Abstract

It is usually accepted that wine sales greatly contribute to restaurants success. But not much is known about the determinants of greater wine sales measured as a proportion of the total sales of restaurants. If we can expect that larger restaurants sell a greater amount of wines and that premium or gastronomic restaurants sell more expensive wines, other variables can also affect wine sales. Among others, the sommelier's role can be questioned.

Literature focuses mainly on wine list design (Sirieix et al., 2011). It also suggests the existence of a sommelier effect (Manske and Cordua, 2005) that can contribute to the financial success of a restaurant and increase consumer's satisfaction and loyalty (Saura et al., 2008; Dewald, 2008; Russell, 2009). In this paper, we examine multiple determinants of wine sales for a restaurant.

Thanks to original survey data collected worldwide (267 observations), we estimate an econometric model to explain the share of a restaurant's turnover generated by wine sales. Controlling for restaurant's location, style and size, it appears that restaurants characteristics, more than sommeliers' profile, allows to increase wine sales.