



The Role of Product Familiarity in the Effect of Attribute Communication on Wagyu Beef Purchase Intentions

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Dissertation written under the supervision of Prof. Paulo Romeiro.

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the MSc Science in Management with Specialization in Strategic Marketing at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 04.01.2025.

ABSTRACT

Title: The Role of Product Familiarity in the Effect of Attribute Communication on Wagyu Beef Purchase Intentions

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This dissertation aims to understand how people perceive Wagyu beef and how communication influences their intention to buy a product that symbolizes luxury and quality. The focus is on familiarity with the product, how its attributes are communicated, whether intrinsic or extrinsic and how these influence their choices.

An online questionnaire was created, and 226 validated responses were analyzed from consumers with different levels of familiarity with Wagyu. Normality tests made it possible to see that the data was non-parametric, so statistical methods such as the Mann-Whitney U test and moderation analyses were carried out. In this way, it was possible to investigate the impact of communicating the attributes and see whether familiarity with the product moderated the relationship between communication and the consumer's purchase intention and whether the impact varied according to the level of familiarity.

The results showed very interesting effects. It was possible to observe that more familiar consumers value intrinsic attributes but still rely on external elements to increase confidence in their decision at the time of purchase. On the other hand, less familiar consumers rely more on extrinsic attributes, but to a lesser extent than expected. In addition, it was found that familiarity plays a very important moderating role since the greater the familiarity with the product, the stronger the impact of the communication of attributes on purchase intention.

Keywords: Premium products, wagyu beef, purchase intention, product familiarity, product attribute communication.

SUMÁRIO

Título: O papel da familiaridade com o produto e o efeito da comunicação dos atributos na intenção de compra de Wagyu

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Esta dissertação tem como objetivo compreender como as pessoas percecionam a carne de vaca Wagyu e como a comunicação influencia a sua intenção de compra de um produto que simboliza luxo e qualidade. O foco é a familiaridade com o produto, a forma como os seus atributos são comunicados, se intrínsecos ou extrínsecos e como estes influenciam as suas escolhas.

Foi criado um questionário online e analisadas 226 respostas validadas de consumidores com diferentes níveis de familiaridade com o Wagyu. Os testes de normalidade permitiram verificar que os dados eram não paramétricos, pelo que foram efetuados métodos estatísticos como o teste U de Mann-Whitney e análises de moderação. Desta forma, foi possível investigar o impacto da comunicação dos atributos e verificar se a familiaridade com o produto moderava a relação entre a comunicação e a intenção de compra do consumidor e se o impacto variava consoante o nível de familiaridade.

Os resultados mostraram efeitos muito interessantes, uma vez que foi possível observar que os consumidores mais familiarizados valorizam os atributos intrínsecos, mas ainda confiam em elementos externos para aumentar a confiança na sua decisão no momento da compra. Por outro lado, os consumidores menos familiares confiam mais nos atributos extrínsecos, mas em menor grau do que o esperado. Além disso, verificou-se que a familiaridade desempenha um papel moderador muito importante, uma vez que quanto maior for a familiaridade com o produto, mais forte será o impacto da comunicação dos atributos na intenção de compra.

Palavras-chave: Produtos premium, wagyu, intenção de compra, familiaridade com o produto, comunicação dos atributos do produto.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation marks the final moments of a very special academic journey for me.

I would therefore like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Paulo Romeiro, for all the guidance, patience and advice he has given me over the last few months, which has been essential to the completion of this thesis.

I would like to thank all the teachers at the Catholic University. I feel extremely proud to have been part of such a privileged university. I will treasure all the time and moments I spent at Católica.

This journey would not have been possible without the constant support of my parents.

Thank you very much for allowing me to continue studying and for the support you have given me throughout this journey.

I would also like to thank my other family, without their support, none of this would have been possible.

I am also extremely grateful for the constant encouragement of my closest friends. A special thank you to all of them.

To my colleagues at Católica, with whom I was lucky enough to share my academic career, as well as all the moments we spent together.

A special thank you to Beatriz, for all the hours, all the moments.

I'm very lucky to have you all in my life.

Finally, I would also like to thank everyone who took the time to take part in the survey.

Without these respondents, none of this would be possible. Thank you all.

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GLOSSARY

BMS - The Beef Marbling Standard

MAFF - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The growing demand for high-quality food products such as Wagyu beef, which has specific attributes such as marbling, tenderness and flavor, demonstrates the need to understand consumer behavior and the communication processes that influence their decisions. Wagyu beef is one of the most expensive beef breeds on the market, due to the quality of the meat it produces. It is a benchmark product for consumers, who care about the quality of the meat, the marbling, the tenderness and the taste.

However, it is not easy to promote such a high-class product, as customers' decisions are determined by several factors, including their perception of the product based on its characteristics.

This dissertation analyzes how familiarity and communication strategies influence consumers' decision to buy Wagyu beef. More specifically, the study investigates the impact of its attributes on purchasing decisions while determining how familiarity moderates this relationship. The aim is to understand better how these elements are related and to develop ideas that will enable more efficient marketing strategies to be defined. The selection of the topic of analysis was since Wagyu beef is a luxury and consumer product, which could provide valuable information on consumer behavior in the premium segment of the market. The current literature review shows that intrinsic and extrinsic attributes are important, but there is still a gap in the literature about how they interact and the role of consumer familiarity with the product.

The growing demand for high-quality food products and products with specific attributes, such as Wagyu beef, shows how crucial it is to understand the product and the perception surrounding it.

The analysis is guided by three key questions: whether the communication of product attributes affects purchase intention, how familiarity affects the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention, and whether consumers with different levels of familiarity react differently to attribute communication. To answer these questions, a quantitative method was employed, and data was collected from consumers who had different levels of knowledge and experience with Wagyu beef. Mann-Whitney U-tests and moderation analyses were employed to understand how these factors affect consumer choices. This approach makes the data reliable and provides a strong foundation for the conclusions. This dissertation is organized in a manner that will help the reader move through the research process smoothly. It starts with a literature review that forms the basis of this research by critiquing the

existing literature on various themes. The methodology section outlines the research design and the processes that were employed in gathering and analyzing the data. The findings and conclusions are presented in a structured manner before expanding on them to position the findings within a broader context and reflect on their implications for academic and business practice. This research enriches the existing academic knowledge and may be of great use to companies working in the high-end product sector, especially the companies dealing with Wagyu beef. It also stresses the need to segment the audience and tailor the communication process according to the level of consumers' knowledge about the product. The study also shows how attribute communication affects purchase intention. In conclusion, this dissertation helps to fill in the research gaps and offer valuable suggestions to the marketing field. It offers specific guidelines on how to increase the sales of high-end products like Wagyu beef, increase customer participation and product differentiation.

1.1 Background

In the recent past, the lifestyles of the consumers as well as their desire to own luxury products have increased and this has made companies seek new ways of competing in the market. Wagyu beef is a high-end product that has better marbling, tenderness and flavor than other beef and is a great example of such a product. Such trends as increased interest in high-quality food products, including Wagyu beef for its unique characteristics prove the significance of understanding consumer behavior and the factors that shape their choices. The above characteristics have therefore led to the increased demand for Wagyu and has made it a luxury product given that it is not easily available (Tsujimoto, 2019). It is not very easy to communicate such a product to different kinds of consumers as is the case here. Knowledge about the product is a crucial factor that shapes the consumers' perception of the value of a product. The normal consumer who is aware of meat understands the characteristics of meat such as the marbling and flavor as identified by Park et al. (2005). Others are influenced by external factors such as the brand, awards, certification or price like the study by Veale et al. (2009). This underlines the need for the identification of the most effective communication strategies based on the level of consumers' knowledge. This is especially so in the sector since both traceability and quality certification play a pivotal role in winning the consumers' confidence. This is the case of Wagyu where the focus on the origin and production methods is crucial to enhance the perception of the product as better than the others in the same category (Tsujimoto, 2019). This trust is important in a consumer, especially the first-time user, since the fear of making a wrong choice

may affect his or her decision. According to Dowling et al. (1994), risk perception makes consumers seek more information about the product and its guarantees before they purchase it. Thus, this study will help to understand how different communication strategies affect consumers' purchase intentions. The work aims at discussing how much knowledge the consumer has about the product and how this affects the consumer's response to the communication and buying decision.

1.2 Problem Statement

This research object is to discover the relationship between the communication of product attributes and consumers' purchase intention of premium meats such as Wagyu beef. Even more, this thesis will try to establish the role of familiarity with the product as a moderating variable on this relationship between the two. To understand how consumers process information about Wagyu beef and how this influences their buying behavior, this study will discuss the role of familiarity with the product.

The research questions are presented, which were formulated to understand the issue better and fulfill the research objective:

RQ1: Does the communication of product attributes influence Wagyu Beef's purchase intention?

RQ2: How does product familiarity impact the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention for Wagyu Beef?

RQ3: Do consumers with varying levels of product familiarity respond differently to attribute communication?

1.3 Academic and Relevance of Research

The topic of this dissertation arose from observing the growing market for premium meats. I was interested in this topic because I managed my father's butchery chain and was fascinated with the demand for premium products such as Wagyu. Consumers often face a wide range of related products when purchasing premium meat (Motoyama et al., 2016).

In this context, it is important to understand how product characteristics are communicated.

A literature review indicates that consumers with limited knowledge of superior-quality products make their purchasing decisions based on extrinsic factors, including the brand name, awards, certifications, and price (Veale et al., 2009). On the other hand, consumers who come across a superior quality product, such as Wagyu, and are familiar with its characteristics, are likely to be attracted by the product's intrinsic qualities, including marbling and tenderness, as identified by Park et al. (2005). It is therefore crucial to effectively communicate the product's characteristics to affect their purchase intention.

This dissertation aims to deepen the relationship between communication strategies for premium product attributes and purchase intention. Even though the topic of understanding of premium products has been paid much attention, this research is innovative in that it explores how the communication of intrinsic and extrinsic attributes influences consumer perceptions. To the managers, traders and producers of premium meat products, the issue of how to effectively communicate the uniqueness of these products is a never-ending process. This is because confidence in the origin and quality is paramount to grabbing the attention of the consumers that form this segment's demands. The results of this dissertation offer valuable insight into how companies can optimize their means by developing more efficient communication strategies to attract both experienced consumers and those who are just beginning to discover the luxury goods market. Clear communication can increase interest in and sales of premium meats by highlighting the transparency and superior quality of the product.

1.4 Research methods

Secondary data were used to answer the research questions. To understand the main themes, secondary data was obtained through literature reviews of previous studies, books, academic journals, and articles. Topics included premium meat, wagyu as premium meat, familiarity with the product, communication of its attributes, and the influence these have on consumer purchase intention.

Regarding the primary data, an online survey was carried out and distributed to quantitatively understand the relationships of the variables. The survey was designed to assess consumers' familiarity level and the impact different strategies for communicating attributes have on their intention to buy. By incorporating four different stimuli, we gained insight into the different consumer responses.

IBM's SPSS statistical software, version 29.0, was used to analyze the respondents' questionnaire answers. Frequency analysis, measures of central tendency (arithmetic mean and median), measures of dispersion or variability (minimum and maximum values, mean and standard deviation), Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and statistical tests such as Mann-Whitney U-test and Process Model 1 were used to analyze the results of the respondents' answers.

1.5 Dissertation outline

This dissertation is divided into five main chapters. The next chapter is the literature review, which explores the main concepts and theories relevant to this study. This chapter provides an understanding of the main factors that influence the purchase intentions of Wagyu beef consumers, all of which are supported by previous research. This chapter is essential for setting the scene and explaining why the research hypotheses are relevant.

The third chapter deals with the research methodology. It explains the methods used to collect and analyze the data. It includes details on how the sample was selected, the specific tools and statistical tests used to understand the impact of product attributes on consumer behavior.

In the fourth chapter, the results of the research will be presented. This chapter will closely examine the data collected and assess whether the results support the proposed hypotheses. It will also explore how different levels of familiarity with Wagyu beef affect consumer decisions.

The final chapter concludes the dissertation with the main conclusions, highlighting what has been achieved and the limitations encountered during the study. There will also be recommendations for future research in this area and some practical suggestions for marketers who want to effectively communicate the qualities of premium products such as Wagyu beef.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following chapter provides a detailed analysis of previous academic research and existing literature to support and justify this study's hypothesis and provide a context for the dissertation research questions. It will be applied to the study of how the communication of product attributes influences the purchase intention of consumers of premium meats, particularly Wagyu beef. For this reason, we begin by explaining the definition and development of the terms used.

2.1 Premium Products

Today, consumers are not only influenced by the functional aspects. The emotional, psychological and social factors also have a significant impact on consumer buying behavior. Premium products are perceived as the reflections of identity, the lifestyle and social status of an individual and this is why products, especially those considered premium, have become the extensions of identity. According to Bian and Yan (2022), exclusivity, prestige values, brand image and the emotional association that consumers have with the brand are some of the key factors that influence consumers' intention to purchase premium products. It is no longer enough that consumers to purchase a product, they are also seeking experience, which is far beyond the mere use of the product.

Nowadays, companies are working on their strategies and presenting offers that meet consumers' needs and their psychological needs. According to Kler et al. (2022), people select specific brands to increase their self-actualization, especially when the brand is associated with their favorite celebrities. This is further proof of the importance of the emotional and psychological factors involved in consumer buying behavior. Premium products are not only more expensive and more functional than normal products, but they are also positioned as an exclusive purchase that will provide the buyer with a special experience, together with the high quality and prestige of the brand.

Chernev et al. (2011) note that consumers' need to use brands to convey who they are is not endless. This indicates that this propensity reduces as consumers select brands to represent them. Thus, the level of their identification with these brands may decrease at some point. Hence, although products like Wagyu can attract consumers in the initial stages by piquing their

interest and making them want to try the product due to the emotional connection it creates and the exclusivity it offers, this connection may not last once the consumers try out other types of meat or even other experiences. This is a problem for the brands that use this emotional task approach of because ensuring that brand are the owners now consumers likely remain left to interested with be in the interested the in brand other brands that or they products. have adopted, especially because of the consumers.

Premium products command a higher price because they offer a unique value proposition that integrates both functional and emotional aspects for the consumer. Hinterhuber (2004) emphasizes that value-based pricing models are often applied to luxury durables due to their complexity. However, premium consumer products such as Wagyu also benefit from a value-based approach, provided there is a detailed approach to consumer perceptions of the product's unique attributes. In this context, the price is adjusted according to the value perceived by consumers, which can go beyond the functional and include emotional factors such as exclusivity and superior quality. Levrini & dos Santos (2021) add that price plays a key role in purchase intention, often overriding the emotional appeal that higher-quality products initially attract. Consumers can move from an emotional reaction to a more rational value assessment when informed of prices. This is because, when informed of the price, they assess whether they are willing to pay a high price or opt for other alternatives. It is, therefore, necessary to better understand the impact of price on consumers' perceptions of premium products.

This contradiction highlights a significant gap in research, particularly about how consumer familiarity influences their perception of value, especially when specific pricing strategies are applied. The current literature on marketing strategies for luxury products is based on non-consumable goods and does not consider consumer segmentation according to their knowledge of the product. This segmentation is important in the marketing of consumer goods especially because quality may have different connotations and may not be easily discerned like in the case of explaining to consumers what makes a product excellent. It is therefore important to ensure that consumers are well informed so that they can easily know the characteristics of a given product that make it superior. This means that as consumers seek other means through which to express their identity, the emotional connection they have with high-end products may not be as strong as it used to be. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that consumers know what they are buying to build their loyalty to the product or brand (Chernev et al., 2011). This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by exploring the role of consumer familiarity as a moderator between the communication of product attributes and purchase intention of Wagyu beef.

Exclusivity also plays a crucial role in the positioning of premium products. Dhaliwal, Singh, and Paul (2020) consider that high-quality products with a higher price are generally distributed selectively through prestigious means, creating scarcity and thus encouraging consumer desire. Although exclusivity effectively attracts specific consumer segments, it does not always have the same effect on all consumers. For instance, consumers who are not aware of the product tend to perceive exclusivity as a threat rather than an advantage unless they are aware of the features that make the product unique. This divergence can be understood with the help of the research conducted by Levrini and dos Santos (2021) consumers where who they are observe not that familiar consumer with sensory and product, emotional these responses factors may vary take depending precedence upon over factors the like emotional price. benefit for of exclusivity, therefore highlighting the importance of brand communication. This means that premium positioning strategies based on exclusivity may have to be adapted depending on consumers' knowledge about the brand. It is crucial to develop communication strategies which give clarity to the consumers as to what defines the product.

This point demonstrates that, although exclusivity can raise the status of a brand, there must be a balance between this and accessible information about the product to satisfy the various levels of consumer familiarity.

Although emotional value and exclusivity are factors in consumer loyalty, they alone may not be enough to justify the high price of premium products. As Palazon and Delgado-Ballester (2013) point out, people are attracted to luxury products not only because of their functionality but also because of the emotional satisfaction and status they offer them. This emotional connection is the key to maintaining a premium brand image (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2018). They say emotional appeal is crucial to strengthening a brand's market position. However, in the case of premium meat, creating a strong emotional connection can be challenging if consumers are not familiar with the specific product attributes. For example, if they do not understand the significance of marbling or other quality indicators, it becomes more difficult to create a compelling emotional appeal. However, Chernev et al. (2011) argue that the emotional appeal of brands diminishes as consumers find other ways to express their identity, which demonstrates the limitations of emotional marketing about products such as Wagyu. For less familiar consumers, emotional appeal alone may not be enough. A combination of emotional benefits and high-quality tangible attributes must be conveyed to justify the premium price and ensure consumer understanding.

2.2 Wagyu as Premium Meat

Wagyu beef represents an exemplary case of value-based pricing criteria, where superior quality, rarity, and emotional appeal are the reasons for its premium status. Marescotti (2018) points out that high-quality products command a higher price because of their attributes and the prestige and social value they represent. This is evident in how Wagyu has been marketed as a symbol of luxury, attracting consumers who seek a differentiated gastronomic experience and social recognition through consuming such a limited and luxurious product. The desire to consume Wagyu is often not just because it is considered the best meat in the world and for all the experience it brings, but because it brings them prestige and social value.

One of the major strategies that are used in the positioning of Wagyu as a premium product is the exclusivity of the brand. This is because the supply of the breed is limited through strict breeding techniques and controlled distribution, thus increasing the demand of the product since it is hard to get and is not found in all places. The study by Sithyphone et al. (2011) indicates that this is due to the controlled scarcity of the Wagyu which creates a high demand from the consumers who wish to consume it due to it being a status symbol in the food industry. However, consumers who are not aware of the features of Wagyu may consider it as a challenge if they do not understand the variations between Wagyu and other high-end brands of beef such as Angus (Dhaliwal, Singh, & Paul, 2020).

This highlights the importance of communicating the intrinsic qualities of Wagyu. Consumers must understand its distinctive qualities and realize that this type of meat has added value due to its differentiated experience compared to other kinds of meat.

There are several brands of the Wagyu breed in Japan. Australia and the United States are the two leading importers of Wagyu worldwide. We have several references in Japan, such as Kobe Beef, Matsusaka Beef, and Omi Beef. The first brand is the best known in the world and is recognized as the top in quality. Kobe Beef, derived from the Tajima lineage of Wagyu cattle, is raised exclusively in Hyogo Prefecture. To be certified as Kobe, the beef must meet strict standards, such as a minimum score of 6 on the Beef Marbling Standard, a specific diet, and carefully selecting the lineage (Motoyama et al., 2016).

The characteristic that distinguishes the superior quality of Wagyu is that it is marbling. Smith (2017) points out that Wagyu cattle have the unique characteristic of accumulating

intramuscular fat, contributing to their intense flavor, juiciness, and texture. Motoyama et al. (2016) also confirm that marbling positively affects this type of meat consumption.

Regarding comparison, Angus is also classified as a premium product due to its flavor and tenderness. Its marbling content is lower, with an average of 20.87% compared to 33.9% for Wagyu, placing it at a higher level compared to other premium meats (Shahrai et al., 2021). The significant difference in the marbling of Wagyu beef is a factor that contributes to a distinct sensory experience, making it highly desirable for those who want a unique experience, who want to feel the flavor and juiciness that they have never felt before with other types of meat. However, Radunz et al. (2009) point out that, for less familiar consumers, marbling alone may not be enough to justify the premium price of Wagyu, especially when compared to other more familiar and cheaper alternatives, such as Angus.

The role of marbling in determining the quality of Wagyu beef is important, but the Wagyu production system also affects its classification as one of the best quality products on the market. McGee et al. (2013) observed that Wagyu cattle are fed a diet that includes cereals, which increases the fat storage capacity of the muscles. This controlled feeding, which is aimed at consumers, can differentiate Wagyu processes, which makes it difficult to recognize the products as being of better quality. This is where the role of Wagyu feeding practices becomes important, this is where consumers need to be informed about the importance of Wagyu feeding practices.

In addition to its attributes, its positioning on the market as a luxury product is related to its cultural significance. Marescotti (2018) argues that Wagyu's luxury status depends not only on its superior quality but also on the prestige and social status that it represents. In contrast, consumers associate premium meats with high quality (Vieira, 2020). However, the elements of exclusivity and prestige make Wagyu a symbol of superiority, unlike Angus, which is not at the same level of demand. Thus, the above-mentioned characteristics and the cultural image that is associated with Wagyu position it in a favorable manner within the market, as a high-end meat even though the consumers' knowledge of other similar high-end products may influence the consumers' perception of the value of the product.

2.3 Product Familiarity

Familiarity with the product has an essential impact on how consumers evaluate premium products. Consumers with higher levels of familiarity value intrinsic attributes such as marbling, texture, and flavor the most. In contrast, less familiar people rely more on extrinsic factors such as the brand, its awards, certifications, or even its price (Park & Stoel, 2005).

H1a: Consumers with higher familiarity with Wagyu beef will prefer intrinsic product attributes communication.

H1b: Consumers less familiar with Wagyu beef will prefer extrinsic cues communication.

This tendency to rely on extrinsic factors is evident in the high-quality food sector, where less familiarized consumers may find it challenging to understand the differences that justify a higher price. Certifications, such as labels verifying a product's quality, sustainability, or ethical standards, are key in increasing perceived value. In addition, participation in prestigious competitions and awards, such as the World Steak Challenge, can serve as quality assurance for these consumers. The origin and history of the product is also essential. Products from prestigious regions or with a strong cultural and historical background are often perceived as more valuable, even if consumers do not fully understand their specific characteristics. As observed by Veale and Quester (2009), consumers who are familiar with the product recognize and tend to appreciate the intrinsic qualities, thus reducing their dependence on external elements.

For these consumers, who recognize the superiority of Wagyu's marbling and flavor from brands such as Kobe Beef, it is easier to understand their willingness to pay a high price for this product. Park and Stoel (2005) point out that familiarity with the brand can reduce the feeling of uncertainty and, consequently, increase their purchase intention, which helps explain why consumers who are more familiar with the product are more willing to buy a product with Wagyu. However, this tendency to trust their experience and reduce risk perception has limits.

Model of perceived risk shows that when consumers are unfamiliar with a product, they tend to perceive a more significant risk when making a purchase (Dowling & Staelin's, 1994). As a result, they tend to rely more on external factors such as brand reputation, price, or certifications rather than paying attention to the actual qualities of the product. As a result, they may overlook important attributes such as quality or unique features that could justify a higher price. This

introduces a barrier to entry for consumers with no experience with the product, where the higher price of Wagyu beef is too expensive, especially when there are cheaper and more familiar alternative breeds, such as Angus. By comparing the price, consumers will evaluate the differences between one and the other and realize whether it is worth paying such a significant difference for this type of product.

Although familiarity can reduce the perception of risk and increase purchase intention, it also leads to overconfidence on the part of the consumer. Park and Stoel (2005) warn that overconfidence arises over time. Consumers who already know the product may become complacent and stop looking for alternatives, relying only on previous experiences. Harlam et al. (1995) argue that even consumers who know the product well can become comfortable with it. Over time, they rely on previous experience without considering changes in the market. For example, Wagyu consumers who are familiar with and satisfied with the product do not research alternatives. They end up paying higher prices because they are based on outdated assumptions about their price, even when new competitors emerge. This reflects a critical limitation of familiarity, as it can lead to repetitive buying behavior and does not necessarily reflect the product's current market value.

Also, over-familiarity makes the emotional association of consumers with premium products weaker (Veale & Quester, 2009). The first time when consumers encounter a premium product, they experience the product as exclusive, high quality, and special. But as the consumer gains knowledge about the product, this feeling of luxury is reduced, and the consumer's involvement decreases over time. In the premium product category, it is crucial for companies to provide new services and experiences to keep consumers interested.

2.4 Product Attributes Communication

It becomes crucial to communicate the characteristics of premium products like Wagyu to build the perception that they are indeed of the highest quality. The way information is put across is very crucial in shaping the consumer's choice at the time of purchase. This is since their perception and appreciation of the attributes differ in those who are well acquainted with the product and those who are not. It is therefore important that these attributes are well put across so that even the consumers who are aware and those who are not can be aware of the rarity of Wagyu beef.

One of the most important aspects of this communication is the need to differentiate Wagyu's unique qualities from its competitors. The marbling present in the meat is the most apparent characteristic when communicating it. Motoyama et al. (2016) emphasize that marbling is the main specificity of Wagyu, directly improving its taste. Tsujimoto (2019) also notes that this marbling is linked to the genetics of the cattle and their strict feeding practices. Therefore, communicating these factors helps reinforce consumers' perception of quality, especially in premium markets that value these qualities highly.

The grading system also plays a key role in how Wagyu is communicated. The Beef Marbling Standard (*BMS*) ranges from 1 to 12 and is a visual and quantitative method for communicating meat quality. According to Tsujimoto (2019), the marbling score, along with yield (A to C) and quality (1 to 5) grade, results in a carcass grade ranging from A5 to C1, with A5 being the highest possible grade, with the most marbling. This grading system is a guideline that has been set by the Director-General of the Agricultural Production Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (*MAFF*) and this is an important tool in their communication with their consumers. According to Motoyama et al. (2016), this system of classification enables the assurance of quality of the various cuts of meat thus making the consumer confident of the quality of the meat. This system is not only applicable to Wagyu breed of cattle but to all cattle in Japan and this is because of the strict quality measures that are involved.

Traceability and certification are also essential elements in communicating the authenticity of Wagyu. Hobbs (2005) points out that traceability systems help to increase consumer confidence by demonstrating transparency about the product's entire journey from birth to the table. The traceability system in Japan, as highlighted by Motoyama et al. (2016), assures the consumer that it is possible to trace each Wagyu beef product, thus reinforcing consumer confidence and

making them believe in what they are buying. Tsujimoto (2019) also highlights the role of the Universal Wagyu Mark, which is like a global certificate. With this, consumers can quickly identify the Wagyu they are buying, so they do not need to worry about whether it is. This certification is important to maintain its luxury status, especially when entering international markets.

As far as the history of Wagyu is concerned, this is another important aspect that needs to be mentioned when describing the product. Some well-known areas for Wagyu production are Kobe, Miyazaki and Tajima. These are recognized for their conventional methods of Wagyu production, which makes it unique. According to Marescotti (2018), Kobe Beef's connection with Hyogo Prefecture and the associated certification process is key to improving the product's image as a premium product on the market.

The bronze Kobe Beef statuette, awarded to its best producers, aims to recognize the excellence of the producers and, at the same time, it serves as a symbol of the excellence and authenticity of Kobe Beef. The aim is to maintain Kobe Beef's status as a luxury brand and differentiate it from other beef products.

Although the communication of these attributes is detailed, it is essential to analyze how effective these methods are in communicating the intrinsic qualities of Wagyu beef. Even though classification systems and certifications help increase the product's credibility at the time of purchase, it is often not enough.

H2: Product familiarity positively moderates the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention.

Hobbs (2005) argues that traceability systems alone may not provide enough information to reduce the amount of information between producers and consumers. We can, therefore, understand that it is important to identify the level of effectiveness of these strategies, especially when referring to the value perceived by less familiarized consumers. As Hobbs (2005) suggests, consumers may demand more than traceability guarantees; they may need a clearer narrative about the product's characteristics, production process, and the differentiated experience the consumer can have with this type of product.

Although Wagyu beef is positioned as a premium product, through its unique qualities, the grading systems that prove them as such, its traceability system, and certification of origin, there is a need to improve the way these attributes are communicated, especially in markets

where familiarity with Wagyu is lower. Strategies could center on educating consumers about its unique qualities, how to prepare it for the best possible experience, and how unique this product is.

2.5 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the decision-making process consumers conduct before buying any product they want or need. Interest in buying something comes when the product meets the consumer's criteria or expectations, (Bougenvile & Ruswanti, 2017). The purchasing decision is not always determined by a series of factors that influence consumer behavior. These factors range from personal preferences and past experiences to how products are marketed and presented to potential buyers.

Numerous factors influence the intention to buy a premium product like Wagyu. These can be intrinsic, such as marbling or texture, and extrinsic, such as price, brand, awards, certifications, etc. Depending on their level of familiarity, these factors play distinct roles with the product. Liu et al. (2022) report that consumers used to a product like Wagyu tend to value its intrinsic attributes more. On the other hand, less familiar consumers value extrinsic attributes more to shape their perceptions of quality (Banovic et al, 2009). This difference suggests that consumers without experience with the product are more influenced by company information, as they do not know it and trust what they are sold.

One of the main points of divergence is the importance of price and emotional appeal in the purchasing decision. Price is often more important than emotional appeal when consumers make purchasing decisions, especially for premium products (Levrini & dos Santos, 2021). On the other hand, Fournier and Yao (1997) suggest that emotional attachments to brands can sustain purchase intentions even when prices are high. This is particularly relevant in the case of Wagyu, where the exclusivity and luxury status of the product may initially attract consumers. However, its high price may reduce their interest since, from the consumer's perspective, paying such a high price for a product may not compensate for the experience on offer.

In addition to price, the brand plays a key role in the consumer's purchase intention, especially when they are less familiar with the product. Banovic et al. (2009) show that trust in a brand

reduces uncertainty about the product's quality, helping consumers make safer choices. Thus, when a consumer is unfamiliar with the product, the brand serves as a guarantee of its quality, associating the product with a safe choice. Park and Stoel (2005) add that the greater the familiarity with the brand, the lower the notion of risk, which increases the intention to buy, especially when it comes to top-quality products, where trust is essential. Fournier and Yao (1997) argue that the emotional relationship between the consumer and the brand significantly impacts loyalty and, consequently, the purchasing decision. They suggest that the emotional association made with the brand is as significant, or even more important, than the characteristics associated with it. This emotional loyalty is very relevant in premium meat products, as it is the factor that makes consumers continue to buy the product after they have tried it, as they will always remember the experience they had and this will make them buy the product again, because they will relate it to the better quality they had previously bought.

On the other hand, marbling, as an intrinsic attribute, is perceived differently by consumers. Killinger et al. (2004) concluded that consumers appreciate marbling, as it is an indicator of the juiciness and tenderness of beef, but at the same time, some consumers may have a negative perception of marbling, depending on their perception of fat. This view of marbling shows that effective communication of meat attributes is essential to align consumer expectations with the reality of the product. It is also important to tell the consumer that the taste of the meat increases with the level of marbling so that the consumer who is not well versed with this type of meat knows the kind of experience that he or she is likely to get so that he or she can decide on whether to buy the product or not.

Therefore, communicating attributes is essential to managing your consumers' expectations. Ardeshiri and Rose (2018) suggest that the visual presentation of the product and the clarity of the information on the label are crucial in shaping consumer perceptions, directly influencing their purchasing decision. However, information alone may not be enough to increase willingness to buy (Park & Stoel 2005), concluding that there is no effect of the amount of information on perceived risk and purchase intention. This situation highlights the need for an educational, rather than just informational, approach to help fewer familiar consumers understand the value of Wagyu's intrinsic attributes.

H3a: The communication of intrinsic attributes has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Wagyu beef.

H3b: The communication of extrinsic attributes has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Wagyu beef.

However, Liu et al. (2022) found that despite effective presentation and access to information, the true sensory experience of Wagyu beef can only be achieved when the meat is consumed, which creates a gap between the first impression and the actual result. Consumers should therefore be properly informed about the Wagyu product, so that they don't have unrealistic expectations about the product and its value for money.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

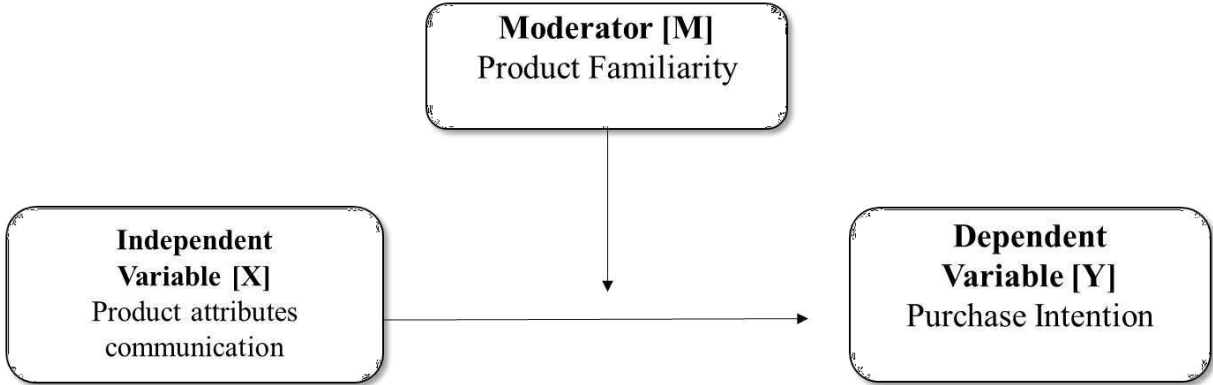


Figure 1 - Conceptual Model

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used to analyze how familiarity with the product and the communication of attributes influence the intention to buy Wagyu beef. The quantitative approach makes it possible to measure the relationship between the variables and verify the hypotheses presented in the previous chapters. This method allowed statistical analysis and quantitative results to be obtained, enabling an understanding of consumer behavior.

The results were obtained through an online survey that assessed purchase intention, familiarity, and preferences. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used, targeting participants with different levels of familiarity with Wagyu beef. Respondents were selected through online channels to ensure a diverse sample. Although not fully comprehensive, this type of sampling was appropriate for the exploratory nature of the study.

A pilot test was carried out with the aim of improving the survey, thus ensuring its clarity and reliability. Some adjustments were made to improve the interpretation of the questions and consistency with the research objectives. Feedback from participants in the pilot test helped to correct some questions and improve their quality. The results were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U-test to compare the different levels of familiarity between the groups and the moderation analysis to assess the interaction between understanding and the communication of attributes on purchase intention. Due to the way the data is distributed, non-parametric tests were used, guaranteeing the reliability of the results. These two methods allowed for a complete analysis of the research questions while answering the exploratory objectives of the study.

This methodology provides a clear and applicable framework for analyzing consumer behavior in the context of premium quality products. By combining the creation of a survey and precise statistical analysis, the study provides important data on the factors that influence the intention to purchase Wagyu beef.

3.1 Research Approach

The main objective of this dissertation is to understand how the communication of a product's attributes influences a consumer's purchase intention, with the consumer's familiarity acting as a moderating factor. To achieve this, exploratory and explanatory research were used.

Exploratory research is an inquiry in the initial stages of discovery and creativity (Casula et al., 2021). It happens when the subject of a study is new, and questions are developed to investigate

and understand it (Casula et al., 2021). The exploratory approach was employed in the initial phase. The conceptual model was developed, which helped clarify the mechanisms underlying consumer behavior and provided a structured basis for creating a critical literature review. This was based on renowned scientific journals recognized for their quality and credibility, which served as secondary data sources. Thus, the literature review provided a comprehensive understanding of the existing research landscape, ensuring the conceptual model was well-founded and based on credible, high-quality secondary data.

The explanatory methodology aims to explain why things are the way they are by analyzing their causes and reasons (Casula et al., 2021). This approach allowed us to study the hypotheses and the relationship between the variables in the conceptual model. Firstly, a visual stimulus was developed to convey the product's attributes. This stimulus was developed to reflect the main elements of its characteristics. Subsequently, a questionnaire was designed and structured as the main means of collecting data and investigating existing relationships through the operational model, which included the constructs product attributes communication, purchase intention and product familiarity as a moderator. This method of data collection enabled the study of the hypotheses and a deeper understanding of their relationships. By validating the operational model, the questionnaire enabled a detailed analysis of how the communication of product attributes influences purchase intention, depending on the level of familiarity with the product.

3.3 Primary Data

Primary data was collected through a survey, which offers several advantages, but also has some problems. As Fricker and Schonlau (2002) point out, this method is economical, quick to implement and very practical, both for collecting data and for analyzing it. But it also has some limitations, such as reduced control over the respondents, the possibility of misinterpreting the questions and problems related to the reliability of their answers.

A pilot test was conducted to ensure the quality and transparency of the questionnaire. This process involved a small sample of responses, allowing feedback from respondents and adjustments to be made to improve the final version of the questionnaire.

3.2.1 Data Collection

The main objective of this study was to obtain data and understand how the different communication strategies for Wagyu beef influenced the consumer's purchasing decision, assessing the moderating effect of product knowledge. The literature review concluded that Wagyu beef is recognized for its high degree of marbling, tenderness and exclusivity.

These attributes distinguish it as a superior product in the meat market. However, familiarity significantly influences consumers' perception and appreciation of these attributes. Those who are familiar give more priority to intrinsic qualities, while those who are less familiar rely more on extrinsic factors. This study analyzed this trend using four stimuli.

The questionnaire was online from November 28th to December 5th via Qualtrics and was distributed through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp. These platforms were used for their ability to effectively reach the target audience of consumers interested in premium meat products. To increase respondents' motivation to participate, the survey was designed to be engaging and accessible in English and Portuguese.

The sample included consumers segmented into two groups: those who know Wagyu beef and are familiar with it and those who do not and aren't familiar with it.

To ensure the accuracy of this segmentation, screen and control questions were asked to understand and verify whether the respondents were meat consumers and whether they appreciated or consumed premium meat. After these two sections, familiarity questions were asked to know how familiar consumers were with this type of premium meat and whether they were familiar with the attributes of Wagyu. After seeing the assigned stimulus, participants were asked to rate their purchase intention, allowing the study to measure their decision-making influenced by the communication strategy.

Data was collected using a convenience non-probability sampling method. The survey received 601 responses, of which 226 were considered valid after excluding incomplete responses, unrealistic completion times, and outliers. The responses were evenly distributed across the four stimuli, with (34) participants exposed to neutral stimuli, (77) to intrinsic stimuli, (54) to extrinsic stimuli and (61) to combined stimuli. This approach ensured a balance in the number

of pieces of information, providing data on how different communication strategies act on product familiarity to influence purchase intentions for Wagyu beef.

3.2.2 Stimuli Development

For this study, it was necessary to create four stimuli that represented the various communication strategies for Wagyu Beef and to analyze how these approaches influenced consumers' purchase intentions. These stimuli were developed, highlighting intrinsic attributes, extrinsic attributes, a combination of both, and a neutral stimulus that served as a control. In this way, it was possible to understand how consumers' familiarity moderated their reactions to the stimuli.





S1	S2	S3	S4
			
(34) – 15,04%	(77) – 34,07%	(54) – 23,89%	(61) – 27,00%

Figure 2 - Stimuli communication strategies

Given Wagyu's positioning as a premium product, the stimuli were created precisely and coherently. The aim was to ensure that each stimulus represented the proposed communication strategy without biasing the participants' responses. For this reason, each stimulus was based on a visual image representing the product and a message highlighting its main aspects.

The stimuli were divided into four groups. The first highlighted intrinsic attributes, such as marbling, flavor and texture, which are elements associated with the premium value of Wagyu and usually captivate consumers who are more familiar with the product. The second highlighted extrinsic attributes, such as quality certifications, awards and the approval of renowned chefs, which are key for consumers who are less familiar and rely on external indicators. The third stimulus combined both attributes, exploring the impact of an integrated communication approach for consumers. Finally, the neutral stimulus presented a simple

generic message informing consumer that the product was available to buy online without highlighting any attributes, serving as a control stimulus.

3.2.3 Measurement / Indicators

To measure the primary constructs of this study, questions were asked to obtain information about the respondents using a 7-point Likert scale. Familiarity with the product was measured through two questions: <Do you know Wagyu Beef?=> and <Do you know the characteristics of the Wagyu Beef product?=> Their answers ranged from 1 (<Not at all familiar=>) to 7 (<Extremely familiar=>) and were used to measure product knowledge.

This format was adapted directly from the study by Zhou and Nakamoto (2007), who used a 9-point scale to assess familiarity with product categories such as CD players and instant language translators.

Purchase intention was measured using three questions: <The likelihood of me buying Wagyu Beef is very high.=> <The likelihood of me trying Wagyu Beef is very high,=> and <My willingness to buy Wagyu Beef is very high.=> Responses were also detailed using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (<strongly disagree=>) to 7 (<strongly agree=>). This model was adapted from Bao, Bao and Sheng (2011), who used a similar scale to determine purchase intention in the context of private label products. The two constructs were essential for developing the operational model and verifying the moderating role of product familiarity in the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention.

Operational Model				
Framework	Construct	Items	Scale	Reference
IV	Product Attributes Communication	Stimuli	Na	Na
Moderator	Product Familiarity	2	7-point Likert Scale	- Nugroho, A., & Wang, W.-T. (2023)
DV	Purchase Intention	3	7-point Likert Scale	- Bao, Y., Bao, Y., & Sheng, S. (2011)

Table 1 - Operational Model

3.3 Data Analysis

The questionnaire was constructed using Qualtrics, and the results were analyzed using SPSS Statistics. After cleaning up all the invalid responses from the participants and keeping only the valid ones, frequency statistics were studied to understand and characterize the demographic data sample. Construct reliability was computed using Cronbach's Alpha to determine its quality and reliability.

After this process, we used non-parametric tests, i.e. statistical methods that do not assume a specific distribution for the data, to analyze the hypotheses created in the literature review chapter. These tests are very useful when dealing with ordinal data or data that deviates from the assumptions of normal distribution (IBM, 2024). Tests such as the Mann-Whitney U-test were used to compare the two groups of high and low familiarity and to understand which type of communication the participants preferred, as described in the hypotheses. The Macro process was also applied to check whether familiarity with the product moderated the relationship between the communication of attributes and purchase intention. Finally, the Mann-Whitney U-test was used to find out which type of communication attribute positively affected the consumer's purchase intention, comparing the stimulus that was to be verified with the neutral stimulus.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main results of the study will be presented and discussed in the next chapter. The only way to reach important conclusions about the research questions set out in the first chapter of the dissertation is to characterize the sample, test the hypotheses formulated in the literature review and the conceptual model, and analyze the quantitative data.

4.1.1. Data-Preparation Process

The study had 602 participants, of whom only 226 were validated. After checking for duplicate IPs, 12 participants were excluded from the study. Ten participants answered that they didn't eat meat in the survey questions, so they were also excluded, since our study only wanted respondents who ate meat. Outliers, which are data points that differ significantly from the rest and can distort the values of an analysis (Aquarela, 2017), were identified using the Mahalanobis distance and the p-value was calculated. After interpreting the p-value and checking for seven outliers, we found that the data differed significantly from the rest. Finally, when checking the answers to the manipulation questions, it was possible that 346 respondents did not correctly match the question they had been randomized to. They were therefore excluded because they had shown little attention to the stimulus, resulting in inconsistent answers. At the end of the process, and with all the data cleaning done correctly, only 226 valid answers were considered.

	Stimuli 1	Stimuli 2	Stimuli 3	Stimuli 4	Total
Initial Observations	148	149	152	152	601
Failed Screening question	4	1	2	3	10
Repeated IPs	0	4	5	3	12
Failed Manipulation	108	67	88	83	346
Ouliers	2	0	3	2	7
Valid Observations	34	77	54	61	226

Table 2 - Participant Data Cleaning Process

4.1.2. Sample Characterization

The participants were divided according to the stimulus they had been given so that it would be possible to understand the sample in question. It was possible to see that the sample consisted of a predominance of women (65.25%) over men (33.2%), with 1 (0.4%) respondent who answered that they were non-binary/third gender and 2 (0.9%) who preferred not to answer the question.

Regarding age, 98 respondents were between 18 and 24 years old, corresponding to 43.4% of the sample. This was followed by 45 to 54 year old (17.7%), 25 to 34 year old (15.0%), 35 to 44 year old (10.2%), 55 to 64 year old (9.7%) and, lastly, 65 year old and over (4%), with these age groups making up the remaining 128 participants.

In terms of education, it was possible to understand that 164, i.e., most respondents had completed Bachelor's (39.8%) and High School (32.7%), and the remaining 62 respondents had completed 9th grade (11.5%), Master's (11.1%) and lastly, mentioned Other (4.9%).

Regarding Net Yearly Income, the majority, i.e., 143 participants, answered that they received less than €15,000 (35.00%) and between €15,000 and €29,999 (28.3%). Next, 43 (19.0%) chose not to answer the question, and the last 40 answered that they received between 30,000€ and 100,000€ or more (17.0%). About meat consumption, it was clear that of the 226 respondents, 206 (91.20%) ate meat frequently (Frequently, Very frequently, Daily), and 214 (94.70%) considered the quality of the product to be important when choosing it (Important, Very important, Extremely important).

Regarding the consumption of premium meat products, 116 (51.3%) of the respondents said that they occasionally ate this type of meat (Occasionally, Sometimes). At special times, 186 (82.30%) respondents considered buying premium meat both occasionally and frequently (Occasionally, Sometimes, Frequently, Very Frequently).

Regarding valuing quality certifications when choosing premium meats, 174 respondents (77%) said they valued certifications that demonstrated the product quality moderately to very much (Moderately, Quite a bit, Very Much). Finally, when asked how exclusive they considered premium meats such as Wagyu to be, 155 (68.6%) respondents said they considered it exclusive (Quite exclusive, Very exclusive).

Appendix 2 and 3 may be examined to get an overview of the sample characterization.

4.1.3. Measures Reliability

All the constructs used in the questionnaire were obtained from the literature review. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a tool for measuring internal consistency that makes it possible to assess the extent to which a set of items evaluates a single unidimensional latent construct (UCLA, 2024), was calculated to determine the reliability of the Purchase Intention and Product Familiarity scales. A Cronbach's alpha value close to 1.0 indicates high reliability, with values above 0.7 generally considered acceptable.

Once calculated, the product familiarity construct had a value of 0.895, revealing a very high-reliability index and good internal consistency. Similarly, combining the three Purchase Intention items produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.858, demonstrating very good reliability. With both constructs validated in terms of reliability, the analysis could proceed confidently.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Quality
Product Familiarity	0.895	2	Very Good
Purchase Intention	0.858	3	Very Good

Table 3 - Cronbach's Alpha Constructs

4.1.3. Results from the Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses created for this research allow us to compare the two groups of high and low familiarity and understand each group's preference. It is also possible to see whether product familiarity positively moderated the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention and, finally, whether attribute communication had a positive impact on the purchase intention of Wagyu Beef. Each participant was exposed to only one stimulus, which made it possible to guarantee the independence of the observations.

Both purchase intention (Statistic = 0.106, Sig. < 0.001) and product familiarity (Statistic = 0.136, Sig. < 0.001) were not normally distributed, according to the test results. The significant p-values (< 0.001) show a considerable deviation from normality for both variables. This variation calls into question the normality principles of the t-test, which could compromise its

validity and indicate that non-parametric approaches would be more suitable for analyzing the data. Therefore, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U tests were created, which would be the most appropriate test for comparing two groups and checking whether they have statistically significant differences.

H1a: Consumers with higher familiarity with Wagyu beef will prefer intrinsic product attributes communication.

To compare consumers with greater and lesser familiarity with Wagyu beef and to understand whether those with more experience with the product preferred intrinsic product attribute communication (S2), it was necessary to carry out the Mann-Whitney U-test (Appendix 7). The results showed statistically significant differences between the groups (Test Statistic = 380.500; $p < 0.001$), indicating that levels of familiarity influenced product preferences. According to the results, it was possible to understand that more familiar respondents (group 2) with the product average rating (47.72) showed a greater preference for communicating intrinsic attributes than respondents with less familiarity (group 1) with Wagyu beef average rating (29.07). Considering this analysis, we can see that consumer with greater familiarity than those with less familiarity, when they see the stimulus highlighting intrinsic attributes (S2), tend to prefer this type of communication and, consequently, that it has a more significant impact on their purchase intention. Thus, **H1a is validated**.

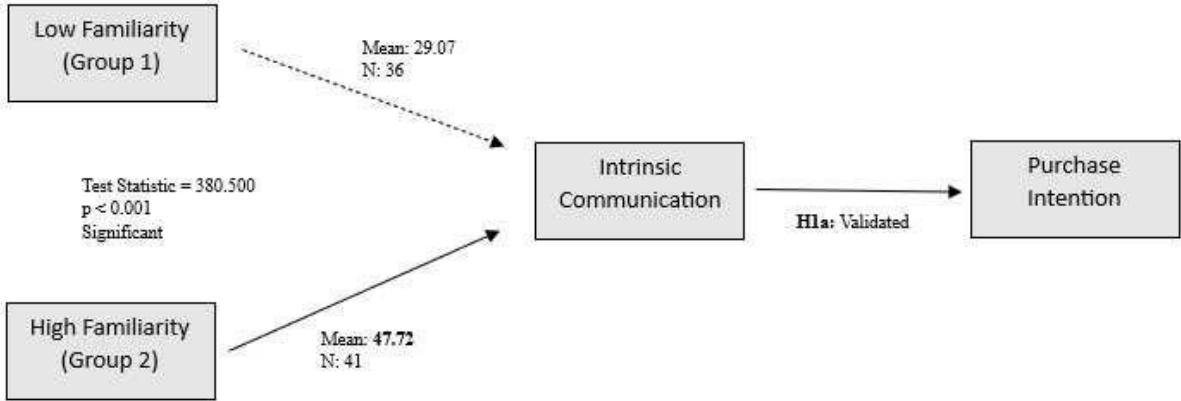


Figure 3 - Effect of Familiarity on Preference for Intrinsic Attributes (H1a)

H1b: Consumers less familiar with Wagyu beef will prefer extrinsic cues communication.

The Mann-Whitney U-test (Appendix 8) was carried out to compare consumers with greater and lesser familiarity with Wagyu beef and to determine whether consumers with lesser

familiarity preferred communication through extrinsic attributes (S3). The results rejected the null hypothesis of equal distribution between the groups, which showed a statistically significant difference in preferences between the two groups (Test Statistic = 168.500; $p < 0.001$). It was possible to see that more familiar respondents (group 2) had a higher average rating (35.26), and those who were less familiar (group 1) had a much lower rating (20.81). This means that respondents more familiar with Wagyu beef attach more importance to extrinsic attributes than those less familiar. Based on this data, it can be said that consumers who are more familiar with Wagyu beef are more likely to buy the product if they see a stimulus based on extrinsic attributes (S3) than less familiar consumers. Since the data shows a different pattern than predicted, **H1b is invalid.**

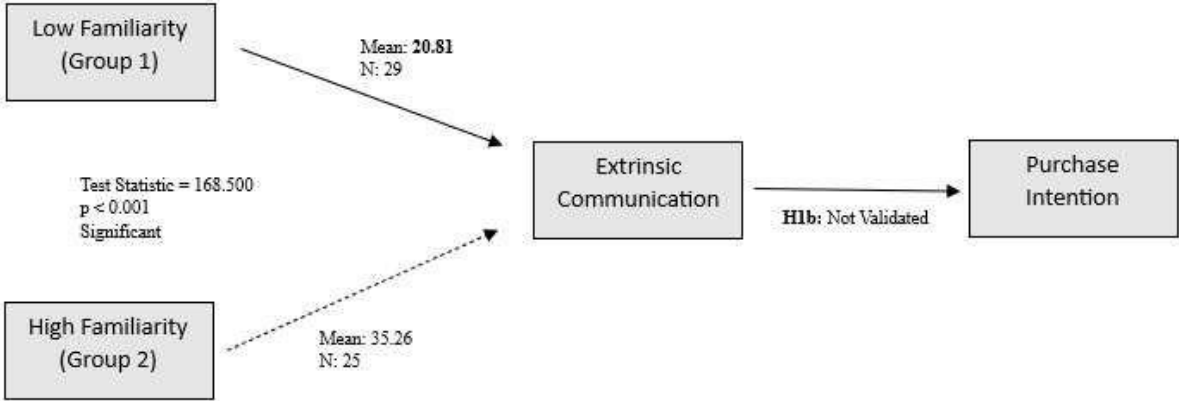


Figure 4 - Effect of Familiarity on Preference for Extrinsic Attributes (H1b)

H2: Product familiarity positively moderates the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention.

To test statistical moderation, Hayes's Process Model 1 was used, and as a result, the following matrix was developed (Appendix 9).

The results obtained begin by concluding that product attribute communication does not have a very important impact on purchase intention independently since the $p > 0.05$ ($p = 0.0816$) and the coefficient is $\beta = 0.1340$. This indicates that product attribute communication alone does not directly influence purchase intention, which aligns with expectations based on the analysis carried out earlier.

When checking the interaction effect between product attribute communication and product familiarity, the results show a significant interaction term ($\beta = 0.0979$, $t = 2.036$, $p = 0.0436$),

indicating that product familiarity moderates the relationship between product attribute communication and purchase intention. The result indicates that the effect of product attributes communication on purchase intention becomes more intense as familiarity increases.

The conditional effects show that the effect of product attributes communication on purchase intention is insignificant ($\beta = -0.0374, p = 0.3647$), showing a weak relationship for participants with low familiarity. At medium familiarity, the effect is slightly significant ($\beta = 0.1340, p = 0.0816$), indicating a moderate influence. However, for participants with high familiarity, the effect becomes significant and positive ($\beta = 0.3053, p = 0.0371$), showing that product attribute communication significantly impacts purchase intention for this group.

Thus, the positive impact of product attribute communication on purchase intention increases as familiarity with the product increases. For more familiar consumers, attribute communication is significant in their purchase intention. However, the relationship is small and insignificant for consumers with little familiarity. For this reason, hypothesis **H2 is supported**, stating that product familiarity positively moderates the effect of product attribute communication on purchase intention.

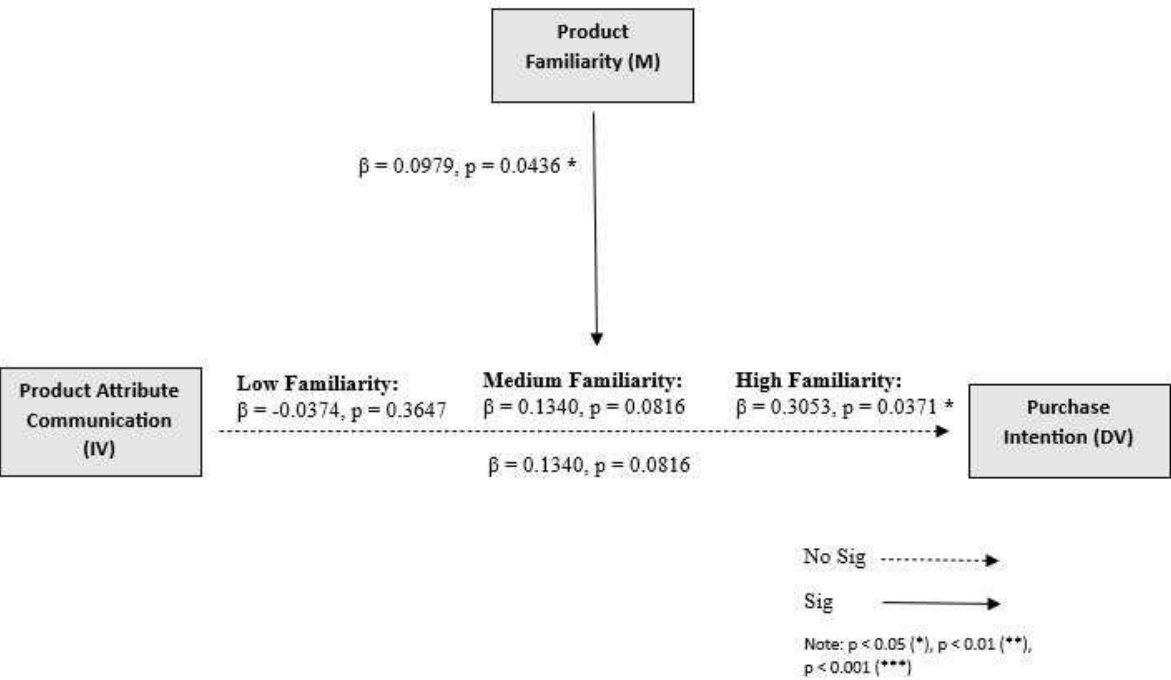


Figure 5 - Effect of Product Familiarity on Attribute Communication and Purchase Intention (H2)

H3a: The communication of intrinsic attributes positively affects the purchase intention of Wagyu beef.

To understand whether the communication of intrinsic attributes has a positive effect on the intention to buy Wagyu beef, the Mann-Whitney U (Appendix 10) test was carried out to compare the intention to buy between the two groups. One was exposed to the communication of intrinsic attributes, and the other to a neutral group that did not refer to any attribute. This test makes it possible to check whether there is a significant difference between the two groups and to see whether the communication of intrinsic attributes impacts the consumer's purchase intention.

The results showed that the group exposed to the intrinsic stimulus (S2) obtained an average ranking of (57.52) while the neutral group (S1) obtained an average of (52.56). Although there was a greater tendency to purchase intention for respondents who observed the communication of intrinsic attributes, the difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.453$). The p-value above 0.05 indicates that the difference observed does not represent a real effect of the intrinsic stimulus.

Therefore, based on the data, it is possible to conclude that the communication of intrinsic attributes did not significantly impact purchase intention compared to the neutral group. Although there was a slight difference in the average ranks, it was enough to confirm the positive effect of the stimulus. **H3a is not supported.**

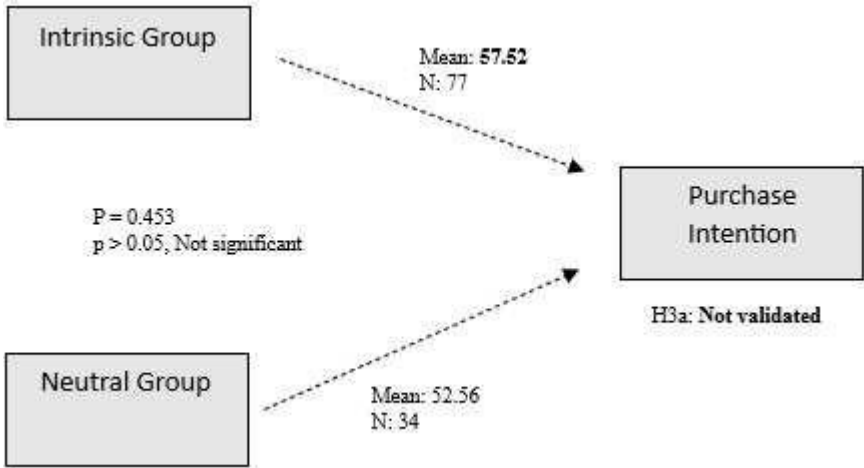


Figure 6 - Effect of Intrinsic Attribute Communication on Purchase Intention of Wagyu Beef (H3a)

H3b: The communication of extrinsic attributes has a positive effect on the purchase intention of Wagyu beef.

To understand whether the communication of extrinsic attributes positively impacts purchase intention, the Mann-Whitney U-test (Appendix 11) was carried out to compare purchase intention between two groups: one exposed to the communication of extrinsic attributes and the other a neutral group, without reference to any attribute. This test allows us to determine whether there is a significant difference between the two groups and whether the communication of extrinsic attributes impacts the consumer's purchase intention.

The results showed that the group exposed to the extrinsic stimulus (S3) obtained an average rating of (49.10), while the neutral group (S1) obtained an average rating of (37.19). This result suggests that respondents exposed to the communication of extrinsic attributes showed a greater tendency toward purchase intention. Furthermore, the difference between the groups was statistically significant ($p = 0.033$), which is less than 0.05, indicating that it is unlikely that the observed result occurred by chance.

Based on the result, it can be concluded that the communication of extrinsic attributes significantly and positively impacted purchase intention. **H3a is supported.**

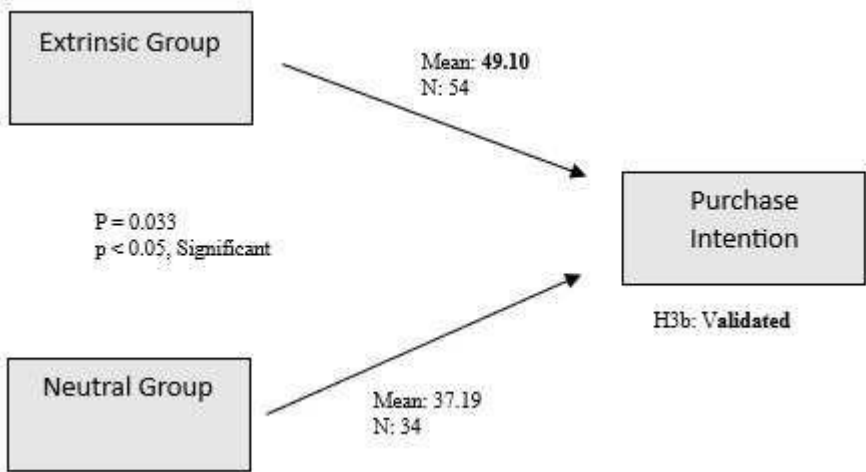


Figure 7 - Effect of Extrinsic Attribute Communication on Purchase Intention of Wagyu Beef (H3b)

4.2 Discussion

The data collected through the Mann-Whitney U-test and the analysis of Process Model 1 made it possible to understand consumer behavior and the factors that affect their intention to buy. The results also show that consumer preference is crucial, as well as the relationship between consumer knowledge of the product and communication plans.

Regarding **H1a**, the results confirmed that consumers who have more knowledge about Wagyu beef prefer message suggestions that focus on the meat's intrinsic qualities, such as flavor and marbling. This result shows that product knowledge increases consumers' comfort in evaluating the quality of intrinsic characteristics. However, for **H1b**, the results were quite contradictory. Less informed consumers do not prefer the communication of extrinsic attributes over intrinsic ones, contrary to the hypothesis. On the contrary, participants who were more knowledgeable about Wagyu preferred extrinsic factors.

The analysis of the moderation of **H2** allowed us to understand it better. It also revealed that familiarity is a crucial factor in the effect that product attribution communication has on purchase intention. Although communication on its own seems to have little effect, it is much more effective the more familiar consumers are with it. For consumers with a high level of knowledge of Wagyu beef, communication of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of Wagyu beef significantly affects their purchasing decision. On the other hand, for less informed consumers, communication strategies don't seem to be very effective.

The results of **H3a** and **H3b** showed different impacts of communicating intrinsic and extrinsic attributes. Communicating only intrinsic attributes (**H3a**) did not have a positive effect on participants' purchase intention and was not significantly different from the neutral group, but it did slightly improve purchase intention. On the other hand, communicating extrinsic attributes (**H3b**) had a positive and significant effect, which highlighted the importance of external attributes, such as brand, award or certification, in influencing consumer purchasing behavior.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The next and final chapters summarize the main results and present conclusions based on the data obtained and the previous literature review. Moreover, it concludes the data collected and the previous literature review. Finally, this chapter addresses managerial and academic implications and limitations and suggests areas for future research.

5.1 Main Findings & Conclusions

RQ1: Does the communication of product attributes influence Wagyu Beef's purchase intention?

This research also shows that the communication of product attributes affects purchase intention and that the impact differs depending on the attributes communicated. Although information about intrinsic attributes makes consumers slightly more likely to buy the product, it does not have a statistically significant impact. Analysis of the communication of extrinsic attributes showed that it has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention. This means that aspects such as the brand, quality certifications, price and awards are more influential when it comes to buying Wagyu beef.

RQ2: How does product familiarity impact the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention for Wagyu Beef?

The study also determined that familiarity with the product interacts with the relationship between the communication of attributes and purchase intention. This means that consumers with more knowledge about the product were more likely to be influenced by product communication and therefore adopt aspects such as marbling and taste. In contrast, consumers with less knowledge relied heavily on the advice they were given to make their decisions. The moderation analysis revealed that the effect of attribute communication on purchase intention increases as familiarity with the attributes increases.

RQ3: Do consumers with varying levels of product familiarity respond differently to attribute communication?

The study also concluded that there are essential differences in the way consumers with different levels of familiarity with the brand and product category react to the communication of attributes. The results show that consumers with a high level of familiarity prefer intrinsic attributes, as they can easily recognize the quality of the product. Interestingly, these consumers also valued extrinsic attributes, which means that even loyal customers look for credentials. Consumers with a low level of familiarity, on the other hand, trust extrinsic attributes, as they offer guarantees regarding the value and quality of the product.

5.2.1. Managerial Implications

The findings from this study offer valuable recommendations for companies and marketers who aim to develop effective communication strategies for premium products including Wagyu beef. This study reveals that it is crucial to know how consumers respond to various forms of product communication depending on their level of familiarity with the product.

The major conclusion is the importance of familiarity in the consumer's response to the product communication. The findings indicated that familiarity is an important factor that can moderate the relationship between attribute communication and purchase intention. This means that for consumers who are familiar with the product, the effect of communication increases significantly. Marketing managers should identify intrinsic attributes, for example marbling and flavor when directing their marketing efforts to such consumers since they are likely to accord high levels of importance to these attributes.

However, the study also revealed that the other attributes, e.g. quality certifications, awards, prices, etc., did not perform as well as expected for the less knowledgeable consumers. Thus, in line with the hypothesis, it was found that external attributes would have a significant impact on the purchase intention of less knowledgeable buyers, but the results were not significant. This surprising result indicates that external factors may not be enough to create the perception of trust and purchase intention among consumers who are not well informed about Wagyu beef. These external indicators may need to be combined with educational content to bridge the knowledge gap for new consumers who are new to the product or who know little about it.

Interestingly, it was also observed that intrinsic attributes alone did not have a strong influence on purchase intention. Family consumers preferred a message that focused on the product's intrinsic attributes, but the results indicate that these features may not be enough to capture consumers' interest. This shows the need to incorporate playful and experiential communication into the explanation of a product's intrinsic features, to make them more understandable to consumers.

There is one of the most useful concepts for marketers and that is to develop strategies based on consumer segments. Rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach, organizations need to first identify their audience and then divide them into different groups depending on how familiar they are with the brand. The communications for the target audience that is not very familiar with Wagyu beef should center on the introduction of the product and its benefits with simple messaging. Conversely, the messaging for the campaigns that are targeted to the already familiar consumers can be more focused on the specific aspects of the product such as quality, authenticity and exclusivity.

Last, the findings also point to the need to set appropriate expectations regarding the efficacy of product communication strategies. The findings indicated that intrinsic or extrinsic communication did not impact the purchase intention of the consumers. This emphasizes the need for an integrated marketing approach where other factors such as price setting, product placement and the image of the product are also considered instead of relying solely on the communication strategy.

5.2.2. Academic Implications

The findings from this study have also helped to extend current understanding of consumer behavior, the communication of products, and the part played by familiarity in the premium products buying decision. The study offers a richer perspective on the interconnection between the communication of attributes and consumer choice.

This study also contributes to the literature by focusing on the role of familiarity as a moderating variable. Previous studies have suggested that familiarity is an important factor shaping consumers' perceptions of products. However, this study goes further and examines the role of familiarity in enhancing the effectiveness of the transmission of intrinsic and extrinsic qualities. Thus, for familiar consumers, intrinsic attributes become more evident, which confirms their

ability to assess the quality of a product. On the other hand, current research has shown that consumers with less knowledge do not trust extrinsic attributes to the same extent as hypothesized. This conclusion, contrary to theory, raises the possibility that the existing literature does not capture the full potential of the relationship between consumer knowledge, trust in external factors and behavior.

The findings also enhance academic knowledge on attribute communication; it was observed that neither intrinsic nor extrinsic factors solely had an influence on purchase intention. This analysis also shows the need to rework the models of attribute communication as these components are usually depicted as unconnected. Rather, the findings indicate that other factors, including the consumer's knowledge and comfort level with the product, play a major role in determining how attribute communication occurs.

Furthermore, the current research enhances the understanding of the market for high-quality products, focusing on the specific role of attribute communication in the perception of high-value products. While quality defining attributes are crucial for Wagyu beef, they only explain a small part of the variance in purchase intention, suggesting that products positioned as premium may require more elaborate communication strategies to appeal to consumers.

The findings about the extrinsic attributes also need to be explored in detail. Although certifications and awards are very useful in creating trust, especially in consumers who are not familiar with the company, the study revealed that the participants ranked them as being of less importance than expected. This leaves the future research to establish whether other external factors like price are not the primary drivers of consumer behavior in this segment.

5.3 Limitations and Further Research

This study aimed at understanding the influence of familiarity with Wagyu beef on respondents' reactions to the product communication and their purchase intention. There are some limitations of the findings which must be considered.

The only drawback is that the number of participants was rather limited and, specifically, for the consumers who are not very familiar with the brand, this might limit the applicability of the findings. Further research with large numbers of participants could check if these findings are relevant for different groups of people. Also, the confidence in the identified purchase motivations that consumers reported may not be the perfect measure of their behavior in the real environment as other factors like price or accessibility may override it. This is where the

research is only focused on Wagyu beef which also restricts the findings to only one product. However, future research can extend this analysis to other luxury products to see if similar patterns appear. Another extension is that even though Wagyu has specific characteristics, research can also explore if such patterns appear in other sectors including luxury fashion or wines. It can also examine whether the consumer will opt for premium products or services if other considerations are at stake including the price or ease of access. Some research can explore this trend and seek to understand how familiarity unfolds.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 : Online Survey

Introduction:

Welcome and thank you for participating in this survey!

My name is Gonçalo Matias, and the following questionnaire is a key part of my Master Thesis at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics.

The questionnaire will take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete, and your answers will be completely confidential. There are no right or wrong answers. I want to know your honest opinion about what you think.

Thank you for your cooperation and for dedicating your time to this survey. Your opinion is extremely valuable to me!

Screening Questions:

1. How often do you consume meat products?
 - Never
 - Rarely
 - Occasionally
 - Sometimes
 - Frequently
 - Very Frequently

2. How important is quality in your choice of food products?
 - Not at all important
 - Very slightly important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

3. How often do you purchase premium meat products?

- Never
- Very rarely
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Very frequently

Control Questions:

4. How often do you consider purchasing premium meats specifically for special occasions?

- Never
- Very rarely
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Very frequently

5. How much do you value quality certifications when selecting premium meats?

- Not at all
- Very slightly
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Quite a bit
- Very much
- Extremely

6. How exclusive do you consider premium meats like Wagyu compared to regular meats?

- Not at all exclusive
- Very slightly exclusive
- Slightly exclusive

- Moderately exclusive
- Quite exclusive
- Very exclusive
- Extremely exclusive

Product Familiarity:

7. Are you familiar with Wagyu Beef

- Not familiar at all
- Slightly familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Fairly familiar
- Very familiar
- Extremely familiar

8. Are you familiar with the product features of Wagyu Beef?

- Not familiar at all
- Slightly familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Fairly familiar
- Very familiar
- Extremely familiar

Manipulation check:

9. What was the main aspect highlighted in the image shown?

- Marbling and flavor
- Certified by quality and loved by top chefs worldwide
- All the above
- No specific aspects were highlighted

Purchase Intention:

Based on the product and information you just saw, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements, using a 7-point scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = Strongly agree).

10. The likelihood of me purchasing Wagyu Beef is very high

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. The probability that I would try Wagyu Beef is very high

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. My willingness to buy Wagyu Beef is very high

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Demographics:

13. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / Third gender
- Prefer not to say

14. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 or older

15. What is your occupation?

- Student
- Employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

16. What was the last level of education that you concluded?

- 9th grade
- High school
- Bachelor
- Master
- Doctorate
- Other

17. Only for statistical purposes, what is your approximate net yearly income, in euros?

- Under €15,000

- €15,000 - €29,999
- €30,000 - €44,999
- €45,000 - €59,999
- €60,000 - €74,999
- €75,000 - €99,999
- €100,000 or more
- Prefer not to say

Appendix 2 : SPSS Output – Control and Screen Questions

How often do you consume meat products?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	2	,9	,9	,9
	Rarely	3	1,3	1,3	2,2
	Occasionally	2	,9	,9	3,1
	Sometimes	13	5,8	5,8	8,8
	Frequently	61	27,0	27,0	35,8
	Very frequently	72	31,9	31,9	67,7
	Daily	73	32,3	32,3	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

How important is quality in your choice of food products?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Slightly important	4	1,8	1,8	1,8
	Moderately important	8	3,5	3,5	5,3
	Important	71	31,4	31,4	36,7
	Very important	91	40,3	40,3	77,0
	Extremely important	52	23,0	23,0	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

How often do you purchase premium meat products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	14	6,2	6,2	6,2
	Very rarely	27	11,9	11,9	18,1
	Rarely	25	11,1	11,1	29,2
	Occasionally	45	19,9	19,9	49,1
	Sometimes	71	31,4	31,4	80,5
	Frequently	37	16,4	16,4	96,9
	Very frequently	7	3,1	3,1	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

How often do you consider purchasing premium meats specifically for special occasions?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	9	4,0	4,0	4,0
	Very rarely	15	6,6	6,6	10,6
	Rarely	16	7,1	7,1	17,7
	Occasionally	31	13,7	13,7	31,4
	Sometimes	60	26,5	26,5	58,0
	Frequently	67	29,6	29,6	87,6
	Very frequently	28	12,4	12,4	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

How much do you value quality certifications when selecting premium meats?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	9	4,0	4,0	4,0
	Very slightly	8	3,5	3,5	7,5
	Slightly	14	6,2	6,2	13,7
	Moderately	46	20,4	20,4	34,1
	Quite a bit	57	25,2	25,2	59,3
	Very much	71	31,4	31,4	90,7
	Extremely	21	9,3	9,3	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

How exclusive do you consider premium meats like Wagyu compared to regular meats?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Not at all exclusive	9	4,0	4,0	4,0	
	Very slightly exclusive	7	3,1	3,1	7,1	
	Slightly exclusive	6	2,7	2,7	9,7	
	Moderately exclusive	22	9,7	9,7	19,5	
	Quite exclusive	82	36,3	36,3	55,8	
	Very exclusive	73	32,3	32,3	88,1	
	Extremely exclusive	27	11,9	11,9	100,0	
	Total		226	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 3 : SPSS Output – Demographics

What is your gender?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	75	33,2	33,2	33,2
	Female	148	65,5	65,5	98,7
	Non-binary / third gender	1	,4	,4	99,1
	Prefer not to say	2	,9	,9	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

What is your occupation?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	55	24,3	24,3	24,3
	Employed	136	60,2	60,2	84,5
	Unemployed	8	3,5	3,5	88,1
	Retired	8	3,5	3,5	91,6
	Other	19	8,4	8,4	100,0
	Total		226	100,0	100,0

Only for statistical purposes, what is your approximate net yearly income, in euros?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under €15,000	79	35,0	35,0	35,0
	€15,000 - €29,999	64	28,3	28,3	63,3
	€30,000 - €44,999	20	8,8	8,8	72,1
	€45,000 - €59,999	13	5,8	5,8	77,9
	€60,000 - €74,999	4	1,8	1,8	79,6
	€100,000 or more	3	1,3	1,3	81,0
	Prefer not to say	43	19,0	19,0	100,0
	Total		226	100,0	100,0

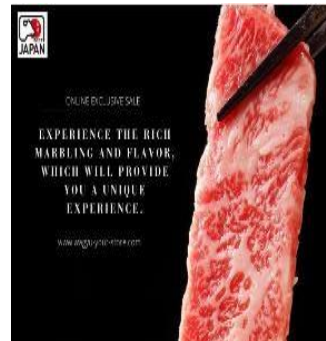
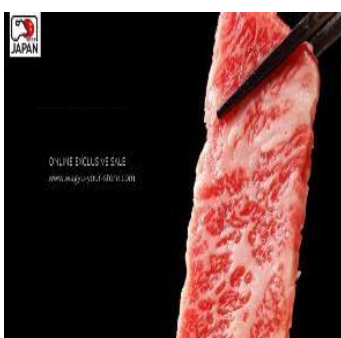
What is your age?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 - 24	98	43,4	43,4	43,4
	25 - 34	34	15,0	15,0	58,4
	35-44	23	10,2	10,2	68,6
	45-54	40	17,7	17,7	86,3
	55-64	22	9,7	9,7	96,0
	65 or older	9	4,0	4,0	100,0
Total		226	100,0	100,0	

What was the last level of education that you concluded?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	9th grade	26	11,5	11,5	11,5
	High school	74	32,7	32,7	44,2
	Bachelor	90	39,8	39,8	84,1
	Master	25	11,1	11,1	95,1
	Other	11	4,9	4,9	100,0
	Total		226	100,0	100,0

Appendix 4 : Presentation of the stimulus



Appendix 5: SPSS Output - Manipulation Check

Ranks

	Stimuli	N	Mean Rank
The likelihood of me purchasing Wagyu Beef is very high	1,00	77	95,80
	2,00	54	122,79
	3,00	61	137,11
	4,00	34	96,49
	Total	226	
The probability that I would try Wagyu Beef is very high	1,00	77	104,49
	2,00	54	117,38
	3,00	61	132,75
	4,00	34	93,22
	Total	226	
My willingness to buy Wagyu Beef is very high	1,00	77	106,10
	2,00	54	119,51
	3,00	61	130,08
	4,00	34	90,96
	Total	226	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The likelihood of me purchasing Wagyu Beef is very high	The probability that I would try Wagyu Beef is very high	My willingness to buy Wagyu Beef is very high
Kruskal-Wallis H	17,605	10,702	9,743
df	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	<,001	,013	,021

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Stimuli

Appendix 6 : SPSS Output - Cronbach's Alpha

Purchase Intention

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	226	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	226	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,858	,858	3

Product Familiarity

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	226	100,0
	Excluded ^a	0	,0
	Total	226	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,895	,895	2

Appendix 7 : SPSS Output - Multicollinearity Analysis

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1,445	,296		4,877	<,001		
	How much do you value quality certifications when selecting premium meats?	,176	,059	,179	2,969	,003	,746	1,340
	How often do you purchase premium meat products	,196	,066	,211	2,964	,003	,535	1,870
	How often do you consider purchasing premium meats specifically for special occasions?	,178	,065	,196	2,729	,007	,526	1,900
	Familiarity_StimulIndex	,074	,015	,275	4,950	<,001	,881	1,135

a. Dependent Variable: PurchaseIntention_Index

Collinearity Diagnostics^a

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	How much do you value quality certifications when selecting premium meats?	How often do you purchase premium meat products	How often do you consider purchasing premium meats specifically for special occasions?	Familiarity_StimulIndex
1	1	4,603	1,000	,00	,00	,00	,00	,01
	2	,253	4,265	,01	,01	,01	,01	,98
	3	,069	8,184	,26	,16	,39	,07	,00
	4	,041	10,548	,50	,78	,04	,12	,00
	5	,034	11,718	,22	,05	,55	,80	,01

a. Dependent Variable: PurchaseIntention_Index

Appendix 8 : SPSS Output - Normality tests

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Intent	,106	226	<,001	,964	226	<,001
FamIndex	,136	226	<,001	,937	226	<,001
Stimuli	,214	226	<,001	,847	226	<,001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Appendix 9 : SPSS Output - Mann-Whitney U-test Hypothesis 1a

Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks				
	Familiarity_Level	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Intent	1,00	36	29,07	1046,50
	2,00	41	47,72	1956,50
Total		77		

Test Statistics^a

	Intent
Mann-Whitney U	380,500
Wilcoxon W	1046,500
Z	-3,661
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001

a. Grouping Variable:
Familiarity_Level

Appendix 10 : SPSS Output - Mann-Whitney U-test Hypothesis 1b

Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks				
	Familiarity_Level	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Intent	1,00	29	20,81	603,50
	2,00	25	35,26	881,50
Total		54		

Test Statistics^a

	Intent
Mann-Whitney U	168,500
Wilcoxon W	603,500
Z	-3,378
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001

a. Grouping Variable:
Familiarity_Level

Appendix 11 : SPSS Output – Process Model 1 Hypothesis 2

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 1

Y : Intent
X : Stimuli
W : FamIndex

Sample
Size: 226

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

Intent

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,5205	,2710	1,4995	27,5028	3,0000	222,0000	,0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4,5655	,0818	55,8458	,0000	4,4044	4,7266
Stimuli	,1340	,0766	1,7496	,0816	-,0169	,2849
FamIndex	,4110	,0468	8,7802	,0000	,3188	,5032
Int_1	,0979	,0444	2,2036	,0286	,0103	,1855

Product terms key:

Int_1 : Stimuli x FamIndex

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
 R2-chng F df1 df2 p
 X*W ,0159 4,8560 1,0000 222,0000 ,0286

 Focal predict: Stimuli (X)
 Mod var: FamIndex (W)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

FamIndex	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-1,7501	-,0374	,1017	-,3674	,7137	-,2378	,1631
,0000	,1340	,0766	1,7496	,0816	-,0169	,2849
1,7501	,3053	,1161	2,6307	,0091	,0766	,5340

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
 95,0000

W values in conditional tables are the mean and +/- SD from the mean.

NOTE: The following variables were mean centered prior to analysis:
 FamIndex Stimuli

----- END MATRIX -----

Appendix 12 : SPSS Output - Mann-Whitney U-test Hypothesis 3a

Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks				
	Stimulus_Intrinsic_vsNeuro	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Intent	1,00	77	57,52	4429,00
	2,00	34	52,56	1787,00
Total		111		

Test Statistics^a

	Intent
Mann-Whitney U	1192,000
Wilcoxon W	1787,000
Z	-,751
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,453

a. Grouping Variable:
 Stimulus_Intrinsic_vsNeuro

Appendix 13 : SPSS Output - Mann-Whitney U-test Hypothesis 3b

Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks				
	Stimulus_Extrinsic_vsNeuro	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Intent	1,00	54	49,10	2651,50
	2,00	34	37,19	1264,50
Total		88		

Test Statistics^a

	Intent
Mann-Whitney U	669,500
Wilcoxon W	1264,500
Z	-2,136
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,033

a. Grouping Variable:
 Stimulus_Extrinsic_vsNeuro