

REGIONAL PRODUCT LABELLING SYSTEM ZNOJEMSKO REGIONÁLNÍ PRODUKT FROM THE POINT OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR'S VIEW

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Abstract

The article is focused on regional labelling systems from the point of consumer behaviour's view. Nowadays, regional product labelling is a tool being used worldwide, mainly by the food, helping to make a food production of small and middle-sized regional and local producers and farmers more visible among the consumers. Regional labelling systems are the most often coordinated by non-profit organizations and regional municipalities. This article is focused on the basic association connected with the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt [Regional product Znojemsko] among consumers. At the time of the research realization, this brand was the youngest regional brand (RB) coordinated by Asociace regionálních značek [Association of Regional Brands] (ARB). The research was provided at the turn of the years 2014 and 2015; 450 respondents of the Czech Republic, South-Moravian region participated in it. The results presented in this article are the partial results of this research and are presented in connection to the selected socio-demographical parameters – the highest education, gender, age and family income. The results show that the respondents with higher income are aware of the regional brand the most. As for the rest of parameters, only small differences among categories of respondents were found.

Key words:

Association connected with brand. Brand. Consumer's behavior. Marketing. Regional labelling systems.

1 Introduction

Historical development led from the lack of food (when food represented mainly satisfaction of the basic needs as it comes to consumer's point of view) to current situation lasting approximately since the World War II and being characterized by changing approach of consumers towards food. Recently, marketing trends contribute to this situation and higher awareness of consumers connected with it. Food has begun to satisfy higher than the basic needs and food producers have had to adapt to such situation.¹ One of those efforts, regional labelling and food certifying represent; in food industry, this is one of approaches helping to make small and middle-sized regional and local food producers more visible among consumers. Regional food labelling is the result of the consumers' pressure on food quality and an alternative for consumers, who prefer local products to global production.² As e.g. Hollis points out, regional food labelling can be built on several pillars, e.g. local culture, traditions and habits, nostalgia as well as on advantages in the field of logistics etc.³ Useful tool how to market those food products are i. e. farmer markets.⁴

¹ For more information, see: SKOŘEPA, L. et al.: *Regionální trh potravin*. České Budějovice : JIH, 2009.

² McENTEE, J.: Contemporary and Traditional Localism: Conceptualisation of Rural Local Food. In *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*, 2010, Vol. 15, No. 9/10, p. 785-803.

³ For more information, see: HOLLIS, N.: *The Global Brands: How to Create and Develop Lasting Brand Value in the World Market*. New York : Palgrave MacMilan, 2008.

⁴ POKORNÁ, J. et al.: Value Proposition Canvas: Identification of Pains, Gains and Customer Jobs at Farmers' Markets. In *AGRIS on-line Papers in Economics and Informatics*, 2015, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 123-130.

The regional branding of food is mainly focused on the development of rural areas with natural and cultural diversity.⁵

As it comes to regional food, La Trobe sees advantages in its freshness and in case agents would be left out in supplying chain, considers food production more quality for affordable prices.⁶ He mainly sees a significance of food labelling for distant regions being built on agricultural production so those systems can bring improvement for given regions also in economic area. Regional brands of food seem to become a suitable opportunity for small and middle-sized local producers producing quality food products; communication of this fact towards potential customers is their weakness though (e.g. because of lack of knowledge or high costs). Together with marketing changes, not only customers' awareness grew but also the number of information they get as well.⁷ Therefore, consumers are searching for particular signals or tools, which would help them to make decision-making process easier. In this field, several researches have been provided and scientific results have been published. For example, the research of Turčínková and Kalábová proves increasing interest in Czech food among the Czech consumers.⁸ Horská et al. then confirms that for the Czech customers, symbols are important when purchasing food.⁹ The popularity of regional food in the Czech Republic (CZ) has an increasing tendency.¹⁰ Similar conclusions, the research of Dimara, Skuras confirm for EU consumers.¹¹ In regional food, consumers search for the alternative to global food production.¹² Slabá, among others, states that local brands can also be perceived positively in foreign countries e.g. in China.¹³

1.1 Regional labelling in the Czech Republic

In 2004, Regional Environmental Center Czech Republic, citizens association (RECCR)¹⁴ implemented in the frame of the project Natura 2000 the regional

⁵ TREGGAR A. et al.: Regional foods and rural development: the role of product qualification. In *Journal of Rural Studies*, 2007, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 12-22.

⁶ LA TROBE, H.: Farmers' markets: consuming local rural produce. In *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 2001, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 181-192.

⁷ For more information, see: FREY, P.: *Marketingová komunikace: nové trendy 3.0*. Praha : MP, 2011.

⁸ TURČÍNKOVÁ, J., KALÁBOVÁ, J.: Preference regionálních potravinářských produktů v České republice a na Slovensku. In PETRANOVÁ, D., ČÁBYOVÁ, L.: *Specifiká regionálního a neziskového marketingu*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2011, p. 206-209.

⁹ HORSKÁ, E., ŮRGEOVÁ, J., PROKEINOVÁ, R.: Consumers' food choice and quality perception: Comparative analysis of selected Central European countries. In *Agricultural Economics - Czech*, 2011, Vol. 57, No. 10, p. 493-499.

¹⁰ VARVAŽOVSKÁ, P., JARKOVSKÁ, M.: Regional Food as Expression of Identity and Sustainability in Regional Development. In *Conference Proceedings from International Scientific Conference: Marketing Identity 2014: Explosion of Innovations*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2014, p. 512-523.

¹¹ DIMARA, E., SKURAS, D.: Consumer demand for informative labeling of quality food and drink products: a European Union case study. In *Journal of consumer marketing*, 2005, Vol. 22, No. 2, p. 90-100.

¹² McENTEE, J.: Contemporary and Traditional Localism: Conceptualisation of Rural Local Food. In *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*, 2010, Vol. 15, No. 9/10, p. 785-803.

¹³ For more information, see: SLABÁ, M.: Advertising in Chinese markets. In SOLIMAN, K. S. (ed.): *26th International-Business-Information-Management-Association Conference Location. Conference Proceedings*. Norristown : Int Business Information Management Assoc-Ibima, 2015.

¹⁴ Since June 2008, it operates under the name Apus, o.s. (remar by the authors).

labelling of local products of Krkonoše, Šumava and Beskydy, by which the first regional brands were established in the Czech Republic. In 2008, those were transformed to Association of Regional Brands, c.a. (ARB). The reason for regional brand system implementation is by the organization Apus, o. s. defined as follows: „*In current over-globalized world, the need to preserve an identity of regions grows stronger. Connection between protection of cultural and natural heritage in regions and economic prosperity of regions is important priority... supports local entrepreneurs (mainly farmers, craftsmen, smaller businesses) thank to promotion... diversification of economic activities in the country and revival of local economies. It increases sense of belonging of local inhabitants and region and initiates different forms of cooperation in region among businessmen, public administration, non-profit sector and nature protection. As far as environmental aspect is concern, support of local production has its significance and consumption as for decrease of transport burden, support of production-friendly production ...*“¹⁵ The principal of regional brands being coordinated at national level of ARB is the system based on regional coordinators, who administrate brands, communicate with local producers and ARB. The brand is assigned to the producers by independent certifying commission in each region after given criteria are fulfilled¹⁶ (regional origin, quality, ecological aspects, uniqueness).¹⁷ Another initiative, which can be considered the pioneer of regional brand in the Czech Republic, regional competition of food producers is – e.g. „Chut’ and Zlatá Chut’ jižní Moravy“, „Chutná hezky, Jihočesky“¹⁸ [Taste and Golden taste of South Moravia, It tastes nice] and Perla Zlínska [the Pearl of Zlin region], which have been established about 2006-2007 as the regional initiative coordinated by regional agrarian chamber. Those competitions are coordinated by the regional agrarian chamber together with local administration. The aim of those initiatives is to make consumers aware of quality regional products and attract them to come to given region. Regional brands regard only the field of Production of food products CZ-NACE 10 and Production of beverages CZ-NACE 11.¹⁹

1.2 Regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt

Regional brand (RB) Znojemsko Regionální produkt (logo see Picture 1) was established in 2013 based on principle of RB coordinated at the national level of ARB. Local active group Živé pomezí Krumlovsko–Jevišovicko, o.s. is the main coordinator.²⁰

¹⁵ Apus, o.s. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at: <<http://www.apusos.cz/regionalni-znaceni-produktua>>.

¹⁶ Criteria for regional brand granting (being coordinated by ARB) are the same for all regions. The list of particular criteria is mentioned by the brand Znojemsko regionální produkt (remark by the authors).

¹⁷ Asociace regionálních značek, o.s. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at: <<http://www.regionalni-znacky.cz/arz/cs/o-nas>>.

¹⁸ Regionální agrární komora Jihočeského kraje: Portál Chutná hezky, Jihočesky. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at: <<http://www.chutnahezkyjihocesky.cz/aktuality/udalost.php?id=7>>.

¹⁹ Buletin ÚZEI č. 5/2012. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at: <<http://www.uzei.cz>>.

²⁰ Znojemsko Regionální produkt: MAS Živé pomezí. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at: <<http://www.zivepomezi.cz/projekty/regionalni-znacka-na-znojemsku/>>.



Picture 1: Logo of Znojensko Regionální produkt

Source: MAS Živé pomezí. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at:

<<http://www.zivepomezi.cz/projekty/regionalni-znacka-na-znojemsku/regionalni-znaceni-na-znojemsku>>.

Table 1: Characteristic of the regional brand Znojensko regionální produkt

Regional brand	Znojensko Regionální produkt
Region location	district Znojmo, South-Moravian region, Czech rep.
Area	1 591 km ²
Population	113 334
Populace density	71,1 inh./km ²
Potential of region	Tourism, wine-growing, farming
Current situation (finances)	EU support, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
Coordinator	ARB and Živé pomezí Krumlovsko-Jevišovicko
Membership conditions	Fulfillment of certification criteria, payment of registration fee
Certification criteria	Methodology of ARB adjusted by local conditions
Number of certified products (2015)	10
Development phases	Establishment and development
Establishment	2013
Field of development	Food industry, services and crafts
Distribution channels	Stores with healthy food and local stores
Brand focus	Food production and crafts
Certification duration	2 years
Certification conditions – product	Quality standards, ecological aspects, uniqueness
Certification conditions – companies	Local subject, friendly production, without debts, quality guarantee
Products category	Food products and crafts

Source: Own processing

The primary aim of the regional brand Znojensko Regionální produkt is to support local producers with focus on small and middle-sized companies (preferring mainly farmers, food industry, accommodation and food services, art craft), which “*manage their business economically, traditionally and in accordance with the principle of sustainable development*”²¹ Methodology of regional brands granting follows valid ARB criteria.²² As for the area, which the brand Znojensko Regionální produkt is

²¹ MAS Živé pomezí. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at:

<http://www.zivepomezi.cz/upload/www.zivepomezi.cz/projekty/_dir/13642/priloha1acertifikacni-kriteria-pro-znacku-vyrobkyaod-1.6.2013.pdf>.

²² Certifying criteria are divided into two groups. A for producers and B for products. „*Criteria for A group: 1. Local subject (business premises have to be in the area limited by previous district Znojmo), 2. Qualification for particular production, 3. Without debts, 4. Guarantee of quality standards (prove only by statutory declaration), 5. Production process does not damage nature (evaluation of certification commission, applicant does not have to be under investigation of Czech Environmental Inspectorate). Criteria for B group: 1. Consumer goods, agricultural and natural products or arts produced in region*

assigned for, previous district Znojmo is concern (South-Moravian region). As the content of regional brand Znojemske regionální produkt is considered, it is wider and does not include only food products.

2 Methodology and results

Primary research was provided within November 2014 – January 2015 in South-Moravian region. Respondents were chosen by quota selection - representing sample of 450 respondents – visitors as well as inhabitants of this region. This article brings the results; the following hypotheses were tested by Pearson Chi-squared test:

H1: Knowledge of regional brand Znojemske Regionální produkt does not depend on respondents' gender.

H2: Knowledge of regional brand Znojemske Regionální produkt does not depend on respondents' age.

H3: Knowledge of regional brand Znojemske Regionální produkt does not depend on the amount of net family monthly income of respondents.

For contingent table $r \times c$ (r = number of rows, c = number of columns), the test statistics of Pearson Chi-squared test on independence is used the most often, which in this case monitors knowledge of regional brand Znojemske Regionální produkt in dependence on the selected socio-demographical factors. Zero hypothesis of this test presumes independence.²³

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \sum_j \frac{(n_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

Symbol e_{ij} means expected frequency for case of independence and symbol n_{ij} means monitored frequency in contingent table. Expected frequency is calculated from contingent table as the product of marginal frequencies divided by total frequency. Assuming independence, the statistics chi-squared has asymptotical division $\chi^2_{(r-1)(c-1)}$. By statistical software Statistica, for each hypothesis p-value was calculated and if $p < 0,05$, zero hypothesis was rejected in favour of alternative hypothesis assuming dependence of variables. To use Pearson chi-squared test, such condition is to be fulfilled – maximum 20 % of expected frequencies should be lower than 5.²⁴

2.1 Results

The results of realized research showed that consumers in South-Moravian region do not mostly know the regional brand Znojemske Regionální produkt. When asked

Znojemske, 2. Product quality (evaluation by certifying commission) 3. Nature-friendly, 4. Uniqueness connected with region (traditional product; product made of local ingredients or materials; handcrafted or mental work; arts with the main motive "Znojemske"/products being specific for region „Znojemske“; exclusive (above standard) characteristics of the product. (For more information, see: MAS Živé pomezí. [online]. [2016-10-05]. Available at:

<http://www.zivepomezi.cz/upload/www.zivepomezi.cz/projekty/_dir/13642/priloha1acertifikacni-kriteria-pro-znacku-vyrobkyaod-1.6.2013.pdf>).

²³ For more information, see: ŘEZANKOVÁ, H.: *Analýza kategoriálních dat pomocí SPSS*. Praha : VŠE, 2007.

²⁴ Ibidem.

whether they have met this brand when purchasing food, 67 respondents answered positively, i.e. 14, 89 % of investigated sample.

Table 2: Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on respondents' gender

Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt	Men	Women	Total
Yes	30	37	67
Relative frequency of yes answers (%)	14,29%	15,42%	
No	180	203	383
Relative frequency of no answers (%)	85,71%	84,58%	
Total	210	240	450

Source: Own processing

From Table 2 results that 30 addressed men (14,29 %) and 37 women (15,42 %) know the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt. Thus, more women know the brand in investigated region than men do.

Table 3: Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on respondents' gender

	Chi-square	df	P
Pearson chi-square	0,1130468	df=1	p=0,73670

Source: Own processing

As mentioned in Table 3, p-value of Pearson Chi-squared test of independence is 0,74, which is significantly more than level of significance 0,05. Thus, hypothesis of independence is not rejected at the level of independence 5 %. The hypothesis H1 is accepted - Knowledge of regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt does not depend on respondents' gender.

Table 4: Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on respondents' age

Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt	18 - 35 years	36 - 50 years	51-65 years	Total
Yes	22	26	19	67
Relative frequency of yes answers (%)	14,67%	17,33%	12,67%	
No	128	124	131	383
Relative frequency of no answers (%)	85,33%	82,67%	87,33%	
Total	150	150	150	450

Source: Own processing

The results mentioned in Table 4 show that people of middle age group 36-50 years (17, 33 %) know about the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt the most and people of the youngest age group 18-35 years (14,67 %) little less. As for respondents of the oldest age group 51-60 years, 12,37 % of those know this brand.

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Table 5: Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on respondents' age

	Chi-square	df	p
Pearson chi-square	1,297689	df=2	p=0,52265

Source: Own processing

In case of knowledge depended on respondents' age, mentioned in Table 5, p-value of Pearson Chi-squared test is significantly higher than defined level of significance 0,05. The hypothesis of independence is not rejected at the level of significance 5 %. Thus, the hypothesis H2 is accepted - Knowledge of regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt does not depend on respondents' age. Even though, statistical dependence could not be proved, it can be stated that respondents of middle age group and younger ones know the given brand more often than respondents of the oldest age group do.

Table 6: Knowledge of regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on the net family monthly income of respondents

Knowledge of brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt	up to 25 000 CZK included	B - 25 001 - 50 000 CZK	C - 50 001 CZK and more	Total
Yes	24	33	10	67
Relative frequency of yes answers (%)	11,11%	16,75%	27,03%	
No	192	164	27	383
Relative frequency of no answers (%)	90,28%	91,88%	86,49%	
Total	216	197	37	450

Source: Own processing

From the results of Table 6 is seen that the highest relative knowledge of this brand the respondents with the highest net monthly family income being above 50.000 CZK (27,03 %) showed. As for other income categories, respondents stated knowledge of this brand very similarly; 16,75 % of respondents with income between 25 000 CZK - 50 000 CZK and 11,11 % of respondents with income up to 25 000 CZK.

Table 7: Knowledge of regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt in dependence on the net family monthly income of respondents

	Chi-square	df	p
Pearson chi-square	7,273717	df=2	p=0,02633

Source: Own processing

P-value of Pearson Chi-squared test of independence, mentioned in Table 7 is in case of dependence of this brand and the highest net monthly family income 0,03, which is less than chosen level of significance 0,05. The hypothesis H3 of independence is rejected at the level of independence 5 % - Knowledge of regional brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt does not depend on the amount of net family monthly income of respondents.

2.2 Discussion

From the results of realized research can be concluded that consumers of investigated region mostly do not know the given brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt. Only 67 of the sample of 450 of them stated knowledge representing thus 14,89%. The highest knowledge showed the respondents with the highest income, which is very interesting fact. This fact is directly opposite to the findings published by the authors Zámková, Prokop, who state that just respondents of South-Moravian region with the highest income are the least interested in bio and ecological food.²⁵ The results of provided research can be interpreted in context with previously published results of the authors; knowledge of brand system in South-Moravian region – Regionální potravina Jihomoravský kraj was found at the level of 46,9%.²⁶ This research was realized with the same respondents' sample and within the same time period. When considering awareness of other brands in this region, it can be said as follows: even the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt is the youngest one, it is the best known brand out of all "small regional brands" of South-Moravian region; compared to the brand Zlatá Chuť jižní Moravy (the oldest regional brand system in region; 11,6% of respondents know it) and the brand Moravský kras Regionální produkt (the brand coordinated by ARB – the same as investigated brand; 9,33% of addressed respondents know this brand). The results of the research, which was provided in neighbouring region – Lower Austria of Austria within the same time period and in which also 450 respondents took part, show that 40 – 65% of respondents know all regional brands. Including the brand Waldland (53,3%), which is to be considered the equivalent to our brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt.²⁷ As for another characteristics of the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt, such research conclusions are proved by e.g. Rojík et al. that better awareness of those brands can be expected from women and middle-age and young generation of the respondents; and consumers with the highest income.²⁸

Conclusion

In the Czech Republic, the labelling of the products and services by regional brands is still quite new tool to make quality regional and local production (mainly food one) more visible. There are two main regional labelling systems in the Czech Republic - state system Regionální potravina [Regional food] and system Regionální/Originální produkt [Regional/original product] coordinated by Association of Regional Brands. Significantly higher budget is considered the advantage of the first system (above that also for communication and other marketing activities). The second system's

²⁵ ZÁMKOVÁ, M., PROKOP, M.: Comparison of Consumer Behavior of Slovaks and Czechs in the Market of Organic Products by Using Correspondence Analysis. In *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis*, 2014, Vol. 62, No. 4, p. 783-795.

²⁶ For more information, see: ROJÍK, S. et al.: Recognition of the regional food brand "Regionální potravina Jihomoravský kraj" by consumers in the Region of South Moravia. In *Littera Scripta*, 2016, Vol. 9, No. 1.

²⁷ For more information, see: ROJÍK, S.: *Úloha regionálního značení potravin ve vybraných regionech ČR a Rakouska*. [Dissertation Thesis]. Opava: Slezská univerzita v Opavě, 2015.

²⁸ For more information, see: ROJÍK, S. et al.: Recognition of the regional food brand "Regionální potravina Jihomoravský kraj" by consumers in the Region of South Moravia. In *Littera Scripta*, 2016, Vol. 9, No. 1.

advantage is its closeness to regional and local producers and the fact that the brand is contrary to the system Regionální potravina granted to all products and producers, who fulfilled certification conditions (it is not competition though as it is in case of system Regionální potravina when this brand is granted to those producers, who win in particular categories). This fact has to be taken into consideration as the main advantage of the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt. Within about two years of its existence in the market, this brand showed the highest awareness compared to all regional brands (excluding Regionální potraviny). Vaguely defined strategy of the brand Znojemsko Regionální produkt has to be considered the disadvantage; because except food products and services, there are also included different products such as e.g. wooden floor; this situation shows coordinator's ambivalence as far as his management is concern.

Because of low awareness of this brand, it does not provide the producers with many benefits why they should have the products recertified; there are also not arguments for this brand coordinator, which would contribute to the increase of demand for certification by the producers. Considering very limited budget of this brand, before the increase of communication effort, it is necessary to work on the basic marketing tool – product. The main task of coordinator would be contacting the associations and significant businesses e.g. out of wine and services fields and offer them certification of those products. This task should be provided as soon as possible. The region of Znojmo is the region with big potential just in the field of wine and travelling (national park, tradition in agriculture and wine-growing, historical middle-age cities being visited by tourists, well-known events for tourists such as Znojemské historické vinobraní [Znojmo's historical grape harvest]). Also cooperation with local municipalities – districts, micro-regions and cities is important. Considering very limited budget of this brand, the authors see above mentioned proposals as the most suitable way how to make development of this brand faster and how to increase its value.

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