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Port wine, an established product a new market: A comparative analysis of perceptions of firms and consumers

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Abstract

Port wine industry can be considered as a case study of the effects of globalization, expressed at diverse levels, such as changes in habits of consumption and lifestyles, that lead to a decrease of consumption rates in the last years. The aim of this paper is to understand how to reverse the downward trend, proposing guidelines to increase Port wine competitiveness in the market. Therefore, the core of this research is to compare perception of wine firms and consumers, regarding the actual image and consumption of Port wine. A qualitative approach was applied including In-depth interviews with the directors of companies (n=20) and two focus groups with young consumers (n=15). Data were transcribed verbatim and content analysed. Results showed convergence between perception of wine firms and consumers regarding Port wine needs to increase its competitiveness in the market. Three main dimensions emerged, as the most important areas to develop: 1) promotion; 2) product adaptation to the market and 3) focus on innovation, mostly regarding the sensory characteristics of beverage, the packaging and the communication to consumers. This study aims to contribute to the growing field of wine marketing, which in special Port wine lacks research.

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1. Introduction

The wine industry can be considered as a case study of the effects of globalization, expressed into changes in the level of international trade, geography of production and consumption, logistics, but also sharp changes in tastes, patterns and consumer's habits. In addition to this trend, there is a decrease of consumption rates in the last years and the different marketing suppliers' performance. Therefore, emerge the need of a better understanding of consumer's preferences, using innovative integrated approaches, in order to define appropriate new marketing strategies (Pomarici, 2016).

Following the forecasts presented by Anderson and Glyn (2017), in the next decade the forecasts point out the stabilization

of the world wine production and consumption by volume, increasing in value. Consumption will decrease in production countries, namely in South Europe, however offset by the increase in consumption of other countries, highlighting the USA and China, or even the emergence of new markets. However, in value both wine production and consumption will tend to increase as a result of consumer preferences changing towards of higher quality wines, becoming the markets and consumers more heterogeneous and complex to portray. Consequently, the product adaptation to the different market segments is a challenge and a priority for the wine companies. The main concerns of wine companies will be less and less focused on the technical-qualitative aspect of their products, but rather to anticipate the market trends and consumer's behaviour (Menghini, 2015). In fact, many winemakers have already realized that producing a quality wine and having a good winery is no longer sufficient to be competitive, if they cannot also sell their wines on the marketplace. Following the Darwin's language,

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Menghini (2015) states regarding the wine industry, that it is not necessarily the strongest nor is the most intelligent winemaker that survives, but that one that will be most responsive to change.

This is an issue with particular acuity in traditional wine regions, where the focus of the main stakeholders, including wineries, has been the product and less the consumer, due to economic, historical, cultural and social reasons. Given this external environment, wine firms must balance tradition with innovation which implies to adapt wines for new destinations, new diets and new lifestyles. Indeed, wine consumption is much more than the content of a bottle, as it has been around for decades, being also an emotional experience very much linked with the context of consumption (Silva et al., 2016). Consequently, wine firms need to be aware that wine is a complex and an experience good and for consumers it is not an easy task to choose the right wine (Lockshin and Cohen, 2015). That is why the most recent approaches to reveal differences between wines and to understand wine choice, do not only relay on the sensory characteristics of wines but also include an emotional dimension to distinguish wines (Danner et al., 2016; Ferrarini et al., 2010; Mora et al., 2018; Mora and Moscarola, 2010; Silva et al., 2018).

In a long term approach and economic sustainability, it has particular interest to know the perception and attitudes of the young consumers, since they are in first place the consumers in the future (Fountain and Zhu, 2017; Silva et al., 2014). They are also the market segment that most uses digital tools in the decision process and buying, anticipating what will be the wine market in the future.

The fortified Port wine is a good example of a globalized product being in the international market since the 1703's Methuen Treaty. Port is a fortified wine produced in the Demarcated Region of Douro, in Portugal and its wine making procedures is based in traditional methods (IVDP, 2018). Port wine is an heterogeneous product sold in the market under different categories or nominations, namely: tawny, white, ruby, rosé, late bottled vintage (LBV), reserve, tawny reserve, cruised, vintage, aged 10, 20, 30, or 40 years old (Hogg, 2013). These categories have different chemical and sensory characteristics (Prata-Sena et al., 2018) which are reflected in level of quality (Monteiro et al., 2014; Vilela et al., 2015).

Between to 2006 and 2016, the total sales of Port wine decrease, both in volume (-16%) and in value (-5%), reaching in 2016, 764 thousand hectolitres and 374 million euro. In 2016 the main destination markets (volume and value) are France (26% and 20%), Portugal (17% and 19%), the United Kingdom (11% and 13%), the Netherlands (15% and 12%) and USA (5% and 9%). These figures show that these five markets account for 73% and 71% of total sales in volume and value, respectively and that almost 80% of Port wine is exported. Port wine industry is important to Portugal, not only because it carries a strong cultural heritage, but also for social and economic reasons.

Given the evolution of Port wine sales, the central issue is to understand how to reverse the downward trend witnessed along the last decade, that is, how to sell more, which, certainly involves a new approach to the consumer's market. However, there is a lack of research regarding Port wine marketing

strategies, and previous published studies date from 1998 (Lages and Shaw, 1998). On the other hand, there are recent studies that established guidelines for wine competitiveness in the market, but these studies focused on still wine industry, which is a different product, and collect data from one source of information. For example some studies used winery managers as the source for data collection (e.g. Scotti and Valli, 2014; Signori et al., 2017). Other studies focused in consumers' evaluation to understand their actual choices and predict consumer behaviour (e.g. Lockshin and Cohen, 2015; Lockshin et al., 2006; Mueller et al., 2010a; Mueller et al., 2010b; Nallaperuma et al., 2017). These studies are certainly valuable to propose guidelines and priorities, however they limited their conclusions to one of the parts involved. To the authors knowledge there is not yet a comparative study, in which producers and consumers are consulted for the same purpose. Therefore, the aim of this study is the comparison of perception of two differing sources, i.e. in one hand the vision of suppliers, the wine producers, and on the other hand the vision of demand, the consumers, regarding the actual image and consumption of Port wine. For consumers it was decided to focus on young consumers, covering the millennial generation (18–35 years old) because they are the segment with less frequency of Port wine consumption (Rebelo et al., 2018) and therefore are the most promising future Port wine consumers, as long as the beverages fulfil their expectations. This study aims to contribute to the growing field of wine marketing, which in special Port wine lacks research.

The paper is organised in different sections. Following this introduction, is the methods section, in which the methodology for data collection and data analysis is explained, as well as participants recruitment and characterisation, and lastly the procedure for the study is described. In the next section, the main results are presented by relevant topics emerged from data and discussed. It describes and discuss the perception of wine firms and consumers separately. The last section of this paper is the final remarks, and includes a resume of the main findings, limitations of the study and further research.

2. Methods

2.1. Methodology

The study design involved data collection from two sources¹: wine firms and consumers, and given the two different type of participants and their own specific characteristics, a different method for data collection from each of the two groups was used.

For wine firms face-to-face individual In-depth interviews (DI) was used, posing open-ended questions and follow-up probes designed to obtain an in-depth understanding of wine firms' perceptions individually (Rosenthal, 2016). For

¹Data was collected from the study *A Strategic Orientation for the Port and Douro Wine sector* (www.ivdp.pt/pt/docs/SINTESE.pdf), required by Instituto dos Vinhos do Douro e Porto (IVDP) to UTAD and in which the authors had an active participation.

Table 1
Characterisation of the interviewed sources: firms ($n = 20$) and consumers ($n = 15$).

Wine firms ($n = 20$)			Consumers ($n = 15$)		
Legal framework of the company	Private company	80%	Male	53%	
	Cooperative	15%	Female	47%	
	Association	5%	University students	100%	
Role of the interviewee in the company	CEO/Director	100%	Age range (years old)	19–31	
Type of wine commercialised	Only or mostly Port wine	32%	Most consumed alcoholic beverages (last year)	Beer	
	Only or mostly Douro wine	47%		Wine	
	Port and Douro wines	21%		Vodka, Gin, Whisky	
				Radler	
				25%	
Wine categories according to price range	All ranges	47%	Frequency of Port wine consumption (last year)	Occasionally	
	Commercial onwards	37%		Once a year	16%
	Non-premium and commercial	16%		Several times/month	16%
				Once a month	14%
				Per occasion glasses of Port wine (60 mL, last year)	
				One glass	46%
				Two-three glasses	45%
		More than three	9%		

consumers data were collected using focus groups (FG), which is an interview technique that brings together 6–10 participants and a moderator (Morgan, 1997).

The methodology for data analysis used constant comparative analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1994) of the discourses of both, representants of the wine firms and consumers, to gain insights in the topics explored. This is an inductive method very suitable when the objective is research of social processes for problem-solving around important topics, such as trying to be sustainable, innovative, and to overcome barriers (Signori et al., 2017).

All data from DI and FG were transcribed *verbatim* to word files. Transcriptions were then imported to NVivo qualitative data analysis software (QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 11, 2017) and content analysed (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Data from transcriptions were coded, i.e., attaching key words, fragments and sentences from the participants' discourse into categories. A category is a class of elements that are treated as equivalent. The first author of this paper coded transcriptions individually and the second author verified the coding in order to have a systematic coding reliability. Content analysis techniques were performed in each category, such as counting word frequencies, finding sequences and systematic explanations of the questions addressed and exploring the relations between categories. Frequency of

usage is an indicator of the importance of that word/category for the participants in a direct relation, the higher the frequency of a word/category, the more important it is for participants (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In order to increase the validity and precision of the study, three well-known techniques of qualitative research were employed in different phases of the study (Barbour, 2001). First, *within-method triangulation* was applied for data collection, i.e. the data were built up from inputs of multiple sources including a larger variety of firms and consumers (Modell, 2005). Second, *purposive sampling* was carefully planned according to the aims of the study. Third, *coding* was performed by the two authors of this paper during data analysis.

2.2. Participants

Wine firms and consumers characterisation is presented in Table 1. Wine firms were carefully selected to represent a wide range of firms linked directly to the market (private firms, cooperatives and one association) and included all the different commercialized Port wine categories according to price range (from non-premium wines to commercial onwards). Interviews were performed until saturation of answers were achieved, which happened around the twentieth interview. The interviewed were in all interviews the chief executive officers (CEO), but in two cases high-level executives of the firms, wanted as well to participate, as they have a broader overview and knowledge of the wine sector.

For the recruitment of young consumers, the study was publicised via internet at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro (UTAD), Vila Real, Portugal, and volunteers could apply to participate by filling in a recruitment questionnaire. Inclusion criteria included: age between 18 and 35 years old, Portuguese native speakers, Port wine consumers (occasionally, i.e several times a year or frequently, i.e. at least once a month), other alcoholic beverages moderate consumers, having a good general health state. Exclusion criteria included: pregnant or lactating women, born in Douro region and studying topics related to food area. A sample of 15 participants was selected (53% male, 47% female), aged between 19 and 31 years old. All participants consumed last year alcoholic beverages including Port wine, mostly between one and three small glasses (60 ml) occasionally. To achieve heterogeneity in each FG, participants were as much as possible, stratified according to gender in two FG, which had 8 and 7 participants. To thank participants a bottle of Port wine was offered at the end of the sessions.

For both, firms and consumers, a consent form to take part in the study was signed at the beginning.

2.3. Procedure

2.3.1. In-depth Interviews (DI)

DI were conducted in October 2017, mainly at the facilities of the firms (Vila Nova de Gaia and Douro), in private, and were scheduled in advance, after sending an invitation letter explaining the study aim. DI were audio-recorded and were all

Table 2
Guide structure of the In-depth Interviews.

Topic (time)	Main questions addressed
Introduction	Introduction of the interviewers Explanation of the aim of the study
Market	<i>In your opinion what can be done to enhance the position of Port wine in the actual markets? Do you have initiatives to sell more and better? Are there new markets to explore? What are the strategies to be followed?</i>
Consumers	<i>How to make consumers feel amazed? Do you have any ideas to surprise consumers positively so that the Port wine consumption or purchase would become a memorable and unforgettable moment? How can we increase the emotional relationship between consumers and Port wine consumption? How to improve satisfaction? What are the major factors determining Port wine experiences for tourists, so that they became Port wine "ambassadors"?</i>
Innovation	<i>In which dimension do you think that Innovation is a priority for the sustainability of the sector? For example: in the product, in the process, in consumer research, in the model of business,</i>
Closing	Thank the participants

Table 3
Guide of the structure of the Focus Groups.

Topic (time)	Main questions addressed
Introduction (5 min)	Welcome and introduction to the study
Product conceptualization (10 min)	<i>What are the first words that come to your mind when thinking about Port wine?</i>
Tasting session and attractiveness evaluation (15 min)	<i>From the bottles presented here what is the one you are most interested to taste? Why? Is it Port wine an attractive beverage? Why or why not? What you would change in order to make Port wine more attractive for you and your friends?</i>
New ways of consumption (10 min)	<i>How do you compare Port wine consumption with Gin (e.g.) consumption? Imagine you go out at night with your friends and you are in bar. Do you think you would drink Port wine in that context? Why or why not? Do you imagine other contexts to drink Port wine? What do you think about Port wine cocktails? And ready-to drink beverages with Port wine? Beer goes with lupins and Port wine goes with ...? Do you associate any food or snack to Port wine consumption?</i>
Relevance of external attributes (10 min)	<i>Focus on the bottle of your preferred Port wine brand. What do you appreciate most? What is the most relevant aspect? If you have the chance to create a label what information would it not miss for sure?</i>
Emotional connotation (10 min)	<i>What emotions do you associate with your preferred beverage? And to Port wine? How do you compare both beverages in terms of emotions evoked?</i>
Summary (10 min)	Summary of the session

performed by the first author to guarantee uniformity and a second researcher. DI occurred in a semi-open structure following a pre-defined guide to assure that all relevant topics were covered allowing, however, the flow of a normal conversation. The structure of the guide for DI was developed and agreed upon by the authors and is presented in Table 2. The DI started with the introduction of the interviewers followed by detailing the aim of the study, as well as what was expected from the interviewed. On average each interview lasted 2 hours. In general, the interviewed were pleased to be listened and have the opportunity to express their opinion about the Port wine sector.

2.3.2. Focus Groups

FG were performed in November 2017 at facilities of UTAD. Consumers were welcome in a pleasant and comfortable room. FG were audio and video recorded and were led by the first author and a second researcher. Each FG lasted about 1 h 45 min. A guide for conducting the FGs was developed and agreed upon by the authors, following the guidelines proposed by Morgan (1997). The sequence of stages followed in the FG interviews and the structured guides to questioning are

presented in Table 3. The FG started with an introduction about the aim of the study, after which participants introduced themselves. The first question aimed to have the Port wine conceptualization and it was a free association task. The free association is a projective technique that encourages respondents to project their underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes or feelings regarding a specific topic (Malhotra, 1993) and was applied to explore words related to Port wine. Following, participants were invited to freely taste small amounts of some of the most popular Port wines in Portugal. The beverages were from different types and brands, but neither the brands nor the flavour were expected to be evaluated. Water and snacks were also provided. This tasting session was meant to be a stimulus to activate the memories related to the consumption of Port wine. It was also to achieve the most appropriate emotional profile for the beverages, since limited descriptions could be obtained if the participants would not experience the beverages. Additionally, the idea behind the free choice for tasting was to evaluate to which extend consumers would be curious enough to try: 1) different types of Ports and / or 2) different brands from their favourite one. The samples were available during the whole interview and

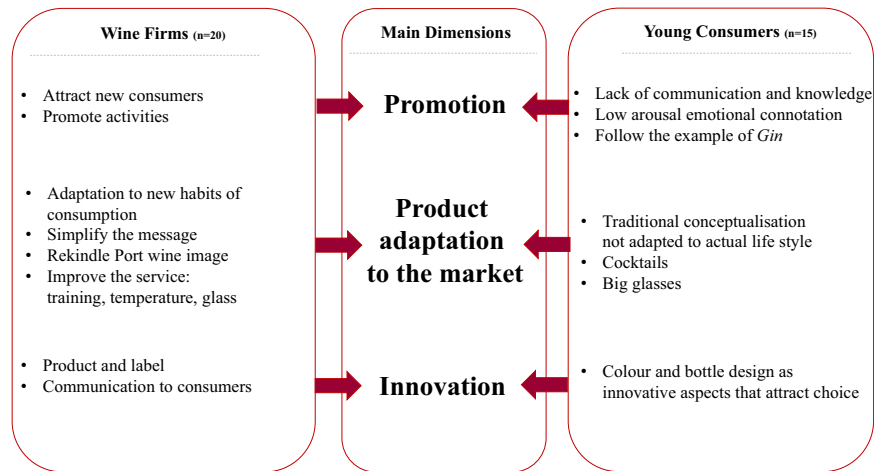


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of the Port wine producers and consumers perception for the competitiveness of Port wine.

participants were free to taste it whenever they wanted (assuring always the recommended limit of moderate alcohol consumption). The first set of questions addressed were about the attractiveness of Port wine, where consumers had to comment about the samples presented. The next set of questions referred to new ways of consumption, and consumers shared ideas, situations and comparisons with other alcoholic beverages. Following this, the perception of external attributes of Port wine, such as label and bottle, was exploited. The last set of questions aimed at knowing what emotional connotations are related with Port wine consumption. Finally, a summary of the discussion was presented, and participants were thanked and gratified for their collaboration.

3. Results and discussion

According to the aim of the study and due to the large dimension of data emerged from the In-depth interviews (DI), this paper will focus only in categories emerged directly related with consumers. Fig. 1 schematically represents the conceptual framework that emerged from data analysis and translates the perception of the wine firms and consumers to improve the competitiveness of Port wine. Three main dimensions were identified showing convergence of perceptions between wine firms and consumers: 1) the need to improve promotion, 2) the need to adapt the product to the market and 3) focus on innovation. These dimensions will be following detailed with examples of sentences stated by consumers in FG and include the number of interviews (I) and the number of times/references (R) in which were mentioned, out of the total of interviews. For example, when presented 16 I, 26 R, means that the topic was referred in 16 out of the 20 interviews, and was mentioned in total 26 times within the 16 interviews.

3.1. Port wine conceptualization

3.1.1. Focus groups

When young consumers think about Port wine, words that came to their minds are expressed in Fig. 2. These words were

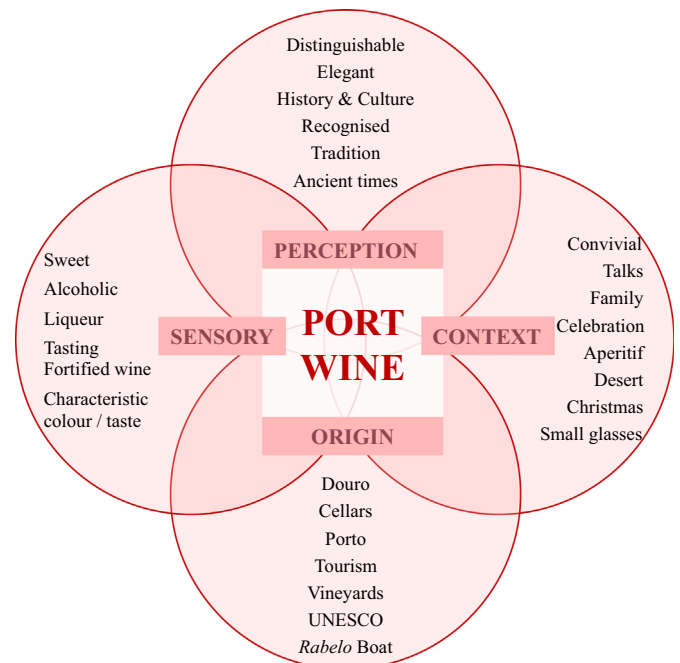


Fig. 2. Port wine conceptualisation by young consumers.

grouped in accordance with their meanings and four dimensions were identified, namely: sensory, context, perception and region. All together they provide the Port wine conceptualisation. In short, Port wine is perceived by young consumers as a sweet alcoholic beverage from Douro region, very linked with history and culture, family and celebrations.

3.2. Promotion

3.2.1. In-depth Interviews

It was clear for the majority of the producers there is a need to *attract new consumers* for Port wine (13 I, 40 R). In order to achieve that is essential to *invest, enlarge and focus more on promotion activities* (10 I, 10 R) showing the quality and the diverse categories of Port wines. Another critical matter that

raises from data is the need to define clearly *who is the entity that is going to promote Port wine* (6 I, 6 R) because the main role of Instituto dos Vinhos do Porto e Douro (IVDP) is defined as regulatory board, and many small and medium producers have no capacity for promotion. Additionally some examples of *activities to promote Port wine* (6 I, 12R) and to achieve new consumers were given, such as: i) organise a megafestival of Port wine, similarly to the famous *October fest* celebrated in Munich, in Germany; ii) participate actively in teaching programmes in professional schools for on-trade segment; iii) develop specific menus for Port wine consumption in restaurants trough the country; iv) invite sommeliers worldwide to visit Douro, showing them Port wine production, the region, and offering training guidelines; v) develop a digital platform promoted by IVDP to sell Port wine in which all producers (big and small) can present their products; vi) effort to develop collective promotion activities with high impact in consumers. Other mentioned activities are already being done for many years (Lages and Shaw, 1998), such as wine tastings, international competitions and trade fairs, inviting journalists and distributors to visit Douro and the wineries. However, it was said that more of this later mentioned activities need to be done and in an organised way, i.e. collectively, so that it can have a big impact on consumers Fig. 2.

3.2.2. Focus groups

Young consumers compared Port wine with the popular and successful beverage, Gin. They stated that the “explosion” of Gin advertisement and promotion was “too much”, but now Gin is consumed in “many ways”, meaning that are many cocktails with Gin and the beverage is served “everywhere”, meaning that in a lot of bars one can easily drink Gin. For Port wine it is necessary to follow the same strategy, that is, to launch a campaign to demystify the traditional concept of Port wine consumption. A statement that translates very well the feeling is the following: “*Port wine consumption is forgotten*” (FG2, P3). They feel there is lack of communication directed to young consumers and that is necessary to present and inform new ways of Port wine consumption. In places they go commonly with friends, such as bars, either, there is no offer of Ports or there is only the traditional type, such as the Ruby, i.e. there is no variety of Port wines, such as the White Port or the Rosé. To overcome this situation, they suggested to have a menu for Ports, to inform the diverse types of Ports and / or create cocktails with Ports maybe involving the barman’s and sommeliers and make them more widely available. Other given idea as an interesting activity of communication was to perform regular meetings such as this FG with tasting session, which was agreed to be very informative and useful to enlarge their knowledge about Port wine. Another suggested activity to improve Port wine promotion was to search for a young personality, linked to the world of music or theatre, so that, without losing the cultural identity and heritage, the image of Port become more actual and renewed, and linked to young consumers.

The common perception of both sources, producers and consumers, that is necessary to promote Port wine, gives new insights to companies to plan and develop focused marketing strategies that catch the attention of young consumers.

3.3. Product adaptation to the market

3.3.1. In-depth Interviews

Besides improving promotion of Port wine firms are aware that it is mandatory to understand consumer’s needs and to adapt the product accordingly, in order to fulfil their expectations. In this respect six main dimensions emerged from data. The most relevant was *adaptation to a new habits of consumption* (13 I, 51R). The second most relevant was the need to *simplify the message to consumers* (7 I, 14R), that is to improve communication to consumers, i.e. communicate with impact. Port wine is a complex beverage in a sense that there are many product categories, e.g. vintage, LBV and tawny, that are unknown to most consumers. It was said that if consumers understand what they are drinking, they will appreciate more the beverage, understand better the prices of the different Ports and value more the beverage. This obstacle of having a complex variety of Port wine categories names was identified many years ago and can affect not only Portuguese consumers but all over the world (Lages and Shaw, 1998).

In this topic another important strategy emerged was to create *new ways of Port wine consumption* (6 I, 6 R), and here the comparison with the story and the growing popularity of Gin was given as a successful example to follow. In summary, there is a need to create a lifestyle associated with Port wine and communicate that widely to consumers. A relevant sub-category of the news ways of Port wine consumption is the *Cocktail* (10 I, 22R). The general perception of wine producers is that cocktails should be introduced in the market, to increase the beverage popularity, easier the consumption and attract especially young consumers. However, it should not be the target for Port wine consumption. Associated with this, *new moments of Port wine consumption* (8 I, 14R) emerged as a relevant strategy to change consumers’ habits. Traditionally, Port wine has been mostly consumed in a small glass and in special occasions, to “toast” and not to “drink”. Many suggestions to create new moments of consumption were given as examples, such as: Port wine brands must be introduced in public places related to lifestyle and endorsed to personalities able to transmit trustworthiness; consumption at late afternoon and sunset, consumption in bares and urban terraces and beach, fashion events, music, theatre and cinema, events “grass roots” capable to evoke alternative culture to Port consumption. Connected with this it emerged to *rekindle Port wine image* (3 I, 3R). Nowadays Port wine image and consumption is associated with old people like grandfathers and has a heavy and old fashion image. To attract younger consumers its image needs to be renewed and properly communicated to consumers.

A new dimension of product adaptation to the market was to *improve the service to consumers*, that included *training* all people involved in serving Port wine (9 I, 26R) in restaurants,

hotels or cafes, so that they are well informed and respect the guidelines of serving each type of Port. An example given was that a bottle of a Vintage must be consumed in the same day that is open, otherwise it loses the specificity of its special sensory characteristics becoming an ordinary Port. It was also highlighted that in many places, and for many people, there is a myth to serve Port wine at the “environment temperature”, that is meaning not cold, and this is a bad practice. So, *servicing Port wines at the right temperature* (7 E, 16R) is relevant. Additionally, the need to *create a new glass design* (5 I, 10 R) with longer and larger dimensions for Port wine consumption and abandon the old fashion small glass that is so commonly used, was repetitively mentioned.

3.3.2. Focus groups

Young consumers were positively surprised that during the tasting session of the FG all Port wines were served cold (between 8 °C and 10 °C) and not at ambience temperature like in the old times, and not in the traditional small glasses but instead in standard size glasses of wine consumption. These changes in Port wine serving were welcome by the young consumers group and got them enthusiastic about the discovery. The impact of serving temperature in hedonic and affective ratings has been demonstrated in different beverages, such as water (Boulze et al., 1983) and beer (Dorado et al., 2016), lemonade and milk (Cardello and Maller, 1982). Results showed that a warmer temperature changes the partition coefficient of volatile components and the perception of the flavour of a product. Therefore, it is necessary to communicate the appropriate serving temperature of Port wine to enhance the experience of consumption.

For this group of young consumers to drink Port wine in the small traditional glass only makes sense in an intimate environment or with family. The small size and shape of the glass associated with Port wine consumption is no longer adequate to the actual life style of consumers, e.g. to drink in a bar when they go out with friends or for cocktails, and a bigger glass would be more proper. Associated with the small glass is the actual image of Port wine consumption, which was characterised by young consumers as “to taste” instead of “to drink”. It is known that the size, shape and type of material influence the sensory experiences. For instance, a tulip glass allows consumers to smell the aroma of the wine in the centre of the glass at a lower alcohol concentration, while drinking (Arakawa et al., 2015), offering consumers a better wine tasting experience. Therefore, the small glass, in which Ports are served, needs to be rethought in order to enhance the tasting experience of Port wine consumption.

Cocktails were mentioned several times as a good way to introduce Port wines to young consumers, as it is clear in this statement: “*It is necessary to break-up standards and follow the example of Gin. Cocktails can be the key for the attractiveness of Port wine*” (FG2, P1).

Due to strong historic and cultural association with Port wine, the context of consumption is the element that mostly differentiates Port wine in relation to another alcoholic beverages consumption. For young consumers Port wine

consumption need a specific emotional context, which nowadays are: celebrations, special days and events, family parties and Christmas and is far from being welcome in a discotheque, as is explicit in this statement: “*Port wine can be differentiated by the moment of consumption. It is to share with family or friends. I am not willing to drink in a discotheque, since that is out of context*” (FG1, P4). That is maybe why for young consumers the emotional connotation with Port wine consumption is a *comforted* and *relaxed* beverage, associated with *nostalgia*. These are positive emotions in valence, but low arousal in excitement (Russell, 2003), which do not reflect the actual life style of young consumers. Emotions evoked by beverages consumption are context dependant (Barrett et al., 2007; Danner et al., 2016; van Zyl, 2016) and thereby the image of Port wine should be communicated and understood as more arousal beverage in advertisement and publicity. This way it would become suitable and a desirable beverage achieving a higher congruence between expectation and consumption experience.

It was observed that more than half of the young consumers did not buy a bottle of Port wine in the last year. The few that bought a bottle it was to give someone else as a gift. This is one of the functionalities of wine in general (Ritchie, 2007). Interesting, is to know that criteria for choice of Port wine is mainly dependant on the age of the person to whom the gift is. It was told that to offer to a friend they buy a type of Port more modern and innovative, such as the rosé, whereas if it is to their fathers or older persons, the choice is a traditional Port wine from the same year that the person was born.

Regarding the label some elements cannot miss in Ports, namely: the brand, year, place of production and category. For young consumers it is really valuable to see the family crest as a way to illustrate the place of production. However, the history of the family is not relevant since they are not interested in reading long texts in the label. The role of product-extrinsic food cues, such as packaging, label or product name in sensory perception, hedonic appraisal and intake/consumption no longer needs to be demonstrated (Piqueras-Fiszman and Spence, 2015). For example, it was shown that an elaborate information in labels of white wines (sensory plus wine high quality and favourable winery information) resulted in higher liking rates, elicited more intense positive emotions (e.g. contented, happy and warm-hearted) and less intense negative emotions (e.g. embarrassed and unfulfilled), and increased substantially the willingness to pay after tasting the wines, compared to a basic label information (sensory description of the wines) (Danner et al., 2017). In another study conducted with content and semiotic analysis of the visual codes of Bordeaux wines labels, was demonstrated that is possible to anticipate most of the idea associations that a package's graphic design is likely to produce in consumers' minds (Celhay and Remaud, 2018). However, consumers perceptions and expectations are product dependant and therefore research in Port wine packaging and labels is needed to help wine producers to define their package designs and label information according to the brand's meanings they seek to communicate to consumers.

3.4. Innovation

3.4.1. In-depth interviews

Innovation was a dimension emerging from the need of innovation at the *product and label levels* (12 I, 25R). It is clear that this industry is traditional in these respects and firms seeking to offer consumers new products and a simplified communication through labelling. It is interesting to realize that twenty years ago innovation was not a priority of the long-term marketing strategies of Port wine industry (Lages and Shaw, 1998), which justifies the lack of innovation over the last years and the actual priority. Innovation in *communication to consumers* was also emphasised (7 I, 8R) focusing in renewing the Port wine image collectively. *Legal regulations* (8 I, 10R) are mentioned as a major determinant that is strongly stopping the possibility of innovation in the sector. For example: the *legislation is not updated* to the actual reality and needs of the sector since it is from 1933 (3 I, 8 R); is a major *limitation to new product development* (12 I, 18R) and to *labelling*, which is hard to interpret and lack of freedom due to legal restrictions (3 I, 3R). This outcome is to a certain extent, in line with the findings of Brito (2006), that suggested that the dynamics of the Port wine sector is not only determined by economic and technological variables but also by interests of social and political nature, that cannot be neglected. This reinforces the importance of the role of collective actors to defend their interests.

3.4.2. Focus groups

Two relevant aspects highlighted by young consumers about Port wine choice to taste during the FG are directed linked to innovative aspects. The first was: *curiosity to taste Port wines that were unknown* to them, such as the white and rosé Ports, as it is clear in consumers' discourse: "I never tried before. I did not know that there is white Port wine. I like it. It is innovative." (FG1P5) "The colour of the wine. I never tasted rosé Port wine before" (FG1P2). The second most important reason for attractiveness was the *differentiated design of the bottle*, avoiding the choice of the traditional bottle of Port wine bottle. This is well expressed in the following sentence: "This bottle has even a different cork, the colour is similar to wood. It has a distinctive design" (FG1P6). In addition, few more conservative consumers decided to taste Ports that they already were familiar. This shows that young adults look for innovation, at the product level, feeling attracted by the different colours of beverage and differentiated bottles and corks. It is relevant to highlight that wine producers were also aware of the importance of Port wine innovation, at both, product and label levels, which converge with consumers expectations. According to Lundahl (2012), the true innovation process starts and ends with the "voice of consumers", and therefore taking the insights of consumers regarding Port wine image and consumption can lead to commercial success.

Table 4
Summary of the statements of the wine firms (WF) and consumers (C) by dimension.

Dimensions	WF	C	Examples of statements	I ()	R ()
Promotion	x		Attract new consumers	13	40
	x		Enlarge and focus more on promotion activities	10	10
	x		Who is the entity that is going to promote Port wine	6	6
	x		Examples activities to promote Port wine	6	12
		x	Port wine consumption is forgotten		
Product adaption to the market	x		Adaptation to a new habits of consumption	13	51
	x		Simplify the message to consumers	7	14
	x		New ways of Port wine consumption	6	6
	x		Cocktail	10	22
	x		New moments of Port wine consumption	8	14
	x		Rekindle Port wine image	3	3
	x		Improve the service to consumers	9	26
	x		Training	7	16
	x		Serving Port wines at the right temperature	5	10
		x	Create a new glass design		
	x	It is necessary to break-up standards and follow the example of Gin. Cocktails can be the key for the attractiveness of Port wine			
	x	Port wine can be differentiated by the moment of consumption. It is to share with family or friends. I am not willing to drink in a discotheque, since that is out of context			
INNOVATION	x		Product and label levels	12	25
	x		Communication to consumers	7	8
	x		Legal regulations	8	10
	x		Legislation is not updated	3	8
	x		Limitation to new product development	12	18
	x		Labelling	3	3
		x	I never tried before. I did not know that there is white Port wine. I like it. It is innovative		
		x	The colour of the wine. I never tasted rose Port wine before		
		x	This bottle has even a different cork, the colour is similar to wood. It has a distinctive design		

Legend: I () – number of interviews in which the topic was identified; R() – number of times the topic was referred within the interviews where it was identified.

To provide an overview of how companies and consumers express themselves in the dimensions analysed - promotion, product adaptation to the market and innovation - Table 4 is presented summarising the main statements expressed by each group and frequency/number, in the case of firms, which can be assumed as key-word to each strand.

Globally, results are, to a certain extent, in line with international standards, in the sense that the competitiveness is more linked to the introduction of new product and process innovations, and the adoption of marketing strategies oriented towards the knowledge of the market are a need (Galati et al., 2017; Scotti and Valli, 2014).

4. Final remarks

This qualitative study allows the comparison between perception of wine firms and consumers regarding the actual image and consumption of Port wine. The content analysis of data collected converged largely, suggesting similarities of the points of view of the suppliers and consumers of Port wine. Results suggest that the main strategic areas to focus, to reverse the downward trend witnessed along the last decade in Port wine consumption, are: an appropriate promotion, product adaptation to the actual life style, and focus on innovation, mostly of the product and packaging.

One limitation inherent to the method of interviewing is that different people have different skills to answer the questions and even to give relevant information for the aim of the study. It was verified that few participants gave evasive answers, describing and stressing the problem but forgetting to express concrete ideas or steps to take to solve problems. In relation to the FG, although all consumers were not from Douro region, they all were studying there, which to a certain extent might strengthens their connection with Port wine and can bias results. The ideal would be to enlarge the study with consumers to other places in Portugal and worldwide.

Given that this study used a small sample and is addressing a specific beverage that has its own characteristics, such as conceptualisation, frequency of consumption, target consumers, among others, inferences to other traditional food products that are facing the same challenges of globalisation must be made with care and considering each product specificities.

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Conflict of interest

None declared.

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