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Wine consumer involvement and cue utilisation: A conjoint analysis

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Tämän Pro gradu -tutkielman tarkoituksena on tutkia viinituotteiden ominaisuuksien hyödyntämistä kuluttajan ostopäätöksen yhteydessä ja kuinka kuluttajan suhde viiniin määrittää tätä. Tutkimus on toteutettu kvantitatiivisin menetelmin suomalaisten kuluttajien viininkulutustottumuksia käsittelevästä aineistosta. Tutkimusta ohjaa taustaolettamus, että kuluttajan kiinnostus ja suhde viiniin merkittävästi määrittelee sen, mitä ominaisuuksia kuluttaja käyttää viinin ostopäätöksessä. Tutkimuksen teoriaosuudessa esitetään aikaisempaa kirjallisuutta ja tuloksia aiheeseen liittyen, sekä määritellään mittarit kuluttajan viinisuhteen määrittämiseksi. Tämän lisäksi tutustutaan vihjeiden hyödyntämisteoriaan aikaisemman kirjallisuuden valossa ja pohditaan tekijöitä, jotka yhdessä vaikuttavat kuluttajan lopulliseen ostopäätökseen. Tutkielman teoriaosuudessa määritellään aikaisemman kirjallisuuden perusteella tutkittavat viiniominaisuudet, jotka empiriaosuudessa otetaan testattavaksi suomalaisilla kuluttajilla. Tutkielman teoriaosuudessa määritellään tutkimuksen viitekehys, jonka soveltuvuutta arvioidaan tutkimuksen empiriaosuuden lopussa. Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että kuluttajat todellakin voidaan jakaa kahteen ryhmään viinisuhteen perusteella, ja että viinisuhteen tasolla on merkittävää vaikutusta kuluttajien ostospäätösprosessiin sekä viininominaisuuksiin, joita hyödynnetään viininvalinnan tukena.

Abstract

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This master's thesis aims to identify the levels of wine involvement of Finnish wine consumers and to understand how the level of involvement shapes the cue utilisation of wine attributes. The thesis is conducted in quantitative manners by collecting data from Finnish wine consumers. Study is constructed under the assumption that Finnish wine consumers can be divided into groups based on their interest and relation to wine products. Theoretical part of the thesis introduces previous academic literature of wine consumer involvement and cue utilisation. Theoretical part of the thesis defines the measurements to identify different consumer groups based on their level of involvement. Moreover, this thesis examines consumers' varying cue utilisation. The theoretical part of the thesis defines the wine attributes and levels that will be applied to the empirical study of Finnish wine consumers. Further, the research framework of the study will be defined in the theoretical part and tested in the empirical part of the thesis. The results of the thesis show that Finnish wine consumers can be divided into groups based on their level of involvement. Moreover, it can be stated that the level of wine product involvement greatly shapes the cue utilisation pattern of consumers.

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“It’s a long way to the top, if you wanna rock ‘n’ roll.”
- AC/DC

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1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce the area of the study and provides insights from the wine academic literature and presents the gaps of it. The covered and excluded areas are presented, additionally, the research questions and structure of the thesis are provided.

1.1. Research background

Historically, wine is one of the oldest commodities. The earliest remnants of wine were discovered in northern Iran, where they have been confirmed to date back to 8500-4000 B.C. (Arena Flowers, 2021). Nowadays, wine is being consumed worldwide – for many individuals, wine is not only a beverage, but a socialization tool or a way to celebrate an event, or even spark up everyday life. Wine is consumed millions of litres yearly, but there are significant differences in consumption between different countries, which in turn is mostly relative to the population of the country, and greatly depended on how strong wine culture the country has. Latter one is partly referred to the viticulture history of the country. In 2019, the total wine consumption in United States was the largest in the world, consuming 33 hectolitres (Statista, 2021). In Finland, the Finnish National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira), reported the wine consumption to be 10 756 000 litres in 2019, 9 345 000 litres coming from retail - from the Finnish monopoly, Alko. (Valvira, 2021)

There are thousands and thousands of scientific research articles on consumer behaviour at different industries, and in the past decade numerous consumer behaviour studies on wine literature have occurred too. As new brands and wine styles have emerged in markets, the wine category has gotten so complex that it has forced researchers to try different methods to find understanding on the drivers that lead to wine purchase decision. Wine consumer behaviour and the factors affecting in purchase decision making have been studied from a variety of different perspectives, such as from the role of price, brand awareness, region, sustainability and green values of the product, grape variety, local and global awards and so on. Different channels, on-premise, online, retail, tax-free as well as wine tourism and the different behaviour within the channels have also been under investigation.

This study focuses on identifying different consumer groups and examining the varying behaviour among the groups. The study will focus on the concept of wine involvement and aims to understand how consumers evaluate wine quality, and which attributes are evaluated in terms of wine quality.

Moreover, since this study is conducted in the government-controlled market, it will provide new valuable information on the cues that consumers consider during the purchase process. Moreover, since no previous research of wine consumer behaviour has not been conducted in the market of Finland, this research will provide some insights of the market conditions too.

1.2. Literature review and research gaps

In the following, the literature review takes a look at previous studies of wine consumer behaviour and seeks to understand what kind of attributes are reviewed relative to consumer choice-making in wines. Moreover, the literature review aims to seek understanding whether there is general consensus on the attributes that have the most sensitivity to trigger purchase among consumers. Furthermore, the literature review examines how consumers have been segmented based on the relationship with wines. So that the literature review does not turn out too broad, only relevant articles considering wine consumer behaviour in retail stores and attributes of wine, have been taken under the scope.

According to Lockshin & Corsi, (2012, 2-3), the broadest areas reviewed in the wine consumer behaviour literature are the studies of consumer purchase behaviour in retail stores, especially what the key drivers of purchase are. Casini, Corsi, and Goodman (2009) studied Italian consumers, to measure the importance of the attributes considered in wine purchase process in a retail and on-premise environment, which was later on continued by Corduas, Cinquanta and Ievoli (2012). Both studies revealed that the involvement level that consumers have towards wines, highly influence the cue utilization. Several other studies have also examined the use of wine cues during the purchase process and the relationship between involvement and wine attributes. Charters and Pettigrew (2006) investigated the relationship between wine drinkers' product involvement and their engagement with wine quality, and found that in terms of extrinsic attributes, low-involvement wine drinkers rarely made a link between grape quality and wine quality. High-involved wine drinkers, on the other hand, put a lot of focus on the terroir the wine comes from. As shown, the research focus has often been put in finding understanding on what attributes of wine products are most sensitive to consumers in terms of purchase. In other words, what features of the product make consumers to make the purchase decision.

In the literature of wine consumer behaviour, the attributes affecting consumer purchase decisions, have usually been divided into two areas. With extrinsic attributes the researchers refer to immaterial attributes, such as brand, packaging, label and price, whereas intrinsic features comprise taste, colour, smell and quality. One of the most occurring factor that has been studied, is the origin aspect of wine and how it affects the wine choices.

The past studies have considered that the country and region of origin play a big role in purchase decision making of wine consumers. Lockshin and Corsi (2012, 11) have stated that the importance of country and region of origin in wine purchase decision, is one of the studied areas of wine consumer behaviour. According to Lockshin and Corsi (2012, 12) majority of the studies on the influence of country and region or origin have been done in countries, such as Australia, China, UK, USA and Canada, where viticulture has not that extensive roots in history and the importance of the country and region of origin has historically been lower, given the regulatory and legislative framework of these countries and the marketing practices used to brand wines.

Atkin and Johnson (2010) conducted a research in the USA in purpose to examine consumer purchase sensitivity based on the geographical information of the wine. The assumption was that many consumers rely upon the place of origin since the origin can be considered as proportional to quality. What the researchers are referring to, is the confrontation between Old (Europe) and New World (rest of the world) wines and how traditional regions, referring to Old World, are perceived to be more quality wines and New World more of a value for money type of wines. Hollebeek, Jaeger, Brodie and Balemi (2007, 1034) presented that with Old World wines, origin is becoming an important source of competitive advantage, and consequently brand equity, enabling the ability to represent premium product prices. Nonetheless, the research of Atkin and Johnson (2010) investigated the importance of origin information in purchase decisions and aimed to find which consumers are more prone to utilize the information. The study showed that the origin and brand were the most valued attributes in terms of wine purchase, however, compared to the origin, brand was by far the most used information among consumers when purchasing wine. Atkin and Johnson (2010) as well as Lockshin, Jarvis, d'Hauteville and Perrouty (2005) make it clear that expert wine consumers are more likely to pay attention to country and region of origin than consumers with less expertise. The latter group seeming to have a tendency to look at wine products as a whole, even though the country and region origin is being highlighted the most.

Country and region of origin is not the only occurring theme in the literature of wine consumer behaviour. Packaging and how sensitive consumers are to make purchase decisions based on the appearance has been a frequent topic in the literature. The appearance is the first touchpoint for a consumer, when stepping into a retail store. Goodman (2009) published a study on consumer wine choices in retail store environment, and according to the results of the study, attracting front label of a wine has the least importance, and higher importance are put on brand, food matching, region of origin information and wine description, which all are often included in the back label. Corduas et al. (2012) have also presented that the front label has the least importance for more experienced wine consumers.

Lockshin and Corsi (2012) argue on the varying importance of the front and back label of the wine and what is indicated there. Based on numerous studies on wine labelling, it seems obvious that the reason for consumers being more prone to make decisions based on the back label of the wine product, is that it contains relevant information of the wine which can often be the final push to the purchase decision. However, Barber, Ismail, and Taylor (2007) argue against this in their study, which reported front labels being more important because of the brand visuals.

As stated previously, back labels tend to contain more information, which is why consumers might prefer the back label over the front label. Mueller, Lockshin, Saltman and Blanford, J. (2009) who studied the importance consumers put on wine back label statements and identified the utility of these attributes relative to price. Significant differences were found for the relative importance of back label statements along with price, price sensitivity, and the acceptance of an ingredient list indicated on the back label. In the study, it became clear that winery information, taste description of the wine and wine-food-pairing were valued the most. (Mueller et al. 2009, 31) Similar results occurred in the study by Kelley, Hyde and Bruwer (2015) who examined what assortment of factors on wine back labels appealed to consumers. They found that the food-wine-pairing information indicated on back labels had a greater impact to consumers than the information of the winery, country and region. Descriptions of food-wine-pairings and symbols of them showed positive utility values, indicating consumers preferred wines with food-wine-pairing information more than having no pairing information present (Kelley et al. 2015).

Even though there are quite a bit of studies on the information indicated on labels, the relevancy of brand name and design of a label should not be left out of the scope. Label designing and brand naming are among the cues that consumers consider when choosing wines. Sherman and Tuten (2011)

set their focus on better understanding the influence of these two label variables, design genre and brand naming. They found that participants preferred traditional labels and names over novelty designs and names. Also, the participants did not consider label design and brand name as influential as wine type, brand familiarity and price for wine choices, and said label design and brand name to have more influence when considering wine as a gift for someone. The study is aligned with the study done by Orth & Malkewitz (2008, 68) who found that participants preferred traditional labels and names to be more influential for wine choices, however, the label design was found to be not as influential as other attributes of wine, such as wine variety, brand awareness and price of the wine.

Despite the numerous scientific studies on wine consumer behaviour, there seems to be clear understanding on the attributes affecting purchase decisions. There is also mutual understanding on the attributes that are more sensitive to the purchase decision, as well as, on the fact that these attributes greatly vary between consumer groups. The researchers agree that the level of wine involvement the consumer has impacts on the preferred attribute order. Lockshin et al. (2005) showed that among the low involvement consumers, price and awards are greatly affected in purchase decisions, while region of origin tends to have more influence in high involved consumer groups. The level of knowledge and the influence of it was backed up again by Corduas et al. (2012); Lockshin et al. (2004) and Atkin, T. & Johnson, R. (2010).

From the appearance perspective, there seems to be varying results regarding the importance of labels. Goodman (2009), Corduas et al. (2012) as well as Bruwer, Chrysochou and Lesschaeve (2016) state that the label has the least importance in the purchase decision, whereas Barber et al. (2007) reported the front label being the most influential attribute to purchase decision. In addition, Lockshin and Corsi (2012) claim the differences of influence to decision making between front and back labels. Later, the study of Lockshin and Corsi (2012) was examined deeper when Mueller et.al. (2009) as well as Kelley et al. (2015) studied the information put in the back label, and found that the food-wine-pairing information tends to be affecting wine choice. In terms of label design, there seems to be consensus that consumers prefer traditional labels and names over novelties. However, the studies did not consider the wine involvement level and the varying difference within them.

This study aims to add value to the existing literature of wine consumer behaviour by studying the consumer wine choice behaviour within high and low involvement consumer groups and by identifying the cues that these consumer groups consider during the decision-making process. The

objective of the study is to develop understanding how these different consumer groups utilize wine attributes in Finnish monopoly store environment.

1.3. Research questions

As the focus of this study is in understanding what kind of wine choices Finnish consumers with different relationship to wine make, and how much different cues weigh in the purchase decision-making, the main research question is formed as following:

RQ1. What wine cues high- and low-involved consumers tend to use to make the wine choice?

Many previous academic literatures discuss the concept of consumer wine involvement, therefore, it is necessary to dig deeper in the literature of involvement and understand where the concept originates from and how the wine involvement is being characterized in the academic literature. Thus, the first sub-research question is designed as following:

SRQ 1. How consumers' wine involvement is being characterized?

The purpose of the study is to understand how the level of involvement shapes the cue utilisation of wine products, therefore, it is necessary to understand the cue utilisation theory and discover the variables influencing the cue utilisation.

SRQ 2. How cue utilisation is defined and what are its implications to study of wine consumer behaviour?

Lastly, once the wine involvement concept and cue utilisation theory have been discussed, it is time to combine the two theories to a framework for this study and discuss the influential effect that the wine involvement has on the cue utilisation.

SRQ 3. How the cue utilisation of wine attributes is being influenced by the level of involvement of consumer?

The purpose of the research questions is to guide the reader throughout the theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis. By answering these research questions, the topic of this thesis is thoroughly discussed and suggestions for academic implications and managerial implications can be made. The structure of the thesis will be more thoroughly presented in the chapter 1.5.

1.4. Exclusions and limitations

Wine consumer behaviour has been studied from variety different aspects, and despite the involvement being a frequent topic in the wine academic literature, very little has been written about how the different wine involvement groups use wine cues during the purchase process. Even though there are clear understanding of the role of the price, origin and brand in wine choice, the cues have not been examined in the Finnish market, in a monopoly setting.

Many of the studies have been conducted in markets that have a stronger wine culture and more involved wine consumers, and do not operate under government-controlled monopolies. For example, in Finland, where the legislative framework leaves very little room for marketing - and Alko being the only channel for all alcoholic beverages over 5,5 %, the circumstances and behaviour within the market is quite different.

Partly related to the previous exclusion, only extrinsic attributes are considered in this study. Due to the rules and legislation in Finland, consumers are not able to evaluate wine quality by tasting the products in the Alko stores, thus leave intrinsic attributes without evaluation possibility.

Moreover, marketing communications of wine brands tend to have some impact on wine choices of consumers, therefore, marketing communications is excluded from this study. Furthermore, it is necessary to note, that this study pre-determines the cues based on the previous academic literature of the topic. These pre-determined cues are analysed in the empirical part of thesis to understand how Finnish wine consumers utilise them.

1.5. Structure of the study

The contents of the study are divided into theoretical and empirical parts. Firstly, the theoretical part of the thesis starts with an introduction to the wine consumer behaviour followed by a literature review. After this, the research questions as well as exclusions and limitations of the study are presented. The theory part presents the previous studies of the two theories, wine involvement and cue utilization and presents the framework for this study.

The hypothesis of the study is raised from the theoretical part of the study, of which some of them concern the wine involvement of Finnish consumers and some of them the cues that are considered during the purchase decision-making process. Before moving onto the empirical part, the findings are summarized by developing a research framework for this study in the chapter 3.

The empirical part of the thesis starts by defining the research context of the study and introduces the collection and analysis methods of the data. Reliability and validity of the study is being evaluated at the end of chapter four.

After defining the groundings for the empirical analysis, the thesis proceeds to the chapter five, where the findings of the study are presented. Data sample description is provided as well as the results of exploratory factor analysis and conjoint analysis.

Key outcomes, conclusions and suitability of the developed research framework is discussed in the chapter six. Finally, conclusions are drawn in the chapter seven, after which theoretical and practical implications are introduced. Lastly, limitations and future directions are suggested in the end of chapter seven.

2. Wine consumer behaviour

Consumer behaviour and more precisely the purchase behaviour is a widely studied topic. As with every product, consumers tend to maximize the value of a product which is typically measured through perceived quality. Product attributes, or cues, act as surrogate indicators of quality and the extent of how different consumers use these cues are specific to individual consumers. In the literature of wine consumer behaviour, the phenomenon of relation to wine is explained through involvement levels.

This section of the thesis will examine the existing literature of wine consumer behaviour to build the research framework for this study. To answer the research questions of the thesis, the theoretical part is divided into two parts, of which the first part examines the literature of involvement and how it is applied to wine consumer behaviour context. The second part deals with the cue utilisation and seeks to find understanding on how wine cues are utilised by consumers to maximize the perceived quality.

2.1. Conceptualisation of involvement

Involvement level is an occurring theme in the literature of consumer behaviour, and it has gained a central place in consumer behaviour theory as it has been proven to have remarkable influence in consumers' decision-making process (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985), thus the conceptualisation of involvement is needed. Moreover, in the literature of wine consumer behaviour, involvement has been considered from different perspectives, therefore, defining the different involvement perspectives and explaining the influence of it on the purchase decision-making process is needed.

Originally, the concept of involvement derives from 1980's psychology literature as psychologists found and measured the degree to which people were more concerned and thought more deeply about some things than others (Roe and Bruwer 2017, 1364). Involvement as a psychological concept has been leveraged intensively in many consumer behaviour studies, since Sherif and Cantril (1947) first presented the concept. Bruwer et al. (2016, 832) note that it was not until the mid-1980's when researchers started to understand the significant relevance of consumer involvement levels for the purpose of segmenting consumers. Since then, the influence of consumer involvement has been understood and used as a concept to understand purchasing behaviour patterns (Bruwer et. al. 2016, 832), brand preferences and perceptions (Bruwer and Buller, 2013).

Bruwer and Buller (2013) present that researchers have invoked diverse images of the concept and the term involvement has been used diversely in the literature. Rothschild (1984, 215-216) definition of involvement is among the very first ones, and it sees involvement as a motivational and goal-directed emotional state that determines the personal relevance of a purchase decision to a buyer. Rothschild (1984) was the first to present the three different aspects of involvement, namely enduring, situational and response. Laurent and Kapferer (1985, 52) continued that involvement is thought to have considerable influence on consumers' decision process and claimed that there is more than one kind of consumer involvement and it is depended on the antecedents of involvement, such as perceived importance of the product or situation, perceived sign value, perceive pleasure value and perceived risk. Today, the most established way to define involvement is by Zaichowsky (1985), who defined the concept of involvement as a person's perceived relevance of an object based on his/her needs, values and interests. In contrary to Rothschild (1984) enduring, situational and response dichotomy, Zaichowsky (1985) and later Mittal and Lee (1989) preferred to present involvement as terms of product and purchase involvement and saw that the new terms allowed situational variation in product involvement as well as purchase involvement.

Even though different involvement aspects occur in the literature, Bruwer et al. (2016, 832) claim that most of the research has been focusing on the enduring and situational involvement, leaving the response involvement with less focus. With situational involvement, the researchers refer to something that is transitory and largely a factor of short-term changes in consumers' direct environment (Lee and Lou 1996), such as promotion displayed in a retail environment. While the situational involvement refers to something transitory, the enduring involvement tends to be something more permanent. Enduring, in other words, product involvement, refers to the general personal relevance of a product category, and affects consumers' use of extrinsic cues (Bruwer et al. 2016, 832-833). Response involvement reflects the time and intensity, or effort used in the undertaking of behaviour (Rothschild 1984).

In addition to the three involvement areas defined by Rothschild (1984), Mittal and Lee (1989) found purchase involvement to be a considerable influencer on consumers' wine purchase behaviour and defined it as an interest taken in making the brand selection within a particular product category. The concept of purchase involvement was raised again by Aurifeille, Quester, Lockshin, and Spawton (2001) as well as Lockshin, Spawton, and Macintosh (1997). In both studies, purchasing involvement was used as a segmentation tool to discover different consumer groups.

In the context of wine, the most occurring involvement types are product (enduring), brand decision and purchasing involvement, which were initially introduced by Lockshin et al. (1997). According to Bruwer and Buller (2013) product involvement is the most studied type of involvement in the context of wine. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) define product involvement as personal relevance of the product to an individual consumer and claim that highly product-involved consumers tend to spend more time and cognitive effort considering their product choices, as well as store choice, than low-involved consumers do (Bruwer and Buller 2013, 833). The second type of involvement, brand decision involvement, has also been widely studied and shown to be a helpful tool to predict the consumer responses to marketing strategies in the case of wine (Lockshin et al. 1997). Brand decision involvement differs from product involvement by focusing on the choice of brand within the product category, and Lockshin et al. (2001, 227) claim that brand decision involvement may be an antecedent for product involvement but may also act separately. Brand decision involved-consumers tend to respond positively to brand advertising in contrary to low brand decision involved-consumers. Lockshin et al. (1997, 172) also presented that consumers in high product involvement but low in brand decision involvement tend to respond mainly to price-oriented appeals and programmed purchase appeals, such as loyalty programs. The third type of involvement, namely purchasing involvement, refers to the interest and enthusiasm exhibited by consumers in the purchasing act itself (Lockshin et al. 1997).

2.1.1. Wine product involvement

The studies on consumer involvement level in wines represents one of the most studied phenomenon in the literature of wine consumer behaviour (Hollebeek et al. 2007, 1036) and the first link to wine can be dated back to the study by Zaichkowsky (1985). Since the concept of involvement was implemented in the literature of wine consumer behaviour, it has been extensively used as a segmentation tool (Koksal 2020; Lockshin et al. 2001; Lockshin et al. 1997; Aurifeille et al. 2001) and as understanding cue utilisation of consumers (Hollebeek et al. 2007; Bruwer et al. 2016; Bruwer et al. 2011; Chrea, Melo, Evans, Forde, Delahunty and Cox 2010; Corduas et al. 2012).

Bruwer and Huang (2012, 463) define wine product involvement as a motivational state of mind of a person with wine or wine-related activity. It reflects the extent of personal relevance of the wine-related decision to the individual in terms of one’s basic values, goals, and self-concept. Its

consequences are types of searching, information-processing and decision making. (Bruwer and Huan, 2012) Wine product involvement can be seen from different angle as well, and according to Lockshing (2005) the involvement level refers to how extensive knowledge a consumer has on wines and how frequently the consumer consumes wine products.

In the studies of wine consumer behaviour, there is a lot of discussion about two terms, wine product involvement and wine product knowledge. In a matter of fact, these two concepts tend to be in relation to each other. Bruwer (2016, 833) present that the interest in a product tends to motivate people to seek further knowledge about the product. Charters and Pettigrew (2006) studied the relationship between product involvement and perceived wine quality and found that product knowledge is a considerable indicator of product involvement. Hussain, Cholette and Castaldi (2007) studied the determinants of wine consumption of US consumers and found that better knowledge of wine, decreases confusion of higher priced wines as well as increases consumption frequency.

Consumer behaviour studies have examined product knowledge from three perspectives: familiarity or past product experience, objective and subjective knowledge (Vigar-Ellis, Pitt and Caruana, 2015). According to Dodd, Laverie, Wilcox and Duhan (2005, 13), the past experience of a consumer has been found to influence both, objective and subjective knowledge. Objective knowledge in the literature is referred to as real knowledge, or simply what the consumer actually knows, whereas the subjective knowledge refers to self-assumed knowledge, or how much the consumer thinks he or she knows about a product (Vigar-Ellis et al. 2015). Among consumer behaviour researchers, it has been noted that subjective knowledge can better express and capture consumer decision making and strategies behind it, because it is based on perceptions and self-confidence. Furthermore, Guo and Meng (2008) present that subjective knowledge is a superior predictor of purchase behaviour and more critical for product evaluation purposes than objective knowledge. Despite the separation of involvement and knowledge, the two terms are often in the literature considered as a whole, and in this study the knowledge aspect is considered as a sub-scale of the involvement.

Product involvement has been linked to wine purchase behaviour and involvement has been identified as significant for the consumers engagement. There is clear evidence that the extent of involvement greatly varies between individuals. Even though most of the existing literature divides involvement into two levels, high and low involvement, there are some studies that have identified a third involvement level, namely moderate involvement, for example, Koksal (2020) segmented consumers into three involvement levels based on wine consumption. The consumption pattern and attributes

evaluated among high and low involved consumer groups can vary significantly. For example, Laurent and Kapferer (1985, 47) have defined high-involved consumers as information-seekers to maximise the expected satisfaction through an extensive choice process. Hollebeek et al. (2007, 1036), agree, by claiming that the previous research has highlighted high involved consumers to utilise greater set of wine attributes in their purchase decisions and to be more interested in learning about wine, while low-involved consumers tend to simplify their choices and rely on price cues more heavily (Charters and Pettigrew, 2006). In addition to high-involved consumers utilizing more cues, they tend to pay more for their wine (Bruwer and Huang, 2012).

H1. The level of wine involvement of consumer shapes the cue utilisation of consumers, making significant differences in the considered attributes.

2.1.2. Measuring involvement

Measuring the involvement that the consumer has towards the product depends on whether it is conceptualized as a single or multi-dimensional construct and in the first attempts of describing involvement, researchers have used approaches limited to single-scales (Hirche and Bruwer, 2014, 301). Involvement, especially related to wine products, should be evaluated as a multi-dimensional construct, since the single-dimension would result in a poor picture of one's involvement (Quester and Lim (2003). For example, "perceived risk" of a product alone would not capture the true level of involvement of consumers. Zaichowsky (1985) used a uni-dimensional approach for the wine product category, whereas Laurent and Kapferer (1985) presented a multi-faceted approach of involvement regarding different antecedents that create involvement. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) presented five determinants of involvement: interest in the product, reward in the product, sign of the product, risk importance and risk probability. Wine as a product category has all the attributes that Laurent and Kapferer (1985) argue that are the source of involvement. Wine as a product is complex enough to generate interest, has an ability to reward and pleasure consumers, has significant value to consumers, and comprises perceived risk when purchasing a bottle of wine. Despite the facts of potential value of the involvement construct and the conceptual work done in numerous previous wine studies (Aurifeille et al., 2001; Hollebeek, et al. 2007; Lockshin, et al. 1997) of Laurent's and Kapferer's (1985) dichotomy, there is no universal consensus on the set of general involvement measures that

could best capture the level of involvement across variety of product categories (Bruwer and Huang, 2012; Hirche and Bruwer, 2014). The measurements to capture the level of wine involvement are chosen in accordance with Laurent's and Kapferer's (1985) dichotomy, but slightly modified in order to suit this study. The determinants of involvement are presented in the figure 1.

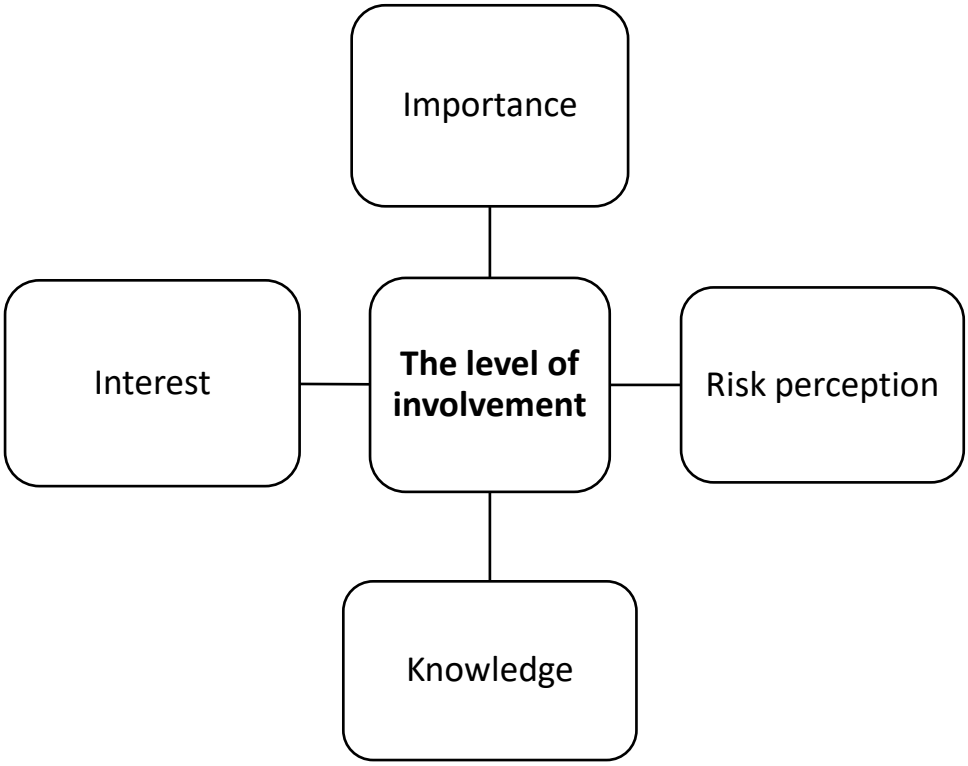

Figure 1. The determinants of involvement level modified from Quester and Lim (2003) and Laurent and Kapferer (1985).

Even though product and purchase involvement occur as separate entities, Cox (2009) claims that product involvement is an antecedent of purchase involvement, therefore, this study focuses on product involvement, since it is the interest taken in wine as a product class, assuming involvement in the purchase decision will naturally follow if the consumer is involved in the product class itself. Moreover, since product involvement is considered to be enduring and a longer-term interest in a product class and the relation to extrinsic cues of wine products is emphasized in product involvement, the current study operationalises the involvement construct from a product perspective.

2.3. Cue utilization and perceived quality

In the purchase decision making process, consumers rely on a variety of different characteristics of products - what in the literature is referred to as cues, to determine product quality. (Bruwer et al. 2016). Quality as a construct within consumer behaviour is a vast subject, and from the perspective of marketing academics, quality is hard to define precisely which has led to focusing on perceived quality rather than actual quality (Charters and Pettigrew 2007). Perceived quality is a term that occurs in the literature when defining quality and Charters and Pettigrew (2006, 91) and Bolton and Drew (1991) note that perceived quality tends to be the dominant perspective within the discipline of marketing, which places the responsibility of determining the quality over the consumer.

As with every purchase decision, consumers tend to evaluate the quality of a product through different sets of cues. Peter, Oude Ophuis and Hans (1995, 178) presented that quality is discussed in terms of perceived quality, which is result of a perception process, which is formed on the basis of visible or invisible product characteristics, that may have actually been experienced, or are believed to be associated with the evaluated product. One of the earliest studies on cue effects on perceived quality is done by Olson and Jacoby (1972) - and later used by Richardson, Dick, and Jain, (1994, 29) which presented the cue utilisation theory, claim that a product consists of an array of cues that act as surrogate indicators of quality to consumers, and when combined, consumers form their overall judgement of the product. Initially Olson and Jacoby (1972) and later Richardson et al. (1994, 29) present that the product cues can be seen as predictive and confidence values to a consumer. The predictive value of a cue is the degree to which consumers associate a given cue with product familiarity, whereas the confidence value of a cue is the degree to which consumers have confidence in their ability to use and judge a particular cue accurately (Richardson et al. 1994, 29).

Steenkamp (1989) extended the work of Olson and Jacoby (1972) by proposing a more complex model in comparison to Olson's and Jacoby's (1972) two-stages process. The distinction between the two perceived quality models were made between quality cues and quality attributes. The model by Steenkamp (1989) was again raised in a study of Peter, et al. (1995, 179-180) where the quality cues are considered as the senses prior to consumption, whereas quality attributes present benefit-generating product aspects that can only be experienced after consumption or usage of the product. (Peter et al. 1995) Olson and Jacoby (1972) as well as Steenkamp (1989) categorize cues as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic cues are physical attributes of a product, such as ingredients, taste and colour. Conversely, extrinsic cues represent product-related attributes that are not part of the physical

product, such as brand name, price and country of origin. When comparing the cues, extrinsic cues are more general and applicable to a wider range of products, whereas intrinsic are often specific to a particular product and usually experiential during consumption. (Richardson et al. 1994; Lee and Lou (1996) Therefore, it can be assumed that consumers tend to rely more heavily on extrinsic cues during purchase decisions.

Steenkamp (1989) and Peter et al. (1995) further makes a distinction between experience quality attributes and credence quality attributes of a product. Experience quality attributes refer to the actual experience of the product, for example in the context of wine, there will always be taste and smell, which can be evaluated either as good or bad. Credence quality attributes refer to something that cannot be ascertained even after normal use of a product for a long time. Desirable product attributes, such as nutritional features cannot be experienced directly, so one has to rely on the judgement of information of others that the product contains such quality attributes. (Richardson et al. 1994) Similar classification of quality dimensions were raised by Grunert, Bech-Larsen, and Bredahl (2000) who based quality dimensions into search, experience and credence dimensions. Search dimensions are something that the buyer can ascertain the quality at the time of purchase, for instance, appearance of wine. Whereas, experience and credence dimensions are something that can be ascertained only after the purchase if ever.

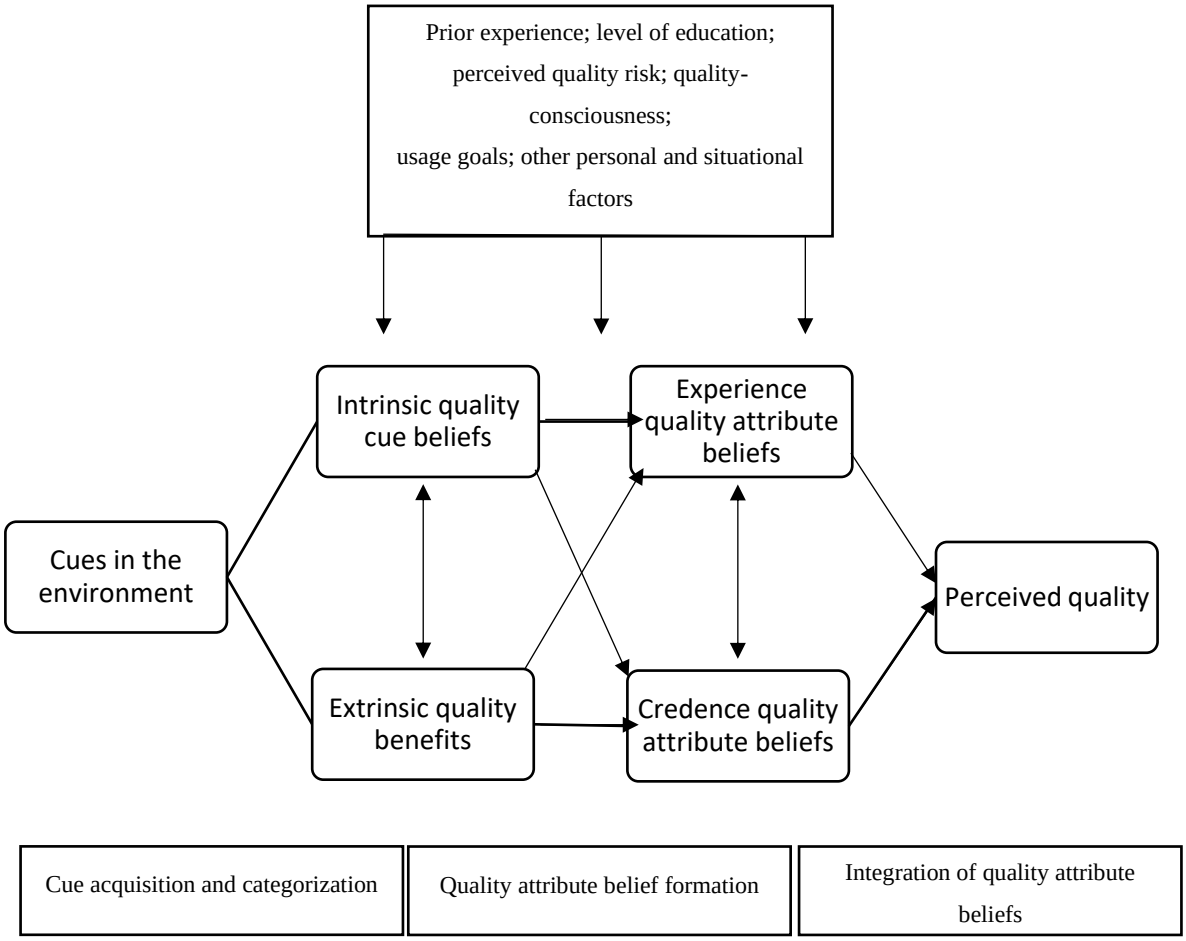

Figure 2. Conceptual model of the quality perception process by Steenkamp (1989) and Peter et al. (1995)

The work of Olson and Jacoby (1972) and Steenkamp (1989) as well as Peter et al. (1995) are still extensively used frameworks in the literature of consumer behaviour and the concept of perceived quality provides a useful framework to understand how cues are used to assess the quality of wine products. The nature of wine quality is complex and comprises a number of different dimensions, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Moreover, quality of wine is a relatively subjective concept and is dependent on individual's own quality perception. Jover, Montes, Fuentes (2004) conducted a study of Spanish wine drinkers using an evaluative mechanism to unravel dimensions of wine quality. Seven different dimensions of wine quality were found and interestingly only two of them were intrinsic and the other five extrinsic to wine. Jover et al. (2004, 455) note that extrinsic cues are related to the expected quality, while intrinsic quality cues are related to both, expected and experienced quality. The study marks the importance of expected quality that consumers are kind of forced to form based on the available cues. As many other products too, wine quality is constructed of different

dimensions. Charters and Pettigrew (2007) study of the dimensions of wine quality suggests that quality is a multi-dimensional construct and that consumers engage with it depending on their varying involvement levels with the product. They present that there is clear evidence of the influential effect of wine involvement to wine-drinkers consumption behaviour, creating complex behaviour patterns with store usage, consumption situation and cues. Charters and Pettigrew (2007) also claim that the relation of involvement to consumers' engagement with wine quality has been poorly examined and is likely to have significant differences.

As shown previously, in the case of wine products, consumers are unable to evaluate its quality until they have purchased and consumed the wine, therefore, consumers are forced to form the quality image based on expected quality, thus evaluate visible attributes that act as indicators to quality, such cues as price, brand, award and origin. Due to the lack of a universal conceptual base to define the dimensions of quality in wines, this thesis dives into the previous literature dealing with wine cues that influence purchase decision and seeks to derive relevant attributes that can be then tested for Finnish consumers to understand the cue utilization within the time of purchase.

Perceived product quality is an abstract construct and of a multi-dimensional nature (Bruwer et al. 2016, 832). Although conceptual framework for evaluating perceived quality through one or more extrinsic and intrinsic cues have been developed (Steenkamp, 1989) none of the previous studies have proven extrinsic nor intrinsic cues to be superior. In addition to the fact that this study is conducted in government-owned and controlled monopoly market, where wine availability is limited to Alko stores, this study uses the framework of Steenkamp (1989) and Peter et al. (1995) as a base and modifies it by applying the concept of wine involvement to the framework. Also, the modified framework will concern only expected quality through extrinsic cues.

2.4. Wine product cues

Many products in the retail market are hard to evaluate before buying it, which is the case in wine products. For wines, the quality evaluation would be much easier if consumers could taste the wine and appreciate its organoleptic qualities, but due to the national restrictions on tastings, consumers are forced to base their evaluations on the extrinsic cues of the product. Wine is a product which is characterized by multiple cues. For example, Quester and Smart (1998), found that wine is combination of 13 cues, among which appear the front label, the back-label, and the style of the wine.

Cohen (2009) found 11 cues, such as recommendations, brand name, food and wine pairing and country of origin. Jover et al. (2003) measured perception of wine quality using a 21-item scale that was grouped into seven dimensions, namely origin, image, the press, experts, presentation, vintage, and organoleptic qualities.

Studies have also found the varying differences of extrinsic and intrinsic cues to purchase decisions. The heavy effects of extrinsic cues on wine decision making were found by Dodd et al. (2005), as well as the study by Bruwer et al. (2016) where the different importance of extrinsic and intrinsic cues on consumers' decision making are highlighted, claiming extrinsic cues to have the most influence. Bruwer et al. (2016) found that the utilization of extrinsic and intrinsic cues differing based on the physical environment. Berger and Fitzsimons (2008) add that extrinsic cues are more often used in retail environments. The claims make sense, since the risk importance is more likely to impact heavily in retail environment where consumers cannot experience the intrinsic cues without buying and tasting the wine (Lacey, Bruwer and Elton 2009). Moreover, Berger and Fitzsimons (2008, 4) emphasized the different utilization of cues in retail environment where consumers' decision making is highly affected by noisy environment, such as marketing activities, price discounts, samples and any other activity that may guide the consumer to make a certain purchase decision. Bruwer et al. (2016) continued that through regulations and laws that differ between countries, consumers are more delimited in decision making. The liquor trading in many countries - especially in the Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Finland), are government-controlled and the strong alcohol - including wine, is sold through monopolies. In government-controlled monopolies restrictions on product display, advertising and promotion increases consumers' reliance on product specific extrinsic cues (Bruwer et al. 20016, 832). Since this study will be executed in a market where the wine business operates under government-controlled monopoly, which precludes evaluations of many intrinsic cues, such as in-store tasting, the study will take only extrinsic cues under evaluation.

2.5. Selection of cues

With regards to the choice of wine attributes, this study will follow the study of Lockshin et al. (2005) and applies attributes presented in the study, namely price, brand, origin and awards. Firstly, the price is often most likely to be the main purchase criteria in wine purchase decisions (Quester and Smart 1998; Chaney, 2000, Bruwer et.al. 2011), and it is commonly known that price is often used as an indicator of quality when there is not enough other information to evaluate the product quality. The

brand of the wine is often referred to familiarity and safety and Lockshin, et.al. (2005, 167) postulate that the brand name acts as a surrogate for quality and acts as a shortcut in dealing with risk and providing product cues. The country of origin has been a frequent topic in the research of wine choice behaviour, which makes this attribute absolutely necessary to be included in the attributes. Moreover, as it will be demonstrated in the following, the effect of country of origin is seen to have significantly varying effects within different consumer groups. Awards on wine products might be the least studied attribute in the literature of wine consumer behaviour. However, the studies that consider this attribute (Lockshin et al. 2005; Neuninger, Mather and Duncan, 2017), have revealed the significant effects of the award attribute.

Awards	Country of origin
Brand	Price

Table 1. The attributes of the study.

2.5.1. Awards

The set of cues consumers use to evaluate during the purchase process vary according to products and with regards to wine products, the number of cues evaluated is often dependedent on the level of involvement of a consumer. Lockshin and Cohen (2009) presented 13 factors consumers use for the retail purchase of wine to segment consumers in cross-national context. They found that the key attributes considered by consumers are grape variety, origin, brand and medals or awards, which are seen as objective measures of quality. The influence of brand, region, award and price to purchase decision-making was acknowledged also in the earlier study by Lockshin et al. (2005). They found that the level of involvement of a consumer makes the cue utilization of extrinsic cues quite complex. Lockshin et al. (2005, 174) see price-quality effect, where demand increases as price increases, but the point at which demand drop, differ regarding to product attributes. One of the findings Lockshin et al. (2005) found was that gold medals on wine labels increases the level of its purchase, with the exception of high-involved consumers who tend to shy away from medals and awards, when buying wines from small origins at high price. (Lockshin et al. 2005, 175)

Despite the positive impact of using awards and medals on wine, there has been some discussion on the diminishing impact of them as the phenomenon has become more common. Neuninger et al. (2017, 101) studied consumers' use of wine awards and found that 1) there are some scepticisms towards the large number of awards indicated on wine, 2) criticism on the transparency of the awards process, criticism on how awards are confusing and misleading. The results indicate that the use of awards is becoming slightly saturated, since the number of different awards and the number of authorities giving them have increased and caused confusion among consumers. Schiefer, J. and Fischer, C. (2008) also note that today, expert ratings in the form of award medals are increasingly used as marketing instruments due to the appealing advantage that they possess. Despite the scepticism and criticism that rose in the study, Neuninger et al. (2017) found all involvement groups frequently using award as indicator of quality, when other credible extrinsic cues were absent. Monteiro Guerreiro and Loureiro (2019, 161) also discovered that during a purchase process, the amount of attention given to a bottle is determinant of individuals' purchase intentions, a relationship that increases in significance for bottles with awards.

H2: Award has an impact on all wine consumers but has a higher impact among low-involved consumer groups.

2.5.2. Origin

Region of origin is also one of the important cues that consumers consider during the purchase process. Typically, when discussing wines, New and Old World are referred to denote the origin of the wine. Hollebeek et al. (2006, 1034) claim in regards with New World wines, the origin was originally placed on wine labels to simply mark the geographic origin of grapes, but is now extensively used as a means of communicating the unique brand value to consumers in purpose of differentiate the product from Old World. They add that with Old World wines, origin is considered as a part of brand equity enabling producers to command premium product prices (Hollebeek et al. 2006, 1034).

In the literature of wine consumer behaviour, there are numerous studies on the impact of origin to purchase decisions. Lockshin et al. (2006) evaluated how consumers value region of origin as a component in the purchase process and used brand and price as moderator to region of origin. They

found that brand and price intervene quite differently among expert and novice consumers, the latter group valuing more the region of origin, while the expert consumers tend to consider the price and brand together with region of origin attribute. Similar results found Balestrini and Gamble (2006) when studying the importance of country of origin on Chinese wine consumers. China is considered as an emerging market in the context of wine, and Balestrini and Gamble (2006, 396) note that the market is relatively under-developed and has a smaller experience of wine drinking than elsewhere in the world. They found Chinese consumers to be slightly novice in terms of wine knowledge, therefore, paying more attention to the country of origin in purchase.

McCutcheon, Bruwer and Elton (2009) found the origin to be an important choice factor, and note that it is preceded by price, and the importance given to the origin is higher among high-involved consumer groups, consumers that have participated in wine tourism activities, and among females. The study raises the same moderating effect of price that Lockshin et al. (2006) discovered, which is no surprise since price is often considered equivalent to quality. Skuras and Vakrou (2002) agree that origin plays an important role in wine purchase, but note the importance of origin that is in accordance with social and demographic characteristics of consumers. In terms of demographical characteristics, according to Forbes (2012) gender does not significantly influence on the amount of cues considered, but increases the relevancy of a particular cue. Forbes (2012) argues against the findings of McCutcheon et.al. (2009) and present that females are more prone to make decisions based on price, while male consumers were found to utilise the region of origin greater extent than females.

Varying importance of origin was discovered in the study of Famularo, Bruwer and Elton (2009) too, which shows the positive impact of origin to purchase as wine knowledge and involvement increases. The study also points the positive effect of wine tourism visitation, therefore attributing to greater recall of wine region in the wine buying decision-making as did the study of Mccutcheon et al. (2009).

H3: Country of origin cue has more importance for high-involved than low-involved consumer groups.

2.5.3. Brand

The brand is one of the most influential cues that consumers assess during the purchase decision-making process of products and it is considered as the sum of the images that consumers have in their mind about a particular company (Cohen 2009). Lockshin et al. (2006) postulate that the brand name acts as a surrogate for a number of attributes including quality and acts as a shortcut in dealing with risk and providing product cues. Moreover, consumers tend to attach the same status to brands as they do to more general cues as variety and region (Lockshin et al. (2006)

D'Alessandro and Pecotich (2012, 288) suggest that the influence of brand name to product choice is linked to the product familiarity and that more familiar products are more likely to have greater effects on product evaluation due to information overflow that numerous brands cause. Corduas et al. (2012) discovered similar results among Italian wine consumers and discussed how fragmented wine markets have become as new brands have entered the market and led people to be overwhelmed by the amount of choices available. D'Alessandro and Pecotich (2012, 288) make an interesting note by presenting that as the brand familiarity increases, consumers are less likely to use other extrinsic cues, and even some cases a familiar brand is that powerful cue that it can overcome or enhance the origin effect particularly when there is a strong association of a brand name with a country. Mueller and Szolnoki (2010) found similar results to D'Alessandro and Pecotich (2012), claiming that for older frequent consumers, the brand and packaging were the most influential, leaving other cues little less consideration. In contrary, younger inexperienced German wine consumers utilised a mix of various extrinsic cues, while more experienced consumers based their evaluation mainly on grape variety Mueller and Szolnoki 2010). Mueller and Szolnoki (2010) note that although there are extrinsic cues for which consumers differ in their responsiveness, brand is an attribute that has at least some importance to all consumer groups.

Lockshin et al. (2006, 176) found in their study that consumers with low-involvement in wines were more prone to make purchase choices based on awards and big brands, while consumers with high-involvement in wines were not considering awards as a sign of quality, but instead put a lot of emphasis on the price cue. They add that the low-involved consumers are more sensitive to use brand cues at low prices, which can be partly due to the assumption that large global brands are inexpensive (Lockshin et al. 2006, 176). Moreover, Lockshin et al. (2006, 175-176) discovered that when the wine originates from low-awareness regions across different price points and involvement, the brand cue increases its value.

H4: Brand cue is in relation to the brand cue familiarity and the utilisation of brand cue is emphasised in low-involved consumer groups.

2.5.4. Price

Unlike other cues, price is not a direct attribute of the wine, but it is set by retailers based on the prices of importers and wine producers. The price is often most likely to be the main purchase criteria in wine purchase decisions (Quester and Smart 1998; Chaney, 2000; Bruwer et.al. 2011), and it is commonly known that price is often used as an indicator of quality when there is not enough other information to evaluate the product quality. However, Martínez, Mollá-Bauzá, Gomis and Poveda (2005) note that other variables of products have acquired importance in the decision-making process, decreasing the influence of price. What the researchers are referring to, is the increase of wine knowledge which has led to consumers to better understand wine quality no matter what the country of origin or grape variety is. Moreover, the product characteristics that have been part of the food sector for quite a while, such as organic, vegan and sustainability, have emerged at in the wine sector as well, thus changing the decision-making process of consumers along with the cues that are being evaluated. However, price has always been the first indicator of quality, and Platania, M. Platania, S. and Santisi (2016) add that the more complex the product is, the greater role price as a quality indicator will have, and wine is a great example of this. Moreover, price is a pre-informative decisive factor in the point of purchase, since often consumers have pre-determined the amount of money that is acceptable to spend, which is an interval that can vary according to the product characteristics and consumption situation. (Platania et al. 2016)

Quester and Smart (1998) in their study found that appreciation of higher priced wines appear to increase with the perceived risk. It is evident that consumers attempt to reduce the perceived risk of a purchase, and that price is often used as a cue to quality, which then suggests that as perceived risk increases, the appreciation given to higher priced wines also increases. Quester and Smart (1998, 225) also note that the effect is evident for lesser involved consumers, who appear to emphasize more heavily on price as an extrinsic cue to quality than do highly involved consumers. Martínez et al. (2005) found similar results to Quester and Smart (1998), where they studied the relative importance of a set of attributes which influence purchase decisions of quality wine. According to their results,

the price attribute has a different valuation depending on the purchase place (restaurant or retailer), being higher in restaurants due to higher prices of wine in these places, which causes a greater involvement of this attribute in the purchase decision. Thus, less involved consumers appear to rely more heavily on the price as an extrinsic cue to quality than do highly involved consumers. (Martínez et al. 2005). Similar results with regards to price were found by Hollebeek et al. (2008); Charters and Pettigrew (2006); Koksal (2020) stating that price is less important attribute to the high-involved consumer groups than for the low-involved consumers. It could be, that for the high-involved consumers, relying on their own knowledge and experience on wines plays a bigger role, thus giving importance on other attributes, too, to form the decision. With low-involved consumer groups, perceived risk tends to grow faster as the price increases, therefore, they are more likely to pick the wine based on price.

The level of involvement also correlates significantly with the price of wine. Even though it could be imagined that the amount of money acceptable to use for wine is often dependent on the level of income of a consumer, there are signs of the significant effect of price sensitivity despite the income level. Bruwer and Buller (2012) claim that high-involved wine consumers are willing to spend more money per bottle than low-involved consumers, because high-involved consumers tend to have better knowledge on wines and know how to appreciate the value for money. Moreover, Hollebeek et. al. (2007) present that since high-involved consumers have more knowledge on wines, they tend evaluate the wine as whole, while low-involved consumers tend to behave simpler in their wine choices by relying on price.

H4. Low-involved consumer groups are more prone to make wine choices based on the retail price level than high-involved consumer groups.

2.6. Summary of theory part

As noted in the involvement chapter of the thesis, the term involvement has been diversely used in the consumer behaviour literature. Rothschild (1984) was among the first ones discussing involvement and defined it as a motivational and goal-directed emotional state that determines the personal relevance of a purchase decision to a buyer. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) continued saying

that involvement is thought to have considerable influence on consumers' decision process. They also claim that there is more than one kind of consumer involvement, and it is dependent on the antecedents of involvement, such as perceived importance of the product or situation, perceived sign value, perceive pleasure value and perceived risk. One of the most established way to define involvement is done by Zaichowsky (1985), who defined involvement as a person's perceived relevance of an object based on his/her needs, values and interests.

The firs sub-research question of the study is formed as:

SRQ 1. How consumers' wine involvement is being characterized?

Based on the theory, involvement has been diversely used in the academic literature and different involvement aspects have arose in the literature. To answer the first sub-research question, the thesis applies the definition from Bruwer and Huang (2012) hence, considers wine product involvement as a motivational state of mind of a person with wine or wine-related activity. It describes the extent of relevance of consumer makes wine related decisions in terms of basic values, goals and self-concept. Typically, consumers with high in wine product involvement, tend to possess more knowledge on wines and act as information seekers, while low-involved consumers tend to simplify their choices and rely on opinions of others. They also emphasize product cues that are not part of the physical wine product, such as price. In this study, the level of involvement is based on the involvement dimensions of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and Quester and Smart (1998). The dimensions are interest, pleasure, risk perception and knowledge.

The nature of wine quality is complex and comprises number of different dimensions, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Moreover, quality of wine is relatively subjective concept and is dependent on individuals own quality perception. In the wine choice process, consumers evaluate the quality through number of different product characteristics, namely cues, which act as indicators to quality. Next, the second sub-research question is being answered.

SRQ 2. How cue utilisation is defined and what are its implications to study of wine consumer behaviour?

This research applies the cue utilisation definition by Richardson et al. (1994) who define cue utilisation as an evaluation process to form an overall judgment of a product. Richardson et al. (1994)

claim that a product consists of an array of cues that act as surrogate indicators of quality to consumers, and when combined, consumers form their overall judgement of the product. By understanding the cue utilisation process of different consumers groups, marketers are able to create better products and customized marketing activities that suit the needs of target consumers.

Now that the concepts of wine involvement and cue utilization are discussed separately, it is time to combine the two concepts and understand how the cue utilisation of wine attributes is being influenced by the level of involvement of consumer. The third sub-research question is formed as following:

SRQ 3. How the cue utilisation of wine attributes is being influenced by the level of involvement of consumer?

One of the fundamental studies of wine consumer behaviour is made by wine Charters and Pettigrew (2007). This study presented quality as a multi-dimensional construct that consumers engage with it depending on their varying involvement levels with wine. They present that there is clear evidence of the influential effect of wine involvement to wine-drinkers consumption behaviour, creating complex behaviour pattern with cues. Theory part of the thesis showed that the consumers do not place the same importance on product choice cues. While high-involved wine consumers tend to consider several attributes to form the overall judgement of the wine, low-involved wine consumers are less interested and possess less knowledge on wines, thus might act simpler way and make choices based on factors that are not part of the physical product, factors that are more evident to indicate the quality of the wine.

3. Research framework

The framework of this study is combined from theories of cue utilization and involvement, and is presented in the figure 2 below. Based on the theory part of the thesis, the level of involvement significantly influences the cues that consumers consider during a purchase process. Despite of some established frameworks for measuring involvement level, there are still no general involvement measurements that could best capture the level of involvement in wine products. The measurements or the determinants of involvement are chosen based on the previous literature of product involvement of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and Quester and Smart (1998). The fact that very little research has been conducted in the government-controlled monopoly market which limits the effects of certain cues that consumers ascertain to quality, makes this research unique. The cues adopted to this study are chosen based on the results of previous studies (Lockshin et al., 2005; Hollebeek et al., 2007 and Bruwer et al. 2016). The relevance of chosen cues are also considered from the Finnish market perspective, to make sure that the chosen cues belong to the consideration sets of Finnish consumers.

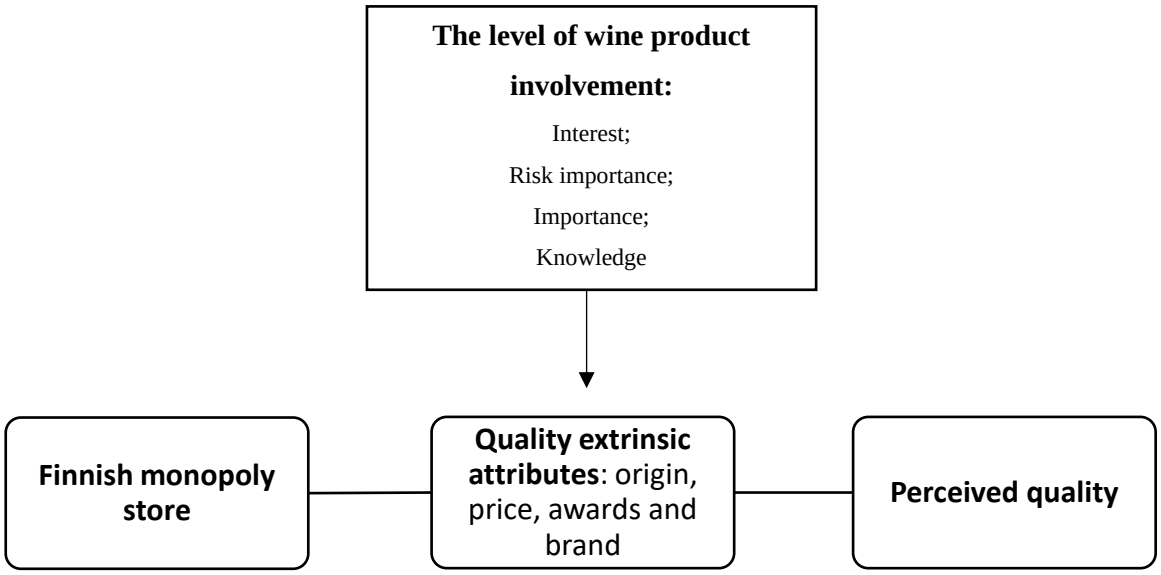

Figure 3. The research framework of the study.

4. Research design and methods

This research seeks to understand consumer cue utilization of wine products and how the level of wine product involvement shapes the cue utilization. To this point, the wine product involvement and cue utilization of wine consumers have been examined in the light of existing academic literature. Based on the findings, hypothesis and research framework, the study is ready to proceed to the empirical examination. Even though the third sub-research question was already answered in the theoretical part of the thesis, support for the third research questions is looked from the empirical part as well.

SRQ 3. How the cue utilisation of wine attributes is being influenced by the level of involvement of consumer?

The empirical part takes the cue utilization hypothesis under testing and seeks to understand the different cue utilisation pattern of high- and low-involved consumer groups. As the nature of the questions requires of extensive data collection and quantitative analysis, a survey was chosen for the data collection method.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research context and justify the research methodology for this study. Firstly, the research context is presented followed by the description of the data collection method. At the end of this chapter, the reliability and validity of the study will be evaluated.

4.1. Research context

As noted previously in the study, quality as a construct within consumer behavior is a vast and complex subject. From the perspective of marketing academics, quality is hard to define precisely, which has led to focusing on perceived quality rather than actual quality. This has led to the point where the responsibility of determining the quality has been transferred to the consumer. In the purchase process, consumers seek to find the best possible value for money, and the way they do it, is by evaluating certain cues that are ascertained to the product. Additionally, as the wine product involvement level of consumers vary, the cues that the consumers evaluate during the purchase

process vary too. Therefore, this research is focused on testing the pre-determined wine cues and on discovering the varying behavior between high- and low-involved wine consumers.

Data collection with a survey was essential for this study as such consumer data was not available at the time. As this study considers both high- and low-involved consumers - consumers who know very little about wine and consumers who consider themselves as wine enthusiasts - there were no need to target specific consumer profiles as long as the target consumers showed some interest towards wine products. To identify the level of wine product involvement of respondents, scales for measuring the involvement levels were developed based on the study of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and Quester and Smart (1998). A 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) was chosen to measure the level of wine product involvement of respondents.

To test the cue utilization of high- and low-involved consumer groups, this study applies a conjoint experiment to create hypothetical product profiles, which will simulate the actual wine products for consumers. Due to the numerous variations of product profiles that the combination of product attributes and attribute levels would create for consumers to be evaluated and rated, this study implements a fractional factorial design, which allows one to gather data on large number of product profiles using a relatively small number of product profiles.

The research was conducted without participation of third parties and was targeted to Finnish wine consumers. Since the study concerns alcoholic consumption of consumers, and considering the legal drinking age in Finland, the survey was shared to people of 18 years and older. As noted earlier, this research takes all wine consumers into account, regardless of how frequent the consumption is.

4.2. Data collection methods

As the purpose of the study is to understand the cue utilization of different wine consumers based on their relation to wine, a survey on Finnish consumers was executed. This research takes account two different theories, involvement and cue utilization. Therefore, the survey was built to measure respondents' relation to wine as well as the preferred cues of respondents.

This research did not limit the consumer profiles suitable for the study and targeted Finnish consumers that show some interest towards wine and consume it once a while. The survey was made

with a questionnaire creation tool Qualtrics, which was provided by the University of Lappeenranta. The survey was conducted online and it was distributed in social media (Facebook, Instagram and Linkedin). Questionnaire was kept open for a period of 5 days and respondents were able to perform it anonymously.

Since this study focuses only in understanding the cue utilization differences among high- and low-involved consumer groups and not in segmenting the Finnish consumers, questions about demographic status of respondents were limited to age and gender. The level of wine involvement was measured by using the involvement dimensions of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and Quester and Smart (1998). Each involvement dimension was transformed to two questions that were shown to the respondents for them to indicate the level of involvement. The involvement related questions were formed as claims for the respondents to indicate whether the claim describes the respondents' wine behavior or not. In total, there were eight questions measuring the involvement level and the respondents were asked to indicate their relation to wine on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly agree, 5= strongly disagree) whether the claim represents their wine behavior or not. The full list of survey questions is included in the appendix.

To measure the cue utilization of respondents, a conjoint experimental design was implemented to create the hypothetical product profiles from the pre-determined attributes and levels. The conjoint experiment along with the selection of attributes and levels will be introduced in the following chapter.

Before presenting the hypothetical product profiles to the respondents, the respondents were asked to consider the 750ml wine bottle to be bought from a Finnish monopoly store for a friends' get-together. It was highlighted that the respondents were not asked to consider wine to be paired with food. Moreover, respondents were free to consider all grape varieties. Only things that the respondents were asked to evaluate were price (8,99 €, 12,99 € and 19,99 €), origin (Chile or Italy), brand (well-known or unknown) and gold medal (gold medal or no medal). To avoid any misunderstandings, the survey was translated to Finnish. All questions were marked as mandatory to ensure that no value was missing in the final data set.

Before publishing the survey, the questionnaire was tested among ten volunteers who provided feedback for the survey flow. It was essential to test the questionnaire with the target group to avoid any misunderstanding and to ensure good flow in the survey. Most crucial part of the survey was the

eight hypothetical product profiles and whether the respondents understood what the four attributes are that they should evaluate to form the final purchase decision. Respondents were shown eight different wine product profiles one by one and in a randomized manner. Then, respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to purchase the hypothetical wine product by rating the products on a scale 1-10.

Figure 4. Hypothetical wine product profiles in the survey.

Due to the heavy distribution of the survey, the questionnaire gained a lot of responses during the five-day period of data collection. In total 589 respondents completed the survey during the time-period, which indicated quality of the questionnaire. The high interest rate of the questionnaire might have been due to the straightforward and intuitive nature of the questions. It needs to be noted, that the ten respondents acting as a test group of the survey, were not included in the final sample.

4.2.1. Conjoint experimental design

The purpose of the conjoint experiment is to provide data for the conjoint analysis based on the hypothetical product profiles. As noted, the chosen wine product cues (price, brand, origin, award) for the analysis were selected based on the suggestions of existing academic literature and based on assumption of what Finnish wine consumers might consider during a purchase process. After the selection of the wine attributes, levels for each attribute were defined, which then made up the hypothetical product profiles. The attributes reflect the key product characteristics, which consumers

use to assess the product quality, therefore, the attribute levels need to be defined carefully (Gil and Sánchez 1997, 5).

Chosen levels for the price were 8,99 €, 12,99 €, 15,99 € and 19,99 €. The defined price levels provided a range from realistically low prices for commercial quality wines to high prices typical for self-indulgence. Origin levels were defined to Chile and Italy based on the top sellers by origin in Finnish monopoly store, Alko (Alko myyntitilastot, 2021). The award attribute was chosen for this study for two reasons. Firstly, at the Finnish wine market, the use of local and global award or review on a wine bottle has become quite common and it has had the author of this study to doubt, how extensively the award has impact on the wine choice of consumers in the end. Secondly, it was recommended by Hollebeek et al. (2007) that using award as one of the attributes could result interesting findings. In this study, the gold medal refers to an excellent review that the wine has received, and the award levels were defined to gold medal and no medal. As for the brand levels, because no relevant data providing brand awareness information was available, the classification was defined as unknown and well-known brands. With regards to brand, the respondents were asked to consider either a brand that is well-known or completely unknown to the respondent him- or herself.

Once the attributes and attribute levels were defined, they need to be combined to form the hypothetical wine product profiles for survey respondents to assign preference ratings (Gil and Sánchez 1997, 5). The number of wine product profiles can be calculated by multiplying the number of levels associated with each attribute, in this case 24 (3 x 2 x 2 x 2) product profiles. Considering the amount of product profiles that the respondents would have to rate, it was necessary to limit the product profiles to avoid loss of concentration by the respondents. In order to make the rating easier for the respondents and still maintain the effectiveness and reliability of the analysis, a fractional factorial design was applied. Fractional factorial design allows one to gather data on large number of product profiles using a relatively small number of product attributes (Gil and Sánchez 1997). To administer the conjoint experiment, the generated eight wine product profiles shown in the table 2 were presented to the respondents for the purpose of rating profiles according to their own preferences. The respondents were able to rate the hypothetical wine profiles on a scale 1 to 10 (1 = definitely would not buy, 10 = definitely would buy). The hypothetical wine product profiles can be found in the table 2.

	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*
Brand	Unknown	Wellknown	
Price	8,99 €	12,99 €	19,99 €
Origin	Chile	Italy	
Award	Gold medal	No medal	

Table 2. Hypothetical wine product profiles generated from the fractional factor analysis.

4.4. Data analysis methods

This research is quantitative by its nature. Quantitative research is systematic investigation of a certain phenomena and it aims to gather quantifiable data to create a statistical model of the research problem. Moreover, quantitative research enables to draw generalizable conclusions from the research results, only if the measurement scales are reliable and valid. Quantitative research fits perfectly to this study, since the purpose of this study is to measure the cue utilization differences in high- and low-involved consumer groups and explaining what type of relationships there are between the two concepts.

A conjoint analysis was applied to this study to analyse the results. Conjoint analysis is extensively used method in psychology and marketing, where it has commonly been used as a technique to analyse consumer preferences towards products. Consumer decision making is usually described as a four-stage process, from a need recognition to search for information and to evaluation of alternatives and finally to purchase decision (Gil and Sanchez 1997, 3). As the number of competitors increase and considering the nature of wine market - where the lifecycle of a particular wine can be relatively short, companies have started to put a lot of effort to influence consumers' wine choices. In commercial terms, winning at the point of purchase.

Conjoint analysis is a multivariate technique, which uses the existence and combination of several variables, in this case wine attributes and levels. One of the fundamental concepts of conjoint analysis

is that it measures utilities, in other words, preferences on which the consumer make the purchase decision of an item (Quester and Smart 1998, 226). In the analysis, consumers are asked to show their preferences towards set of product profiles created through combination of product attributes and attribute levels. In order to understand consumer preferences, we have to assume that the consumer faces various competitor products within the purchase decision-making process (Quester and Smart 1998). Consumers evaluate product cues, such as price, brand, origin and awards with regards to quality, and for companies, knowing the most valued attributes within the purchase decision of a certain consumer group, they are able to design better products and enhance their marketing activities to win at the point of purchase.

With regards to the attributes to be included in the conjoint analysis (table 2), the choice of price, origin, brand and awards were based on numerous previous studies, in addition, the attributes are considered to be most influential in the purchase decision-making of Finnish consumers. Furthermore, the distinction of attribute preferences is made by classifying the consumers to low- and high-involvement consumer groups. This further increases the knowledge on how different consumer groups differ based on their behaviour pattern.

In the case of wine, as Quester and Smart (1998) have pointed out, when consumers purchase wine, they tend to select the wine according to the consumption situation. For example, for a special occasion people are more likely to use more money than for a personal consumption. With regards to the consumption situation and purchase place, in the survey, consumers were asked to consider situation where the wine is enjoyed on a dinner with friends. Due to the government-controlled market in which the study is conducted, the monopoly (Alko) store is considered as a place of purchase.

The reasons for choosing conjoint analysis for this study, was to understand the cue utilization of wine consumers at the point of purchase as well as identify how the preferences are shaped by the wine involvement level of consumers.

In the conjoint analysis, average importance, in other words relative importance, is calculated to see the importance attached to each attribute. Briefly, for each attribute the highest and lowest utility values are first determined. The difference between the values form the utility range, and this value determines the relative importance (RI_i), for an attribute *i* as defined by the formula.

$$\mathrm{RI}_i = \frac{attribute_utility_range_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} attribute_utility_range_i}$$

The process of conjoint analysis of this study is described in the figure 5. The conjoint analysis starts from defining the research problem and the product that it concerns for. Product attributes and corresponding levels are defined as well as the chosen data collection method. As presented earlier, the data for the conjoint analysis was acquired through a survey conducted online. The hypothetical product profiles were created by conducting a fractional factor analysis, where a subset of the actual number of product profiles were selected for respondents to rank them. The conjoint analysis was executed by using R program. The R was chosen for analysis tool for this analysis for the personal interest of the author. R is a widely used programming language and it offers a wide range of statistical and graphical tools for free. R packages psych, dplyr, conjoint, ggplot2, REdas and GPArotation were used in this analysis.

The last steps of the conjoint analysis are the analysis of the data and reporting the findings of the study. These all will be covered in the chapter 5.

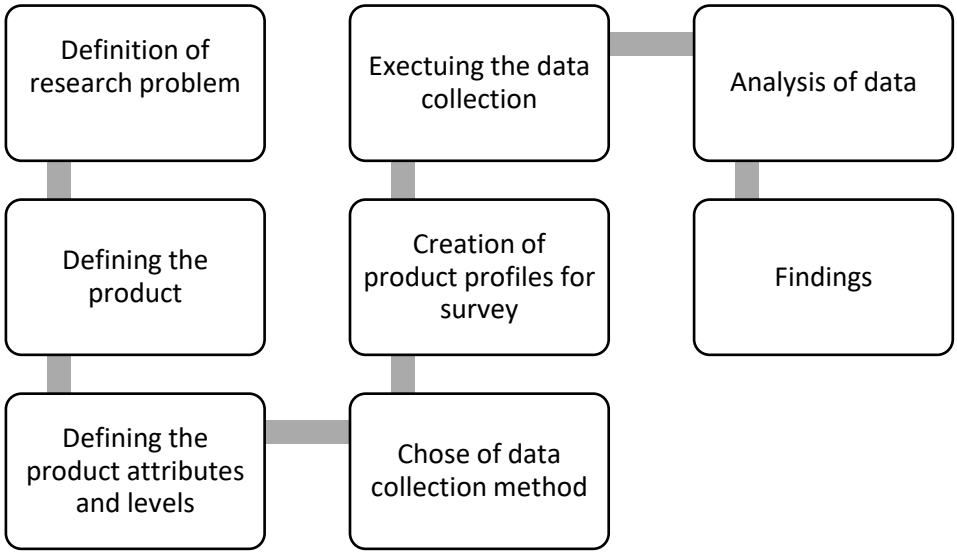

Figure 5. The process of conjoint analysis.

Before executing the conjoint analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to compose and validate the questions measuring wine involvement. The need for exploratory factor analysis often emerges when large set of scores is needed to be described more parsimoniously. Also, in cases where the researcher has no clear expectations or relatively incomplete expectation about the underlying structure of correlations. Exploratory factor analysis seeks to identify variables with high communality from the data. (Leandre, and Duane 2012, 4) In this study, the exploratory factor analysis was used to create composite variable from the wine involvement responses of the questionnaire, and to validate the questions set to measure theoretical concept of wine involvement. Exploratory factor analysis is widely used concept and it is used to assist in development of measurement instruments to assess the underlying construct. It also provides information regarding which specific measured variables effectively capture each factor. Hence, factor analysis is widely used in the development of measurement instruments.

In this study, the purpose for implementing the exploratory factor analysis was to interpret whether the wine involvement questions measured the involvement variable well enough. With factor analysis, it was possible to eliminate the questions poorly measuring the involvement variable, and then summarize all the questions with high loadings to factors.

The chapter 5 starts the analysis from the questionnaire results by presenting the screening method and data preparation techniques. In the data preparation, the data was numerically and visually viewed for any outliers. Only a few outliers were found from the data, which were then adjusted to match majority of the observations. Description of the data sample will be discussed in order to understand the composite of the data sample. After data examination, the analysis continues to exploratory factor analysis where the factor for wine involvement is tested and created. Exploratory factor analysis showed strong loadings from the eight involvement measurements, therefore, there was no need to eliminate any variable. The created factor was then divided into two data sets to represent the consumers with high- and low involvement with wines. Lastly, the two data sets representing high- and low-involved wine consumers were separately run in the conjoint analysis to get comparable results.

The analysis was conducted with statistical program R, which provided the necessary tools for conjoint analysis. The used R packages for the analysis were conjoint, pcysch, dplyr, REdas, ggplot2, grid and GPArotation.

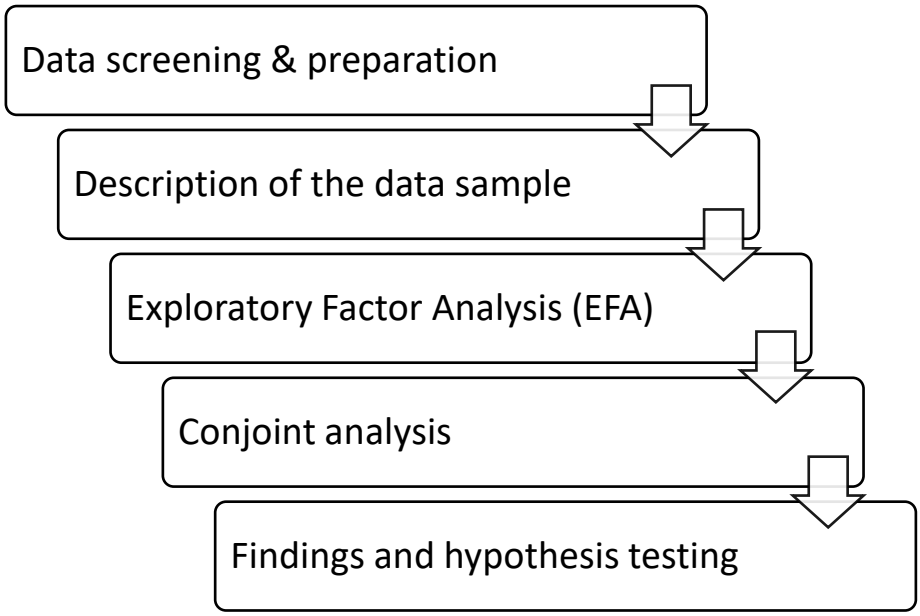

Figure 6. Data analysis process.

4.5. Reliability and validity

Reliability refers to the consistency of the study, in other words, if the study can be replicated by producing similar results under the same conditions. In practical terms, this means that another researcher should be able to generate similar results by using the same method and variables. The involvement measurement construct was tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha correlation test. The reliability analysis revealed an overall strong correlation performance and resulted in a value of 0.84. Therefore, the final model proved to be reliable and was further used in the conjoint analysis to discover the utilities of high- and low-involved consumer groups.

On the other hand, validity is the extent to which the scores from a measurement describe the factor it was intended to (Litwin, 2013, 2). Validity concerns the terms and measurement scales defined from the theoretical perspective. Moreover, validity describes the research problem as well as how generalizable the research results are. The scales implemented to this study are adapted from the previous studies of wine consumer involvement and the dimensions set to measure the involvement construct are initially defined by Laurent and Kapferer (1985). All the chosen scales to measure the wine involvement, were acceptable and did not require elimination of variables. Moreover, it needs to be noted that the study involves responses of 589 respondents. The bigger the data set is, the more reliable results it will give and makes division of consumers either to high- or low-involved wine consumer groups easier.

Reliability and validity checks were also done for the conjoint analysis. Conjoint analysis necessitates respondents to rank in preferential order a set of hypothetical products, which are created from a selection of attributes and levels. Quester and Smart (1998) note that the key to the reliability of the conjoint output, therefore, is the selection of the appropriate product attributes and realistic levels. The attributes for the wine product have been chosen based on the previous academic literature of wine consumer behavior. Moreover, the attributes have been considered from the perspective of Finnish wine market and consumer behavior. Further, the sales statistics of Finnish monopoly supported the selection of the attributes for this study.

Another key input of a successful conjoint analysis, is the ability to simulate the actual purchase process as well as possible. To simulate the actual purchase process, the respondents were provided a short information of the purpose they are buying the wine for. Additionally, the respondents were asked to consider only 750ml wine bottles. In the survey, it was not the purpose to fully guide the

respondents to consider only red or white wine, or even different wine styles, but rather give liberty to consider whatever wine they would be buying anyways. Only variables that the respondent were asked to consider, were the brand, price, origin and award.

The hypothetical wine product profiles ranked by respondents must include attribute levels consumers are most likely to evaluate in the actual purchase process. For this conjoint analysis, only four different attributes were chosen for three reasons. Firstly, the higher the number of attributes is, the more complex the analysis gets. Secondly, whilst, the inclusion of all potentially influential attributes would best describe a hypothetical product as well as simulate better the actual purchase decision, anything excess of five or six attributes is argued to diminish the reliability of the conjoint analysis (Quester and Smart, 1998). Thirdly, Quester and Smart (1998) postulate that while the number of attribute level increases, the relative importance of an attribute will be biased upwards. Hence, based on the previous conjoint studies of Quester and Smart (1998), Martínez et al. (2005), Hollebeek, et. al. (2007) and Gil, and Sánchez (1997) this study took four attributes into consideration.

5. Findings

In this chapter the process of data analysis is presented in detail. Firstly, the collected data is examined and described. Some outliers were found from the observations, which were then replaced with values representing majority of the observations. However, the analysis was run with the initial data sample as well as without the outliers, and it was discovered that keeping the outliers in the study would not have distorted the final analysis. After data examination, involvement factor for the conjoint analysis was formed. Conjoint analysis is implemented with the two involvement groups. Since majority of the observations belonged in the age groups of 18-25 and 26-35, while minority in the 36-45 and + 56, the age groups of 36-45 and +56 were excluded to see whether the results would change. Additionally, consumers representing age groups 18-25 and 26-35 were combined and then divided based on their involvement levels. After this, the conjoint analysis was conducted with both data sets, high- and low-involved consumer groups.

5.1. Data sample description

Since the survey questions were mandatory for respondents and any incomplete survey responses were automatically deleted within an hour, the final data set did not have any missing values. As the survey was tested with target group of ten people before publication, the ten test answers were excluded from the final analysis. The data set was checked for any outliers, but luckily there were not significant outliers that would have affected the final analysis. However, the few small outliers that were found in the data, were replaced with values representing majority of the observations. The conjoint analysis was then performed with the sample that did not have outliers. Some data cleaning considering irrelevant information - such as survey start time and end time, were done for the data.

The respondents conducted the survey anonymously and personal information were not asked. Demographic information, namely age and gender, were asked to ensure the data contained diverse enough group for the wine involvement analysis. The survey gained 589 responses during the four-day survey period. Majority (49%) of the respondents represented the age group 26-35. This being the largest respondent group by age, which most likely is in parallel with the author's age. The second largest age group was 18-25, which represented 42% of the observations. Unfortunately, the participation of higher age classes (36-45, 46-55 and 56 and over) was quite poor, representing only 9% of the total observations. Gender ratio of this study was 80/20 for females favor.

Despite majority of respondents being under 35 years old and female, the ultimate purpose of this study was not to measure wine involvement based on demographic factors, but to measure the relationship that the respondents have toward wines. Therefore, we can consider the analysis to be valid.

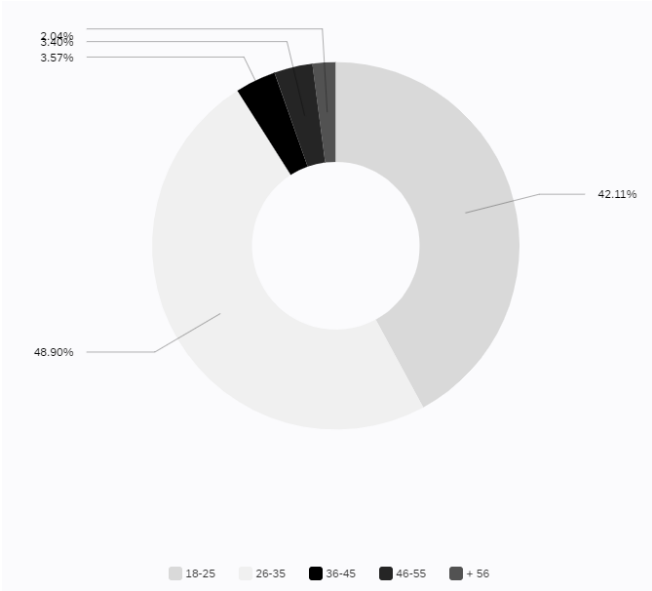

Figure 7. Age groups of respondents (n=589).

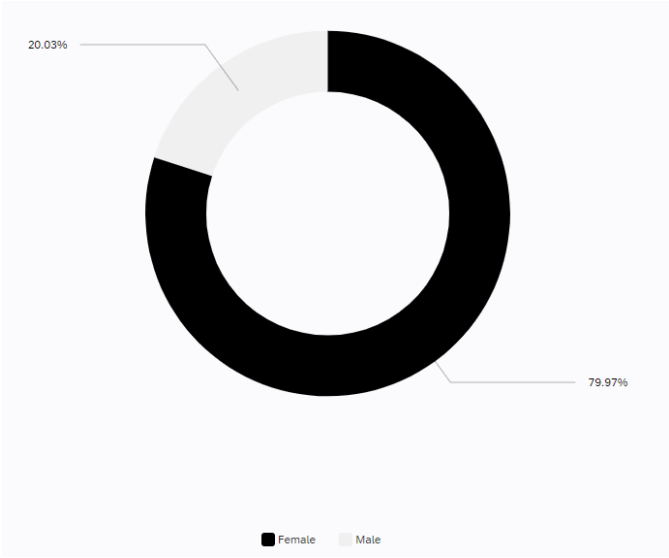

Figure 8. Gender split of respondents (n=589).

When looking at the responses to the involvement related questions, we see that there are not that big of variance in the responses and generally people could not decide whether they strongly agree or strongly disagree. Surprisingly, despite of clear signs of extreme wine involvement, the respondents strongly agreed on the fifth question (Q5), "I drink wine because I like the taste", while the other risk perception -question indicated more "undecided" answers. It is also evident that the respondents were not that interested in reading wine magazines and publications, but still tend to put slightly more importance on wines. Most frequent answer to risk perception questions was around 2-3, while the knowledge questions were more towards "strongly disagree" -claim. It is interesting to see, that the respondents considered not to have that extensive knowledge on wines, but still enjoyed consuming wine. To conclude, it is obvious that the sample of this survey is relatively homogeneous, which might not give a complete description of Finnish wine involvement construct.

INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONS	*Mean*	*Std dev.*	*Var*
INTEREST			
Q1. I attach great importance to wine.	2,87	1.28	1.65
Q2. I often read wine magazines and publications.	4.18	1.12	1.26
RISK PERCEPTION			
Q3. I am not confident in my ability to select a wine.	2.79	1.17	1.38
Q4. When I face a shelf of wine, I always feel at a bit lost to make my choice.	2.49	1.21	1.48
PLEASURE			
Q5. I drink wine because I like the taste.	1.78	1.04	1.08
Q6. Buying wine is like buying a gift to myself.	2.99	1.37	1.86
KNOWLEDGE			
Q7. I have a good wine knowledge.	3.93	1.1	1.20
Q8. I have a good wine knowledge.	4.06	1.15	1.33

5-Point Likert scale (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree)

Table 3. Results of involvement questions Q1-Q8.

5.2. Exploratory factor analysis and composite variables

To analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire, an exploratory factor analysis was needed to examine whether the variables measured the wine involvement sufficiently. The assumption was that all the wine involvement variables measure the involvement well enough, and that all the variables load to one factor. Before carrying out the exploratory factor analysis, Bartletts test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure were executed. The Bartletts test resulted to be highly significant (p-value <.-16), and demonstrated that the correlation between items were loading large enough (fact (x^2 (28 = 2138,528), p < .001). The sampling adequacy in Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was acceptable (KMO = .82). Moreover, as the data set was large enough (589 respondents) and was not missing any values, exploratory factor analysis was ready to be conducted.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		***Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin factor adequacy***								
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
X2	2138.528	MSA for each time	0.85	0,89	0.71	0.75	0.83	0.83	0.84	0.84
df	28									
p-value	$< 2.22e-16$									
		Overall MSA = 0.84								

Table 4. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test.

After confirming the data was suitable, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The factor analysis was first done with four factors to see how the variable will load to factors. The analysis with four factors showed relatively strong loadings to three different factors (Fact1 = 2.01, Fact2 = 1.65 and Fact3 = 1.50), but since the aforementioned involvement theory in this study suggested one factor to be used in interpreting the involvement levels of respondents, the factor analysis was reduced to be done with one factor.

Exploratory factor analysis was performed with every variable measuring involvement and resulted high loadings to one factor (Fact1 = 3.36) which explained 42 % of the variance. Communality value of 0.5 was assigned to indicate the minimum loading to the factor, and based on this rule, each variable loaded to the factor in accordance with the rule. Therefore, there was no need to eliminate factors. Reliability test was conducted with Cronbach's alpha, which indicated good (0.84) reliability.

	Factor 1	*Communality*
INTEREST		
Q1	0.65	1
Q2	0.69	1
RISK PERCEPTION		
Q3	0.50	1
Q4	0.63	1
PLEASURE		
Q5	0.52	1
Q6	0.51	1
KNOWLEDGE		
Q7	0.83	1
Q8	0.76	1
SS loadings	*3.326*	
Proportion Var	*0.416*	

Table 5. Factor loadings.

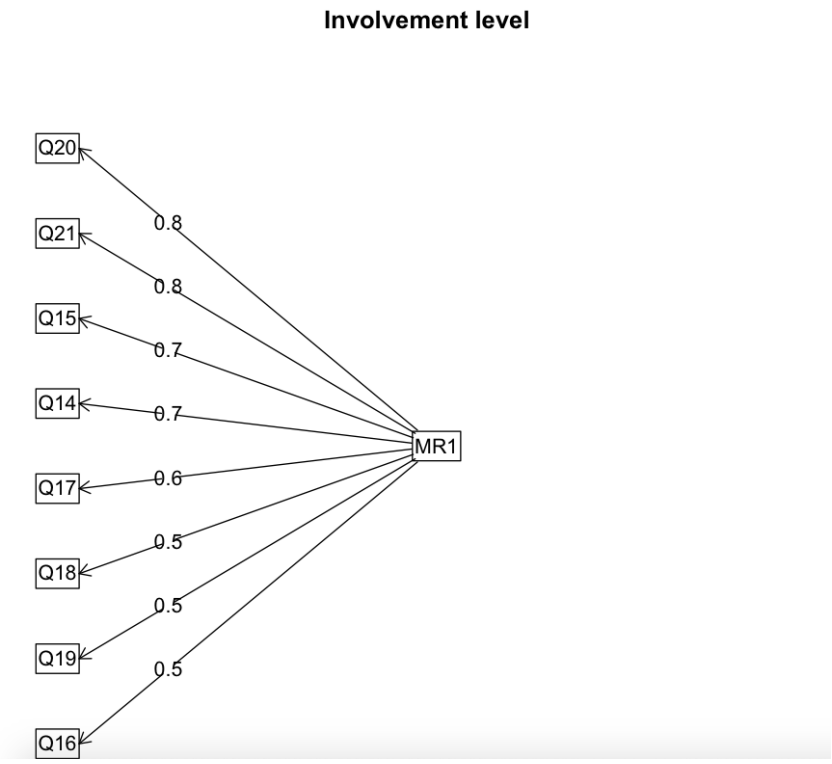

Figure 9. Involvement factor.

Based on the exploratory factor analysis, the one factor measuring the involvement level of respondents was created (figure 9). After creating the involvement factor, the data set was divided into two data sets based on the mean value of involvement factor. Mean value (3.25) divided the initial data set into two groups, values below 3.25 indicating respondents with high involvement and values above 3.25 indicating respondents with low involvement. The split resulted high involvement group of 295 respondents and low involvement group of 294 respondents.

After exploratory factor analysis and split of data set into two groups, the examination was ready proceed to conjoint analysis. Conjoint analysis was conducted with the two data sets to obtain the utilities of the two groups and to evaluate the differences between the groups.

5.3. Conjoint analysis

An important step in coming to the analysis part of the study, was to get the respondent ratings for the four wine attributes based on hypothetical wine profiles created in the conjoint experiment. To refresh the memory, the hypothetical product profiles are presented in the table 6.

Wine product profile	Brand	Price	Origin	Award
Profile 1	Unkonwn	8,99 €	Chile	Gold medal
Profile 2	Well-known	19,99 €	Chile	Gold medal
Profile 3	Unknown	12,99 €	Italy	Gold medal
Profile 4	Well-known	19,99 €	Italy	Gold medal
Profile 5	Well-known	12,99 €	Chile	No medal
Profile 6	Unknown	19,99 €	Chile	No medal
Profile 7	Well-known	8,99 €	Italy	No medal
Profile 8	Unknown	19,99	Italy	No medal

Table 6. Hypothetical wine product profiles.

Conjoint analysis was first conducted with the whole data sample and then executed separately with the two data sets created based on the involvement level of respondents. Firstly, part utilities for each attribute levels for each respondent were calculated. Part utility values of attribute levels represent the utility value of respondents, which allow interpreting which attribute levels had positive impact in the wine choices of respondents.

Table 7 illustrates the part worth utilities for each level. First, considering at the values for total sample, positive utilities can be seen on unknown brand, prices of 8,99 € and 12,99€, of which the latter one had greater positive utility. For origin, Italy received positive utility while gold medal had positive utility of the award attribute. In the total sample, 12,99 € received the highest utility followed by gold medal.

When conducting the analysis with the two data samples representing the different involvement levels, variance in the results can be seen. For the brand, unknown brand had positive utility in both, high- and low-involved consumer groups, the latter one slightly utilising unknown brand more. As for price, there is variance, despite the fact of both groups giving positive utility for 12,99 € price, high-involved group seemed to emphasis it more. Price 8,99 € had the lowest positive utility, however, there is remarkable difference between the two groups, high-involved consumers giving it

significantly less utility. Both groups considered high negative utility for the price 19,99 €. Any major differences in the origin levels were not discovered between the two groups, both giving positive utility for Italy. As for award attribute, both groups gave positive utility for gold medal, low-involved utilising it more than high-involved group.

To conclude, highest positive utility in high-involved consumer group was given to 12,99 € price. While the 12,99 € price also received high positive utility in the low-involved group, slightly greater positive utility was assigned to the gold medal.

***Notes**: Part worths (utilities) of levels (model parameter for high and low respondents as well as for total).*

	High-involved	*Low-involved*	*Total sample*
INTERCEPT	5.29	5.02	5.16
BRAND			
Unknown brand	0.30	0.32	0.31
Well-known brand	-0.30	-0.32	-0.31
PRICE			
8,99 €	0.0025	0.48	0.24
12,99 €	0.88	0.72	0.80
19,99 €	-0.89	-1.20	-1.04
ORIGIN			
Chile	-0.34	-0.24	-0.29
Italy	0.34	0.24	0.29
AWARD			
Gold medal	0.66	0.79	0.72
No medal	-0.66	-0.79	-0.72

Table 7. Part worths of attribute levels.

To summarize, the results of high- and low-involved groups, it is worth calculating the average importance – known as relative importance, for each attribute. Calculating the average importance of attributes is a two-step procedure, starting from getting the difference of the highest and lowest utility

values of each attribute, and then taking the sum of ranges over all attributes. The relative importance (RI_i) of an attribute *i* is defined as:

$$\text{Preference importance}(i) = \frac{100^{*}\,\text{Range}(i)}{\sum Ranges(i)}$$

The relative importance of each wine attribute, expressed as percentages, is shown for both groups in figures 10 and 11.

In figure 10, average importance values of high-involved consumer groups are presented. Price has the greatest importance of all attributes, followed by award attribute. Brand and origin are the least important, origin being slightly more highlighted. As for the low-involved group, the results vary a bit. Price attribute is still considered as the most important, followed by award attribute, however, the award attribute is significantly more important for the low-involved group than for the high-involved group. Significant differences can be seen in the origin and brand attributes, which in the low-involved group are contrary to the high-involved consumer group. For the low-involved consumer group, the brand attribute is considered over the origin attribute.

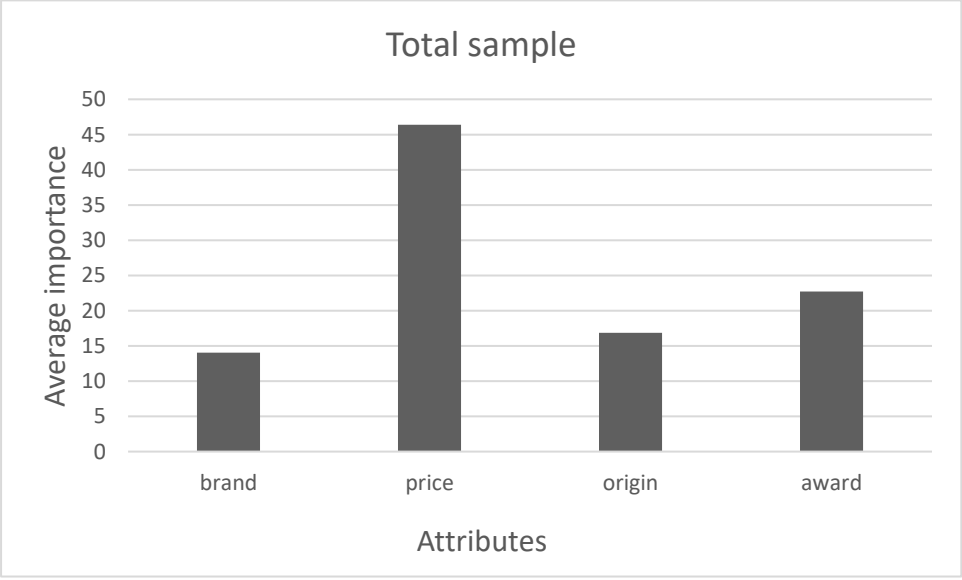

Figure 10. The average importance of attributes of total sample (n=589).

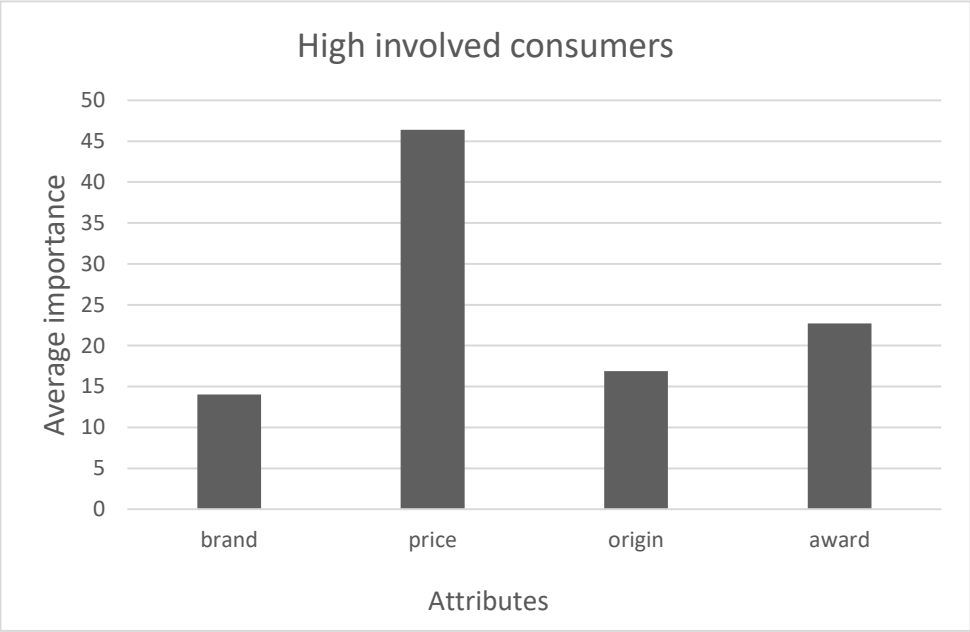

Figure 11. The average importance of attributes of high-involved consumers (n=295).

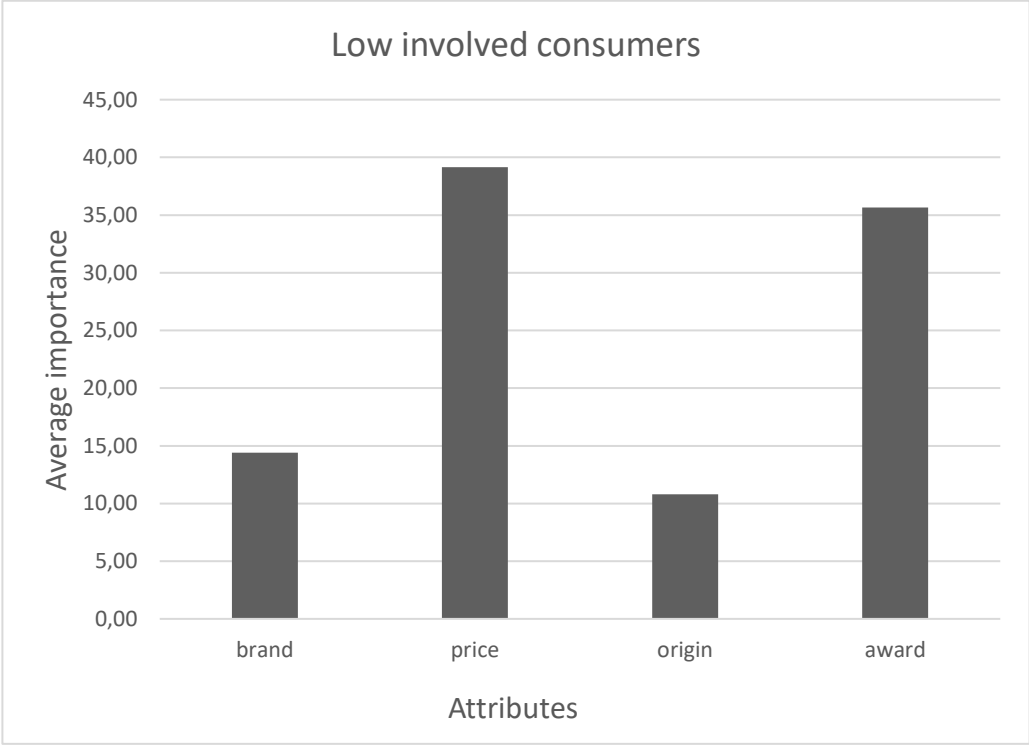

Figure 12. The average importance of attributes of low-involved consumers (n=294).

This study did not consider age as one of the measures for involvement level, but since the data set of this study had significantly more younger consumers, another analysis was done with the consumers representing age of 18-35 to discover whether the results vary.

After combining the age groups of 18-25 and 26-35 and dividing them into high- and low-involved consumer groups, another conjoint analysis was run with the two groups. Excluding the older consumers from the data set, did not significantly change the average importance values of attributes. However, by excluding the older consumers changed the importance values of brand and origin in the high-involved group, now the brand and origin being highlighted equally. Based on this finding, it can deduced that the older consumer group tend to consider the origin attribute more.

To ensure the validity of the study, the outcomes of the thesis are derived from the combined age group of 18-35.

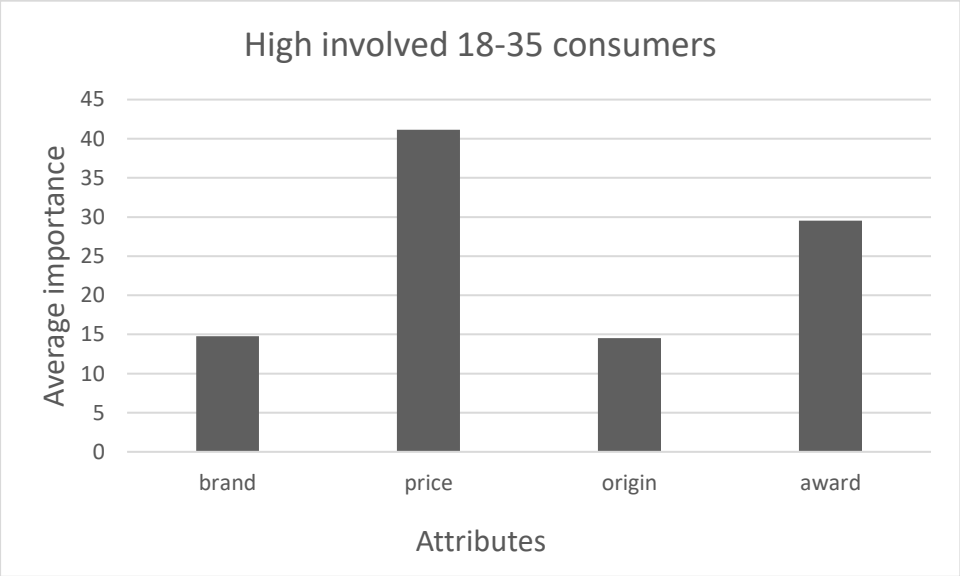

Figure 13. The average importance of attributes by high-involved consumer with age of 18-35 (n=259).

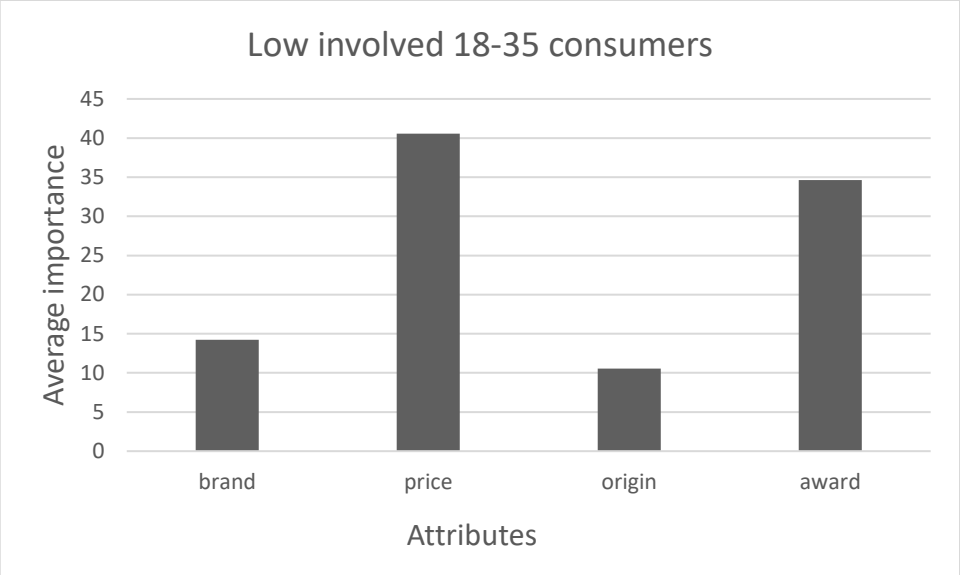

Figure 14. The average importance of attributes by low-involved consumer with age of 18-35 (n=277).

When looking at the part utilities assigned to the attribute levels, the same trend can be seen continuing as in the previous analysis. The price of 12,99 € continues to have the highest positive utility in the high-involved group, while gold medal has the highest positive utility in the low-involved group. Small changes can be seen in the low-involved consumer group, where the positive utility of the gold medal, 12,99 € and unknown brand were enhanced. In general, relevant changes were not discovered.

	High-involved	*Low-involved*	*Total sample*
INTERCEPT	5.30	5.02	5.16
BRAND			
Unknown brand	0.32	0.33	0.31
Well-known brand	-0.32	-0.33	-0.31
PRICE			
8,99 €	0.05	0.46	0.24
12,99 €	0.88	0.73	0.80
19,99 €	-0.93	-1.19	-1.04
ORIGIN			
Chile	-0.32	-0.24	-0.29
Italy	0.32	0.24	0.29
AWARD			
Gold medal	0.65	0.82	0.72
No medal	-0.65	-0.82	-0.72

Table 8. Part worths of attribute levels of age group 18-35.

In summary, the results of the conjoint analysis supported the first hypothesis. The analysis of utilities assigned to the different attribute levels, as well as the examination of average importance, support the hypothesis by showing clear behavior differences between the two consumer groups. Based on the average importance values, the first hypothesis is accepted.

H1. The level of wine involvement of consumer shapes the cue utilisation of consumers, making significant differences in the considered attributes.	Accepted

As expected, the award cue had significant importance in both groups, and it was significantly more considered in the low-involved group, thus making the hypothesis valid.

H2: Award cue has an impact on all wine consumers, but has a higher impact among low-involved consumer groups.	High 29,6%	Low 34,7%

While the country of origin had significantly less importance as thought, the importance was higher in the high-involved consumer group, thus the third hypothesis of the study is also supported.

H3: Country of origin cue has more importance for high-involved than low-involved consumer groups.	High 14,5%	Low 10,6 %

As for the brand cue, even though the unknown brand had positive utility, the importance of brand for low-involved consumer group was evenly important, thus the fourth hypothesis is rejected.

H4: Brand cue is utilised more in the low-involved consumer groups.	NS

Despite of both groups valuing price attribute the most, it was not considered more by the low-involved consumer group, thus the hypothesis is not supported by the analysis results.

H5. Low-involved consumer groups are more likely to make wine choices based on the retail price level than high-involved consumer groups.	NS

Last hypothesis referred to more equable cue utilization among high-involved consumer group. However, the results indicate that the cue utilization pattern is relatively the same for both groups,

despite the varying importance of brand and origin attributes. Both groups put significant importance to the price and award attribute, leaving the brand and origin with less consideration. Thus, the sixth hypothesis will be rejected.

H6: High-involved consumers tend to consider attributes more evenly, while price is solely decisive factor for low-involved consumer groups.	NS

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the findings of the empirical part are discussed and reflected to the previous academic literature of the wine consumer involvement and cue utilization. The sub-research questions and main research question are answered based on both, theoretical and empirical outcomes of the study. Finally, the results are compared to the presented framework.

6.1. Key outcomes of the research

The analysis of outcomes starts with analysis of the whole data sample and then continues to make the comparison between the high- and low-involved consumers with the age of 18-35. In the chapter 6.2. the conclusion of outcomes is presented.

This study clearly proves that there are differences in the cue utilization between high- and low-involved wine consumer, although the difference is not significant. The variance in the cue utilization might increase by taking a bigger sample of wine consumers under examination and changing the measurements of wine involvement. It can be assumed that the used data sample in this study did not contain many extreme wine consumers who consider themselves as wine enthusiasts. Interestingly, the two most utilized cues in wine choices were the price and award, which neither of them represented physical attributes of a wine product. On the same note, Finnish wine consumers are relatively price sensitive, or, if not price sensitive per se, price conscious and frequently use price as an indicator for quality. What considering the award cue of the wine, good reviews or medals that the wine has received, tend to play a big part in the purchase decision process, being highlighted more among the low-involved wine consumers. Lastly, the impact of the country of origin – which has been proven to have most influence in wine choices in previous studies, was surprisingly low in both, high- and low-involved consumer groups.

The first outcome of the study was that the Finnish wine consumers overall are prone to make the purchase decision based on the price of wine (figure 10). Quester and Smart (1998) as well as Chaney (2000) and Bruwer et al. (2011) present, that the price is often one of the main criteria in wine purchase and is often considered as an indicator for quality. The use of the price as a primary cue, might tell something about the general level of wine involvement of Finnish consumers. As briefly discussed earlier, Finland does not belong to the wine producing countries nor has viticulture history,

unlike other European countries. Moreover, taxation of alcoholic beverages is relatively high in Finland compared to other European countries. This all probably have some sort of impact on the overall wine interest and knowledge of Finnish wine consumers, shaping the risk reduction strategy towards the extensive use of price as a primary choice factor. Furthermore, it is proved that consumers end up putting more emphasis on the price when there are not enough credible cues to evaluate (Quester and Smart 1998). Despite the emphasis of price, it is interesting to see, that the emphasis is not directly on the lowest price, thus excluding the assumption of price sensitivity. From the price levels, 12, 99 € had the highest positive utility, 8,99 € being next and 19,99 € having negative utility. To note, the price levels used in this study, represent a price range of commercial wine products to premium reserve level and to more premium gran reserve level.

The second most utilized cue was the award. Award levels were divided to gold medal and no medal. The respondents were pre-informed that the medal indicates a good review, which the wine has received, and it is being communicated as a sticker on the wine bottle. The average importance of the award attribute was 32,25 % (figure 10), indicating high importance. The results support the results of Neuninger et al. (2009) and Monteiro et al. (2019), saying that despite the involvement level of consumers, communicating a good review on the bottle increases the probability of purchase. Neuninger et al. (2009) also note that the influence of award increases, when other credible extrinsic cues are not presented. This said, the award effect might have had little less effect in wine choices if there were other relevant attributes for consumer to assess the wine product quality.

In the total sample, the brand and origin had the least importance (figure 10). It is important to note that the brand cue was presented to the respondents as "well-known" and "unknown" brands, meaning that the respondents were asked to consider brands that they are either familiar or unfamiliar with. In this study, the brand cue utilization was remarkably lower than in the previous study of Mueller and Szolnoki (2010). However, the study notes that the brand utilization was in relation to the consumption frequency of consumers. If this study had taken the consumption frequency into consideration, the brand utility could have been more significant. Moreover, the studies that consider the brand being one of the influential cues in wine choices, have had slightly different scope for the study. In the study of Lockshin et al. (2006) it was discovered that the brand cue increases as the wine originates from low-awareness regions. The origins chosen for this study, present the top selling origins in the Finnish wine market. Therefore, this study is not directly comparable to the previous study of Lockshin et al. (2006). If this study would have taken some low-awareness region into

account and then defined the brand levels in accordance with the actual brand names, the familiar brand name of low-awareness region would have reinforced the region effect.

As for the origin, the low utility came as a bit of surprise, having the least importance (figure 10). Numerous of recent studies have proved the effect of country of origin to wine choice no matter the involvement level. However, it needs to be noted that the country of origin -effect might have increased if other attributes of the study would have been different. For example, the studies resulting stronger effect for country of origin, such as Tustin and Lockshin (2001) and Hollebeek et al. (2007), used different sets of attributes to discover the wine choice behavior of consumers. Even though the origin effect remained the lowest, more thorough analysis of the origin is dealt next, when the comparison of high- and low-involved consumer groups is incorporated.

When comparing the average importance of the two groups, it is clear that the price and award continue to be the most considered cues in wine choices of younger consumers. Interestingly, the importance of price cue is slightly higher for the high-involved wine consumers than it is for the low-involved consumes, hence, the results do not follow the previous literature. It could be argued that the difference to the previous results might be due to the homogeneous data sample in terms of consumers' relation to wine. For the future research, it is recommended to change the measurements or conduct the survey in an environment where more wine involved consumers can be found.

Significant differences can be found in the award cue, which is being emphasized more among the low-involved consumer groups. The results confirm the findings of Lockshin et al. (2005) stating that a gold medal on wine bottles increase the level of purchase. This is more evident among novice consumers than expert consumers, who might shy away from the medals and awards when buying wines, especially from small origin at higher price. As low-involved wine consumers possess less knowledge on wines and might look for easy choices, a presentation of gold medal on a wine bottle might just provide this.

On the origin cue, some difference between the high- and low-involved consumers can be found, the latter one utilising origin a bit less. From the origin levels - Chile and Italy, Italy had positive utility. In the academic literature, there are varying opinions on the effect of country of origin to the high- and low-involved wine consumers. For example, Lockshing et. al. (2005) as well as Balestrini and Gample (2006) claim that novice consumers are more prone to make decisions based on the country of origin of wine, while Mccutcheon, et. al. (2009) argues and claim the origin to be preceded by

price and to have more importance among expert consumers. However, note that the importance is higher among consumers who have participated in wine tourism and associate the wine choice with the country they did the wine trip to. Furthermore, the study of Famularo et al. (2009) found that there is a positive relation with country of origin and purchase as wine knowledge and involvement level is high. This study also highlighted the wine tourism variable and its positive effect on origin cue. The reason why the origin is being highlighted in the high-involved consumer group, might be due to the better knowledge. Consumers in the high-involved group probably know what type of wine they are looking for and know that the origin of the wine has a lot to do with the style of the wine.

The brand cue had no difference for high- and low-involved consumer groups. Interestingly, both consumer groups considered the unknown brand more in wine choices. This is an interesting finding and indicate that Finnish wine consumers do not make purchase decisions mainly based on the brand cue. It can be also that Finns are not that aware of different wine brands. Even though there are wine literature indicating the importance of brand (Cohen 2009) in wine choices, in this study it was considered to have very little importance in both groups. However, we can see that the low-involved consumers tend to utilise the brand over the origin cue, which might be part of the risk reduction strategy of the low-involved wine consumers. The low-involved wine consumers having a little less knowledge on wines, might rely more on interesting brands and leave out the origin cue and the traditions and wine styles associated to the origin. Lockshin et al. (2006) postulate that the brand name acts as a surrogate for quality and acts as a shortcut in dealing with risk, thus, if familiar brand names were used in this study as a reminder for the respondents, the importance of brand cue might have increased. However, it was not the purpose to show specific brands to the respondents, but rather ask the respondents to consider brands that they are familiar or unfamiliar with. Defining brand names, which are either familiar or unfamiliar to all respondents, proved to be an impossible task.

6.2. Conclusions on research questions

The aim of this study was to understand how the level of wine involvement shapes consumers' preferences in wine choices in the monopoly environment. To identify the cue utilization of high- and low-involved consumer groups, one main research question and three sub-research questions were developed. First sub-research question was formed as following:

SRQ 1. How consumers' wine involvement is being characterized?

This question is mainly dealt in the theoretical part of the thesis, but then utilised in the empirical part of the study. This study implemented the wine product involvement to indicate the relation to wine products. Wine product involvement is defined as a motivational state of mind of a person with wine or wine related activity. It describes the extent of relevancy that the consumer makes wine related decisions in terms of basic values, goals and self-concept. Based on theoretical and empirical findings, the used dimensions of wine involvement in this study, namely interest, pleasure, risk perception and knowledge, are good variables to describe the level of wine product involvement of consumers. Even though particular involvement measures – such as the involvement dimensions by Laurent and Kapferer (1985), are widely used measurements to describe wine involvement, market conditions are different at different markets, which is why the same variables might not be directly applicable to every market. Despite the fact that this study managed to measure wine product involvement in some extent, for future research it is suggested to put more focus on the data collection to ensure the sample contains more consumers who can be regarded as experts in the field. In the theoretical part, it became obvious that high-involved consumer groups typically possess more knowledge on wines and are information seekers, while low-involved consumers tend to simplify their choices and rely lot on opinions of others, and such product cues that are not part of the physical wine product, like price.

Consumers' level of involvement in this study is being characterized to high- and low-involvement based on the interest, pleasure, risk perception and knowledge variables. However, as some of the previous studies have implemented a third level, namely moderate involvement, raises some doubts whether the third involvement level would have arisen from this study as well.

Continuing to understand the cue utilisation theory and the factors influencing it, the second research questions was designed as following:

SRQ 2. How cue utilisation is defined and what are its implications to study of wine consumer behaviour?

Similarly to the first sub-research question, the second sub-research question was mainly discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. This research applies the cue utilisation definition by Richardson et al. (1994) who define the cue utilisation as an evaluation process to form an overall judgment of a product. Richardson et al. (1994) claim that a product consists of an array of cues that act as surrogate indicators of quality to consumers, and when combined, consumers form their overall judgement of the product.

As discussed earlier, quality as a construct within consumer behaviour is a vast subject. From the perspective of marketing academics, quality is hard to define precisely which has led to focusing on perceived quality rather than actual quality. As with every product, consumers tend to seek the best value for money, and the way they do it, is through cues associated with the product. The cues can be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic cues - the latter one being in the centre of this study. Extrinsic cues are more general and applicable to a wider range of products, whereas the intrinsic cues are often specific to a product and often experiential during or after consumption. Moreover, from the marketing perspective, the extrinsic cues can be studied more easily and adjusted according to the market and consumer preferences, which was also one of the reasons for conducting the study – to introduce some future managerial implications.

The third sub-research question closely touches the main research question. However, it focuses more on the overall cue utilisation rather than on the specific cues that are utilised. It is formed as following:

SRQ 3. How the cue utilisation of wine attributes is being influenced by the level of involvement of consumer?

This research question was also partly discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis from the light of previous research results, and later supported by the empirical part of the thesis. Since there were no research conducted in the Finnish markets, it was the purpose of this study to complement and generate new information on the behaviour of Finnish wine consumers. As already seen in the theoretical part, the level of involvement significantly shapes the behaviour and wine choices.

One of the fundamental studies of wine consumer behaviour is made by wine Charters and Pettigrew (2007). This study presents wine quality as a multi-dimensional construct that consumers engage with it depending on their varying involvement level with the wine. They present that there is clear evidence of the influential effect of the wine product involvement to wine-drinkers' consumption behaviour, creating complex behaviour pattern with store usage, consumption situation and cues. This study also showed that the different consumer groups do not place the same importance on wine cues. While the high-involved wine consumers tend to consider several attributes of the wine, the low-involved wine consumers possess less interest and knowledge on wines. Therefore, the low-involved wine consumers might choose wine products based on cue that are not part of the actual product, such as price and award.

Finally, the main research question of the study is presented as following:

RQ1. What wine cues high- and low-involved consumers tend to use to make the wine choice?

Theoretical and empirical parts of the study, accompanied by the sub-research questions, gave grounding answer to the main research question. Consumers' level of involvement significantly influences the cue utilisation of wine products and it can be assumed that this influence increases as the level of involvement increases. Majority of the Finnish wine consumers use the price as a primary factor for purchase, followed by the award attribute. As the price was the primary influencer, we can assume that the Finns are relatively low-involved wine consumers when compared to other countries with more aware wine consumers. Moreover, award being the second important factor, reinforces the claim of Finns being low-involved wine consumers. Both, the price and award, are not part of the physical wine product, the first one reflecting the cost structure of the wine product, which easily can be understood as a direct indicator to quality. On the other hand, award reflects the good review that the wine has received from an expert or wine critique.

Brand cue is one of the least considered attribute, which indicate low brand loyalty and awareness among Finnish consumers. With regards to the brand cue, it was interesting to discover that the unknown brand had positive utility among both groups, which again reinforces the claim of Finns not being that brand loyal. Significant differences were found in the utilisation of the brand and origin cues among high- and low-involved consumers groups. The low-involved consumers seemed to be

more dependent on the brand cue, leaving the origin cue with a little less consideration. This indicates that the low-involved wine consumers are not aware of origin information and the wine styles that the different origins represent.

6.3. Wine consumer product cue utilization

Based on theoretical part, the cue utilization theory and concept of the wine product involvement were merged to act as a framework in this study. The cue utilization framework of Steenkamp (1989) and Richardson et al. (1994) was implemented and modified to suit the purpose of this study. The involvement construct was implemented from the studies of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) as well as Quester and Smart (1998).

It was verified in the empirical part of the thesis, that the cue utilization of consumers is greatly shaped by the level of wine product involvement. As the Finnish monopoly regulate the in-store activity of wine products, it was necessary to focus on the extrinsic attributes.

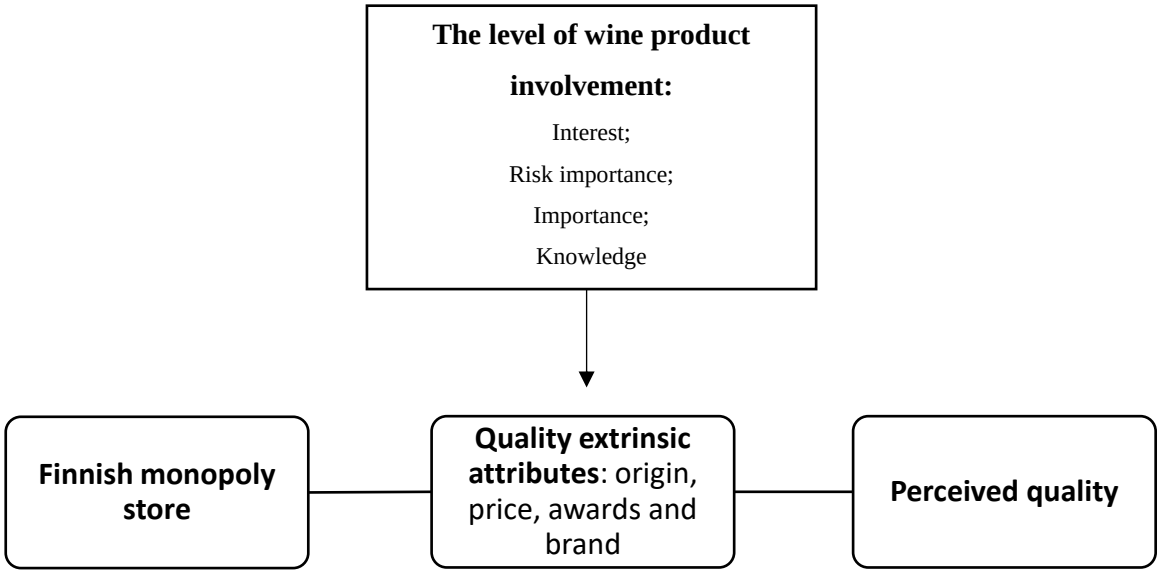

Figure 15. The final research framework of the study.

7. Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the conducted research and concludes the main findings to theoretical and practical contributions. Firstly, theoretical contributions of the thesis are discussed, followed by suggestions for managerial implications. Lastly, limitations and future directions are presented.

7.1. Theoretical contributions

As presented in the chapter one, in terms of academic contributions, the purpose of this study was to complement, and in some measure, extend the current research by providing results from a different market. Specifically, by distinguishing the levels of involvement of Finnish wine consumers and identify the different cue utilization among them. This study set out to provide some support and extension to the previous studies of Lockshin et. al. (2006) and Hollebeek et. al. (2007). With regards to the contributions of this study, this is the first study to empirically examine Finnish wine consumer purchase behavior from the perspective of wine involvement. Specifically, this study confirms that both consumer groups extensively use price and award as criteria for purchase, while many of the previous studies have highlighted the importance of attributes that are part of the actual product, such as origin and brand. The results speak for itself, which is why it can be assumed that generally Finns are not high-involved wine consumers, at least when compared to other countries like Italy and France. These countries have wine culture rooting back to the Middle Ages. On top of that, these countries are amongst the most known wine producing countries.

Following from the above, the findings also raise a question whether the measure of product involvement is the right for measuring the levels of Finnish wine consumers. For instance, Bruwer et al. (2016) used wine knowledge and wine involvement as separate variables to better discover the cue utilization of high- and low-involved consumer groups. In the study Bruwer et al. (2016) found the wine knowledge to have a positive impact on cue utilisation, however, only on intrinsic attributes.

Moreover, if other additional attributes or levels had been chosen for this study, different results may have emerged. For example, while the country of origin effect has been proven to have great influence on consumers' wine choices, it needs to be noted that the attributes used in this study are different to the previous studies and by changing the attributes in this study, the influence of country of origin may have had greater importance as well.

One of the key theoretical contributions of this study is the support of involvement construct of Laurent and Kapferer (1985). This study proved the level of wine product involvement of Finnish wine consumers can be discovered through the four involvement dimensions, namely interest, risk perception, pleasure and knowledge. On a same note, it was supported that the extent to which consumers put emphasis on wine cues, vary according to the level of wine involvement.

Lastly, very little research has been done in the government-controlled markets where the evaluation of wine quality is limited to extrinsic attributes of wine products. This research provides valuable information on what cues and in which extent are used in the monopoly environment.

7.2. Practical implications

As discussed earlier, the nature of wine is relatively complex and comprises number of dimensions, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Moreover, quality of wine is subjective and dependent on individual's own quality perception. As new brands and more innovative packaging solutions enter the market, has the competition increased and created a rather fragmented market, which has then forced marketers to better understand consumer behavior. Understanding the key drivers for purchase as well as the differences in consumer groups have gotten even more important to companies.

This study shows that some differences between the segments do exist in terms of the attributes that the consumers consider during purchase process. Considering that this study had rather homogeneous data sample, it is possible that even bigger differences emerge with a bigger set of observations and with more heterogenous data sample.

The fact that different wine consumer involvement exist, lead to questions of how wineries, importers and wine marketers can leverage this information and plan activations for the different consumer groups. Essentially, this study provides support to the fact that these different consumer groups value different wine attributes. Understanding this, companies are able to better position brand, customize marketing communication and increase the return on investment (ROI).

The implementation of a gold medal or equivalent recognition on wine bottles increase the likeliness of purchase of all Finnish wine consumers. However, as discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis,

gold medals on wine bottles have proven to saturate at some point as the amount bottles with gold medals increase. Such activations should be considered for short-term or, in Finland's case, for well-known brands that found to have negative utility. Since this study found positive utility for unknown brands, indicating low brand loyalty and awareness, it is recommended that companies representing wine brands in Finland, do not put too much money on branding. Moreover, based on the results of the analysis, it is highly recommended to use gold medals on wines at 12,99 €. These two levels proved to have the highest positive utilities in both, high- and low-involved consumer groups.

7.3. Limitations and future directions

Maybe the biggest limitation of this study is the rather homogeneous data sample. If the data sample would have contained more of extreme wine consumers who consider them as expert wine consumers, more distinguishable involvement levels might have emerged. On the other hand, it can be that the wine product involvement perspective was not the right approach for Finnish wine consumers. Different results may have emerged if Finnish wine consumers would have been tested in terms of purchase involvement. Moreover, it is recommended to re-evaluate the wine involvement measurements used in this study and consider adding measurement for consumption frequency to better understand the level of involvement.

Since the Finnish monopoly store represents numerous brands and wine styles from numerous regions, it is very likely that the consumers consider more attributes than the four attributes presented in this study. It is recommended, if possible, to use actual purchase data to reveal the actual wine choices of wine consumers.

One significant limitation involves the simulation of actual purchase process in the form of questionnaire. Since the questionnaire was implemented online without any supervision and without presenting actual products with actual attribute levels, might have limited the validity of this study. Moreover, in the actual purchase process, consumers tend to consider more than one product, so presenting two alternative products from which the consumer needs to make choice, would have more likely changed the result of this study. Lastly, the pre-information presented in questionnaire, asked the consumers to consider the wine for a friend's get-together. For some consumers, the consumption situation is a decisive factor in the wine choice, and as in this case, the friend's get-together might have been considered as a special occasion. Consequently, consumers might purchase something

special. This pre-information might have affected the positive utility of unknown brand and low utility of price 8,99 €.

Choice experiments, like done in the study of Lockshin et. al. (2006) can provide indication of which effects to look for and can model effects that are difficult to measure, such as the choice of an unknown brand at different price points and unknown region versus well-known region wine with and without gold medal. Moreover, choice-based conjoint analysis could help in reducing the high price effect by introducing two wine products at different price points with varying attribute levels to choose from.

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Appendix 1. List of survey questions

Age

- 20-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- +56

Gender

- Male / Female

Wine involvement questions

Interest

- I attach great importance to wine. (Bruwer, J., et.al., 2016)
- I often read wine magazines and publications. (Bruwer, J. and Buller, J., 2012)

Risk perception

- I am not confident in my ability to select a wine. (Bruwer, J. and Huang, J., 2012)
- When I face a shelf of wine, I always feel a bit at a loss to make my choice. (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985)

Pleasure

- I drink wine because I like the taste. (Bruwer, J., et.al., 2016)
- Buying a wine is like buying a gift for myself. (Bruwer, J., et.al., 2016)

Knowledge

- I have a good knowledge on wines. (Hirche M. and Bruwer, J., 2014)
- Other people often ask me advice regarding wine. (Hirche M. and Bruwer, J., 2014)

In the following, wine profiles with varying attribute levels are shown and asked to be rated.

You are asked to consider a wine bottle (750 ml, white or red) to be purchased from Alko store for a friends' get-together. It is not asked to consider wine to be paired with food.

Wine choice is asked to be made in according to the four attributes (brand, price, origin and award). Other attributes can be freely considered.

- Brand refers to either unknown or well-known brand.
- Price
- Origin refers to the country the wine comes from.
- Award refers to the review the wine has received.

How likely you would buy this wine? 1= would definitely not buy, 10= would definitely buy.

Wine profile 1.

Wine profile 2.

Wine profile 3.

Wine profile 4.

Wine profile 5.

Wine profile 6.

Wine profile 7.

Wine profile 8.