Italian Consumers’ Preferences Towards Dealcoholized Wine
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Empirical contributions that studied consumers’ preferences for wine, such as hedonic analyses widely populating the economic literature, highlighted the positive relationship between alcoholic content of wine and price, between alcoholic content and its perceived quality.

On the other hand, it is important for the vitivinicultural sector to consider a response to market signals suggesting emerging consumer interest in products containing less alcohol than has been traditionally associated with wine.

This interest may well be due, in part, to global efforts by governments to address irresponsible and harmful levels of alcohol consumption.

Notwithstanding the strong linkage between the vitivinicultural sector and the human, social and cultural interaction, it is important to focus on continuous improvements that support innovative attempts to respond to these market and regulatory signals.

We therefore address our research towards the understanding of consumers’ preferences towards the dealcoholized wine categories, respectively: alcohol free wine, dealcoholized wine, partially dealcoholized wine, reduced alcohol wine. In addition, we measure the eventual price premium consumers’ are willing to pay in correspondence to different price points in order to depict the market potential and the benefits for producers that effort the costs of reducing the alcohol content of those wines.

The Choice Modeling Method (CMM) has been chosen in order produce an experimental design, set up the survey and to estimate econometrically consumers’ preferences and willingness to pay. The sample selected for the survey belongs to South Italy and it is stratified for age and gender. Results show that age and educational attainments significantly affect the likelihood of a dealcoholized wine to be bought. Similarly, willingness to pay demonstrates the existence of a price premium associated to lower alcohol content.

On the other hand, contrasting results concerns heavily dealcoholized wines, which generate aversion.

Our results imply that there could be room for producers investing towards this type of productions. Policy, on the other hand, should promote the consumption of those products in order to make producers exploit the market potential rapidly, and society achieving the auspicated reduction in irresponsible and harmful level of consumption.