

The Influence of Background Music on the Sensory and Hedonic Evaluation of Kalecik Karası

Ayseli izmen

Wine and Beverage Instructor, Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Türkiye

Abstract

This study investigates how background music influences the sensory and hedonic evaluation of a Turkish red wine (*Kalecik Karası*). Building on prior research in multisensory flavor perception, the experiment compares three conditions: silence (control), Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*, and Mussorgsky's *A Night on Bald Mountain*. A total of 39 second-year Gastronomy students repeatedly assessed the same wine, rating acidity, tannin, body, and overall liking while also judging the music's likeability and its perceived congruence with the wine.

Results indicate that *Waltz of the Flowers* does not significantly alter acidity, tannin, or body, although participants consistently associate it with a mellow, refined character. In contrast, *A Night on Bald Mountain* significantly increases perceived tannin levels, showing no substantial effect on acidity or body. Moreover, participants' hedonic response to the wine moderates these effects: those who enjoy the wine under the more intense musical condition perceive greater body and tannin. Acidity remains unaffected in all comparisons. These findings align with previous work suggesting that darker, more dynamic music enhances red wine's tannin and body.

From a practical standpoint, the results underscore the value of sonic cues for optimizing wine presentation. Curating music that aligns with a wine's flavor profile may heighten specific attributes, potentially enhancing consumer enjoyment. The study expands crossmodal research to Turkish wine consumers and highlights the pivotal role of auditory stimuli in shaping taste perceptions, offering strategic insights for both hospitality settings and marketing strategies.