

## DETERMINING SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF YOUNG CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS OF WINE IN SICHUAN, CHINA

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### Abstract

China has become a world leader in wine consumption, especially for wines imported from traditional wine-producing countries and domestically produced in China. Thus, this study determines the factors of quality perception, health benefits, emotional assessment, beliefs, and outcome evaluation influencing young consumers' attitudes and wine purchase intention in Sichuan, China. This quantitative study obtained data for analysis by distributing questionnaires to 500 participants. The index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), pilot test, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Model (SEM) were methods utilized to analyze the data and test the research hypotheses proposed. Results show that health benefits, emotional assessment, and attitude significantly influence purchase intention. Outcome evaluation, health benefits, and beliefs significantly influence attitude. However, Quality perception has no significant influence on purchase intention, and the relationship between emotional assessment and attitude is not supported. In conclusion, wine-making enterprises and distributors should focus on customers' health benefits, emotional assessment, beliefs, outcome evaluation of wine attitude, and purchasing intention.

**Keywords:** Wine, Young Consumers, Quality Perception, Attitudes, Purchase Intention

### Introduction

Wine has become one of the most dynamic products in the global economy, transforming the growth of both old-world wine-producing countries (such as France, Italy, Spain, and other European countries and new world wine-producing countries) (Festa et al., 2016). According to the report, an upturn in the world wine industry trends with a slow but sustained increase in global wine consumption. There are 15 major suppliers in the global supply chain that dominate the global wine market. As wine production begins to outstrip global consumption, the question of how to compete in this changing market becomes more pressing. In addition, how to attract consumers and understand why, when, and how they decide to buy a bottle of wine has become a priority for all participants in the market (such as wine producers, distributors, retailers, etc.).

Meanwhile, China is the sixth largest wine consumption country, with 1.24 billion liters. It is predicted that China will become the most extensive wine market in the world in 30 years (Camillo, 2012). However, research in this area is still insufficient to understand the main determinants driving consumer acceptance of wine (Jenster & Cheng, 2008). Moreover, wine is an absolute "sunrise industry" in China. Currently, the annual consumption of wine in China is only 0.66 liters per capita, and the world average is around 4.5 liters wine has a massive space for improvement in the future. Therefore, knowing more about young Chinese consumers' purchasing intention on wine can not only provide marketing intelligence for countries that export wine to China and Chinese wine enterprises but also have important implications for international destinations to capture lucrative markets and support local attractions and hotels, restaurant business (Lu et al., 2019).

## Literature Review

### 1. Quality Perception

Khalid and Helander (2004) proposed that perceived quality refers to the consumer's evaluation of the overall characteristics of a product. Monteiro et al. (2019) pointed out that quality perceptions positively impact customers' wine purchase intentions. Liu et al. (2020) confirmed that quality perception significantly affected purchase intention. Hence, the researcher proposed the following hypothesis:

**H1:** Quality perception has a significant influence on purchase intention.

### 2. Health Benefits

Health-conscious consumers understand and care about their health and are incentivized to improve and maintain health and quality of life by adopting healthy behavior and maintaining self-awareness to prevent poor health awareness (Newsom et al., 2005). Misra and Singh (2016) found that the consumer's belief in health benefits influenced the intention to purchase organic products. According to Lu et al. (2019), the cognition-affect framework confirmed that health benefits significantly influenced consumer attitudes and purchase intention toward organic wine. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H2:** Health benefits have a significant influence on purchase intention.

**H3:** Health benefits have a significant influence on attitude.

### 3. Emotional Assessment

Emotional assessment refers to people who use their present emotion as an informational cue to form judgment when making an evaluation judgment (Loewenstein & Lerner, 2003). Wang et al. (2019) used Cognitive Appraisal Theories of Emotion (CATE) to confirm that emotional content significantly impacted purchase intention. Lu et al. (2019) applied a cognition-affect framework to indicate that emotional assessment positively influences attitude. Accordingly, this study proposes hypotheses:

**H4:** Emotional assessment has a significant influence on purchase intention.

**H5:** Emotional assessment has a significant influence on attitude.

#### 4. Beliefs

Jenster and Cheng (2008) suggested that attitudes toward behavior can explain an individual's general positive or negative beliefs and assessments of that behavior. Salient beliefs are primary determinants of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Sogari et al. (2015) pointed out a causal relationship between quality beliefs and attitude. Based on the previous studies, the researcher proposed the following hypothesis.

**H6:** Beliefs have a significant influence on attitude.

#### 5. Outcome Evaluation

Consumer evaluation of a product involves using cognition of the product to develop beliefs about the expected outcome of the product and emotional responses to the product (Heslop et al., 2010). Li and Zhong (2017) pointed out that outcome expectation is a judgment of the possible consequences of the consumption of green aquatic products and a motive for people to consume green aquatic products. Young et al. (2005) have demonstrated that outcome expectancy influence intention and attitude towards behavior. Based on the assumptions, the researcher hypothesizes as follows:

**H7:** Outcome evaluation has a significant influence on attitude

#### 6. Attitude

Consumer attitudes can be divided into functional and constructive categories. Thus, functional attitudes form a broader basis for constructive attitudes at a given time (Didyasarini et al., 2017). However, consumers can use functionality and a constructive attitude (Argyriou & Melewar, 2011). Silva et al. (2014) utilized TPB to discover that attitude was the most significant factor that impacted young adults' wine consumption behavior and intention. Consequently, H7 is set:

**H8:** Attitude has a significant influence on purchase intention.

#### 7. Purchase Intention

Intention refers to the subjective probability of carrying out a particular behavior which is a driving component in the decision-making process (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The role of intention in decision-making is related to the level of effort required to perform a behavior, such as purchasing a product or a service (Bagozzi et al., 1990). Das (2014) defined *purchase intention* as the individual's willingness to purchase goods or services, which can be converted into purchase behavior. Tavares et al. (2008) confirmed that if a person intended to purchase products, he/she would take action when buying goods and thought the price was fair and found them easy to obtain.

## Research Framework

The research framework was constructed from the previous four theoretical frameworks. For the previous study's framework, the first one was conducted by Wang et al. (2019), and it provided quality perception (QP). The second one was conducted by Lu et al. (2019) which provided health benefits (HB), emotional assessment (EA), and attitude (ATT). The third research, carried out by Jose and Kuriakose (2021), was concerned with the investigation of attitude (ATT) and purchase intention (PI). The last one was conducted by Zanten (2005), which provided the study of beliefs (Be), attitude (ATT), and outcome evaluation (OE). Based on the previous studies, the research framework is shown in Figure 1.

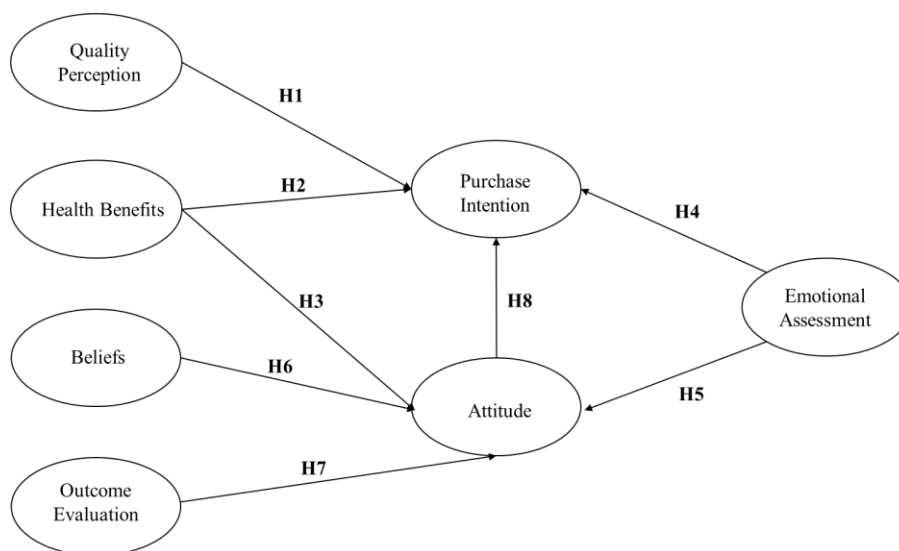


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

## Research Methodology

The data were collected through online questionnaires, consisting of screening questions, demographic profiles, and measuring items. For scale items, a 5-point Likert scale was used to measure variables from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Before data collection, the researcher conducted an item-objective consistency (IOC) index test by three experts, showing that all items were approved at a score of 0.6 or above. To test the reliability of the study, the researcher also conducted a pilot test and used Cronbach's Alpha measurement to distribute questionnaires to 50 target populations, resulting in all constructs being approved at a score of more than 0.7 (Dikko, 2016). Afterwards, the researcher distributed questionnaires to the target population, and 576 valid questionnaires were obtained for the study. The data were analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation model (SEM) by using SPSS and AMOS software.

### 1. Population and Sample Size

The target population is people living in Sichuan, China, who have experienced purchasing these three brands of wine (Great wall, Chang Yu and Dynasty). There are seven latent variables and 33 observed variables in this study. Williams et al. (2010) suggested that 500 was the minimum sample size required in a complex model compared with a simple model. In order to obtain valid questionnaires, the researchers distributed about 600 questionnaires and used 576 valid questionnaires for the study.

### 2. Sampling Techniques

The sampling procedure involves purposive, stratified random, and convenience sampling. The purposive sampling is to select people living in Sichuan, China, who have experienced purchasing these three brands of wine (Great wall, Chang Yu and Dynasty). The age of the respondents is from 18 to 41 years old. Stratified random sampling to collect data proportionally according to the size of the young wine consumers. For convenience sampling, the online survey was distributed between April and June 2022 to over 600 participants via WeChat, of which 576 were returned and qualified to process the analysis.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Demographic Information

According to the demographic profile of 576 respondents, 65.5 percent (378) are male, while 48.4 percent (198) are female. The majority of respondents are between 35 and 41 years old of 35 percent, followed by between 18 and 25 years old of 32.8 percent, and between 26 and 34 years old of between 26 and 34 years old of 32.2 percent. For education level, most respondents are Bachelor's degree of 54.3 percent, and the least group is Doctoral degree of 0.5 percent. In the term of occupation, most respondents are private employee of 32.8 percent. The majority of respondents earn monthly income between CNY 5001-10,000 of 50.3 percent.

### 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Hair et al. (2006) indicated that Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a highly effective method to determine how to account for small-scale variables appropriately. Convergent validity (factor loading, composite reliability, average variance extraction) and discriminant validity can be verified by CFA. The results in Table 1 show that the construction has an internal consistency coefficient under the rule of thumb that Cronbach's Alpha must be 0.70 or above (Dikko, 2016). Factor loading of each variable was above 0.5 at a t-value >1.98 and p-value < 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). Composite reliability (CR) was more significant than 0.7 and average variance extracted (AVE) was more significant than 0.4 for all constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In summary, the statistical estimates were approved.

**Table 1** Confirmatory Factor Analysis Result, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Latent Variables	Source of Questionnaire	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Factors Loading	CR	AVE
Quality perception (QP)	Monteiro et al. (2019)	4	0.914	0.826-0.874	0.914	0.727
Health Benefits (HB)	Lu et al. (2019)	5	0.975	0.880-0.966	0.974	0.884
Emotional Assessment (EA)	Lu et al. (2019)	4	0.963	0.878-0.963	0.960	0.859
Beliefs (BF)	Zanten (2005)	6	0.965	0.891-0.933	0.965	0.846
Outcome Evaluation (OE)	Christodoulidou (2009)	6	0.924	0.755-0.861	0.921	0.659
Attitude (ATT)	Neeraj et al. (2020)	4	0.769	0.587-0.788	0.772	0.462
Purchase intention (PI)	Lu et al. (2019)	5	0.942	0.584-0.957	0.948	0.789

Source: Created by the author.

In this study, the square root AVE of each factor was larger than the correlation values of all factors. Consequently, the discriminant validity was approved. Studenmund (1992) stated that when the factor correlations did not surpass 0.80., it had no multicollinearity problems as demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2** Discriminant Validity

Correlation	QP	HB	EA	BE	OE	ATT	PI
QP	<b>0.852</b>						
HB	0.400	<b>0.940</b>					
EA	0.195	0.447	<b>0.926</b>				
BE	0.279	0.430	0.487	<b>0.919</b>			
OE	0.357	0.375	0.308	0.333	<b>0.811</b>		
ATT	0.368	0.443	0.371	0.427	0.600	<b>0.679</b>	
PI	0.255	0.386	0.361	0.450	0.260	0.433	<b>0.888</b>

Note: The diagonally listed value is the AVE square roots of the variables.

### 3. Structural Equation Model (SEM)

The model's fitness is illustrated in Table 3, where the statistical indicator values from the SEM are compared with acceptable criteria. The indices and its value used for goodness of fit are CMIN/DF = 3.210, GFI = 0.850, AGFI = 0.817, CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.944, RMSEA = 0.062. All the index values were within the acceptable standard, which confirmed the model's fitness.

**Table 3** Goodness of Fit for Measurement and Structural Model

Index	Acceptable Values	Statistical Values of Structural Model
CMIN/DF	< 3.00 Hair et al. (2006)	3.210
GFI	≥ 0.85 Sica and Ghisi (2007)	0.850
RMSEA	< 0.08 Pedroso et al. (2016)	0.062
AGFI	≥ 0.80 Sica and Ghisi (2007)	0.817
NFI	≥ 0.90 Bentler and Bonett (1980)	0.930
CFI	≥ 0.90 Bentler (1990)	0.951
TLI	≥ 0.90 Bentler and Bonett (1980)	0.944

Model summary	Acceptable Model Fit
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Remark: CMIN/DF = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = Goodness-of-fit index, RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation, AGFI = Adjusted goodness-of-fit index, NFI = Normed fit index, CFI = Comparative fit index, and TLI = Tucker-Lewis index

### 4. Hypothesis Testing Result

Structural models measure the significance of relationships between variables by their regression weights and R<sup>2</sup> variance. It turns out that all of the hypotheses presented are supported, except H1 and H5. Attitude (ATT) was the strongest predictor of purchase intention (PI). They were followed by emotional assessment (EA) and health benefits (HB). Outcome evaluation (OE) was the most influential to attitude, followed by beliefs and health benefits.

**Table 4** Hypothesis Results of the Structural Equation Model

Hypothesis	( $\beta$ )	t-value	Result
H1: QP→PI	0.026	1.208	Not supported
H2: HB→PI	0.092	3.546***	Supported
H3: HB→ATT	0.121	4.953***	Supported
H4: EA→PI	0.098	3.769***	Supported
H5: EA→ATT	0.040	1.697	Not supported
H6: BE→ATT	0.127	5.086***	Supported
H7: OE→ATT	0.361	10.294***	Supported
H8: ATT→PI	0.292	5.361***	Supported

Note: \*\*\*= $p < 0.001$

Source: Created by the author.

H1: The standardized path coefficient between quality perception and purchase intention was 0.026, and the t-value was 1.208, indicating no significant effect between quality perception and purchase intention. Hence, H1 was not supported, and quality perception did not influence purchase intention in this study.

H2: The standardized path coefficient between health benefits and purchase intention was 0.092, with a t-value of 3.546\*\*\*. The hypothesis was supported by TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and previous empirical studies (Jose & Kuriakose, 2021; Lu et al., 2019). Therefore, it concluded that health benefits positively influenced purchase intention. Therefore, H2 was supported.

H3: The standardized path coefficient between health benefits and attitude was 0.121, with a t-value was 4.953\*\*\*. Consequently, H3 was supported. It implied a positive causal relationship between health benefits and attitude. This finding is consistent with previous research (Newsom et al., 2005).

H4: The hypothesis was supported by the positive influence of emotional assessment on purchase intention with a standardized path coefficient of 0.098 and a t-value was 3.769\*\*\*, which was supported by Cognitive Appraisal Theories of Emotion (CATE) (Wang et al., 2019). The finding is aligned with studies by (Bui & Kemp, 2013; Lu et al., 2019; Watanabe et al., 2020). Therefore, H4 was supported.

H5: The standardized path coefficient between emotional assessment and attitude was 0.040, with a t-value of 1.697. Therefore, H5 was not supported. Therefore, the result indicated an insignificant relationship between emotional assessment and attitude.

H6: The hypothesis testing exposed that the standardized path coefficient of beliefs and attitude was 0.127, and the t-value was 5.086\*\*\*. Hence, H6 was supported. TRA and TPB (Ajzen, 1991) supported the hypothesis. Sogari et al. (2015) concluded that beliefs positively influenced attitude.



H7: The standardized path coefficient between outcome evaluation and attitude was 0.361, and the t-value was 10.294\*\*\*. Consequently, H7 was supported. The hypothesis was supported by TRA and TPB (Ajzen, 1991). This corresponds to research conducted by (Li & Zhong, 2017; Young et al., 2005; Zanten, 2005). It implied that there was a positive relationship between outcome evaluation and attitude.

H8: The hypothesis testing exposed that the standardized path coefficient of attitude and purchase intention was 0.292, with a t-value of 5.361\*\*\*. The finding is aligned with studies of (Caliskan et al., 2020; Neeraj et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2014). All the studies applied to TPB to find that attitude positively influences purchase intention.

## Conclusions, Recommendations, Limitations and Future Research

### 1. Conclusions

Results show that health benefits, emotional assessment, and attitude significantly influence purchase intention. Outcome evaluation, health benefits, and beliefs significantly influence attitude. However, Quality perception has no significant influence on purchase intention, and the relationship between emotional assessment and attitude is not supported. Firstly, the attitude was the most influential predictor to purchase intention. Lu et al. (2019) posited that Chinese consumers express a favorable attitude and are interested in purchasing wine. Secondly, the attitude was primarily influenced by outcome evaluation. Affective evaluation can prompt rapid, heuristic, and automatic responses, which are helpful in rapid decision-making and positive attitude.

Besides, Lu et al. (2019) pointed out that health benefits positively influenced Chinese consumers' attitudes toward wine. Regarding the participants' perceptions of wine and health, the researchers found that most participants were optimistic about the health benefits of moderate wine consumption. However, according to the statistical result, there was no causal relationship between emotional assessment to attitude. Thirdly, attitude plays a significant role as it serves as the mediator variables of outcome evaluation (OE), beliefs (BE), emotional assessment (EA), and health benefits (HB). In conclusion, nowadays, wine is a tasting experience, not only a symbol of prestige but also a social communication tool or a means of celebration. In contrast to other products, wine consumption can be almost compared to aesthetic products, and the experience is the basis of purchase and post-purchase.

### 2. Recommendations

For recommendations, firstly, the results suggest that wine companies or participants should leverage the experiential attitude of consumers towards the product. Secondly, there was no causal relationship between quality perception and purchase intention. The results show that consumers perceive sustainability certification as a guarantee of high-quality standards and have a more positive attitude towards this type of wine, as well as helping give a positive impression to the industry. Thirdly, wine companies should investigate young

consumers' beliefs and concerns about wine's health benefits. It is vital for vintners to responsibly promote the health benefits of moderate drinking as an effective marketing technique. Fourthly, all the wine participants should know that the most significant influence comes from young consumers' outcome evaluation of their consumption behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to educate young consumers to evaluate products better.

Lastly, the results suggest that emotional assessment did not influence attitude but mattered to young consumers' wine purchase intention. This result challenges previous research on western consumers that positive emotions are integral to wine-related consumption (Mora & Moscarola, 2010). wine companies should be aware of this age group's attitudes, perceptions, preferences, and behavior to adapt to their current and future needs and expectations. This study can also serve as a starting point for further research in wine marketing, as the implications of the findings and the questions raised may have applications in communication and advertising.

### 3. Limitations and Future Research

Future research should also investigate other factors such as country of origin, label, price, etc. In addition, it might be more beneficial to analyze other target consumer groups, such as middle-aged consumers or the generation X group. Moreover, marketers can more precisely design appropriate and effective campaigns by further refining the target consumer groups who are most likely to respond to marketing messages around health benefits. While no one is advocating that everyone should drink wine, it is crucial for vintners to responsibly promote the health benefits of moderate drinking as an effective marketing technique. Finally, the influence of another participant may cause the findings to be very similar within pairs (couples) or groups. In future research, care will be taken to ensure that other participants do not influence individual responses.

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