

Clustering Spanish alcoholic beverage shoppers to focus marketing strategies

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is twofold: to analyse the influence of both individual and environmental factors in order to explain alcoholic spending and to identify different groups of alcoholic beverage shoppers.

Design/methodology/approach – For the research, an online questionnaire was distributed among 1,023 Spanish participants of age more than 18 years. Multivariate techniques were used for analysis, and the results show significant influence of specific motivational domains, brand awareness, perceived culture, socio-demographic variables and purchasing environment. With these results, a cluster analysis was carried out identifying seven groups of alcoholic beverage shoppers.

Findings – This research confirmed the influence of both individual and environmental factors, and the authors have identified seven different groups of alcoholic beverage shoppers: prosperous, social, non-conformist, postmodern, communities, controllers and planners. This led to the consideration of various management implications, which would boost the success of the beverage industry.

Originality/value – The originality of this research focuses on identifying different cluster of shoppers who purchase alcoholic beverages and on revealing the characteristics of each identified cluster. Based on the exact profile proposed, the alcoholic beverage industry should design more appropriate marketing strategies to achieve competitive advantage and to reinforce purchasing because in today's markets, there are fewer and fewer situations where a mass marketing approach is feasible.

Keywords Alcoholic drinks, Consumer behaviour, Clustering, Spending behaviour, Alcoholic beverage shoppers, Beverage industry

Paper type Research paper



1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, drinks companies have enjoyed unprecedented commercial success. However, factors such as the changing climatic conditions, economic recession and consumers becoming health-conscious, are forcing the beverage industry to rethink their

business methods in order to strengthen their brands in a market that has become even more demanding and globalised (Kao, 2015).

Specifically, according to the Spanish Federation of Alcoholic Drinks (FEBE, 2017), various innovative policies need to be implemented for the national drinks sector to recover. Likewise, according to Nielsen (2018), the alcohol-free drinks have seen the highest decline in sales (at -2.8 per cent), followed by high-alcohol-content drinks (at -1.8 per cent). However, the sale of low-alcohol-content drinks has grown (at +2.1 per cent), specifically wine and beer with 41.7 per cent of the total sales in the sector.

To sum it up, we live in an era of accelerated changes in the market and people are focusing on spending and consuming in an almost programmed and irrational manner (Galán *et al.*, 2014). The majority of the population has a huge variety of drinks available to them, and thus there is a wide diversity of options.

It is essential for the beverage industry to understand the factors affecting the buying behaviour of shoppers in the twenty-first century. The industry would then be able to design appropriate and commensurate strategies to stimulating the buying behaviour. Till date, research papers in this sector have been partial (Goodman, 2009; Lu *et al.*, 2017) and practically non-existent when tackling the different factors that determine spending on alcoholic beverages from a holistic perspective.

Therefore, the first aim of this study is to analyse the factors affecting the purchase of alcoholic drinks in order to estimate the probability of one being a frequent buyer of alcohol and identify appropriate marketing actions to reinforce buying behaviour. The second aim is to provide a holistic model which explain shoppers' spending patterns influenced by the beverage industry (individual and environmental factors) and which, in the final instance, will allow profiles of alcoholic beverage shoppers to be identified (Attila and Çakir, 2011).

To do this, 1,023 participants were interviewed to get information about their alcoholic drinks purchases to identify factors that better determine their behaviour. As previously stated, all of these are will guide marketing actions for every type of beverage in a more exact way according to the variables affecting the buying behaviour.

Thus, value is added as regards previous studies about consumer's behaviour. We have analysed the reasons (considering individual and environmental factors) explaining shoppers spending patterns influenced by beverages industry actions. Consumers' behaviour and beverage choices have been previously studied (Goodman, 2009; Hernandez-Fernandez *et al.*, 2017), but there are only a few studies on alcohol shopping behaviour from the marketing perspective.

Moreover, the originality of this research also focuses on identifying different cluster of shoppers who purchase alcoholic beverages and on showing the characteristics of each of the identified clusters. Based on the exact profile proposed, the alcoholic beverage industry should design more appropriate marketing strategies to achieve a competitive advantage and to reinforce purchasing behaviour, because in today's markets, there are fewer situations where a mass marketing approach" (Bruwer and Li, 2007, p. 19).

2. Literature review

This study begins with using an approach based on that by the Association for Consumer Research (ACR, 2018), specifically, a multidisciplinary focus of consumer research (McFadden, 1986; Ashok *et al.*, 2002), in which the areas of marketing, psychology and sociology are coherently integrated for integral assessment of consumer behaviour.

Studies of beverage consumers' behaviour, based on partial analyses alcoholic drink consumption, have proliferated (Goodman, 2009; Lu *et al.*, 2017; Hernandez-Fernandez,

et al., 2017). However, only few studies have analysed the weekly buying behaviour alcoholic drinks.

Therefore, our study focuses on the analysis of the buying behaviour of alcoholic drinks. The reason is that the increase in sales of these drinks depends on the ability of the different brands to transform their current management to strengthen factors affecting those purchases. A rational publicity focus on the products is not enough, that is, the mere transmission of factual, verifiable information about their attributes, characteristics and main benefits, but rather a change in strategy is needed to find new ways to impact and convince shoppers so that effective and responsible buying increases. As in the study of *Lu et al.* (2017), respondents were asked to consider purchases that they made themselves (for themselves and their friend and families where relevant).

More specifically, this study focuses on analysing two types of factors (Figure 1) affecting weekly purchases of alcohol, namely, individual factors and environmental factors, and was conducted in one country, Spain.

2.1 Buying alcoholic beverages: individual factors

Among the individual factors, and after reviewing the literature, this study considers five factors key to influencing shoppers of alcoholic beverages: motivational domains, decision-making styles, perceived cultural dimension, perceived ethnocentrism and socio-demographic variables. The significance of studying each is justified in the following sections.

2.1.1 Motivational domains. Limiting the concept of motivational domains to the act of buying drinks, consists a set of needs which, when linked to the system of individual values, help identify whether a person has opted to buy an alcoholic drink or an alcohol-free drink. According to *Schwartz* (2009), motivational domains can be defined as the union of emotional motivations and human values which an individual uses and which underlie the behaviour of the customer. The ten motivational domains (self-dependence, stimulation,

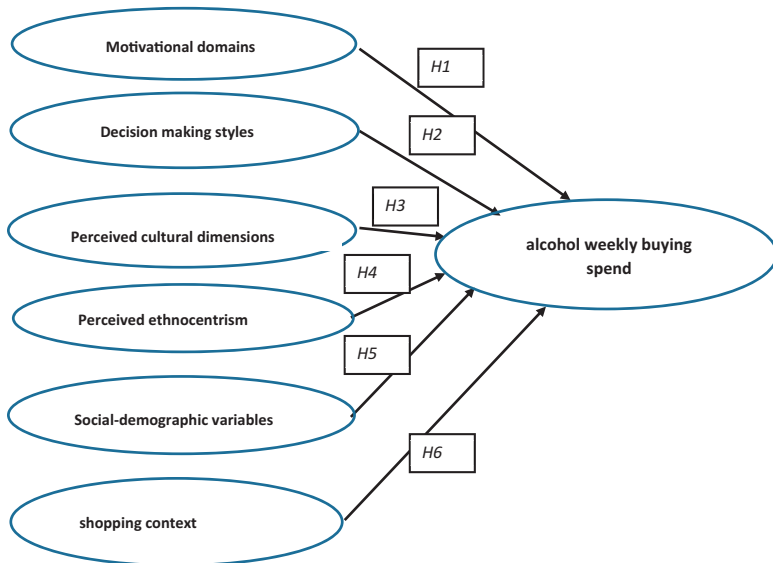


Figure 1.
Model for alcohol
weekly buying spend

hedonism, achievements, power, security, compliance, tradition, benevolence and universality) are subjective concepts implying that every person buys for a different reason. Therefore, these domains can determine the degree of acceptance or rejection of a certain type of drink. Thus the first hypothesis is:

H1. Motivational domains significantly affect the purchase of alcoholic beverages.

2.2.2 Decision-making styles. In marketing, there are no shoppers who have a unique buying style (Salamó *et al.*, 2010). In fact there may be a dominant trait/style, but it is also possible to determine the existence of coexisting and interdependent others. Following on from the work of Sproles and Kendall (1986), the decision-making styles have been defined as styles of buying that depend on the emphasis placed by shoppers on purchasing activities. Based on this, we have applied eight decision-making styles (perfectionism/awareness of high quality, brand awareness, novelty and fashion, price as a value, recreational and hedonistic shopping, impulsiveness, confusion due to information overload, habit/loyalty to alcoholic drinks buying behaviour. In this regard, an impulsive decision-making style leads the individual to buy more alcohol without having to worry about the price or whether it is really needed or not, and simply buy it without any previous planning. In contrast, a decision-making style confused by information overload implies a blocked buyer decision owing to excessive alternative options, meaning that they tend to buy fewer beverages and choose the most well-known and those in which they have greater confidence (Palma *et al.*, 2017).

This leads us to formulate the following hypothesis:

H2. The different decision-making styles of individuals significantly affect the purchase of alcoholic drinks.

2.2.3 Perceived cultural dimension. The different studies carried out in this field (Kuster *et al.*, 2010) have centred on whether there exists a global customer with a uniform buying behaviour. In a scenario of globalisation and multiculturalism, it is argued that the people of different countries in the world move around easily, communicate more and buy more using new technologies (Ruiz *et al.*, 2011). This means that the market is becoming increasingly homogeneous as regards needs and buying behaviours

On the contrary, another current of the literature does not recognise the existence of a transnational customer. This current defends the possibility of identifying segments according to nationality (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2013), stating that, even if a segment of shoppers of transnational character (generally young people) may exist, cultural differences among shoppers from different countries take precedence, especially if they are of different ethnic or territorial origins.

Following Hofstede's (1980) research, perceived cultural dimension could be defined as the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group from another. Thus, buying alcoholic beverages seems greater in collectivist cultures (promoting social relations) than in individualist cultures. Therefore, in Spain, with a culture characterized by Hofstede and Bond (1984) as being highly collectivist, male, non-authoritarian, non-controlling and focused on the long term, shoppers will be more likely to buy alcohol.

The above leads to the following hypothesis:

H3. The cultural dimension perceived by shoppers significantly affects purchasing alcoholic beverages.

2.2.4 Perceived ethnocentrism. According to [Javalgi et al. \(2005\)](#), perceived ethnocentrism could be defined as the attitude or point of view by which the world is analysed according to the parameters of the culture itself. Ethnocentrism usually implies the belief that one's own ethnic group is the most important, or that some or all aspects of one's own culture are better than those of others ([Tse et al., 2011](#)).

The final decision to buy a drink can vary in response to the degree of ethnocentrism/patriotism of the shoppers and self-identification with national versus foreign beverages ([Balabanis et al., 2001](#)). Therefore, and according to research by [Javalgi et al. \(2005\)](#) and [Lewis and Grebitus \(2013\)](#), there is a significant positive correlation between their levels. So if the drink comes from or is made in a country less developed than the country where it is to be sold, the foreign product is rejected in favour of the national one. However, if the beverage is imported from a country considered superior economically and technologically, acceptance of this foreign product is greater in the country where a market is sought owing to the association between people's opinion of the merchandise and the positive image of the producer country.

All of this leads to the following hypothesis:

H4. Ethnocentrism perceived by shoppers significantly affects the purchase of alcoholic beverages.

2.2.5 Socio-demographic variables (age, gender, level of education and family income). Currently shoppers, and especially young adults, are bombarded with publicity campaigns about alcoholic drinks (alluding to diversion and pleasure with responsibility) and alcohol-free drinks (making the customer responsible for their own health, and personal and family well-being) ([Nees et al., 2011](#)), to initiate a causal link between individual characteristics and actual buying.

As regards age, [Espada et al. \(2011\)](#) point out that buying alcoholic drinks is most common among young Spaniards of age 14 to 18, and that Spain is one of the countries that has the highest alcohol consumption per inhabitant per year. Gender is also a variable, which affects the frequency of buying drinks. According to the data presented in the report of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (2015), men prefer to buy more often and in smaller quantities than women, who buy larger quantities but on fewer occasions. For men, the purchase of drinks would be related to the need for self-recognition and a predisposition to search for new alternatives, while for women, it would be more closely linked to the search for good prices and taste ([Shield et al., 2013](#)).

As regards the level of education, studies by [Wicki et al. \(2010\)](#) and [Stern et al. \(2015\)](#) highlight the increase in buying of alcohol among young undergraduates and postgraduates.

Finally regarding family income, [Ailawadi et al. \(2001\)](#) suggest that the level of income may be related to the decision to buy a specific brand of drink, while the employment situation of the buyer could be linked to the time available for shopping. In addition, shoppers with higher incomes could be expected to not need to save on buying and thus prefer to buy beverages of higher quality and price, as is the case with famous brands of alcoholic drinks.

Thus the following hypothesis:

H5. Socio-demographic variables (age, gender, level of education and family income) significantly affect the purchase of alcoholic beverages.

2.2 Buying alcoholic beverages: shopping environment factor

A review of the literature shows extensive research in the USA and Europe into the environmental factors on an individual basis (only the physical or virtual or social environment is analysed). These studies analyse whether the environment is capable of redirecting the customer's decision or changing their way of thinking regarding a product or service (Briesch *et al.*, 2009; Cotes, 2010; Nees *et al.*, 2011). However, research into the shopping environment (physical, virtual and social) jointly analysing the act of spending on alcoholic beverages is relatively scarce in Spain.

Based on this and following on from work by Rose *et al.* (2011) and Trujillo *et al.* (2011), the application of three types of shopping environment capable of affecting drinks buying is presented:

- (1) place and physical environment of the establishment;
- (2) virtual purchasing environment; and
- (3) social buying environment.

In the physical shopping environment, some studies carried out in the drinks industry (Molla *et al.*, 2014) have shown that the effect of music, smell and colour is more effective when adjusted to the general context of the buying situation. In particular, different styles of background music were used in an alcoholic beverages shop. The results showed that shoppers bought more expensive beverages when the background music was classical than when it was modern (top twenties) and, as a result, they spent more. According to the original model of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), based on the stimulus–organism–response behaviour paradigm, the environment of the establishments selling alcoholic beverages would indirectly influence buying responses via the emotional state produced in the shoppers. This leads to an increase or decrease in alcohol buying.

As regards the virtual environment, various studies focused on the purchasing experience of the virtual customer (Grant and Gino, 2010; Rose *et al.*, 2011). They note that the following are decisive for buying: quality and innovation in the website design, contents offered for both computer and mobile (leisure activities, information, search and buying) and experience offered to shoppers as well as the opportunity to exchange these virtual experiences.

The digital environment described implies greater *empowerment* of shoppers and obliges establishments that sell drinks to innovate to remain competitive in the market, as the customer will first consult the webpage of the shop where he wishes to purchase a quality drink before going there, and secondly the brand's social networks.

Finally, and with regard to the social environment, we are living in the age of “*self-emptiness*” (DePrince *et al.*, 2015; Zerach, 2016), where alienation and loss of identity can be resolved by this environment, in which the customer builds up his or her own image by purchasing and consuming drinks that are advertised, accepted and purchased in the same environment. Some shoppers have a positive opinion of the presence of crowds in the establishment where they buy. A study carried out by Sierra *et al.* (2011) on a pub showed that, in some circumstances, from the commercial perspective, the large numbers of people can prove to be beneficial. They are associated with the feeling of being more in control of a situation; so, when a shopper looks for certain experiences (going somewhere to have a drink), large crowds can intensify the overall impact and increase the sale of alcoholic drinks.

More specifically, and according to the study by Wiedmann *et al.* (2013), young Irish adolescents have a more favourable attitude towards buying alcoholic beverages in pubs

because of acceptance by their family and group of friends. Similarly, research (Trujillo *et al.*, 2011) on Spanish, Italian and Latin American subjects confirms that the social environment has a significant effect on where alcohol is bought because it is important to be accepted by the people around (Moysén *et al.*, 2012). In accordance with the above the hypothesis is:

H6. The purchasing environment (physical, virtual or social) has a significant effect on purchasing alcoholic beverages.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants and procedure

To contrast the hypotheses posed, research was carried out (from 2010 to 2013) on a sample of 1,023 Spanish participants of age over 18 years, from all the autonomous regions in one specific country (Spain). The on-line medium was used as it offered high quality of and veracity of the responses obtained, as the participants were free to state their real reasons and preferences as regards alcohol consumption under these circumstances (Ganassali *et al.*, 2013). The questionnaire was sent out following various procedures, according to the characteristics of the on-line channel and Spanish shoppers (Aldas, 2012). Two phases were followed: the first one, pre-selection of assistants among students and researchers at the Spanish universities taking part in the research; and the second one, a non-probabilistic snowball procedure by which the questionnaire *link* was sent to a specific target public who had previously agreed to collaborate in transmitting and circulating this questionnaire among their contacts (when using the online medium, Spanish regulations prohibit sending email without the previous consent of the recipient).

Table I shows the sample profile, which is no different than that of the Spanish population (INE 2017).

Characteristics	Spanish population (%)	Sample profile (%)		
		Global, <i>N</i> = 1,023	Frequent buyers (\geq €18)	Infrequent buyers ($<$ €18)
<i>Age</i>				
18 to 25	5.2	7.27	2.73	4.54
26 to 40	28.9	36.8	13.59	23.21
41 to 55	31.3	29.58	11.07	18.51
56 to 80	34.2	26.87	10.05	16.82
<i>Gender</i>				
Men	49.1	51.89	19.42	32.47
Women	50.9	48.11	18.01	30.10
<i>Level of education</i>				
Primary	9.7	6.01	2.25	3.76
Secondary	15.2	14.16	5.30	8.86
Vocational Training	21.9	14.65	5.49	9.16
University	37.2	39.38	14.74	24.64
Postgraduate (Master/doctorate)	16.0	25.80	9.65	16.15
Total sample	46.549m	<i>N</i> = 1023	<i>N</i> = 383	<i>N</i> = 640

Table I.
Socio-demographic
profile of the sample

Source: INE 2017 (Statistic National Institute)

The research provides data on the weekly amount spent by participants on alcoholic beverages. Following [Lu, et al. \(2017\)](#) different types of alcohol were included in the choice scenarios (i.e. wine, beer/cider and spirits). Data provided by the [PNSD-National Anti-Drug Strategy \(2009-2016\)](#) and the Spain Country Drug Report (2017) on alcohol purchasing in Spain were used to determine the cut-off point for differentiating between “Frequent shoppers of alcoholic beverages” versus “Infrequent shoppers of alcoholic beverages”. Based on previous reports and on [Lu et al. \(2017\)](#), the cut-off point was established at €18/week (the categorisation of buying levels was based on the quantity–frequency approach). The two groups of shoppers identified in the sample were:

- (1) *Frequent shoppers*: Those spending exactly €18 or more than €18 on alcoholic beverages per week (383 people in the sample).
- (2) *Infrequent shoppers*: Those spending less than €18 on alcoholic beverages per week (640 people in the sample).

In a first stage, a logistic regression (SPSS 22.) was used for hypothesis contrasting, where the dependent variable was “Amount spent on alcohol per week” (1: Frequent shoppers: alcoholic beverages bought weekly, that is, exactly €18 or more than €18 per week; and 2: Infrequent shoppers: less than €18 per week). Explanatory variables were those listed in the theoretical review, included in the regression function averaging the items in each factor.

To test each hypothesis, a different logistic regression was performed, because no interaction terms wanted to be measured. In this sense, [Dittmar \(2005\)](#) carried on diverse partial analysis to explain compulsive buying behaviour considering different potential prediction factors. In the same vein, [Lu et al. \(2017\)](#) performed different kinds of analyses (simple and multiple choosing models) to analyse the impact of marketing promotions on alcohol purchase behaviours.

Then, a *ceteris paribus* analyses was performed to test the explanatory power of each independent factor separately. The reason is that each factor is composed of different items and we did not want to lose this information ([Stockwell et al., 2016](#)).

In a second stage, a cluster analysis was carried out using the most significant results to identify characteristic groups of shoppers of alcoholic beverages. As [Stern et al. \(2015\)](#), we used cluster analysis to group shoppers by their beverages shopping patterns. As the authors underline, “the purpose of the cluster analysis was to place shoppers into mutually exclusive groups, or clusters, such that shoppers in a given cluster were distinctly similar to each other and distinctly different from shoppers in other cluster”. Therefore, first, we performed a hierarchical cluster analysis following the Ward method. Then, based on the results provided by the dendrogram in the Ward method, we did another cluster analysis following the k-means method. Using ANOVA tests, this analysis enabled the extent to which the groups really differed from each other to be demonstrated.

3.2 Measures

The variables and generation of items were designed based on previous work on the subject, adapting them to the sector under analysis. Thus, the ten motivational domains (five-point Likert scale, 20 items) are based on the original scale by [Schwartz and Bilski \(1990\)](#) and [Schwartz \(2009\)](#) and have subsequently been used by others; [i.e.: I buy alcoholic beverages because: I consider myself an independent shopper [. . .]; To prove that I am different from others, more motivated [. . .]; Because it is fashionable [. . .]; Because it is easy to get [. . .]].

The eight decision-making styles (five-point Likert scale, 35 items) are based on the original scale by [Sproles and Kendall \(1986\)](#) and have also subsequently been used by other authors [i.e.: When I buy alcoholic beverages: I buy fast; I choose the first alcoholic beverage

or brand that I find good enough [. . .] It is difficult for me to make my mind up with so much information about alcoholic beverages [. . .] I think one brand is as good as the others [. . .].

Hofstede's instrument for measuring the perceived cultural dimension (semantic differential scale, five items) (Hofstede and Bond, 1984) is widely supported by the literature (De Mooij, 2013) (i.e.: Shopping for alcoholic beverages: Men and women must have the same roles//Men and women have different roles)

Concerning perceived ethnocentrism (five-point Likert scale, five items), among the different scales used, we chose to adapt an extract from those proposed by Javalgi *et al.* (2005) to assess the purchase of alcoholic drinks [i.e.: Shopping alcoholic beverages: which case (A, B, C, D, E) best describes the level of overlap between your personal identity and your national identity [. . .]]

Finally, a synthesised scale, adapted to those used by Howell *et al.* (2012), was used for the context of purchasing. Three types of purchasing environments capable of influencing the purchase of beverages are taken into account: the location and physical environment of the establishment (two items); virtual purchasing environment (three items); and social purchasing environment (four items) [i.e.: Purchasing alcoholic beverages: I prefer small shops to supermarkets [. . .]; I regularly shop online [. . .] I love shopping with friends [. . .]]

4. Results

4.1 Results obtained in the hypothesis contrasting

The results obtained in the hypothesis contrasting for the individual and environmental factors are shown in Table II.

First, we can partially confirm *H1* (Gill *et al.*, 2007), according to which motivational domains affect weekly spending on alcoholic beverages by the Spanish shopper. Specifically, three of the ten factors (F2 – stimulation, F3 – hedonism and F7 – conformity) clearly explain the differences between Group 1 (Frequent shoppers that spend €18 or more than €18 per week on alcoholic beverages) and Group 2 (infrequent shoppers that spend less than €18 per week on alcoholic beverages).

The “stimulation” domain (F2) acts inversely. The more the stimulation with regard to emotion, innovation and personal challenge in life, that much less is spent on alcoholic beverages, and vice versa, and the less the stimulation and personal challenge, that much more is spent on alcoholic drinks. The “conformity” domain (F7) confirms that the greater the conformity, the higher the propensity to buy alcohol. On the other hand, the lower the level of conformity or desire to please the group, that much less is spent on alcoholic drinks. The same changes in feelings and attitudes underlie the analysis of the significant effect of the “hedonism” domain (F3). The higher the level of hedonism, the greater is the tendency to buy alcoholic beverages, and vice versa, and the lower the need to seek pleasure or self-gratification, the fewer alcoholic drinks that are bought.

Secondly, we must partially confirm *H2a* (Gill *et al.*, 2007), according to which decision-making styles affect how much Spanish shoppers spend per week on alcoholic beverages. Only one of the eight factors analysed seems to affect the number of alcoholic beverages bought. Indeed, only “brand awareness” (F2) has a very significant effect, as Spanish people base their choice on brands when buying alcoholic beverages.

The “brand awareness” (F2) has a very significant effect on Spanish shoppers, because the alcohol brands are expensive and shoppers wish to impress their friends or acquaintances or because the brand is well known and has a designation of origin which grants a certain degree of trust and reputation. Therefore, the greater the brand awareness, the more renowned brands of alcoholic beverages are bought. In other words, shoppers of alcoholic beverages prefer good brands (Palma *et al.*, 2017).

Factors	Hypotheses	Explanatory variable	B	Wald	Exp. (B)	
<i>Individual factors</i>	<i>H1: Motivational domains</i>	1 - Self-independence	0.088	0.461	1.092	$\chi^2(10) = 23.698^{***}$ R^2 (Cox and Snell) = 0.031 R^2 (Nagelkerke) = 0.043
		2 - Stimulation	-0.165**	3.461	0.848	
		3 - Hedonism	0.263**	3.662	1.301	
		4 - Achievements	0.087	0.701	1.091	
		5 - Power	0.057	0.817	1.059	
		6 - Security	0.036	0.125	1.036	
		7 - Conformity	0.351***	6.358	1.420	
		8 - Tradition	0.068	1.310	1.070	
		9 - Benevolence	-0.052	0.382	0.949	
		10 - Universality	-0.058	0.354	0.944	
<i>H2: Decision-making styles</i>	<i>H2: Decision-making styles</i>	1 - Perfectionism	-0.161	0.728	0.825	$\chi^2(8) = 24.153^{***}$ R^2 (Cox and Snell) = 0.023 R^2 (Nagelkerke) = 0.032
		2 - Brand awareness	0.228*	1.771	1.257	
		3 - Innovation and fashion	-0.082	0.601	0.921	
		4 - Price as value	0.334	0.050	1.417	
		5 - Recreational	0.189	1.560	1.208	
		6 - Impulsiveness	0.149	1.595	1.161	
		7 - Confusion due to information overload	0.134	1.490	1.143	
<i>H3: Perceived cultural dimension</i>	<i>H3: Perceived cultural dimension</i>	8 - Loyalty-habituality	0.028	0.029	1.028	$\chi^2(20) = 59.708^{***}$ R^2 (Cox and Snell) = 0.056 R^2 (Nagelkerke) = 0.077
		1 - Individualism-collectivism	0.309*	2.590	1.362	
		2 - Masculinity-femininity	0.165	0.647	1.180	
		3 - Distance to power	-1.714**	8.318	0.180	
		4 - Control of uncertainty	0.355**	4.714	1.426	
<i>H4: Perceived ethnocentrism</i>	<i>H4: Perceived ethnocentrism (foreign brand vs domestic brand)</i>	5 - Long-term orientation	0.382**	4.496	1.464	$\chi^2(5) = 4.343$ R^2 (Cox and Snell) = 0.004 R^2 (Nagelkerke) = 0.006
		Perceived ethnocentrism (foreign brand vs domestic brand)	0.068	0.023	1.070	
<i>H5: Socio-demographic variables</i>	<i>H5: Socio-demographic variables</i>	1 - Age	0.008	1.462	1.008	$\chi^2(18) = 105.589^{***}$ R^2 (Cox and Snell) = 0.097 R^2 (Nagelkerke) = 0.133
		2 - Gender (1)	0.842***	36.460	2.322	
		3 - Level of education	0.347	0.881	1.415	
		Primary (1)	0.737**	9.019	2.091	
		Secondary (2)	0.634**	6.939	1.885	
Vocational Training (3)	0.780***	17.963	2.180			
University (4)						

(continued)

Table II.
Logistic regression to explain spending on alcohol

Table II.

Factors	Hypotheses	Explanatory variable	B	Wald	Exp. (B)
<i>Environmental factor</i>	H6-Buying environment	4 – Family income	-0.749	0.745	0.473
		More than €5000 (1)	1.455**	4.143	4.285
		From €3000-5000 (2)	1.206	3.031	3.339
		From €2000-2999 (3)	0.766	1.225	2.151
		From €1000-1999 (4)	0.469	0.467	1.599
		From €500-999 (5)	0.392	0.301	1.480
	H6-Buying environment	1 – Physical-SHE	0.101	1.496	1.106
		2 – Virtual-SHE	0.282**	7.121	1.325
		3 – Social-SHE	0.283***	11.937	1.327

Notes: Values with different * are significantly different *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$. χ^2 , R^2 (Cox and Snell), R^2 (Nagelkerke); psychometric properties; italic data are statistically very significant

Thirdly, we can partially confirm *H3* (Gill *et al.*, 2007), according to how the cultural dimension affects how much the Spanish shopper spends weekly on alcoholic beverages. Four cultural dimensions in particular were significant among groups: “distance to power” (F3); “control of uncertainty” (F4); “long-term orientation” (F5); and “individualism-collectivism” (F1).

Regarding the “distance to power” domain (inverted) (F3). This variable explains the acceptance or not of the authority. Because it is an inverted variable, low scores mean high distance to power (no acceptance of the authority). Therefore, individuals with higher distance to power will buy more alcohol.

Concerning the “control of uncertainty” (inverted) (F4), it seems that people who do not adapt or lack spontaneity and those who, when faced with different problems in life, are unable to cope with the consequences because they are insecure, buy more alcoholic beverages. On the other hand, those who have the capacity to adapt and deal with daily setbacks with a strong spirit are less likely to buy alcoholic drinks.

Regarding, the “long-term orientation” domain (F5), the long-term oriented buyer is more likely to buy alcoholic drinks than one with short-term orientation, who tends to buy fewer alcoholic drinks.

Finally, the domain related to “individualism-collectivism” (F1) also has a significant result though to a lesser extent. Identifying with or belonging to a group increases the likelihood of buying alcoholic drinks.

In fourth place, we must reject *H4*, which states that perceived ethnocentrism influences how much the Spanish shopper spends on alcoholic drinks per week, as no significant results were obtained. That is, the degree of coincidence between personal identification and the identification of where the shopper is from has no effect on buying alcoholic drinks.

In fifth place, we can partially confirm *H5* (Gill *et al.*, 2007), according to which different socio-demographic variables have a significant effect on how much the Spanish shopper spends weekly on alcoholic drinks. Specifically, gender (F2), education level (F4) and family income (F5).

The “gender” factor (F2) was particularly significant. The results show how men buy more alcoholic drinks than women. Men are more assiduous shoppers of alcoholic drinks, though in smaller quantities, usually for immediate consumption, whereas women buy alcoholic drinks less frequently but in larger quantities, possibly to consume later and in a more relaxed way (Espada *et al.*, 2011).

The “education level” factor (F4) was also particularly significant. The results show the increase in buying alcohol among young undergraduates and postgraduates (Wicki *et al.*, 2010). Specifically, secondary or vocational training-level students are much more likely to buy assiduously alcoholic drinks than master- or doctorate-level students (Pons and Beriano, 2013).

Concerning the “family income” domain (F5), it was significant, although not as much as the previous two. Owing to the financial and employment crises affecting Spain over the past 10 years, family and personal expenditure allocated to food and drink has decreased considerably. In this respect, results show that shoppers with a monthly income of €3,000 to 5,000 spend more on alcoholic drinks (Carrillo, 2013)

There is no doubt that the Spanish society has changed in recent decades and that gender, level of education and family income factors have a significant effect on the purchase of alcoholic beverages

As can be seen in Table II, in sixth place, we can partially confirm *H6* (Gill *et al.*, 2007), according to which the buying environment has a significant effect on how much the

Spanish shopper spends on alcoholic drinks per week. Specifically, the “social environment” (F3) and the “virtual environment” (F2).

Regarding “social environment” (F3), it is significantly more important when buying alcoholic drinks. Social psychology research (Mababu 2010c), shows that belonging to and being accepted by a group is a fundamental human need. This need to belong goes beyond the scope of the family where it is satisfied initially and after work extended to the group of friends, the neighbourhood or the local community where we live, and to the different associations or cultural or social networks that we use to communicate throughout our lives (Mababu 2010d). This research shows that belonging to and being accepted by a group enables shoppers to develop solid stable relationships with others and to participate in the emotional and commercial current between them. They feel more attracted to certain drinks if they are bought and consumed by the group.

The “virtual environment” (F2) was significant, though to a lesser extent, when deciding how much to spend on alcoholic drinks online (i.e. creative webpages, social networks, mobile internet). In this case, shoppers who normally use these digital media are affected by emotions felt in a virtual environment where they are provided with contents and interaction (with friends, friends of friends) that continuously fuel their personality and attitudes (Hernández, 2013). The virtual environment also provides them with anonymity. On the contrary, the “physical environment” (F1) was not significant. It does not seem to stimulate the purchase of alcoholic drinks, possibly because the Spanish shopper prefers to buy alcoholic beverages in supermarkets and not in small shops or municipal markets. This physical environment is directly related with off license [It is understood as a shop (bottle store, supermarket) that allows the sale or supply of alcohol for consumption off the premises], very usual in Spain too.

4.2 Results obtained in the analysis cluster

It was possible to confirm the existence of certain factors that significantly influence the purchase of alcoholic drinks. In fact, the existence of these predictors has allowed us to further group individuals and to identify different groups for buying alcoholic beverages. However, membership in one of these groups does not exclude interaction with others. Therefore, the results lead us to define the characteristics of the groups and the profile of the individuals that compose them.

In short, in our model (whose centre piece was “weekly spending on alcoholic beverages”), factors related to motivational domains’ stimulation, hedonism and conformism, the decision-making style related to brand awareness, the perceived cultural dimension, gender, educational level and family income and virtual and social shopping environment, were all significant.

We used these results to classify the individuals in our sample into homogeneous groups. Thus, the profiles of the participants in one group were very similar to each other (internal cohesion of the group) and participants from a different cluster were different (external isolation of the group) (de la Fuente 2011). To define the number of groups, we followed the Bigné and Vila procedure (2002) and Bigné *et al.* (2002). First, a Ward-style hierarchical cluster analysis was performed with the SPSS software package. This analysis permits the division of the global sample into sub-samples’ subspaces whose members vie more with each other than with the rest of the participants. In the same way, this analysis makes it possible to have intra-group variance explained, and the increase of variance explained as each new group is added. Following these criteria, seven groups must be retained because with seven groups, the intra-group variance is high (d^2 £ 60 per cent) and, besides, the addition of an eighth group explains little in the way of extra variance (Dd^2 £ 5 per cent).

Second, a K-means non-hierarchical cluster analysis was also performed. This analysis makes it possible to verify the importance of the difference between the seven groups retained in the Ward method as regards the cluster variables

To conclude these cluster analyses, our research identifies seven different groups of buyers of alcoholic beverages: prosperous, social shoppers, non-conformist, postmodern, communities, controllers and planners (Tables III and IV).

5. Discussion

In the field of alcoholic beverages, different factors may influence customers' buying decisions; factors that companies have to take into account when designing their marketing strategies. Therefore, taking into account the significant results obtained in our research and the cluster analysis done, we show below the characteristics of the seven groups of buyers:

Group 1, the *Prosperous* group, consists of 106 respondents who spend €21 (average) on alcoholic beverages. In the cluster analysis, only incomes between €3,000 and 5,000 have been considered, and as Table IV shows, the outstanding feature of this group of buyers (more men than women) is the level of income. So, it could be characterised as follows: they do not like the social shopping environment. This group are quite individualistic and less distant to power.

Group 2 is made up of the *Social shoppers*. It consists of 162 respondents, both men and women. This is the group that spends the most on alcohol (an average of €30 per week). Its main objective focuses on social relations related to the purchase. They live in the present (long-term orientation is 1.19). So, the most important area for them is to enhance their socialization.

Next, Group 3 are the *Non-conformists*, individuals with a certain level of education completed. It consists of 97 respondents, both men and women, who spend an average of €22 per week on alcohol (as does Group 5). The highest number of postgraduate respondents

No. of clusters	Cluster	Weekly average spending (€)	Frequent buyers of alcohol \geq €18	Women
1	Prosperous, $N = 106$	21	33%	41.5%
2	Social Shoppers, $N = 162$	30	32.1%	46.9%
3	Nonconformist, $N = 97$	22	37.1%	43.3%
4	Postmodern, $N = 153$	20	39.9%	42.5%
5	Communities, $N = 88$	22	36.4%	63.7%
6	Controllers, $N = 236$	19	38.6%	52.9%
7	Planners, $N = 181$	18	42%	47.5%
Statistic differences		F -value: 1.377* (a)	Chi-square value = 5.017 (b)	Chi-square value = 15.518***(c)

Notes: Values with different * are significantly different *** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.1$. (a) Although the statistic differences are not very significant, it could be appreciated that there is a cluster with a high average spending on alcoholic beverages (Group 2) versus a cluster with a very low average spending on alcoholic beverages (Group 7); (b) There are no significant differences. In all clusters there are frequent buyers of alcoholic beverages; (c) There are statistically significant differences with respect to gender. Group 6 has a similar percentage of men and women; the magnitude of the difference between women and men is 5.8 per cent (52.9-47.1 per cent) for this cluster. In Groups 2 and 7, the difference between women and men is 6.2 per cent and 5.0 per cent, respectively. In Groups 1, 3, 4 and 7, the differences are 17.0 per cent, 13.4 per cent, 15 per cent and 27.4 per cent, respectively

Table III.
Clusters' characterization with statistical differences

Table IV.
Analysis cluster to
identify different
groups for buying
alcoholic beverages

Cluster	Education	Incomes	DM Stimulation	DM Hedonism	DM Conformity	ETD Foreignbrand vs domestic brand
Prosperous	3.48 ^{1,2}	3.43²	2.95	3.39	3.84 ^{1,2}	4.03
Social shoppers	3.30 ¹	3.19 ^{1,2}	3.14	3.47	3.87 ^{1,2}	4.06
Nonconformist	3.88²	2.76 ¹	3.19	3.54	3.75 ¹	4.09
Postmodern	3.49 ^{1,2}	2.97 ^{1,2}	3.08	3.65	3.89 ^{1,2}	4.08
Communities	3.76 ²	2.88 ¹	3.05	3.38	3.92 ^{1,2}	4.13
Controllers	3.79 ²	2.88 ¹	3.09	3.51	4.01²	4.16
Planners	3.85 ²	3.09 ^{1,2}	2.93	3.46	3.91 ^{1,2}	4.15
F-value	5.476***	3.983***	0.925	1.731	3.027***	1.690
Differences among cluster	2 and 3 2 and 5 2 and 6 2 and 7	1 and 3 1 and 5 1 and 6	No different	No different	3 and 6	No different

Notes: Values with different * are significantly different *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$. The key variables to define the profile of each cluster, considering the significance of the variable, have been highlighted in bold. In this sense, the lowest and least relevant results to characterize the cluster have been highlighted in italic

(continued)

Cluster	SHE Virtual	SHE Social	DCP1 Individual/collective	DCP3 Distance to power	DCP4 Control uncertainty	DCP5 Long term
Prosperous	3.46	3.17 ¹	1.06 ¹	1.13 ¹	3.03 ²	4.52 ³
Social shoppers	3.57	3.60 ²	2.48 ²	1.41 ¹	2.64 ²	1.19 ⁴
Nonconformist	3.48	3.45 ^{1,2}	1.31 ¹	4.31 ³	1.57 ¹	4.33 ³
Postmodern	3.47	3.36 ^{1,2}	1.44 ¹	4.69 ³	4.63 ³	3.42 ²
Communities	3.48	3.20 ¹	4.68 ³	4.64 ³	3.06 ²	1.48 ¹
Controllers	3.61	3.54 ²	4.64 ³	3.72 ²	4.71 ³	4.66 ³
Planners	3.58	3.46 ^{1,2}	4.39 ³	3.70 ²	1.48 ¹	4.68 ³
F-value	1.167	4.260***	329.94***	281.78***	183.58***	306.70***
Differences among cluster	No different	1 and 2	1 and 2, 5, 6, 7	1 & 3, 4, 5,	1 and 3, 4, 6, 7	1 and 2, 4, 5
		1 and 6	2 and 3, 4, 5	1&6,7	2 and 3, 4, 6, 7	2 and 3, 4, 6, 7
		2 and 5	2 and 6, 7	2&3,4,5	3 and 4, 5, 6	3 and 4, 5
				2&&6,7	4 and 5, 7	4 and 5, 6, 7

Table IV.

forms this group. Non-conformist individuals. This group is significantly less conformist than Group 6 (there are no significant differences in other groups).

Group 4 is the *Postmodern* group. It consists of 153 respondents, with more men than women. They spend an average of €20 per week on alcohol. In comparison to the rest of the groups, the members of this group present the highest levels of distance to power.

Group 5, *Communities*, is the smallest of the identified groups. It consists of 88 respondents. They spend an average of €22 a week on alcohol. They are individuals who emphasize the values of belonging to a social group.

Group 6, the *Controllers*, is the largest group (236 respondents); they spend an average of €19 a week on alcoholic drinks. This group presents the highest level of control of uncertainty, which means that they seek information before purchasing-taking decisions. This group is significantly more conformist than Group 3.

Group 7 is made up of *Planners*. It consists of 181 respondents, both men and women. They are planned, drivers and base their lives on long-term investments. They spend an average of €18 weekly on alcoholic drinks. This group presents the lowest level of uncertainty control and they like to plan long-term (long-term orientation-4.68).

6. Conclusions, implications, limitations and further research

Taking the results of this research into account, we can conclude that Spanish shoppers buy alcoholic drinks depending on certain individual and environmental factors.

For our model, the core aspect of which was weekly spending on alcoholic drinks, three factors relative to motivational domains (stimulation, hedonism and conformism) were significant; the decision-making style related to brand awareness; the perceived cultural domain; the gender, education level and family income factors; and the virtual and social buying environment.

According to the above, some practical implications could propose because “it is important to continue studying the complex rationale for people’s food shopping patterns” (Stern *et al.*, 2015, p. 1841), including beverages shopping patterns, given that companies should apply different strategies to different shopping behaviour.

First, and given that the hedonism factor favours the purchase of alcohol, drinks companies should support activities that encourage the search for pleasure and gratification in a responsible way both as an individual and as a group. In fact, Spanish shoppers tend to change their opinions, attitudes and behaviours to fit in better with their group (Suarez, *et al.*, 2016; Romo-Avilés, *et al.*, 2015; Sánchez-Queija, *et al.*, 2015; Galán *et al.*, 2014).

Second, in today’s fiercely competitive environment, very few brands can claim that they have enjoyed a strong presence in the market for decades without having to reinvent themselves to attract new generations of shoppers or expand their market niche. Given that brand awareness is a significant factor when buying alcohol, alcoholic drinks companies are encouraged to invest in brands and use so-called *empowerment* of the *prosumer on social networks*, as today’s shoppers are very aware of their power and brands must identify their preferences and needs in accordance with their new profile (Kuster and Hernandez, 2013).

Third, the cultural domain is a variable that acquires a significant predictive value. Therefore, according to the results, the companies of alcoholic beverages must take into account the profile of some of their buyers (people with high power distance, spontaneity, oriented to the long term and identifying themselves with the belonging to a group) when they design their campaign of communications in the media. Many times, the sponsorship of social actions by alcoholic beverage companies can be very beneficial and well received by this group of people.

Fourth, Spanish shoppers are more likely to buy alcoholic drinks if their social environment requires them to do so. In this sense, this shopping environment is directly related with on license environment (it is understood as pub, tavern, hotel, restaurant, cafe, bar, entertainment venue that allow the sale or supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises), something very usual in Spain. On the contrary, those who are not too influenced by their social environment tend to buy fewer alcoholic drinks.

Fifth, alcoholic drinks companies could promote activities via social forums and social activities using current digital media and the many comments that shoppers make on them about a brand (Hernández, 2013). Beverage companies need to make good use of these media to gain users by uploading images or videos of their brands. They should also promote music shows to encourage social relations between friends and colleagues. Apart from the event itself, the beverage companies could organize free transport for participants from the venue to the city to encourage responsible consumption.

Finally, it should be pointed out that, as is the case in any research, certain limitations have affected the development of this paper. On the one hand, the nationality of the participants since it is a sample of only Spanish shoppers. On the other hand, the methodology used, that is, we have used partial regressions. Also, factors related to emotions and addictions have not been evaluated. Finally, we have not analysed the effects of advertising alcoholic drinks campaigns on the purchase of alcohol and we have not developed a study to analyse the interactive effects among the independent variables considered in this study.

Nevertheless, these limitations provide us with future lines of research such as extending the sample and performing a cross-cultural analysis. We also would include nationality as a moderating variable. We would focus the research on the perception of the customer after changing the alcoholic beverage container including preventive claims and studying the results using peripheral analytical techniques. Moreover, following Franzese and Kam (2009), a future research line could be the development of a study to analyse the interactive effects among the independent variables considered in this study. For this purpose, a simplified version of each factor (i.e. average of items) should be used in the global model.

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