wine consumption was high among the males than the females. As a result, much focus in winery marketing has been directed towards men. Moreover, since most of the wine products are branded as gender-specific, people tend to relate to categories that appeal to either masculine or feminine. However, despite the variations, the females have manifested their superiority in preferences and tastes of wine. They consider aspects such as attractive color, grape variety, low alcohol content, better smell, and eye-catching bottle designs. Having realized feminine wine consumption habits, the marketers

engage in practices that seek to satisfy the female market segment. In a nutshell, winery marketing target specific preferences adopted by varied segments of clients in the industry.

Description of Context and Participants

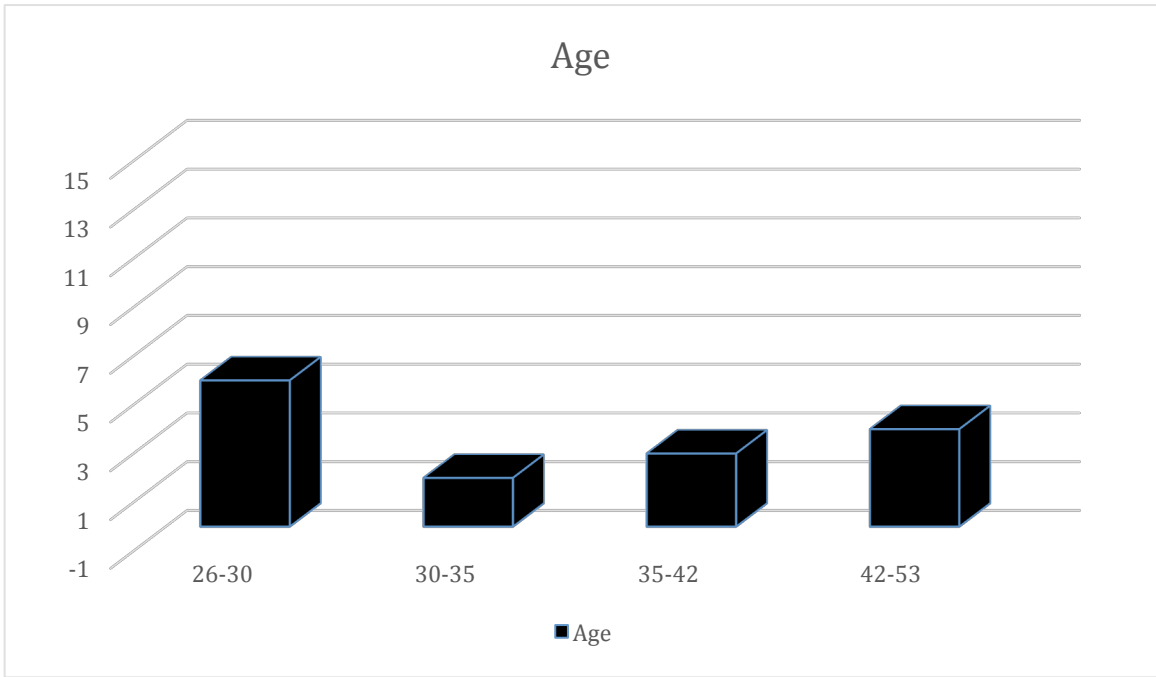
Figure 2. Sample’s gender composition



(Source: Author).

The selection of the study subjects was considered three vital story-receiver antecedents – age, gender, and education. A total of 15 participants were sampled. This size of the sample found to be easy to manage and still obtain rich answers. Both men and women were included in the study. Eight women and seven men were chosen to avoid appearance of the gender issue as an undesirable variable. Furthermore, men and women have been found to exhibit different preferences. Therefore, incorporating the gender aspect in the study helps in understanding the reasons behind the variations in their preferences.

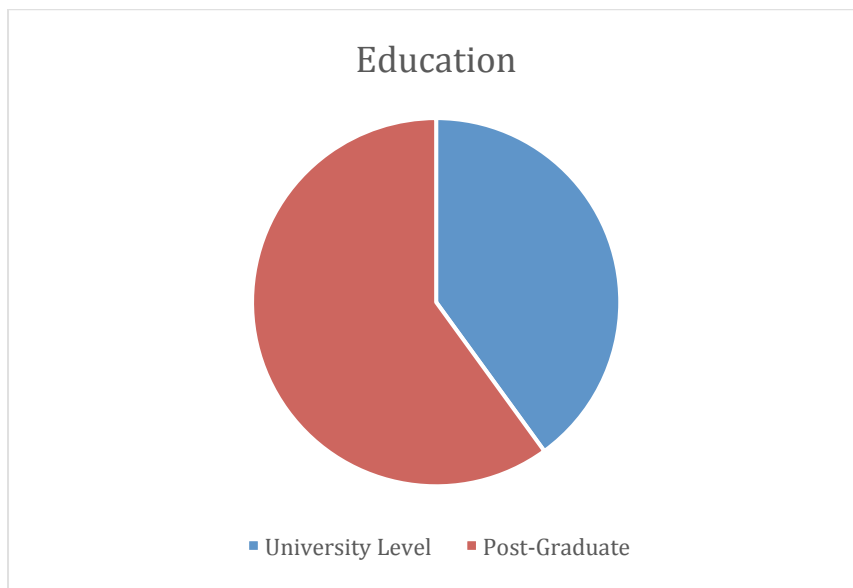
Figure 3. Age composition



(Source: Author)

As revealed in Figure 2, the age group of the participants ranged from 26 to 53. The decision was designed for the study's need to receive information from both the millennials and older consumers. The millennials are attracted to modern features in winery products while older persons focus more on the taste. These two categories of the population assisted in establishing why there are differences in perceptions about the winery products.

Figure 4. Population's education levels



(Source: Author)

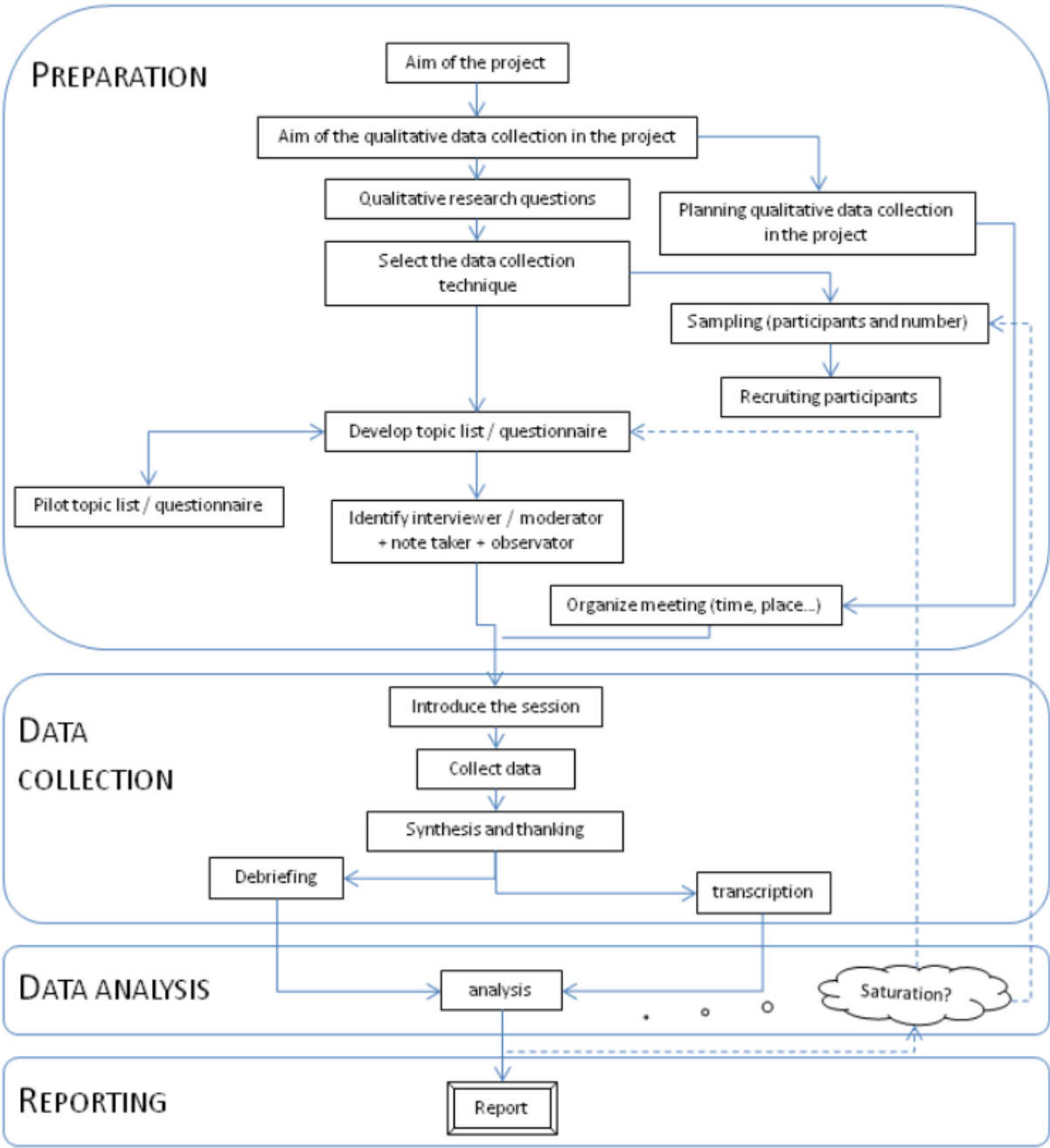
In terms of educational background, the study selected six university students and the rest were be post-graduate students. The latter have a life-long experience in drinking wine than the former. The researcher selected the university education as the minimum level because most of persons categorized in that standard have been legally allowed to take any type of alcoholic beverage. All the participants must have a moderate interest in drinking or buying wine. Furthermore, only those willing to take part in the research were admitted.

A list of five wine brands between “New World” and “Old World” were selected to test the brand awareness of the interviewees. The brands were varying in terms of levels of relationship with the manufacturers. The research methodology adopted favours the participants because of their expertise in wine testing and experience in drinking. The opinions and responses provided are expected to be reliable. The interview questions and the questionnaire

were designed in the format that addressed the four categories of the identified cues – brand recognition, critic’s grades, label design, and winery marketing.

Explanation of the Data Collection Steps

Figure 5. Data collection process



(Source: Author)

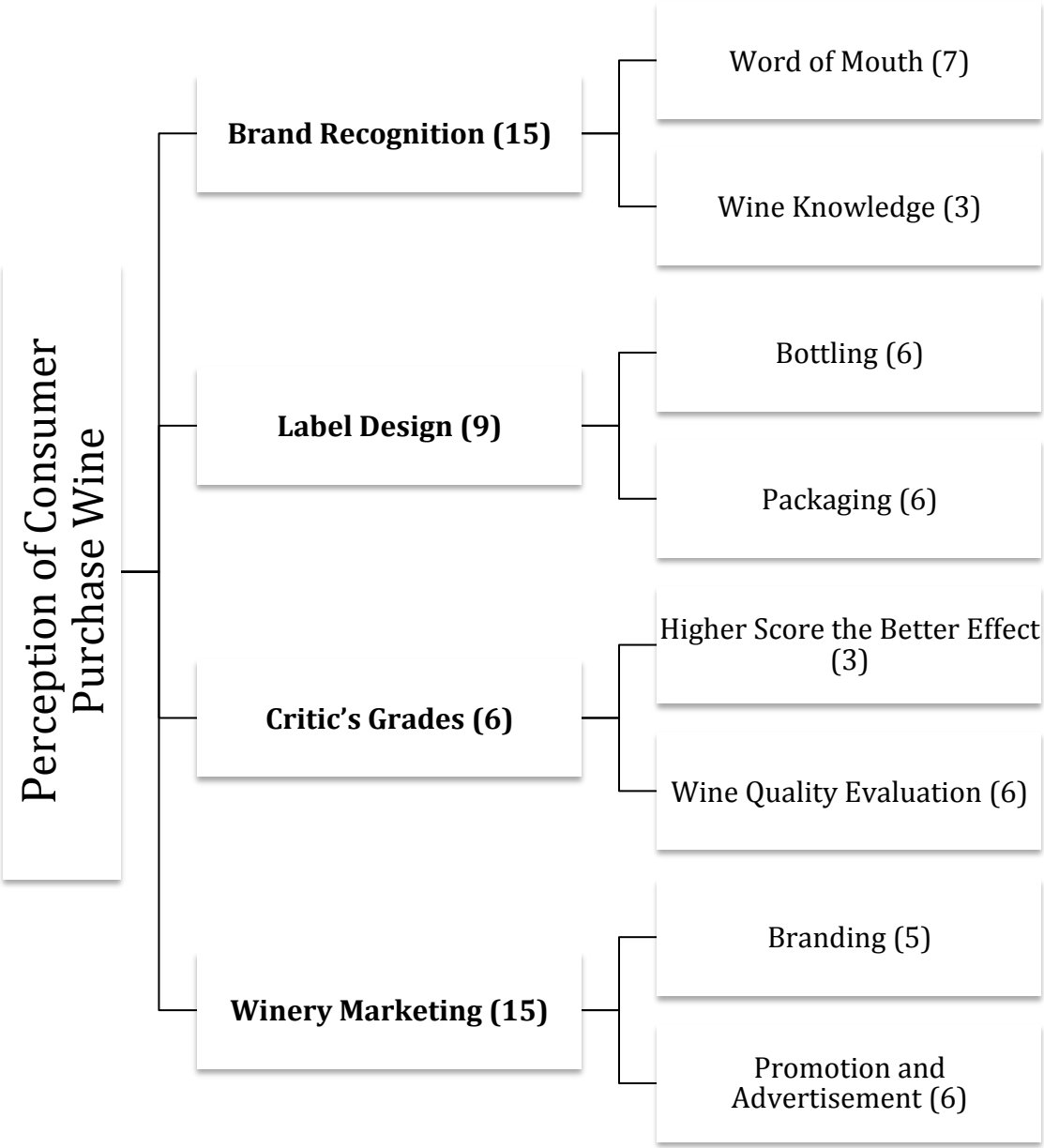
The research has been identified the appropriate tools for gathering substantial data from the subjects. The primary instrument that has been used including open ended interview and a questionnaire. The proposed study has considered ethical issues when designing and employing the use of the data collection tools in the field. The respondents were guaranteed of their safety in the field. Before, the research begins; the researcher has obtained full consent from all the subjects. In design of the data gathering tools, the participants were ensured that their information would remain confidential and private. The study has maintained the anonymity of the persons under investigation. Furthermore, the researcher is expected to respect the dignity of the subjects in the process of gathering information. Exaggeration and deceptions will be avoided in explaining the study's objectives.

The authenticity of the data collection tools has been checked before gathering the data. The move ensured the validity and reliability of the apparatus and, therefore, avoiding bias in the responses as noted by Silverman (2009) and Morse et al. (2002). For the focus group interviews, three labels for each of five wine brands have been chosen. The labels have helped in examining the knowledge of the subjects regarding the different types of wines. The questionnaire has been administered through the email platform while the interviews were conducted in calm environment where the subjects were required to sit around a table. A set of questions was asked and pictures of the labels of wine were shown to the respondents. The investigations have been recorded on tape to enable the researcher listen to the responses later. Each session has lasted for about four hours.

Explanation of the Data Analysis Procedure

The information gathered has been utilized to establish the link between the four cues and the wine consumers' purchasing decisions. According to Gibbs (2008), computer-supported data analysis software programs have been developed to enhance the process of synthesizing research information. The proposed study will further deploy the appropriate software technologies in analysing the collected data. The associations between the nominal variables, for instance the winery marketing and buyers' perceptions will be examined using a Chi-Square test. Coding of the collected data in form of the responses from the interview will be done using the SPSS software program. To get the sense of the finding, the research will summarize each sentence using themes.

Analytical framework



Preliminary Findings

The study anticipates that over 80% of the subjects admit of being knowledgeable about wine showing the level of interest in wine. The spending of the participants in wine is expected to range from HKD \$500 to \$1200. It is expected for split answers to the question on “which element of the wine label do you consider when determining the quality of wine?” However, since most of the participants were females, a higher percentage of mention aspects, such as appellation, vintage, taste, aroma, colour, and the country of origin. Moreover, it is anticipated that the most prominent brand out of the five selected was preferred for drinking by over 50% of the subjects. Brand awareness and winery marketing found to have a positive influence on the buying behaviours of the participants. When faced with the question as to “which source of information helped people to gain knowledge about different wine brands?” a higher percentage expected to mention experts’ and critics’ opinions.

Discussions that Will Emerge from the Findings

From the analysis of the findings, the brand that has been highlighted by the majority of the participants as prominent was received better image. Consequently, there will be a high likelihood that most of the subjects has prefer the brand over the others. Therefore, this is an indication that brand recognition has a positive effect on the purchase perceptions of the buyers. Most of the female participants have mentioned features of the label design that was associated with feminine nature meaning that the cue influences the buying decisions of that segment of consumers. The grading and opinions of

the critics has been acknowledged as the most common source of information regarding wines. Shoppers take into account the information obtained from the critics when buying wines. The best winery marketing features the attitudes and attributes of the buyers.

Conclusion

The study has serious implications to the winery industry. The finding positively helps the marketers to improve their selling strategies. Since the study anticipates to find a positive relationship between the consumers' attitude and winery marketing, the wineries will be required to design their sales strategies based on the interests of the buyers. The wine companies can obtain critical knowledge about the purchasing behaviour of the shoppers. The recommendations from this research will help the management of these firms to address the consumers' needs when producing wine and designing the labels of the brands.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Personal Reflections

From my viewpoint, the input and the efforts of the participants truly helped in determining the success of the proposed study. However, I experienced several challenges in the process of conducting this research study, especially in collecting the data part. One of the problems I encountered was late arrival of the interviewees in the interviews. In order to improve this, I propose a more intense communication with the interviewees prior to the interview regarding the schedule and content of the study so as to mitigate the problem of lateness and improve efficiency. Additionally, I felt challenges of distractions such as ringing of the subjects' phones that disturbed the flow of conversation resulting to partial responses. I recommend that in the future study, researcher need to indicate the need for switching off the participants' phones when being questioned. The rule should be highlighted in the consent forms and the guidelines given to the subjects before the beginning of the study. I further suggest that the possibility of breaking down of the tape recorder should be avoided by carrying an extra one in the future research.

Moreover, I will certainly use a higher number of participants in the future as larger number of participants will provide me with a more diverse opinions about their wine consumption patterns verse a small sample limits the scope of responses and consequently reduced chances of obtaining desirable findings. During this research, I found that Qualitative Research is a tough way to conduct research. However, it is a more humane toward a study

as the fundamental concepts of validity, reliability, and generalizability as applicable to qualitative research is addressed with an update on the current views and controversies, for which I enjoy it very much.

Appendix B. Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Q1. Your Gender?

Q2. Your Age?

Q3. What is your education background?

Q4. What is your level of knowledge about wine?

Q5. The reason of consume/buy wine?

Q6. When buying wine what are your key criteria?

Q7. When buying wine, what is your budget (in HKD)?

Q8. Will you pay extra for better designed bottle?

Q9. What source of information helped you to gain knowledge about different wine brands?

Q10. Which element of the wine label do you consider when determining the quality of wine?