

Repositório ISCTE-IUL

Deposited in *Repositório ISCTE-IUL*:

2021-10-20

Deposited version:

Accepted Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Guftométros, M. & Guerreiro, J. (2021). The effects of cultural differences on social media behaviour. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 15 (4), 412-428

Further information on publisher's website:

[10.1504/IJIMA.2021.10040885](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2021.10040885)

Publisher's copyright statement:

This is the peer reviewed version of the following article: Guftométros, M. & Guerreiro, J. (2021). The effects of cultural differences on social media behaviour. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 15 (4), 412-428, which has been published in final form at <https://dx.doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2021.10040885>. This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with the Publisher's Terms and Conditions for self-archiving.

Use policy

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a link is made to the metadata record in the Repository
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Published in:

Guftométros, M.; Guerreiro, J. (2021). **The Effects of Cultural Differences on Social Media Behaviour**. International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising. DOI: [10.1504/IJIMA.2021.10040885](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2021.10040885)

The Effects of Cultural Differences on Social Media Behaviour

Abstract

This paper studies the relationship between culture and social media marketing using Hofstede's cultural dimensions. The data were organically gathered from 6750 posts from 225 different Facebook brand pages and 15 different countries. The gathered data included the engagement metrics such as the amount of likes, shares and comments and the various versions of likes such as: love, wow and funny. Interesting differences were found that could be explained by Hofstede's dimensions. Countries low in individualism and/or high in power distance share posts more than comments. Also, the use of the funny and wow emoticon responses are related to higher scores on individualism. Findings from this paper show that the use of Hofstede's dimensions to group countries into different cultures predict some online consumer behaviour patterns, particularly on Facebook.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural, Hofstede, Social Media Marketing, eWOM, Consumer Behaviour, Engagement.

1. Introduction

Over the last decades business has become increasingly more global. The Internet and social media have made it much easier to reach people abroad. Currently, 90.2% of people in the EU are on the Internet and 49.7% use Facebook (Internet World Stats, 2019). Despite such globalization effect, later studies have proved that even though there is a higher inter-connectiveness, people still respond favourably to their own cultural values (Lynch and Beck, 2001). Therefore, companies need to understand how to communicate on social media in order to share their standardized institutional messages adapted to local cultures using a customer-centric perspective (Sinkovics, Yaminand Hossinger, 2007). New communication platforms (such as Facebook) make people even more inter-connected, thus it would be

valuable to shed more light on this debate, especially in terms of social media in which customers express their opinion in the form of likes, comments and shares.

The main objective of this study is to outline differences in how countries engage with Facebook posts. In particular, the question is posed whether Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010) could explain preferences in how consumers engage with companies on Facebook. For example, does people in collectivistic countries share posts more often than people in individualistic countries? Or is the use of (particular) emoticon sentiments linked to cultural dimensions? Data from 15 countries in Europe are used to analyse the effect of culture on engagement metrics. Even though all the chosen countries are from the same continent they vary with regard to Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010) and thus form a good basis to analyse whether cultural dimensions have an explanatory power and in what way, or to what degree, consumer behaviour varies.

The results of this study could shed further light on the debate whether or not cultural differences are becoming less significant with the increased inter-connectiveness and globalization in the world. Studying cultural differences on a new medium such as Facebook is especially interesting, as these social media are often deemed a cause of the shift towards a global consumer culture (Ladhari, Souidenand Choi, 2015). Previous studies have employed surveys to analyse differences in social media use between countries (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013; Tsai and Men, 2017) and have outlined theoretical models to organize international social media marketing most effectively (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013). To the author's knowledge this is the first study that uses real world organically gathered data in the form of engagement metrics to analyse cultural differences.

2. Literature Review

Cultural models have been used to find out which marketing strategies and products work best in particular cultures. One of the most widely used models are the Hofstede dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010). Hofstede research has suggested a set of 6 dimensions of cultural differences, namely: Power Distance, Individualism-Collectivism, Masculinity-Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long Term Orientation-Short Term Orientation and Indulgence-Restraint. Table 1 resumes the main definitions of each dimension.

-- INSERT TABLE 1 AROUND HERE --

The current paper relies on three of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, namely: individualism-collectivism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance. According to the literature, these dimensions are often considered in the context of interpersonal verbal communication styles in general (De Mooij, 20014) and of social media behaviour, in particular (Abbas and Mesch, 2015). For example, collectivistic cultures and cultures high in power distance keep their emotions more subdued (De Mooij and Hofstede, 2010). On the other hand individualistic cultures show more emotional expressivity, in particular of happiness and surprise (Matsumoto et al., 2008). Also, collectivists are more likely to hide negative emotions to preserve group harmony (Gudykunst, William, Yoonand Nishida, 1987). Asian cultures, for example, are strongly influenced by the concept of 'losing face', which could lead to an unhappy customer not wanting to file a complaint directly to a company. However, such unhappy customer may engage in negative WOM with their in-group (De Mooij and Hofstede, 2010). Studies also show that individualist countries respond differently than collectivist countries regarding social media. For example, for people in individualist countries the message construal level (abstract message vs. concrete message) has an effect on how they evaluate a brand communication, while for people in the collectivist countries, such effect is not significant (Sung et al., 2020).

People from individualistic cultures low in power distance search more actively for information through different media before making a purchase, as a result they feel more informed. In the opposite cultures, people base their buying decisions on feelings and trust in the company. Such cultures acquire knowledge unconsciously by relying on frequent social interaction, which causes an automatic communication flow between people (De Mooij, 2010). Also, in high power distance cultures, people rely more on personal sources of recommendation, are more active opinion seekers and are less active in information seeking via impersonal sources (Dawar, Parkerand Price, 1996; Pornpitakpan, 2004).

De Mooij has developed a framework to map different cultures on their preferred advertising styles. For example, findings show that humour is more applicable in countries low in uncertainty avoidance and power distance and high in individualism. Whereas the opposite cultures are more inclined to use entertainment and metaphors (De Mooij, 2004).

Not only have cultural differences in traditional advertising been studied, also online content on web pages has been researched. Most of these studies find that web pages tend to reflect the culture of the targeted country (Tigre Moura, Singhand Chun, 2016). Also a high cultural congruity on a website tends to influence users' perceptions positively, allowing a greater evaluation of multiple aspects of the site, such as the attitude toward the site, navigability, online trust and the overall presentation of information (Tigre Moura et al., 2016).

2.1 Culture and social media marketing

Culture has an influence on how people engage with social media (Khan, Dongping and Wahad, 2016; Chwialkowska and Kontkanen, 2017). For example, social browsing was found to be more important for French and Italian users compared to US users. In contrast, for French users, pictures and status updates were less important than for US users (Vasalou, Joinson and Courvoisier, 2010). It is posited that in individualistic cultures social media are used to maximize personal utility, whereas in collectivistic countries sharing ideas and opinions is more important (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). This is not to say that individualistic cultures are only self-centred, though. There is good reason to believe that people from these cultures actually exert more effort into maintaining personal relations, because these are not immediately part of their identity as they are in collectivistic cultures (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013).

It was found that people from collectivistic cultures use Facebook more to make purchasing decisions (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). People from high collectivism and power distance cultures tend to share opinions and ideas more and tend to base their purchasing decisions more on trust in the company and other's opinions, whereas their counterparts search more actively for impersonal sources on the internet and base their decisions on hard facts. People in individualistic cultures still engage in eWOM but this is because someone might have the information they need, whereas collectivists will engage in eWOM to form an opinion through the other's ideas (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). It is also shown that people in countries low in power distance are more willing to engage with brands on social media, even though people in countries high in power distance spend more time on social media (Lin, Swarna and Bruning, 2017). In another recent study, Tsai and Men (2017) found both similarities and differences in the motivation of consumers to engage with brands on social networking sites between China and the USA. Both countries were primarily focused on entertainment and information

seeking. However Chinese users were more inclined to engage with brands and were motivated by the opportunity to connect with likeminded peers, whereas American users were more motivated by obtaining economic benefits in the form of coupons, for example. Another example of such cultural differences and how they affect social media behaviour relates to crisis management on social media. During crisis such as the one that affected the automotive industry due to the scandals around C2O emissions (Hotten, 2015), cultural differences have a major role in how consumers perceive the different responses from the companies (Zhu, Anagondahalli and Zhang, 2017).

2.2 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Formulation

The current paper explores how people from various countries engage with brands pages (for example Facebook posts) and explores in depth the work by Guftoétros et al. (2019). According to Hofstede et al., (2010), collectivist countries rely on strong in-group relations and on WOM as a source of information to make decisions (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). People in individualistic countries, however, use more factual information as the basis for their decisions (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). The same occurs between countries with different types of power distance. People from high power distance cultures often rely more on WOM and personal sources, while their counterparts rely more on facts and impersonal sources (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013). One way to participate in WOM is to share a post on Facebook, allowing everyone to share information, entertainment or a product with their group of friends. Moreover, countries that are weak in these dimensions are doing more to preserve ties, because they are not part of their identity. Tagging others in a post 's comment is a specific way of preserving friendships with a specific individual, while collectivists instinctively believe they are part of a community and may therefore decide to share the whole post with their group. Hence:

H1: Shares per comments ratio are negatively associated with individualism and are positively linked to power distance in response to commercial posts (on Facebook).

De Mooij notes that countries that have a high uncertainty avoidance and power distance, but a low individualism use drama, entertainment and metaphors as advertising styles, while low uncertainty avoidance countries tend to use humor instead (De Mooij, 2004). Hatzithomas, Zotos and Boutsouki (2011) also found that consumers in individualistic countries with low uncertainty avoidance prefer humorous messages. In fact, research

also shows that in the case of social media, the different categories of emoticons used in communication to highlight particular emotions are a good source to understand cultural differences (Li et al., 2019). Therefore we posit that:

H2: In response to commercial posts (on Facebook), the use of a humorous emoticon (funny/likes ratio) is negatively related to uncertainty avoidance and power distance and has a positive relation with individualism.

According to the literature, “cultures high in individualism are ones in which individuals are more likely to act on their emotions rather than subjugate themselves to the will of the larger group” (Baker, Meyer and Chebat, 2013: 821). In fact, countries high in individualism are more emotionally expressive especially in terms of amazement and surprise (Matsumoto et al., 2008), which could influence the use of more Wow emoticon responses. The opposite is true for collectivist cultures, in which people are more likely to hide negative emotions to preserve group harmony (Gudykunst, William, Yoonand Nishida, 1987). Therefore, we suggest that:

H3: The use of the wow emoticon response (wow/likes ratio) in response to commercial posts (on Facebook) is positively related to individualism.

3. Methodology

Facebook was used as the platform to measure differences in social media engagement between countries. There are two main reasons why Facebook was chosen. First, it is the most widely used and recognizable social media for following and engaging with a company, especially in Europe. Only few companies used in this study have an Instagram or Twitter profile for all countries, whereas Facebook pages for each country were much more prevalent. Second, the engagement options on Facebook are higher than Instagram or Twitter. On Facebook there are many types of ways to interact with posts such as likes (love, wow and funny), comments and shares, which are more options than on Instagram or Twitter.

3.1 Sample

Both the company size and the sector can influence how much engagement is generated on Facebook. A giant company in the entertainment industry such as Disney generates more engagement than a car company such as BMW. Furthermore, some companies are more active in particular countries than others. In order to be able to generalize the results,

15 companies from different sectors were compared over 15 countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey). The companies are: Audi, BMW, Coca Cola, Disney, Dove, Fanta, Honda, Huawei, IKEA, L'Oréal, McDonald's, Nespresso, Nivea, Samsung and Toyota.

The criteria for selecting which companies to include in the research were the following:

1. To have a market share in each country based on Euromonitor country reports (Euromonitor, 2018), or be a part of the top 100 brands in the world (Independent, 2016).
2. To have a Facebook page for each country.
3. To have enough activity on the Facebook page. Companies that posted less than 15 times per year were excluded. Companies from which the Facebook page in one or more country had too little engagement (the first 15 posts did not get more than 50 likes on average) were also excluded.

From each Facebook page 30 posts were extracted starting at the same date for every page and until 30 posts were reached. From each post the following information was captured: shares,

comments, likes and the emoticon responses (love, wow and funny). Figure 1 shows an example of a post captured during data collection.

-- INSERT FIGURE 1 AROUND HERE --

The data were collected for 30 posts per company per country. Meaning that in total $30 \times 15 \times 15 = 6750$ posts were gathered. Certain posts were giveaways in which the consumer can win something when they comment. These posts received a disproportionate amount of engagement and in particular comments, so these were not included in the analysis, since the focus is on outlining differences between cultures and including these posts would give an unrealistic image of what the actual differences in the engagement metrics are. The only other posts that were not included are situations wherein consumers can vote using the emoticon responses. An example of this is: "Which product do you like the best? Vote with like for product A, Love for product B and Wow for product C". Again the focus of this analysis is to outline cultural differences in engagement metrics and including these posts would blur the results.

3.2 Measurement

The scores per country for each dimension were based on the data provided by the Hofstede country comparison tool (Hofstede, 2019). It is important to consider that the countries used in this study all have different populations and certain brands may be more popular in one country compared to another. For example, Turkey has a population of around 81 million, whereas Norway only around 5.3 million, it is thus likely that a page will receive more shares, comments and likes in Turkey than in Norway. To be able to measure differences between the countries, ratios were used for all the variables in this study. For example, to measure the propensity of a country to share a post rather than to comment on a post, the shares of the posts are divided by the comments (referred to as shares/comments ratio). Funny and Wow emoticons are compared with likes which allows for a more comparable ratio and shows the propensity for people to label the posts with a more evident emotion than just liking the post. For example, a higher funny/likes ratio in a country means that people in that country are more willing to classify the posts as funny than to like the post, than in another country. The ratios are explained in table 2.

-- INSERT TABLE 2 AROUND HERE --

To make sure that every company is weighed equally and differences between the countries could be analysed, the following process was conducted:

1. Start with the full sample of 6750 posts (30 posts from 225 brand pages).
2. Sum up each variable (shares, comments, likes, love, wow and funny) per brand page.
3. Create ratios for each brand, for example total shares of brand page divided by total comments, this creates a sample of 225 ratios for each variable for each brand page.
4. These ratios are then added up for each country, which creates the country scores on each ratio.
5. The result is a distilled sample of 15 with the country ratios for each variable.

3.3 Methodology descriptive analyses

To illustrate the relationship between the variables and cultural dimensions descriptively, graphs were created with one line representing the variable and another line representing

the cultural dimension. The y axis on the left side represents the score on the dimension and the y axis on the right side the variable score. Abbreviations were used for the cultural dimensions: individualism = IDV, power distance = PDI, uncertainty avoidance = UAI, masculinity = MAS, long term orientation = LTO and indulgence- restraint = IVR.

The variables are analysed through a Pearson correlation analysis to find out which Hofstede dimension better correlate with these dependent variables. The main focus is on the dimensions that are hypothesized but the other dimensions will also be tested to observe whether or not these also correlate with the engagement metrics as well.

4. Results

Information collected from the 225 brand pages were used to test the correlations between the different ratios and the cultural dimensions. Table 3 shows the correlation results.

-- INSERT TABLE 3 AROUND HERE --

The first hypothesis posits that the shares/comments ratio is negatively related to individualism and positively to power distance. Figure 2 provides the combination of the shares/comments ratio with individualism.

-- INSERT FIGURE 2 AROUND HERE --

There seems to be a pattern that when individualism rises the shares/comments ratio drops. Italy is a strong outlier, though. Furthermore, it seems that the countries that score the lowest in individualism (Portugal, Greece, Turkey and Spain) all have a much higher shares/comments ratio except for Turkey which has a more moderate score.

Figure 3 deals with the same ratio, but in combination with power distance.

-- INSERT FIGURE 3 AROUND HERE --

The expected pattern that power distance is positively related to the shares/comments ratio does seem to be reflected, but there are some strong outliers, in particular Poland and France.

Significant correlations were found with individualism ($r(225)=-.400$, $p < .001$), power distance ($r(225)=.315$, $p < .001$), uncertainty avoidance ($r(225)=.408$, $p < .001$), masculinity ($r(225)=.140$, $p < .05$), long-term orientation ($r(225)=.145$, $p < .05$) and indulgence-restraint ($r(225)=.265$, $p < .001$). We can thus accept H1 that the

shares/comments ratio is negatively related to individualism and positively related to power distance. In fact, although with a weak correlation, the shares/comments ratio is also significantly correlated with the other cultural dimensions.

Hypothesis 2 posits that the funny/like ratio is positively related to individualism and negatively related to power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Figures 4, 5 and 6 provides the relationship with funny/likes ratio with individualism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance respectively.

-- INSERT FIGURE 4 AROUND HERE --

A higher score on individualism seems related to a higher funny/likes ratio with some outliers, for example the ratio drops down strongly for the two most individualistic countries and also there is a dip in the line with Norway and Sweden. There is an upward trend observable, though, especially on the left side of the graph with the more collectivistic countries up until Switzerland, the funny/likes ratio steadily increases as the countries get more individualistic.

-- INSERT FIGURE 5 AROUND HERE --

Power distance seems to negatively influence the funny/likes ratio, but France and Austria being the country with the second highest score on power distance and lowest score on power distance respectively, are both rather strong outliers. France has a high funny/likes ratio and Austria rather low.

-- INSERT FIGURE 6 AROUND HERE --

Finally, uncertainty avoidance has a somewhat similar pattern to power distance, but strong outliers here are again France and Norway, The Netherlands and Sweden having a higher score on the funny/like ratio would give the graph a stronger relation.

Significant correlations were found with individualism ($r(225)=.168$, $p < .05$) and uncertainty avoidance ($r(225)=-.142$, $p < .05$). The other dimensions, including power distance ($p = .124$), were not found to be significantly correlated. We can thus partly accept H2, since individualism is positively correlated with funny/likes ration and uncertainty avoidance has a significant negative correlation, albeit weak, but power distance was not found to be significantly correlated with this engagement metric.

The third hypothesis posits that the wow/likes ratio is positively related to individualism. Figure 7 displays the relationship between individualism and wow/likes ratio.

-- INSERT FIGURE 7 AROUND HERE --

There seems to be a positive relation between individualism and the wow/likes ratio, but again there are some strong outliers, with the drop off for the most individualistic country: The Netherlands, and a fairly high score on the wow/likes ratio for the second lowest scoring country on individualism Greece. Indeed, both individualism ($r(225)=.193$, $p < .001$), power distance ($r(225) = -.171$, $p < .05$) and uncertainty avoidance ($r(225)=-.133$, $p < .05$) were found to have a weak but significant correlation with the wow/likes ratio thus supporting H3.

All possible combinations were put into graphs, but the dimensions reported above explained each variable the best. The other variable love/likes was also combined with each dimensions and the only interesting pattern that emerged was love/likes ratio with uncertainty avoidance, which is displayed in figure 8.

-- INSERT FIGURE 8 AROUND HERE --

It seems that when the score on uncertainty avoidance rises, so does the love/likes ratio. Turkey is a rather strong outlier with the lowest love/likes ratio and having a fairly high score on the uncertainty avoidance dimension. This ratio was therefore also statistically tested to find out whether the observed relationship is statistically significant. Results show there is a significant positive relation between power distance and loves/likes ratio ($r(225)=.280$, $p<.001$) and between uncertainty avoidance and loves/likes ratio ($r(225)=.261$, $p<.001$). A negative correlation was also found between indulgence-restrain and loves/likes ratio ($r(225)=-.165$, $p<.05$).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The current study shows that even though social media could have influenced the convergence of cultures, which is an active discussion nowadays (Sobol et al., 2018), cultural dimensions still could be used to explain some behaviours on this type of media. One thing in particular it can be used for, is showing that a country has more of a propensity to share a post than comment on it.

Collectivists consider themselves as part of a community, so sharing something with a Facebook group is more accepted than to comment and tag one or more people directly. Individualists are not organically members of a community and often feel the need to establish and sustain friendships more frequently (De Mooij and Hofstede, 2010). Tagging a friend in a post is a good way to build or maintain a relationship with someone. Furthermore, people in high power distance countries use social media and WOM to shape their opinions (Goodrich and De Mooij, 2013), so sharing something makes this process simpler by supplying a community of friends with new information and at the same time getting feedback on a shared post. Another explanation why people from countries with low power distance comment more is that brands are not considered to be above them, but an equivalent partner. Power distance explains the degree to which people are comfortable with wealth and status being distributed unequally (Hofstede et al., 2010) and this might also translate into how companies are regarded online.

There are also practical implications of the current findings. When a post is shared, it becomes more prominent in the community timeline. When someone comments it is only displayed for a short time on their friend's feeds and if they have tagged someone that person will receive a notification. Viral marketing strategies that work best when information is constantly exchanged with an expanding community of people could work well in collectivist countries and countries high in power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Moreover, in opposite countries, asking people to tag their friends could be more successful.

The second hypothesis is that the use of humor in the form of a funny emoticon is positively related to individualism and negatively related to power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Such effect is explained because those types of countries are usually more prone to accept ads that express humor as a message style (De Mooij, 2004). Hypothesis 3 posits that the use of the wow emoticon is positively related to individualism, since it is posited that countries high in individualism are more open to express amazement and surprise (Matsumoto et al., 2008). These findings were partly supported by the results. The use of the funny emoticon was found to be significantly positively related to individualism and significantly negatively related to uncertainty avoidance. Power distance is an insignificant predictor. The use of the wow emoticon was found to be significantly positively related to individualism, as expected, but also with power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

Finally, the love/likes ratio was not directly hypothesized to have a relationship with the cultural dimensions, but revealed to have some connection to uncertainty avoidance in the descriptive graphs. Not only is the relation with uncertainty avoidance significant, but also with power distance and indulgence-restrain (a negative correlation). Such results are in line with the literature that suggests that countries high in uncertainty avoidance would love brand posts more, because research has indicated that they value frequent social interaction with brands and tend to anthropomorphize brands more than countries low in this dimension (Epley et al., 2007; Hudson et al., 2016). Loving a brand post might be more natural when the brand is highly anthropomorphized.

The current study enables managers to know more about the emoticon reactions that are more used in the different types of cultures. In countries high in individualism and low in uncertainty avoidance, humorous posts may be more aligned with what consumers expectation, but posts that elicit astonishment might better function in countries high in individualism.

Despite the findings in the current study, there are some limitations that may allow further research to extend and confirm results. For example, local companies were not included in this study, but could provide an interesting comparison to global brands. Also, only Facebook was studied in the current case. Although Instagram and Twitter have less metrics to measure engagement, it would be interesting to observe whether the same behaviour patterns emerge.

More research should be conducted to find out what it means when a consumer engages with these emoticon responses. Does loving a post instead of liking it mean that there is a stronger brand relationship? Does responding with the funny or wow emoticon mean that customers are more engaged and interested in the posts? Or do these sentiments reveal nothing about the customer's actual feelings towards the brand. To the author's knowledge, these types of studies have not yet been conducted and are interesting avenue for future research.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, R., & Mesch, G. S. (2015). Cultural values and Facebook use among Palestinian youth in Israel, *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 48, pp. 644-653.
- Baker, T. L., Meyer, T., & Chebat, J. C. (2013). Cultural impacts on felt and expressed emotions and third party complaint relationships, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 66(7), pp. 816-822.
- Chwialkowska, A., & Kontkanen, M., (2017). How culture shapes user responses to firm-generated content on social media : the role of cultural dimensions of in-group collectivism, indulgence, and masculinity, *International Journal of Export Marketing* Vol. 1(4), pp. 328–356.
- Dawar, M., Parker, P. M. and Price, L. J. (1996). ‘A Cross-Cultural Study of Interpersonal Information Exchange’, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 27(3), pp. 497–516.
- De Mooij, M. (2004). ‘Translating advertising: Painting the tip of an iceberg’, *Translator*, Vol. 10(2), pp. 179–198.
- De Mooij, M. (2010). ‘Consumer Behavior and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing and Advertising’: Sage Publications.
- De Mooij, M. and Hofstede, G. (2010). ‘The Hofstede model: Applications to global branding and advertising strategy and research’, *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 29(1), pp. 85–110.
- De Mooij, M. and Hofstede, G. (2011). ‘Cross-cultural consumer behavior: A review of research findings’, *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 23(3–4), pp. 181–192.
- Epley, N., Waytz, A. and Cacioppo, J. T. (2007). ‘On seeing human: A three-factor theory of anthropomorphism’, *Psychological Review*, Vol. 114(4), pp. 864–886.
- Euromonitor. (2018). Euromonitor. Available online at <http://www.euromonitor.com/> (accessed on 30 June 2019).
- Goodrich, K. and De Mooij, M. (2013). ‘How “social” are social media? A cross-cultural comparison of online and offline purchase decision influences’, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 20(2), pp. 1–14.

- Gudykunst, William, B., Yoon, Y.-C. and Nishida, T. (1987). 'The Influence of Individualism–Collectivism on Perceptions of Communication Ingroup and Outgroup Relationships', *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 54, pp. 295–306.
- Guftométros, M., Guerreiro, J., & Loureiro, S. (2019). Unveiling how consumers from different cultures engage with Facebook pages. In *ANZMAC 2019* (pp. 570-573).
- Hatzithomas, L., Zotos, Y., & Boutsouki, C. (2011). Humor and cultural values in print advertising: a cross - cultural study, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28(1), pp- 57-80.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). 'Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival'. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2019). Hofstede Insights. Available online at: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/> (accessed online on 30 June 2019)
- Hotten R. (2015). Volkswagen: The scandal explained. Available online at <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-34324772> (accessed on 23 January 2020).
- Hudson, S., Huang, L., Roth, M. S. and Madden, T. J. (2016). 'The influence of social media interactions on consumer-brand relationships: A three-country study of brand perceptions and marketing behaviors', *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Vol. 33(1), pp. 27–41.
- Independent. (2016). 'The top 100 brands in the world have been revealed'. Available online at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/apple-most-valuable-brand-iphone-7-google-coca-cola-a7345501.html> (accessed online on 30 June 2019)
- Internet World Stats. (2018). Internet Usage in the European Union. Available online at: <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats9.htm> (accessed online on 30 June 2019)
- Khan, I., Dongping, H., & Wahab, A. (2016). Does culture matter in effectiveness of social media marketing strategy? An investigation of brand fan pages, *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 68(6), pp. 694-715.

- Ladhari, R., Souiden, N. and Choi, Y. H. (2015). 'Culture change and globalization: The unresolved debate between cross-national and cross-cultural classifications', *Australasian Marketing Journal*, Vol. 23(3), pp. 235–245.
- Li, M., Chng, E., Chong, A. Y. L., & See, S. (2019). An empirical analysis of emoji usage on Twitter. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, Vol. 119(8), pp. 1748-1763.
- Lin, H. C., Swarna, H. and Bruning, P. F. (2017). 'Taking a global view on brand post popularity: Six social media brand post practices for global markets', *Business Horizons*, Vol. 60(5), pp. 621–633.
- Lynch, P. D. and Beck, J. C. (2001). 'Profiles of Internet Buyers in 20 Countries: Evidence for Region-Specific Strategies', *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 32(4), pp. 725–748.
- Matsumoto, D., Yoo, S. H., Fontaine, J. (2008). 'Mapping expressive differences around the world: The relationship between emotional display rules and individualism versus collectivism', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 39(1), pp. 55–74.
- Okazaki, S. and Taylor, C. R. (2013). 'Social media and international advertising: Theoretical challenges and future directions', *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 30(1), pp. 56–71.
- Pornpitakpan, C. (2004). Factors Associated with Opinion Seeking: A Cross-National Study. *Journal of Global Marketing*, Vol. 17, pp. 91–113.
- Sinkovics, R., Yamin, M. and Hossinger, M. (2007). 'Cultural adaptation in cross border e-commerce: a study of german companies', *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol. 8(4), pp. 221–235.
- Sheldon, P., Herzfeldt, E., & Rauschnabel, P. A. (2019). Culture and social media: the relationship between cultural values and hashtagging styles. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, pp. 1-13.
- Sobol, K., Cleveland, M. and Laroche, M. (2018). 'Globalization, national identity, biculturalism and consumer behavior: A longitudinal study of Dutch consumers', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 82, pp. 340–353.

Sung, Y. H., Kim, D. H., Choi, D., & Lee, S. Y. (2020). Facebook Ads Not Working in the Same Way: The Effect of Cultural Orientation and Message Construals on Consumer Response to Social Media Ads. *Telematics and Informatics*, 101427.

Tigre Moura, F., Singh, N. and Chun, W. (2016). 'The Influence of Culture in Website Design and Users' Perceptions: Three systematic Reviews', *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol. 17(4), pp. 312–339.

Tsai, W. H. S. and Men, L. R. (2017). 'Consumer engagement with brands on social network sites: A cross-cultural comparison of China and the USA', *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 23(1), pp. 2–21.

Vasalou, A., Joinson, A. N. and Courvoisier, D. (2010). 'Cultural differences, experience with social networks and the nature of "true commitment" in Facebook', *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, Vol. 68(10), pp. 719–728.

Zhu, L., Anagondahalli, D., & Zhang, A. (2017). Social media and culture in crisis communication: McDonald's and KFC crises management in China, *Public Relations Review*, Vol. 43(3), pp. 487-492.

FIGURES

Figure 1 - Example of post (source: facebook.com/BMWPortugal)



Figure 2 - Individualism with shares/comments ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

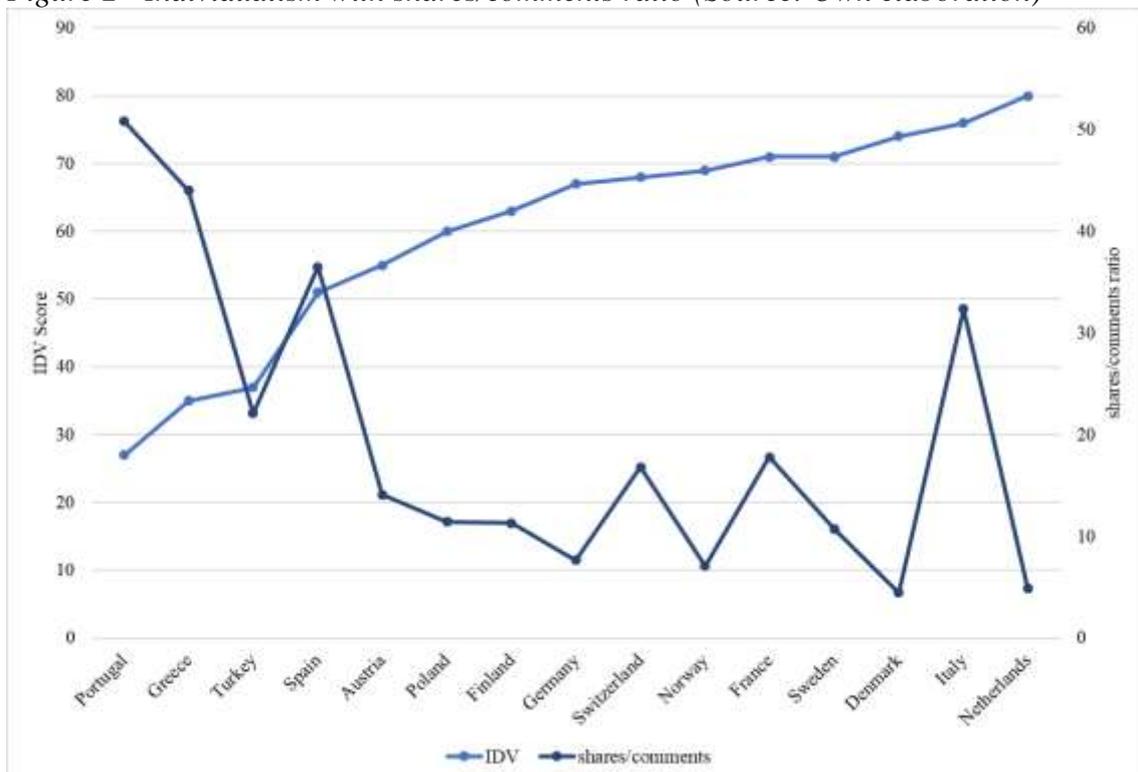


Figure 3 - Power distance with shares/comments ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

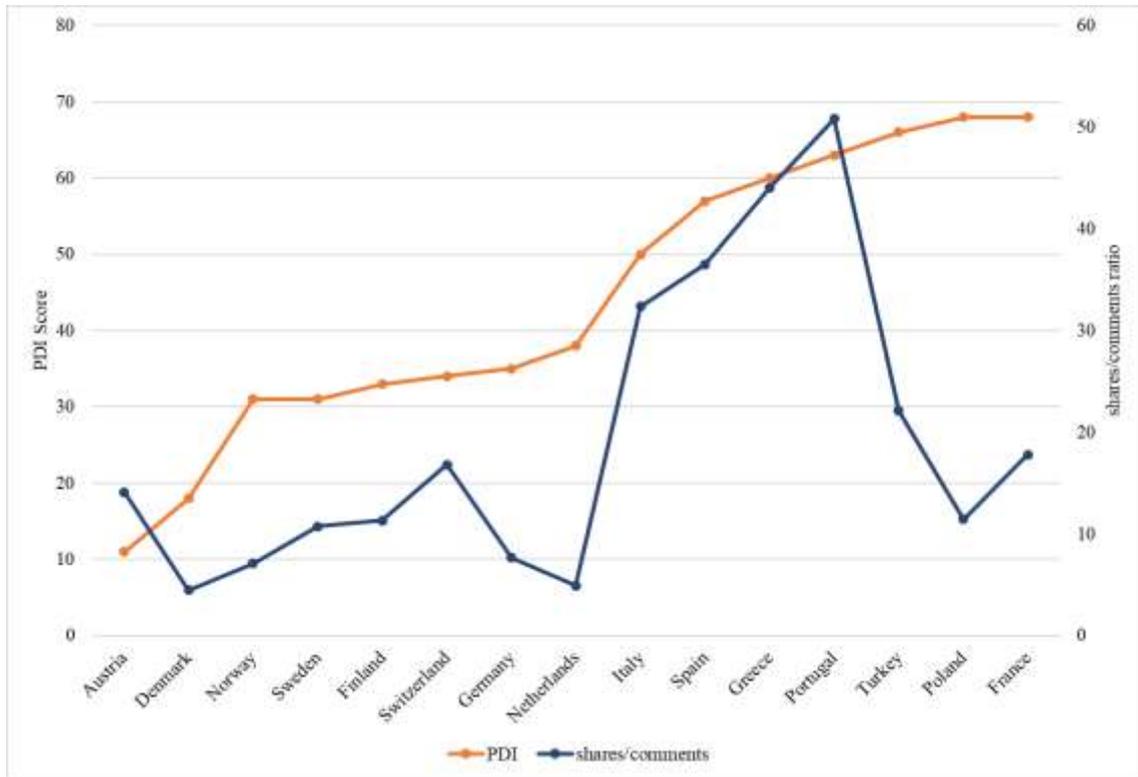


Figure 4 - Individualism with funny/likes ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

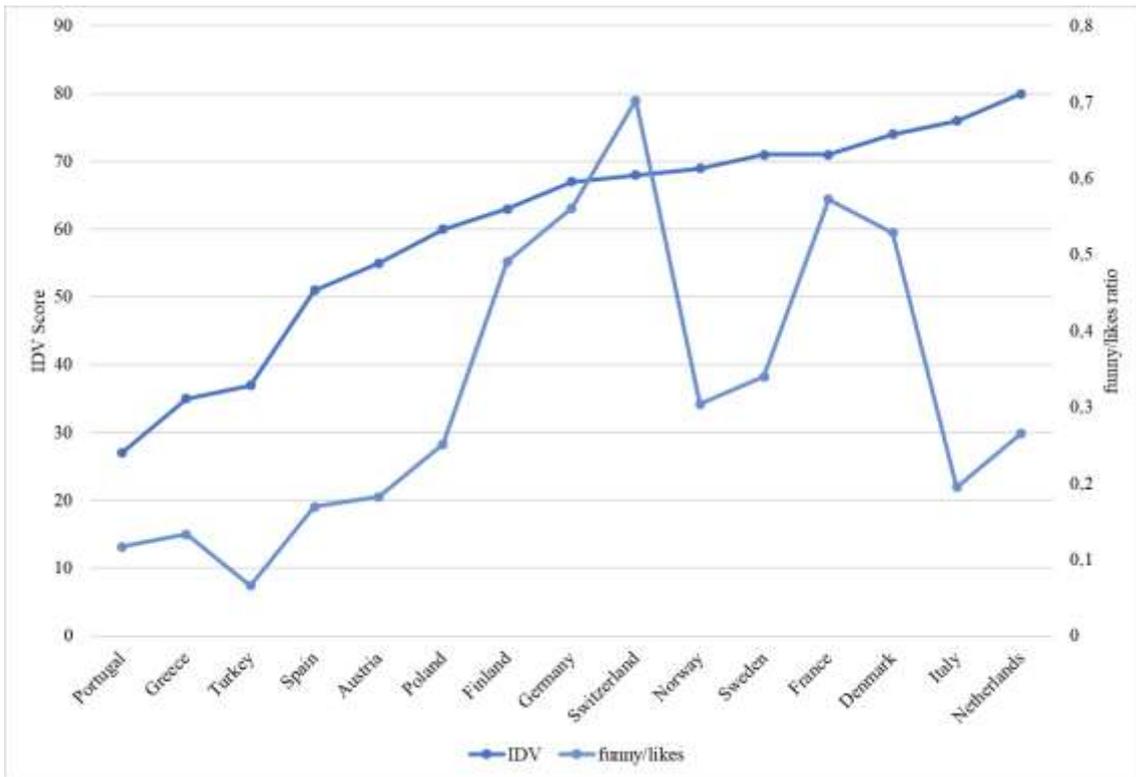


Figure 5 - Power distance with funny/likes ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

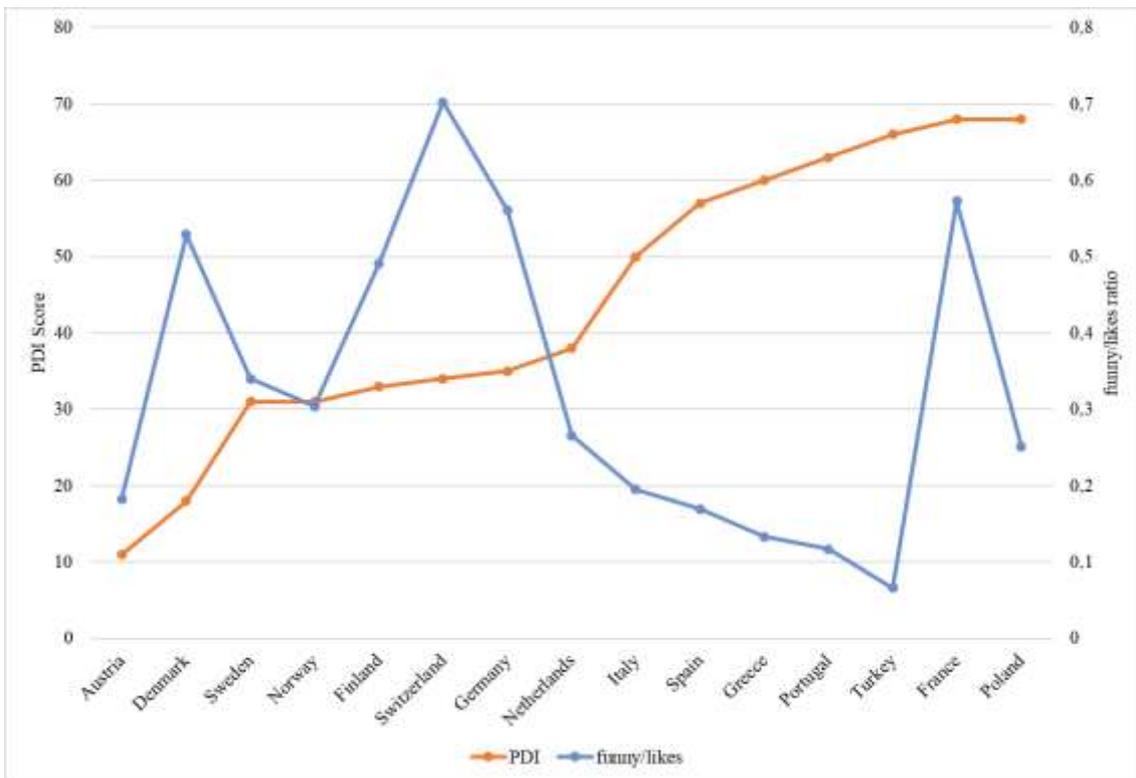


Figure 6 - Uncertainty avoidance with funny/likes ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

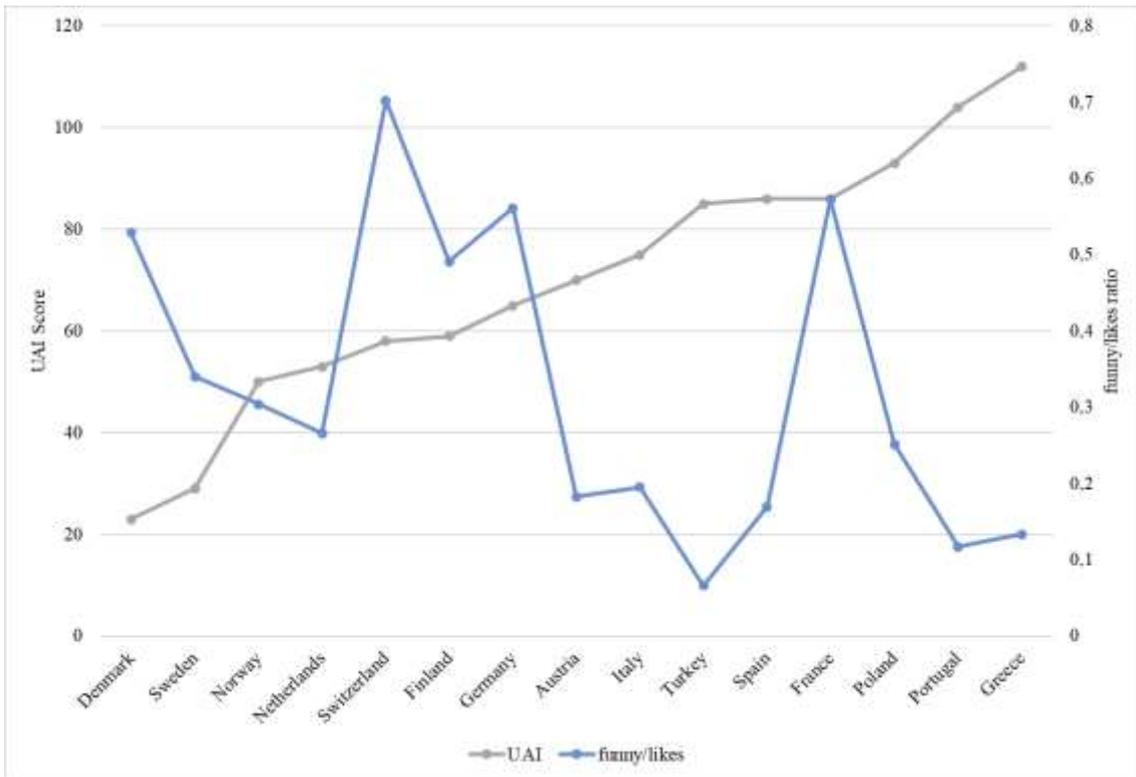


Figure 7 - Individualism with wow/likes ratio (Source: Own elaboration)

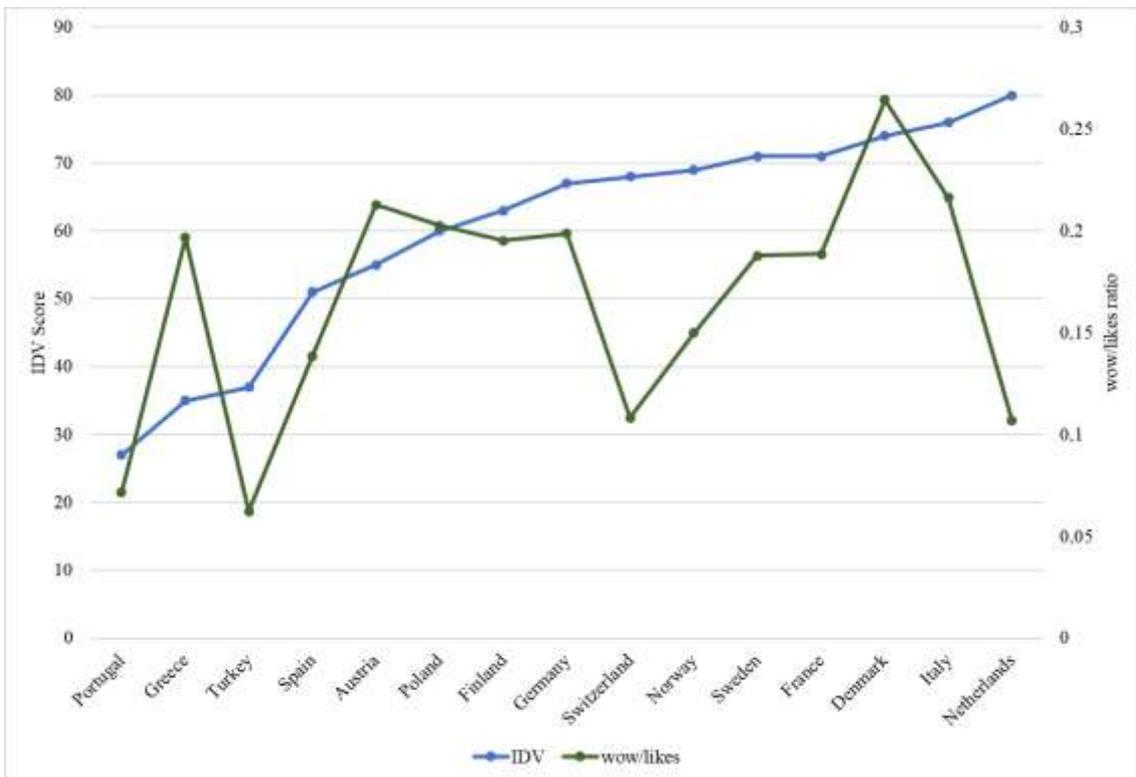
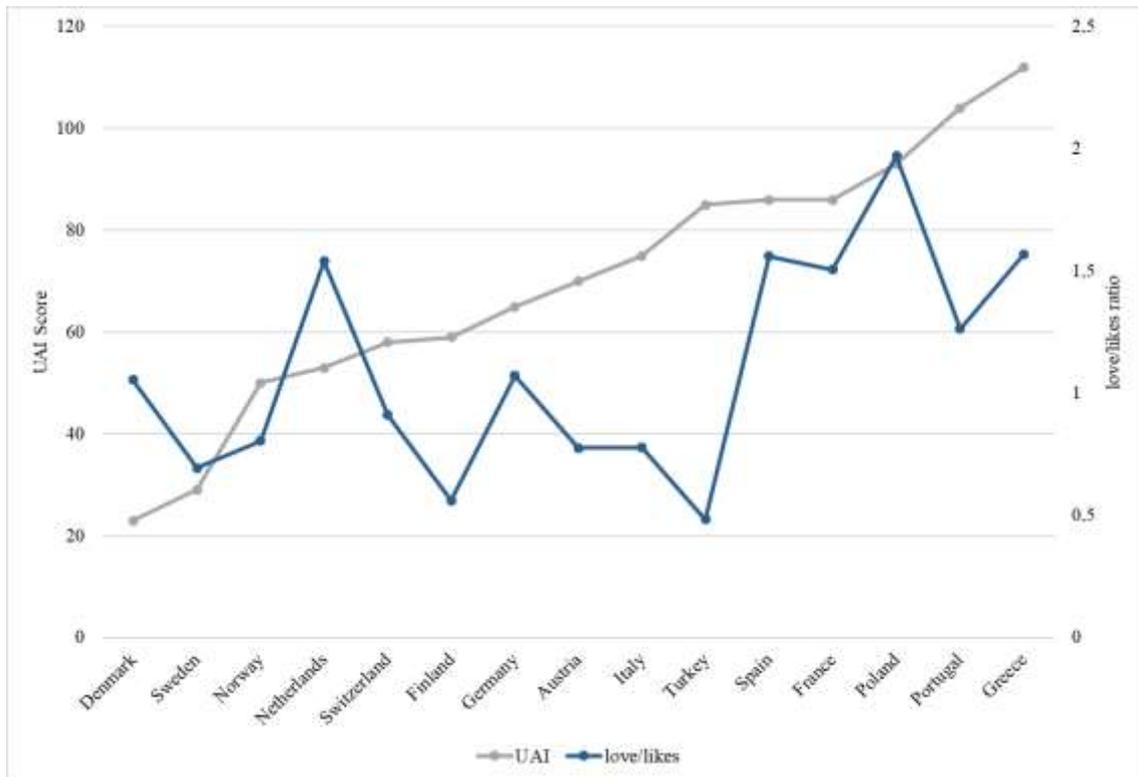


Figure 8 - Uncertainty avoidance with love/likes ratio (Source: Own elaboration)



TABLES

Table 1. Hofstede Dimensions of Cultural Differences (Hofstede et al., 2010)

Dimension	Definition
Power Distance (PD)	How power is expected to be unequally distributed in a society by its less powerful members.
Individualism-Collectivism (IDV)	In individualistic cultures, individuals are expected to take care of themselves and immediate families. In collectivistic cultures, individuals expect their relatives or members of a ingroup to take care of them without expecting anything in return.
Masculinity-Femininity (MAS)	In a masculinity society, it is expected that its members have a sense of achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success, while in a femininity society, its members are more prone to cooperate, to be modest, to care for the weak and quality of life.
Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)	Cultures that have a high degree of uncertainty avoidance feel uncomfortable

	with uncertainty and ambiguity and maintain rigid codes of conduct.
Long Term Orientation (LTO)	Long term oriented cultures are more open to accept and prepare long term changes on the society.
Indulgence-Retrain (IVR)	Indulgent societies promote free gratification to help its members achieve a mutual well-being, while retrained societies impose more strict rules on gratification.

Table 2 – Dependent variables with explanations (Source: Own elaboration)

Variable	Measured	Purpose
Shares/comments ratio	Shares of the posts divided by the comments of the posts.	A higher shares/comments ratio will indicate more of a propensity to share a post and a lower shares/comments ratio will indicate more of a propensity to comment on a post.
Funny/likes ratio	The funny responses of posts divided by the likes of the posts.	A higher ratio will indicate more of a propensity to use the funny response than a lower ratio.
Wow/likes ratio	The wow responses of the posts divided by the likes of the posts.	A higher ratio will indicate more of a propensity to use the wow response than a lower ratio.

Table 3 – Pearson Correlation Analysis (Source: Own elaboration)

	IDV	PDI	UAI	MAS	LTO	IVR
shares/comments	-.400**	.315**	.408**	.140*	-.145*	.265**
funny/likes	.168*	-.103	-.142*	-.006	.121	-.017
wow/likes	.193**	-.171*	-.133*	.057	.017	-.099
love/likes	-.047	.280**	.261**	.067	-.022	.165*

*** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)*

** Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)*