# Padua 2017 Abstract Submission

**I want to submit an abstract for:**
Conference Presentation

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**Keywords**
Champagne industry, women, entrepreneurship, wine

**Research Question**
What are the characteristics of women who have taken power in the champagne industry (personal characteristics, management styles and business strategies of women who lead independent wineries or champagne houses)?

**Methods**
Qualitative method. In-dept interviews with women in champagne business and direct observations. Exploratory analysis with multiple case studies.

**Results**
Map of women wine-growers/-makers in Champagne. Four types of behavior are identified depending on women's individual characteristics, the influence of socio-cultural variables, and the business and management strategies they implement.

**Abstract**
While wine was once considered a male-dominated sector (Bryant, Garnham, 2014; Gilbert, 2011; Ting, 2013), and while “no other industry has so resolutely excluded women from positions of influence for so long” (Matasar, 2010; Pavel, 2012), the tide has shifted. Women have broken the barriers and have become winery owners, vine growers, winemakers, sommeliers or brand managers... even if little is known about how many they are in the wine industry. Furthermore, few academic studies have addressed their progress (for few exceptions, see Bryant and Garnham, 2014, Galbreath, 2014; Gilbert, Gilbert, 2015). So what still needs to be understood is what roles women might play in an industry that has historically been dominated by men; which kind of wines they produce and what are the ways they get involved; what kinds of doors they bang into or of ceilings they may hit. Another issue may be how wines produced at wineries or champagne houses having lead women winemakers are acclaimed in comparison to those having male winemakers.

This research investigates the characteristics of women who have taken power in the wine industry and who now own their wineries and vineyards, who produce, promote and sell wines. Why were they confined – when they were tolerated at the winery – to administrative jobs for so long? Are obstacles that these women have to overcome to achieve success in wine industry (traditions, cultural practices, professional stereotypes, social mores, the limited access to capital, difficulties in building a social network, the lack of entrepreneurial education, the “burden” of the father figure, heritage) different from those found in other professions or sectors? Is there a typical profile for women who lead independent wineries or prestigious champagne houses? Do they have a different vision of the world of wine from that of men and, therefore do things differently (operating methods, tendency to introduce innovative products or processes - their way of doing things and of communicating)? Are there differences in leadership and management styles between men and women in the champagne sector (are women more orientated to supporting or maintaining relationships than men? Does a maternalistic management – understood as a caring way to treat people and a different way to encourage sustainable growth, development, transformational leadership and corporate responsibility - exist in the wine sector in comparison with authoritarianism, benevolence or paternalistic models?). And finally, how does female representation in top
management of their wineries or champagne houses (*) improve firm performance and how women contribute to the world of wine?

Through an interactive, multifactorial analysis of more than 35 women working in the champagne industry, the study shows the wide range of factors influencing their entrepreneurial intentions, and their reinvention of the winegrower’s profession, whether through a career in a champagne house or the management of an independent winery. From in-depth interviews with women in the champagne sector and direct observations, analyzed using NVivo software (exploratory analysis with multiple case studies), four types of behavior are identified depending on the women’s individual characteristics (personal and circumstantial history, motivation, skills); the influence of socio-cultural variables on their desire to make a place for themselves in the wine industry; and the business and management strategies they implement. The typologies of women entrepreneurs traditionally proposed are also compared, by combining behavioural aspects with the specific features of the wine business and the different jobs available in the industry (ownership, managerial or purely technical roles).

Finally, this paper contributes to the debate over women in wine and, more generally, over women in entrepreneurship. First, by relying on a unique qualitative database, this study tracks women in the champagne industry and focuses on understanding of how they appear to be reaching top leadership roles in small wineries as in upper echelon positions at champagne houses. Second, this paper provides some insights that could inform about women in management positions in the wine sector by analyzing how they are defying gender stereotypes and other constraints by doing things sometimes better, sometimes just differently than men. Third, this study also goes beyond gender entrepreneurial models focusing on “the glass-ceiling” and which say that women would become entrepreneurs or their own boss because it is the only way for them to find work in the wine industry. In reality, if female wine entrepreneurs face a set of challenges not typically shared by their male counterparts, our model shows that they find ways to overcome these issues without suffering the situation.

Finally, women are a powerful economic force in the champagne’s world even if the glass ceiling is far from being smashed; this study offers important insight into representation of women in previously under-examined leadership positions and shows how these “wine ladies” may change the face of the wine industry.

(*) In this study, “top management positions” refers to chief executive officer (CEO), chief financial officer (CFO), chief operating officer (COO), but also viticulturist, winemaker and marketing role.