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Culture personality and its effects on the country's evaluation as an ideal tourist/business destination

Abstract

The main purpose of our study was to investigate the effect of perceived culture personality (CP) on the evaluation of the country as an ideal business/tourist destination. After introducing the concept of culture personality, initial results of our CP scale development are discussed, and dimensions of culture personality will be examined. As a result of the scale construction procedure, - based on extensive qualitative studies -, a 51-item semantic differential scale was developed and tested. Similarities and differences of perceived personalities of French and Hungarian cultures are described. Initial results show that not only different culture personalities are perceived differently, but some of the traits of the same culture are also judged differently by diverse groups (in our case, the French and the Hungarian respondents). Elements of perceived culture personalities influencing the evaluation of countries as ideal tourist or business destinations were identified. Correlations were found between more than half of the personality scale items and ideal tourist/business destination evaluations, our two regression models proved the connections between the concepts. Directions for further research, limitations of our study and managerial implications of the findings are also discussed.

Key Words: culture, personality, scale development

1. Introduction and objectives

In marketing practice one is often exposed to advertising that tries to make an impact on the audience with help of personality built around the object of the communication. The concept of personality gained attention among researchers in marketing when very similar products resulting from mass production started to appear on the market and brand managers faced a great challenge regarding their positioning strategy. The quality parameters of products started to be identical and differences could have been achieved only in case of irrelevant product attributes which were not perceived or noticed during the information process of customers. Practitioners soon realised that products can efficiently be distinguished on the bases of brand personalities, person-related associations or abstract traits (McEnally and De Chernatony 1999); especially because in most cases this kind of differentiation required less investment than the product development process (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003). Another advantage of this kind of symbolic positioning is that in case of simple products with only few relevant attributes, personality as a complex and diverse concept provides wide range of possibilities to build and express uniqueness.

Similar processes can be observed in case of economic relations between countries, either in the field of tourism or international trade. The concept of country image, country branding and destination marketing have recently gained more attention in international academic research in marketing relying its methodology partly on the achievements of brand personality theories. The more nationalities live in a country, however, the more differences can be observed there and these nationalities have their own cultural specialities and they are perceived along different personality traits. Papp-Váry (2008: 134) emphasizes that ‘with the higher and higher speed of the information diffusion, countries are becoming more and more similar. The difference, which is the most important factor in (country) brand management, can be gained by those unique and special characteristics of the culture that are deeply rooted and embedded in a country’.

The main objective of the research presented in this article was to develop a Culture Personality (CP) scale which can be used to measure how consumers perceive the cultures of different countries as personalities. In this paper, a short overview of concepts and the related theories of culture and personality will be given followed by the discussion of the partial results of scale development. The article finally investigates the impact of culture personality on the evaluation of countries as ideal touristic and business destinations.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 The personality concept

Personality, the core concept of our research, has been conceptualised in many different ways. Diverse approaches have been emerged in the literature depending on assumed antecedents of the concept that can presumably be biological, psychoanalytical, or evolutionary etc.

One of the most popular directions of various research streams is the trait theory that emphasizes the stable and inherited characteristics of a person and focuses primarily on the measurement of these traits. The pioneering researcher of this theory was Allport, who collected 49 definitions of personality to analyse and classify them. Based on this work he developed his own definition as „*personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to the environment*” (1937, p. 48.). This description reveals the nature of the concept that can be hardly captured in a precise manner and by necessity researchers are forced to define it on a rather general level. Despite some weaknesses of the theoretical background, the trait theory evolved into the most dominant approach of investigating personality. This can be attributed to the strong measurement orientation and the attention paid to the development of applicable scales. The Big Five model of personality assumes a hierarchical structure of traits and five broad dimensions at the highest level. Although both the lexical method and the Big Five model are heavily criticized stating that it ignores deeper theoretical approach and explanations (McAdams, 1992), the five factor framework is accepted as a universal empirical tool to measure personality. It is important to emphasize that trait psychologists albeit admit that personality can also be determined by other factors than genes, they mitigate the relevance of the environment (Mirnics, 2006). As a consequence, personality is considered as a sum of relative constant characteristics of an individual (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003) and as such, it is easy to measure.

Researchers have developed identical models when investigating the role of personality either in the interaction of individuals or the relationship with objects, such as products, to explain behaviour. Among them, congruity theory, whose core element is the comparison of the self-image and the perception of the object, is widely accepted. After this comparison, the subsequent

mental or behavioural reactions depend on the motivations of the person, so we can distinguish two motives regarding this theory - *self-esteem* and *self-consistency* (Epstein, 1980). According to Sirgy (1982, 287.) the previous one “*refers to the tendency to seek experiences that enhance self-concept*”. Self-consistency, on the other hand, “*denotes the tendency for an individual to behave consistently with her view of herself*”. To explore the psychological mechanisms and determine valid associations, researchers differentiated several types or components of self-concept (see Sirgy, 1980; Higgins, Klein and Strauman, 1985; Markus and Nurius, 1986; Prónay, 2011); all of which incorporate personality as a dominant part.

In marketing the main focus of researchers has been concentrated to the link between various types of self-concept and brand image but the results were contradictory in some cases. After his literature review Sirgy (1982) found that although the effects of congruity between the different types of self-image and brand image are mostly supported, some studies were not consistent with these findings. Regarding destination marketing there seems to be a difference between the consequences of the actual and the ideal self-image. The actual self-image plays role in more probable return of consumers, if a destination is perceived similar to their self, but they recommend those destinations that are perceived consistent with the ideal self-image (Usakli and Baloglu, 2011).

2.3 The relationship between culture and personality

Culture has also been defined in various ways concentrating on different aspects of the concept. From a broader perspective, “culture is a visible and invisible system collectively formed by a social group, which provides guidance, orientation, lifestyle and problem solving schemas for its members via beliefs, norms, symbols, rules, values, behaviour patterns, standards and customs” (Malota, 2012). Other explanations focus on some parts of the preceding one. According to Kuper (1999, p. 227.) culture is „*a matter of ideas and values, a collective cast of mind*”. Hofstede interpreted the concept alike to some extent, given the definition as „*the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group or category of people from another (...) interactive aggregate of personal characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment*” (Hofstede 2001, p. 9.). As Allport's conceptualisation of personality, Hofstede's culture concept also manifests in the reaction to the external environment. Also, a similarity

between these two concepts that they are the source of uniqueness/differentiation, but in case of culture the distinction is made on group level instead of the individual one. The main difference is, on the other hand, that in case of culture, inherited components are excluded.

The origin of the conceptual connection between culture and personality stem from the phrase of national character, a concept that has been in interest in history. Inkeles and Levinson (1969, p. 428.) defined it as a „*relatively enduring personality characteristics and patterns that are modal among the adult members of the society*”. This definition induces the question whether the character or personality of a country, nation or culture is the sum or average of the attributes of all members, or it reflects the characteristics of a typical member or the group has other, distinct characteristics. For the owner of a dog, his/her favourite pet can be described with several positive attributes. He might say that it is an especially friendly animal. However, if next day she/he meets a flock of one thousand similar dogs, the crowd will remind her/him the phrase “frightful” despite the fact that none of the members alone can be marked with this trait.

In the country image model of Heslop et al. (1993) the image of the country and the one of the people living there are handled as two different – but strongly correlated – concepts. People’s image is not considered as part of the country image, it can be interpreted in other dimensions.

Hofstede and McCrae (2004) empirically tested the relationship between the factors of culture and personality and they tried to explain the uncovered associations from the theoretical point of view, assuming opposite causality. According to Hofstede, there can be three reasons behind the significant differences between the traits of cultures: a) the inherited traits have systematically different distributions in nations; b) in the socialisation process the dominance of the common characteristics of individuals increases; c) response bias since the individuals of cultures are differently affected by social expectations while answering the personality test. However, McCrae in the same article emphasized the inherited, biological nature of personality, and according to him culture can influence only the manifestations of this personality in different situation but it cannot be changed at trait level. McCrae refers to the research of Bouchard and Loehlin (2001) that concludes that common environment has only minor impact on personality and to the longitudinal studies that revealed that personality traits are stable despite different life experiences (McCrae and Costa, 2003). McCrae explains the explored connection between cultural and personality factors with two theories. *Selective migration* supposes that an individual whose personal characteristics do not fit to a culture will leave it and *reverse causation* assumes

that a culture and its institutions and value systems are determined by the distribution of personal traits in it.

3. Method

3.1. Personality scales in the literature

General personality scales

The efforts the followers of trait theory made to construct a valid and generally applicable measure of personality can be well demonstrated by the lexical method they used. Allport and Odbett (1936), for instance, collected almost 18 000 phrases that are found in the dictionary and describe the differences of the behaviour of individuals. This list incorporated phrases of temporal mood and subjective evaluation of a person but they were sorted out later. Cattell (1945) continued the work of Allport and Odbett and reduced the number of traits dramatically to 22 items. He identified 16 factors of them later (see Cattell et al, 1970). Fiske (1949) was the first who published 5 factors using Cattell's items and despite questioning different types of respondents (self-evaluators, class-fellows, psychologists), he managed to achieve the same structure. Tupes and Christal (1961) also gained the five-factor model and other researchers also confirmed the results. This became the origin of the most recognised measure of personality, the Big Five (John and Srivastava, 1999). In addition to the five-factor model of personality, different numbers of dimensions can be found in the literature, such as the 6-factor model of Ashton and Lee, and the 3-factor model of Eysink (Linden et al., 2010). Researchers have recently investigated the possibility of more common dimensions or a single universal one called the General Factor of Personality (GFP; Linden et al., 2010).

Although the researcher made tremendous effort to find a generally accepted, context-free scale with common dimensions of personality, another trend can be observed in the literature. The demand for more and more sophisticated measurement and the fit requirements of complex models requires the adaption of the general scales or development of new ones that are more valid regarding a specific field of research interest.

Marketing related personality scales

The measurement tools of personality applied in the field of marketing can be classified into two groups, so we can distinguish brand personality and country personality scales. In the latter case, the personality is often a part of a broader concept of a model and can be viewed as a dimension of country image, country-of-origin image, or country brand equity (see Berács and Gyulavári, 1999; Berács et al., 2000, Malota, 2003, Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009, Jenes, 2012).

In the marketing literature one of the most recognised personality scale was developed by Aaker (1997), who constructed a new measurement to brand personality. She perceived that two types of scales were applied at that time to measure the personality of a brand. On the one hand, many of them were formulated at haphazard for a given business research project, on the other hand, general psychological scales were implemented. In case of the latter ones, not all the items were evaluated relevant for a brand and additional characteristics were viewed to be important that were originally not part of the personality concept. Age as a demographic characteristic, for instance, is not a personality trait but is related to the perceived image of a person and this symbolic attribute plays important role in the buying decisions of customers. Once, marketing managers decree to position the brand upon personality, - e.g. with the help of celebrity endorsers -, they cannot neglect this characteristic. For this reason, Aaker developed her own brand personality scale and generated items from three different sources: a) general personality scales, b) scales used by market research agencies, c) qualitative research carried out for this target. The 309 items collected this way were reduced to the final 45 which represent 15 facets across 5 dimensions.

D'Atsous and Boujbel (2007) also had the objective to create a specific personality scale that is more appropriate to measure the perceived personality of a country than the general ones. They developed a six-factor scale and tested the nomological validity of it in frame of the congruency theory that is, whether the similarity between self-image and country image leads to stronger preference. The perceived personality of a country and a culture is highly correlated but differences can also be identified. The most obvious one is related to the natural characteristics of a country which can be part of the country image. The expressions 'Mother Nature' and 'the wild' used in the English and Hungarian language well demonstrate the tendency of describing things with personal attributes. Nature itself, however, is rarely represented in the concept of

culture. As a conclusion, country personality and culture personality are overlapping but different concepts. From the aspect of measurement, country image has other elements which are hard to personalize, e.g. economic, political, geographical dimension. For this reason, a personality scale works better in case of culture.

3.2. Exploring and identifying culture personality traits

Following the recommendation of the methodological literature (Churchill, 1979; Rossiter, 2002), after the definition of the concept to measure we started the culture personality (CP) scale construction procedure by generating items via exploring methods (see Gyulavári et al, 2012). Qualitative data were collected during each semester between 2004 and 2012 among foreign exchange students, answering the following question: „Culture is often thought of as the personality of the society. If your culture was a person, how would you describe its personality traits?”. Altogether 520 culture personality descriptions (about 42 different cultures) were generated this way and based on the most often used adjectives, a list of personality traits was prepared. In 2012, two control methods for these scale items were used. 48 personal interviews with MBA students were conducted then 70 international business majors were asked to discuss cultural descriptions in small groups after lectures of the intercultural communication course on theoretical models of culture. Utilizing the results of these above mentioned three methods, a 51-item bipolar scale was developed (Malota and Gyulavári, 2012).

Opposite adjectives of the semantic differential scale were examined and content validity was checked. Before translating the scale items to English and French, interviews with linguistic experts were conducted. Then real content and interpretations of the adjectives were discussed with bilingual translators. This way – besides resembling the different versions of parallel translations – interpretation of the Hungarian adjectives were double-checked. To finalize the scale items, we employed psychologists, economists, native speaking translators and bilingual proof readers.

3.3. Quantitative data collection

After the exploring phase, the final 51-item scale was tested by quantitative method. An online survey was conducted among a convenience sample of 216 Hungarian and 47 French university students.

Both groups were asked to rate the personal traits of French and Hungarian cultures on a 7-point semantic differential scale, with the following introduction: “Please rate French and Hungarian culture as a person, using the following scales”. Both groups filled in the questionnaire first regarding their own culture and then regarding the other culture.

Further phases of the scale development and the finalised scale will be presented in later publications.

4. Findings

4.1. Similarities and differences of perceived culture personalities of France and Hungary among Hungarian and French respondents.

In the followings, we present the first 10 scale items that respondents evaluated with the highest means on a 7-point scale. Regarding these variables with the 10 highest means, we found similarities for five personality traits of French culture (proud, ambitious, dynamic, wasteful and open-minded) and for four traits of Hungarian culture (pessimistic, traditional, conservative and inflexible) among French and Hungarian respondents. On the whole, Hungarian participants evaluated French culture more positively than Hungarian culture, while French students associated more positive characteristics with their own culture than those of Hungary’s. Interestingly, both groups found their own culture humorous, on the French respondents’ list of adjectives this is the first adjective in rank with the highest mean, for the Hungarians it is the second. Besides, both nations perceive their own culture’s personality as proud (third rank on the Hungarians’ list, and second on the French’). In the following table (Table 1) French culture’s most characteristic personality traits perceived by Hungarian and French respondents are listed.

Table 1

The most characteristic personality traits of **French culture** among Hungarian and French respondents

Hungarian respondents n = 216			French respondents n = 47		
Personality traits of French culture	Mean (1-7)	St. Dev.	Personality traits of French culture	Mean (1-7)	St. Dev.
1. proud	6.05	1.08	1. humorous	5.90	1.40
2. dreamer	5.02	1.34	2. proud	5.83	1.28
3. self-reliant	4.99	1.36	3. ambitious	5.45	1.35
4. ambitious	4.96	1.51	4. friendly	5.28	1.51
5. wasteful	4.94	1.07	5-6. sophisticated	5.03	1.21
6. dynamic	4.83	1.21	5-6. dynamic	5.03	1.45
7. sad	4.81	1.14	7. wasteful	4.93	1.39
8. feminine	4.80	1.47	8. modern	4.90	1.29
9. open-minded	4.73	1.52	9-10. sexy	4.83	1.58
10-11. colourful	4.63	1.19	9-10. open-minded	4.83	1.69
10-11. educated	4.63	1.28			

According to 42% of Hungarian and 38% of French respondents the personality of French culture is expressly proud (gave “7” on a 7-point scale). The level of agreement is the same on French culture being open-minded and ambitious. Although the means are not different for being wasteful (4.93 and 4.94), it is obvious that Hungarians typified it more wasteful with scores “5” and “6”, while one third of French respondents gave “4” on the wasteful-thrifty bipolar item. The same frequencies can be found on the adjective “dynamic” (only 13% of the Hungarians and 31% of the French gave the middle value, “4”). Whilst the French described Hungarian culture as rough, impolite and insensitive, they identify themselves friendly and sophisticated. Interestingly, the Hungarians perceive the French culture personality sad, at the same time the French have the same belief about Hungarian culture. The most characteristic culture personality traits of Hungary are demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2

The most characteristic personality traits of **Hungarian culture** among Hungarian and French respondents

Hungarian respondents n = 216			French respondents n = 47		
Personality traits of Hungarian culture	Mean (1-7)	St. Dev.	Personality traits of Hungarian culture	Mean (1-7)	St. Dev.
1. pessimistic	6.01	1.141	1. conservative	5.76	1.091
2. humorous	5.04	1.189	2. traditional	5.34	1.261
3. proud	5.36	1.423	3. sad	5.24	1.504
4. traditional	5.13	1.142	4. insensitive	5.21	1.590
5. conservative	4.96	1.212	5. rough	4.97	1.322
6. past-oriented	4.93	1.195	6. pessimistic	4.90	1.589
7. unstable	4.88	1.150	7. inflexible	4.83	1.338
8. inflexible	4.87	1.226	8-10. impolite	4.76	2.012
9. disorganised	4.71	1.243	8-10. Brave	4.76	1.272
10. anxious	4.70	1.124	8-10. Calm	4.76	1.806

While 91% of the Hungarians perceive Hungarian culture pessimistic, only 52% of French think so (giving 5, 6 or 7 for the optimistic-pessimistic bipolar item on a 7-point semantic differential scale). 42% of the Hungarians while and only 24% of the French evaluated this item with “7”. French respondents perceive Hungarians culture more conservative than Hungarians see themselves (82% vs. 72% gave 5, 6 or 7 on this trait). Both groups similarly reckon Hungarian culture personality traditional and inflexible. Besides, the French believe that Hungarian culture personality is rough, insensitive, impolite, sad, calm and brave, although the Hungarians perceive it as past-oriented, unstable, disorganised and anxious.

In the followings, we elaborate on those personality traits that show significant differences in means among French and Hungarian respondents ($p \leq 0.05$). Figure 1 represents personality traits of French culture that were perceived significantly different by the French and the Hungarians, we found 22 significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$). Hungarians see the French more honest, calm, more optimistic, peaceful, traditional, thoughtful and realistic than French see themselves. Also, the Hungarians perceive French culture personality sadder, less friendly, less humorous, less sexy,

more inflexible and less sophisticated than the French. The latter describe it more idealistic, carefree, polite, insensitive, more past-oriented, self-reliant, flattering, stable and patriotic.

Figure 1 Significant differences of the evaluation of French culture personality traits in frame of the means given by Hungarian and French respondents (in parenthesis the opposite trait of the semantic differential scale is shown, meaning the negative pole of the scale: 1 on 1-7).

Figure 2 presents remarkable differences of the Hungarian culture’s evaluations regarding quite a lot of attribute pairs: out of 51 pairs 24 significant differences were found.

Besides the above mentioned differences, the French see Hungarian culture as colder, more rational, less intelligent, more average, thrifty, industrious, realistic, strict, careless, more future-oriented, grey, feminine, self-dependent and selfless than Hungarians see themselves.

Figure 2 Significant differences of evaluation of Hungarian culture personality traits in frame of the means given by Hungarian and French respondents (in parenthesis the opposite trait of the semantic differential scale is shown, meaning the negative pole of the scale: 1 on 1-7).

4.2. Dimensions of culture personality

In the followings, dimensions of the culture personality scale will be examined only for those items that are correlating with the country evaluations as ideal tourist or/and business destination. For this stage of research, exploratory factor analysis was decided to be appropriate (as opposed to confirmatory factor analysis). Principal components analysis (PCA) was completed for these 29 items incorporating a varimax axis rotation. The correlation of variables was confirmed by calculating KMO values (0.883) and Bartlett-test that proved to be significant.

Table 3

Factor structure of the culture personality scale (a, ideal tourist and/or business destination items)

Factors	Factor items	Component					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Competence	Well-organized-disorganized	.732					

	Perfectionist-negligent	.718					
	Stable-unstable	.568					
	Aimless-ambitious	-.554					
	Lazy-industrious	-.548					
	Smart-unintelligent	.513					
	Educated-uneducated	.499					
Life approach	Anxious-carefree		-.812				
	Optimistic-pessimistic		.791				
	Passive-dynamic		-.532				
	Dependent-self-reliant		-.497				
	Idealistic-materialistic		.467				
	Petty-generous		-.454				
Aura (visible style)	Humorless- humorous			-.671			
	Passionate-cold			.599			
	Sexy-not sexy			.588			
	Warm-hearted-insensitive			.577			
	Colorful-grey			.544			
	Unfriendly-friendly			-.514			
	Unique-average			.492			
Interpersonal approach	Aggressive-peaceful				.686		
	Polite-impolite				-.619		
	Selfish-selfless				.554		
	Liar-honest				.516		
	Intolerant-tolerant				.515		
<i>Humble collectivism</i>	Humble-proud					-.691	
	Individualistic-collectivistic					.559	
Rectitude	Coward-brave						.711
	Straightforward-flattering						-.445
EXPLAINED VARIANCE BY THE FACTOR		11%	11%	11%	10%	6%	5%
CRONBACH'S ALPHA		0.79	0.75	0.76	0.68	0.30	0.39

According to the anti-image matrix, all variables' MSA (measures of sampling adequacy) values are within the correct interval, above 0.770, providing the basis for the variables being included in the analysis. The number of factors was determined on the basis of the „eigenvalue greater than 1” criterion and it resulted in six factors. The total variance explained by these 6 factors was

equal to 54 percent. The results of the factor analysis are displayed in Table 3.

The first four factors “Competence”, “Life approach”, “Aura” and “Interpersonal approach”, explain almost the same amount of sample variance, each 10-11%. These factors are easy to interpret and they can likely be considered general factors for any culture’s personality, whilst the last two seem to be less general factors. The first factor, called „Competence”, includes skills and competencies, e.g. stability, ambition, intelligence etc. The second consists of traits that show some kind of “Life approach”, like being optimistic, dynamic, idealistic etc. The third factor is named „Aura”, its variables expressing distinctive but intangible quality traits that seem to surround a person, like sexiness, passion, humor, uniqueness. The fourth factor, „Interpersonal approach” includes elements related to how a person approaches others, e.g. with tolerance, honesty, politeness. The last two factors include only two variables each, are called “Humble collectivism” and “Rectitude”.

The last row of Table 4 presents the reliability of the relating scales. The Cronbach’s Alpha values for the reliability of the dimensions are high, evidencing their inner consistency, except for the last two dimensions that consist only of 2 items.

As easy applicability in practice requires further reduction of scale items, we selected the 24 attributes that had been determined to be significantly correlated with the evaluation of France as a touristic destination, that is, more relevant items from this point of view. Compared with the previous analysis where all personality scale items correlating with ideal tourist and/or business destination evaluations were included, we can conclude that the factors of this 2nd analysis (items correlating only with tourist evaluations) are stable, and show only small modifications from the previous findings. The “Life approach” and “Aura” dimensions remained exactly the same, with the same variables loading to the factor (except for the “dependent-self-reliant” variable that is not correlating with countries being ideal tourist destination so it was excluded from this analysis). The “Interpersonal approach” factor is also the same as in the previous analysis, except for not containing the “liar-honest” variable, as this variable is strengthening our last factor “rectitude”, together with “lazy-industrious”, making it more stable and understandable. The “Competence” dimension also consists of the same variables as previously, except for excluding three variables that are correlating only with ideal business destination plus the “individualist-collectivist” scale item was loading here (with a low factor score though).

4.3. The effect of culture personality on the evaluation of France as a tourist and business destination

One of the research questions in the focus of our study is which personality traits influence the consideration of a country (in our case France) as ideal tourist/business destination.

Correlation was found between France being ideal business and being ideal tourist destination for the Hungarians (Pearson correlation: 0.482, $p < 0.0001$).

France is considered quite an ideal destination from the touristic point of view (mean is 5.00), and a little less ideal business destination (4.25), measured on a 7 point scale.

For the French, Hungary is also an ideal tourist destination (5.04), but less ideal as a business partner (3.11). (Note that French respondents have spent 3.5 months in Hungary as exchange students so have some experience regarding the country).

Correlation coefficients can be found in Table 4. As the sample size of French respondents is quite small, we discuss only results for France, i.e. which personality traits correlate with the evaluation of France as an ideal destination for Hungarians.

We found correlations with 24 variables in case of tourist destination, and with 18 variables regarding business destinations. Among these, 13 scale items are positively correlating with both. Honesty is the most important culture personality trait, it has the highest correlation coefficients with both the tourist and the business destinations.

Table 4

France as an ideal tourist and business destination in frame of its culture personality traits

Correlation either with ideal tourist or business destination	Correlation with both ideal tourist and business destination
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Culture personality traits	ideal tourist destination	ideal business destination		Culture personality traits	ideal tourist destination	ideal business destination
warm-hearted	.301			honest	.371	.346
passionate	.287			friendly	.370	.163
carefree	.254			sexy	.352	.286
tolerant	.243			smart	.330	.291
polite	.226			humorous	.312	.210
selfless	.205			brave	.308	.221
dynamic	.202			educated	.282	.221
optimistic	.176			unique	.272	.236
generous	.171			colourful	.229	.133
individualistic	.150			peaceful	.198	.172
idealistic	.137			straightforward	.160	.207
well-organized		.202		perfectionist	.143	.226
stable		.195		industrious	.140	.263
self-reliant		.179				
proud		.154				
ambitious		.135				

Pearson correlation coefficients ($p \leq 0.05$)

The influence of culture personality on the evaluation of France being ideal tourist or business destination has also been examined with the help of regression models. Regression analysis was run on the culture personality trait variables, results are displayed in Table 5. In each case we identified the most fitting model step-by-step (partial F-test with stepwise method) with regression procedure. This method alternately enters and removes variables from the list of independent variables with respect to the partial correlation coefficients. The stop-criterion is the exit of F-statistics and significance values from the pre-determined interval. In our case it is adequate to apply the stepwise technique, because the size of the sample is much bigger than the number of explanatory variables. The “stepwise” regression model may be problematic for some reasons (e.g.: Laurent 1996). These were eliminated with utmost care: possible logical errors were controlled (based on our preliminary research), and on several occasions, the stability of the

results was checked via assessing cross-validity so that we divided the database into an estimate and a validity sample.

Table 5

Relationship between France's culture personality and France being an ideal tourist/ business destination

Independent variables	M1 Ideal tourist destination		M2 Ideal business destination	
	β	t	β	t
Honest	0,18	3,028	0,31	5,208
Sexy	0,15	2,465	0,16	2,583
Brave	0,15	2,473	-	-
Passionate	0,13	2,174	-	-
Educated	0,13	2,123	0,16	2,494
Friendly	0,12	1,898	-	-
Stable	-	-	0,15	2,193
F	13.819		15.494	
R²	0.26		0.21	
Adjusted R²	0.24		0.19	

Based on the results of the regression analysis we can conclude that after filtering the partial effects, in case of touristic evaluation six, in case of business evaluation four variables are included to the model. Important result, that among the personality traits besides the hardly explainable "Humble Collectivism" factor, variables from the "Life approach" dimension were excluded from the models.

In evaluating France as an ideal tourist/business destination, honesty is the most important variable, with the highest β values in both models. Besides, "sexy-not sexy" and "educated- uneducated" items were included to both models, showing significant effect on the country's evaluation. Further, from the touristic point of view friendliness, bravery and passion, from the business point of view stability are the most determinant traits.

5. Discussion

The study summarises the initial results of a culture personality scale development process. From methodological point of view this means an exploratory phase to generate relevant items and refine them. As a result of this work a 51-item bipolar scale was developed, which was translated into three languages (Hungarian, French, English). After quantitative data collection we managed to identify some dimensions that seem to be stable across different factor analyses. These, per se, can be useful to get deeper insight into the antecedents of the evaluation of cultures as touristic and business destinations. Beside the factors called “Competence”, “Life approach”, “Aura” and “Interpersonal approach”, “Rectitude” was proved to be stable but it requires further item generation and purification.

The analysis shows that French and Hungarian university students perceive both the own and the other groups’ culture personality in different ways. It is quite an interesting result that 29 items out of the total 51 correlated with the evaluation as a touristic and/or business destination but the regression analysis reduced the significant items into seven representing more or less the dimensions captured by the exploring factor analysis.

The results can be used for international communication activities related to the cultures where (due to the sample composition) the target group is university students.

6. Limitations

Our study has limitations due to the nature and size of the sample and the preliminary stage of scale development and provides inputs for further scale developments and measurement issues in the field of country image. The results about the perceived culture personality could be biased mainly by sample size and composition. The students taking part in business education can have different reference points to evaluate cultures to visit or establish business relations with and they can perceive personalities through other dimensions than others in the society. To increase reliability, sample size should also be raised, especially in case of exchange students as the number of French respondents did not allow some of the analyses to run. As a consequence, the answers of the two groups were not comparable.

Another shortcoming of the research was the data collection method which restricts the length of the questionnaire, so the use of control variables and investigation of nomological validity was limited due to the lack of space.

7. Further Research

Further testing and refinement of the scale is a priority among research directions. Based on the results, the finalization and international validation of the CP scale is the next phase in the process to achieve the possibility of international comparison. Further reliability and validity analysis, the appropriate number of items are also a critical aspect. That means, on the one hand, well balanced scale items across dimensions, which was not the case due to the explorative nature of the factor analysis. On the other hand, the final item number should fit the criterion of easy implementation the practice, which requires further reduction.

Beyond the methodological issues, the role of culture personality should be measured in frame of a broader concept such as country equity or country brand identity.

In case of countries with multiple nationalities, and this way different subcultures, it can be an interesting research question to identify the contribution of each one to the perceived culture personality of the whole country and the dynamics of that.

8. References

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