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Article

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Suggested Citation: Janšto, Erik; Chebeň, Juraj; Šedík, Peter; Savov, Radovan (2024) : Influence of labelling features on purchase decisions: Exploratory study into the Generation Z beverage consumption patterns, Amfiteatru Economic, ISSN 2247-9104, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Vol. 26, Iss. 67, pp. 927-942,
<https://doi.org/10.24818/EA/2024/67/927>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/306191>

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INFLUENCE OF LABELLING FEATURES ON PURCHASE DECISIONS: EXPLORATORY STUDY INTO THE GENERATION Z BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

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Please cite this article as:

Janšto, E., Chebeň, J., Šedík, P. and Savov, R., 2024. Influence of Labelling Features on Purchase Decisions: Exploratory Study into the Generation Z Beverage Consumption Patterns. *Amfiteatru Economic*, 26(67), pp. 927-942.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24818/EA/2024/67/927>

Article History

Received: 9 March 2024

Revised: 15 April 2024

Accepted: 3 June 2024

Abstract

The growing purchasing power and unique purchase behaviours of Generation Z have captivated the attention of academics, marketers, and researchers, who are keen to understand the nuances of this cohort's consumption patterns. While current studies focus on factors influencing consumer choices, we can hardly find studies focusing on understanding the dynamic interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic cues in influencing consumer behaviour, specifically in the context of alcoholic beverages like wine. The importance of this study lies in a deeper investigation into how these factors collectively impact consumer perceptions and decisions. This study specifically delves into the intriguing domain of their beverage consumption preferences, offering insightful revelations into their distinct buying habits and brand inclinations. The main objective of this research is to identify the influence of label characteristics on the changing buying patterns of Generation Z. Using factor analysis, multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), and Friedman's test, we have analysed the behaviour of 431 consumers from 2 EU countries. The results revealed "product identity" and "sensory appeal" as two hidden factors with a significant impact on consumer choice. In particular, sensory profiles that showcase a reputable brand and highlight distinctive grape varieties, countries of origin, and wine regions are likely to resonate with young people. Conversely, companies may be able to de-emphasise information about quality designations and awards to develop a more youth-focused strategy. Additionally, the MCA results reveal differences in the frequency and occasions of drinking across gender and place of residence groups. The further research could focus on a broader spectrum of beverage cross-generational and intercultural preferences

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considering psychological and social factors that influence purchasing decisions, such as peer influence, marketing campaigns, or environmental consciousness.

Keywords: generation Z, iGeneration, labelling, wine, purchase behaviour, product identity, sensory appeal, consumer choice, intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

JEL Classification: M31, M37, Q13

Introduction

Choosing beverages, especially wine, involves complex decisions more intricate than other food items, largely due to label influences on initial impressions and purchasing choices (Sogari, Mora and Menozzi, 2016; Pickering, Duben and Kemp, 2022). Despite extensive research on consumer preferences, particularly among older demographics, less is known about how wine labels affect Generation Z's buying decisions, revealing a significant gap (Pomarici et al., 2014; Ordun, 2015; Dharmesti et al., 2021). Wine, a popular global alcoholic beverage, sees consumer choices shaped by intrinsic qualities (e.g., taste, quality) and extrinsic factors (e.g., branding, marketing) (Pezoldt et al., 2014; Rai et al., 2023). These decisions are also influenced by sociocultural and psychological elements, not solely the product's intrinsic or extrinsic attributes (Betancur et al., 2020). Research shows that packaging, labelling, and marketing significantly affect consumer expectations and sensory experiences, shaped by demographic variables and personal wine interest or knowledge (Piqueras-Fiszman and Spence, 2015; Spence, 2019; Boncinelli et al., 2019; Lerro et al., 2019). In scenarios where wine tasting is not possible, extrinsic features like labels become crucial in decision-making (Lockshin et al., 2006). Various studies underscore the impact of label design on perceptions of taste, quality, and environmental attributes (Le Bel, 2005; Capitello et al., 2021; Crichton-Fock et al., 2023).

Recent studies have delved into consumer choice determinants, yet there remains a significant gap in comprehending the dynamic interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic cues on wine consumer behaviour, particularly among Generation Z. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating how demographic factors (gender, residence, and nationality) impact Generation Z's wine preferences, and by exploring the role of wine label attributes, both intrinsic (e.g., grape variety, taste) and extrinsic (e.g., brand, origin), in their selection processes. The current study makes several notable contributions to the literature.

First, it enhances the understanding of consumer behaviour and wine marketing theories by detailing Generation Z's wine selection nuances influenced by label attributes, offering strategic insights for both scholars and industry practitioners. Second, the research pinpoints which label attributes - both external (brand, design) and internal (grape variety, sensory attributes) - are pivotal in shaping Generation Z's wine choices, thus elucidating their preference patterns. Third, it bridges the theoretical and practical aspects of consumer perception and marketing strategies, providing valuable guidance for marketers to tailor their products and campaigns effectively towards Generation Z, thereby facilitating successful brand positioning in the wine market.

The paper is structured as follows: first, a literature review on Gen Z, which is followed by a detailed examination of both the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of wine labels.

Subsequently, the methodological section introduces a conceptual framework, encompassing the data collection process and the analytical methods employed. The final section of the paper is dedicated to presenting the findings, engaging in a thorough discussion, and drawing conclusive remarks.

1. Review of the scientific literature

The following three parts concisely examine Generational Cohort Theory (GCT), focussing on how consumer behaviour varies across age groups, especially Generation Z. The first part integrates research to show how different generations' purchasing habits are influenced by technology and social factors, like Generation Z's preference for online shopping versus Baby Boomers' emphasis on in-store experiences. It also notes significant within-generation variations due to diverse backgrounds. The next part analyses how gender, location, and age influence wine consumption, with differences in purchasing reasons between men and women, and contrasts in preferred drinking settings between younger and older consumers. The last part explores how label information affects wine selection, with millennials valuing label details differently than other segments, thus highlighting the complexity of consumer preferences in the wine market.

1.1 Generations and wine labelling

Generational Cohort Theory (GCT) defines differences across generations, such as the world crisis generation (pre-1946), baby boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y (1981–1996), and Generation Z (1997–2012). This study focuses on Gen Z's unique digital engagement and its impact on their behaviours and preferences (Thach, Riewe and Camillo, 2021; Chaney et al., 2017). Influenced by digital media, Gen Z exhibits distinct purchasing behaviours and socialisation processes, marked by a demand for information and digital fluency in shopping and communication (Šramková and Sirotiaková, 2021).

Contrasting with previous generations, millennials show a strong preference for sustainable consumer behaviour (Ordun, 2015). Research indicates significant variances in wine preferences across cohorts, with Gen Z's wine interest maturing over time and being shaped by social status, self-presentation, and public perception. This is juxtaposed with older generations, for whom wine consumption serves as a social trigger for memories and rituals, as noted by Barrena and Sanchez (2009), highlighting a generational divide in motivations behind wine consumption (Silva et al., 2017).

Gender differentiation further influences wine consumption behaviours, with distinct patterns emerging across genders in terms of lifestyle, purchasing reasons, and health concerns (Rodríguez-Donate et al., 2019). Moreover, situational involvement and urban living conditions are found to impact younger consumers' preferences, indicating a shift towards public consumption and sustainable wine choices. This underscores the importance of regional branding in wine selection (Martínez-Carrasco Martínez et al., 2006). These findings lay the foundation for the following hypotheses:

H1a: Demographic factors, including gender, place of residence, and country, have a significant influence on shaping the reasons for consuming wine. Additionally, within Gen Z, specific

variables are assumed to have statistically significant associations with purchase behaviour, shedding light on the key factors influencing wine purchase decisions within this demographic.

H1b: Demographic factors, including gender, place of residence, and country, have a significant influence on average annual wine consumption within different consumption categories. Furthermore, specific variables within Gen Z are expected to show statistically significant associations with wine consumption, providing insight into the nuanced preferences and patterns within this demographic group.

1.2 Role of Extrinsic and Intrinsic labelling features in beverage consumption

The decision-making process among Gen Z when it comes to buying wine is quite complex and is driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Studies by Rasmussen and Lockshin (1999) have highlighted that consumers often rely on factors such as brand reputation, price, packaging, and label design to assess the quality of wine. Other studies by Monteiro, Guerreiro and Loureiro (2019) and Laeng, Suegami and Aminihaibashi (2016) have emphasised the role played by wine labels in quality assessment and their impact on attracting consumer attention. They suggest that aesthetic appreciation of a label can influence quality expectations and purchase desire. Chamorro, García-Gallego and Trindade-Carlos (2020) argue that wine labels hold greater sway in consumer choices than the bottle's type, seal, or even the brand name itself. While Dobeles, Greenacre and Fry (2018) acknowledge that brand name can be a quality indicator in specific contexts such as gifts or restaurant selections, they note that country of origin, price, and wine category generally outweigh bottle design in consumer preferences.

Escandon-Barbosa and Rialp-Criado (2019) have demonstrated that label details related to wine attributes significantly affect purchase intentions, with the wine's region of origin playing a crucial role, as also noted by Foroudi et al. (2019), and Rodrigues and Parr (2019). However, Lunardo and Rickard (2019) find that brand awareness, price, and wine type are more critical than label design or name, except when purchasing wine as a gift. Tang, Tchetchik and Cohen (2015) have shown that label colour and design preferences vary between younger consumers, who favour modern, red-dominated labels, and older generations, who prefer traditional, white-dominated labels. Lick et al. (2017) suggest that the label colour can set flavour expectations, with different colours hinting at various wine flavours. Despite the importance given to wine awards, Thach, Riewe and Camillo (2021) have observed that Gen Z views them as a minor factor in wine selection, which is echoed by Herbst and Von Arnim (2009), who consider wine awards less crucial than vintage, origin, production method, price, producer, or type. Johnson and Bastian (2007) note that awards rank 8th in importance among low-involvement consumers.

Given the nuanced interplay between label aesthetics, brand perception, and regional identification in influencing Gen Z's wine selection, it becomes evident that extrinsic label features serve as pivotal cues in their purchasing decisions. This leads to the hypothesis that:

H2: For Gen Z, the specific extrinsic factors highlighted on wine labels, such as brand, country of origin, wine region, graphic design, vintage, quality designation, and awards, are expected to play a significant and influential role in shaping their wine purchase behaviour.

The intrinsic attributes of a wine label refer to the characteristics of the wine itself (Rahman and Reynolds, 2015). Grape varieties that are popular with consumers are often associated with wine style, grape quality, and winemaking practices (Tempere et al., 2019). Stanco,

Lerro and Marotta (2020) argue that grape variety appears to be important to consumers, following previous findings by (Pomarici et al., 2017; Lerro et al., 2019), and may be influenced by previous experience with the product or a specific preference for the wine. However, the journey through consumer preferences takes a nuanced turn when considering the role of sensory attributes, with significant differences between experts and non-experts, and between males and females. Furthermore, Henley et al. (2011) showed that information on wine labels had a significant impact on perceived quality and taste for millennial consumers. However, Mueller et al. (2010) found that ingredient information had a significant negative impact on certain consumer segments, while components such as flavour descriptions, winery history, and food pairings were significantly valued by wine consumers. According to Galati et al. (2019), the choice of natural wine was positively influenced by the following elements on the wine label: production method, ingredient content information, and sensory characteristics (Sherman and Tuten, 2011). Sogari, Mora and Menozzi (2016) found that eco-labelling on the bottle can increase consumer attention but may not be sufficient if the product is perceived as too expensive or of superior quality.

H3: For Gen Z, the specific intrinsic factors highlighted on wine labels, such as grape variety and sensory attributes (including taste, colour, and aroma) are expected to play a significant and influential role in shaping their wine purchase behaviour.

2. Methods

The research is based on primary consumer data collected via an online questionnaire survey conducted in 2022. The survey targeted wine consumers belonging to Gen Z (aged 18-25 years) in Slovakia (SK) and the Czech Republic (CZ). The sample selected from Slovakia consisted of 223 respondents, while the sample from the Czech Republic consisted of 208 respondents. Respondents who did not drink or buy wine were excluded from our research. Our research sample is representative in terms of country and gender. The geographical distribution shows that 47% of respondents in Slovakia came from rural areas, compared to 64% in the Czech Republic, suggesting possible regional differences in consumption preferences. A significant preponderance of students (80%) and university-educated respondents (61% in Slovakia, and 38% in the Czech Republic). In terms of the income, more than 60% of respondents reported a net income of less than € 500.

The operationalisation of the key variables in this study is presented in Table 1. Each variable is defined to provide a comprehensive overview of the methodology used to collect data on wine consumption patterns.

The conceptual model employed in this study aims to elucidate the purchasing behaviour of Generation Z based on the wine label, a demographic cohort of Gen Z known for its unique characteristics (Figure 1). It is important to note that the conceptual model takes into account sociodemographic characteristics such as country, gender, and place of residence, but we do not include net income due to its skewed distribution (more than half have a net income of less than 500 euros) and the fact that 80% of the sample is made up of students.

Table no. 1. The operationalisation of the variables

Variable	Operationalisation	Measurement
Frequency of purchasing	Do you buy a wine?	Yes, regularly; Yes, occasionally; No
Consumption	What is the average amount of wine consumed per year (in litres)?	4 categories: 1. Less than 9 litres; 2. 10 – 20 litres; 3. 20 – 30 litres; 4. 31 and more litres
Reasons of drinking	Most common reasons for wine consumption:	3 categories: 1. Socialisation; 2. Relax/Entertainment; 3. Health Benefits
Extrinsic wine attributes	How does this information* influence your purchase decision? (Extrinsic*: brand, country of origin, wine region, graphic design, vintage, quality designation, awards)	Likert-type scale used: 1 – Extremely; 2 – Very; 3 – Moderately; 4 – Slightly; 5 – Not at all
Intrinsic wine attributes	How does this information* influence your purchase decision? (Intrinsic*: grape variety, sensory attributes: taste, colour, aroma)	Likert-type scale used: 1 – Extremely; 2 – Very; 3 – Moderately; 4 – Slightly; 5 – Not at all

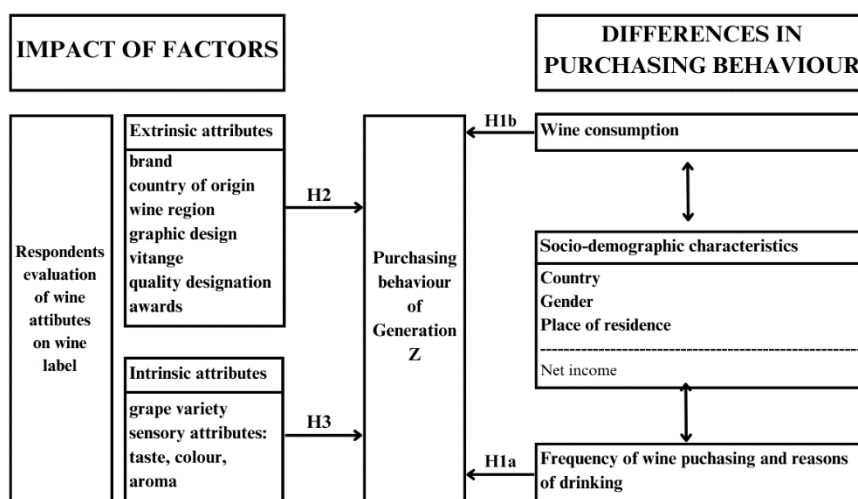


Figure no. 1. Conceptual model - Purchasing behaviour of Generation Z

The survey was designed with a combination of closed-ended questions, which allowed respondents to provide one or more answers and rating scale criteria. The closed questions were used to obtain information about wine consumption patterns, frequency and quantity of wine consumed, and willingness to pay. The rating scale questions were used to assess various attributes and specifics related to the wine label selection process. A five-point scale was used, with a score of 1 indicating extreme influence and a score of 5 indicating that there is no influence on the wine label selection process. Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS version 26 and XLSTAT 2022.4.1 (Addinsoft, NY, USA), with a significance level of 0.05. Factor analysis with varimax rotation was employed to identify latent factors. In addition, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test of SK (0.839), and CZ (859) was

performed to validate the assessment. To investigate statistically significant differences in respondents' attitudes towards specific factors and label information in the purchase decision process, Friedman's test and multiple pairwise comparisons using Nemenyi's method were used. Multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) was applied to study and visualise associations within a set of categorical variables (gender, place of residence, country, reasons for wine consumption, annual consumption of wine, and purchasing frequency.) MCA represents a statistical method used in consumer studies (Šedík, Hudecová and Predanócyová, 2023).

3. Results

Among Gen Z wine consumers, there is a balanced distribution of consumption patterns, with a significant proportion consuming wine several times a week or month. On average, they tend to consume a moderate amount of wine, typically between 10 and 20 litres per year. Notably, approximately 33% of SK and 31% of CZ Gen Z consumers prefer a more moderate intake of less than 9 litres. Although wine is commonly associated with special events and social gatherings, Generation Z primarily consumes it at home (60%) or when visiting someone (around 30%). Furthermore, most of the respondents stated that they would be willing to spend a maximum of € 6 on a bottle of wine for regular consumption.

The study examined the frequency of wine purchases and reasons for consumption among young Slovak and Czech wine drinkers. Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) shows that Slovak Gen Z are more likely to cite health benefits and socialisation as their main reasons for drinking wine. This phenomenon could be influenced by various factors, including the changing preferences and inclinations towards a more health-conscious lifestyle. Conversely, Czech Gen Z appears to purchase wine more frequently. Despite this, the two populations exhibit similar patterns in their associations with relaxation/entertainment, occasional wine purchases, and the influence of gender (Figure 2A).

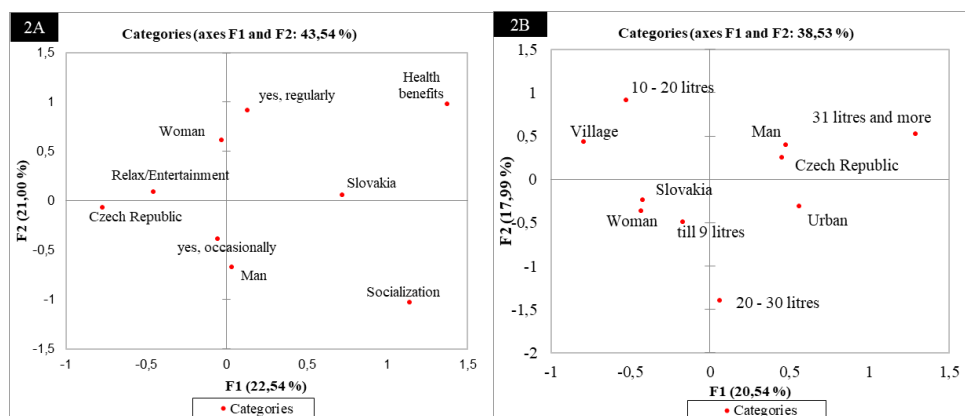


Figure no. 2A. Multiple correspondence analysis of the Gen Z wine consumers: reasons for drinking, and wine purchase frequency;

Figure no. 2B. Multiple correspondence analysis of the Gen Z wine consumers: average amount of wine consumption per year, gender, and place of residence

The second MCA analysis (Figure 2B) has provided valuable insights into the interrelationships between the Gen Z of two samples, and other variables reveal distinct

consumption patterns. In Slovakia, the Gen Z demographic is predominantly female, residing in rural areas, and reportedly consuming '10-20 litres of wine annually. In the Czech Republic, on the other hand, they tend to be male, urban dwellers, and frequent drinkers. This is particularly true of the '20-30 litres' and '31 litres and more' groups. These groups shed light on why the two countries have such different wine consumption patterns.

The study revealed that the key factors influencing Gen Z Slovak consumers' wine selection are primarily anchored in the sensory product description ($M = 4.637$), underscoring their emphasis on the taste, aroma, and colour profile of the wine. Interestingly, these Gen Z consumers tend to prioritise brand ($M = 5.159$) and grape variety ($M = 5.211$) closely, indicating a sophisticated appreciation for wines with a solid winery history and varietal characteristics. The study found that the country of origin ($M = 5.549$) and wine region ($M = 5.599$) are moderately important, while graphic design (Mean rank = 6.545) and vintage (Mean rank = 6.617) are slightly less significant. The results of the study suggest that certain characteristics are less important to Gen Z consumers. Specifically, the survey shows that Quality Designation ($M = 7.177$) and Awards (Medals) ($M = 7.350$) are considered to be the least important factors influencing purchasing behaviour. (Table 2).

Table no. 2. The importance of selected aspects on the wine label (Slovakia)

Sample	Mean of ranks	Groups
Sensory Product Description (Taste, Aroma, Colour)	4.637	A
Brand	5.159	A
Grape Variety	5.211	A
Country of Origin	5.549	A B
Wine Region	5.599	A B C
Graphic Design	6.545	B C D
Vintage	6.617	C D
Quality Designation (PDO, PGI, etc.)	7.177	D
Awards (Medals)	7.350	D

Post-hoc analysis revealed that Gen Z of Czech consumers (Table 3) prefer to choose wines based on grape variety ($M = 4.495$), indicating a clear focus on varietal characteristics. The country of origin ($M = 4.856$) and the winery ($M = 4.885$) follow closely behind, highlighting that consumers value the geographical origin and the reputation of the winery in shaping their preferences. The study shows that wine region ($M = 5.175$) and sensory product description ($M = 5.264$) significantly influence consumer patterns. Meanwhile, vintage ($M = 6.796$) and graphic design ($M = 6.813$), quality designation ($M = 7.389$), and awards (Medals) ($M = 7.873$) are considered less important. It is important to note that the study only considers the information provided on the wine label.

Factor analysis was used in the current research to investigate the purchasing behaviour of Gen Z wine consumers based on label information. This method helped to identify latent patterns and associations within the data set. The factor analysis was performed on a sample of Slovak and Czech wine consumers, explaining 57.91% and 65.85% of the total variance, respectively. Factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed two latent factors that significantly impact consumer preferences in these wine markets.

Table no. 3. The importance of selected aspects on the wine label (Czech Republic)

Sample	Mean of ranks	Groups
Grape Variety	4.495	A
Country of Origin	4.856	A
Winery	4.885	A
Wine Region	5.175	A
Sensory Product Description (Taste, Aroma, Colour)	5.264	A
Vintage	6.796	B
Graphic Design	6.813	B
Quality Designation (PDO, PGI, etc.)	7.389	B
Awards (Medals)	7.873	C

Table no. 4. Results of factor analysis with varimax rotation

	Slovakia		Czech Republic	
	Component		Component	
	1	2	1	2
Wine Region	0.806	0.155	0.874	0.270
Grape Variety	0.745	0.044	0.776	0.073
Country of Origin	0.738	0.008	0.842	0.285
Winery	0.734	0.026	0.863	0.160
Quality Designation (PDO, PGI, etc.)	0.617	0.482	0.420	0.632
Vintage	0.610	0.490	0.734	0.385
Graphic Design	-0.105	0.744	0.098	0.514
Sensory Product Description (Taste, Aroma, Colour)	0.083	0.698	0.074	0.809
Awards (Medals)	0.508	0.597	0.492	0.557

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.

Product identity: The first latent factor (explained SK 43%; CZ 52% of variance) is significantly associated with wine region, which includes grape variety, country of origin, winery, and vintage. The items loaded on this factor are related to product identity, which allows consumers to make more informed choices based on their preferences. Additionally, it seems that two dataset's Gen Z consumers place quality labelling on a distinct latent factor. While each of these items may contribute positively to the overall perception of wine quality, it is important to note that they may do so independently or have different patterns of influence. This is particularly relevant in the context of the overall wine enjoyment experience, where consumers can connect with the story, craftsmanship, and unique attributes behind each bottle.

Sensory appeal: The second latent factor represents (explained SK 14%; CZ 11% of variance) variables such as sensory product description (taste, aroma, colour), graphic design, and awards (medals) which can help to set consumer expectations. It shows that sensory aspects can be important in appealing to consumers. It is important to value transparency and informed choice, especially with the digitally native and visually oriented Generation Z. To appeal to this demographic, labels should be aesthetically pleasing and well-designed. Awards and medals can serve as external validation of a wine's quality. For Gen Z, who place a high value on social validation and peer opinion, the knowledge that wine has won awards may influence their perception of its value. Additionally, they are interested in authenticity and cultural connections that reflect local characteristics.

4. Discussion

Our study significantly advances our understanding of Gen Z's wine-purchasing behaviours, emphasising the unique preferences and motivations distinguishing this demographic from earlier generations like Generation X and Millennials. While previous studies (Rodríguez-Donate, Romero-Rodríguez and Cano-Fernández, 2021; Wiedmann et al., 2014) have provided a broad understanding of wine consumer behaviour, our research offers novel insights into Gen Z's specific consumption patterns and the decisive role of label information. Key findings reveal that Gen Z's wine consumption diverges notably in terms of frequency, motives, and demographic influences. Unlike prior observations by Kelley, Hyde and Bruwer (2015) and Bianchi et al. (2021), which suggest general trends in alcoholic beverage purchases, our study uncovers that Czech young consumers, particularly males and urban dwellers, show a pronounced regularity in wine purchases for relaxation and entertainment. This contrasts with Slovak Gen Z, which prioritises health and socialisation, aligning with Silva et al. (2017) findings on wine's role in social settings yet providing a distinct demographic snapshot.

Importantly, our research highlights two critical factors influencing Gen Z's wine selections: wine identity and sensory appeal. While the significance of label attributes such as region, grape variety, and winery - elements of 'product identity' - resonates with past research emphasising intrinsic quality cues (Sáenz-Navajas et al., 2013; Jaeger, Danaher and Brodie, 2009), our findings extend the narrative by showcasing Gen Z's heightened sensitivity to 'sensory appeal'. This aspect, encompassing taste, aroma, and visual design, underscores the evolved consumer interaction with wine labels, contrasting with the modest impact of country of origin noted by Liu et al. (2022).

In the constantly evolving world of wine marketing, Kelley, Hyde and Bruwer (2015) have emphasised the crucial role of label design in attracting consumers. They suggest that wineries need to integrate appealing label elements strategically to captivate customers. Crichton-Fock et al. (2023) support this assertion by highlighting the effectiveness of symbols in communicating the wine's multisensory experience, including the taste, aroma, and colour, thereby enhancing customer engagement and interaction with the product. The significance of visual appeal, as confirmed by Barber, Almanza and Donovan (2006) and Bianchi et al. (2021), goes beyond aesthetics and includes the impact of awards or medals on customer preferences, emphasising the importance of sensory appeal in influencing choices. The focus on sensory appeal resonates with Slovak Gen Z consumers, who have a marked preference for wines that promise a rich sensory experience, characterised by enticing flavours, aromas, and appealing visual design. These preferences align with broader demographic trends, reinforcing the findings of St. James and Christodoulidou (2011) regarding the universal appeal of taste and the ability of wine to complement food among American consumers. The critical role of sensory evaluation, including colour assessment, as discussed by Singh (2006) further emphasises the multifaceted nature of wine selection. These insights collectively underscore the comprehensive impact of sensory appeal and product identity on wine selection processes, illustrating how strategic label design can serve as a pivotal point of interaction between the wine and its potential buyers, shaping their perceptions of quality and value.

Although wine awards and medals are generally acknowledged as influential in purchasing decisions (Corsi, Mueller and Lockshin, 2012), our results indicate that Gen Z does not prioritise these accolades, supporting Neuninger, Mather and Duncan's (2017) argument about consumer skepticism towards awards. This observation is consistent with Chrysochou et al. (2012), who

found that medals/awards were not the top criteria for Generation Y and older cohorts, suggesting a shift in priority. Despite the historical significance of quality designations in influencing consumer choices, as found by Skuras and Vakrou (2002), our study shows that Gen Z places less emphasis on such designations when selecting wine, echoing Livat, Alston and Cardebat (2019) critique of the confusion caused by multiple quality labels. Therefore, our research emphasises the importance of market segmentation based on product knowledge, confidence, and generational differences to fully understand the evolving preferences and motivations of young consumers, challenging the traditional emphasis on quality indicators and shedding light on Gen Z's unique criteria for wine selection.

Conclusion

In response to wineries' aspirations to engage this younger demographic, our study is pivotal to the significance of wine labelling. The label, transcending its traditional role of mere presentation, embodies a repository of diverse information that encompasses both intrinsic and extrinsic quality attributes (Thomas and Pickering, 2003). These attributes, subject to consumer valuation and decision-making, are meticulously explored and analysed within our research. This study examines the impact of specific wine attributes displayed on the label on wine consumption patterns among Slovak and Czech Gen Z. The results indicate that there are differences in consumption patterns based on the gender and location preferences of Gen Z. The findings suggest that Gen Z prioritises sensory appeal and visual elements and emphasises wine identity on labels. Although before 1993 Czechs and Slovaks were one nation and there were no language barriers, the results have revealed distinct consumption patterns between Slovak and Czech Gen Z consumers, with differences in consumption frequency, volume, and gender distribution. In Slovakia, the Gen Z demographic is predominantly female and rural, with moderate wine consumption, while in the Czech Republic, it tends to be male, and urban, and includes more frequent drinkers. Another theoretical contribution is the study's revelation that Slovak Gen Z consumers emphasise sensory product descriptions, brand, and grape variety in their wine selection, contrasting with Czech Gen Z consumers who focus more on grape variety, country of origin, and winery reputation. The last theoretical contribution is the observation that Gen Z consumers are shifting their focus from traditional cues such as awards and quality designations to the sensory experience and the story or heritage behind the wine, potentially leading to a transformation in marketing strategies for Gen Z.

The findings regarding Gen Z can provide valuable insights for the wine industry, aiding winemakers, wine label designers, and wine marketers in assessing the significance of specific attributes and enhancing the appeal to the upcoming core group of wine consumers. From a managerial perspective, adapting actionable insights for the wine industry could be advantageous to generating positive feedback in wine markets. This, in turn, would allow producers to create more consumer-friendly bottle and wine label designs. Small and large wineries must understand these nuances to thrive in today's dynamic wine industry. Our findings suggest a nuanced understanding of how regional and gender factors influence wine consumption habits. It reveals that wine marketing strategies should be tailored to these demographic nuances, considering how gender and regional contexts shape preferences and consumption behaviours. The emphasis on sensory characteristics and consumer expectations provides a foundation for improving product development. Understanding the role of taste, smell, colour, and other intrinsic qualities in shaping consumer preferences can lead to the creation of products that better align with consumer desires. Tailoring marketing

communication, retail strategies, and packaging designs to Gen Z based on our findings can enhance the effectiveness of advertising and eventually also product placement.

Our findings point to the importance of recognising regional and gender-specific factors in wine marketing, highlighting the potential of sensory characteristics in product development and marketing communication. However, the study's scope, focused on Slovak and Czech Gen Z consumers, suggests the need for broader research to capture the full spectrum of Gen Z's diversity and preferences across different contexts. We recommend applying our study to different wine consumer segments as suggested by <https://winebusinessanalytics.com/news/article/134707/Study-Identifies-Wine-Consumer-Personalities> instead of the Gen Z cohort. Future research could expand on label attributes, explore technological advancements in labelling, and apply findings to broader consumer segments and cross-cultural studies, offering a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in the wine industry and beyond.

Acknowledgements

The research was funded by the project GA FEM “The impact of storytelling on wine tourism and consumer behaviour” from Grant agency FEM SPU in Nitra. This article has been supported was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract APVV-21-0174: “Rural development and agricultural employment: the role of policies, globalisation and climate changes”. This work was supported by the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic (ME SR) and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) under the contract No.VEGA-1/0741/24.

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