Title
The women’s engagement in the development of the Polish wine industry and their business roles in wine enterprises.

I want to submit an abstract for:
Conference Poster Session

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Keywords
Women, wine, Poland, entrepreneurship, business roles, gender, engagement

Research Question
What are the key business roles of women operating in the emerging wine industry in Poland?

Methods

Results
A map of Polish women, with special attention to their diversified roles, engagement in the Polish wine industry.

Abstract
There is no doubt that women are gaining importance in the world’s wine market. Many researchers worldwide investigate women’s behavior in wine consumption as well as gender differences between female and male entrepreneurs. Less is spoken and written while we take into consideration the functioning of the wine making sector. Traditionally, wine industry is heavily influenced by male roles and male presence at all positions. However, from the production side, agronomy and wine tasting the role of women in wine business has been significantly rising since almost 20 years.

Driving from the sociological perspective and gender diversity, women characterize with special capabilities and resources, which lead to better company performance. Wine industry is a specific branch, in which sensory analysis is one of the most important factors and research states that women has better sensory perception than men (Korneliussen, I. 2012). This analysis will be strengthened by my study about Polish women winemakers and their impact on the development of the industry. The results are shown in a descriptive and structured model, transformed into a special map.

Women played important role in Central and East European economies including Poland in the transition from
the centrally-planned to the market economy, after the collapse of the communist regime in the 1990. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the role of women in emerging wine industry in Poland. According to the ARR State Agency (Rural Market Agency) in Poland in 2014 there were 76 registered wineries that can legally produce and sell wine. Moreover the number of newly opened wineries increases each year. Out of these 76 wineries, women own 13 (i.e. 17% of all wineries) and in many other wineries they undertake various professional roles, ranging from enologist, viticulturist to marketing & PR role. In that respect the female engagement in the emerging wine sector in Poland is not much different from that in the mature wine producing countries. For example, in California (USA), out of 480 of wineries researched by Gilbert, A.G. & Gilbert, J.C. (2014) - 69 or 14% were led by women. In Italy the share of women is much higher. Benedetto, G. & Corinto, G.L. (2010) demonstrated that females manage 33% of wineries in Italy. Galbreath, J (2015) proved that women owners account for the number of 14% in Australia.

The Polish wine industry is still at the early stage of development. The majority of wineries are run by wine enthusiasts rather than business people. However, due to the climate change, new opportunities for viticulture arises. Entrepreneurial people take this opportunity in order to turn their passion into well managed business. The aim of my research is to analyze the economic and social conditions for women to engage in the wine business in Poland and particularly their diverse roles in the wine business, ranging from ownership, managerial or purely professional roles. I include into analysis the effects of social and cultural factors and perceptions of female in this particular sector but also constrained resulting from motherhood and household responsibilities. Polish women demonstrate well above average entrepreneurial attitudes according to the Women Entrepreneurship Report 2011, prepared by the Polish Agency of Entrepreneurship Development (PARP). Past research proved however that Polish women are underrepresented in high-technology, capital-intensive sectors. The phenomenon of “glass ceiling” in the employment career is also one of the reasons for women to start their own business.

My research has qualitative exploratory character. I will investigate secondary data from the Polish Rural Agency (ARR) and the Women Entrepreneurship Report 2011. On the basis of these data I will construct a map of engagement of women working in the wine business and their top business roles. In the next phase I will conduct structured, in depth, face-to-face interviews with at least 15 women active in the Polish wine industry.

The study will relay in principle on the categorization various types of female in the wine sector, developed by Galbreath, (2015). He has identified 4 specific top business roles in wine business: women CEO, women winemaker, women viticulturist and women marketer. In Poland, the newly established wineries are very small so that individual members of the top management team typically take two and more roles. The function of wine trader (marketer) exists only in few bigger wineries and is limited to the operations in the Polish market, without engaging in exporting. In my research, I will take into account the size of wineries area, geographical location (administrative division of Polish geographical regions), age of women, their work experience, level of education and company ownership (family business or independent enterprise). In the analysis of various role models I shall also include the role of woman as wife of the male wine business owner and her contribution to the company’s performance in such role. Based on initial inquires most Polish wineries are run by families, in a specific wife/husband ownership and management partnership.

Bibliography:

5Women Entrepreneurship Report 2011, Polish Agency of Entrepreneurship Development (PARP)