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Abstract:

According to the World Health Organization’s (WHO) recent survey, Hungary can be found among the top ten wine-consumer countries. The Hungarian consumption pattern is largely influenced by consumer purchasing power, consumer way of life and health. Important consumption differences among single consumer groups can be observed. Richer households consume double or triple amount of wine than the poorer households and the tendency is similar among older contra younger households.

In this paper we analyze Hungarian wine consumption patterns based on socio-economic status (SES), age level and marital status. Our object is to examine, whether money is the only responsible for allowing one’s access to wine or it depends mostly on social factors. Our hypothesis is that same influencing factors causing different impact on every single social stratification.

For the analysis secondary data received from the Hungarian Central Statistics Office (HCSO) is utilized. The aggregated consumption panel data contains the years between 1998 and 2010. In order to improve perspicuity of the study we separate consumer deciles into three main groups: poor, rich and middle class. Beyond these three socio-economic status categories, we create three different age-level profiles and two other groups according to the number of their children.

For the calculations an own-built multivariate regression model for demand analysis is evaluated by the technique of ordinary least squares (OLS). The method is adopted into two multidimensional measurement-environments. In the first case the dependent variable (y) means the amount spent on wine, while the independent variables (xi) are defined such as total food expenditure, education, housing, household energy, health care, etc.

In the second step income, own and cross price elasticity are analyzed. As wine can be considered as a luxury good, significant and positive income effect is expected. Besides red- and white wine own prices, the price effect of basic food products like meat, milk and oil are integrated into the model.

As a result of our calculations we can identify, evaluate and quantify the main factors that might affect a consumer group’s wine-drinking habits.