

**The Interplay between National Culture, Social Identity and Consumer
Behavior for Wine**
- the case of Denmark and Romania -

MA Thesis
Culture, Communication and Globalization (CCG)
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Abstract

Undoubtedly, wine marketing research has advanced significantly in recent years. However, several areas remain underexplored, amongst which, that of wine and culture. Diving into the topic of wine and culture in the context of marketing is important, as wine is extensively more than a mere beverage; it also represents a symbol of cultural identity and can open several doors for researchers of culture and marketing as well as for marketers. Wine consumption is often times associated with particular social contexts, cultural values, and beliefs. In other words, consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards wine are shaped by their cultural background. Exploring wine consumption in distinct cultural contexts is of utmost importance for wine marketers whose goal is to develop top tier marketing strategies that resonate with local consumers.

This MA thesis focuses on the study of the connection between national culture, social identity and consumer behavior for wine across two distinct societies – Romanian and Danish. It also employs somewhat of a comparative analysis between the two countries in relation to wine consumption, the main goal being to uncover the ways in which national culture and social identity impacts the behavior of wine consumers differently. The culture behind wine consumption in both countries is first explored through a literature review. Subsequently, theories of culture such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and social identity theory are used to frame the study and explore the problem formulation. The study employs open-ended online surveys to gather primary data that is afterwards subjected to meticulous analysis. The findings demonstrate significant influences of national culture and social identity on the consumer behavior for wine of Danish and Romanian consumers. National cultural values and norms were found to influence various aspects of wine consumption differently, depending on national background and social identity. Some of these aspects are: consumers' perception of wine consumption, consumers' value for wine consumption, and their consumption habits.

Keywords: *wine consumption, consumer behavior, cultural influence, wine culture, national culture, social identity*

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1. Introduction

The consumption of wine is widely considered a cultural and social practice that can be associated with traditions, customs and symbolic meanings. The level of wine consumption has increased drastically in recent years, with wine becoming a social and cultural symbol.¹ Purchase behavior, decision-making, and price perceptions are examples of cultural effects on consumer behavior and consumption. Multiple research studies have considered the effect of culture on dietary choices – these studies seek to comprehend culturally influenced decisions, actions, and beliefs. However, only a few studies have considered cross-cultural wine consumption.²

Lockshin and Corsi, in their review of academic papers concerning consumer behavior for wine, state that *“marketing in general, not just wine marketing, has few descriptive studies that really look at a phenomenon and describe it. This would be a very useful activity in developing markets to find who is buying wine, what are they buying, where they are buying, what are their motivations.”*³ As wine is rapidly becoming a more and more globalized commodity, grasping cultural impacts on consumer behavior for wine is crucial; especially for marketers of wine.

The topic of wine consumption has already been extensively studied – from the comparison of wine preferences and/or behavior between the younger generations and older generations, to the effects of the packaging attributes and labelling information on consumer preference and decision-making.⁴ However, academic literature surrounding the ways in which cultural context and social identity influences consumer behavior for wine is still scarce.⁵

Thus, this research aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by examining the ways in which cultural context and social identity may impact consumer behavior for wine by collecting data from individuals of distinct cultural backgrounds. In this case, ‘cultural

¹ Jens Beckert, Jörg Rössel, and Patrick Schenk, "Wine as a Cultural Product: Symbolic Capital and Price Formation in the Wine Field," *Sociological Perspectives* 60, no. 1 (2017): 206–22, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26579800>.

² Lara Agnoli and J. Francois Outreville, "Wine Consumption and Culture: A Cross-Country Analysis," *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy* 43 (2021): 1101-1124, doi: 10.1002/aep.13097, 2.

³ Larry Lockshin and Armando Maria Corsi, "Consumer behaviour for wine 2.0: A review since 2003 and future directions," *Wine Economics and Policy*, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2012, Pages 2-23, ISSN 2212-9774, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wep.2012.11.003>, 20.

⁴ Larry Lockshin and Armando Maria Corsi, "Consumer behaviour for wine 2.0: A review since 2003 and future directions," *Wine Economics and Policy*, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2012, Pages 2-23, ISSN 2212-9774, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wep.2012.11.003>, 2.
(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212977412000075>)

⁵ Lara Agnoli and J. Outreville, "Wine Consumption and Culture: A Cross-Country Analysis," 2021, *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43, 1101-1124. 10.1002/aep.13097, 2-3.

context' specifically refers to national culture, while the phrase 'distinct cultural backgrounds' indicates the acknowledgement of the wide and complex range of cultural factors that may contribute to the influence of consumers' behavior based on their national and ethnic background. Some of these factors are values, beliefs, traditions or cultural practices that individuals of the same national background may have in common.

The term 'consumer behavior' in the case of this thesis implies and includes motivations and preferences of wine consumers, decision-making processes in what concerns wine consumption and the purchasing of wine, and consumption styles (i.e frequency of consumption, contexts in which consumption takes place). In addition, as social identity may be another key factor in the shaping of consumers' behavior, this concept will also be explored in connection to national culture. Investigating the interplay between these two elements may add value and depth to the study in terms of gaining a deep understanding of consumer behavior across cultures.

As such, the problem formulation intended to be explored is: "*How does national culture and social identity influence consumer behavior for wine?*" This problem formulation acts as a blueprint for investigating the intricate connection between national culture, social identity, and consumer behavior for wine. To explore this topic, the study takes on a qualitative research approach that operates with open-ended online surveys sent to wine consumers from two fairly different national and cultural backgrounds – Romanian and Danish; the main goal being to explore, identify and analyze potential factors related to national culture and social identity that may influence consumer behavior for wine. Hofstede's 6D model of national culture as well as social identity theory will be used in analyzing the data through a thematic analysis with themes emerging from Hofstede's model. Social identity is not used by delving into its deeper theoretical elements, but rather as a broader concept within the scope of Hofstede's model of national culture. Social group memberships are explored in the context of national culture and consumer behavior for wine; however, the complexities of social identity are not extensively explored in this study.

According to a recent study conducted in two counties of Romania with the goal of identifying consumers' perception towards wine consumption, as well as the factors contributing to wine consumption and the decision process of purchasing a certain type of

wine, in Romania, wine studies rarely take into consideration the factors influencing the consumers' decision to purchase, such as potential cultural factors.⁶

Cultural values and norms, and social identity are expected to play an immense role in shaping consumers' attitudes, perceptions and behavior towards wine consumption. They may even impact the preferences that individuals have for wine, as some may prefer red wine, while others may prefer sparkling wine. In addition, certain cultures may have a tradition of consuming wine during religious or ceremonial rituals and mostly only consume it for such occasions, while others may indulge in moderate wine consumption with their dinner as an ordinary daily activity.⁷ Wine marketers need to be aware of potential cultural differences and tailor their branding strategies in order to fit the cultural context in which wine is consumed.

The findings of this study are expected to bring contributions to the existing literature on wine consumption and culture, one of the main goals being to provide fruitful insights into the topic. Subsequently, the study may open doors for wine producers and marketers, as it can contribute to the more efficient tailoring of products and marketing strategies that may better resonate with consumers from different cultural backgrounds. Implications and suggestions for marketers are thoroughly discussed in the Findings chapter.

2. Literature Review

In this section, the focus is placed on identifying existing research on the topic of wine consumption and culture in the case of Denmark and Romania, as well as in general, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic and prove a gap in the literature. Several themes will be explored: 1. Drinking culture and wine in Denmark; 2. Drinking Culture and wine in Romania; and the general theme 3. Wine consumption and buying Behavior as it relates to culture.

2.1 Drinking Culture and Wine in Denmark

It is widely known that Denmark possesses a strongly held drinking culture, where heavy drinking is deeply entrenched. A report on Nordic studies of adolescent drinking habits in 2000-2018 mentions that Denmark adopted a traditionally liberal alcohol policy that

⁶ Anca Monica Brata, Daniel I. Chiciudean, Vlad Dumitru Brata, Dorin Popa, Gabriela O. Chiciudean, and Iulia C. Muresan, "Determinants of Choice and Wine Consumption Behaviour: A Comparative Analysis between Two Counties of Romania" 2022, *Foods* 11, no. 8: 1110, <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods11081110>, 1.

⁷ Yung Yoo, Anthony Saliba, Jasmine MacDonald, Paul Prenzler and Danielle Ryan, "A Cross-cultural Study of Wine Consumers with Respect to Health Benefits of Wine, Food Quality and Preference," 2013, 28. 531–538, 10.1016/j.foodqual.2013.01.001, 531.

emphasizes individual control over public regulation. A Danish study followed a group of young individuals aged 15 to 25, with the goal of identifying and examining changes in their drinking habits over time. In comparison to international trajectory-type studies, three major 'Danish' traits were identified in the drinking trajectory groups. The findings of the study showed that the groups of cautious users were small. In fact, the largest groups consumed large amounts of alcohol in their adolescence; with some decreasing their consumption as they grew older and others continuing their heavy drinking habits in their adolescence.⁸

In Danish youth culture, the use of alcohol has traditionally played an important role in one's maturation process, with many adolescents having their very first drink at home, with their families. A study surveyed Danish adolescents with a focus on what it takes to start drinking in a country like Denmark, where underage drinking is common to such an extent. The results showed that the demystification of the risk experience associated with alcohol intoxication, as well as learning to find pleasure in losing control, are the major factors.⁹ The teenagers' parents also share this opinion, but different reasons are at the core. There are several social implications associated with engaging in alcohol abuse. For instance, young people tend to perceive alcohol as a means of constructing and maintaining friendships.¹⁰

More specifically, when it comes to wine as the alcoholic beverage, Denmark is one of the countries that have a high consumption level of wine. In 2009, approximately 189 million liters of wine were consumed, and although the total sales volume of wine in Denmark decreased overall since 2010, in 2021, the total volume of wine sold in Denmark was approximately 169 million liters.¹¹ It is worth mentioning that, historically, Denmark has not been considered a wine producing country.¹² However, according to VisitDenmark, Danish wine has recently been growing in popularity since the year 2000.¹³ Wine is a popular beverage among young Danes, and Denmark consumes the most wine out of any non-wine

⁸ Yaira Obstbaum, "What's new about adolescent drinking in the Nordic countries? A report on Nordic studies of adolescent drinking habits in 2000–2018," Nordic Welfare Centre, 2019, ISBN: 978-91-88213-39-6, https://nordicwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/What%E2%80%99s-new-about-adolescent-drinking-in-the-Nordic-countries_FINAL.pdf, 18.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Statista, "Total sales volume of wine in Denmark from 2010 to 2021," Statista, 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/605965/total-sales-volume-of-wine-in-denmark/>.

¹² Jan Bentzen and Valdemar Smith, "Wine production in Denmark Do the characteristics of the vineyards affect the chances for awards?," Aarhus School of Business, https://pure.au.dk/ws/files/9153/wp_09-21, 3-4.

¹³ VisitDenmark, "Explore Danish Wine," <https://www.visitdenmark.com/denmark/things-do/danish-food/vineyards>.

producing country. At 36 litres per yearly capita, the vast majority of the wine being sold in Denmark is red wine.¹⁴

While the overall alcohol consumption, as well as the consumption of liquor has been fairly consistent over the years, wine has gained substantial market share at the expense of beer, beer being an important part of Danish culture. Historically, Danish alcohol taxes favored domestic production by taxing wine more heavily than beer, and by taxing liquor differently, so that imported liquor was more heavily taxed than traditional Danish products. The tax rates now, however, primarily refer to the alcohol content of wine and beer; only liquor is taxed at a higher rate.¹⁵

In terms of traditions related to wine, Astrid Krabbe Trolle in *“Winter Solstice Celebrations in Denmark: A Growing Non-Religious Ritualisation,”* discusses wine consumption as part of specific winter solstice celebrations – *“While people gather around the bonfire, they consume fish soup and white mulled wine. The fish soup and white mulled wine resemble the menu for New Year’s Eve as well as the village identity as a fishing village close to the sea.”*¹⁶ These culinary choices are somewhat reflective of nowadays’ traditional Christmas celebrations due to serving traditional red mulled wine yet, at the same time, offering as alternative white mulled wine and fish.¹⁷

The academic literature on wine culture in Denmark and on wine consumption and buying habits as they relate to culture is extremely scarce, if not almost non-existent. This is what makes the Danish market an interesting and necessary market to study in connection to the population’s wine consumption habits and buying behavior as it relates to culture.

2.2 Drinking Culture and Wine in Romania

Romania is, to some extent, similar to Denmark in terms of drinking habits and drinking culture. A study on Romanian young people’s drinking habits found that binge drinking is a common practice, as almost the entirety of the participants (1111) were consuming alcohol at the time, the majority of them preferring heavy drinking. While Denmark is one of the

¹⁴ Elsebeth Lohfert, “The top wine buyers of Denmark,” *Meininger's Wine Business International* magazine, Issue 06, 2019, <https://www.meiningers-international.com/wine/power-lists/top-wine-buyers-denmark>.

¹⁵ Anders Milhøj, “The Market Share of Wine in Denmark,” *Journal of Wine Economics*, Volume 5, Issue 2, Pages 327-338, The American Association of Wine Economists, 2010, <https://www.cambridge-org.zorac.aub.aau.dk/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/CFDB6A82B42AA120ED98B79D1B0ADAE3/S1931436100000973a.pdf/the-market-share-of-wine-in-denmark.pdf>, 329.

¹⁶ Astrid Krabbe Trolle, “Winter Solstice Celebrations in Denmark: A Growing Non-Religious Ritualisation,” *Religions* 12, no. 2 (2021): 74, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12020074>, <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/12/2/74>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

countries with most drinkers in the world of both genders, Romania has some of the heaviest drinkers of masculine gender, The Guardian reported.¹⁸

In terms of wine, Romania had one of the most ancient vineyard practices in Europe. Strabon of Amaseia (63 BC-19 AD), an erudite historian, geographer, and ethnographer, communicated in his paper that the order given by Burebista on the advice of the priest Daecaenaeus (70 BC) was concerned with vine destruction. This leads to the conclusion that an important wine culture existed in Romanian territory long before the Romans invaded Dacia (106 AD).¹⁹ The favorable social conditions in Romania at the time, particularly among struggling proletarians and overworked peasants following the agrarian reform of 1864, created an ideal environment for this economic development.²⁰

These people, who were living in deplorable conditions, had few options for entertainment and thus, turned to cheap alcoholic beverages to relax and socialize. "The Tavern" played a key role in providing them with the only source of entertainment, where they could network with other people, participate in holiday festivities with fellow villagers, and even find temporary employment when agricultural activity was halted. The study also states that *"Wine was evaluated not only as an important alcoholic drink but also as a vital end product of viniculture. This explains the permissive attitude of the society and of the state towards alcohol consumption, a fact that favoured in time its expansion."*²¹

In Romanian culture, wine is highly perceived as a sacred beverage, as it is tightly related to religion. Wine is mentioned in orthodox biblical writings in relation to physical and spiritual health, with wine being associated with high symbolic values such as joy, Holy Spirit, wisdom, and truth. Individuals' desire to obtain wine manifested itself in a magical-ritual complex, and in one variant of the Baba Dochia story, she demanded food from God – specifically, bread and red wine; which were essential components of human food.²²

Gheorghe Csavossy, a renowned viticulture professor and researcher, believes that wine is a gift from heaven, and that individuals drink it for its aesthetic value rather than its alcohol

¹⁸ Sarah Boseley, "No healthy level of alcohol consumption, says major study," The Guardian, 23 August, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/23/no-healthy-level-of-alcohol-consumption-says-major-study>.

¹⁹ Leăşu Andreescu and Rogozea, L., "Alcoholism in Romania in the Late Nineteenth Century and at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," 2014, *Clujul medical* (1957), 87(4), 288–292, <https://doi.org/10.15386/cjmed-369>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Gheorghe Epuran, Gabriel Brătucu, Oana Bărbulescu, Nicoleta Andreea Neacşu, and Anca Madar, "Food Safety and Sustainability: An Exploratory Approach at the Level of the Romanian Wine Production Companies," *Amfiteatru Economic Journal* 20, no. 47 (2018): 151-167, https://www.amfiteatruconomic.ro/temp/Article_2677.pdf, 153.

content and effects. In addition, in a relatively recent study published in Romania, wine is considered a phenomenon of culture and spirituality, the perenniality of culture reinforcing the idea of food safety through responsible consumption of wine in the context of sustainable development.²³

A recent study titled “*Determinants of Choice and Wine Consumption Behaviour: A Comparative Analysis between Two Counties of Romania*,” sought to determine Romanian consumers' perceptions of wine consumption by identifying the factors influencing consumption, in order to better understand the characteristics of wine consumers and the attributes that they seek when deciding to purchase wine, and to assist Romanian stakeholders involved in wine production and commercialization in improving their marketing strategies in response to market needs and constraints.²⁴

The findings show that intrinsic cues (such as taste) and consumer experience are the most important factors influencing wine consumption. Wine tasting opportunities are valued by consumers, but they are limited, resulting in uncertainty and risk. Building strong brands through marketing can help consumers associate the name with positive experiences. Younger consumers with lower incomes place more emphasis on extrinsic cues such as origin, whereas those with higher incomes place more emphasis on notoriety. Consumers are willing to pay more for wine as they gain more experience.²⁵ Although this study focused on Romanian consumers' wine consumption habits, it did not place much emphasis on social identity and potential cultural factors that may impact it, which is the literature gap that this thesis seeks to fill.

2.3 Wine Consumption and Buying Behavior as it relates to Culture

There exist several cross-national studies where multiple countries are compared in terms of wine preference and purchasing behavior. For instance, de Magistris et al. in “*Do millennial generation's wine preferences of the “new world” differ from the “old world”? : a pilot study*,” seek to compare the preferences of the Millennial generation for wine attributes in

²³ Ibid, 154.

²⁴ Anca Monica Brata et al., "Determinants of Choice and Wine Consumption Behaviour: A Comparative Analysis between Two Counties of Romania," *Foods* 11, no. 8 (2022): 1110, <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods11081110>.

²⁵ Ibid.

two countries, one from the "New World"(the U.S), and one from the "Old World" (Spain), to find differences and similarities between the two.²⁶

According to the findings, similarities are prevalent in terms of American and Spanish Millennial consumers' wine preferences. While millennial consumers in the U.S prioritized prior experiences, Spanish Millennials prioritized origin. Furthermore, heterogeneity in attribute importance was observed in both countries, with five consumer segments being identified with major differences in the importance attached to various wine attributes: "Traditionalists," "Wine seekers," "Label fans," "Insecure," and "Price conscious."²⁷

In addition, another study from 2009 titled "*A cross-cultural comparison of choice criteria for wine in restaurants,*" sought to discuss the challenges posed by the issue of cultural differences in consumption behavior studies, and to propose the bestworst method as a tool for comparing data from a crossnational survey. The findings prove cross-national differences, with an obvious contrast between the French on one hand and the Australians and British on the other.²⁸

A number of country specific surveys can also be found. An academic article where the data collection and emphasis is placed on grasping the basics of consumer behaviour in one country is titled "*Factors influencing wine consumption in Southern California consumers,*" and it further investigated the factors that influence the intention to consume wine. Based on previous research conducted among British and Australian wine drinkers, this study was conducted among Southern California wine drinkers in order to provide a cross-cultural comparison of wine consumption motivations and intentions. The findings of the research showed a significant influence of the perceived health benefits of wine consumption among Southern California wine drinkers.²⁹

Another study, "*Chinese choices: a survey of wine consumers in Beijing,*" wished to better understand the Chinese wine market and aid in market entry and penetration by examining

²⁶ T. de Magistris, E. Groot, A. Gracia, and L. Miguel Albisu, "Do Millennial generation's wine preferences of the "New World" differ from the "Old World"? A pilot study," *International Journal of Wine Business Research* 23, no. 2 (2011): 145-160, <https://doi.org/10.1108/1751106111143007>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ E. Cohen, F. d'Hauteville, and L. Sirieix, "A cross-cultural comparison of choice criteria for wine in restaurants," *International Journal of Wine Business Research* 21, no. 1 (2009): 50-63, <https://doi.org/10.1108/17511060910948035>.

²⁹ M. St James and N. Christodoulidou, "Factors influencing wine consumption in Southern California consumers," *International Journal of Wine Business Research* 23, no. 1 (2011): 36-48, <https://doi.org/10.1108/1751106111121399>.

the purchasing habits of two categories of wine consumers in Beijing and assessing the impact of several factors on their decision-making processes.³⁰

Based on the findings, consumers plan to pay smaller amounts of money for everyday wines but are willing to pay more for wines that are purchased as gifts. Domestic brands accounted for the majority of sales, followed by French wines. Consumers care most about price and nation of origin. Awards and such attributes do not have a significant impact on their wine purchasing decisions. It was found that the most influential variables in purchasing decisions were prior experience with the wine, its origin, and the brand name listed.³¹

3. Concepts and Theoretical Framework

The following chapter is descriptive and explanatory of the concepts that the research is built upon as well as the theoretical frameworks that will serve as tools in the analysis of the data. The complex concept of culture is firstly discussed, followed by Hofstede's understanding of culture as well as his 6 dimensions of national culture. Lastly, social identity theory and its dimensions are dismantled, as it will also be used towards exploring the problem formulation.

3.1 Culture

Culture, a broad and complex concept that has been deeply contested throughout time, can be defined in innumerable ways. However, one of the most comprehensive interpretations of the concept was Edward Tylor's, the founder of cultural anthropology. He defines the concept of culture as *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired... as a member of society."*³²

In addition, a relevant mention that relates to the topic of culture in relation to consumer behavior is that Kroeber connects the concept of culture to human behavior, claiming that it has an impact on it and thus, identifies it as *"transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas and other symbolic-meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behavior and the artifacts produced through behavior."*³³

³⁰ Y. Yu, H. Sun, S. Goodman, S. Chen, and H. Ma, "Chinese choices: a survey of wine consumers in Beijing," International Journal of Wine Business Research 21, no. 2 (2009): 155-168, <https://doi.org/10.1108/17511060910967999>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Matthew Johnson, 'What Is Culture? What Does It Do? What Should It Do?' in "Evaluating Culture," ResearchGate, January 2013, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304818111_What_Is_Culture_What_Does_It_Do_What_Should_It_Do, 2.

³³ Yu-Wei Chang, Ping-Yu Hsu, Wen-Lung Shiau, and Chung-Chih Tsai, "Knowledge sharing intention in the United States and China: A cross-cultural study," European Journal of Information Systems, May 2015, ResearchGate,

Culture makes up the phenomenal world in two respects: on one hand, culture can be viewed as the "lens" through which an individual perceives phenomena; as such, it decides how phenomena are understood and assimilated. On the other hand, culture can be considered the "blueprint" of human activity, determining the co-ordinates of social action and productive activity, as well as defining the behaviors and objects that emerge from both.³⁴

Culture, in its lens form, is responsible for the way people perceive the world. In its blueprint form, it determines how human effort shapes the world. Briefly put, culture shapes the world by attributing meaning to it. This meaning can be described by two concepts: cultural categories and cultural principles.³⁵ The vast body of categories is constituted by cultural categories of time, space, nature, and person, resulting in a system of distinctions that organizes the phenomenal world. Each culture develops its own distinguishable vision of the world, rendering understandings and rules that are deemed appropriate to one cultural setting and absurdly inappropriate to another. At the same time, each culture creates a set of terms in which close to nothing appears alien or unintelligible to the individual member of that culture. In simple terms, culture "constitutes" the world by imbuing it with its own unique meaning.³⁶

In terms of the substantiation of cultural categories in goods, one can argue that goods constitute a chance to express a culture's categorical scheme, as they can provide an opportunity to create material culture. Goods, as any other type of material culture, allow individuals to visually discriminate among culturally specified categories by encoding these categories in the form of a set of material distinctions. Person categories can be divided into parcels of age, sex, class, or employment and can be represented in a collection of material distinctions by goods. This medium of communication can also reflect the categories of space, time, and occasion.³⁷

Sahlins' study from 1976, dealing with the symbolism of North American consumer products investigates food and clothing "systems" and demonstrates their correspondence to

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276076287_Knowledge_sharing_intention_in_the_United_States_and_China_A_cross-cultural_study, 3.

³⁴ Grant McCracken, "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods," *Journal of Consumer Research*, June, 1986, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 71- 84, Oxford University Press, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2489>, 72.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid, 73.

cultural categories of people. This research shows that the order of goods is modeled on the basis of the order of culture. It also demonstrates that the majority of the meaning of products can be traced back to the categories that a society divides its world into.³⁸

3.2 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

The theoretical framework that will act as one of the pillars for this study is Hofstede's six dimensional model of national culture. According to Hofstede, culture is a shared programming of the psyche that distinguishes groups from one another. This programming encompasses patterns of thinking, feeling, and potentially also acting that individuals learn throughout their upbringing process.³⁹

In comparison to other definitions, Hofstede's description of culture is concise yet insightful. Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions seeks to show how a society's culture influences its members' values and how these values influence behavior. This is what makes it suitable for analyzing consumption as it relates to culture. He conducted an exploratory empirical study of 115,000 IBM employees operating in 40 various countries to determine the dimensions and degree to which societies differ. After identifying the cultural dimensions, he assigned an index to each nation for each dimension. This index depicts the country's location on a scale between the two extremes of each dimension. On the "Hofstede Insights" website, one can observe where each country stands on the index.⁴⁰

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is extremely relevant to understanding the influence of culture on consumption and buying behavior and it can assist marketers in developing more effective and culturally appropriate strategies for different regions, such as in this case, Denmark and Romania. Comparisons between the two countries can also be conducted on the website 'Hofstede Insights'.⁴¹ This would appear as demonstrated below:

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Hafiz Muhammad Abdullah Shaiq, Hafiz Muhammad Sufyan Khalid, Aisha Akram, and Bakhtiar Ali, "Why not everybody loves Hofstede? What are the alternative approaches to the study of culture?" The International Institute for Science, Technology and Education, October 21, 2011, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234624093.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2F-Fesm9mncZwcuRHUcA0K9MkC0LsFtQat9fITGBgKOfIJ1QaizUYeA>, 102.

⁴⁰ Nebojsa Janicijevic and Ivana Marinkovic, "Empirical testing of Hofstede's measures of national culture and their impact on leadership in four countries," *Ekonomika preduzeća*, Vol. 63, ResearchGate, January 1, 2015, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299423050_Empirical_testing_of_Hofstede's_measures_of_national_culture_and_their_impact_on_leadership_in_four_countries, 265.

⁴¹ Ibid.

COUNTRY COMPARISON

Select one or several countries/regions in the menu below to see the values for the 6 dimensions.

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Figure 1: Hofstede's 6D model of national culture. Comparison of 2 countries: Denmark and Romania, in all six dimensions of the model; Source: Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/fi/product/compare-countries/>.

In addition to the index, the website offers the option of reading more about the chosen countries and provides descriptions for each of the cultural dimensions, as they relate to the countries chosen.⁴² These descriptions and additional information will prove extremely useful in the analysis of the primary data collected through open-ended online surveys sent to consumers of wine from Denmark and Romania.

⁴² Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,romania/>.

A relevant mention is that his 6D model has often been used as theoretical framework in cross-cultural studies and the investigation of cultural values in various contexts. Several studies that sought to gain a deeper understanding of cultural differences between countries as well as to measure these differences often use this model as a main tool. For example, Mooij and Hofstede claim that the 6D model of national culture is extremely helpful in the field of international marketing, as it can identify national values both generally and in a business context. The argument is that in order for businesses to adapt their product and service offerings locally and to meet preferences, they must first understand the culture of their target market, which is highly influential in for example, their tastes in fashion, food, cars, music and dance, and so on.⁴³

For instance, if a business seeks to sell cars in a country where the uncertainty avoidance dimension is high, emphasizing the car's safety features is crucial in order to ensure success. Similarly, if the business wishes to market a cell phone in a country where the individualism dimension is high (such as in the USA), one needs to show the consumers an advert of an individual using the gadget as a means of saving time and money, whereas if the marketing is taking place in a country where individualism is low (such as China), one need to focus more on collective experience.⁴⁴

As shown by Figure 1 above, the six cultural dimensions that Hofstede identified are as follows: 1. Collectivism/Individualism; 2. Power Distance; 3. Uncertainty Avoidance; 4. Masculinity/Femininity; 5. Long-Term Orientation/Short-Term Orientation; and 6. Indulgence/Restraint.

3.2.1 Collectivism/Individualism

Individualism and collectivism are two opposing societal traits. Briefly put, they relate to the degree of closeness people in a society have to others in-groups. Highly individualistic societies have loose ties and expect individuals to be self-sufficient, independent, mostly caring for themselves and their close relatives. On the opposite end, highly collectivistic societies integrate individuals into strongly tied, cohesive in-groups, often consisting of extended families that provide protection in return for unconditional loyalty. These in-groups are frequently opposed to other organizations. This dimension is a fundamental problem that

⁴³ Ushe Makambe and Rene Pellissier, "The application of Hofstede's cultural dimensions at Botho University: A model for workplace harmony in a multi-cultural business environment," *Information and Knowledge Management*, www.iiste.org, ISSN 2224-5758, ISSN 2224-896X (Online), Vol.3, No.4, 2014, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234671602.pdf>, 94.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 94-95.

affects all societies worldwide.⁴⁵ Hofstede enumerated Individualism index scores for 76 countries; high individualism can predominantly be found in developed and Western countries, while collectivism is more predominant in less developed and Eastern countries.⁴⁶

In the case of Denmark, Hofstede classifies it as possessing a highly individualistic culture, with a score of 74. Such a high score indicates that Danish people have a strong preference for a loosely knit social framework in which they are only expected to care for themselves and their close relatives. In the context of business, Hofstede states that it is reasonably simple to begin doing business with Danes.⁴⁷

On the other hand, in the case of Romania, Hofstede attributed it a low score of 30, as it is considered a collectivistic society. What this means is that a close long-term commitment to the member 'group' is expected. This can take the form of a family, extended family, or extended relationships. Loyalty plays a crucial role in a collectivist culture, and is placed above most other societal rules and regulations. The highly collectivistic society promotes strong relationships in which everyone takes responsibility for the other group members. Offense results in shame and loss of face in collectivist cultures. In a business context, employer/employee relationships are perceived morally (as a family link), hiring and promotion decisions consider the employee's in-group, and management is the management of groups.⁴⁸ In Romania, wine may be perceived as a good strategy for strengthening social relations, as it is often consumed in formal settings where it may be viewed as a symbol of social harmony and respect.

3.2.2 Power Distance

The concept of Power Distance relates to the extent to which people with less power in institutions and organizations, such as families, accept and anticipate the unequal distribution of power within the group. This type of inequality is created by those who are subordinates rather than those in positions of power. What this implies is that a society's level of inequality is enforced not only by leaders, but also by followers. It is essential to mention that power

⁴⁵ Geert Hofstede, "Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context," 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 11.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 12.

⁴⁷ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,romania/>.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

and inequality are inherent in all societies, though some societies may have more pronounced levels of inequality than others.⁴⁹

Hofstede defines Power Distance as “*the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.*”⁵⁰ For example, in a low power distance society, parents treat children as equals, whereas in a large power distance society, parents teach children obedience. Similarly, in low power distance societies, older people are neither respected nor feared, whereas on the opposite end, older people are both respected and feared.⁵¹

In Hofstede et al., Power Distance Index scores tend to be higher for East European countries such as Romania, and lower for Germanic and English-speaking Western countries such as Denmark.⁵² More specifically, Denmark scores 18 on this index, putting it at the very bottom of this dimension in comparison to other countries. Danes embrace independence, equal rights, friendly superiors, and that management supports and empowers them. Power is extremely decentralized. On the other hand, Romania scores extremely high on this dimension (90), indicating that people accept a hierarchical order in which everyone has a particular position without further justification.⁵³

When it comes to the consumption and buying of wine, Power Distance may play a big role in individuals’ attitudes. Possessing a low Power Distance, Danes value individualism and equality. Thus, in the wine consumption scenario, Danes may focus more on their own preferences rather than depending on anyone’s advice. They may also view wine as a daily beverage that can be enjoyed in several scenarios. Romanian society, on the other hand, with an extremely high Power Distance, may be more likely to listen to the views of experts or authoritative figures in their wine choices. In Romania, wine may also be perceived as a sign of social status, which makes it a popular beverage in formal or ceremonial scenarios.

3.2.3 Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty Avoidance refers to a culture's capacity to accept ambiguity or, as the name implies, the unknown. It assesses the extent to which a society promotes or discourages its members from feeling at ease or, on the opposite end, uneasy in unstructured, unfamiliar, or

⁴⁹ Geert Hofstede, “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context,” 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 9.

⁵⁰ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,romania/>.

⁵¹ Geert Hofstede, “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context,” 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 9.

⁵² Ibid, 10.

⁵³ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,romania/>.

unexpected situations. High uncertainty avoidance societies work towards reducing the likelihood of these kinds of circumstances happening by for instance, enforcing strict laws and codes of conduct, while low uncertainty avoidance societies are more relaxed in this sense.⁵⁴

Denmark ranks extremely low in this dimension, with a score of only 23. This implies that Danes are not that interested in structure and predictability in their lives. Plans can often be unpredictable and change suddenly, and Danes do not mind. Curiosity and being adventurous is encouraged from an early age in Danish society – *“What is different is attractive! This also emerges throughout the society in both its humour, heavy consumerism for new and innovative products and the fast highly creative industries it thrives in – advertising, marketing, financial engineering.”*⁵⁵ On the other hand, Romania has a high score of 90 on this dimension. This indicates a strong desire for avoiding unfamiliar situations. Romanians tend to maintain rigid beliefs and behavior codes and are often intolerant of unconventional behavior and ideas. Innovation may be resisted, and security is highly important in Romanians’ lives.⁵⁶ Thus, in the wine scenario, Romanians may prefer buying wine they have had prior experience with or choosing wines that are made through secure and consistent wine-making techniques.

3.2.4 Masculinity/Femininity

The Masculinity/Femininity dimension points to the societal characteristics that allude to the distribution of values between genders (a problem any society encounters). According to IBM research, while women tend to have similar values across societies, men’s values can differ considerably across nations. Men’s values may range from greatly assertive and competitive, which is extremely opposed women's values, to modest and caring, which is extremely similar to women's values.⁵⁷

The competitive end of this range has been termed 'masculine,' while the modest and caring end has been termed 'feminine.' In highly feminine societies, both genders tend to possess modest, caring values, whereas in highly masculine countries, women tend to be slightly more similar to men from masculine societies, although not to the same extent as

⁵⁴ Geert Hofstede, “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context,” 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 10.

⁵⁵ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark.romania/>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Geert Hofstede, “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context,” 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 12.

men.⁵⁸ This creates a disparity between men's and women's values in masculine societies – *“The fundamental issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (Masculine) or liking what you do (Feminine).”*⁵⁹

Denmark scores a low 16 on this dimension, which labels it a Feminine society. Individuals aim for consensus, and respect equality, solidarity, and quality in their lives. The solution to conflicts is compromise and negotiation, and Danes are known for their lengthy discussions until consensus is reached. Romania scores 42 on this dimension, implying that it is also a Feminine society, though less than Denmark. The emphasis in these societies is on happiness.⁶⁰

In the wine consumption scenario, both genders in Denmark may embrace the idea of exploring a wide range of wines, without the burden of gender-based expectations. Any type of wine may be perceived as a beverage that can be consumed by anyone, regardless of gender. In other words, diversity and equality may be preferred in the wine consumption and buying process. Romanian society, on the other hand, which has a higher level of Masculinity, may be more affected by gender-based expectations in its wine consumption habits and buying behavior. Wine may appeal more to men, who may consume it in formal scenarios. Strength, masculinity and sophistication may be qualities that the Romanian market seeks in wine products.

3.2.5 Long-Term Orientation/Short-Term Orientation

This dimension is characterized by values such as perseverance, thrift, organizing relationships by rank, and having a sense of shame at the long-term pole, and values such as reciprocal social obligations, respect for tradition, protecting one's 'face,' and personal steadiness and stability at the short-term pole. Long-term orientation is often found in East Asian countries, as well as Eastern- and Central Europe (Romania), while medium term orientation is found in South- and North-European countries (Denmark). A difference between the long and short-term pole is that, while in a long-term oriented society, the value

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark.romania/>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

that is adopted is “*personal steadiness and stability: a good person is always the same,*”⁶¹ in a short-term oriented society, this is “*a good person adapts to the circumstances.*”⁶²

In other words, this dimension refers to how different cultures integrate their past, present, and future, with differing priorities. One can classify societies based on their normative outlook. Those societies with a low score tend to retain established norms and be wary of social change, while those that score high on this dimension adopt a more pragmatic view, prioritizing education and saving as a means of preparing for future challenges and unexpected situations.⁶³

Denmark, with a low score of 35, is deemed as possessing a normative culture. Individuals in normative societies are highly concerned with establishing the absolute Truth, meaning they are normative in their thinking. They value and strongly respect their traditions, have a relatively weak desire to save for the future, and a high focus on achieving quick results. Romania scores 52 on this dimension, deeming it a less normative country.⁶⁴

This can translate to the wine consumption and wine buying behavior scenario in that Danish individuals may be less likely to save up money for or invest in expensive wines for the future. Instead, they may be more likely to focus on more immediate gratification. Romanians, on the other hand may be more likely to invest in more expensive wines that they can save for special occasions planned for the future.

3.2.6 Indulgence/Restraint

Indulgence refers to a society that allows for the relatively unrestricted fulfillment of basic and natural human needs that are related to pleasure and enjoying life, while restraint represents a society that controls and regulates fulfillment of demands through strong social rules. In other words, it refers to the degree of socialization that the youth receives, as it is a crucial aspect in determining one's growth and identity as a human being, and has been a significant challenge throughout time. Individuals' ability to manage their natural impulsivity and desires is influenced by their upbringing. This is what established this dimension of "Restraint" and

⁶¹ Geert Hofstede, “Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context,” 2011, Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 15.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark.romania/>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

"Indulgence" – societies can be classified as Restraint or Indulgent on the basis of the extent of their control over their impulses and desires.⁶⁵

Denmark, with a high score of 70 on this dimension, is an Indulgent country. Individuals in countries with a high Indulgence score are more likely to impulsively act on their inclinations and desires when it comes to enjoying life and having fun. They are inclined to be optimistic and they strongly value leisure time, act on their desires, and spend money lavishly. On the opposite end, Romania is a restrained country, with a very low score of 20. Societies with low score in this dimension tend to be more pessimistic. Furthermore, unlike Indulgent societies, restrained societies do not place as much emphasis on leisure time and tend to have more control over their impulses.⁶⁶

In the context of wine, individuals in Denmark, being more indulgent, may be more likely to consume wine as a means to fit in with their social group or exhibit a certain lifestyle. On the other hand, conformance to societal norms may be prioritized in Romania, where a restrained culture is dominating, which may impact Romanians' wine consumption and buying behavior.

3.3 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory claims that individuals identify themselves based on personal characteristics and social groupings to which they belong. This concept implies that personal and social identity is what an individual's concept of self is formed of. Personal identification refers to the sense of belonging to a particular group, whereas social identity refers to an individual's distinctive characteristics.⁶⁷

The process by which people categorize themselves into groups is referred to as the *cognitive* dimension of social identity. Several group memberships, for instance those based on country and gender may be the result of this process. Whilst the *evaluative* dimension of social identity is represented by the emotional connections that a person has to their group, which may contribute to an increase in self-esteem, the *affective* dimension implies an emotional commitment to group identity, which may have various behavioral impacts.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,romania/>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Tien Wang, Social identity dimensions and consumer behavior in social media, Asia Pacific Management Review, Volume 22, Issue 1, 2017, Pages 45-51, ISSN 1029-3132, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2016.10.003>, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1029313215300919>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Although previous research has claimed that the cognitive and evaluative dimensions are most significant, the three dimensions are separate and may have different impacts on behavior. An important mention is that prior research has proven that social identity generally has favorable connections with participation behavior, such as purchasing intention. According to a study by Tien Wang titled "*Social identity dimensions and consumer behavior in social media*," each aspect of social identity influences purchasing intention.⁶⁹

Applying social identity theory to the analysis of the data collected through open-ended online surveys sent to consumers from Denmark and Romania can provide fruitful insights into the potential various ways in which cultural identity impacts consumer behavior for wine.

In this sense, it can be argued that social identity theory may be connected to Hofstede's dimensions theory, as both theories seek to unravel how social environments and its elements are perceived by individuals of different cultures and social status and how they may affect their behaviors. However, Hofstede's theory is highly focused on cultural differences and how they impact behavior, while social identity theory strongly focuses on how individuals perceive themselves as well as other people from different social groups. The two theories will be used in unison, as this can increase the level of understanding in terms of how culture impacts consumer behavior and it can also increase the validity of the research.

4. Philosophy of Science and Methodology

In this chapter, the focus is on describing the philosophical underpinnings and methodological framework that the thesis adopts in order to conduct the research. More specifically, the philosophical part will explain how the researcher perceives the nature of the surrounding reality and the way to study it, while the methodological one will describe the methods and tools used for data collection and analysis.

4.1 Philosophy of Science

4.1.1 Ontology

Ontology can be defined as the study of 'being,' which is concerned with 'what is,' such as the structure of reality and the nature of life itself. It is concerned with the extent to which the

⁶⁹ Ibid.

world may be known. ‘Ontology’ is a term concentrated on the existence of various components of society, such as social actors, cultural norms, and social structures. It concerns itself with the various elements that exist in a society. These ontological considerations are crucial in the study of social research.⁷⁰

As opposed to positivism and objectivism, which focuses on objectivity and evidence in discovering the truth, and where the world is not impacted by the researcher, constructionism argues that *“knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding (not discovering) the social world of the people being studied, focusing on their meanings and interpretations, i.e., meanings are socially constructed by the social actors in a particular context.”*⁷¹

Due to the problem formulation being *“How does national culture and social identity impact consumer behavior for wine?”* which implies the existence of social actors and inquires about the ways in which cultural context shapes these actors’ perceptions and attitudes, and behaviors towards wine consumption, a constructivist ontological position is deemed most appropriate to provide an answer. The reason is that the position stands by the fact that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and communication within particular cultural contexts. Meaning it acknowledges that individuals actively and continuously form their own perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards wine consumption through social interactions, rather than these attitudes being pre-existent within them.⁷²

In addition, a constructivist ontological position acknowledges the major role that the researcher plays in the process. This is particularly relevant for this study, as open-ended surveys will be conducted and there is a need for the researcher to be attuned to the social context and cultural elements of each participant's responses.⁷³ Thus, rather than adopting a universal and objective stance in understanding the phenomena, a subjective constructivist perspective will be adopted, as it would allow for a detailed and contextual understanding of the participants' experiences and attitudes on wine consumption and wine buying behavior.

⁷⁰ Hashil Al-Saadi, “Demystifying Ontology and Epistemology in Research Methods,” February 2014, ResearchGate, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260244813_Demystifying_Ontology_and_Epistemology_in_Research_Methods, 1.

⁷¹ Ibid, 3-4.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid, 6.

4.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the philosophical study of the nature, origin, and limits of knowledge. The phrase is derived from the Greek words epistm ("knowledge") and logos ("reason"), and the field is sometimes referred to as "the theory of knowledge".⁷⁴

Constructivism is an epistemology/theory of knowledge or meaning-making. It explains the nature of knowledge and the different ways in which humans learn. The theory upholds that only prior experience and background information can help in constructing true understanding of a matter. In addition, it claims that individuals construct their own new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they currently believe and the ideas and experiences with which they come into contact – *"The situation in which individuals perceive, interpret, and explain the same object differently despite the sensation can be approached to the constructivist approach."*⁷⁵

Constructivism as an epistemological position was deemed most appropriate for the conduction of this research due to constructivism perceiving knowledge as being constructed by individuals through their experiences and interactions, rather than being constructed through accepting and embracing passive information. This thesis adopts constructivism as it acknowledges that individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behavior towards wine consumption are shaped by their unique cultural contexts and interactions with wine products as well as the experience regarding buying process.

It is also recognized that participants' responses are shaped by their own understanding of their personal experiences, and thus they are subjective rather than objective truths. Constructivism also acknowledges that the researcher's own biases and beliefs may impact the outcome of the research. Reflexivity and personal criticism is embraced, resulting in increased validity of the findings.⁷⁶

"Constructivism is not a theory about teaching...it is a theory about knowledge and learning... the theory defines knowledge as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective." (Brooks & Brooks, 1993 p vii).

⁷⁴ Matthias Steup and Ram Neta, "Epistemology", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/epistemology/>.

⁷⁵ Emel Ültanır, "AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL GLANCE AT THE CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH: CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING IN DEWEY, PIAGET, AND MONTESSORI," *International Journal of Instruction*, July 2012, Vol.5, No.2, e-ISSN: 1308-1470, p-ISSN: 1694-609X, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED533786.pdf>, 195-186.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Research Design

As the problem formulation seeks to explore the potential ways in which national culture and social identity impacts consumer behavior for wine, the chosen methodological approach is of qualitative and exploratory nature. Qualitative research is focused on non-numerical data and frequently leads to an understanding of concepts, attitudes, or experiences through the interpretation of meanings hidden in the data. In the context of this research, it also offers helpful tools for understanding the ways in which national culture, in its complexity, may impact consumer behavior for wine. This type of research is appropriate for studies that seek to answer "how, what, in what ways and why" questions – which is why it was deemed most suitable for this study.⁷⁷

Qualitative research in the form of open-ended online surveys will be used to collect data on the perceptions and attitudes of individuals from the two countries on the impact of culture on their wine consumption and buying behavior. Traditional methods of data collection such as face-to-face interviews or telephone surveys can be time consuming. The emerging data collection method based on internet/e-based technologies (e.g. online platforms and e-mail), is a relatively time effective alternative – *“If designed and executed rigorously, results from an online survey may be no different than paper based survey results, yet may demonstrate to be advantageous due to lower costs and speedy distribution.”*⁷⁸ The surveys will seek to find answers about the respondents’ experiences, perceptions, and beliefs regarding their habits in terms of consuming and buying wine as well as cultural factors that may influence their consumer behavior for wine.

The advantage of this method is that the participants’ responses to open-ended questions are personally constructed rather than suggested by multiple response options. As such, bias introduced by suggesting responses to participants can be avoided. Moreover, open-ended questions offer participants the possibility to give detailed responses about their experiences and opinions and allow for a wide range of potential responses.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Ashley Crossman, “An Overview of Qualitative Research Methods”, ThoughtCo, February 2nd, 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com/qualitative-research-methods-3026555>.

⁷⁸ Pramod Regmi et al., “Guide to the design and application of online questionnaire surveys,” *Nepal journal of epidemiology* vol. 6,4 640-644, 31 December, 2016, doi:10.3126/nje.v6i4.17258.

⁷⁹ Connor Desai and Reimers S., “Comparing the use of open and closed questions for Web-based measures of the continued-influence effect,” *Behav Res* 51, 1426–1440 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-018-1066-z>.

It can be argued that the relationship between theory and research in this case is both inductive as well as deductive. The use of the theories as tools in the analysis of the collected data indicates a deductive approach, as the theories are being applied to the data in order for their applicability to be confirmed and to gain insights into the topic, while the problem formulation being based on a particular observation (i.e the impact of national culture and social identity on consumer behavior) indicates an inductive approach, as an explanation to the observation is sought for within the data.⁸⁰

4.2.2 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The primary data collection method for this study will be open-ended online survey. The surveys will be conducted in English and Romanian, as the researcher is not fluent in Danish while some Romanian participants are not fluent in English. Most of the surveys will be sent through the platform Facebook, while some will be sent through e-mail.

The survey questions will be developed based on the research question as well as the theories chosen and will cover some of the following topics: 1. Demographic information (i.e. age, gender, education level, occupation, and cultural background); 2. Preferences for consuming and buying wine; 3. Consumption and buying habits for wine; 4. Perceptions and attitudes concerning cultural elements in the context (i.e how the participants believes national culture and social identity influences their consumer behavior for wine), etc., and the open-ended format of the survey is expected to generate flexible and fruitful responses.

Deductive thematic analysis will be the method used in the analysis of the collected data – “*Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.*”⁸¹ Thematic analysis is frequently used in a flexible manner in qualitative data analysis, and there have been several attempts at providing a more systematic approach to its use, with most authors combining deductive and inductive versions with the goal of creating a hybrid approach.⁸² The analysis that this study seeks to conduct is solely deductive, as Hofstede’s theory of national culture and social identity theory will be used in the generation of themes. The themes, which will be based on the dimensions of the theories mentioned in the theoretical framework chapter, will also be compared across the participants to identify

⁸⁰ Meredith Young, Lara Varpio, Sebastian Uijtdehaage, and Elise Paradis, “The Spectrum of Inductive and Deductive Research Approaches Using Quantitative and Qualitative Data,” *Academic Medicine* 95(7):p 1122, July 2020. | DOI: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000003101.

⁸¹ Noel Pearse, “An Illustration of Deductive Analysis in Qualitative Research,” *European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies*; Kidmore End, June, 2019, DOI:10.34190/RM.19.006, 264.

⁸² Ibid.

similarities and differences between the two countries in the respondents' answers. The use of the theories will allow the researcher to interpret the data and provide insights into the impact of national culture and social identity on consumer behavior.⁸³ Additionally, sub-themes are expected to emerge from the data.

4.2.3 Sampling

This research adopts a purposeful sampling method for the identification of 'information-rich' cases. This implies selecting individuals that are familiar and have experience with, in this case, wine consumption. In addition, individuals were also chosen based on the criteria of trustworthiness and their capability of communicating their experiences and opinions effectively.⁸⁴ As such, 16 avid Danish and Romanian wine consumers were chosen for the study. In order to bring variety to the study, certain sample group members differ in profession, age, and gender. The form below provides general information on the participants:

Danish participants				
Name	Age	Gender	Residency	Profession
XYZA1	25	Male	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZB2	26	Male	Vrå, Denmark	Freelancer
XYZC3	22	Female	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZD4	22	Male	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZE5	26	Male	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZF6	26	Male	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZG7	28	Female	Aalborg, Denmark	IT Consultant

⁸³ Lorelli Nowell, Jill Norris, Deborah White, and Nancy Moules, "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria," 2017, *International Journal of Qualitative*, 16. 10.1177/1609406917733847, 2.

⁸⁴ Lawrence A Palinkas et al, "Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research," *Administration and policy in mental health* vol. 42,5 (2015): 533-44, doi:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y.

XYZH8	28	Male	Aalborg, Denmark	Software developer
Romanian participants				
XYZI9	24	Female	Aalborg, Denmark	Student
XYZJ10	21	Female	Campia Turzii, Romania	Psychologist
XYZK11	25	Male	Odense, Denmark	Student
XYZL12	24	Female	Cluj, Romania	Graphic Designer
XYZM13	24	Female	Aalborg, Denmark	Wolt Market employee
XYZN14	48	Female	Frederikshavn, Denmark	Industry worker
XYZO15	49	Male	Frederikshavn, Denmark	Industry worker
XYZP16	75	Female	Campia Turzii, Romania	Retired

The reasoning behind selecting Danish and Romanian respondents is that the researcher is most familiar with these two cultures and markets. Most importantly, however, is that the Danish and Romanian markets are underresearched in what concerns the impact of national culture and social identity on consumer behavior for wine. In addition, most of the respondents are to a certain extent acquainted with the researcher – while this may have some practical implications and limitations in what concerns the data collection, a personal survey delivered to a small sample group that the researcher is acquainted with may also allow for a certain level of trustworthiness and validity in conducting the study.

Despite the fact that the size of the sample may be considered small, the nature of the research being qualitative, the entirety of the survey questions being open-ended, and the relationship between the researcher and the respondents being a close one is believed to allow for the generating of in-depth fruitful responses – *“Samples in qualitative research tend to be smaller in order to support the depth of case-oriented analysis that is fundamental to this*

mode of inquiry.”⁸⁵ While the research at hand may not fully align with the definition of a case study, the detailed analysis of individual responses that will be conducted through thematic analysis can be considered similar to case-oriented analysis. As such, the sample group of 16 individuals which are considered ‘information-rich’ cases allows the researcher to manage the complexity of the analytic task.⁸⁶

4.2.4 Limitations and Ethical Considerations

It is also important to acknowledge that the study may have limitations that need to be considered in the interpretation of the findings. One of these is that the relatively small sample size may not be fully representative of the entire Danish/Romanian population, and the findings may also not accurately apply to other cultures or contexts.

In addition, time and resource restraint is also a limitation as it did not allow for the selection of a bigger sample group. The theories that are used in the analysis of the data may also not be completely accurate in the context nor apply to every member of the nations under investigation.

Ethical considerations are a crucial part of any research that employs methods which involve human subjects. As this research employed personal online surveys which were delivered to individuals of two different national and cultural backgrounds, multiple aspects were taken into consideration.

Written consent in the form of a consent template was requested to be filled in by all of the respondents. The respondents were informed about the topic of the research and the anonymity and confidentiality of every participant was promised. Thus, the names of the participants were substituted by codes (XYZA1, XYZB2, etc.) The respondents were never coerced to give answers to questions unless they wished to. Thus, few of the answers are short or the respondents state “I don’t understand the question” or “I don’t know how to answer this.”

5. Analysis

The following chapter contains the examination of the primary data collected through open-ended online surveys sent to 16 respondents of Danish and Romanian nationality. Hofstede’s

⁸⁵ Vasileiou K., Barnett, J., Thorpe, S. et al, “Characterising and justifying sample size sufficiency in interview-based studies: systematic analysis of qualitative health research over a 15-year period,” BMC Med Res Methodol 18, 148, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0594-7>.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

6D model of national culture was used in the generation of the main themes as well as in the analysis of the data, while several sub-themes emerged from the primary data collected from the participants. The main goal of this chapter is to gain insight into the potential ways in which national culture in connection to social identity may influence consumer behavior for wine.

5.1 Collectivism/Individualism

As a result of thoroughly examining the collected data several times, the presence of collectivism and individualism could be observed in the participants' responses to questions related to their consumption habits as well as their consumer behavior as it relates to wine products. This led to the creation of two sub-themes, namely "attitudes towards wine consumption contexts" and "decision-making for purchasing wine."

5.1.1 Attitudes towards wine consumption contexts

As demonstrated by Hofstede's 6D model of national culture, countries can differ significantly in their collectivism/individualism levels. In the case of Denmark, the country is placed extremely high on this spectrum, with a score of 74.⁸⁷ This means that the country is highly individualistic, which may imply that the social nature of Danes is mostly introverted and, as such, they may enjoy spending recreational time alone. Its place on the spectrum may indicate, in the context of consumer behavior for wine, that they may value "me time" and thus, for instance, enjoy drinking a glass of wine alone at the end of a tiring day. In what concerns attitudes towards ways of consuming wine, however, most respondents from Denmark expressed their preference for drinking wine in group settings, rather than alone. Respondent XYZA1 states *"I prefer to drink alcohol socially, that includes wine."* This goes against the assumption that Danish culture is highly individualistic. However, it may be that this simply does not apply to all cases, or that it cannot be applied to all contexts.

The preference of consuming alcohol, including wine, socially may also be viewed as a "consequence" of influences brought upon by the individuals' social identity. Danish culture is known for valuing social gatherings and in-group activities. As mentioned by the literature review, there are several social implications associated with engaging in alcohol use and abuse. For instance, young people tend to perceive alcohol as a means of constructing and

⁸⁷ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, Denmark and Romania, Accessed May 8, 2023, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=denmark%2Cromania>.

maintaining friendships.⁸⁸ The preference for consuming wine socially may be indicative of Danish individuals' wish to respect the habits of the social group they belong to. As such, wine may be used as a means for reinforcing their social identity. In addition, the concept of 'hygge' which signifies a cozy atmosphere that Danish individuals enjoy in groups may also play a role in the preference of consuming wine socially. Respondent XYZF6 states *"Drinking warm gløgg with my friends and family during winter brings me an unexplainable feeling of comfort."* These preferences can be linked to social identity and considered an expression of it, in that the respondents show a desire to embrace cultural practices and the practices of their social group.

Romania, on the other hand, is placed extremely low on the collectivism/individualism spectrum, with a score of merely 30 – *"This is manifest in a close long-term commitment to the member 'group', be that a family, extended family, or extended relationships."*⁸⁹ What this implies is that individuals from Romania may prefer being part of a tightly-knit group rather than a loosely-knit one. As a result, it can be deducted that activities are mainly conducted in groups, which may include alcohol consumption. As the data shows, most respondents from Romania prefer to drink wine socially, in group settings. However, this is only a preference and not a rule; some respondents also admitted to enjoying having a glass of wine alone in certain instances. For example, respondent XYZO15 states *"I prefer to drink wine in group settings, but I can of course also enjoy drinking it alone from time to time."*

Additionally, one of the senior respondents attributed a depressing feeling to drinking alone, which she claims is of the main reasons she prefers drinking wine in group settings. Moreover, religious beliefs and practices may also be linked to the preference of consuming wine in group settings, at least for the older generations – respondent XYZP16 states *"there are several religious events where wine is involved,"* and *"I do have to drink red wine for religious purposes from time to time, such as during religious holidays where red wine is served."* The respondent may feel an obligation to participate in these practices due to her social identity and the group she belongs to, which revolves around religion and faith. As uncovered by the literature review, in Romanian culture, red wine symbolizes the blood of Christ, which is why she may feel pressured to drink it during religious ceremonies held in

⁸⁸ Yaira Obstbaum, "What's new about adolescent drinking in the Nordic countries? A report on Nordic studies of adolescent drinking habits in 2000–2018," Nordic Welfare Centre, 2019, ISBN: 978-91-88213-39-6, https://nordicwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/What%E2%80%99s-new-about-adolescent-drinking-in-the-Nordic-countries_FINAL.pdf, 18.

⁸⁹ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, Denmark and Romania, Accessed May 8, 2023, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=denmark%2Cromania>.

groups. This may also contribute to her general preference of consuming wine in group settings rather than alone.

The study also surveyed a younger respondent that embraces Christianity – respondent XYZJ10. She is 21 years old and shares some of the same attitudes towards wine consumption as the 74 year-old respondent. When asked about her wine consumption habits in terms of the context she consumes it in, she states *“Usually when going out with friends or at events such as weddings, christenings, etc. I never drank wine alone.”* This goes in accordance with the collectivistic nature of Romanian culture that Hofstede demonstrated in his model.

5.1.2 Decision-making for purchasing wine

Consumers’ decision-making in what concerns the purchasing of wine can also be affected by their culture’s placement on Hofstede’s collectivism/individualism spectrum. After scanning Danish respondents’ answers to questions related to their decision-making processes, a few important observations were made. While not all of the Danish respondents purchase wine on the basis of their personal preference and expertise, most of them are individualistic in their preference for decision-making with regards to wine purchasing.

For instance, respondent XYZD4 states *“When shopping for wine, I rely on my personal knowledge and experience. However, I am open to recommendations from others if they have similar tastes as I do or if they are knowledgeable about wine.”* Similarly, respondent XYZA1 states *“I might rely on some opinions of people I’ve met, otherwise I rely on my own knowledge and maybe an app that rates wine. Never would I ask a store employee.”* Based on these types of responses, it is clear that their decision-making process in what concerns consumer behavior for wine is, to a certain extent, influenced by their placement on Hofstede's collectivism/individualism spectrum. Their responses are reflective of a highly individualistic nature where personal preference and personal experiences hold more value than other people’s opinions. The authoritative and decisive phrase “never would I ask a store employee” highly emphasizes the strong desire for having control over one’s decisions and the preference for personal autonomy.

This preference can also be linked to social identity. In investigating the cultural context in which wine consumption preferences and consumer behavior evolve, the interplay between social identity and national culture turns out to be quite obvious. Individualism is a cultural element that is highly valued in Danish society. Danish individuals are encouraged to live their lives based on their personal wishes, to express themselves openly in their own

uniqueness, and to embrace their freedom and free will. This cultural context has a profound impact on the social identities of Danish individuals, which in turn shapes their behavior, attitudes, and preferences, including their approach to the consumption of wine. Danish individuals may also take pride in embracing and expressing their personal preferences and personal autonomy.

In the case of Romania, most of the respondents prefer to get help in their purchase for wines. Respondent XYZJ10 states *“Since I am not that picky about wine, I have a few brands or types of wines that I enjoy and I only purchase those. I have acquired these preferences from tasting them in various settings and purposefully remembering their name for future use.”* While this answer may not exactly indicate that the respondent asks for help or other people’s opinions in her decision-making for wine purchasing, the fact that she has gathered a few favorites in “various setting” may indicate that certain wine preferences emerged in group settings, where she tried wines that were bought by her group members. In addition, some respondents ask for other people’s opinions in the case that they cannot find a wine they have had long experience with – respondent XYZP16 states *“I usually ask for other people’s opinions if I cannot find a wine that I have had a long experience with, as I would like to go the safe route and get a wine that I am sure I will enjoy.”* This being said, there were certain exceptions where respondents expressed high individualism in their answers, such as respondent XYZN14, who voiced her strong desire for often trying new wines and relying on her personal preferences and expertise – *“I like to test new wines and so I rely more on my personal experience and personal preference.”*

Romanian society, being highly collectivistic, values other people’s opinions, including in terms of decision-making for wine. The influence of social identity and the cultural context in which these preferences are shaped may be the culprit for this inclination. As priorly drawn upon, the response of participant XYZJ10 suggests that some of her wine preferences may have emerged through shared experiences and interactions within her social group. In other words, her belonging to that social group may have contributed to the development of her preferences for wine.

Furthermore, most of the respondents’ preference for seeking the opinions of others indicates an emphasis on in-group reliance in terms of recommendations, which emphasizes the strong influence of social groups and social interactions on respondents’ social identity, as well as the value placed on shared experience and collective decision-making – respondent XYZI9 states *“When it comes to my social group, my social identity definitely has an*

influence on my wine preferences and choices, as I take their recommendations into consideration. Luckily, we have the same taste in wines.” The respondent’s feeling towards having similar wine tastes as their social group may imply a desire for fitting in with their social group.

5.2 Power Distance

In examining the collected data, the existence of indicators of Power Distance was observed in various respondents’ answers. As such, two sub-themes emerged from the data, more specifically, “wine preferences based on social and socio-economic status” and “wine consumption habits as dictated by tradition.”

5.2.1 Wine preferences based on social and socio-economic status

In Denmark’s case, the country is placed extremely low on the Power Distance spectrum, with a score of merely 18 – *“With a very egalitarian mind-set the Danes believe in independency, equal rights, accessible superiors and that management facilitates and empowers.”*⁹⁰ What this may imply in the context of consumer behavior for wine, is that individuals are less concerned with hierarchical divisions and social status. Thus, in what concerns their behavior as consumers, Danish consumers may be minimally impacted by external factors such as social and socio-economic position. It is, thus, expected that Danish individuals place more emphasis on personal satisfaction and personal preferences in their decision-making for wine.

This expectation is met, as most Danish respondents expressed their disinterest in buying certain types of wines (i.e expensive wines) for the purpose of impressing their group members or adhering to a certain social status or social expectations. For instance, when asked about the importance of face-saving in their culture and its impact on consumer behavior for wine, respondent XYZD4 states *“I prioritize taste over brand or status,”* and *“I don't think that the concept of face-saving has a significant impact on my wine consumption choices. In my culture, there is a certain level of importance placed on maintaining social status and avoiding shame, but this is not necessarily tied to wine consumption. I tend to choose wines based on my personal taste preferences rather than what others may think of me. However, I can see how face-saving could be a consideration in certain situations, such*

⁹⁰ Hofstede Insights, Country Comparison, Denmark and Romania, Accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=denmark%2Cromania>.

as when attending formal events or business dinners where certain wine choices may be expected.”

In addition, respondent XYZA1 states *“Denmark is not a “face” culture, with that being said, people do want to avoid looking bad. This could probably drive some people to, for example buy Möet champagne because of the recognizable brand, I however am no sheep and am also confident in my wine knowledge, so I don’t care what people say.”* Based on these responses, it can be argued that while there appears to be a certain desire for or idea of face-saving in Danish culture, the majority of Danish wine consumers do not take this into account and rather prioritize taste and personal preference. This fits with Hofstede’s model of national culture which places Denmark extremely low on the spectrum.

Within the context of the interplay between social identity and national culture, Danish respondents’ emphasis on personal satisfaction in wine consumption and buying behavior points to their independence and rejection of conformity. This is representative of their social identity in the sense that it is being formed by cultural factors such as independence, equal rights, and liberty. Through means of social group interactions and by emphasizing personal taste and preferences, Danish consumers express their personal autonomy and uniqueness in their wine consumption habits.

In the case of Romania, an immense difference could be observed in Hofstede’s chart. The country being placed extremely high on this spectrum, with a score of 90, implies that *“people accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. Hierarchy in an organization is seen as reflecting inherent inequalities, centralization is popular, subordinates expect to be told what to do and the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat.”*⁹¹ What this may signify in the context of consumer behavior for wine, is that social and socio-economic status may play an important role in consumer behavior for wine, particularly regarding wine preferences and buying behavior.

However, most Romanian participants state differently. For instance, respondent XYZJ10 states *“Face-saving is indeed an important aspect of my culture, but it has to do more with the amount of alcohol consumption rather than its quality or refinement.”* However, this may have come as a result of her social identity, as she is part of the middle class and Gen Z, a younger generation – *“First of all, being middle class, I do not purchase*

⁹¹ Ibid.

expensive wines for the sake of having an exquisite beverage. What I do is search for the best deal in rapport with taste and price. I am from the generation Z so refinement is not typically an important factor; we typically look for other factors such as price.”

After examining one of the senior’s responses, a change could be observed regarding this dimension, as compared to the younger respondents’ answers. Senior respondent XYZP16 states *“the concept of face-saving is very important in Romania, especially amongst the older generations. Therefore, I would not do anything related to wine consumption that would bring me judgment from others. If I were to visit someone and decided to buy a bottle of wine for them, I would make sure it is a quite expensive one.”* This difference amongst generations may indicate that the feeling of having to adhere to certain social expectations and the concept of “face-saving” is mostly an element of the past. However, it is still important for marketers to acknowledge these differences, as it can contribute to the generation of personalized marketing incentives that resonate with the target population.

5.2.2 Wine consumption habits as dictated by tradition

Tradition was also found to play a key role in consumers’ consumption habits for wine. When asked about the connection between tradition and their wine consumption habits, most respondents from Denmark pointed out the strong connection between culture and alcohol consumption. Respondent XYZA1 states *“In Denmark we drink a lot and it’s a big part of our culture because we are shy and alcohol helps us of this, to that end we also drink alcohol for just about every holiday.”* Through this answer, it can be deduced that Danish people use alcohol, including wine, as a medium for facilitating social interaction and also potentially for fitting in with their social group.

In addition, respondent XYZD4 similarly states *“In terms of cultural beliefs or practices surrounding the consumption of alcohol and wine, my culture generally views it as a neutral or positive aspect of socializing and enjoying life. However, there is also an awareness of the potential negative effects of alcohol and the importance of responsible consumption.”* In Denmark, alcohol, including wine, plays an immense role in social interactions and cultural events. Thus, it can be argued that tradition plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior for wine. Danish respondents’ acknowledgement of the strong connection between Denmark’s drinking culture and their alcohol consumption habits is reflective of the influence of tradition on their wine consumption habits, specifically how often and the contexts in which they consume it.

In terms of the connection to social identity, the focus on tradition and the recognition that alcohol, including wine, is often abused by Danish individuals due to Denmark’s strong drinking culture may point towards a sense of shared social identity and a desire to belong and fit into Danish society. By embracing the heavy drinking practices associated with Danish culture and respecting the

cultural importance of drinking, Danish consumers validate their social identity and use drinking as a main way of bonding with their social group.

The vast majority of Romanian respondents also acknowledged the strong connection between tradition and their wine consumption habits. However, they did so in a different way than Danish respondents. As mentioned by the literature review, Romania is a wine producing country. Therefore, most of the emphasis was placed on Romania's tradition of making homemade wine out of personally cultivated grapes. Respondent XYZJ10 states *"My country prides itself in producing wine from locally sourced vineyards"* while respondent XYZN14 more clearly and affectively states *"Yes I believe tradition has an impact on my wine consumption habits because when I was young, my father used to make homemade wine from his personal vineyard, and it is a tradition to squeeze the grapes and drink unfermented wine together. I believe this made me like wine more."* In this case, it can be observed that the respondent associates her passion for wine and her habit of drinking wine quite often to her childhood and the tradition of wine-making that her father embraced.

In addition, Christianity, which is also a huge part of Romanian culture, is also mentioned as having an impact on respondents' wine consumption habits. For instance, respondent XYZP16 states *"Yes, there are several religious events where wine is involved,"* when asked about a potential connection between tradition/cultural practices and wine consumption. She further emphasizes the influence of religion, tradition, and religion as a cultural practice by stating *"I am religious, so the religious traditions and ideas surrounding wine such as the idea that wine is the blood of Christ and the tradition of home-making wine definitely had an impact on my wine consumption habits in terms of me actually wishing to consume it and how often I do it."* In addition, she also acknowledges the tradition of wine producing by stating *"I believe growing up in a culture that produces its own wine, it affected my preference for domestic wines."* All of these preferences and ideas are factually representative of Hofstede's model of national culture in what concerns Romania's high placement on the Power Distance spectrum. By adhering to tradition and cultural practices, including religious practices, individuals express their acceptance for authority, control, and hierarchical order. It becomes clear that tradition and cultural heritage holds great power in shaping Romanian respondents' consumer behaviors for wine.

This adherence to tradition and cultural practices in the case of Romanian respondents also points to the interconnection between social identity and national culture. As tradition and cultural practices are extremely important in Romania, the respondents' association with their cultural heritage and social groups is an obvious outcome. The association of wine consumption with the tradition of making homemade wine from personally cultivated grapes reflects a sense of pride and connection to their social identity. By embracing these traditions and practices, their social identity as members of a society that values and seeks to preserve cultural heritage and traditions is strongly reaffirmed.

Furthermore, consuming wine during religious practices can also be linked to the desire or feeling of obligation to fit in with their social group.

5.3 Uncertainty Avoidance

Indicators of the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension of national culture are vastly present in the respondents' answers. After examining the data, one major sub-theme emerged: "willingness to try new kinds of wine."

5.3.1 Willingness to try new kinds of wine

Denmark scores extremely low on the Uncertainty Avoidance spectrum, namely 23. This means that Danes generally value spontaneity and adventurousness in their lives over security and certainty. While Hofstede offers the workplace as a scenario when explaining this dimension, this can be replaced by the wine consumption scenario – *"Curiosity is natural and is encouraged from a very young age. This combination of a highly Individualist and curious nation is also the driving force for Denmark's reputation within innovation and design."*⁹² Danes appreciate diversity in their lives. This can also be observed throughout society in its interest and heavy consumerism for new and innovative products as well as the fast highly creative industries it thrives in (i.e advertising, marketing.)⁹³

Hofstede's finding is highly reflected in Danish respondents' answers related to their willingness of taking chances and risk-taking when it comes to wine consumption. The vast majority of Danish respondents prefer risk-taking and adventurousness in their wine consumption over sticking to a wine they are familiar with. For instance, respondent XYZB2 expresses his preference for adventurousness in his wine consumption habits by stating *"I really enjoy taking risks in all aspects of my life, when it comes to wine i am also very open to try new unfamiliar wines and anything related to wine."* In other words, this implies that Danish wine consumers are not bound by traditional or familiar choices but more often than not, they embrace the unknown and diversity in their wine choices.

Danish respondents' propensity for risk-taking in wine consumption is also reflective of their social identity within the Danish cultural context. As priorly mentioned, personal autonomy is highly valued in Danish society. Thus, as mentioned by Hofstede, Danish individuals are encouraged from a young age to explore their personal preferences and to be curious individuals.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

Danish consumers, by expressing their personal taste and their daresness of exploring the unfamiliar, they are also reaffirming themselves as individuals coming from a culture that values curiosity and personal autonomy. It can be argued that this style of wine consumption is a reflection of individual personalities and it helps each person stand out from the crowd. These wine consumption habits promote their social identity of being curious, open to the unknown, willing to take risks and seek new experiences.

Romania, on the other hand, scores 90 on this dimension, which is extremely opposite to Denmark. This means that Romanians generally strongly prefer avoiding uncertainty in various contexts and scenarios, including wine consumption – “*Countries exhibiting high Uncertainty Avoidance maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas (...) innovation may be resisted, security is an important element in individual motivation.*”⁹⁴ After scanning Romanian respondents’ answers related to their preference in terms of trying new wines or sticking to familiar ones, their preferences were found to mostly misalign with the score attributed by Hofstede on this dimension.

While most respondents stated that they are open to risk-taking and trying unfamiliar wines, the high uncertainty levels could be observed in their unwillingness to consume wine more than in moderation due to health concerns for the future. For instance, respondent XYZJ10 states “*I like trying new wines so in that sense I am open to uncertainty and risk taking, but I do consume it in moderation because of the risk of health effects in the future.*” This indicates that some respondents value security in the health aspect of wine consumption, rather than in the types of wine they consume. However, it is worth mentioning that some respondents also expressed their high uncertainty avoidance in this scenario.

For example, respondent XYZM13 stated “*I like trying different wines, but also if I find one that I like, I will mostly stick to it since I don't like buying wine and ending up not liking it. Then I'd rather have one to stick with*” while respondent XYZK11 responded “*I am always eager to try new wines and I feel that I am somewhat open to try unfamiliar wines, but I always try to have a base knowledge about the next wine I am buying.*” In the case of the latter respondent, it can be observed that he is, to a certain extent, willing to take risks in his wine choices, but at the same time he feels the need to be somewhat prepared before buying any new kind of wine, which places him somewhere in the middle on this spectrum. However, respondent XYZM13 next to fully aligns with Hofstede’s placement on the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

spectrum of this dimension, as she strongly expresses that she would rather stick to a wine that she is certain she will enjoy, rather than purchasing new, unfamiliar types of wine.

In the case of Romania, although the answers were somewhat mixed, the connection between this dimension of national culture and social identity can still be discussed from various perspectives. In the case of the respondents that expressed a strong desire for avoiding uncertainty and sticking to familiar wines, this preference is expressive of the importance placed on security and conformity within Romanian society. As Hofstede states “*innovation may be resisted, security is an important element in individual motivation.*”⁹⁵ Furthermore, in the case of respondent XYZK1, the moderate openness to trying new wines while ensuring a certain level of preparedness is reflective of the tension between personal expression and autonomy and the idea that there is an obligation to conform to societal standards.

5.4 Masculinity/Femininity

As a result of actively searching for indicators of the Masculinity/Femininity dimension within the data, several pointers could be found which generated two sub-themes: “wine preferences based on gender expectations,” and “perceptions of masculinity and femininity in wine consumption.”

5.4.1 Wine preferences based on gender expectations

Denmark, with a score of 16 on this dimension, is considered a highly Feminine society. In Feminine countries, equality, solidarity and quality of life are highly valued aspects. This means that gender equality is also a type of equality that is highly important.⁹⁶ What this may further imply in the wine consumption scenario is that Danish individuals emphasize inclusivity in their wine preferences and habits. In a highly Feminine country such as Denmark, where gender equality is as important, individuals may be strongly inclined towards rejecting gender stereotypes. As reflected by the respondents’ answers to questions related to their opinions on gender expectations in general and in the wine consumption context, it could be observed that Danish people do not generally base their wine preferences on gender expectations.

For example, respondent XYZD4 states “*In my opinion, there is little correlation between drinking wine and being a man or a woman in my society. In general, people believe that anyone—regardless of gender—can enjoy wine. Although there may be certain*

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

misconceptions or assumptions regarding which wines are considered to be more "masculine" or "feminine," these are not universal and depend on the person." This response, which is similar to most responses related to this topic, aligns with Hofstede's score attributed to Denmark on this dimension. However, it is worth mentioning that there were also certain respondents who acknowledged that rosé wine is viewed as more feminine than other types of wine – respondent XYZA1, when asked about the impact of gender expectations on his wine consumption habits, states *"I am still no sheep, so it doesn't affect me, but rosé is definitely seen as feminine by many people and so, some men will avoid it."*

In addition, respondent XYZB2 states *"I am a very open person when it comes to gender roles, i don't feel like it affects anything about me buying any specific wine or brand of wine. I do also believe that a lot of the general population has very strong opinions about what wines are masculine and what wines are feminine. An example could be that sweet wines are feminine, and that more complex and dry wines are masculine."* Here, it can be observed that, while the actual respondents do not adhere to gender expectations in their wine preferences, they believe that the general population is strongly opinionated on certain types of wines as being more feminine than others. Respondent XYZC3 even goes as far as to mention that she observed most marketers use the strategy of marketing rosé wine as feminine, similarly to the marketing of sparkling champagne. This may be indicative of the belief of alcohol marketers that Danish individuals adhere to gender expectations, when this is mostly not the case, as proven by the amount of respondents who claimed to not care about gender expectations.

Danish individuals affirm their social identity as embracers of equality and justice by opposing traditional gender expectations in wine consumption. They generally believe that wine is a beverage that should and could be enjoyed by anyone, regardless of gender. This is in accordance with their social identity, which appreciates inclusion and opposes gender-based prejudices. According to some Danish respondents, there may exist particular social misconceptions of certain types of wine, such rosé, being more feminine than others. However, in the case of the actual respondents, such stereotypes are not found to impact their wine preferences. On the contrary, the focus is more on their personal preference rather than potential societal standards. Their social identity as independent individuals who are raised to make their own choices and who do not allow themselves to be influenced by traditional gender expectations is further reaffirmed.

Romania is placed quite close to Denmark on this spectrum, with a score of 42. Thus, it is considered a relatively Feminine country. Similarly to Denmark, Romanians are found to value equality and solidarity and the emphasis is on well-being.⁹⁷ This is reflected in that the majority of the respondents do not give significant importance to traditional gender expectations. However, similarly to Danish people, they acknowledge that rosé wines and weaker wines are perceived as more feminine by the general population, while stronger wines and other drinks such as beer is perceived as more masculine. For instance, respondent XYZK11 states *“Romania, still being a conservative country, gender roles are traditional, with men expected to be imposing while women are expected to be supportive. I am not influenced by these social constructs and I drink all types of wine”* and adds *“Red wines are associated with masculinity while white and rose wines are seen as more delicate and feminine,”* when asked about specific wine types in relation to gender.

5.4.2 Perceptions of masculinity and femininity in wine consumption

The connection between traditional gender-based expectations and wine consumption habits such as how often wine is consumed was another major topic of discussion within the survey that the respondents touched upon. In Denmark’s case, the country being highly feminine, the perceptions related to gender and wine consumption habits are expected to differ from those in more traditional or masculine societies such as Romania. More specifically, it is expected that all genders are equal, including in terms of alcohol consumption. All genders are believed to have the liberty of enjoying wine and alcohol in general, without judgment.

However, while this is the case, responsible and moderate drinking is still expected of all genders, as binge drinking may generally be considered wrong, regardless of gender. This can be observed in Danish respondents’ answers – while most acknowledge the heavy alcohol consumption in Denmark and claim they do not care about how much people drink, regardless of gender, they also recognize that moderate drinking is generally important and encouraged in their culture – respondent XYZD4 states *“Consuming wine in moderation is important in my culture. While wine is enjoyed for its taste and social aspect, there is also an understanding that excessive alcohol consumption is not healthy or desirable. Although there’s also some people who buy cheap wine just to get drunk.”* In addition, there were multiple answers similar to *“No one cares if you drink a lot of wine.”* (XYZA1) and *“I feel like here in Denmark we like to drink a lot.”* (XYZC3), coming from both men and women.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

There were also several mentions regarding the context for drinking wine. Most Danish respondents believed that wine is a beverage for special occasions, rather than an everyday beverage. Respondent XYZF6 states *“Growing up, it used to be an everyday beverage, but as I got older, it became more of a special occasion thing. For a birthday or special dinner/occasion.”* Additionally, respondent XYZA1 states *“I would say it leans towards special occasions, just because it is alcohol and I think few people drink alcohol daily.”* The latter kind of opinion was found in most respondents’ answers to questions related to context of drinking wine.

It can be argued that emphasis on responsible and moderate drinking fits with the expectations of a feminine culture, as the rejection of irresponsible binge drinking may reflect the stress placed on quality of life and well-being, aspects which Hofstede claims are highly valued in a feminine society.⁹⁸ In addition, wine being mostly perceived as a beverage for special occasions rather than an everyday beverage further emphasizes the strong femininity of Danish society, as special occasions imply celebration and solidarity, which is the expression of a feminine society.

Social identity is also found to influence wine drinking patterns in Danish society. There is an emphasis on equality and inclusivity and responsible, moderate drinking is encouraged, aligning with a social identity that emphasizes collectivity, social responsibility and well-being. The strong association between wine and special events reaffirms Danes’ shared identity as a society who prioritizes social gatherings and sharing experience together as a collective.

Romania, being a slightly more masculine society than Denmark, is expected to be somewhat similar in terms of perceptions regarding masculinity and femininity in wine consumption. However, Romanian respondents placed much more emphasis on the importance of moderation in alcohol consumption, especially for women. For instance, respondent XYZP16 states *“Yes, moderate drinking is important especially for women. However, most men abuse it.”* In addition, female respondent XYZJ10 similarly states *“personally I don’t care to impress with wines or to avoid drinking a certain type of wine due to fear of judgment. However, I do care how people perceive the amount of wine I drink or how often I drink.”* This is indicative of some Romanian women fearing being judged based on their alcohol consumption habits (i.e how often and how much they drink.) which is in turn, indicative of a

⁹⁸ Ibid.

degree of gender inequality, as most men are claimed to abuse it which may imply that men do not care about being judged on this basis. It is worth mentioning that, unlike in the case of Danish respondents, no Romanian respondent stated that they or people in general do not care about how much alcohol others consume.

In terms of the context in which wine is believed as appropriate to be consumed, this is similar to Denmark's case. Most respondents stated that wine is perceived as a beverage for special occasions and formal gatherings such as religious meetings. Respondent XYZI9 states *"In my culture, wine is perceived as a beverage for holidays and special occasions, but also as an everyday beverage that mostly men enjoy after a long day of working, or it is served to guests whenever they visit, whether it is a holiday or not."* Again, in this case, the respondent points out the belief that men drink significantly more than women. This, to some extent, aligns with Hofstede's placement for Romania on this spectrum, in the sense that with a score of 42, Romania is expected to be less focused on gender equality. However, the country's femininity is expressed in the same way as Denmark's, through the emphasis on the concept of moderate drinking and drinking during special occasions.

An important mention, in what concerns the interconnection between social identity and national culture, relates to female respondents' concerns surrounding perceptions about their alcohol intake. This concern is reflective of a social identity where traditional gender expectations and beliefs surrounding a certain "appropriate behavior" for women are at the root.

5.5 Long-Term Orientation/Short-Term Orientation

One major sub-theme emerged as a result of examining the data for cues related to Hofstede's long-term orientation/short-term orientation dimension, namely "preferences regarding aging of wine." The respondents were asked whether they prefer newer or older wines, in order to determine whether the dimension of long-term orientation/short-term orientation may have an impact on their wine preferences.

5.5.1 Preferences regarding aging of wine

Denmark has a low score of 35 on the long-term orientation/short-term orientation dimension of national culture, which indicates that Danish culture is normative. In other words, Danish people have a strong concern with establishing the absolute Truth (i.e they are normative in their thinking) – *"They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to*

save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick results.”⁹⁹ In the case of wine consumption these norms may be traditions related to wine, customs, and expectations in terms of wine consumption habits and preferences. Danish individuals may prefer to adhere to these norms rather than steer away from them. However, exceptions may also exist.

Most Danish respondents prove an impact of short-term orientation on their wine consumption in their answers. For instance, respondent XYZA1 stated that he does not have a particular preference for newer or older wines – *“You can’t make a distinction between old and new wines, some age well, some don’t really change and barely any would get worse with age. I therefore have no preference. I also don’t think the aging of wine is a cultural thing, just a thing of wine culture.”*

The comment related to the aging process of wine not being a cultural element but rather a characteristic of wine culture itself suggests that the respondent places more importance on the inherent positive qualities of the wine rather than its age or the cultural significance of aging.

The indifference towards the aging of wine may infer that their approach to wine consumption aligns more with a short-term orientation where the focus is on immediate gratification and enjoying wine’s qualities rather than obsessing over the age of wine or cultural aspects of the wine they are buying. Individuals from highly long-term orientation cultures may place more value on wine aging. They may value wines that have been matured for a lengthy period of time, as aging may be considered a sign of quality and refinement. They may also view wine as an investment and may collect older wines rather than consume them immediately. This is apparently not the case in Danish society, which aligns with Hofstede’s placement of Denmark on this spectrum.

Romania is placed noticeably close to Denmark on the long-term orientation spectrum, with a score of 52. Although this fact may lead one to believe that the countries are similar in the way that individuals’ wine consumption is impacted by this dimension, after examining the data, it was observed that Romanians placed much more emphasis on traditions, particularly in what concerns wine making. Tradition and the long-term orientation dimension are inextricably connected. As a cultural element, long-term orientation proves a society's inclination towards preserving established values and standards throughout time. It implies patience, frugality, and a strong need for planning for the future and working towards goals.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Although older wines are not as preferred, the respondents often pointed to the process of wine-making as being highly valued – respondent XYZI9 states *“I believe that in my culture, the aging process isn’t as important as the fact of it being home-made or not. Home-made wine is always more appreciated than store bought wine. Maybe that is why I don’t have a preference when it comes to how old the wine is.”* Home making wine is a highly valued traditional custom in Romania. Especially in the countryside, people produce their own wine at home and then sell it at the Wednesday market. Several other responses were similar to this one. For instance, respondent XYZJ10 discussed her childhood experience related to wine – *“Yes I believe tradition has an impact on my wine consumption habits because when I was young, my father used to make homemade wine from his personal vine, and it is a tradition to squeeze the grapes and drink unfermented wine together. I believe this made me like wine more.”* This emphasis on tradition and upholding cultural and traditional customs while not necessarily caring for the aging of wine may be indicative of a medium level of short-term/long-term orientation, which is exactly where Romania is placed on this spectrum. Thus, this aligns with Hofstede’s placement for Romania on this dimension.

5.6 Indulgence/Restraint

The sub-theme that emerged for the main theme of indulgence/restraint is “level of self-discipline with regards to wine consumption habits.” The data was searched for patterns and cues related to the level of indulgence and restraint that the respondents have in their wine consumption preferences and habits, in order to find how their consumption is affected by this dimension of national culture.

5.6.2 Level of self-discipline with regards to wine consumption habits

Denmark, with a score of 70 on the Indulgence dimension spectrum, is considered a highly indulgent country. This signifies that individuals in societies with a high Indulgence score are strongly inclined towards following their wants and needs in terms of enjoying life and its pleasures. They are also generally optimistic and place a larger value on leisure time, acting according to their personal liking, and spending money lavishly – *“This dimension is defined as the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised. Relatively weak control is called “Indulgence” and relatively strong control is called “Restraint”.*”¹⁰⁰ Based on Danish respondents’ answers to the questions connected to this dimension, Denmark’s high indulgence can be observed as a factor influencing wine

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

consumption preferences and habits. For instance, respondent XYZB2 stated *“I believe in my culture it’s more about indulgence, since there is a strong background in Denmark, with social pressure to drink alcohol.”* There is a strong recognition of the role that alcohol plays in Danish culture and that it is a deeply ingrained cultural practice. Respondent XYZA1 states *“In Denmark we drink a lot and it’s a big part of our culture because we are shy and alcohol helps us of this, to that end we also drink alcohol for just about every holiday.”* It is also worth mentioning that some respondents view wine as an everyday beverage, which may be another indication of Denmark’s high indulgence – respondent XYZC3 states that wine is an *“Everyday beverage, when the Sun is out, when it’s time to relax, to eat, etc.”*

As mentioned above, one recurring theme in the data is the acknowledgement of alcohol as a key element of Danish culture. The respondents pointed out the societal pressure around consuming copious amounts of alcohol, as well as the way this is deeply ingrained in Danish norms and traditions. This proves that alcohol intake is connected to Danish individuals' social identities, as it becomes a shared experience and a tool for individuals to interact with one another and socialize. Furthermore, the notion that alcohol may be used to overcome shyness and promote social interactions strengthens the relationship between indulgence, social identity, and alcohol intake. Respondents stated that alcohol, particularly wine, is used for a variety of events and holidays, highlighting its significance as a social lubricant. Individuals reaffirm their social identity as members of a society that values social interaction and leisure time by partaking in these acts.

Romania, on the other hand, scores extremely lower on this dimension – namely, 20. This indicates that Romanian society is highly restrained. Societies with a low score in this dimension tend to embrace cynicism and pessimism. Furthermore, as opposed to indulgent societies, restrained societies do not put as much value on leisure time and are better at controlling the gratification of their desires – *“People with this orientation have the perception that their actions are Restrained by social norms and feel that indulging themselves is somewhat wrong.”*¹⁰¹

This can clearly be observed in Romanian respondents' answers to the survey, especially in women's case. A significant emphasis is placed on the concern surrounding how they are perceived by society if they were to indulge in wine consumption. For instance, respondent XYZJ10 expresses her concerns by stating *“In our culture in general the concept of face saving is important. However, personally I don’t care to impress with wines or to avoid*

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

drinking a certain type of wine due to fear of judgment. However, I do care how people perceive the amount of wine I drink or how often I drink.” In addition, respondent XYZP16 stated *“Yes, the concept of face-saving is very important in Romania, especially amongst the older generations. Therefore, I would not do anything related to wine consumption that would bring me judgment from others.”* This nature of statements perfectly aligns with Romania’s position on Hofstede’s spectrum for the Indulgence dimension, meaning that this dimension of national culture has a strong influence on Romanians’ wine consumption preferences and habits.

In terms of alcohol consumption, including wine consumption, the notion of face-saving appears to be extremely important in Romanian society. This notion can be connected to social identity, as Romanian individuals appear to feel obligated to conform to societal standards and expectations and act restrained in behaviors such as alcohol consumption in order to avoid judgment from their social group.

Due to their social identity, Romanian individuals are inclined towards avoiding activities that could potentially endanger their social position within their social group. This appears to have resulted in a conservative approach to wine consumption, as most respondents point out their concerns with indulging in alcohol consumption – respondent XYZN14 states *“I grew up in an environment in which women would feel judged when it comes to consuming alcohol. Therefore, I often consume wine in moderation and most of the times I have to restrain myself from drinking as much wine as I wish during social events due to fear of being judged.”* The respondent appears to go against her wish of consuming as much wine as she wishes, thus controlling the gratification of her desire, due to fear of being judged and the higher valued desire of maintaining a positive image within her social group.

6. Findings and Conclusion

This section provides an overview of the findings that were gathered as a result of conducting the analysis of the responses given by Danish and Romanian participants in the online survey, using Hofstede’s 6D model of national culture as well as social identity theory. As a result of analyzing the primary data through the lens of Hofstede’s 6D model of national culture, several findings that are relevant to the field of wine marketing as well as marketers of alcohol, wine and other relevant stakeholders surfaced.

In terms of the connection between Hofstede's individualism as a dimension of national culture, social identity and consumer behavior for wine, it was found that Danish respondents prefer consuming wine in group settings, which misaligns with Denmark's position on this spectrum but instead, aligns with the social nature of Danish identity, culture, as well as the key notion of 'hygge' which is a crucial element of Danish culture. Similarly, Romanians behavior aligned with the collectivistic characterization of Hofstede's by preferring consuming wine in group settings, which is believed to be an outcome of the tightly-knit social nature of Romanian society and the importance of social groups. In terms of decision-making for purchasing wine, Danish respondents proved highly individualistic, claiming to rely on personal experiences and preferences in their wine consumption habits. Personal autonomy was placed above the satisfaction of in-group members. Romanian respondents, on the other hand, placed emphasis on seeking opinions on which wines to purchase, particularly from their in-group members, which points towards the influence of social identity and collectivistic nature of their nation.

Marketers of wine and other important stakeholders, in Denmark's case, may consider focusing on social aspects in their strategies, most importantly the concept of 'hygge'. Marketing wine as a means for social bonding and as an element that should be included in cozy scenarios may appeal to Danish consumers' preferences. For the Romanian market, strategies should prioritize collectivism as well as the importance placed on recommendations from in-group members and social approval. Furthermore, marketing wine as representative of cultural traditions and togetherness may align with the highly collectivistic nature of Romanian consumers. Briefly put, whilst for the Danish market the emphasis should be on liberty and personal autonomy, for the Romanian one, it should be on social approval and the sense of community.

As for the power distance dimension, it was found that Danish respondents value personal gratification over adhering to social standards and expectations in their wine consumption habits and choices. Their strong independence as an element of Danish social identity leads to their indifference towards social status which is reflective of a low Power Distance, aligning with Hofstede's positioning of Denmark on this spectrum. In the case of Romanian respondents, it was found that despite Romania's high placement on this spectrum, it is mostly older respondents who are still mindful of societal expectations and consider the notion of face-saving important. Younger respondents prefer a cheaper wine over preserving the image of a high social and socio-economic status. Tradition was also found to play a

significant role in both Danish and Romanian consumers' behavior for wine. While Danish consumers view it as a medium for social bonding and fitting into their social group, due to the deeply embedded drinking culture of Denmark, Romanian consumers associate it with the long existing tradition of making homemade wine, as well as cultural and religious practices.

Marketing wine as a symbol of Romanian traditions, by for example promoting it through an advertisement that showcases the cultural practice of the wine being homemade, may resonate with Romanian consumers' value for preserving this tradition and their cultural and social identity. Generational dissimilarities also need to be considered for the Romanian market, as younger consumers place affordability over refinement, while older consumers may still value refined wines in order to appeal to their social group and the notion of face-saving.

In examining the uncertainty avoidance dimension in the context, it was found that Danish consumers are not afraid of trying unfamiliar wines; on the contrary, most of them expressed their excitement for having diversity in their wine consumption. As Hofstede claims, adventurousness is encouraged in Danish society since early childhood, thus it is logical that Danes embrace risk-taking in their wine consumption habits. This implies that the Danish market is an ideal market for new, unique and innovative wines.

In contrast, Romanian consumers expressed a strong preference for avoiding the unknown in wine consumption. They are more inclined towards sticking to familiar wines or having a base knowledge before purchasing new wines. This indicates a value for security and conformity which marketers should consider in their strategies for Romanian consumers. The safety and reliability of their wine should be highly emphasized.

For the masculinity/femininity dimension, based on the data collected from Danish respondents, Danish society appears to value equality, especially gender equality, and inclusivity. In the context of wine consumption, this means that most Danish consumers are indifferent towards gender expectations. Although the respondents acknowledge or believe that certain types of wine such as rosé may be perceived as feminine by the general population, they personally do not adhere to such gender expectations. Furthermore, the high Femininity of Denmark is highlighted by the importance placed on well-being and quality of life. Wine was found to be considered a drink for special occasions rather than an everyday beverage by most participants, and although it was acknowledged that Danes indulge in drinking, binge drinking was rejected by most respondents. In Romania, while moderate

drinking and consuming wine for special occasions is upheld, there is a much stronger focus on gender stereotypes in what concerns the amount of alcohol consumed by women. Women feared being judged for their alcohol intake, despite some of them wishing to drink more than the socially acceptable amount.

For Denmark, marketing incentives should be based around gender-neutral strategies, where inclusivity and gender equality is promoted and encouraged. Despite the perception that the general population classifies certain wines as more feminine than others, the actual respondents claimed to not adhere to such stereotypes in their consumer behavior for wine. Special occasion can be used for both markets as a means of promoting wine as a tool for improving social gatherings and celebrations. Breaking gender stereotypes within the Romanian market is also encouraged.

A major finding regarding the long-term orientation/short-term orientation dimension as it relates to consumer behavior for wine is that Danish and Romanian consumers express preferences that align with their respective cultural orientations. As Denmark has a normative culture, respondents expressed a strong indifference towards the aging of wine. They instead claimed to value the inherent qualities of the wine over its age or the cultural significance of the aging process, which suggests a short-term orientation, where immediate gratification is prioritized over patience and future outlooks. Therefore, wine marketers should focus on promoting their products to the Danish market by amplifying aspects such as immediate gratification and sensory experience, rather than the aging of wine or cultural/traditional elements. In Romania, on the other hand, as Romanian respondents value tradition, particularly wine-making practices, the focus should be on emphasizing the process of wine-making as well as the way wine fits in with traditions and cultural practices.

The main findings related to the indulgence/restraint dimension in connection to consumer behavior for wine are as follows: Danish respondents expressed a strong preference for personal autonomy and they recognized alcohol consumption, including wine, as a crucial part of Danish culture and Danish social identity. In Danish society, wine consumption is perceived as a collective experience and a tool for improving social anxiety and social bonding. Thus, focusing on the social and leisure aspects of wine consumption, as well as wine's potential of facilitating social interactions may be an effective and efficient way of promoting wine products in Denmark.

In Romania, as it is much more restrained than Denmark, respondents expressed a high level of restraint in their consumer behavior for wine. The main findings relate to women's concerns regarding societal perception and judgment towards their wine consumption, if they were to indulge in it. The concept of face-saving was acknowledged as being important by some of the respondents, as they expressed their need to conform to societal expectations. The connection to their social identity as it relates to their need of preserving a positive image within their social group influences their consumer behavior, resulting in a more conservative style of wine consumption. Thus, it may be beneficial for wine marketers to account for Romanian consumers' worries surrounding these concepts and issues. The emphasis on conservative and moderate drinking, as well as on the cultural and traditional characteristics of wine may appeal to the Romanian market.

The problem formulation that this research sought to explore is "*How does national culture and social identity influence consumer behavior for wine?*" The analysis of national culture and social identity within the primary data reflected the multidimensional influence of these concepts on Danish and Romanian consumers' behavior for wine. The various dimensions of national culture (individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term/short-term orientation, and indulgence/restraint) as well as the concept of social identity in its broad and superficial sense were found to contribute in shaping Romanian and Danish individuals' behaviors towards wine consumption.

The major findings prove that national cultural values and norms influence various aspects of wine consumption differently, depending on national background and social identity. Some of these aspects are: consumers' perception of wine consumption, consumers' value for wine consumption, and their consumption habits. For instance, one of the most important findings is that in Denmark, where individualism is extremely high while power distance is low, wine consumption is associated with personal autonomy, immediate gratification, and relaxed social bonding. In Romania, on the other hand, where the power distance is higher and individualism is low, wine consumption is associated with tradition, social norms, and the concept of face-saving. Romanian respondents, especially women, expressed a much higher level of restraint in their consumer behavior for wine, as a means of preserving their image within their social group.

Grasping the complex interplay between national culture, social identity and consumer behavior in marketing can play a crucial role in ensuring the success of marketing incentives. Marketers of wine and other important stakeholders need to consider these cultural

differences and tailor their marketing strategies accordingly. This ensures that there is an alignment between marketing incentives and the cultural values, norms and preferences of each target market.

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Appendix A

Online Survey Questions

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your profession/occupation?
4. What is the highest level of education you've completed?
5. Where do you reside?
6. How do you perceive your social and socioeconomic status?
7. Do you believe tradition as it relates to culture has an impact on your wine consumption habits?
8. What is your opinion on wine consumers from different cultures?
9. Are you independent when it comes to wine consumption? Do you prefer to drink it alone or in group settings?
10. When you shop for wine, do you usually ask for other people's opinion or do you rely mainly on your personal experience?
11. Do you believe your social identity has an impact on your wine preferences?
12. How do you believe indulgence versus restraint in your culture affects your wine consumption?
13. How do you perceive uncertainty and risk-taking? Do you believe it may impact the way you approach wine consumption? Does it affect you in your willingness to try unfamiliar wines or are you open to the unknown?
14. Is the concept of face-saving valuable in your culture, and do you believe it impacts your wine consumption choices and how these are perceived by others?
15. How do you perceive masculinity and femininity? Do you believe this element of culture influences the types of wines you buy and prefer?
16. To what extent do you believe your personal preference in wine consumption differs from that of your group members?
17. Are there any types of wines that are perceived as more appropriate or suitable for men as opposed to women in your culture?
18. Does certainty and trustworthiness in terms of wine choices matter in your culture, or is adventurousness more important?
19. Do you prefer newer or older wines? Is the aging process of wine important in your culture?
20. Are there certain methods of making wine/getting wine that are more valued in your culture, regardless of whether they are more time consuming or require more effort?
21. Is consuming wine in moderation important in your culture?
22. In your culture, is wine perceived mostly as a beverage for special occasions or as an everyday beverage?

23. Are there any cultural beliefs or practices/traditions surrounding the consumption of wine/alcohol in general in your culture?
24. How do you believe your social identity impacts your preference for local versus imported wines?
25. How does individualism versus collectivism impact your choice to share wine with other people?

Appendix B

Consent Form

Title of Project: the Connection between National Culture, Social Identity and Consumer Behavior for Wine - the case of Denmark and Romania

Name of Researcher: Daniela-Loredana Florea

Outline of Research: The purpose of this research is to explore the potential influences of national culture and social identity on consumer behavior for wine. Furthermore, it seeks to offer suggestions for marketers of alcohol, especially wine, in conducting incentives for the Danish and Romanian markets.

The research takes its point of departure in Hofstede's 6D model of national culture, which provides the basis for understanding cultural influences and for interpreting the data acquired through surveys delivered to avid Danish and Romanian wine consumers.

Your identities will be kept confidential so that your responses can be kept anonymous. Taking part in this research is voluntary and if you do not want to answer some of the questions, you do not have to.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the above outline of the research and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that my answers will be kept confidential and that I will only be identified by a pseudonym in the publications arising from this research.
4. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

