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CONSUMER ATTITUDES TO GLOBAL GRAPE VARIETIES VERSUS HUNGARICUM VARIETIES IN THE SOUTH-ALFÖLD REGION

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ABSTRACT: From the beginning of 1980's global grape varieties became popular in Hungary. Wine makers like them because of their good quality, consumers also experienced a superb quality. In the beginning of 1960's local Hungarian varieties (like Kadarka, Kövidinka, Ezerjő etc.) were wide spread. The wine made of them had a poorer quality partly due to the wrong wine making technique. In the advance of EU membership viticulturist and enologists were wonder whether traditional varieties and special Hungarian wine taste can increase competitiveness. The wine making technology became more advanced. Instead of mass production a better attention was paid to yield, quality and growing technology. Besides varieties wine producing regions were compared too. In the present paper the attitudes of local and global varieties were matched so that this information could help decision makers in wine industry. Multidimensional scaling statistical technique was used to reveal the differences of questioned consumers. The results show that consumers are conservative and it is hard to overcome the bad reputation that was achieved for decades.

KEYWORDS: customer, attitudes, grape varieties, multidimensional scaling

INTRODUCTION

Marketing experts are faced with enormous difficulties when they try to estimate income, sale, market share of a new product, or the effect of a marketing strategy (Nótári et. al., 2010/a).

In our days markets are segmented and the competition between the producers/suppliers is fierce (Hajdun I-né et.al., 2003). The main challenge for the marketing experts is to develop differentiated products that can develop a good market share and are able to keep their marketing share. The number of new products that are introduced to the market developed enormously (Nótári et. al., 2010/b).

Success of strategic decisions depends on a well-operating marketing information system. Marketing research uses multivariate statistical methods to better understand consumer behavior (Ferencz et.al., 2009/a, 2009/b).

The abundance of measured data supposes statistical methods. As there is a continuous change (evolution) of living organisms the trends can be calculated statistically by computers especially if the available time for decision making is short (Ferencz et.al., 2010).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study shows the results of a survey done among college students. In order to measure the attitude to wine regions and varieties a 1000 sample size survey was carried out. The data was processed by SPSS 10.0 for Windows statistical program package. The two methods used were multidimensional scaling and histogram of frequencies.

RESULTS

Figure 1 shows that, as for the wine producing region, Tokaj-Hegyalja is located in the corner of the map and Kunság Wine Growing district is the farthest from it. Frequencies show that consumers attribute high price for wines from Eger and Tokaj Hegyalja and low price to the wines originated from Kunság Wine Growing Region.

Figure 2 shows that as for the fame of the wine producing consumers regard Tokaj-Hegyalja, Eger and Badacsony the most renowned while Kunság the least one. Not surprisingly Pannónhalm-Sokoróalja is not positioned well which is attributed to its relatively new age.

Figure 3 shows that as for the quality of wine produced, Tokaj, Eger, Badacsony are well positioned while Kunság is again the least positioned. This shows that respondents attribute higher price to a more prestigious wine producing region.

Figure 4 shows the positioning of white varieties. As histograms indicate (Figure 5-6) Furmint, Hárslevelű varieties are favored while Kövidinka was not. Perhaps respondents were orientated by the fame of the region. Kövidinka, a local variety, or hungaricum is well adapted to the Alföld (Kunság)

region which gives a light table wine. This variety is takes an important part in the wine strategy of the Alföld (Kunság) region. It is going to be difficult for the marketing experts to reposition this variety.

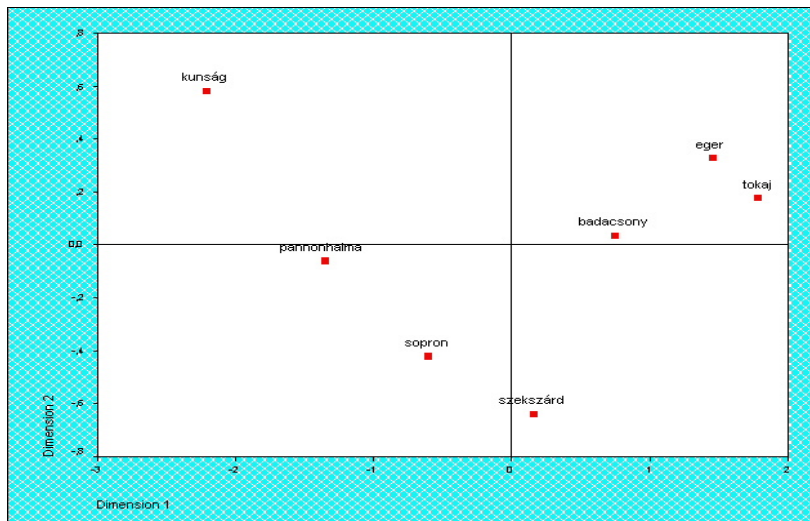


Figure 1. Positioning according to price of the wine

Among red varieties so called “global” varieties (Merlot, Cabernet sauvignon) are preferred to local wines. Kadarka is the least favored hungaricum variety. Zweigelt is in an intermediate position (Figure 7.). Histograms help to reveal the inner structure of the relations (Figure 8-9.)

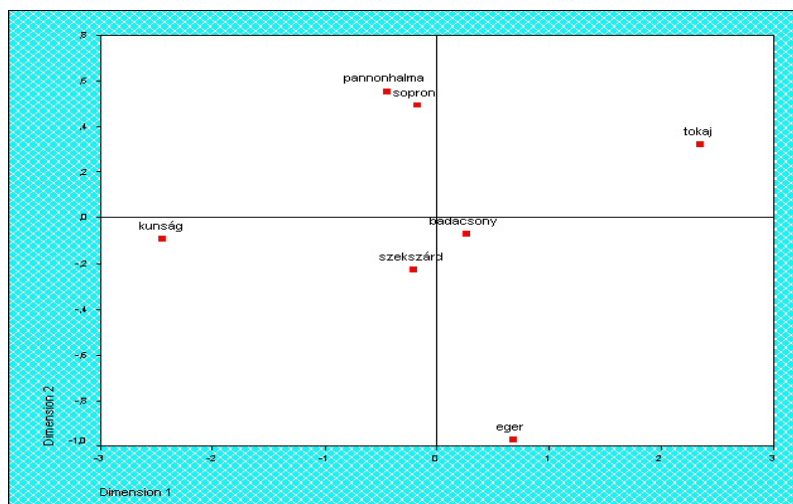


Figure 2. Positioning according to fame

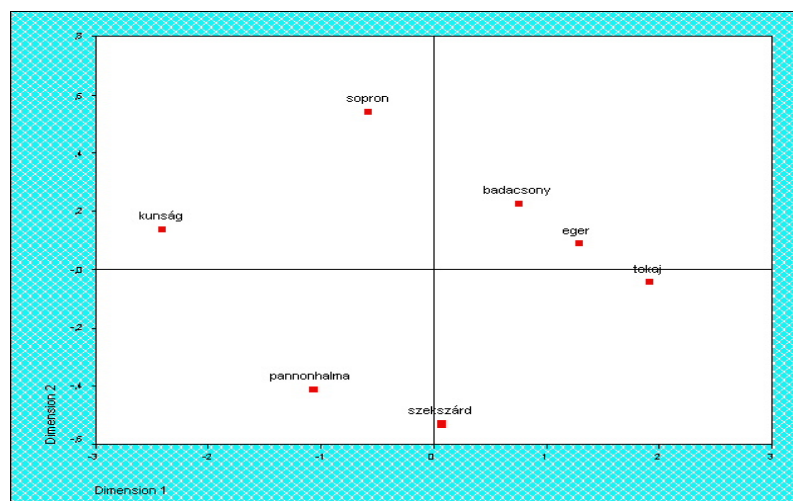


Figure 3. Positioning according to quality of wine

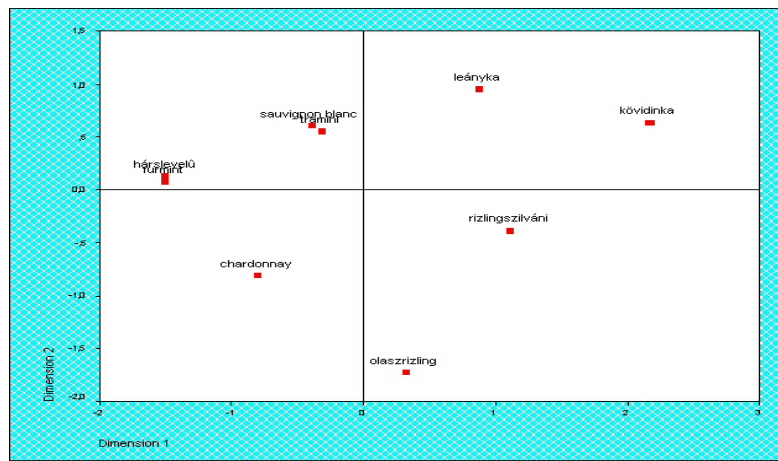


Figure 4. Positioning of white varieties

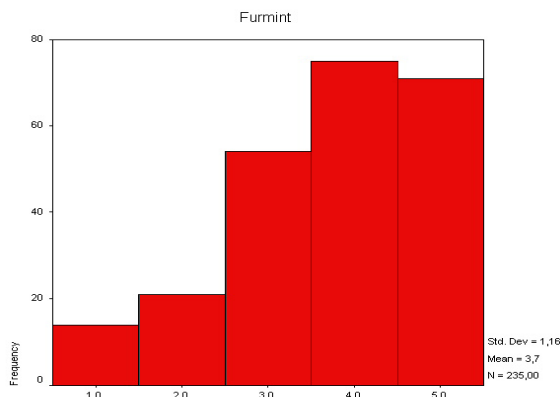


Figure 5. Histogram of Furmint variety

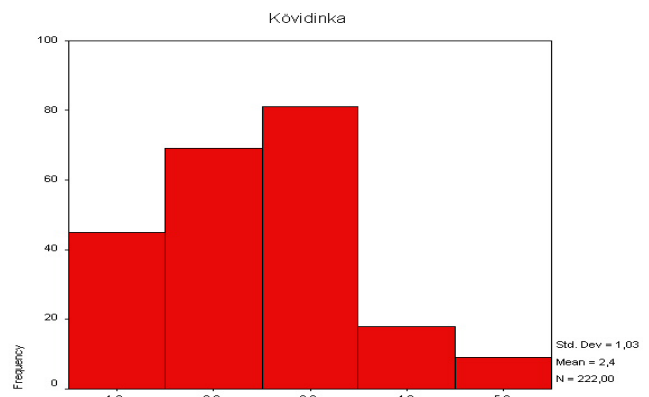


Figure 6. Histogram of Kövidinka

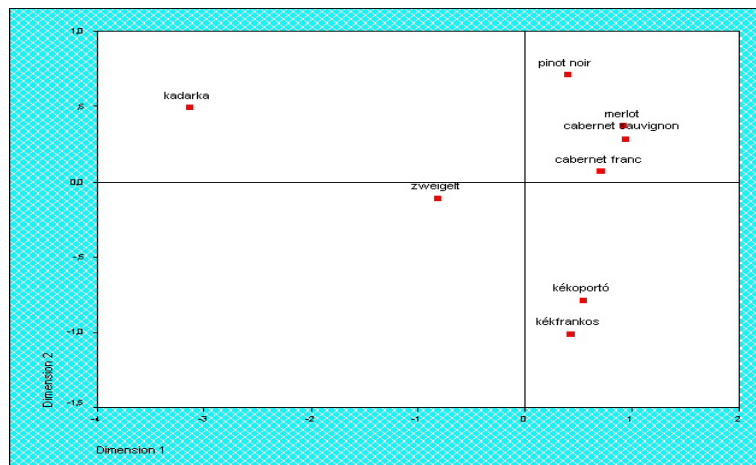


Figure 7. Positioning of red varieties

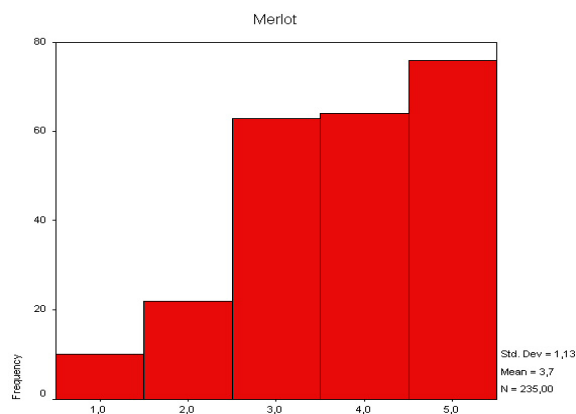


Figure 8. Histogram of Merlot variety

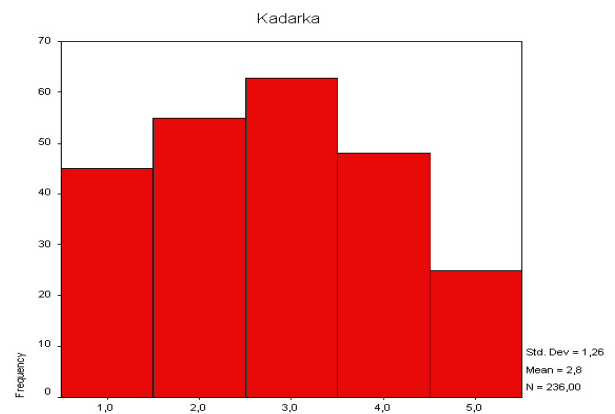


Figure 9. Histogram of Kadarka variety

CONCLUSIONS

- Multidimensional scaling is a useful tool in creating perceptual maps that is for positioning (Lévai et al., 2010). Histograms are useful to “see behind the curtain”.
- It is seen that the wine producing regions with high reputation is reflected in the positioning, whereas Kunság and Pannonhalma-Sokoróalja are less positioned. This later is a new region therefor it is intermediately positioned.
- Fame and quality positively price is negatively correlated. Respondents attribute higher price of the wine to more renowned regions (Nótári et. al., 2010/a, 2010/b).
- As far as varieties are concerned, among white varieties Furmint, Hárslevelű varieties are positioned best, because their “Tokaj” image. Kövidinka, a local variety, mostly grown in the Kunság region has a negative reputation even though this is a valuable variety, that has its place on the market. Among the reds, Merlot and Cabernet sauvignon are favored, while Kadarka is not. Kadarka is also associated to Kunság region and produce a light colored table or quality wine. It has a renaissance in the Szekszárd Wine producing region.

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