

Expectation Before Tasting: Names, Prices and Reputation in Judgment

Sensory Science and Judging Ethics — Ahmad Issam Maadarani's Series

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Ahmad Issam Maadarani examines information arriving before the bite, distinguishing blind product assessment from an explicitly described dining experience. He proposes comparisons separating information effects from retasting effects without treating one experimental result as a general accusation of bias.

Evidence map

Published evidence: [EXPECT08]

Author proposal: Information comparison controlling retasting.

1. Information and the task

Hiding price and name may suit a question about recipe performance. An openly communicated promise belongs to a question about the full restaurant experience. Declare the task boundaries before testing. A menu-informed judgment is not a blind measurement, while blind tasting cannot alone answer every question about value or service. Different questions can produce different results without automatic contradiction.

2. A bounded experiment

In a human wine experiment, price information changed experienced-pleasantness ratings and related neural responses. This result concerns that setup and does not establish an effect of every name or price on every culinary judgment. [\[EXPECT08\]](#) Nor does it demonstrate assessor dishonesty. An ethical judgment about a person requires an additional argument that the experiment does not supply.

3. Before-after confounding

A hypothetical participant tastes a coded dessert and retastes it after reading an elaborate description. Greater liking could reflect information, familiarity, elapsed time or sample change. That sequence alone cannot isolate the cause. Include a retasting condition without new information, balance orders where appropriate, standardize service and record expectations before tasting.

4. An information comparison

Use different truthful descriptions of one product, such as a short description and one explaining preparation. Assign conditions randomly or in balanced sequences. Record expected quality, then intensity, liking and suitability. If hypothetical price information is used for research, provide an appropriate participant procedure and subsequent clarification. Do not publish hypothetical information as commercial fact. The record distinguishes description effects from changes in the food itself.

5. Precise reporting

Write “liking increased under the stated information condition,” rather than claiming that

names deceive everyone. Effects may differ by person or product. When competition concerns the product alone, control information outside its criteria. When the promise belongs to the task, evaluate its accuracy separately. Avoid counting one promise-driven effect twice without justification, and preserve genuine observations even when theory did not predict them.

6. Expectation record and limits

Retain displayed wording and timing, prior familiarity, expectation, product code, tasting order and subsequent ratings. Do not generalize all reputation or pricing from one description. This article complements blinding and descriptive honesty with a distinct test of advance information. Its value is identifying what changed judgment under specified conditions; interpreting that perceptual effect within a competition remains an explicit evaluative responsibility.

Application worksheet

Field	What to retain
Information	Wording, timing and familiarity
Comparison	Code, order and retasting condition
Judgment	Expectation, intensity, liking and suitability

The author's analysis and proposals; examples are hypothetical and proposed procedures have not been tested here. No new experimental data are presented. Research-attributed claims remain within their source scope.

Related articles

- [15 — Article 15](#)
- [21 — Article 21](#)
- [41 — Article 41](#)

References and source scope

1. **[EXPECT08]**Plassmann, H., O'Doherty, J., Shiv, B., & Rangel, A. (2008). Marketing actions can modulate neural representations of experienced pleasantness.

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 105(3), 1050–1054. DOI:
10.1073/pnas.0706929105. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2242704/>

Wine and price information in a specified human experiment.

Publication metadata and available abstracts were used; complete original texts were not fully reviewed for this edition.

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