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### **Wine Consumer Preferences and Attitude in Colombia**

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During the last third of the twentieth century the world wine market became significantly competitive. Consumption declined in the traditional wine producing and consuming countries, while competition emerged from such 'New World' nations as the United States, Australia and Chile, and prosperous consumers chose quality rather than quantity in consumption (Bisson L. F. et al., 2002).

Over the last decade, the wine industry has become increasingly globalized (Velikova N. et al., 2013). Global outlook of wine market is characterized by a supply higher than demand, which results in an even more competitive environment. Many wine producers look for new opportunities to increase their sales and earnings and export a considerable portion of their overall wine production (Velikova N. et al., 2013).

Recent wine literature focuses on developing wine producing countries and regions, nevertheless there is a general understanding of the importance of studying emerging markets that are not wine producing countries. These countries are often overlooked but may be equally important because they may comprise lucrative markets for export. Few papers have been found in literature on wine consumers understanding in countries which are not wine producing regions, specifically two recent academic researches focus on wine consumers in Jamaica (Rothschild J., 2006) and in the Dominican Republic (Velikova et al., 2013).

This study has the aim to gain insights into one such market. Colombia today is the third bigger economy of Latin America, after Brazil and Mexico and the sixth in all the Americas. Therefore, specifically this paper has the objective to examine Colombian wine consumer preferences, behavior and attitudes. Additionally the current study analyzes wine market in this country. None academic paper on Colombian wine consumer understanding and on Colombian wine market analysis has been found so far.

For the study, a consumer survey was conducted in Colombia, in 2014, on 1150 wine consumers. Consumer opinions were collected in thirty-two cities of several Colombian Districts. A proper questionnaire was prepared with questions having the objective of gathering information socio-demographic variables (gender, age, work, education, city of residence, family members number, etc.), economic variables (income, job position, etc.), preferences in regards to alcoholic drinks, types of wine purchased (color, taste, country of production, price, brand, etc.) and consumption behavior (motivation for buying wine, quantity, consumption occasions, places of purchasing, etc.). Additionally, secondary data were used for market analysis.

According to results of the survey, the sample is well balanced in terms of different age categories and gender. Respondents have higher education and job position than the general population in Colombia. The most preferred alcoholic beverages are beer and spirits. The most part of the sample reports

preferences for white wine, followed by preferences for red wine. The vast majority of respondents reports to consume wine at least one a month, followed by who refers to consume every week, while 13% reports a daily wine consumption. Respondents report they buy wine at supermarket or at specialized shops. They additionally report preferences for wine imported from Chile, followed by domestically produced wine. Respondents mainly consume wine at home or restaurants. They referred to choose wine because it is easy to drink with food and they referred they like this drink. Consumption occasions, for the majority of respondents, are special events and rarely at home as a daily consumption.

Colombia imports wine mainly from Chile (59.7%), from Argentina (24.9%) and from Spain (6.2%) and it accounts about 26 million of consumers of wine (Faostat, 2014). Importers and distributors continue striving to educate and create in Colombia a culture around wine in order to increase wine consumption. The average consumption pro-capite is 2 liters while only ten years ago it was 0.3 liters (ProChile, 2012).

Discovered preferences of Colombian consumer may represent such useful information for European producers oriented to increase sales. Wine producers of traditional wine producing countries can meet preferences and needs of this 'new' wine consumer. Product positioning in Colombian market, in response to consumer preferences highlighted, may be an opportunity in order to fix wine exports in Colombia.

Keywords: Wine Market Analysis, Consumer Survey, Emerging Wine Markets

JEL Code: Q130, M310, Q170

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