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Antecedents of Value-in-Use in a Winery in Southern Brazil

Silva, M. B. C.**, **Bebber, S.****, **Matte, J.****, **Milan, G. S.*/****,
De Toni, D.**, **Mascarello, C. G.**** and **Suzin, T. Z.****

UCS – Universidade de Caxias do Sul (**)

Unisinós – Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (***)

gsmilan@unisinós.br (*)

Abstract

The goal of this study is to analyze the perceived value-in-use by wine tourism customers based on the product design, the product price, the service provided, and customer satisfaction. A survey was applied to 223 customers visiting or buying at a winery in southern Brazil. The data were analyzed through the structural equation modeling technique. The main results show that value-in-use is influenced by customer satisfaction, which, in turn, is influenced by the service provided. The price charged for a product is positively influenced by the product design but is not influenced by the service provided by the winery. Wine tourism services should be charged separately from the products and not as tied-in sales. The confirmation of the service provided as an antecedent of customer satisfaction demonstrates the importance of the services when visiting wineries, evidencing that tourists seek the experience as one of the visit motivations. New experiences and a qualified staff, who can guide the tourist during visitation, make the tourist more satisfied.

Keywords: Value-in-use, Product design, Product price, Services, Customer satisfaction, Wine.

Resumo

O objetivo deste estudo é analisar o valor de uso percebido pelos clientes de enoturismo com base no design do produto, o preço do produto, o serviço prestado e a satisfação do cliente. Foi aplicada uma *survey* a 223 clientes que estavam visitando ou comprando em uma vinícola no sul do Brasil. Os dados foram analisados através da técnica de modelagem de equações estruturais. Os principais resultados mostram que o valor de uso é influenciado pela satisfação do cliente, que, por sua vez, é influenciado pelo serviço prestado. O preço cobrado pelo produto é positivamente influenciado pelo design do produto, mas não é influenciado pelo serviço prestado pela vinícola. Os serviços de enoturismo devem ser cobrados separadamente dos produtos e não como vendas vinculadas. A confirmação do serviço prestado como antecedente da satisfação do consumidor demonstra a importância dos serviços quando se visitam vinícolas, evidenciando que os turistas procuram a experiência como uma das motivações da visita. Novas experiências e funcionários qualificados, que podem orientar o turista durante a visita, tornam o turista mais satisfeito.

Palavras-chave: Valor de uso, Preço do produto, Design do produto, Serviços, Satisfação do consumidor.

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es analizar el valor de uso percibido por los clientes de enoturismo en función del diseño del producto, el precio del mismo, el servicio prestado y la satisfacción del cliente. Se aplicó una encuesta a 223 clientes que visitaban o compraban en una bodega del sur de Brasil. Los datos se analizaron mediante la técnica de modelización de ecuaciones estructurales. Los principales resultados muestran que el valor de uso está influido por la satisfacción del cliente, que a su vez está influida por el servicio prestado. El precio que se cobra por el producto está influenciado positivamente por el diseño del producto, pero no por el servicio que presta la bodega. Los servicios de enoturismo deben cobrarse por separado de los productos y no como ventas vinculadas. La confirmación del servicio prestado como

precedente de la satisfacción del consumidor demuestra la importancia de los servicios en la visita a las bodegas, mostrando que los turistas buscan la experiencia como una de las motivaciones de la visita. Las nuevas experiencias y los empleados cualificados, que pueden guiar al turista durante la visita, hacen que éste quede más satisfecho..

Palabras clave: Valor de uso, Diseño del producto, Precio del producto, Servicios, Satisfacción del cliente.

1 Introduction

A wine experience can be enjoyed as a form of entertainment - such as wine blend, a music concert, or a heritage visit – or as a learning base – such as home winemaking classes, a tasting class with a local specialist, or a cooking or crafts class (Thanh & Kirova, 2018). For wine tourism, visitors' experiences are central, as the visitors travel to the wineries and experience these destinations (Byrd et al., 2016). However, some wineries achieve limited benefits through their involvement with wine tourism (Alonso & Liu, 2012).

Studies suggest that adopting a visitor-centered approach provides a broader experience variety, consolidates customer loyalty, influences purchase intention, create bonds with the customer, and increases the relevance of the liquor market (Bebber et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2016; Thanh & Kirova, 2018), factors that drive the business. Customers direct the business value proposition and are central to any analysis of this nature (Priilaid et al., 2020).

It is crucial to identify factors that can influence visitors' value-in-use perception, described as the customer cognitive evaluation of the practical experience with the service and value-in-use provided (Sandström et al., 2008). Satisfaction is one of those factors since the customer perceives value from the satisfaction acquired after use (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). Value is one of the comparative operations customers apply in the satisfaction response (Oliver, 1996).

To create conditions for a positive and satisfactory service experience, Bitner (1992) mentioned that one of the necessary dimensions is the physical or technical attributes, such as physical signs, symbols, products, and infrastructure necessary to create the various attributes that impact the service experience. One of the explored factors in this study is the product design since it impacts the purchase decision and customer experience (Vannevel et al., 2018).

Previous studies pointed that customer behavior and the wine purchase decision are not only based on the characteristics of the products, for instance, its appearance, but also on its price, as the value perceptions and price sensitivities may vary widely among customers (Schons et al., 2014). Winery customers perceive price not merely through the wine offered but also through the whole wine tourism experience. These customers are willing to pay for wine tourism offers, regardless of whether the customer has previous wine knowledge or not (Bitsch et al., 2020). Therefore, the price was also included in this study, as winery's pricing may influence customer perceived value-in-use.

Another investigated factor in this study is the service provided by evaluating attendance and staff's attention to customers, both vitals to promote customer loyalty, once customers seek personalized attention and enjoy services that best represent their perceived interest (Hamari et al., 2017). Besides influencing business goals – for example, customer retention, productivity, profitability, corporate image, and customers' intentions to share their positive company experiences (Anderson et al., 2004; Anderson & Fornell, 2000) – there are cues that services also influence value-in-use (Grönroos, 2017; Sandström et al., 2008).

In this context, this study aims to analyze the perceived value-in-use by wine tourism customers based on the product design, the price charged, the service provided, and customer satisfaction. We expect this study to help winery owners and managers identify factors that influence their customers' perception of value-in-use related to the wine tourism experience in their wineries.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Product Design and Product Price

After the wine is bottled, corked, and labeled, it assumes a set of attributes that give it importance and complexity (Reynolds et al., 2018). Wineries offer new sorts of wine packaging that enhance its shape, color, label, design, and bottle capping type (Barber et al., 2009). That is to say, investing in the appearance of their products. As the product price is a marketing suggestion, as well as the design of the products (Aschemann-Witzel et al., 2020), there is a positive relationship between the products' design and the price charged by the supplier.

For most wines, package design is one of the most important factors to stimulate customer choice and product evaluation (Vannevel et al., 2018), as customers generally associate good design with quality (Zhang et al., 2020). Price is also a factor that provokes comments about the product and its choice. Namely, a product price reduction influences the customer's purchase or not-purchase decision (Aschemann-Witzel et al., 2020). Information on labels and product design, for example, influence the price and purchase decision of wine customers (Saïdi & Giraud, 2020). Therefore, the first hypothesis is:

H₁: The product design positively influences the product price.

2.2 Service Provided and Product Price

The services provided in wine tourism may be appreciated through tasting classes with a local specialist, visitation, gastronomy, or handicrafts (Thanh & Kirova, 2018). Tangible attributes of the service quality, such as the wine cellar, region and grape variety, harvest, and winery size, are statistically significant in explaining the deviations from average wine prices (Oczkowski, 1994). Customers are willing to pay for wine tourism offers, and this willingness to pay is not dependable on their wine knowledge (Bitsch et al., 2020).

When exploring the critical dimension of the service quality at a winery in China, Lee, Madanoglu, and Ko (2016) argued that wine variety, wine quality, and staff behavior are crucial factors that influence Chinese tourists. Ben Dewald (2008) also investigated the specialized wine service and identified that customers are willing to pay more to consume wine products when visiting a restaurant that offers sommelier services than restaurants without sommeliers. The explanation may be on the personal contact and the products information provided by producers or specialists, which increases the customers' willingness to pay (Kim et al., 2014), being that the second hypothesis:

H₂: The service provided by the winery positively influences the product price.

2.3 Product Price and Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction is characterized as "an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experience with a good or service over time" (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann 1994, p. 54). The role of price as an antecedent of overall satisfaction finds its theoretical foundations in the theory of equity satisfaction (Chen et al., 2016), which refers to fairness perception, equity, or customer merit, based on the comparison of the results related to inputs (Oliver, 2014). The more equitable the customers perceive the price/use exchange, called cost-benefit, the more satisfied they will be with the service or product (Bolton & Lemon, 1999).

Studies confirmed a positive relationship between cost-benefit and customer satisfaction in tourism contexts (Ramos & Cuamea, 2019). In the online wine market, quality and price influence customer satisfaction (Jorge et al., 2020). For wine tourism, the perception of tourists' cost-benefit ratio on the wine products positively influences their overall satisfaction with the visit (Chen et al., 2016). The third hypothesis is:

H₃: The product price positively influences customer satisfaction.

2.4 Service Provided and Customer Satisfaction

Wineries visitors seek “added value” in their visits to the wineries (Chen et al., 2016). Service and staff attention to visitors' needs are vital to promoting customer loyalty since they tend to seek personal attention and enjoy services representing their best-perceived interest (Hamari et al., 2017).

Wineries managers must provide a memorable experience so that they can establish a long-term relationship with visitors by attracting repeated visits and wine purchases (Bruwer & Alant, 2009). One way is through the service provided, based on empathy, tangibility, assurance, and credibility, since all positively impact customer satisfaction (Lau et al., 2019).

If the service meets the customers' expectations, they will be satisfied (O'Neill, Getz, & Carlsen 1999). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is:

H₄: The service provided by the winery positively influences customer satisfaction.

2.5 Customer Satisfaction and Value-in-use

Satisfaction is the customer evaluation after the service use. The customer perceives value when the service performance exceeds the customer expectation (Blut et al., 2016; Oliver, 2014; Oliver, 2016). This post-use perceived value is known as value-in-use, a cognitive evaluation of the service experience (Sandström et al., 2008).

Customers determine value based on the value-in-use experienced (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). For Macdonald et al. (2016, p. 98), value-in-use refers to the “customer perceived consequences arising from a solution that facilitate or hinder achieving the customer's goals”. In this context, value-in-use is perceived after receiving the service, along with satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction influences value-in-use. Moreover, customers evaluate and have the perception of the results obtained with service after receiving it. Finally, the fifth and last hypothesis is:

H₅: Customer satisfaction positively influences value-in-use.

Figure 1 illustrates the relationships between the theoretical constructs and their respective hypotheses.

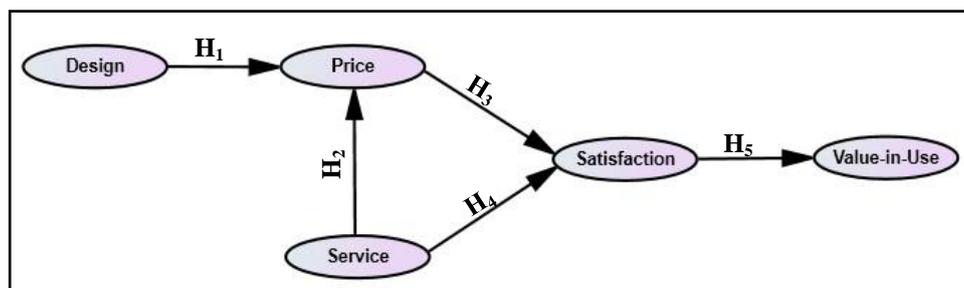


Figure 1. Proposed Theoretical Model

3 Research Methods

The research is a quantitative study, categorized as descriptive research, specifically a cross-sectional survey (Mueller & Hancock, 2018). For data analysis, structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the intrinsic relationships between the proposed theoretical model and its respective hypotheses (Kline, 2015; Byrne, 2016; Hair Jr. et al., 2018).

The research participants were visitors from a winery located in southern Brazil. The participants were invited to fill out the survey questionnaire with a drop-off method (Malhotra et al., 2012) after visiting the winery visitation, purchasing its products or services, but still in the winery site.

The questionnaire was composed of previously validated scales, adapted for the research context: product design (Kumar & Noble, 2016), product price (Graciola et al., 2018), service provided (Thomas et al., 2018), customer satisfaction (Fernandes & Cruz, 2016; Fornell et al., 1996), and value-in-use (Wang et al., 2004). The instrument resulted in a two-page document in which the attributes representative of the theoretical dimensions were measured using a seven-point Likert scale, requesting respondents for their degree of agreement (Bearden et al., 2011). After structuring, the questionnaire was submitted to three research professors and three experts for content validation.

The data collection occurred from January to August 2019, with a total of 271 questionnaires filled. After checking for missings and outliers (through the Z-score and Mahalanobis test) (Malhotra et al., 2012; Hair Jr. et al., 2018), the final sample resulted in 223 valid questionnaires. All the analyses were performed with the help of the statistical software SPSS21® and AMOS20®. Confirmatory factor analyses were performed to evaluate the instrument quality and structural equation modeling to examine the proposed hypotheses. The level of statistical significance was set at 0.05.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Participants (Sample)

In total, 271 questionnaires were collected, 48 of which presented missings or outliers, resulting in 223 valid questionnaires used in the analysis. According to the sample information, the characteristics were as follows: 57% of the visitors were female, 42.6% were male; the vast majority of the interviewees were between 31 and 60 years old; 38% of the visitors were married, while 35% were single; 32.7% had higher education.

4.2 Common Method Biases

In order to test for common method bias, Harman's single factor test was employed by conducting an exploratory factor analysis with all the measured items. According to this technique, if a single factor emerges from the factor analysis or one "general" factor accounts for over 50% of the covariation in the variables, common method variance is present (Podsakoff et al. 2003). The largest factor accounted for only 33.25 % of the variance, indicating that common method bias was not a concern in this study.

4.3 Structural Model Evaluation

For the constructs' validation, the convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated. The attributes SP04, SP06, and SA04 presented standardized regression weights below 0.5. Therefore, they were excluded from further analysis, as Hair Jr. et al. (2018) recommended. Regarding the variance extracted, which, according to the literature indexes, should be higher than 50%, all constructs presented values as indicated. The composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha of all constructs were above the recommended score of 0.6 for Cronbach's Alpha and 0.7 for composite

reliability (Malhotra et al., 2012; Hair Jr. et al., 2018), indicating that they have adequate reliability. The results are in Table 1.

Table 1. Convergent validity

Variables		Loadings	CR	AVE	Alpha
Product Design					
PD01	The design of the label conveys the wine quality.	0.696	0.821	0.535	0.811
PD02	The design of the bottle conveys the wine quality.	0.695			
PD03	The design of the product conveys high product standards.	0.830			
PD04	The design of the product packaging is attractive.	0.696			
Product Price					
PP01	The price indicates the quality of the wine.	0.667	0.813	0.522	0.809
PP02	I would pay more for older vintages' wines	0.711			
PP03	The price is justified by the quality of the wine.	0.821			
PP04	I would pay more for a wine with a bottle/label differentiated and aesthetically attractive.	0.682			
Service Provided					
SP01	The staff shows goodwill and have good communication in customer service.	0.911	0.863	0.617	0.852
SP02	The staff has skills and competence concerning customer needs.	0.884			
SP03	The staff maintains good service during peak periods.	0.663			
SP05	The waiting time in the attendance/payment was satisfactory.	0.645			
Customer Satisfaction					
SA01	Overall, I am very pleased with my visit to this winery.	0.861	0.912	0.777	0.900
SA02	The extent to which this winery has produced the best possible outcome for me is satisfying.	0.839			
SA03	I am completely happy with my visit to this winery	0.941			
Value-in-use					
VU01	The decision to consume this winery's products is the correct choice when price and other expenses are considered.	0.675	0.811	0.518	0.809
VU02	The services provided by this winery propitiate value for my money based on previous experiences.	0.739			
VU03	This winery's products and service's availability makes me trust it.	0.760			
VU04	The services provided by this winery makes me feel good.	0.703			

The subsequent analysis performed was the discriminant validity, to verify the differentiation of one to the other constructs, based on Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. Discriminant validity was observed because each construct squared root (highlighted in bold in Table 2, on the diagonal) was higher than the correlation with other model constructs (values outside the diagonal).

Table 2. Discriminant validity

Constructs	①	②	③	④	⑤
① Customer Satisfaction	0.777				
② Service Provided	0.237	0.617			
③ Product Price	0.069	0.033	0.522		
④ Product Design	0.521	0.123	0.053	0.535	
⑤ Value-in-use	0.504	0.226	0.217	0.476	0.518

4.4 Structural Model Validation

To validate the proposed Theoretical Model, the similarity between the estimated and observed covariance matrices is verified through the Goodness-of-fit indexes, classified as absolute fit measures (GFI, AGFI e RMSEA); incremental fit measures (NFI, TLI and IFI); and parsimonious fit

measures (CFI) (Kline, 2015; Byrne, 2016; Hair Jr et al., 2018). The indexes of the proposed model were satisfactory for NFI (0.902), TLI (0.930), IFI (0.943), and CFI (0.943), being above 0.9. Besides, RMSEA (0.072) was between 0.05 and 0.08 (Kline, 2015; Burne, 2016). The GFI (0.889) and AGFI indexes (0.848) were below the recommended in the literature (0.900). However, Bagozzi and Yi (2012) emphasized that often GFI and AGFI do not present acceptable values and are not presented in several studies today.

The hypotheses test was conducted to examine the significance and the magnitude of the estimated regression coefficients (Byrne, 2016; Hair Jr. et al., 2018). Table 3 shows the structural paths, the unstandardized coefficients, the standard errors, the standardized coefficients, and the p-values.

Table 3. Hypotheses test

H _y	Structural Paths	Unstandardized Coefficients (b)	Standardized Error	Standardized Coefficients (β)	Sig.	Results
H ₁	Design → Price	0.499	0.050	0.618	***	Confirmed
H ₂	Service → Price	0.220	0.150	0.080	0.143	Not Confirmed
H ₃	Price → Satisfaction	0.044	0.017	0.167	0.010	Confirmed
H ₄	Service → Satisfaction	0.328	0.050	0.454	***	Confirmed
H ₅	Satisfaction → Value-in-use	1.198	0.125	0.676	***	Confirmed

According to the presented results, it is observed that the hypotheses **H₁** (product design positively influences the product price, $\beta = 0.618$, $p < 0.001$), **H₃** (product price positively influences customer satisfaction, $\beta = 0.167$, $p = 0.001$), **H₄** (service provided by the winery positively influences customer satisfaction, $\beta = 0.357$, $p < 0.001$) and **H₅** (customer satisfaction positively influences value-in-use, $\beta = 0.676$, $p < 0.001$) were statistically proven. **H₂** (service provided by the winery positively influences the product price, $\beta = 0.080$, $p < 0.005$) was not confirmed in the study. Figure 2 presents the final theoretical model.

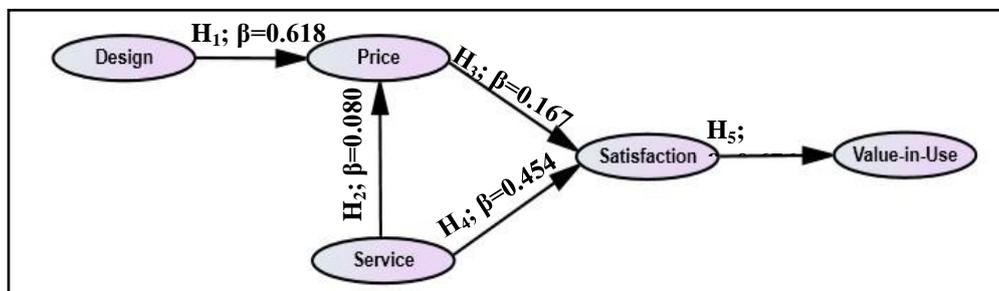


Figure 2. Proposed Theoretical Model results

Another way to check the effectiveness of the hypotheses test is to use the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the Theoretical Model (Malhotra et al., 2012; Hair Jr. et al., 2018). Value-in-use is explained in 45.6% by the direct relation with customer satisfaction and indirectly by product price, service provided, and product design. Product design explains 38.8% of the product price. The service provided explains 24.6% of customer satisfaction.

After validating the constructs in previous studies and based on the results presented in Table 3, **H₁** confirms the studies of Zhang et al. (2020), demonstrating that customers associate good appearance (design) with quality. Similarly, product design influences the product price, which indicates that labels and product design influence the price and wine customers purchase decision, based on adequate explanation ($R^2 = 0.388$) and strong impact of $\beta = 0.618$ ($p < 0.001$), and confirming studies by Elliot & Barth (2012), Wiedmann et al. (2014), Vannevel et al. (2018) and Saïdi & Giraud (2020). Thus, the product price is positively influenced by the product design.

H₃ hypothesis relates to the positive impact of the product price on customer satisfaction and shows that price has little impact on satisfaction, with $\beta = 0.167$ ($p < 0.001$). The perception of wine tourists' cost-benefit ratio on wine products during a visitation to a winery has shown a low impact and influence on customer satisfaction. However, a positive impact, as proposed by Chen et al. (2016) and Jorge et al. (2020). It can be assumed that the reason for the visitation and the winery experience is more determinant for the satisfaction perception than other factors, placing the perception of price in a low impact situation.

The fourth hypothesis tested **H₄** concerns the positive impact of the service provided by the winery on customer satisfaction and was confirmed with $\beta = 0.454$. Service provided has demonstrated a considerable impact on customer satisfaction, confirming the studies of O'Neill, Getz, and Carlsen (1999), Foroughi et al. (2014), and Zhang et al. (2017), who stated that service affects visitor satisfaction. Lee, Madanoglu, & Ko (2016) argued that the variety of wines, wine quality, and staff performance are crucial factors that influence tourists, being it a service factor that has confirmed service quality perception and, therefore, positively influenced satisfaction.

Satisfaction has positively influenced the value-in-use, confirming **H₅**, with $\beta = 0.676$ and adjusted $R^2 = 0.456$. In this context, value-in-use is perceived after receiving the service at the winery, explaining that the value-in-use perceived by customers is influenced by customer satisfaction, confirmed by the studies of Macdonald, Kleinaltenkamp, & Wilson (2016) and Vargo & Lusch (2014).

Hypothesis **H₂** has not been confirmed, determining that services have no impact on the product price in the studied context. In this winery, which links visitation to the consumption experience, the product design has shown a greater explanation over price. According to studies performed by Ben Dewald (2008), the specialized wine service identified that customers are willing to pay more for wine products consumption when visiting a restaurant offering sommelier services, compared to restaurants without sommeliers. However, services have proven a greater positive impact on satisfaction than price. Such behavior is more strongly linked to the visit reason and the experience of consuming the product in the winery and not related to the winery price.

5 Conclusion

In recent years, the experience of customers visiting wineries has proved to be an alternative for delivering products and services offered by wineries. Customers have several options to experience wine, culture, the production of the goods and services delivered together with the wine. Binding differentiated products and services related to the appearance of the products is part of marketing strategies. This study aimed to analyze the perceived value-in-use by wine tourism customers based on the product design, the product price, the service provided, and customer satisfaction.

The results show a significant relationship between the theoretical constructs – product design, product price, service provided, customer satisfaction, and value-in-use – in the context of this winery. This study implies the possibility of using this model as a tool to support the decision process related to the service and product to be delivered to customers, generating vital information to allow a better understanding of the dimensions involved, which affects customer satisfaction and value-in-use.

Another theoretical implication is in the product price practiced by the winery. Customers' perception of prices allows us to confirm that product design is an influential antecedent. However, service has not been confirmed as such. Thus, it is vital that the wine packaging has a good appearance and labels with relevant information for the tourist to charge a higher price. Nevertheless, tourists are not willing to pay higher prices due to the service itself. This result suggests that wine tourism services should be charged separately from the wine price and not charged in the form of a

tied-in sale. This policy clarifies the price charged for the product and the price paid for the tourism service (e.g., guided visit).

A further implication that this study brings is concerning customer satisfaction, which is influenced by the services provided. This relationship shows the importance of services when visiting wineries, which shows that the tourist seeks the experience as one of the motivations for visiting. Therefore, investing in new experiences and having a qualified staff that can instruct the tourist during the visitation satisfies the tourist the most.

The last implication of the study shows the positive and significant influence of satisfaction on value-in-use. This result proves that value-in-use is obtained after satisfaction, from the perception of the experience. As already seen, services have positively influenced tourist satisfaction, suggesting that services can indirectly influence value-in-use. As a result, wineries can invest and encourage moments that provide experience through services, because as the proportion of experience attributes of products or services increases, the perception of quality tends to be a practical judgment and can be increased (Johnston, 2004), especially for nondurable services and goods, in which experience attributes dominate (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016).

As a limitation, the research investigated only the product's design attribute and no other aspects that could influence the price. Thus, new research may replicate the tested theoretical model and add attributes such as brand value, product quality, taste, and other factors that may impact the price of the wine bottle.

The study did not explore the time tourists spent visiting, which could be a factor that influences the experience and, consequently, satisfaction and value-in-use by the customer. Thus, if there are many activities to participate in at the time of visitation, the length of stay in the winery is higher, generating greater involvement, more experiences, and more services. Therefore, new research can investigate whether the time spent and the number of experiences lived can influence tourist involvement, satisfaction, and value-in-use.

Finally, new research may replicate the theoretical model and replace value-in-use with the service quality to prove that the value defined as value-in-use and service quality may represent the same empirical phenomenon (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020).

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