

The perception of spirituality in the Brazilian and Danish
social contexts –

An intergenerational study



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Abstract

With churches getting emptier with the passing of time and the decline of religious affiliations, thoughts on where spirituality is heading are recurrent. Yet, no extensive study has been done onto whether people are dismissing religion, together with their beliefs, or if they in fact remain 'believers' of spirituality, and just not attending the established religious institutions. A similar trend seem to be happening as the year passes by, in which elderly people are perceived as being more religious and younger people as not.

Thoughts about the meaning and role of spirituality on people's lives in the actual times brought me to the following question: *"How is spirituality perceived and experienced in Brazil and Denmark?"* To be able to complement and assist the process of this research, the following sub question was formulated: *"Is there a common trend for spirituality in both countries?"*

This research will follow a cross-sectional design, by which an online self-administrated questionnaire was used the method of data collection, using the countries of origin and the different generations as variables for comparison and investigation of the generalized data. The analysis will be done using the coding method, in which the codes were predetermined by the chosen theories, following a generational structure.

The research is supported by main four theories, as the first starts by understanding of the origins of spirituality while also defining its concept; the second theory defines the concept of culture, also presenting specific information of the Danish and Brazilian cultures; the third theory explains the general concept of a generation, following by a description of each generation to be studied in this thesis; while the fourth theory explains and define the concept of globalization, followed by a the reflection of globalization applied to culture.

The final discussion of the analysis compares key answers of both cultures, making it possible to identify bigger or minor generational trends in relation to spirituality. The most expressive trend identified in the findings indicates that people prefer to not fixate themselves under an established religious institution or labels; the biggest trend is to either reject any kind of classification or to attach themselves to groups or ideas that are more fluid, providing them the room for mobility.

List of figures

<i>Figure 1 – Social media invitation for online survey</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Figure 2 – Country comparison: Brazil and Denmark</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Figure 3 – Overview on the generations</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Figure 4 – Overall status</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Figure 5 – Q1: When were you born?</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Figure 6 – The available languages of the questionnaire</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Figure 7 – Baby Boomer description</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Figure 8 – Generation X description</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Figure 9 – Millennial description</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Figure 10 – Family perception - Brazil</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Figure 11 – Family perception - Denmark</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Figure 12 – Relationship between spirituality and religion – Denmark</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Figure 13 - Relationship between spirituality and religion – Brazil</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Figure 14 – Foreign familiarity - Brazil</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Figure 15 - Foreign familiarity - Denmark</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Figure 16 – SoMe - Brazil</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Figure 17 – SoMe - Denmark</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Figure 18 – Cultural consumption – Brazil</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Figure 19 – Cultural consumption – Denmark</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Figure 20 – Overall interest – Brazil</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Figure 21 – Overall interest – Denmark</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Figure 22 – Self perception – Brazil</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Figure 23 – Self perception – Denmark</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Figure 24 – Religious adherence – Brazil</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Figure 25 - Religious adherence – Denmark</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Figure 26 – Self identification – Brazil</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Figure 27 – Self identification – Denmark</i>	<i>68</i>

Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Methodology	2
2.1. The research nature of the theory	2
2.2. Research philosophy	3
2.3. Research design	4
2.4. Methods	4
2.5. Analytical methods	7
3. Theoretical framework	8
3.1. The role of spirituality for humankind	9
3.1.1. Anthropological perspective	9
3.1.2. Culture and spirituality's shared root	10
3.1.3. Spirituality and identity	11
3.1.4. Defining 'spirituality'	12
3.2. Culture	13
3.2.1. The Hofstede Model	15
3.2.2. The Brazilian Cultural Context	17
3.2.3. The Danish Cultural Context	18
3.2.4. Brazil and Denmark	20
3.3. Understanding the generations	20
3.3.1. Understanding age groups and generations	21
3.3.2. The generations	23
3.3.3. The Silent Generation	24
3.3.4. The Baby Boomers	25
3.3.5. Generation X	27
3.3.6. Millennial Generation	29
3.4. Understanding globalization	32
3.4.1. Globalization within culture	34
4. Analysis	35
4.1. Spirituality in the different generations	38
4.1.1. The Baby Boomer Generation	38
4.1.1.1. Culture	38
4.1.1.2. Globalization	41

4.1.1.3. Notions of spirituality	44
4.1.2. The Generation X	45
4.1.2.1. Culture	45
4.1.2.2. Globalization	47
4.1.2.3. Notions of spirituality	50
4.1.3. The Millennials	52
4.1.3.1. Culture	52
4.1.3.2. Globalization	54
4.1.3.3. Notions of spirituality	56
4.2. Discussion	58
4.2.1. Culture	58
4.2.2. Globalization	61
4.2.3. Notions of spirituality	64
4.3. Final considerations	69
5. References	70

1. Introduction

Thoughts on how spirituality and religion play a role in today's societies are quite common, accompanied by assumptions on whether each culture is more or less spiritualized, according to their level of modernization or financial success. Also, the increased levels of globalization and the access to nearly unlimited flows of information transformed many of the ways people and societies function and behave, leading often to the question of how much are individuals really changed.

In several countries, it is widely observed how churches and its active members seem to be slowly disappearing; a phenomenon taking place especially in Western Europe (Ester, Braun & Mohler, 2006, page 31). The scholar Grace Davie (as cited by Ester, Braun & Mohler, 2006), defines the situation in Europe as a scenario in which 'believing without belonging' is the main characteristic of the actual times, suggesting that people are not dismissing their beliefs, but they do not experience and act on them on the same way than before (page 31). Still, in many other societies and cultures, the idea of spirituality and the presence of religious institutions do not seem to lose force at all. Different to the European context, the USA "remained highly religious, but not only in their beliefs but also with regard to the church participation" (Ester, Braun & Mohler, 2006, page 32), demonstrating that even modern and financially abundant societies can also present a high number of religious individuals, contradicting older theories that became a part of a wider common sense when people relate religious practices with less modernized societies. Yet, with the increase of the flows of knowledge and access to mass-spread information from and to most places of the world - especially through the internet; assumptions about the impact of such influences on the most traditional of the societies in regards of religion adherence and personal beliefs are made; suggesting a possible decline on both of them (Ester, Braun & Mohler, 2006, page 32).

Having both scenarios in mind, I decided to investigate how two distant and different societies perceive and express their own spirituality, and whether the individuals engage with it at all. The countries are Brazil, in South America, and Denmark in Northern Europe. Intertwined with it will be the aspect of globalization and how it possibly impacted both of the societies, as well as other areas of the world. In order to do so, and try and observe and understand the aspect of globalization, the concept of the generations will be used as a metric tool and structure to it; serving as a time frame for reference. As the same principle is often applied to the younger generations as well, in which in a constantly developing and more globalized world, the youngest are assumed to be less spiritualized and/or religious than their elder relatives.

Whilst the youngest are expected to be more open minded than the eldest, as they have the possibility to connect, share and learn about different cultures and worldviews, impacting on their own culture and beliefs.

As Ester, Braun and Mohler (2006) affirm that no extensive research has been made onto what extent individuals adopt religious beliefs or not, not having a significant discussion on that. Having that in mind, this study also aims to serve as an exploratory, informative “real-time picture” of how the notion and experience of spirituality look like in both Brazil and Denmark, while possibly identifying a common, globalized trend for it. As an effort to do so, this research is being based on three four theories, being it a theory for understanding and defining the concept of spirituality; theories for contextualizing globalization, a theory about culture, and the theory on the generations, that will later be applied as a general structure for analyzing and discussing the findings through the data collected via online questionnaires.

The above mentioned theoretical base and research methods chosen for this thesis are here to help us answering the main research question, followed by the sub question:

1. *“How is spirituality perceived and experienced in Brazil and Denmark?”*
2. *“Is there a common trend for spirituality in both countries?”*

2. Methodology

In order to investigate how spirituality is perceived and experienced in Brazil and Denmark; specific research approaches and research methods were selected as guidelines to this process. This chapter will clarify the steps on how this research was developed, in terms of the relationship between theory and generating knowledge, the philosophical approach of the research (as of the ontological and epistemological considerations), the methods being used for data collection and analysis; and the research design.

2.1. The research nature of the theory

As of the theoretical nature of the research question itself, involving three major theoretical concepts, being ‘culture’, ‘globalization’ (as two different countries are being addressed) and ‘spirituality’; the methods used for data collection are also guided by the initial theories, in which the findings are both conducted and dependent on the

existing literature in order to be understood (Bryman, 2016, page 21). The development of theory referred to above is the deductive, by which I initially formulated a research question based on the predominant theories of culture, globalization and spirituality, leading to a selection of different theories for a better understanding of the topic, including then the theory on generations, serving as both a guideline and a time frame to be used in the attempt to dismantle and understand the globalization as a process in the micro perspective, of the individuals. As the next step, the methods for data collection were designed according to the theories, when developing and choosing to conduct online structured interviews, in which the data would be collected with the possibility of separating groups of individuals according to their generation and country of origin, concepts that are defined on the initial theoretical background. At last, the research findings will be related and compared once again with the initial theories, with the intention to contribute to it with further knowledge.

2.2. Research philosophy

The ontological approach of a researcher to a project reflects how the social entities will be portrayed and used in an investigation. When social entities are perceived as independent established institutions, immune to the actions of individuals and other social actors, the ontological perspective is named objectivist. Different to the first, when the role of the social actors are perceived as being active on social change in a macro level, the ontological position is then called constructivist (Bryman, 2016, pages 29-30). By acknowledging globalization as a process and investigating the impact of it on large social groups, while recognizing the active role of individuals on it, the ontological approach to this research is the constructionist, opening space for the investigation of social change among different generations and expressed by individual opinions and perspectives on the world.

The epistemological position refers to which kind of knowledge and way of addressing it is considered to be valid in the academic perspective. The two opposite sides of the issue are of the natural sciences, and of the social sciences (Bryman, 2016, page 24). The biggest debate rotates around on whether the social sciences should be researched following the same principles and methods of the natural sciences or not. In this research, the epistemological approach being used is the critical realism, associated to a phenomenological perspective, in which I investigate the social world and social phenomena differently than the ways applied on the natural sciences.

In despite of it, as the critical realism is positioned between the two poles, it acknowledges the existence of fixed entities on the social world that are not directly

perceived in a micro level, but as its structures are identified and observed, the process of social change fueled by the social actors can be understood. The core of the knowledge collected and analyzed here are based on the individuals (participants of the survey) own perception of themselves and the world, but as they are placed in bigger already established categories, which are the generations. The process of social change that I am trying to identify on this research is the globalization.

2.3. Research design

The design of a research determinates how the data will be collected and analyzed in a project. This research follows a cross-sectional design in which the data will be collected “on a sample of multiple cases and at a single point in time” (Bryman, 2016, page 53), through online self-administered questionnaires, in order to produce quantitative data, to be compared to different variables. The variables to be compared on the analysis are the four generations selected to be investigated in this thesis, together with the two distinct cultures (Brazilian and Danish); that will operate as a platform for a structured observation on the topic.

The use of quantitative data on a research based in the field of the humanities often leads to the impression of a study designed to test an early formulated hypothesis, theory or concept, not being able to extract new theories and knowledge from a structured observation. However, as Alan Bryman (2012) also attests, and as it is the case of this research itself, the use of survey generated data opened ways for a much exploratory study of the concept of spirituality, culture and globalization; done in a linear, structured way while making use of the creativeness in the dealing and interpreting the data, in order to generate new knowledge (page 621).

2.4. Methods

As part of the cross-sectional research design, the data was collected through online self-administered questionnaires, using four generations as variables of measurement and comparison, together with their country of origin. But, why is the generation of an individual relevant to the topic investigated in this research? The grouping of individuals in regards to their assigned generation will aid on grasping onto the global events that most likely impacted individuals worldwide, regardless of their specific geographic location. But certainly not all global events reach every area of the world equally, and to some areas or groups of people, they might have had no direct

impact whatsoever. Yet, in this research, as the survey was distributed and answered exclusively online, the individuals to be analyzed are among the ones who were most likely directly impacted by the effects of globalization, while they also participate actively on it through their online presence, regardless of their generation they are a part of.

The targeted public was individuals above 18 years old, from Brazil and Denmark. As a previous effort to reach respondents from all parts of the world, the survey was made available in 7 different languages, being English, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Danish, Italian and Cantonese (Chinese); but after reassessing the viability of such study, the data being analyzed is from individuals of Brazil and Denmark only. The criteria for the selection of languages were based on the availability of native speakers around my social network and also the availability of those who could translate it, with the intention to make the questionnaire more accessible to a larger number of people. The participants were selected according to the snowball sampling method, since there was no minimum or maximum number initially set as a goal.



Figure 1 – Social media invitation for online survey.

The questions presented on the questionnaire, were developed with the intention to obtain the following information:

- *Who are they?*
 - *Generation; cultural/religious background, have they lived abroad?*
- *Their concept of spirituality:*
 - *Spirituality vs. Religion;*
 - *Do they consume information about spirituality on social media?*
- *How they identify themselves “spiritually-wise”.*

In regards of the type of language used in the questionnaires, a colloquial form of communication was preferred in this context, in order to make the experience more pleasant to the respondent, causing them to complete the entire survey, and to avoid repelling or confusing the participants that may not be acquainted to a more formal way of written communication. As of the design and information presented on each question, I chose not to explain or describe any of the concepts found there, since my main intention was to allow the respondents to judge and identify or not to the concepts, apart from my own perception as the researcher. Therefore, as an effort to minimize the interference of my own preconceptions over the terms and concepts on the questionnaire, I did not provide explanations to the respondents, while I also preferred to use colloquial expressions and terms.

In order to better access the interviewees’ personal views and experiences around the many facets and concepts of spirituality, culture and globalization at the survey, multiple-indicators are being used on the questionnaire, to measure the nuances of each individual’s relationship to each concept and how it might have changed with time and their varied experiences in life. An indicator is used to grasp wider concepts that are non-quantifiable, such as social concepts; and they aid on the measurement of these concepts, that become measurable when coded and turning into quantifiable data for the research (Bryman, 2012, page 164).

Multiple-indicators were used in the survey as an effort to draw a much more personalized and multi-dimensional picture of each participant, as the room for diverging behaviors, worldviews and personal opinions is very high on the above mentioned concepts and such dimensions are the ones to indicate any process of social change in each generation or not, according to very personalized questionnaire answers. A multiple-indicators survey offers several options of response to the participant, with radical and intermediate options, displaying a gradient of how intensely the participant feels about the question in general (Bryman, 2012, pages 165-167). An

example of how this was applied in the interview guide used for this research is on question number 8:

“Are you familiar with life-philosophies, and/or religions that are not originally from your cultural background?

- a. Yes, I find it very interesting to see new ways of expressing spirituality.
- b. Yes, I read about it online and/or at school. I like to learn about different cultures.
- c. No, I don't usually pay attention to these kind of topics.
- d. No, I have my personal beliefs and I prefer to focus and deepen my knowledge onto them.”

In terms of the validity of the indicators used in this research, on whether they assess or not the intended concepts of spirituality, globalization and culture (in social and personal views), it can be affirmed that the collected data has not only face validity, as well as a construct validity. Face validity is the intuitive process of reading through the questionnaire and reflecting if it mainly portrays the targeted concepts or if they deviate from the focal points. The construct validity of the survey is at place when a new hypothesis is deduced from the collected data; which is done in this research on the attempt of identifying and drawing possible new trends for spirituality both in Brazil and Denmark in relation to the process of globalization. (Bryman, 2012, pages 170-172)

2.5. Analytical methods

The methods used for analyzing the data are content analysis, in which predetermined categories are used to quantify the content of the data collected, in a systematic and replicable way (Bryman, 2016, page 285). These predetermined categories mentioned above refer to the method of coding, as of in this research will be determined by the main three theories of ‘spirituality’, ‘culture’, ‘globalization’, all analyzed repetitively following the generational structure. After separating the survey respondents according to their country of origin, the respondents will be separated once again, now according to their generation, meaning, their year of birth.

Having the respondents sorted out according to their generation and country of origin, their answers will be analyzed accordingly, by first focusing on the code of culture, followed by the code of globalization, and the code of notions on spirituality. After analyzing all of these aspects in-depth, a discussion will be made with the overall findings, this time, with the intention to identify and compare singular and

corresponding trends in relation to the respondents of both countries, Brazil and Denmark.

Analyzing the results using the generations and theoretical codes, will help on the assessment on how spirituality is perceived and experienced in both the Brazilian and Danish contemplated groups, as each code reaches minor and bigger different aspects that are so important to build and understand the bigger picture.

Regarding the generalizability of the findings on this research, it is very important to stress that the results, outlined trends and notions of culture, spirituality and religion addressed to the Brazilian and Danish population reflect only the investigated group, instead of the whole Danish and Brazilian societies.

3. Theoretical framework

Understanding the concepts and theories behind the terms 'spirituality', 'culture', 'generation' and 'globalization' is of sum importance in this research, as they will be used, discussed on, combined and distinguished one from the other during the analysis chapter. The data collected via online questionnaire from Brazilian and Danish individuals will be presented following the same structure of the generations, while also attaching all the meaning that come with each one of them. The thorough information contained in the topic on the theories on generation, will help defining and understanding each group of individuals to be studied on this research, providing layers to each of them, while enriching the interpretation of the data collected. The concept of spirituality, religion and its social and individual manifestations learned here will also be applied in the analysis, being them one of the codes for data analysis. The notions of culture and globalization discussed above also helped setting a more defined background and key understandings of how culture relates to spirituality in the two different contexts, while also defining what perspective of globalization is being investigated in this project. Both 'culture' and 'globalization' will also be used as codes, to aid on the analysis of the data.

Having that said, the chapter will start first setting the widest picture on this project by defining what spirituality is; then will carry on with culture, presenting specific information about the Brazilian and Danish cultures, followed by a definition and presentation of the concept of generations; finalizing with the notions of what globalization means in this research. So let us start with the wider, essential picture in the following topic.

3.1. The role of spirituality for humankind

As a base for this research, the approach used here to define and reflect upon spirituality is aligned with the work of Robert Torrance (1994), who explains on his book 'The Spiritual Quest' that "[...] this activity is grounded in the structure of human nature (and ultimately in life and even of matter) and finds expression in every part of the world" (Torrance, 1994, preface). Meaning that in this project, spirituality will be held as an anthropological trace in a society, expressed differently in each culture, but deriving from the same roots and human needs.

By breaking down the overall concept of spirituality and getting to the core of it, understanding the essential parts and roots of the whole concept and meaning of the term 'spirituality' will make possible to define, apply, and therefore, study its own existence in a specific culture. A clear definition of what spirituality is in this research will be a guide and point of reference to all the interpretations being made when using the different variations of the concept of spirituality in the social and individual sphere, in the Brazilian and Danish societies. Also, it is very important to define spirituality very early in this project, in order to differentiate spirituality and religion, both which are being treated as two different things in this research.

3.1.1. Anthropological perspective

Anthropology as a discipline in itself, conducts in-depth studies in specific locations or groups, with the purpose of investigating and understanding wider issues, outgrowing the boundaries of the targeted location by connecting and comparing it to other locations, other groups, having the larger goal to understand the whole, by knowing several parts of it. The main objective is to understand theoretical issues, in the context of specific places. Being these places geographical, political, occupational, religious, and so on (Amit & Mitchell, 2013, preface p. vii).

This research views spirituality through the lens of anthropology, trying to investigate a possible impact of globalization (or transnational flows) on spirituality by choosing to analyze two specific populations, delimited by their country (Brazil and Denmark), that express two different cultures. As Professor Amit and Dr. Mitchell (2013) highlight on the preface of the book "A History of Anthropology", "Anthropologists don't study villages; they study in villages" (Clifford Geertz, as cited by Amit & Mitchell, 2013, p. vii), also, the base for anthropological studies is the investigation of "large issues explored in small places" (Amit & Mitchell, 2013, p. vii);

and this exactly the perspective being brought to this research on globalization and spirituality in the Brazilian and Danish contexts.

3.1.2. Culture and spirituality's shared root

Rituals, religious institutions and supernatural events and forces have been a part of human existence since immemorial times. The search for explanations of the world surrounding us and the cycles of life and death is a common trait of societies across the globe, in the most diverse ways; but why did human beings come across and developed such trait and how does it operates in a community? This section will lay down notions of the above mentioned topics in order to clarify the bigger picture, which is by understanding, in general, what is spirituality from both the individual and collective perspectives.

As natural beings, humans are by default considerably vulnerable to the environment around them, especially in relation to other natural beings. Survival by itself is an endless puzzle for human individuals and populations, which struggled with manufacturing tools and solutions for surviving and thriving in a determinate scenario. To overcome its natural limitations, humans developed what Torrance (1994) defines as a 'second nature', which on his words is "an acculturation process so routine as to seem automatic: to speak one's native language, or to manufacture a basic artifact, requires no one to go questing afar" (Torrance, 1994, pages 3-4).

The second nature that we speak of is culture itself; guidelines on which humans are capable of transmitting ancient knowledge about life and the relationship with the natural world surrounding them, generation after generation. The individuals' awareness of culture itself, of their own human existence outside of the natural world, the existence of this second nature and the separate dimension where it lives; leads to and establishes the idea of a spirit, and therefore, spirituality. Moreover, spirituality, such as culture - the second nature, is transcending and always under construction.

"It lies in the nature of spirit, which owes its existence to the separation that it continually strives to overcome, rather to seek than to find" - (Torrance, 1994, page 4).

Being culture a communal creation and effort carried on by individuals, when it comes to spirituality, it is often defined by religion, as it is also a cultural manifestation, but presenting a different approach to the 'spiritual quest'. As spirituality lives in the field of eternal seek and constant change, heading towards an uncertain future; religion

appears as a place to find the answers the spirit seeks. So, as the spirit invites the individual to 'seek', religion provides the answers and solutions for these questions and worries, saying 'seek no further!'; simultaneously generating and expressing the "dominant social values" (Torrance, 1994, page 4).

Under this light, religion - as a product of culture and society, is not a mechanism of survival itself, but has roots in it, as it can be seen as having the goal of providing codes of social behavior and subjective meaning for people's lives and the ever changing world around them. It is a conjoint effort of finding stability in a mutable world, in which we have little to no control of, standardizing "the right way of thinking and acting and society takes up the verdict and repeats it in unison" (Malinowski as cited by Torrance, 1994, page 5). The transcendental aspect of religion lies on the rituals that "regulate, maintain and transmit from one generation to another sentiments on which the constitution of the society depends" (Radcliffe-Brown as cited by Torrance, 1994, page 4).

However, rituals (in its essence, not confined exclusively within religion), provide more to an individual than guidance, social predominance and belonging. They have also a psychological effect on providing safety and fulfilling the need for stability in order to keep a person 'sane' among the chaos of the natural world. Yet, its mutable nature is so deeply rooted in culture, as in a transcendental matter – generation after generation, that it can hardly be sensed by the individual, providing that sense of firm ground, fixity, stability. (Torrance, 1994, page 7)

3.1.3. Spirituality and identity

The social nature of the human being shines through in the creation and the need of social rituals in an individual's life. The individual finds stability and security through established rituals, and therefore, among the others, he identifies and confronts the 'self', in relation to the whole. Torrance (1994) successfully sums up this concept when saying: "Selfhood is achieved by identification with the group, not distance from it" (page 9). Applying the nature of rituals back on religion, taking religion as the significant social construct for the 'spiritual quest'; religion is also social experience, in which the individual signifies himself from and at the same time, resignifies the whole by participating on it. Also by reaffirming the community and its social bonds, as it is seen in different religions examples of rituals of passage and isolation, in which the individual sees itself outside of the whole and goes through a process of rejoining the group; highlighting the human need of a social life, of being a part of a community (Torrance, 1994, page 12).

When it comes to the awareness of the 'self' by the individual, the assimilation of the 'whole' is necessary. In this way, the individual is able to identify the 'me', which is intrinsic to them; and to define the 'I', which is their social persona, understood by an ongoing internal conversation between the 'me' and the internalized persona of the 'whole'. This conversation is an eternal negotiation between the 'me' and the 'whole', as the scenario constantly changes, the individual is always seeking the answer to the question: 'who am I?' In regards of society itself, religion symbolizes the 'I', mediating the communication between the society's 'me' and the natural world, the unseen. This way, religion can be able to provide a meaning and a way of understanding themselves in the world. (Torrance, 1994, page 14)

Still, the nature of the 'spiritual quest' - the 'human quest', is in the movement and it realizes itself in the process, by never reaching the final destination. This way, whenever an answer is provided, another one arises, there is no end. Religion then provides answers to some questions and helps a society, a group, an individual to define and understand themselves, but it also is a participant of the quest, of the unending questions being made and that will be made. Therefore, religion cannot be said to provide all the answers to an individual and/or society.

"For just as rest is a phase of the movement that includes it, finding can be no more than a momentary pause in the continuous process of seeking which has, by its nature, no end." – (Torrance, 1994, pages 16-17)

3.1.4. Defining 'spirituality'

Having all that said, how can we define and understand the term 'spirituality' then? Torrance (1994) affirms that the term 'spiritual' "indicates the transcendent potentiality of the unknown" (page 54). Meaning that the 'spirit', together with the natural being of the individual, embodies the potential of a human life for a "purposeful creation and growth" of consciously set future goals (Torrance, 1994, page 54). So 'spiritual' is the conscious intention or action of the spirit, for creating and achieving future goals.

Still, to understand what it is 'spiritual', the concept of 'spirit' needs to be understood as well. As a starting point, Torrance (1994) brings the essential meanings of the word 'spirit', which in Latin originally means "breath or breeze" and "associating breath or wind with the animating power of life"; an occurrence not exclusive of the "Indo-European or Mediterranean cultural spheres". As of the descriptions above, the

term 'spirit' is understood as the breath of life, the "air as the force sustaining life", by which connects also to the individual's consciousness that makes it aware of itself (page 56). Furthermore, 'spirit' as the air sustaining life, connects human beings with all the other spheres of existence, as 'spirit' is also essentially present in other forms of life and is also transcendental regarding the dimension of time.

"For spirit, like the life-sustaining air, is both within and without, an embracing power connecting man with the world around him in the reciprocal bond of a truly open system." – (Torrance, 1994, page 56).

In this way, the 'spirit' is defined as the connection between all living beings, through space-time, and when an individual is acting on it, as being 'spiritual', the person is engaging on an intentional creation of a possible future human experience.

3.2. Culture

While previously acknowledging the importance of the relationship between culture and spirituality, understanding and also defining what culture means in this research is very important. Especially when dealing with different countries, two different cultures and very distinct societies, such as Brazil and Denmark. In order to understand and better interpret what spirituality and religion mean in such cultural context, it is of great importance and help to take into consideration what appears to be common place in which spirituality emerged, which is culture; and how it plays a role in both the society and the individual's life.

The contact and exchange within individuals from different origins has had an impact on people's perspectives and ideas of culture and societies. The curiosity about the 'other' has lead people from all places (tracing back to the beginning of times) to observe, discuss and even create concepts about a determined group of people or other people in general, that don't belong to the observing group. Psychologist Thomas Eriksen and Anthropologist Finn Nielsen (2013) sum up the idea by saying "we start an anthropological enquiry the moment a foreigner moves into the neighbouring flat" (p. 1), exposing how inherent the investigation process of curiosity, observation and creating an assumptions is kick started by the contact with the different, with the 'other'.

This relation to the 'other' became a central discussion among Ancient Greek philosophers, resulting in the paradox of 'Universalism VS Relativism', in which the

Universalist anthropologist would focus on the “commonalities and similarities between different societies, while a Relativist would emphasise the uniqueness and particularity of each society and culture” (Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013, p. 2-3). Such paradox created a great discussion among philosophers around the nature of ‘truth’, whether it was universal or relative, the relativists affirmed that there could be several kind of ‘truths’, meaning that one’s truth is defined by one’s specific set of life experiences, what in the present times is called as ‘culture’ (Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013, p. 3).

In the attempt to understand and describe the ‘others’, the notion of social groups come to a surface, so the ‘other’ in comparison to the observant is placed outside of their own group, claiming the existence of several different groups and the possibility of several different ‘truths’. Even with the unique experience of each individual of the same group, culture is still a ‘collective phenomenon’, and is shortly described by Geert Hofstede as being “[...] the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 3).

Individuals become members of several different groups through their lifetime, and therefore, take part on different kinds of cultures, according to each group. Specific cultures can be experienced in a company/organization, a social class, a generation and also their gender. Even though these are cultures embraced and expressed by many individuals within a group setting, many of them are transitory, and are much easily modified or ‘traded’ for a new one whenever their life situation change, as an example, when the individual takes on a new job role, or change school or company. The cultures that are more ingrained and “deeply rooted” on individuals are the ones they absorb since their birth and continue to participate during their upbringing, such as their national culture, gender and the specific society they are a part of (Hofstede, 2011, page 3).

Although the approach of the study of cultures mentioned above is inclined more to the Relativist pole, it is important to not lose sight of the Universalist perspective, since the overall structure in which the relativist categories (to distinguish each culture) are a part of, can be said to be some kind of ‘basic mold’ that provides different answers to the same essential problems all societies face in direct relation to biological issues and overall environment.

“[...] Every society’s patterns for living must provide approved and sanctioned ways for dealing with such universal circumstances as the existence of two sexes; the helplessness of infants; the need for satisfaction of the elementary biological requirements such as food, warmth and sex; the presence of individuals of different ages and of

differing physical and other capacities.” – (Clyde Kluckhohn, (1962), as cited by Hofstede, 2011, page 3).

In this paper, culture will be seen and studied through Geert Hofstede’s model of cultural comparison, studied through different universal categories, in which he applies and analyzes different groups of people and also national culture. The six categories are called ‘The Hofstede Dimensions’ and function as the Universalist mold in which he investigates each specific culture via surveys (the ‘Value Survey Mode’) done with individuals of such groups, in which the result is analyzed statistically and therefore, turned into comparable, quantitative data.

3.2.1. The Hofstede Model

Hofstede created six dimensions in which the joined answers of all the individual surveys conducted score different points, according to how many times each answer is selected among the questions. The answers are grouped within each country, but not according to each individual, meaning that the data is generated from the aggregated value of each answer selected and not by the amount of people interviewed. This method of research is called ‘the ecological factor analysis’, in which the stability of the data obtained does not entirely depend on the amount of respondents, but on the repetitive incidence of same answers selected. In that way, the number of cases and respondents does not have to be larger than the number of variables, it can even be smaller, according to the study (Hofstede, 2011, p. 6).

Since the Brazilian and Danish cultural context will be compared in this research (with the aim to understand how spirituality takes part on each society), it is important to understand the dimensions they are being analyzed through and what they mean from a ‘universal’ perspective. The six Hofstede Dimensions are, briefly:

- 1) “*Power Distance*, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;”
- 2) “*Uncertainty Avoidance*, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;”
- 3) “*Individualism* versus *Collectivism*, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;”
- 4) “*Masculinity* versus *Femininity*, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;”

- 5) “*Long Term versus Short Term Orientation*, related to the choice of focus for people’s efforts: the future or the present and past;”
- 6) “*Indulgence versus Restraint*, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life.”

(Hofstede, 2011, page 8)

The score obtained in each Dimension, and also by crossing the results of the other ones, generate a more detailed analysis of the social and cultural context of the country being studied, providing a generalized perspective of the group as a whole. But a factor that the author stresses about is that the opposite cannot be done. Meaning that one should not use national generalizations in order to define an individual, since the variation of personalities in each national group is very large, and the generalizations are done statistically (Hofstede, 2011, page 8). Even though statistics plays a big role on the analysis of the data, the author affirms that the quantitative analysis does not star a central role on this process. The qualitative analysis of the data is equally important, for the matters of interpretation of the differences according to each context and what the data mean for each population (Hofstede, 2011, page 9).

As of the future, the data originated from each research will still retain their value and reliability, according to the author himself. He claims that the data helps on the process of understanding and tracking social changes in the studied societies; and also, they get meaning always in relation to the other populations. Global impacts such as new technology tend to affect all societies, directly or indirectly, also tending to balance and hold their punctuation in relation to the other countries, as they will all fluctuate together through change (Hofstede, 2011, pages 21-22).

In the next topic, the analysis of the cultural context of Brazil and Denmark made with the Hofstede Dimensional method will be presented, with the purpose of better analyzing spirituality in each society, taking in consideration their cultures, that has deep roots with the social shared concept of spirituality. The data presented here is retrieved from the research conducted by the company *Hofstede Insights*, that provides the possibility of comparing two or more countries in their website, while also offering different kind of consulting and researching services, all based on Geert Hofstede’s methods and work. The punctuation scores are measured from 0 to 100.

3.2.2. The Brazilian Cultural Context

Power Distance

Scoring 69 points, Brazilians tend to respect hierarchies and be more accepting of inequality between individuals in the society, in a way that the ones that hold more power experience more benefits than the less fortunate ones. The power relations among generations are also accentuated, when the elder is expected to receive a more respectful treatment and also, the offspring is expected to care for their elderly ones. Power relations are also very important in communication, which is the usual manner of showing respect for others that are in distinct social positions, whether in the work place or in the family (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Individualism

The score of 38 in this Dimension indicates that Brazilians are usually a part of a cohesive and strong group since their birth, the group consists of close family members, as well as extended family, that tend to maintain the bond throughout the course of their lives. This characteristic is carried to the working sphere, in which older members of the family are expected to help the younger ones to get started on their working life. These collectivist tendencies are also very prominent on the overall working culture, when is very important to build trust and lasting relationships with the people they are doing business with. The communication used is usually “context-rich, so people will often speak profusely and write in an elaborate fashion” (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Masculinity

Being that a Masculine society is described as being competitive and success driven; and a Feminine society would be one focused on the quality of life and not ‘standing out from the crowd’; Brazil scored 49 points, showing to have an intermediate approach to life and to what success means (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Uncertainty Avoidance

As the majority of the Latin American countries, Brazil’s score on the Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension is very high, scoring 76. Societies like these have a

strong need for rules and laws to organize life, as a way to create a safer environment; so bureaucracy is a part of it. The high score on Uncertainty Avoidance also indicate that Brazilians need and take time of their everyday life for moments of relaxation, socializing and/or entertainment. They are also more passionate and have a more expressive body language, in which emotions are expressed through (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Long Term Orientation

The two poles of this Dimension are the Normative societies (with low score) and the cultures with a more pragmatic approach (high score). The Normative societies focus on maintaining traditions and norms, being 'suspicious' about social change; while the societies with high score encourage modern tools and ideas, as a way to better prepare for the future. Brazil scored 44 points and showed an intermediate position among the two poles (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Indulgence

Scoring 59 points, Brazil can be classified as an indulgent society, in which people have a tendency to have a positive attitude and be optimistic; puts high value on leisure, take actions and use money according to their own personal will. People in indulgent societies are more willing to fulfill their wishes and desires with the purpose of enjoying life and having fun (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

3.2.3. The Danish cultural context

Power Distance

Denmark scores very low on the Power Distance Dimension, with only 18 points, indicating employee autonomy on the workplace, an egalitarian mindset, accessible superiors and an informal communication. An employee's respect in the company will be earned through the result of the work performed there, instead of their position in the company (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Individualism

Scoring 74 points, Denmark appears as an Individualist society, in which individuals are expected to support “themselves and their immediate family only”. When doing business, it is not of great importance to create and develop a relationship first, and the communication is kept very direct, ‘straight-to-the-point’, with minimal ‘small talk’ (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Masculinity

With a score of 16 points, Denmark is considered a feminine society, in which the work/life balance is very important. In the working environment, the relationship between managers and employees is very close, and quality, solidarity and equality are highly valued. Reaching a consensus in the decision making at business is very important; and it is more likely to have flexible working conditions and free time in Feminine societies (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Uncertainty Avoidance

Scoring 23 points, Danes do not have the need of a too structured, inflexible working life and changes at work are faced with naturalness. This dimension also reflects on humor, heavy consumerism and the thriving creative industries, such as “advertising, marketing and financial engineering”. Also, saying ‘I don’t know’ in a professional setting will probably not be perceived negatively (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Long Term Orientation

The low score of 35 points classifies Denmark as a normative society, with a normative way of thinking. Societies as these have the concern of establishing an ‘absolute Truth’, have a great appreciation and respect for their traditions and a slight tendency to focus on short-term goals (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Indulgence

With a high score of 70, Denmark is an indulgent country, in which people are more willing to fulfill impulses and desires for the purpose of having fun and enjoy life. Individuals in Indulgent countries are usually more optimistic and have a positive

mindset, valuing highly some 'leisure time'; taking action and using money according to their personal wishes (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

3.2.4. Brazil and Denmark

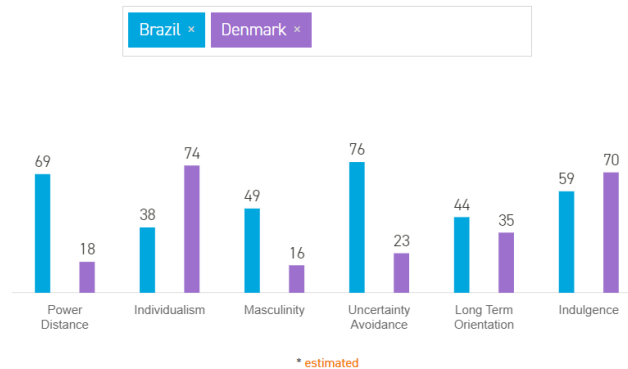


Figure 2 – Country comparison: Brazil and Denmark.

Available at <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/brazil,denmark/>

Having information of the key areas in which Brazil and Denmark align and differ from one another will help to understand and interpret how Brazilians and Danes see the concept of 'spirituality' and how present it is in both societies, even with the aspect of social change. The cultural understanding of Brazilians and Danes through the methods of investigation of Hofstede will be one of the main variables used to analyze the answers obtained with the online questionnaire used in this research.

3.3. Understanding the generations

Prelude

As discussed previously, the concept of spirituality shares deep roots with culture and the human need of understanding and defining themselves in the social context. Spirituality connects people to the past and future, and with this, also to the idea of perpetuating family rituals and traditions. While the world becomes wider for both individuals and societies through time, the thought on how these different world views impacted on people and societies' expressions of spirituality, comes to the surface.

In order to connect and align the global with the individual and local spheres of this research, the concept of 'generations' will be used as a tool of convergence of both spheres mentioned previously. In short, generations categorizes groups of people by crossing two different aspects of them, which are the period of time they were born and

the most expressive events that impacted people's lives at that time, influencing the shaping of their world views and how they navigate in it, socially and individually. The term 'generation' summarizes this concept, providing us a pack of information about a specific age group in a generalized form, helping on the identification of possible trends locally and/or globally. Nevertheless, the concept of generations and its implications will be defined and looked at in more depth under this chapter.

3.3.1. Understanding age groups and generations

When looking at the process of the continuation of culture and the perpetuation of social and family traditions, the interaction between the different age groups in, as an example, a familiar setting is remarkably important. These different age groups are parts of a fixed structure, "persistent in their form and function even as the people in them live and die" (Durham & Cole, 2007, pages 15-16). The pillar of this structure lies precisely in the differentiation between the groups that precede and succeed them, making their differentiation also a connection point to all of them (Durham & Cole, 2007). In a family setting, the structure could be exemplified as the differentiation and the connection between parent, child and grandchild; and even if these members are alive or not, they remain included in this structure perpetually.

The observation of such structure enlightens how this biological factor is translated to the social context, "providing a powerful symbolic and practical terrain for marking and naturalizing relations of hierarchy and dependency, difference and sameness, as well as patterns of temporality" (Durham & Cole, 2007, page 13). Meaning that the age of a person influences directly on how they will interact to different people and also how they are perceived socially. Different age groups are most likely prone to experience different kinds of social interactions while navigating the society. As a middle-aged individual (in many societies) would expect to be treated differently by younger individuals, while he addresses an elderly one in a specific manner, and experiences a sense of 'sameness' with other individuals of the same age group, generating yet another form of social interaction.

Even with its fixed nature, the age groups forming the so-called 'generational structure' are still agents of social change. Implying the duality within the generational web, that is a media for both cultural reproduction and change. Collective events (locally or globally) have a direct impact on how different age groups are perceived and interact among themselves. And the changes coming as a result of that are not a product of one generation in particular, but of the relationship between them, "as

people negotiate, pragmatically and emotionally to manage the present and to reproduce desirable and livable futures” (Durham & Cole, 2007, pages 2-3).

In despite of the clear association of social change with the relationship between the different age groups, Karl Mannheim (as cited by Durham & Cole, 2007) correlates social changes with “groups of youth who came of age at roughly the same time” (Durham & Cole, 2007, page 16), placing the ‘youth’ as the most expressive actor of social change, and in this way, carving his definition of a ‘generation’. The thought behind that definition lies on Mannheim’s concept of ‘fresh contact’, that happens when “young people, reaching adulthood, ‘come into contact anew’ with their accumulated sociocultural heritage [...] and develop a novel perspective upon it...” (Mannheim, 1972, as cited by Durham & Cole, 2007, page 18). The fresh contact pictures an initial clash between an individual’s previous life perspectives, inherited mostly by his original background, formed by family and the community he was inserted in; and to a new life perspective, met in a new social context, with a new social role, as an adult.

Individuals experience ‘fresh contact’ several times throughout their lives, through, as an example, changes of “residence and statuses” (Durham & Cole, 2007, page 18). Still, Mannheim (as cited by Durham & Cole, 2007) places the youth at the center of what he calls ‘social rejuvenation’, by saying that the ones coming of age usually have more impactful experiences than the ones who have “already formed a series of social entanglements and well-established patterns” (Durham & Cole, 2007, page 18). Being able to connect an individual’s personal story to collective events in a time where an individual makes a big transition to another life-phase, the adulthood, puts the youth at the most favorable place for being the ones triggering social change, and therefore, creating social rejuvenation (Durham & Cole, 2007).

However, as mentioned before, no single generation can be said to be responsible for social change, as it is a product of the relationship between them. New behaviors, world perspectives and socioeconomic opportunities were only made possible by the direct participation of earlier generations and the interactions between them with the youngest, in their present context (Durham & Cole, 2007). Ester, Mohler and Vinken (2006) thoroughly describe that process in the following extract:

“Older generations were socialized in periods characterized by famine, warfare, and economic insecurity and therefore hold materialist values such as physical security and safety. Younger generations (in the US and the Western part of the EU), however, were raised in relatively peaceful, famine-absent, prosperous times and therefore can give more priority to postmaterialist values such as having a say in politics,

freedom of speech, quality of life, self expression, and self-esteem. Value change, in short, is attributed to generational differences in formative dynamics, life chances, and cohort-peer socialization.” – (Ester, Braun & Mohler, 2006, page 21).

Having that outlined, it became clear the dynamics between age groups, family relations and social and world events, forming the concept of generations. Using the generations as a tool of research in this project will make possible the observation of the impacts of globalization in the individual sphere, while grouping them back to different generations in order to identify a possible trend on spirituality in the current date of this research.

3.3.2. The generations

In this project, the concept and labeling of generations will be based on the American perspective, taking as examples facts and events that took place in the USA's historical context. As of the American predominance over the political and cultural exchange through media internationally, the nomenclatures used here are regularly used globally in marketing strategies and the media in general, and therefore, was chosen to be represented here, with the intention of making the concept more relatable to the wider public, also taking in consideration my own background and context of study, being based on Western points of view.

As discussed previously, generations are groups of people within the same age group, in a certain time period. The most expressive social and global events taking place over that time most likely affect direct or indirectly the individuals under that context, challenging their personal and world views, while also changing how other generations' perceive them; and ultimately, giving a name to that specific generation. As Lauren Troska (2016) affirms: “generational legacies are formed out of major events like wars, economic stability and instability, or population growth” (Troska, 2016, page 6).

The time frame that determines each generation is not unanimity between scholars, so consequently, the ones being used in this research will be the ‘Silent Generation (1925 - 1945), the Baby Boomer Generation (1946 - 1964), the Generation X (1965 - 1980) and the Millennial Generation (1981 - 2003) – (Troska, 2016, page 7).

GENERATION NAME	BIRTH YEARS	MAJOR EVENTS
WWII Generation (Renamed “The Greatest Generation” in 1990s)	1901-1924	The Great Depression World War II
Silent Generation	1925-1945	End of WWII & The Great Depression
Baby Boomer Generation	1946-1964	Hippie Movement, Vietnam War & Anti- Segregation Laws
Generation X	1965-1980	Lunar Landing & Ending of Vietnam War & 1973 Oil Embargo
Millennial Generation	1981-2003	9/11, 2008 Recession
Generation Z	2003-Present	Boom In Technology

Figure 3 – Overview on the generations (Troska, 2016)

The chart above summarizes the generations to be described and analyzed further on this research, while it also presents two generations that will not be addressed, but that as generations are categorized in relation to one another, it is relevant to include them as well.

3.3.3. The Silent Generation (1925 - 1945)

The Silent Generation was directly impacted by the World War II, by many of them having parents or close relatives participating on the war, by being inserted in a society under war and also by experiencing the end of it, providing them a world with globalized “goods, ideas and technology” (Troska, 2016, page 13). Through all this, they were witnesses and participants of a major societal transition, from a society on war mode, to a more tranquil and fruitful environment. This transition led the society to a state of recovery, in which its youth was seen as ‘ready to conform’, and read as being ‘silent’, as they did not live under the urge of ‘life-changing’ news at all times. The focus of this generation was to secure their financial and social stability, in order to enjoy life; a big shift from the ‘World War II’ generation, which biggest common trait was the uncertainty (Troska, 2016, page 14).

The jobs created during the war, and the increase of the trade flows from the United States to other countries after the war highly increased the local industry’s profit, boosting the American capitalism worldwide and generating an economical “Golden Age of success”, enlarging the American middle class and causing them to have an unprecedented power of purchase (Troska, 2019, page 19). The said scenario rewrote

the narrative of “The American Dream”, that now consists basically of financial abundance, job security, family well being and experiencing the good things in life; also, the Silent Generation middle class children would not have to work, unlike their parents. In that way, the problems for that generation were about the economy, the family life and businesses (Troska, 2016).

There was a significant cultural change on American society at that time, in which money was at the heart of all matters and television was the protagonist of that era, uniting all the generations. The central positioning of television this period is due to the fact that the Silent generation was exposed to it in a much younger age than the previous ones, creating a generational gap and turning into a source of concern to World War II parents, criticizing the impacts of early and abundant exposure of television to kids at a young age (Troska, 2016, pages 22-23).

The biggest cultural shift happening in the Silent Generation takes place with the emergence of a ‘youth culture’, something the previous generations haven’t experienced before. The youth now has a larger duration and it engages in topics around ‘television culture’ and ‘consumerism culture’, something that was not possible before, since the World War II generation had already joined the work force by then. The ‘youth culture’, seen as being based on superficialities, came to be a big part of the American culture later on (Troska, 2016, pages 24-25). The Silent Generation also starred the divorce movement and the midlife crisis, while experiencing an economic prosperous society and again, unlike their parents, preferring to work for large companies and choosing their working conditions, as they did esteemed their personal well-being in relation to work as well (Troska, 2016, page 33).

3.3.4. The Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964)

While the Silent Generation started the ‘youth culture’, the Baby Boomers changed their society through the youth culture. The calm, unbothered feeling of the previous generation still is a part of the Baby Boomers generation, as they are also a post war generation, experiencing the profits and feeling of peacefulness after it. But the way Baby Boomers navigated the society, dealt and claimed for change is the most prominent trait of differentiation between them and the previous generation (Troska, 2016, page 35).

“Baby Boomers didn’t seem to care that they were different from their parents, and outwardly expressed their

visions for their own culture rather than standing by 'in silence' like its parents." – (Troska, 2016, page 36).

The influences on the changing of culture of Baby Boomers can be attributed to the Cold War, to the War of Vietnam to the assassination of American president John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King (Troska, 2016, page 36). The expressive increase of the birth rate impacted all the spheres of the American society, from "fashion and music", to "education and crime rates", generating the counterculture that happened especially during the 1960s, while still experiencing economic prosperity (Troska, 2016, page 39).

A big social change affecting the Baby Boomers was the fact that they were introduced to consumerism at a very early age, something their parents only experience later on their lives. Even so, that Lauren Troska highlights them as being labeled as 'exceptional consumers', even as children. Quoting an article from Times Magazine in 1947, she stresses out the fact that, for the first time babies were referred to as consumers:

"[...] thanks to the rise in marriages during the war, and to general prosperity, the U.S. added 2,800,00 more consumers to its population in 1947." – (Times Magazine, as cited by Troska, 2016, page 40)

In that way, Baby Boomers were born as consumers and valued the most the 'new' versus the 'old', one of the epitomes of consumerism. Besides the economical prosperity of the times, the members of this generation suffered the impacts of the Cold War, experiencing the fear of unexpected foreign attacks and atomic bombs, while going through bomb simulations during their school time. A threat the previous generation, the Silent Generation did not go through (Troska, 2016, page 44). Entertainment for the young ones was also following the same route, as comic books presented stories not only of superheroes and adventure, but also brought contemporary social critique. Through the comic books, young children and teenagers were acquainted and participating on issues around the world; raising the concern of the parents of the exposition of their children to violent themes early on in life (Troska, 2016, pages 45-46).

When coming of age around the 1960s, Baby Boomers (especially in college) started questioning societal values, in the name of freedom, originating the 'Counterculture Movement', in which they tried to find alternative ways of living life and building a society. "They craved the certainty of their parents, schools, and religions

had been unable to give them” (Jones, as cited by Troska, 2016, page 49). This uncertainty lies on the widely different life perspective Boomers had to the former ‘World War II’ generation in which they question everything and that can be very well illustrated in the following testimony:

“I didn’t want to go to Vietnam, I didn’t think I had nothing to fight for. I don’t think anyone knew why I was over there... I often wondered what they would have told my parents if I had been killed. That I died for my country?” – (R. W. Mullen, as cited by Troska, 2016, page 49).

At the time of the Vietnam war, among other internal issues, the era of economic prosperity came to an end in the USA in the beginning of the 1970s, when the main population concerns “shifted from social concerns to economic concerns” (Troska, 2016, page 52). Under these terms, the Baby Boomers became now categorized as the generation that placed their efforts in economic success over social success, as a result of the given times, a very different scenario of the beginning of their era.

3.3.5. Generation X (1965 - 1980)

Unlike the Baby Boomers and Millennials, the Generation X did not receive much media coverage and criticism, as they inherited a failing economy from their parents and did not come across substantial cultural changes in society. Lauren Troska (2016) mentions an article that labels Generation X as the ‘neglected middle child’, since researchers and the overall public treats this generation as a bridge from the Baby Boomers to the Millennial generation (Troska, 2016, page 58). Under these circumstances, I gathered information about the Generation X through online articles and magazines, in order to outline and understand this generation’s specificities in relation to the others.

As mentioned above, Generation X, as the Silent Generation is seen as a transitional generation, with no major social and economical changes. Also, by not having a ‘blatant cultural identifier’, the letter X was addressed to this generation, “illustrating the undetermined characteristics they would come to be known by” (Kasasa, 2020). Still, that does not mean that the world was stable and provided security for people at the time. Economically, the Generation X experienced the internet and online market boost, suffered the global financial crisis of 2008 and the

Great Recession; while dealing with the expectations of supporting financially not only their children, but their elderly parents, due to the increase of life span and the postponement on becoming parents themselves (Kagan, Investopedia, 2019). In addition to that, other shaping events of Generation X were the “end of the Cold War, [and] the rise of personal computing” (Kasasa, 2020).

On purchasing habits, compared to Baby Boomers, the members of Generation X were found to be more ‘self-directed’ and ‘tech-savvy’, preferring to use online tools in order to do business and make financial decisions, relying more on online ‘peer reviews’ than the ones from the previous generations, that have a preference and bigger trust on direct professional advice (Kagan, Investopedia, 2019). As to their media consumption habits, Generation X members consume traditional media, such as radio, magazines newspapers and television, but are also heavy users especially of television and Facebook (online network) – spending more hours in this specific social media than any other generation (Kasasa, 2020). In terms of financial perspectives, according to a study conducted by JP Morgan Asset Management (as cited by Kagan, Investopedia, 2019), the X’ers are on “[...] track to become the first generation to be worse off in terms of being prepared for retirement than their parents” (Kagan, Investopedia, 2019).

According to another survey, conducted by the Nielsen Company (as cited by Kagan, Investopedia, 2019), more than half of the Generation X members affirmed they were in debt; 23% of them maintained personal economic savings and were confident in them; and about 24% of X’ers “expected Social Security as their main source of retirement income” (Kagan, Investopedia, 2019). As a result of that, almost three quarters of Americans aged 35 to 50 years old affirm that they plan to continue to work after their official retirement, as they do not seem to rely on Social Security; but also due to personal aspirations (Ameriprise, 2015; as cited by Kagan, Investopedia, 2019). Such aspirations are related to the fact that most individuals do not want to withdraw themselves from the mental, physical and social stimuli that are present in the work environment. And even when they do retire, they seek a different kind of life and experiences, in which they can be physically and intellectually active, which can include travelling, performing physical activities and doing “meaningful volunteer work” (Kagan, Investopedia, 2019).

“The new reality is that Gen Xers are planning to reinvent retirement. They don’t have an on-off switch in terms of leaving the workforce and instead anticipate a gradual evolution

into this new phase of life, which really sets this generation apart.” – (Keckler, as cited by Kagan, Investopedia, 2019).

Some cultural shifts particular of the Xers are in the way they resisted social norms, by creating their own ways of life, being actually the bridge from an analog world to an interconnected world. This generation faces the social conventions by not rebelling or conforming to them, like the Silent and Boomer generations; but by stirring their own individual paths, not necessarily aiming for social approval. The American magazine *The New York Times* illustrates this way of being with the following description: “They crave entertainment, but their attention span is as short as one zap of a TV dial. They hate yuppies, hippies and druggies. They postpone marriage because they dread divorce. They sneer at Range Rovers, Rolexes and red suspenders” (The New York Times, 2019). Maybe being this bridge in between worlds is the biggest cultural signifier of this generation itself; as the Generation X was both the last generation to experience the analog world and the one to develop and immerse into an interconnected world by the internet.

“But our lo-fi world ended on October 13, 1994 with the introduction of the Netscape browser, which made it possible to actually ‘surf’ the ‘net’, to invoke a term that has aged a lot worse than vinyl albums. In the coastal capitals of capitalism, opportunity, suddenly, was in the air.” – (The New York Times, 2019).

3.3.6. Millennial Generation (1981 - 2003)

The Millennials are the children of both Baby Boomers and Generation Xers, having a bigger cultural gap between the first ones than the later mentioned. When reaching the youth period and getting knowledge about the youth of their own parents - in which they dealt with far less rules by the same age; Millennials started questioning the society's institutions, established by the Baby Boomers (Troska, 2016, page 56). The most widely name for the group of people born between the years 1981 and 2003 is linked to the fact that these individuals would ‘come of age’ right in the turn of the millennia, at the year of 2000. Other names considered for this generation were “‘Don’t label Us,’ Generation Y (or Why?), Generation Tech, Generation Next, Generation.com, Generation 2000, Echo Boom, Boomer Babies, and Generation XX” (Troska, 2016, page 57).

The main trait on this generation's early years is on how their parents overprotected them in the most different ways. As the Boomers lived in a 'tumultuous' time and the Generation X witnessed the end of the Vietnam and Cold War, they both had this urge to protect their children from 'the evils of the world', and technology was these parents biggest ally on fulfilling that intent (Troska, 2016, pages 60-61). By using technological devices, parents were able to have constant surveillance and availability to their children, what made possible the existence of the concept of the 'helicopter parent', meaning that the children would be surrounded by the parents guidance and direct interference, at all times and all places (Troska, 2016).

"Indeed, the cell phone has ever been considered the 'world's longest umbilical cord' giving parents full access to their children." – (Troska, 2016, page 62).

The 'helicopter' parenting is a way to assure that their children would be provided with what each parent judges the best, having a big impact on children's education. If a parent was not content with a school's method, they would change the child to another school; if the school system wasn't living up to their standards, they would then homeschool their children; as the same, are expected to achieve the highest grades since an early age, in a way to already prepare for a future college education (Troska, 2016, page 62). In addition to formal education, Millennials were also engaged at a young age in competitive extracurricular activities, to an extent that "seventy-three percent of students by the late 1980s were involved in extracurricular activities", from that, another way of addressing Millennial individuals appears, as the "Trophy Generation" (Troska, 2016, page 64).

With a competitive mindset within a failing economy, Millennials experienced an environment that searched for "instant gratification in buying consumer goods", in which television boomed with "instant-winning money" shows in the 80's and 90's, while most of the households had both of the parents working outside of the home (Troska, 2016, page 66). This different scenario caused yet another change on the market and advertising, when in the previous generation the main target were the parents, in the Millennial generation, the advertisement then started being made directly for the children, which were the ones spending most time watching the television (Troska, 2016, page 67). This relationship Millennial children had with technology and media, created an even bigger generational gap between them and the previous generations, as Elizabeth Weil (as cited by Troska, 2016) exemplifies in the following extract:

“[...] adults tend to see all things computer-related as work, even when they’re play; kids tend to see them as play, even when they’re work. It’s a profoundly different mindset.” – (Elizabeth Weil, as cited by Troska, 2016, page 68).

The way Millennials see and deal institutions is also a product of events occurring especially during their time. As the Baby Boomers rebelled and questioned the society with the Vietnam War, Millennials experienced and were (still are) affected by the ongoing wars of our time and the constant threat of terrorism. Such events makes Millennials see institutions as a way of making the world a safer place, and that is where they place the value on the institution, as a media for social change and a place of the effort of a possible outcome of security (Troska, 2016, page 69). Troska (2016) goes further, linking the early engagement in social activities of Millennials with the way they deal with the society and its institutions, different to the Baby Boomers that created social change through mass protests, Millennials chose the ‘hands on’ approach, by engaging on activism and community service, and technology plays a big role on that (Troska, 2016, page 71).

“The Baby Boomer Generation had to make changes by word of mouth, but because the Millennials had technology, they were able to do it faster and more efficiently.” – (Troska, 2016, page 71).

Following the same mindset, the work ethics is also undergoing a big transformation, as the Millennials do not have as their main motivation a large paycheck; to them, “flexible work hours and personal fulfillment” are far more important (Troska, 2016, page 73). Therefore, it also affects the professional relationships they have with companies, as they no longer want long careers in only one place, as it would require them a money-driven mindset (Troska, 2016, page 74). Linked with that, it is the change of the professionals available at the job market at the present moment, as many of the Millennial members have higher education degrees, but in unconventional areas.

A study conducted by the Executive Office of the President’s Council of Economic Advisors (of The USA), found that “Millennials are more likely to study social science or applied fields – like communications, criminal justice, and library science – that do not fit into traditional liberal arts curricula” (as cited by Troska, 2016, pages 76-77). Another fact stressed about this is that these fields do not offer guaranteed jobs

after their completion, creating another generational gap between Millennials and the previous generations that find difficult to understand the choices of the youngest (Troska, 2016, page 77). Under that note, there is still much to see on how the Millennial era will continue to develop and express themselves locally and globally, as they are challenging and undergoing social changes of all forms.

3.4. Understanding globalization

Globalization is a multidimensional concept, it is all the same an “object, a perspective and a horizon” (Velho, 1997, as cited by Robertson & White, 2007, page 55), and when studied, needs to have the many of its dimensions taken into consideration. However, when globalization is taken as a perspective, the world can be analyzed in a unique way, as a whole. In the article “What is Globalization?”, Roland Robertson and Kathleen White (2007) briefly summarize the concept by saying:

“[...] globalization may be understood as the direction in which the world considered as a whole is moving.” – (Velho, 1997, as cited by Robertson & White, 2007, page 55)

Despite the current use of the term ‘globalization’ in the later years, globalization has been identified and discussed under the same name since the 1970’s and 1980’s in different academic fields. Becoming a popular term especially in the 1990’s after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, creating a divide between scholars, in which one part has a mostly economic perspective on it, and the others that chose a wider view on the process (Robertson & White, 2007, page 55). The economic perspective on globalization is based on the development and implementation of international policies created by the most affluent nations at the time, promoting the free trade, open markets and privatization of assets. A movement labeled as ‘neoliberalism’, opening ways for even more international trade and the operation of multinational companies and organizations; dividing the opinion of many scholars and people in general, seen as fruitful by some, and harmful by others (Robertson & White, 2007, pages 55-56).

Scholars that look into globalization from a wider perspective, applied this phenomena into different areas of knowledge, such as “sociology, political science and anthropology”, with the general idea of the world becoming a “single place”; questioning the most basic place of their study, which is society itself (Robertson & White, 2007, page 56). As many consider the rise of interconnectivity as being the most

significant trait of globalization, it is often neglected a more subjective trait of globalization, which is the increase of the global consciousness, which also considers culture as a participant on it. And by global consciousness, the very collective notion of a 'humanity', is already an expressive example of it, affecting people and societies in a global scale (Robertson & White, 2007, page 56).

"[...] while interconnectivity has been considered by political scientists, international relations specialists and economists as the defining feature of globalization, consciousness has been studied more by anthropologists, sociologists and cultural historians." – (Robertson & White, 2007, page 56)

Connecting both the economic and social discourse on globalization, Robertson & White (2007) highlight the fact that none of them should be addressed entirely separated from one another, as they are all interconnected. As an example, they address the "social and economic practices" that were disseminated through business and trade initiatives, causing a standardization of the different markets, even in the effort of adapting to different cultures. Further explaining it, the paradoxical relationship between economic efforts and culture, acts in a way that the "expansion of capitalism around the world has of seeming necessity involved the elevation of the cultural themes" (Robertson & White, 2007, pages 57-58).

As much as being a global process, looked at mostly from a macro-perspective, globalization affects and is also affected by individuals, generating change and reflecting the social changes coming from the sphere of the 'self' – that through this phenomenon experiences also the process of individualization (Robertson & White, 2007, page 60). This individualization process turns the individual into a unique isolated being, responsible for his/her actions, in which the society as local and global also depends on the individual's contribution to it. And such individuality, makes possible the so-called 'manipulation of individual identities', when the self can "assume a variety of forms and modes of representation, such as the 'racial', the national, the class, the religious, the gender and so on" (Robertson & White, 2007, page 61). And being an individual in the context of a society, the 'self-identity' becomes a paradox between belonging and not belonging, between "similarity and uniqueness", in which the individual expresses their "uniqueness in terms of a common mode of presentation", that can be exemplified by fashion, for instance (Robertson & White, 2007, page 61).

3.4.1. Globalization within culture

Looking back on the broad concept of globalization, John Tomlinson (2007) summarizes it as being generally the description of the “material, social, economic and cultural life in the modern world”, as well as its implications (page 352). He further describes it as being the flow around these networks, globally, “of virtually everything that characterizes modern life: flows of capital, commodities, people, knowledge, information and ideas, crime, pollution, diseases, fashions, beliefs, images and so forth” (Tomlinson, 2007, page 352). Having said so, we experience globalization in every aspect of our daily lives, having an impact on social behavior and collective aspirations and fears, shaped by global events.

“[...] from the shadow cast by terrorist attacks to worries over global warming, influenza pandemics or how fluctuations in the global economy are likely to affect our job security, our taxes or the interest payments on our home loans. In all these ways, it is quite clear that we are living in a much more globally connected world today than even 20 years ago, and in no longer historical terms the level of global interdependence is without precedence.” – (Tomlinson, 2007, pages 352-353)

Similar to the individualization process, the same occurs among cultures and territories, and this process is called ‘deterritorialization’. With deterritorialization, culture is no longer so fixated to its original geographical location, or so much to its grounding traits such as their relation to local identity and definitions. With the globalization flows and interconnectivity, individuals and societies experience in their own localities - in different ways-, cultures from distant places, possibly changing the meanings of their own cultural practices, but also of the different cultures they are being exposed to. But even with that potential change of understanding one’s own culture and the different ones, the ‘travelling’ cultural products and influences always “retain a high degree of cultural distinctiveness”, even in the most metropolitan areas of the world (Tomlinson, 2007, page 360).

Therefore, deterritorialization does not erase the local aspect of the travelling culture, but instead, integrates them into a new cultural context, confirming the connection that is central to the discussion of globalization. And the integration of new cultures into a new locality, promotes a cultural shift in the individuals and their notions of what is global and what is local, what is familiar or not, and consequently being able to change even a social and national identity of the said location (Tomlinson, 2007,

page 361). Another form of deterritorialization takes place through the media and the internet, in which the individual itself is able to detach from their location and virtually travel to different places. This most recent facet of deterritorialization challenges basic social interactions, societies' values and the way people navigate in the world, as global actors themselves. Such experience is called 'telemediatization', making an allusion to the various screens we navigate through, being mobile phones, computers, televisions and the many variations of them. The immediacy of such devices and experiences is the biggest trait of the "contemporary youth culture" (Tomlinson, 2007, pages 361-362). Characterizing a youth that in a few instants can communicate with other individuals at the other side of the globe, purchase the most diverse and exotic products and contact in first hand local and global institutions, located nearly everywhere.

4. Analysis

With the aim to understand how spirituality is perceived and experienced in the Brazilian and Danish societies, while also trying to identify one or more tendencies for spirituality in the future; the data generated through the online questionnaires will be treated as a "screenshot" of the moment each participant answered the survey. In order to understand the role of spirituality in both societies, an investigation will be carried out on how the individuals see their families, their concept of spirituality, whether they interact or not on social media, and how they classify themselves. The key point is to reflect on whether globalization - meaning the flows of information, cultural products and increased transit of people; has impacted in both the Brazilian and Danish societies. This will be measured by using the concept of generations as a metric tool, in order to observe how each generation see and express themselves and their environment; with the intent to create a linear way of analysis and be able to identify possible ongoing or future trends for the role and (if at all) expression of spirituality in the Danish and Brazilian respondent groups.

It is important to bring to the attention that the findings of this analysis cannot reflect the entire population of Brazil and Denmark, so therefore they reflect the views and experiences of the group of participants that took part of this online survey. Their answers are being analyzed and seen through exploratory glasses, magnifying indicators of measurements and the correlation of the studied concepts.

As defined beforehand in the Theoretical framework, spirituality and culture share roots within both individuals and communities, as a shared experience and institutions. Also, since Brazil and Denmark are culturally distant to one another, it is very important to understand better each culture and ways of expression; therefore, the studies made on the Brazilian and the Danish culture using the Geert Hofstede's cultural theory as a base, will be used as one of the codes for analysis of the gathered data.

The respondents will be first divided according to their country of origin, and then gathered in three different groups, according to the generation they are a part of, being: The Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. Each generation will be analyzed separately with the application of 3 different codes that encompass the theories presented in this project, which are: Culture, Globalization and Notions of spirituality. Afterwards, a discussion comparing the two different results will be made, to see their differences and most importantly, similarities among the changes they both are going through during the generations, also to spot if globalization and the contact with media, travel and cultural products play a role on this. Ultimately, the existence or insurgence of a trend on spirituality on both countries individually and combined will be discussed in the final considerations.

The online survey had 235 participants in total, with the majority of the respondents being members of the Millennial generation, followed by the Xers and Baby Boomers, having not reached directly any respondent from the Silent Generation.

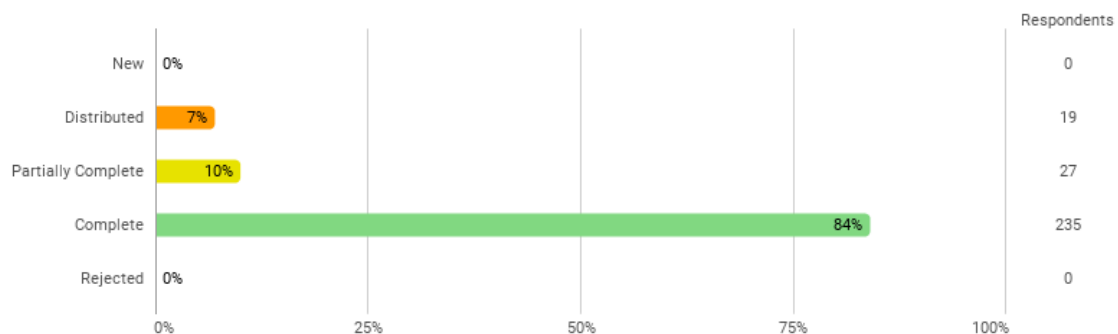


Figure 4 - Overall status

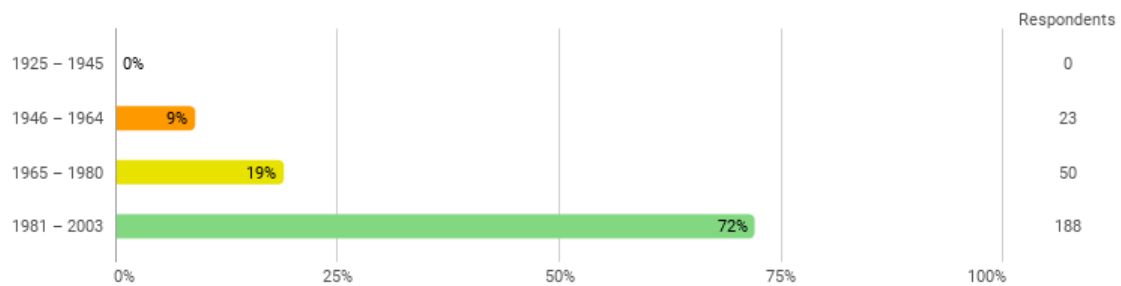


Figure 5 - Q1: When were you born?

As an initial effort and before choosing to focus on the Brazilian and Danish populations, the survey was distributed to several people in different countries. To keep track of the different nationalities being reached, the questionnaire was translated to 7 different languages, asking each participant the country they were born in. As a result, 51% of the participants answered the Portuguese version of the survey, followed by 19% of the Danish version, 11% of the English, 10% in Spanish, 4% in Cantonese (Chinese), 3% in Italian and 1% in French.

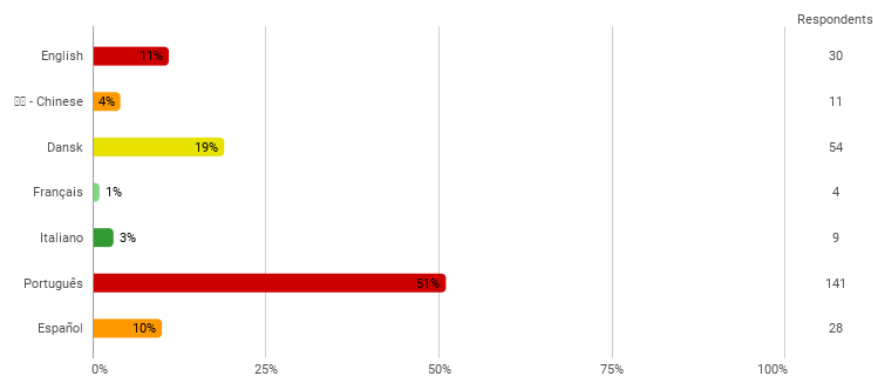


Figure 6 – The available languages of the questionnaire

As to their location of birth, there were respondents of complete and partially complete questionnaires from 5 continents, in which the majority was born in Brazil (137), while the others are spread in different proportions among different countries. And, as a result of the answers obtained, the decision was to focus on the comparison of the two populations with the biggest number of respondents, which are Brazil and Denmark. In order to balance the results and analysis, the number of Brazilian answered questionnaires (137) that were accessed and had their data crossed with the different variables was diminished, in order to match the number of Danish respondents (47 in total) of each generation.

4.1. Spirituality in the different generations

As no member of the Silent Generation was reached by the online questionnaire, the generations to be analyzed in depth in this research will be the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X and the Millennial generation. Each group will have their answers divided and compared according to three separate codes, which are Culture, Globalization and Notions of spirituality. In order to make a better comparison, the Brazilian and Danish populations will be analyzed alternately in each code, as a way to visualize better any differences and similarities existing.

4.1.1. The Baby Boomer Generation



Figure 7 – Baby Boomer description. Available at:

<https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>

4.1.1.1. Culture

Brazilian Baby Boomers

When asked about how religious the Brazilian Baby Boomers consider their family of origin, the majority consider their family of origin to be religious, indicating the contact with religion and religious institutions since an early age and being part of the family life. While 75% of them consider their families of origin to be religious, the other 25% say their original families are not religious, but are spiritual in a more fluid way, indicating how some of them prefer to not attach themselves to an institution, but also don't dismiss the concept of spirituality as whole, engaging with it in flexible, different ways. The non existence of households that were classified as not being religious or

spiritual at all, calls the attention to a society in which the social norm appears to include a religious practice or at least the existence of the idea of spirituality. Together with that, also 75% of Brazilian Baby Boomer respondents distinguish the concept of spirituality to the existence of religious institutions, while answering that they believe a person can be “spiritual” but not religious. Also, 7 out of 8 of the interviewees judge spirituality to be a personal experience, instead of a collective one. Also, none of them affirmed to not believe in spirituality.

The cultural research done by Hofstede Insights (2020) corresponds to the results obtained at the survey conducted at this research, when related to the Power Distance dimension, Brazilians tend to spend more time in close contact with their immediate family, which includes cohabitating with elder members of the family at a young and adult age, since individuals are expected to take care of the older members of the family. This fact, together with the different ways of navigating the society, based on hierarchy, seniority and so on, puts a light on how cultural values and traditions, such as religion and spirituality are more prone to be perpetuated and less questioned. Especially when reflecting on the differences of power relations between different generations in a household, and as a leading figure in a religious institution; having a society that has a tendency to show a different way of respect (increased) to seniors and prominent figures, and how they are in very close connection throughout an individual's life; enlightens the nature of the results obtained. The fact that the even the Baby Boomer generation (seen as more rebel to societal norms and then conforming at a later stage in life) appears to not break these social and cultural values related to religion and spirituality, shows evidence on how power relations and a collectivist approach to life is significant in the Brazilian society.

Connected to the collectivist nature of the Brazilian society, is the emphasis on building stable, trustful and lasting relationships in other areas of life, including work and business, that could not be very different in terms of religion and ways of living. That leads to the thought of Brazilians remaining with their ancestral, familiar traditions and beliefs, and if not, making a change on their own beliefs and traditions also in a slowly more cautious fashion. A behavior that could also explain how most Brazilians that identified their family of origin as not being religious, were still classified as being ‘spiritual’, not walking away completely from the concept of spirituality, as it is a part of their shared experience with family and their surroundings. The Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension also communicates with the results, as they identify the Brazilian society as one that appreciates and need a more structured society and life in general. Rules and laws are used in order to create a sense of safety for the community, and in terms of culture, traditions and navigating through the world as individuals, collectively, religion

provides this sense of safety and stability, need of rules and fixed structure that Brazilians seek.

Danish Baby Boomers

Unless the Brazilian Baby Boomers, the Danish respondents of the same generation mostly identify their original families as not being religious, with 57% answering negatively to the question, followed by 28% considering their parents and/or grandparents as being not very religious, practicing it only on special dates; having only one respondent that consider their family as religious and no respondents at all identifying their family of origin as “spiritual in a more fluid way”. Such results indicate that religion and the concept of spirituality is mostly not a part of the family life in the upbringing of the Danish Baby Boomers, with the exception of some households, that would perform religious rituals and follow traditions in special dates; pointing the social motivation behind the experience, as a communal practice and activity. This becomes even more expressive when the respondents are asked about their personal idea of spirituality, having the biggest majority of them (71%) affirming that they do not believe in the concept of spirituality as a whole. Even though the majority personally affirm to not believe in spirituality, equals 71% of the interviewees believe that an individual, in general, can be spiritualized and not follow a specific religion, indicating that despite themselves or their family of origin, they acknowledge a possible separation of the concept of spirituality and religion, being spirituality the bigger frame, in which religion comes in.

Such results accentuate the normative trait of the Danish society and culture, in which there is a need for an “absolute truth”, and the traditions and local culture are highly respected and perpetuated. So, even though the Danish society and its individuals tend to welcome and deal well with changes, the values and traditions where they stand are held to a standard of “absolute truth”, providing the sense of safety and stability, allowing the individuals to focus on short-term goals, in which changes play a big role. In relation to spirituality and religious institutions, as individuals, most of the Baby Boomers interviewed do not believe in the existence of spirituality, but they acknowledge the existence of such concept in the shared experience, as a community. Not in a fluid way, but in special dates, according to a religion institution.

Even though Danes in general, are not very religious individuals, religion is kept alive in the social sphere as a sort of center piece for cultural reference, in a way that

the national church is commonly known as *Folkekirken*, which stands for “The Church of the People” in Danish (“Folkekirken,” n.d.). The role of religion in the Danish society has a prominent cultural value, being highlighted by the Danish National Church’s website (in English: www.lutheranchurch.dk) and the country’s promotional website maintained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (www.denmark.dk), in which the national religion and church have their ancient story told and also how the religious institution holds the place of a cultural institution, mentioning that even though 75% of the population is registered at the Evangelical Lutheran Church, only a fifth of them consider themselves as being religious, and in fact, most of the population participate on the church mainly once a year, highlighting Christmas Eve. Also, in order to hold an event at the national church, such as a baptism, a wedding, a confirmation, it is necessary to pay for the church taxes and become a member (“denmark.dk”, n.d.).

The convergence of the answers obtained in this research’s online questionnaire with the data gathered by the State and Hofstede Insights, combined with the individual perspective over spirituality of the participants made it even more clear how Danish Baby Boomers tend to have a social motivation towards spirituality and religion, in a way that it is mostly only recognized in a cultural and social setting, but not according to an individual recognition of a spiritual experience.

4.1.1.2. Globalization

Brazilian Baby Boomers

When trying to assess how many Brazilian Baby Boomers have lived abroad and how the experience impacted them, the results showed that currently all the respondents live in Brazil, having two of them already lived abroad (25%). The two respondents affirm that the experience has impacted their view of the world and personal beliefs, with one saying that it had big impact and the other saying that it had a smaller impact. Still, both of the interviewees acknowledge how their contact with different people and different cultures can change individual perspectives, obtained from their home culture.

But when it comes to the Brazilian Baby Boomer respondents, living abroad or not, the results are significantly split in regards of their familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies. 50% of the respondents state that are familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, with a bigger interest to the different ways of expressing spirituality; while 37.5% affirm not having familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, as they

prioritize to cultivate their own beliefs. The opposite mindsets mirror the dynamic that appear when describing the Baby Boomer Generation, having part of the generation as being more open to changes and rebelling against social norms, while other group stick to the social norms and values, seeking the feeling of safety and security. A smaller number of respondents (25%) affirm that they are familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, but the biggest motivation is the cultural factor, while none answered that they have no interest in the topic of spirituality.

When inquired about their social media and cultural products consumption, 50% of the Brazilian Baby Boomers confirmed that they do follow and engage with social media accounts that approach spiritual-related themes, as they find them very inspirational, while another 25% do so for entertainment purposes; only 25% of the respondents answered that they do not follow or interact with such social media accounts at all. That highlights how active and engaged Brazilian Baby Boomers are in social media, more so while interacting with topics of their own interest, such as spirituality. Their significant presence on social media, and in such specific topics such as their interest on spirituality, shows how actively Baby Boomers participate and contribute to the flows of information that goes worldwide through the internet. In regards of the consumption of cultural products, the answers obtained are quite similar to the participation on social media. 50% of the respondents consume spiritual related movies, series, podcasts and etc, on streaming services, while 37.5% do so mostly on traditional media, such as television and radio. Only one respondent stated that they prefer to watch or listen to different kind of content.

When it comes to globalization and participating on the flows of information, the Brazilian Baby Boomers appear as mostly spiritualized, big consumers of cultural products and social media. The importance of religion and/or spirituality for them is consistently reaffirmed through the majority of the answers, surpassing the interest for the topic for only educational and entertainment purposes. But as a highly spiritualized group, they express, exchange and experience it online and very actively.

Danish Baby Boomers

When it comes to living abroad, all of the 7 Danish Baby Boomers have already lived abroad; having one of them still living out of their country of origin, and the 6 others experienced it for 5 months or less. Regarding whether the experience had an impact on their personal beliefs and views of the world or not, 42% of the respondents affirm that living abroad did not have a big impact, since they are very grounded on

their own beliefs and values, so that did not change with the experience away from home. In opposition to that, 28% of the respondents (the second largest group) affirmed that living abroad has significantly impacted the way they view the world and their beliefs, showing that discussed duality characteristic to the Baby Boomer Generation, in which they have a more open and eager for change group, while also has a more traditional group, that chooses security over instability.

In terms of their familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, the Danish Baby Boomers presented divided results, with 3 equally predominant groups. The first group is the ones that have familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, but with an educational and cultural motivation attached to it; the second group does not have familiarity with different religions and philosophies, as they prefer to deepen their knowledge and focus on their own personal beliefs; and the third group that does not have familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies because it is not a topic of their interest. While all the groups have completely different motivations behind their behaviors, the only commonality among them is the predominance of the individuals that are not familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, all for personal preferences. The normative nature of the Danish society, discussed in the topic above, can be related to these results as well. In a way that shows the Danish Baby Boomers choosing either to dismiss the topic of spirituality, or choose to focus on their original beliefs and philosophies, in correlation to their perception of their national religion being a strong pillar of their own culture and identity, something very essential to the Danish society.

In relation to their social media behavior and consumption of cultural products, the Danish Baby Boomers have all answered that they do not follow or engage with spiritual related content on social media, as well as not consuming this kind of cultural products on neither on streaming services or traditional media (television and radio). These absolute results make clear how the Danish Baby Boomers will probably not individually choose to read, listen or watch content related to spirituality, as affirmed by them previously on the research, spirituality is not a personal interest or something the majority believes. As connecting on social media or consuming content either traditionally or online is mostly an individual act, spirituality and/or religion will not have a significant presence; being reserved for cultural and traditional family events. Having that said, we can affirm that the effect of the global flows of information are kept to a minimum with the Danish Baby Boomers, as their notion of spirituality and beliefs are quite specific and peculiar, different to many other cultures represented on the media and online.

4.1.1.3. Notions of spirituality

Brazilian Baby Boomers

As of the perspective the participants have on themselves when it comes to spirituality, 87.5% of the Brazilian Baby Boomers stated that spirituality is a topic of their interest. Only one of the respondents answered that it was not a big interest of theirs, but they did come across this topic once in a while, showing some level of openness to the topic. The same 87.5% of the participants consider themselves as being spiritualized. 50% of the Brazilian Baby Boomers subscribe to a religion, while 37.5% also affirm positively, but expresses that they do not follow all the rituals and norms of their chosen religion. From the ones that subscribe to a certain religion, only one does not follow the same religion as their parents and/or grandparents, making clear how cultural continuity in the Brazilian society, among the Baby Boomers is a strong trait, as most of the respondents are religious and continue to follow the same religion as their family of origin.

When asked to choose a group/label to which they identify the most as individuals, surprisingly, 50% of the Brazilian Baby Boomers identified as being 'Spiritual', while 25% identified as 'Religious' and the other 25% rejected the idea of choosing one group, choosing the option 'I prefer not to label myself'. The self identifications seen above endorse the significant number of interviewees that either does not follow any religion, or subscribes to the religion of their family of origin, but don't perform all the norms and rituals, possibly as an echo of an individual perspective of their own spirituality, since the vast majority of them believe that spirituality is an individual experience. None of the Brazilian Baby Boomers identified as 'Agnostic' and 'Atheist'.

Danish Baby Boomers

The majority of the Danish Baby Boomers (71%) affirmed not to be interested in spirituality as a topic, in general; having the remaining 28% of the group stating that spirituality is not a topic of their interest, but they do encounter the topic occasionally, showing that they do not dismiss the topic completely. None of the respondents answered yes to the question, showing that generally, it can be said that this group of Danish Baby Boomers do not have any interest in spirituality.

As on how they see and identify themselves, all of the interviewees do not see themselves as being spiritualized, having one of them being subscribed to a religion, but not following all the rituals and norms. This one interviewee that subscribe to a religion, follow the same religion of their parents and/or grandparents; confirming the social and cultural motivation to participating and connecting to the religious institution. When identifying themselves with specific labels/social groups, all the Danish Baby Boomers identify as being 'Atheist', while one identifies as being 'Religious'.

4.1.2. The Generation X



Figure 8 – Generation X description. Retrieved from <https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>

4.1.2.1. Culture

Brazilian Generation X

When asked whether they consider their family of origin to be religious or not, 66% of the Brazilian Xers responded positively to the question, while the second largest group of 25%, do not consider their parents and/or grandparents to be religious, but as being spiritualized in a fluid way. A minority of the group (8%) consider their families to be a bit religious, mostly around special dates. Like the previous generation, the Brazilian Xers also mostly classify their family household as being religious, and also by not having any interviewee that would not consider their family to be religious. As of their perception on how spirituality and religion relate to one another, 79% of the

respondents believe that spirituality is a wider concept, in which religion could be a part of. Still, the other 20.8% of Brazilian Xers does not separate the concept of religion and spirituality, having 8% affirming that they do not believe a person can be spiritual, but not religious; and 12.5% declaring that a spiritualized but not religious person might probably be someone who subscribes to a certain religion, but don't follow all the rituals and traditions. As of their individual perception over spirituality, 79% of the interviewees see spirituality as a personal experience, with 20.8% of them seeing spirituality as a shared experience, as something to be practice in community, together with other people. Like the generation before (Baby Boomers), none of the Xer participants said to not believe in spirituality.

The aspects of power relations, social hierarchy and cultural perpetuation still seem to connect with the Brazilian Xers, as they also perceive their parents and/or grandparents to be mostly religious, and also by having no participants that dismiss the concept of spirituality as a whole. The novelty on Generation X was the shy insurgence of a small group of individuals that attach the existence of a spirituality within a religion; and also by viewing spirituality as a shared experience. The collectivist nature of the Brazilian society seems to come a little more to the surface on Generation X, but still in a small part of the group. As described on the topic about generations, the Generation X is not known for protesting or easily conforming to the social norms, but for building their own norms and space, also in community; a trait that could also be showing in the area of spirituality and how they deal with religion.

Danish Generation X

As of the Danish Xers, the results are quite divided and very different to the results of the previous generation, the Baby Boomers. The majority of the respondents (41%) consider their family of origin to be somewhat religious, but mostly around special dates; while the second largest group (35%) consider their parents and/or grandparents to be religious, with no further explanations; finishing with the remaining 23% of the interviewees, that do not consider their family of origin religious at all. None of the respondents considered their family to be "spiritualized in a more fluid way". About their opinion on the relationship of the concept of spirituality and religion, 82% of the respondents see spirituality as being the bigger frame for religion, not one being necessarily attached to the other. 11.7% of the Danish Xers believe that a person that is spiritualized but not religious, is someone that subscribes to a religion but doesn't follow all the rituals and norms. And in regards of their individual perception

on spirituality, the majority of the Danish Xers (64.7%) declared that spirituality is a personal experience; while the second largest group of Xers (23.5%), affirm that they do not believe in the concept of spirituality as a whole, representing an expressive decrease of those who dismiss the concept.

The Danish Generation X seems to be more prominent to perceive others as either being somehow attached to a religious institution or not having a spiritual experience at all. Even though an expressive majority of the interviewees judge spirituality to be a personal experience, the lack of respondents that attach spiritual expressions and experiences to less defined structures, tell that they either don't believe in spirituality or seek structured ways of connecting to their own spirituality. The individualistic nature of the Danish society, according to Hofstede Insights (2020), together with the normative culture indicate how Danes seek established traditions in order to solve or access individual quests, such as a spiritual experience, for those who cultivate spiritual beliefs.

4.1.2.2. Globalization

Brazilian Generation X

The vast majority 91.6% of the Brazilian Xers currently live in Brazil, having 33% of them lived abroad beforehand. In regards of how much the experience of living abroad impacted their personal beliefs and views of the world, the interviewees are sharply divided by 50% of those who already lived abroad, saying that the experience has definitely impacted their world views and personal beliefs; while the other 50% that lived abroad affirm that they were not much impacted, as they are very grounded on their values and personal beliefs. Making clear that equal amounts of the Brazilian Xers were open to observe and absorb different worldviews and perspectives on their inner beliefs; and the other half kept firm on their original values and beliefs, even due to increased immediate contact with foreign ideas.

In terms of their familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, the majority of the Brazilian Xers (62.5%) said to be familiar with foreign ideas on spirituality and ways of life, being the biggest motivation the interest on seeing new forms of expression of spirituality. The second largest group, 33.3% of them, also declare to be familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, but with a cultural and educational motivation behind it. The following and smallest group (12.5%) declares not to have familiarity with different religions and philosophies, as they prefer to focus and deepen

their knowledge into their own existing beliefs. Still, like the Baby Boomers, Brazilian Xers show a big interest on the topic of spirituality and tend to be more open to different perspectives, having a bigger number of participants that are also interested in the educational, cultural point of view.

When it comes to their social media and cultural products preferences, 70.8% of the respondents affirm that they do follow spiritual related social media accounts for inspirational purposes; followed by a shy 8.3% of Xers that do the same, but for entertainment. Unlike the previous generation, 20.8% of the Brazilian Xers claim not to follow any spiritual related social media account. Regarding the consumption of movies, series, TV shows, radio programs, podcasts and so on, 41.6% of the interviewees claim not to consume cultural products with spirituality and/or religion as the center theme, as they prefer to watch and/or listen to different kind of topics. Slightly behind them, 37.5% of the Brazilian Xers affirm that they do consume spiritual related cultural products, but mostly on streaming services. 20.8% of the group also consume the cultural products mentioned above, but they do so via traditional media, such as television and radio. The results of this specific topic are similar but very much unlike the behavior observed in the Brazilian Baby Boomer generation, in which most of them consumed spiritual related cultural products on streaming services (like Generation X), but only one of them did not consume such products at all.

In terms of the flows of people and information, the Brazilian Generation X has a bigger number of participants that lived abroad, and as a whole, the group shows an expressive interest on the topic of spirituality itself, as well as familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies. Also, the biggest part of them participate actively on social media in regards of spiritual related content, indicating the increased possibility for encountering different kind of discourses and information, coming from different parts of the world. But even with the big openness and exchange of information around the topic of spirituality and religion, the Brazilian Generation X also presented a minority, but significant number of individuals that choose to retrieve themselves from the areas of consumption and/or exchange of spiritual related themes or products, either from lack of interest or as a choice to focus on their own preexisting set of beliefs.

Danish Generation X

From the Danish Xers, 82.3% currently live in Denmark, having 52.9% of them already lived abroad in some point of their lives. In regards of the impact this experience caused on them, the results showed that 29.4% of all Danish Xers affirm

that living abroad has definitely made an impact on their worldview and personal beliefs; and 23.5% of them also affirm that it had an impact on them, but to a lesser extent. None of the respondents said that living abroad did not have an impact on their views of the world and personal beliefs, showing a significant shift from the Danish Baby Boomers, in which nearly half of the group did not go through a big impact on their lives as a result of living abroad. In that sense, Danish Xers appear to be more open to understand and absorb different ways of seeing the world and experiencing spirituality.

As of their familiarity with foreign life-philosophies and religions, the results were very diversified, having the majority of the interviewees (41%) answered that they are familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, with a cultural and educational motivation behind it. 29% of the group declared to also be familiar with different religions and philosophies, but with an interest on the different ways of expressing spirituality. Other 29% of the Danish Xers claim not to be familiar with foreign life-philosophies and religions, as it's not one of their personal interests; while the 11.7% remaining affirm to not have any familiarity with the concepts mentioned above, as they prefer to focus and deepen their knowledge into their own personal beliefs. What is mostly different about these results is that the number of respondents that are familiar with foreign religions and philosophies is expressively higher than the number of those who do not have any, disregarding their motivations. It is also to be noted the small increase of those who have an interest on learning about different ways of expressing spirituality, a concept that was highly dismissed in the previous generation.

Regarding their social media behavior, 70.5% of the Danish Xers do not follow or engage with any social media account with spiritual related themes, having the remaining 23.5% of them evenly distributed between the ones who do follow for inspiration and the ones that follow and engage for entertainment. In terms of the consumption of cultural products with a spiritual related narrative, equals 70.5% of Danish Xers do not consume this kind of products, as they prefer to consume different kinds of content. The remaining 29.5% are consumers of spiritual related content, but they do so mostly on streaming services.

The results above follow the same line of thought present on the Danish Baby Boomer respondents, but with a significant parcel of the group that express some kind of interest around the topic of spirituality, especially with information and/or products found online. In comparison with the Danish Baby Boomers, the Danish Xers appear to be opening up to places of contact and exchange of ideas, that could be challenging or not their own personal beliefs; even though most of the participants prefer to not

engage whatsoever with spiritual related social media, online groups, and cultural content.

4.1.2.3. Notions of spirituality

Brazilian Generation X

When questioned about their overall interest in spirituality as a whole, 95.8% of the Brazilian Xers responded positively to it, while only one respondent (4.2%) answered negatively. In regards of the perception of their own spirituality, 95.8% of the participants consider themselves as being spiritualized, with 33.3% stating that they subscribe to a religion; while having another 41.6% of the group that do subscribe to a religion, but do not follow all the rituals and norms. 25% of the interviewees affirm that they do not subscribe to any religion. The difference between the Brazilian Baby Boomers and Xers is expressive, when the largest number of the participants do not follow the religion entirely; as well as the fast insurgence of individuals that do not subscribe to any religion, a completely different scenario than of the previous generation, in which the majority defined themselves as being categorically religious.

Of those who subscribe to a religion, 70.5% follow the same religion as their parents and/or grandparents, while 29.5% chose a different one. Indicating how the perpetuation of traditions, culture and values has a strong correlation with how most individuals express their spirituality, when believing in such.

When having to identify themselves with a certain group according to their own spiritual beliefs (or the lack of), the largest group (45.8%) identify as 'Spiritual', followed by 37.5% of Brazilian Xers who prefer not to label themselves; having 12.5% identifying as 'Religious' and 4.1% as being 'Agnostic'. None of the participants identified as being 'Atheist'. Having that outlook of their self identifications, it is outstanding how Brazilian Xers are mostly avoiding the label of subscribing to a specific religious institution, if any at all. There seems to be a bigger individualization of the experience of spirituality in the Generation X, a trend observed as one of the impacts of the globalization and the constant flows of information that takes place locally and in the individual sphere.

Danish Generation X

As of their general interest on the topic of spirituality, 41% of the Danish Xers stated that the topic is not of their interest, but they do come across it once in a while, demonstrating some level of openness to the topic, instead of just dismissing it completely. Besides that, the second largest group of participants (29.4%), answered that they have no interest in spirituality, followed by 23.5% of interviewees that says the opposite, affirming that they do have an interest in spirituality. These results confirm how the Danish Generation X is much more open and interested in the concept of spirituality, even though a significant number of Xers claim to not have any interest on it.

This approach to the concept of spirituality and the experience of it continues to show in the personal ideas and identification the Danish Xer participants have. While 58.8% of the respondents do not consider themselves as being spiritualized, 35.2% see themselves as being spiritualized people. Regarding on the adherence to a religion, 41.1% categorically affirm that they do subscribe to a religion, while 35.2% also do so, but don't follow all the norms and rituals. Only 17.6% of the respondents affirm that they do not subscribe to any kind of religion. Comparing the amount of interviewees that do not see themselves as spiritualized people, with the number of respondents that claim to subscribe to a religion, it becomes clear that for many, the motivation for being a member of the religious institution does not rely on their individual beliefs and spirituality, but somewhere else. This motivation is most probably related to family and cultural bonds, as the vast majority (70.5%) of the Danish Generation X participants follows the same religion as their parents and/or grandparents.

In terms of self identification, 52.9% of the Danish Xers identify as 'Religious', 17.6% prefer not to label themselves, 11.7% as 'Atheist'; and another 11.7% distributed equally among 'Spiritual' and 'Agnostic'. The almost antagonist way that Danish Boomers and Xers see themselves, as the number of self declared Atheists fell dramatically from one generation to the other, reinforces how Generation X seems to be more open to the concept of spirituality, new concepts, as well as foreign ideas. The number of self declared religious individuals rose from one individual in the Baby Boomer Generation to more than half of Generation X, also implying how the importance of engaging in cultural traditions and values is more accentuated in this generation than to the one before, as religion for Danish nationals is highly attached to their cultural identity.

4.1.3. The Millennials

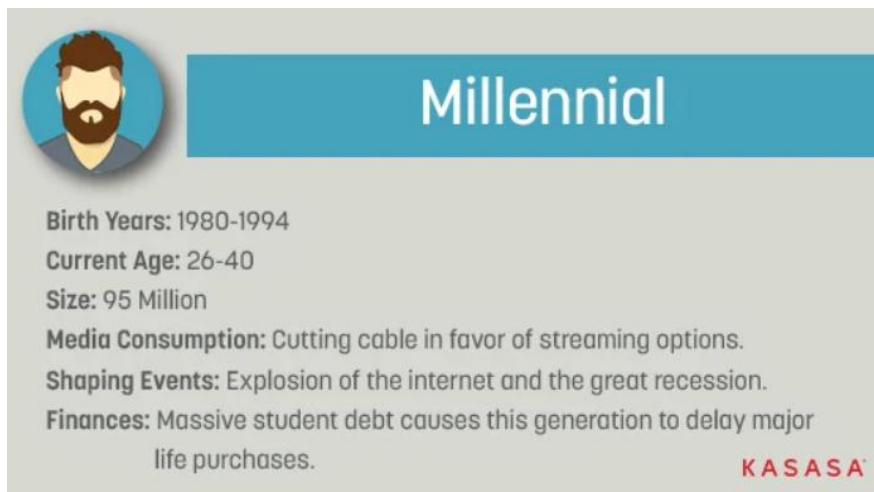


Figure 9 – Millennial description. Retrieved from <https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>

4.1.3.1. Culture

Brazilian Millennials

In regards of how the Brazilian Millennials view their family of origin according to religiosity, 46.6% of the participants considered their family to be religious, followed by 26.6% considering their family to be spiritualized in a more fluid way. Besides that, 20% of Brazilian Millennials affirmed that their parents and/or grandparents are not very religious, expressing it mostly on special dates; the minority of the interviewees (6.6%) do not consider their family of origin to be religious at all. The lower number of families considered to be religious, the diversity of the results and the presence of parents and/or grandparents that are not considered to be religious at all; suggest that the Brazilian Millennial Generation experienced a different upbringing in comparison to the previous generations when it comes to diversity, fluidity and a less rigid religious structure to the majority of the group.

As to whether the Brazilian Millennials acknowledge the existence of a spiritual experience outside of religion, 86.6% believe that it is possible for someone to be spiritual but not religious; having the remaining 13.3% affirming that a spiritual person would be someone that probably does not follow all the rituals and traditions of a religion they follow. As of their idea on how spirituality is experienced, 73.3% judge it to

be a personal experience, while 20% sees it as a communal practice and shared experience and a minority of 6.6% envisions spirituality as a way to connect and honor their cultural and family traditions. None of the participants affirm to not believe in the concept of spirituality. Although the majority of the group follows the same line of thought as the previous generations, seeing spirituality as a personal experience, a significant minority attaches the spiritual experience and practice with a community around them; and for the first time, a even smaller fraction of the participants connect spirituality directly to culture and family bonds; suggesting a bigger awareness of spiritual experiences and practices as being a cultural expression of its own. Also indicating how cultural transmission from one generation to the other remains strong in the Brazilian society, even with some slight adjustments of meaning to every individual.

Danish Millennials

According to the Danish Millennials own view of their parents and/or grandparents spirituality, 52.1% do not see them as being religious, while 26% consider their family of origin to be religious only on special dates, 13% do consider their family to be undoubtedly religious, while only one participant judged them as being spiritualized in a more fluid way. The resurgence of a non-religious majority of Danish households is significant, highly seen on the Generation Baby Boomer, but considerably lowered on Generation X. A continuous trend is at the second largest group that considers their family of origin as being religious on special occasions, suggesting the attachment of religious rituals to cultural traditions.

In terms of whether spirituality can be experienced outside of a religion, 65.2% of the respondents believe that spirituality is a wider concept than religion, while 17.3% do not believe so, confining the spiritual experience to some kind of religion institution. Another 13% of the group affirms that a spiritual but not religious person is most likely someone that subscribes to a specific religion, but doesn't follow all the rituals and norms required. As of their personal opinion on how spirituality is experienced, 60.8% of Danish Millennials believe that spirituality is a personal experience, while 30.4% declare to not believe in the concept of spirituality as a whole; while one interviewee sees spirituality as a way to honor and connect to their cultural and family traditions. The decay of the number of individuals that see spirituality as something not always connected to religion, with the rise in the number of those who does not personally believe in the concept of spirituality, connect the Danish Millennials to the Baby Boomers point of view, in which for many, spirituality is deeply attached to culture and

their rituals and traditions, instead of an individual “spiritual quest”. Still, the Millennials that do believe spirituality to be an individual experience are the majority of the group, also showing continuity to the Danish Generation X perspective.

4.1.3.2. Globalization

Brazilian Millennials

Regarding the place of residence and experience living abroad, 86.6% of the Brazilian Millennials currently live in Brazil, having 33.3% already lived abroad for 5 months or longer and 16.6% that currently live outside of the country. 60% of the Millennials claimed that living abroad had a significant impact on their worldviews and personal beliefs, while 6.6% say the experience did have an impact, but on a smaller scale; indicating an accentuated cultural exchange between Millennials and foreign individuals and cultures. That indicates how the Millennial Generation appears as the one in which most individuals have experienced larger geographical mobility in their lifetime, experiencing different cultures at a deeper level; what could possibly affect their own perspectives of the world and behaviors.

In terms of their familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, 60% of the respondents claim to be familiar with such, having the biggest interest on how different cultures express their spirituality. Another 46.6% of the group also claim to have familiarity with different philosophies and religions, but the main motivation behind it is educational and/or of cultural interest. 20% of the participants affirm to not be familiar with foreign religions and life philosophies, as they are not interested in the topic, while 3.3% are also not familiar with such, as they prefer to focus and deepen their knowledge into their own personal beliefs. The results indicate a bigger openness of the Brazilian Millennials to different perspectives on ways of life and beliefs, while showing a bigger interest on the topic of spirituality in itself.

As of the Millennial behaviors around spirituality on social media, 43.3% of the respondents claim to follow spiritual related social media accounts for inspirational purpose, while 33.3% as a form of entertainment; and 23.3% affirm that they do not follow any social media account with spiritual related themes. In regards of the consumption of cultural products, the majority of the participants (56.6%) do not consume spiritual related movies, series, TV shows, podcasts, etc, as they prefer to watch and/or listen to different topics. Another expressive 40% of the respondents consume spiritual related cultural products mostly online, on streaming services; while

only one participant claimed to do the same but on traditional media (television and radio).

The results show that a significant part of the Brazilian Millennials are open and interested in consuming content related to the theme of spirituality, but mostly on social media, where the forms of engaging and exchanging information is accentuated and more personalized, in which the individuals are part of a larger type of community, while having an individualized experience, not necessarily connected to their original or immediate surroundings and/or cultural background. The same trend applies on their consumption of cultural products, in which a slight majority do not show enough interest in this kind of exchange of information – as it is mostly one-sided; but a second majority of the group that do consume this kind of cultural products, choose to do so online, in streaming services, known for their interactive, highly personalized platforms and nature.

Danish Millennials

Currently all of the Danish Millennials live in Denmark, having 39% of them already lived abroad for 5 months or longer. In relation to the impact of the experience of living abroad (long or short-termed) in their worldviews and personal beliefs, equals 39% of the group affirm that the experience had definitely made an impact on their beliefs and world perspectives, while another 21.7% acknowledge that the impact they had was in a smaller scale. In comparison to the previous generations, the Millennials appear as the group with the smallest percentage of individuals that have already lived abroad in a longer period of time, but only with a slight decrease in relation to the Generation X. Besides that, when it comes to their familiarity with foreign life philosophies and religions, 56.5% of the participants stated that they are familiar with such, as they have an interest in different cultures and have learned about it online and/or at school. 30.4% of the Danish Millennials affirm to not have any familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies, as it is not a personal interest of theirs; while 21.7% are familiar with the above mentioned topics, as they are interested to see new ways of expressing spirituality itself; and 8.6% of the participants who are not familiar with such topics as they prefer to focus and deepen their knowledge into their own personal beliefs.

As of the Danish Millennials social media preferences, 86.9% of the Danish Millennials claim to not follow any social media account with spiritual related content; as the remaining 8.6% that do, are evenly distributed between the ones that follows for

inspiration or entertainment. Regarding the consumption of cultural products with a spiritual related narrative, 78.2% also claim to not watch and/or listen to spiritual related movies, TV shows, radio programs, etc, as they prefer to consume different kind of themes according to their own interests. The remaining 17.3% that do consume these cultural products do so online, on streaming services. The results found on the Danish Millennial Generation follow the same predominant behaviors of the previous generations, in which the vast majority does not engage or consume spiritual related content either online or on traditional media. Those who do, choose to consume it online, in an environment that is highly personalized and interactive.

4.1.3.3. Notions of spirituality

Brazilian Millennials

As a topic of general interest, 63.3% of the Brazilian Millennials affirm that spirituality interest them; while 36.6% does not count it as a personal interest, but they do come across the topic sometimes, indicating that they don't object the subject as a whole. None of the participants affirmed to not be interested at all in the topic of spirituality, following the trend of the two previous generations. In regards of their own relationship with the concept of spirituality, 76.6% of the interviewees consider themselves as being spiritualized people, with the remaining 23.3% of the group not considering themselves to be spiritualized. When it comes to being religious, 50% of the respondents claim not to be affiliated to any religious institution, while 43.3% declare to subscribe to a particular religion, but not to follow all of its rituals and norms. Only 6.6% of the Brazilian Millennials claimed to be religious, without further definitions.

The amount of individuals who do not subscribe to any religion is the highest in the Millennial Generation, as well as the remarkable decay of the number of participants that undoubtedly claim to be religious. As the number of non-religious and non-spiritualized individuals grow in the Millennial Generation, the presence of those who consider themselves as spiritualized continues to be predominant in the group, surpassing by far the increased number of non-religious Brazilian Millennials, suggesting that some are rejecting the religious institutions and structures, but not dismissing their personal concept of spirituality as a whole. Nearly all of the Brazilian Millennials (85.7%) who subscribe to a specific religion, follow the same as their parents and/or grandparents, while only 14.2% of them chose a different religion than

of their family of origin, showing that cultural perpetuation within the family sphere is still a big significant on which religion individuals usually practice.

When asked about which social group they identified the most, 50% of Brazilian Millennials identified as being 'Spiritual', while 36.6% preferred not to label themselves, 6.6% identified as 'Agnostic', one individual as being 'Religious' and another sole interviewee identifying as being 'Atheist'. The results show a constant tendency among the three generations, in which the majority of the group identifies with more fluid concepts such as 'Spiritual' and by rejecting any labels. The biggest shift seen in the Millennial group is how less people identified as being 'Religious', having the first 'Atheist' of all three generations in Brazil appearing here.

Danish Millennials

In terms of general interest, 56.5% of the Danish Millennials declare that spirituality is not one of their personal interests, but that sometimes come across the subject, showing that they not object to it completely. Another 26% of the participants affirm that they are not interested in spirituality, while other 13% of them affirm that they do take an interest in the topic; showing a slight increase of those who are open to the subject, but also how the Millennial Generation follows the same line of thought as the Danish Generation X. Whilst being open to the topic sometimes, 78.2% of the Danish Millennials do not consider themselves spiritualized people, having only 17.3% seeing themselves as being so. This result presents an increase on the number of participants who do not see themselves as such, getting closer to the Danish Baby Boomer perspective, when all participants were not spiritualized.

When inquired on whether they subscribe to a certain kind of religion, 52.1% of the interviewees responded negatively, while 21.7% responded positively, and another 21.7% affirmed that they do subscribe to a religion, but do not follow all the rituals and norms. Of those who subscribe to a religion, 90% follow the same one as their parents and/or grandparents, with only 10% of the interviewees choosing to subscribe to a different religion. Again, the number of those who do not subscribe to any religion slightly increases in relation to the previous generation, but also maintaining a significant number of participants who subscribes to a certain religion, strictly or not. The cultural continuation passed through the family continues to play a bigger role on the participants' choice of religion, accentuating the close relationship of religion with cultural identity.

As a matter of self identification with social groups, 30.4% of the Danish Millennials identify as being 'Religious', while 26% identify as 'Atheist', 21.7% prefer not to label themselves, and the remaining 17.3% are equally distributed as 'Spiritual' and 'Agnostic'. The results of the self identifications match accordingly to the nearly 80% of Danish Millennials who do not see themselves as being spiritualized people, as religion appears as a social signifier in the Danish society, combined with the self declared Atheists, and the ones that reject labels. The noticeable trait of the Danish Millennial Generation is the increase of Atheist individuals, as well as the more "open minded" ones, that often rejects labels, but still engage with topics around spirituality in a smaller scale, being them foreign, local, by living abroad or online. The religious, more fixated individuals appear in a smaller scale in the Millennial Generation, in comparison with the previous ones.

4.2. Discussion

In order to compare the overall results of both Brazilian and Danish societies, the same three codes utilized in the previous part of the analysis will be used to conduct the discussion in a structured way, so the different nuances of each category can be better addressed and understood. In each topic (Culture, Globalization and Notions of spirituality), the changes and consistencies of the generations will be now seen together, while comparing how the social dynamics took place in the Brazilian and Danish society, with the intention to outline differences and similarities.

4.2.1. Culture

When comparing both Brazilian and Danish results simultaneously, it becomes clear how opposite both graphics appear, as the predominant results in both societies nearly mirror each other, with the majority of the Brazilian households being considered to be religious and the Danish ones as being non-religious. Looking deeper into the changes between each generation, a significant decline of religious Brazilian households is seen, while the number of non-strict religious families faces a small rise. Brazil also counts with a stable and constant group of families that were considered to have a more fluid spirituality, not attaching themselves to any specific religious institution. With the decrease of religious families, a shy 6.6% of Brazilian families start being considered as being non-religious in the most recent generation.

As the tendency of the Brazilian families is to become less strict religiously or become detached from religious institutions, the Danish families start making the opposite movement; starting by being mostly non-religious to then having a more stable group of non-strict religious families, to having a small amount of considered religious ones. As the Brazilian, a tiny group emerges on the most recent generation, which is the one with families with a fluid approach to spirituality. Still, the most expressive groups among the Danes interviewed were the non-religious families and the non-strict religious ones. What both countries have in common is the subtle decline of fixed ideas and ways of experiencing spirituality; as well as the growth of less strict, mobile ways of religion in the family.

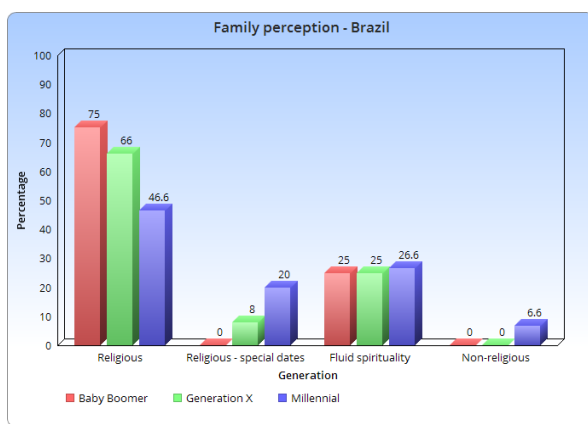


Figure 10 - Family perception - Brazil

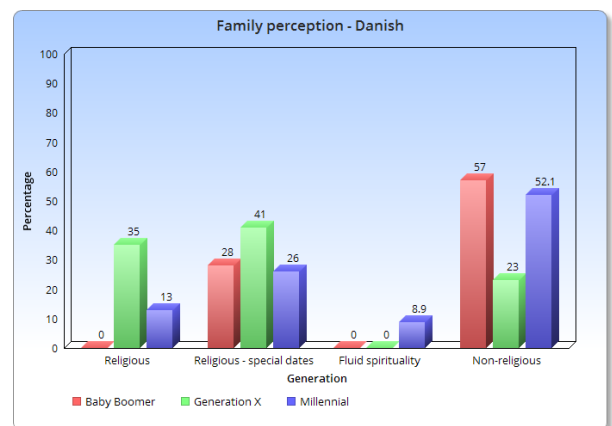


Figure 11 – Family perception - Denmark

As the number of those who don't believe in spirituality slightly falls in Denmark, together with the idea that spirituality is a bigger concept, not always attached to religion; it is noticeable the proportional increase of Danish individuals linking the idea of spirituality directly with the structure of a religion. The timid but constant rise of those who consider spirituality as a way to honor and connect with your family and traditions, imply that as the idea of a spirituality is being more diffused through the generations, it is being incorporated to the individual sphere as a cultural trait, not as an individual expression of the concept of spirituality.

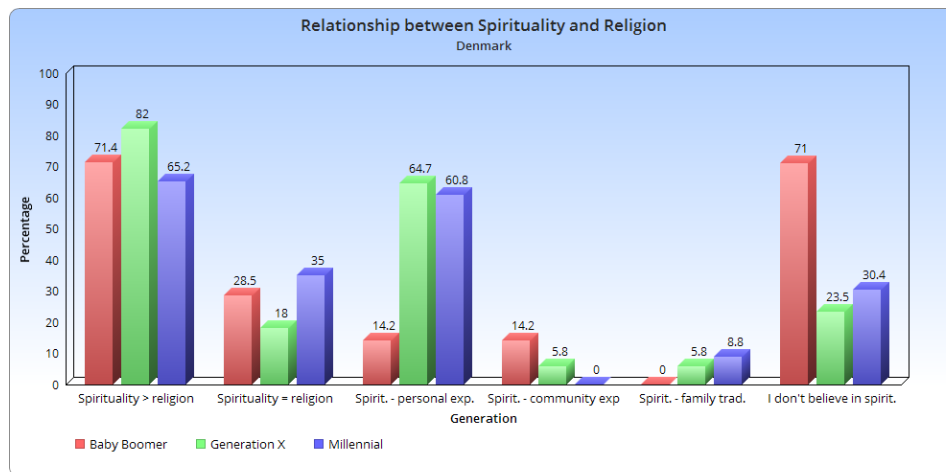


Figure 12 – Relationship between spirituality and religion - Denmark

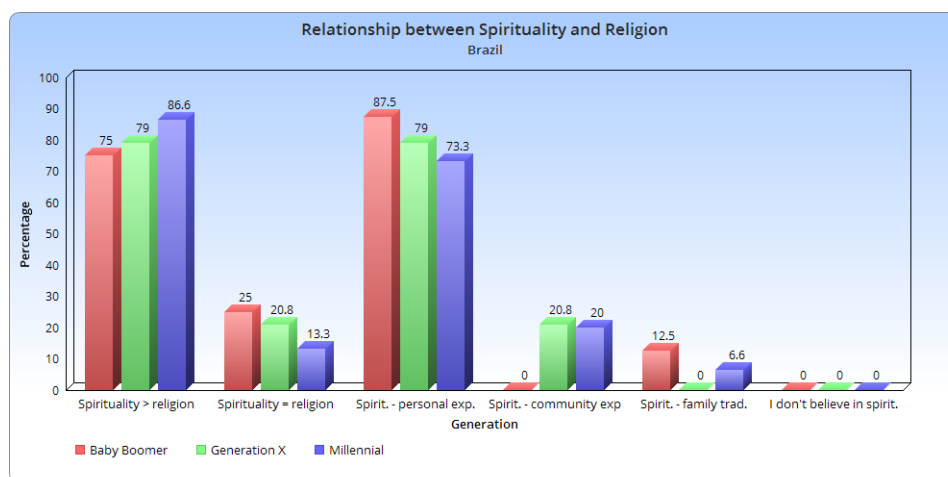


Figure 13 – Relationship between spirituality and religion - Brazil

Different than the Danish society, the Brazilian results show a big concentration of participants who increasingly detach spirituality from religious structures, while mostly perceiving spirituality as a personal experience. Still, the idea of a purely personal experience of spirituality started to slowly decline throughout the generations, giving a small but significant space to the ones that see it as a shared experience, being it in a community or in the family. While having slight different predominant perspectives on the relationship between spirituality and religion, a common and small trend seen in both countries is the spirituality as a shared experience, even with their different motivations behind their points of view. Still, at the present moment, both societies tend to generally perceive spirituality as a wider picture than religion, and as being an individual experience.

4.2.2. Globalization

In regards of how familiar Brazilians are with foreign religions and life philosophies, the majority claims to have some familiarity, as they are interested in the different ways of expressing spirituality in different cultures. Also, there is an expressive growth in the number of people that have familiarity with foreign life perspectives through a cultural lens, instead of spiritual. Another remarkable difference is in the growth of the amount of individuals who are not familiar with foreign religions and philosophies, as it is not a topic of interest to them. Still, it is predominant the group of Brazilian participants who are acquainted with such information, disregarding of their personal motives.

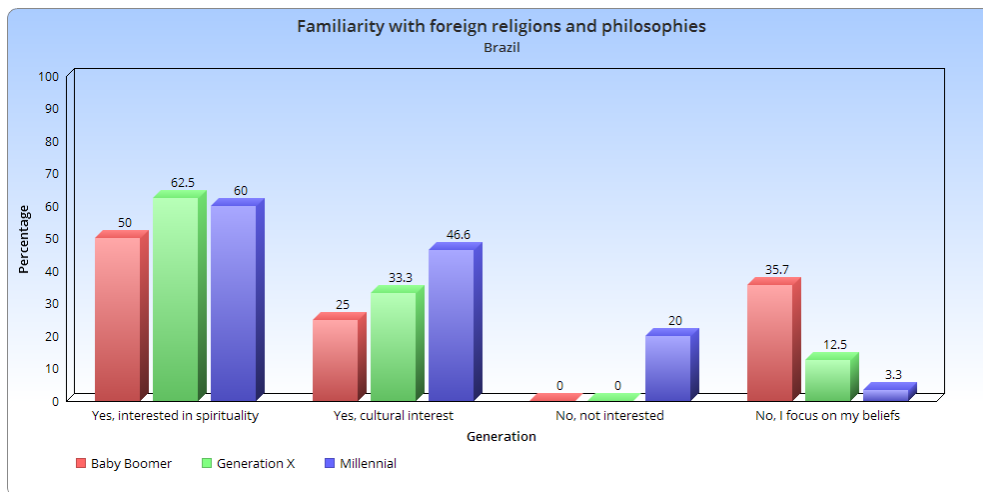


Figure 14 – Foreign familiarity - Brazil

The Danish studied population presents a more constant scenario, in which the number of those who are not familiar with foreign religions and philosophies remain nearly the same through the different generations, as the number of those who have some kind of familiarity with such topics show a bigger increase when their motivation is cultural learning. A significant increase, followed by a shy decline, appears on the group that is familiar with foreign religions and life philosophies where the main interest lies on the different expressions of spirituality. Also, the number of Danes choosing to focus and deepen their knowledge into their already existing beliefs suffered a progressive and remarkable decline, going almost next to zero participants by the Millennial generation.

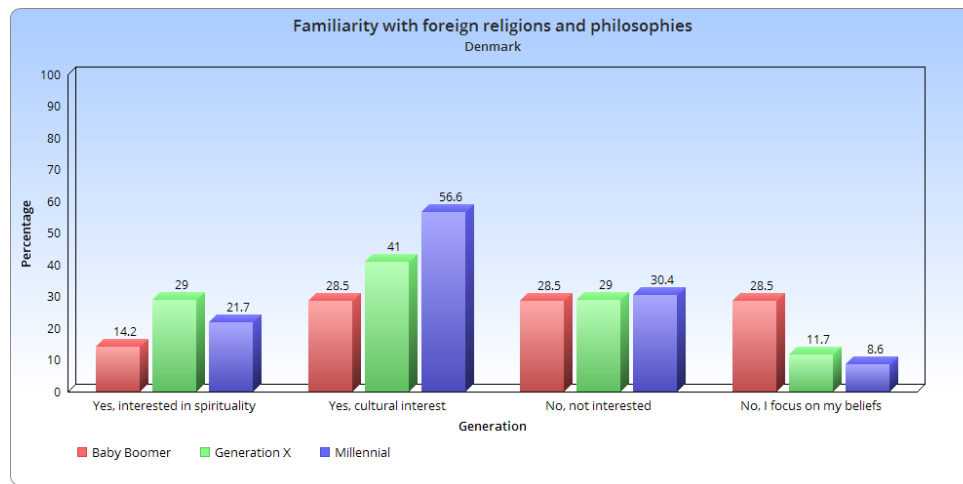


Figure 15 – Foreign familiarity - Denmark

The ongoing trends that both populations have in common are in the increase of the familiarity coming from a cultural/educational perspective, as well as of the ones who do not have familiarity with foreign religions and philosophies for the lack of a personal interest in the topic. Being that the group that retrieves themselves from the contact with foreign religions in favor of their own beliefs, is quickly declining in both Brazil and Denmark; in a way that in future, the ones that will acquire familiarity with different religions will do so through cultural learning, and the ones who do not acquire any familiarity, will do so for the lack of interest in the topic of spirituality in general, being it foreign or their own.

The increased flows of information through the internet, traditional media and travels, people have more access to different cultures and individuals every passing day, the amount of exposure to diverse ways of life can also play a role on this, as a large amount of diverse information reach individuals every time earlier in life, being it before they come of age (18 years old) and during the period where they are still forming their own cultural base.

In the matters of how the two different groups navigate and engage on social media regarding the subject of spirituality, the majority of the Brazilians declared to follow social media accounts related to the topic of spirituality for inspirational purpose. Although they are the majority in all the three generations, the size of such group is shrinking, when comparing all the generations and the other variables. Combined with the decline of the inspirational social media Brazilian followers it is the modest increase of the group of Brazilians who still engage with this kind of content, but with recreational purpose, while keeping a stable number of individuals who prefer other themes on social media. When it comes to the Danish population, the number of respondents who do not engage with spiritual related themes on social media is

incredibly higher than all the other variables; being in all the generations almost the totality of the respondents. For the Danish population, the trend seem to be the non-engagement with such themes in the social media at all, having only a very small percentage of isolated individuals occasionally interacting for inspirational or recreational reasons.

Social media appears to be a source of information in regards of spirituality and religion mostly to the Brazilian population, as the Danes prefer to navigate on it differently, and with different expectations.

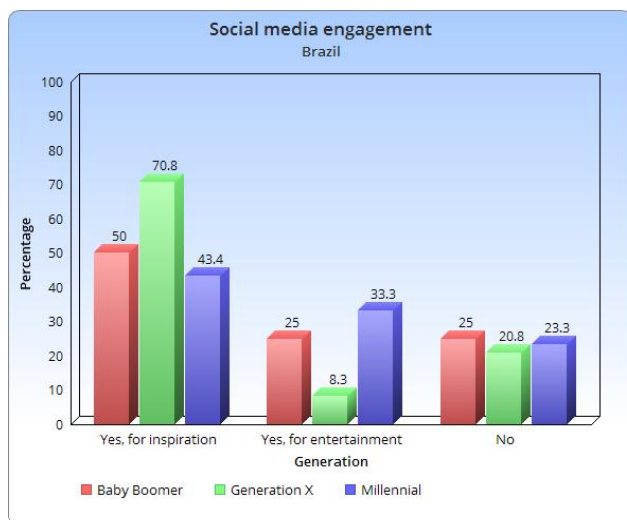


Figure 16 – SoMe - Brazil

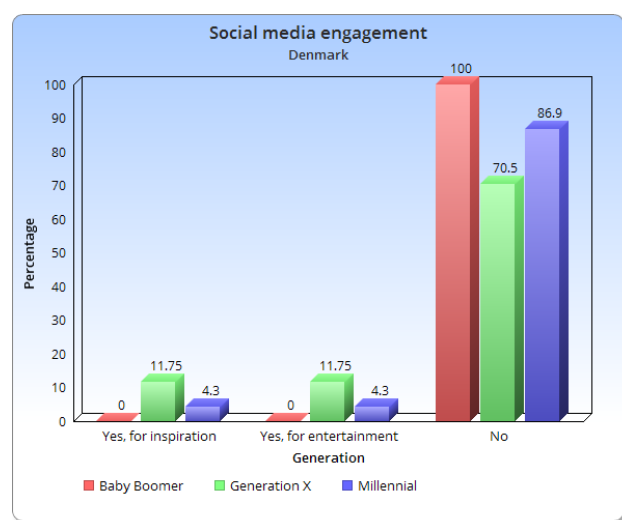


Figure 17 – SoMe - Denmark

In terms of cultural products (movies, series, TV shows, radio, podcasts, etc), the majority of the Danish participants of all generations predominantly do not choose to consume cultural products in which spirituality is part of the main narrative; but when they do so, they consume it through streaming services, indicating a more personalized and interactive way of choosing and consuming the content. As of the Brazilian respondents of all generations, the numbers are almost even between the group that chooses to watch and/or listen to spiritual related content on streaming services, and the other group that prefers not to watch such content over other subjects. The biggest increase is on the number of Brazilians that have not been consuming cultural products on this theme, together with a small increase of those who chooses to consume it on streaming services. In terms of trends of consumption of cultural products under this theme, the Danish and Brazilian populations are aligned, even though by a big disparity between them.

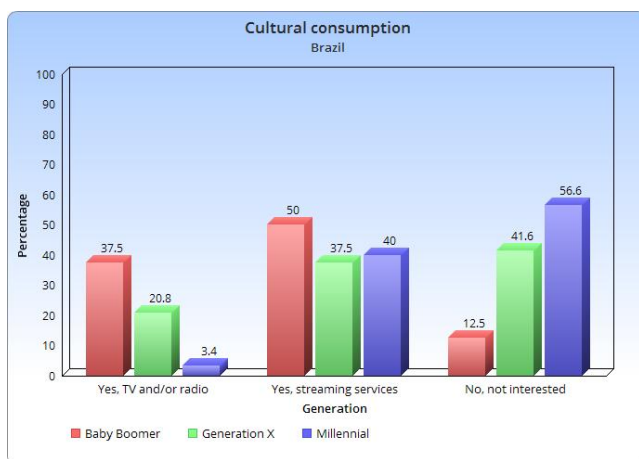


Figure 18 – Cultural consumption - Brazil

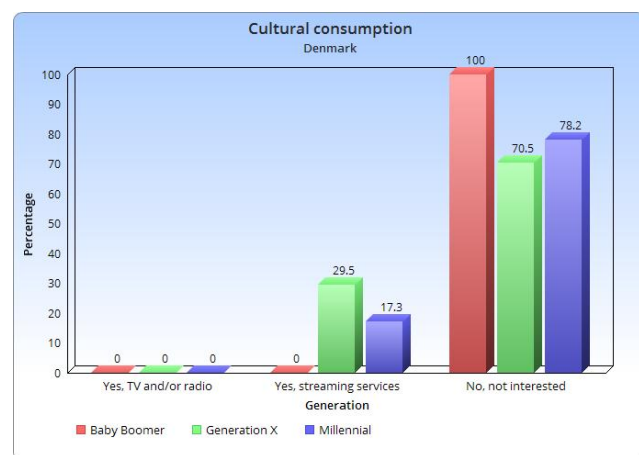


Figure 19 – Cultural consumption - Denmark

4.2.3. Notions of spirituality

When dealing with spirituality as a subject of general interest, the Brazilian population is highly interested in the topic, having almost no participant affirming that there was no interest whatsoever in the theme. Although, it is visible that the Brazilians seem to be losing their interest in spirituality as a topic in itself, as with time (through the generations), many of the respondents declare that even though it is not among their main interests, they are open when coming across with it.

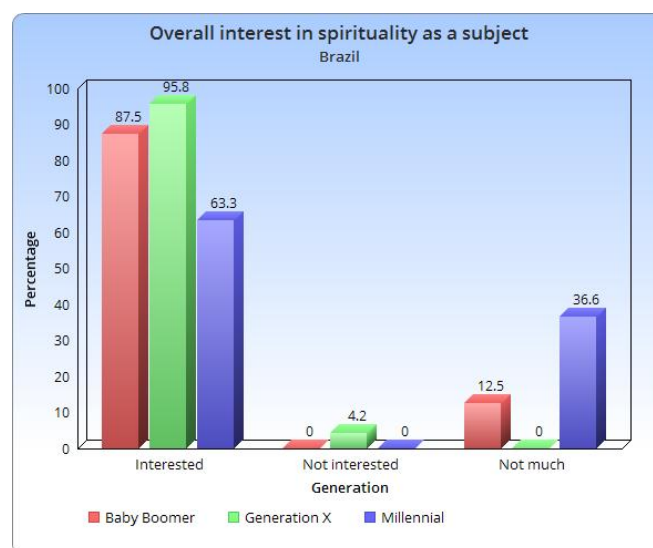


Figure 20 – Overall interest - Brazil

As of the Danish perspective, the population goes from having no interest in spirituality to still not counting it as an interest, but showing some openness to the

theme at times. A small amount of Danish Millennials show interest in the topic, but the biggest and progressive growth is in the group of those who are not interested, but open to the subject; a similar trend seen on the Brazilian population as well.

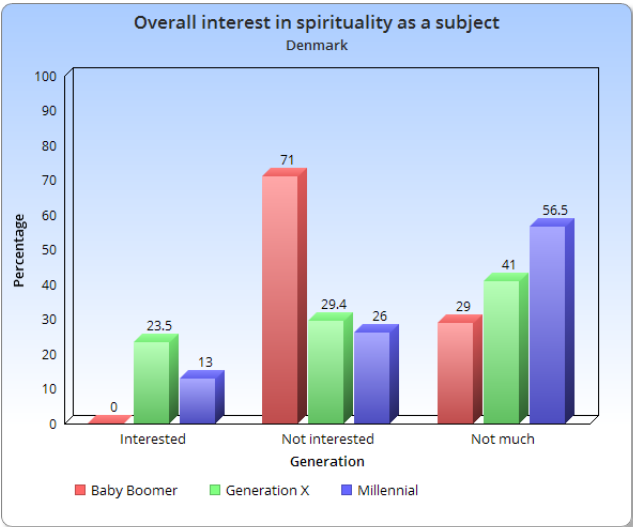


Figure 21 – Overall interest - Denmark

In terms of how spiritualized the individuals of both populations declare to be, the vast majority of the Brazilians consider themselves as being spiritualized, while the Danish consider themselves to be the opposite.

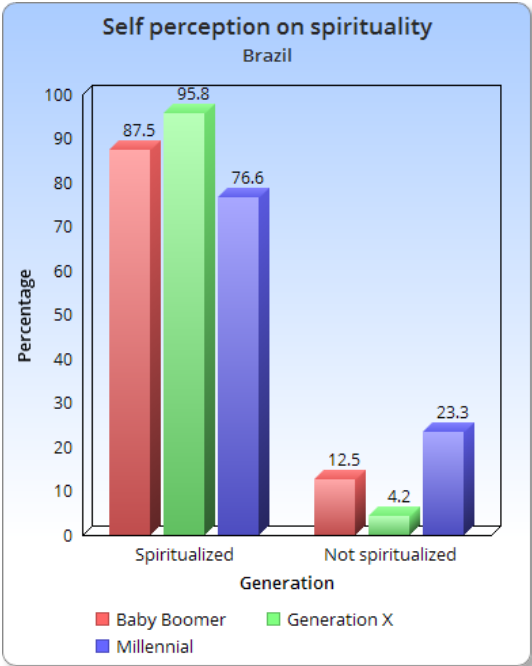


Figure 22 – Self perception - Brazil

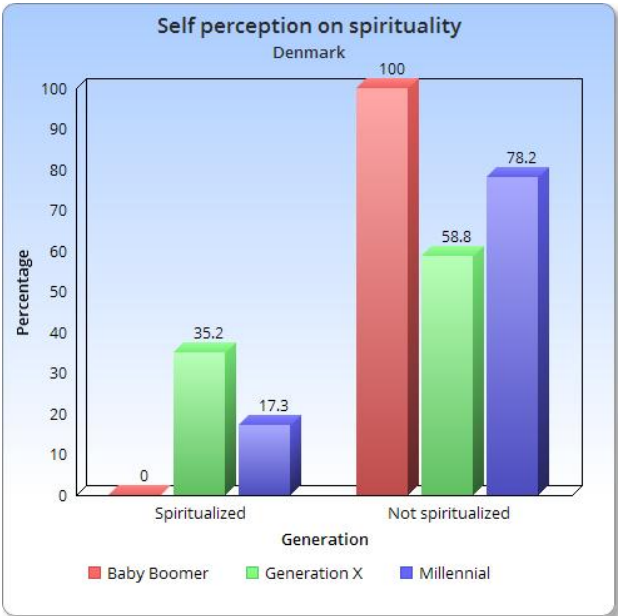


Figure 23 – Self perception - Denmark

While the Generation X appears as the most spiritualized in both societies, when comparing the Baby Boomer Generation and the Millennial Generation in both societies, the movement towards some kind of balanced results is seen in both countries, with the Brazilian population becoming the least spiritualized throughout the generations, and the Danish group presenting a consistent presence of spiritualized people. Even though the number of spiritualized individuals rose in the Danish analyzed group, another significant growth also showed in the amount of Millennials not seeing themselves as spiritualized people.

By observing simultaneously the two charts, it becomes clear how the two populations mirror themselves, especially regarding the Millennial Generation, that present almost even numbers, on opposite sides, but indicating a similar movement that approximate one of the another, suggesting the insurgence of more non-spiritualized Brazilians in the future and more spiritualized Danes in the future, even though the Danish population maintains the tendency of having a bigger number of non-spiritualized individuals instead of the other.

Even though the number of self declared spiritualized individuals goes to extremes in both the Danish and Brazilian populations, it does not always reflect how they express it in the society, as many do not attach spirituality with a religion and vice versa. In terms of religious adherence, the results from the different generations in Brazil nearly mirror each other regarding the extremes, which are vehemently subscribing to a religion or not. While half of the Brazilian Baby Boomers declare to be integral members of a religious institution, equals half of the Brazilian Millennials are not affiliated at all with any religion. The place of convergence to all the generations is at the group of people that are not strict followers of a religion, but still identify as being members.

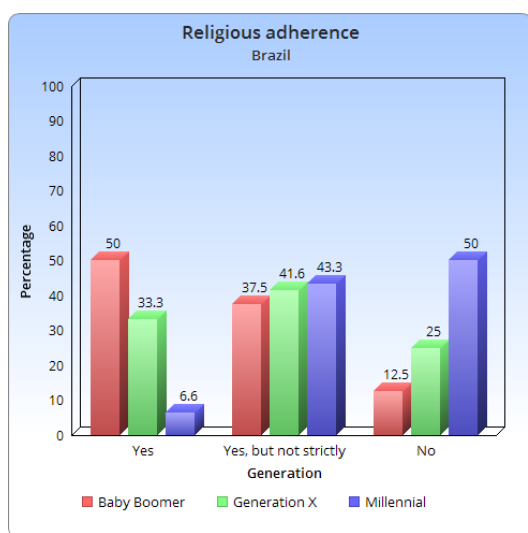


Figure 24 – Religious adherence - Brazil

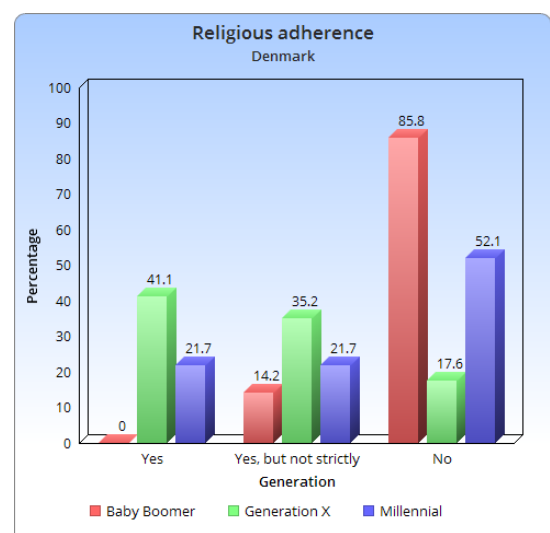


Figure 25 – Religious adherence - Denmark

The visible trend running its course at the Brazilian population is of the balance between those who subscribe to a religion, while not following all the norms and rituals, with the ones who choose to not subscribe to any religion in particular. It should also be noticed that the group of those who do not have any religious affiliation, is growing faster than of the non-strict religious. While Brazil walks towards a balance with a bigger tendency towards the non-religious affiliation, the Danish scenario in terms of religious adherence appeared to suffer from waves through the generations.

As the Baby Boomers are predominantly non-religiously affiliated, with a few being non-strict religious, the Danish Generation X shows a more balanced result, but with a slight tendency towards being firmly religious. Again, the picture changes in the Millennial Generation, in which the number of religious and non-strict religious turn to fall, while the amount of non-religiously affiliated individuals becomes twice as much as the others. Still, some sort of balance can be seen at the Millennial Generation, when observing that half of the group does not subscribe to any religion, while the other half do, no matter how strict or liberal they are. Nevertheless, the spotted trend for the Danish population is being less religiously-affiliated.

In regards of how the Brazilian and Danish groups identify themselves in the social context, while having the opportunity to choose from different labels or groups, the results are very diverse when comparing one population with the other. In Brazil, a solid amount of people from all three generations consider themselves as being 'Spiritual', while the number of self-declared 'Religious' dramatically falls, and the number of people rejecting any labels continues to be the predominant, right behind the 'Spiritual'.

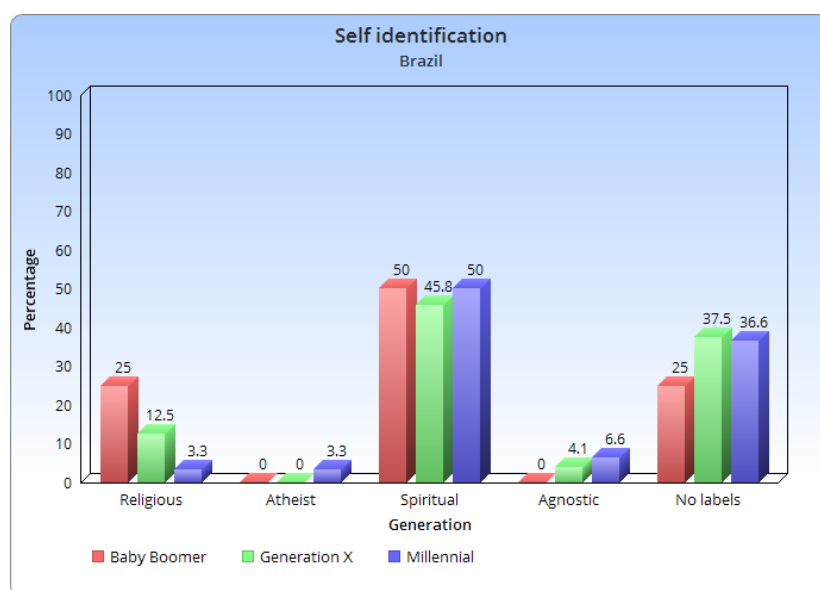


Figure 26 – Self identification - Brazil

In the Brazilian population is also observed a timid rise of the self-declared 'Agnostic' and 'Atheist'. Still, a stable and expressive amount of the participants seem to prefer a more mobile category, such as 'Spiritual', implying that in this way they can navigate among different concepts of spirituality in their own personalized way. The other expressive group is the one rejecting any labels, which also suggests the desire of mobility and individualization, by not attaching themselves to any group at all.

The Danish analyzed population follows quite different trends, as their logic of spirituality and religion is very different than of the Brazilian. With the two most expressive categories being 'Religious' and 'Atheist', it becomes clearer how the Danish perception of spirituality and its expressions is less nuanced and more direct, with a kind of "all or nothing" approach to the theme, and how it plays a role in the society. Even though the points of view seem to be very polarized, when looking directly at the Millennial Generation and their choices of identification, a different kind of balance starts to emerge. As nearly two thirds of the population identifies themselves as either 'Religious' or 'Atheist', an almost another third part of the Danish Millennials choose to reject any form of label, showing there some kind of nuance between the two poles. Together with it, two different nuances start to arise, the 'Agnostic' and the 'Spiritual' groups of people. It is challenging to identify or assign a specific trend for the Danish population; but the most visible growth can be observed in the ease of the polarization in the Danish society, with two thirds of the Millennials being either religious or atheists, while the other third prefers to abstain themselves from the discussion. A timid insurgence of 'Spiritual' and 'Agnostic' people in the scenario can also suggest the higher level of individualization and personalization being expressed in terms of religiosity and spirituality in Denmark.

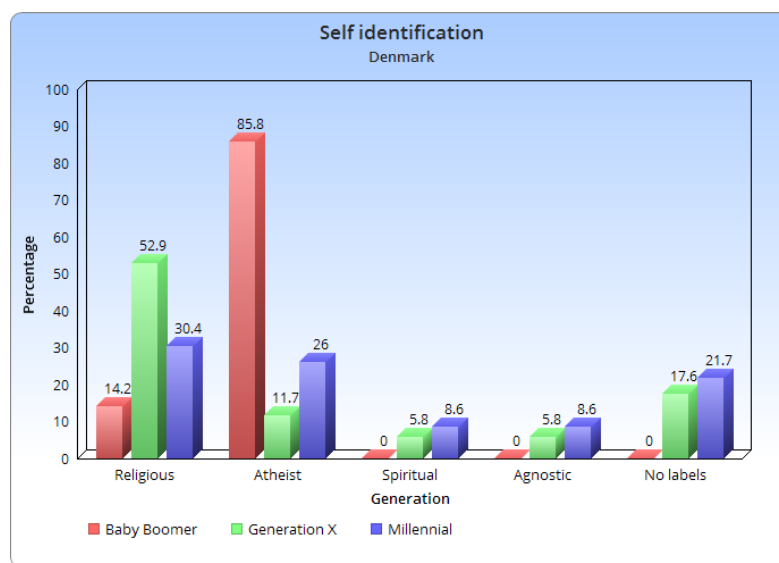


Figure 27 – Self identification - Denmark

The common trend seen both in Brazil and Denmark in regards of how the individuals identify themselves socially in terms of spirituality, is in the growing number of those who reject any kind of labels, suggesting a preference to personalize and maintain their individuality when it comes to their spiritual expression.

4.3. Final considerations

After thoroughly analyzing the personal and social implications of spirituality in both Brazilian and Danish contexts, separately and comparatively, it becomes visible that the trend for spirituality and religion in both groups does not point to any of the extremes of a future “death” of spirituality or resurgence of highly structured institutions. Instead, spirituality seems to take a new role on society and in the individual experience. What started as a form of a human conjoint effort to deal with the surrounding world, while helping to create and maintaining a sense of community and social bonds; appear to be, with time, turning into a more individualized and highly personalized experience, to an extent in which individuals are increasingly choosing to not designate and incorporate a social signifier to it, as a label.

Two of the main characteristics of globalization, which are the deterritorialization and telematization, reverberate on how individuals have been understanding and navigating through society, and also through the wider world. Being that so, as unique and multifaceted individuals that now gravitate towards non-fixed elements of identification, as the possibility of change and mobility of the ‘self’ is the biggest trait of individuals in the globalized world. Therefore, the biggest trend on self identification of the Brazilian and Danish investigated population is of the rise of the amount of people who reject any kind of labels; suggesting the possibility to navigate through different ideas, philosophies and practices at different times, or even simultaneously, if they wish. The biggest trend for spirituality found in this research is, ultimately, the mobility.

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