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The Projected Destination Brand Personalities of European Capital Cities and their Positioning

Abstract

Capital cities are significant drivers of visitation to their countries and therefore it is important to understand how the destination brand personalities (DBP) of capital cities are projected and positioned. Hence, the aim of this research is to develop a projected DBP scale for European capital cities, and to investigate their relative positioning. Content analysis of the cities' main tourism websites was used to develop a projected brand personality scale. This was followed by correspondence analysis to investigate the relative positioning of the city brand personalities. The DBP scale included six dimensions: excitement, malignancy, peacefulness, competence, ruggedness and conservatism. Excitement is the most strongly communicated dimension across all cities, followed by peacefulness and competence. No city rated highly on ruggedness. The correspondence analysis clusters cities into three projected DBP groups: (1) Warsaw and Moscow, (2) Athens, Rome, Madrid, and Berlin, (3) Amsterdam, Paris and Vienna.

Keywords: destination brand personality; projected destination personality; cities; city positioning

Summary statement of contribution: This is the first study to explore the positioning of cities on the basis of their DBP. In addition, it contributes to the very limited body of research on projected (as opposed to perceived) destination brand personality.

1. Introduction

At the heart of place branding is the notion of place identity (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013).

Place brand identity can be articulated in terms of benefits, values and personality traits.

In the last few years, the articulation of a place brand identity in terms of its personality has been viewed as increasingly valuable for understanding the perceptions of places and for crafting a unique destination identity to enhance its brand equity (Ekinici & Hosany 2006).

Dickinger and Lalicic (2016) suggest that this is associated with a shift in focus from functional attributes to emotional attributes in branding campaigns. Various authors have observed that the functional attributes of tourist destinations alone are insufficient to attract travellers, mainly because of the growing substitutability of destinations (Bekk, Sporrle & Kruse, 2016; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Usakli & Bagoglu, 2011). On the other hand, emotional attributes, since they are concerned with relationship building between visitors and destinations, have the potential to be used to increase visitor numbers (Hultman, Skarmeeas, Oghazi & Beheshti 2015). Self-congruity theory suggests that one aspect of this relationship building process is the development of an alignment between a consumer's self-concept and their perception of a destination (Sirgy & Su, 2000). According to self-congruity theory, tourists tend to choose destinations whose typical visitor image is congruent with their own self-image (Pan, Zhand, Gursoy & Lu, 2017). This is because tourist destinations provide an important venue in which they can create, enhance, maintain and express their self-identity (Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1988). Supporting this are a number of studies that have shown that an alignment between an individual's personality and place brand personality has a significant effect on intentions to purchase products, travel to and develop ties with a place (Murphy, Benckendorff & Moscardo, 2007a; Murphy & Papadopoulos., 2013; Rojas-Mendez, Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos & Alwan, 2015; Usakli & Balogulu, 2011).

Despite the growing interest in destination brand personalities (DBP's), there are some very significant research gaps. First, very few studies on DBP have focussed on cities, with most focussing on countries or nations. Yet, cities, and capital cities, in particular, are major drivers and beneficiaries of visitation to most countries. Gospodim (2004) argues that European cities are overtaking countries as driving forces of the new Europe. Mikulic, Milicevic and Kresic (2016) also suggest that "the importance of city tourism is gaining momentum and cities around the world are increasingly competing" (p. 14). In addition, since Europe is the most visited region in the world (Molina et al., 2017), understanding the branding practices and positioning of European cities is particularly pressing. Two recent studies have focused on the branding and relative positioning of European capital cities, but both focus on brand equity, not on brand personality. Hence, it is important to explore how European capital cities project and position their personalities through their branding campaigns.

Secondly, few studies have explored projected, as opposed to perceived, destination brand personality. Perceived brand personality relates to the notion of the brand personality in the eyes of the audience for the communication regarding a place; studies that examine perceived brand personality typically undertake surveys of visitors, students or residents, or a combination of these groups. Recent examples include Baloglu, Henthorne and Sahin (2014) (first-time and repeat visitors), Ishii and Wantanabe (2015) (residents), and Guerreiro, Agapito and Pech (2015) (students). Much less attention has been directed towards the study of projected DBP, the personality communicated through the various communication channels used by the destination's tourism organisation. Yet, projected personality contributes to the formulation of perceived brand personality, and furthermore, it is important that those destination marketers who are seeking to project a specific DBP have tools at their

disposal to assess the success of their branding investment (Pitt, Opoku, Hultman, Abratt & Spyropoulou, 2007). Only two studies have examined projected DBP; Kim and Lehto (2013) studied South Korea, whilst Pitt et al. (2007) examined ten African countries. Hence, there is considerable scope for additional studies in this area.

Finally, thirdly, since many studies on DBP have focussed on only one destination (e.g. Dickinger & Lalacic, 2016 (Vienna); Kim & Lee, 2015 (South Korea); Sahin & Baloglu, 2014 (Istanbul)), the issue of brand positioning has been significantly under-researched. Yet, in a marketplace in which destination substitutability (Pike & Ryan, 2004; Usakli & Bagoglu, 2011; Zenker, 2009) is becoming a significant challenge, the development of methods for understanding the relative positioning of destinations is pivotal, and may have significant benefits for destination managers (Kendall & Goursoy, 2007). Only two studies explicitly explore DBP positioning; both focussed on the perceived DBP of nations. D'Astous and Boujbel (2007) used a survey to develop a personality scale to position eleven countries, (perceived DBP), whilst Pitt et al. (2007) examined the positioning of ten African countries through a content and correspondence analysis of their websites (projected DBP).

Hence, the aim of this research is to contribute to addressing the last two gaps in the theory of DBP identified above by: (1) developing a *projected DBP scale* based on European capital cities; and, (2) investigating the relative *positioning* of the projected destination personalities of European capital cities.

The following section offer a distillation of the literature and prior theory, followed by an outline of the two-stage methodology adopted in this research. The findings are reported next, before conclusions and recommendations are offered.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Destination brand personality

The objective of place branding is to strengthen the destination's position in an increasingly competitive marketplace (Anholt, 2005). Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs), and other bodies associated with a place or destination invest in branding initiatives in order to attract more visitors and investors and to engage residents with their place (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005). Early destination branding initiatives focussed on destination image (Kavaratis, 2004; Peel & Lloyd, 2008), and typically privileged the functional aspects of a place. However, whilst the representational element of destinations and their re-generation remain important in communicating with diverse audiences, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of emotional and experiential benefits in driving preference and decisions (Chen & Phou, 2013; Dickinger & Lalicic, 2016; Murphy et al., 2007a). The functional attributes of tourist destinations alone are no longer viewed as sufficient to attract visitors. DMO's need to capitalise on and communicate the emotional attributes of their destination that are key to relationship building between visitors and a destination (Hultman et al., 2015). Taking this further, Bekk et al. (2016) note that whilst many holiday destinations may feature sea, sun, and sand, they can be differentiated from one another on the basis of characteristics such as glamour and luxury, and authentic and friendly. They also demonstrate that tourist-destination personality similarity increases tourist' satisfaction and recommendations regarding the destination.

Personifying a place provides the opportunity to communicate its emotional attributes. Paxson (2009) and Brown and Campleo (2014) suggest that there is a long tradition of personifying place, in the form of, for example, naming streets and buildings after famous people, and describing the essence of a place using adjectives normally ascribed to people

(e.g. ‘smart’ cities, ‘happy’ cities). Lakoff and Johnson (2008) define personification as a process whereby inanimate objects, institutions, abstractions, or substance are regarded as people, and have human characteristics attributed to them. Destination personality occurs when a DMO describes a set of human characteristics that tourists associate with the destination in their brand communications (Hosany et al., 2006). Aaker (1997) defined brand personality as the “set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (p. 347). Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) offer a more recent definition: “brand personality is the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands” (p. 151). In offering this definition, Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) operationalise the notion of brand personality and distinguish it from the personality of a person. Consistent with this, Aaker and Fournier (1995) suggest that it is important to recognise that in the context of destination marketing, the term ‘personality’ does not literally reflect a person’s appearance, traits, or behaviour, as in psychology, but is a *metaphor* that personifies destination attributes, benefits, price and users’ imagery. Thus, in addition to personality characteristics, destination personality also includes socio-demographics, such as age and gender (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). In support of Aaker and Fournier (1995), Avis et al. (2012) assert that a more open interpretation of ‘personality’ can serve as a metaphor for intangible brand attributes; this may lead to the inclusion of traits that are not strictly human personality traits, such as ‘modern’. They further argue that there should be no constraints on the range of the terms used to communicate brand traits. Various authors have suggested that, if the unique personality traits of a place can be captured in brand communications, they can be used to differentiate one place from another (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007b; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). In turn, this can influence the formation of

strong emotional associations with a destination, and thereby increase travel intentions, satisfaction and destination loyalty (Chen & Phou, 2013; Murphy et al., 2007b).

Self-congruity theory has been used by a number of researchers to explain the impact of DBP on visitors' intentions and behaviours with regard to destinations. Self-congruity theory proposes that consumption behaviour is influenced by the match between a consumer's self-concept and their perception of a destination (Sirgy and Su, 2000). The greater the match between a tourism destination's visitor image and the consumer's self-concept, the more likely it is that the tourist will have a favourable attitude towards a destination, which, in turn, may influence their visiting intentions (Murphy et al., 2007a; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2015).

Despite the growing interest in DBP, most of this research explores perceived DBP, typically through consumer surveys and neglects the projected DBP. In support of the need for further research on projected personality, Pitt et al. (2007) note the limitations associated with a high reliance on consumer surveys, and promote the adoption of other approaches to understanding DBP. Research into this area has potential to offer insights into how DMOs are personifying their destination brand, either deliberately or sub-consciously, which, in turn might inform practice and research. DMOs typically manage, or work with their marketing agency to manage brand communications through a range of channels, including people, paper and digital. Only two prior studies have considered projected brand personality. Most recently and significantly, Kim and Lehto (2013)'s study compared the projected DBP as communicated through the official Korean tourism website, and the perceived DBP through a survey conducted amongst a sample of US travellers. Interestingly, they found significant discrepancies between the perceived and projected personalities. Whilst the KTO's effort to portray South Korea as a sincere and family-oriented destination with warm-hearted people

and advanced technologies appeared to be successful, there was a marked discrepancy on the 'excitement' dimension. The KTO had been trying to cast South Korea as exciting, dynamic and energetic, but these qualities were not acknowledged by the US travellers. Finally, Pitt et al. (2007) analyse the website brand communications of ten African nations, using Aaker's personality dimensions. The procedure that they use, combining content and correspondence analysis, offers a means whereby tourism researchers and managers can explore and compare projected brand personalities.

2.2 Destination brand personality measurement and scales

One of the most important, yet most significant challenges regarding research and practice concerning DBP is the development of robust measurement scales. Indeed, the development of measurement scales has been the primary objective of a number of studies (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Eckini, Sirakaya-Turk & Baloglu, 2007; Pan et al., 2017; Xie & Lee, 2013). The approach to measurement has been significantly influenced by Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale, which consists of five dimensions (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness) with fifteen sub-facets or traits. Aaker's brand personality scale has made a significant contribution to theory building in respect of brand personality and its effect on consumer behaviour. In respect of place branding, with the exception of Kaplan, Yurt, Guneri and Kurtulus (2010), all other DBP studies on cities have used Aaker's scale as their point of departure. The scale has dominated and guided scale use and development for the measurement of place brand personality (e.g. Apostopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2015 (mid-sized cities in Greece); Bekk et al., 2016 (Fuerteventura); Dickinger & Lalicic, 2016 (Vienna); Xie & Lee, 2013 (Beijing)).

Notwithstanding, there are various criticisms regarding the use of Aaker's scale which was developed for product brands. Firstly, there is disquiet about the relationship between Aaker's scale and the 'Big 5' personality traits, developed in the field of human psychology. More specifically, in mapping Aaker's dimensions to the 'Big 5' traits, Aaker's dimension of sincerity maps onto the traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness, excitement includes items such as sociality, energy and activity, as does extroversion. The remaining two of Aaker's dimensions, sophistication and ruggedness, do not relate to any of the 'Big 5' traits. Other concerns and debates centre around whether the scale measures brand personality or brand identity (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003); its generalisability, particularly for comparing or relative positioning of brands (Austin, Siguaw & Mattila, 2003); and, its initial construction and testing (Geuens, Weijters & Wulf, 2009).

Secondly, there is trepidation as to whether a brand personality scale developed for products is applicable or suitable for destination place brands in which physical, hedonic and symbolic elements are critical components of the tourist's overall travel experience (Huang, Gursoy & Xu, 2014; Pan et al., 2017). Travellers' perceptions of these elements are likely to have a direct impact on how tourists perceive a destination's personality (Ekinici & Hosany, 2006; Ekinici et al., 2007). Hence, it is not surprising that studies that have attempted to use Aaker's traditional scale in tourism contexts report additional dimensions with substantial variations. Additions include conviviality (Ekinici & Hosany, 2006; Ekinici et al., 2007), outdoorsy, and upper class (Murphy et al., 2007b), vibrancy (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), cool, and trendy (Sahin & Baloglu, 2011). On the other hand, some of Aaker's personality dimensions are not in evidence in some destination studies, even when this scale has been used.

As a result of these concerns regarding Aaker's scale, some researchers have sought to develop their own scale. Many use an elicitation process similar to that adopted by Aaker (1997) to develop their own dimensions. For example, d'Astous and Boujbel (2007) generated their own scale through an elicitation process that covered 29 countries. This scale was tested through a survey of a convenience sample of French-Canadian residents of Montreal; the scale had the following personality dimensions, none of which are in Aaker's scale: agreeableness, wickedness, snobbism, assiduousness, conformity, and unobtrusiveness. Rojas-Mendez et al. (2013) also used a free elicitation process in order to identify personality traits and dimensions in their study of the USA from the perspective of the Chinese; they identify three dimensions, amicableness, resourcefulness and self-confidence, none of which are in Aaker's scale. Kumar and Nayak (2014) in their study of the DBP of India conducted an elicitation process to generate unique traits of the Indian personality, but supplemented these traits from the scales of Aaker (1997) and d'Astous and Boujbel (2007); they identified the following dimensions: courteousness, vibrancy, conformity, liveliness, viciousness, and tranquillity. Kaplan et al. (2010) also used a free elicitation process to generate a list of 87 personality traits; their list included excitement, competence, and ruggedness (already in Aaker's scale), but also introduced three new dimensions, *viz*, malignancy, conservatism, and peacefulness.

Other researchers have used a variety of approaches to place brand personality scale development. In a study of the relationship between the destination personality and the destination image of Dubai, Souiden, Ladhari and Chiadmi (2017), used a selection of traits from Aaker (1997). Pan et al. (2017) generated personality characteristics from travel reviews, supplementing these with items from Aaker (1997) and Kaplan et al. (2010). After data collection with mainland Chinese travellers, they identified the following factors:

competence, sacredness, vibrancy, femininity, and excitement. However, it is important to observe, that in their scale development they were working with projected DBP, whilst in their survey they were collecting data on perceived DBP. Given the discrepancies that Kim and Lehto (2013) found between perceived and projected DBP, further reflection is necessary on scale development processes. Hanna and Rowley (2017, chapter 2) summarise the studies using place brand personality dimensions between 2006 and 2015, and identify 29 dimensions, with all of Aakers' dimensions being cited more than once (sincerity: 8; competence: 6; excitement: 6, sophistication: 4; and, ruggedness: 3), hence revealing a lack of consensus regarding DBP scales.

Other studies further suggest that it is unclear whether it is possible to create a generic DBP scale. There are a number of potential reasons for this. First, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) suggest that a single, static view of place identity cannot reflect the full complexity of the place identity, on account of the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the creation, development and ownership of the identity of the place (Kavaratzis, 2012). Second, there is a growing body of evidence, which points to the role of culture in influencing individual perceptions of destination personality (Sung & Choi, 2010). Aaker, Benet-Martinez, and Garolera (2001) examined the influence of cultural variations on brand personalities, and found, for instance, different perceptions of the same brand between Japanese, Spanish and American consumers, as well as identifying new culturally specific personality dimensions (e.g. peacefulness for Japan and passion for Spain). In the context of DBP, Rojas-Mendez et al. (2013) found significant differences between American and Chinese customers' perceptions of the US brand personality. This echoes Sahin and Baloglu (2009)'s earlier study of visitors from various countries to Istanbul, which that perceptions of cognitive and overall image, and of brand personality of a place, differed between nationalities. From a

slightly different perspective, there is also evidence that nation brand personality is dependent on the product being evaluated (Ishii & Watanabe, 2015). Finally, and with significant implications for the value of some previous research, a few authors have found that the perspectives of destination personality or DBP varies depending on the respondents' relationship with the city. For example, Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2015) studied the destination personality of Patras, a mid-sized city in Greece. They found differences between local residents, past visitors, and non-visitors in their perceptions of DBP. Whilst multiple views on the personality of a city do not preclude the development of a generic scale, they do suggest that the development of such a scale is likely to be complex and that such a scale may not emerge until there is a strong body of research around the notion of destination (and place) brand personality.

2.3 Destination brand personality of cities

The majority of studies on DBP's focus on countries or nations; a limited number of studies focus on cities; Table 1 provides a summary of these studies. Most of these studies cover only one city; exceptions are Hosany et al. (2006), Ekinic and Hosany (2006) and Kaplan et al. (2010). As identified above, whilst some scale dimension's feature in most of these studies (e.g. excitement, competence) there are significant variations in the number and nature of the dimensions in the scales. Most of these studies conduct a survey, usually with visitors; hence their focus is on perceived DBP. Only Sahin and Baloglu (2009) performed an analysis of brochures and websites (projected DBP). Dickinger and Lalici (2016) also undertake a content analysis, but they study tourist content on social media, which can be viewed as a reflection of both perceived and projected DBP. Finally, with the exception of Kaplan et al. (2010), all of these studies use Aaker's scale or an adaption of the scale.

Overall, Table 1 demonstrates that there is a significant need for future research into the DBP of cities. Moreover, given the concerns over the applicability of Aaker's scale in measuring DBP, there may be benefits to be accrued from using an alternative approach. Hence, this study takes Kaplan et al. (2010)'s scale as its point of departure, given that the scale was developed for cities, and its application has not been further explored.

2.4 Positioning

Considering the challenges facing destinations, such as cities and tourist regions, and, in particular, the concerns expressed about destination substitutability (Pike & Ryan, 2004; Usakli & Bagoglu, 2011; Zenker, 2009), the body of research that explicitly focusses on positioning is very limited. Three studies do explore the positioning of European capital cities on the basis of brand equity, but not brand personality. Molina et al. (2017) explore the brand equity generated through online and offline media, Mikulic et al. (2016) examine the relationships between brand strategies and tourism intensity, and Gomez, Fernandez, Molina and Aranda (2018) conduct a survey to compare the brand equity of selected European capital cities. Hosany et al. (2006) and Ekinici and Hosany (2007), on the other hand, did survey participants views on the personality of European countries, but they were not explicitly comparing destinations, but rather using a range of destinations to investigate the relationship between destination image and destination personality, and to develop a three-dimensional scale of DBP (sincerity, excitement, and conviviality).

The six studies that have considered the relative positioning of destinations on the basis of DBP have studied nations. Five focused on perceived DBP. d'Astous and Boujbel (2007) conducted a survey amongst French-speaking Canadians. They report on the mean position of each country with regard to each of their personality dimensions. On this basis, Australia and

Mexico were perceived to be most associated with agreeableness, the United States with wickedness, France with snobbism, Japan with assiduousness, China with conformity, and Canada with unobtrusiveness. In a parallel study, d'Astous and Li (2009) adapted their scale to the Chinese cultural context and used it to position eleven countries, nine of which were the same as in their previous study. However, the association of specific dimensions with specific countries differed considerably from the results of the previous study, highlighting the importance of culture on perceptions of DBP. For example, in this study, China had the highest rating for agreeableness and assiduousness, Japan for wickedness, United States for snobbism, and Saudi Arabia for conformity and unobtrusiveness. Kim et al. (2013) conducted a survey of students in various countries; they suggest that the United States and Japan are positioned on leadership, Italy and Sweden on sophistication, Singapore and Sweden on peacefulness, and Korea on tradition. Matzler, Strobl, Stokburger-sauer, Bobvnicky and Bauer (2016) study the role of cultural differences on the impact of brand personality perceptions of tourists' visit intentions. Although their focus was on the congruity-visit intention relationship, they demonstrated difference on the effect of brand personality dimensions and brand self-congruity and visit intention between countries. Finally, Ishii and Watanabe (2015) undertook a survey in Japan in order to investigate the relationship between nation brand personality and product evaluation among Japanese people. Although not its primary output, this study developed a DBP scale with the three dimensions, sincerity, competence and warmth, and used this to profile attitudes towards products from different countries. Germany scored highest on sincerity, United States highest on competence, and Italy highest on warmth. Although no country was positively perceived on all dimensions, China was negatively perceived on all dimensions.

Pitt et al. (2007) conducted the only study focussing on projected DBP, through a combination of content and correspondence analysis. Although the central purpose of this study was to demonstrate a method of researching destination positioning, Pitt et al. (2007) offers some interesting insights into the positioning of ten African countries. They observed three country groupings amongst the websites, one for Angola and South Africa, a second for Morocco, Swaziland, Ghana, Zambia, and Botswana, and a third group for Kenya and Zimbabwe; Malawi (not communicating any of the dimensions clearly) stood on its own.

It is important to observe that the studies discussed in this section use different sets of personality dimensions and/or traits and that none of these studies explore the DBP positioning of cities. This is a major weakness in the study of DBP, and more widely, place brand personality as will be discussed in the following section.

3. Methodology

To develop a projected DBP scale for European capital cities, this study collected and analyzed text-based content from the websites of ten European capital cities. This was followed by correspondence analysis of the DBP's of the cities as a basis for the exploration of the relative positioning of these cities based on their DBP dimensions. The data collection and analysis was facilitated through the use of QDA Miner with WordStat (Provalis Research, 2014)

3.1 Data Collection

The cities included in this study were selected based on the number of international visitors to their respective countries, according to the World Tourism Organization's Tourism Highlights (2016) (<http://mkt.unwto.org/publications>). This was the most recent, authoritative

and comprehensive list of visitor statistics to European cities available when the research was being designed. The capital cities of the top ten most visited countries were selected for inclusion in this study. Other criteria for inclusion were that: (1) the city has an official tourism website, accessible in English; (2) the city website included rich textual data describing the city and, was not entirely dedicated to practical information for visitors. The selected websites were identified through a Google search. Where more than one candidate website was identified, the website for inclusion was selected on the basis of their URL and the organization identified as being responsible for the website.

Ten cities were deemed to be sufficient since other studies that have explored the DBP of either nations or cities have included ten or less in their study (e.g. d'Astous & Li, 2009 (9 nations); de Rosa, Bocci & Dryjanska, 2017 (10 cities); Ishii & Wantanabe, 2015 (5 nations); Kaplan et al., 2010 (3 cities); Kim et al., 2013 (9 nations); Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013 (2 nations)). Additionally, analysis of more than ten cities can make the correspondence map very busy and therefore difficult to interpret (Pitt et al., 2007). Table 2 presents the ten European capital cities selected, together with the number of tourist arrivals to their country, website address, and the number of words mined from the website for content analysis.

A major challenge associated with extracting data from websites for subsequent content analysis is deciding which content to mine. The decision was made to focus on text-based information, in full acknowledgement that tourism websites also include many images, which are also important in communicating the personality of a destination. For the purpose of this study, textual elements include headlines and bodies of text that consist of a single sentence, a paragraph or several paragraphs (Brugger, 2009). To build the data set, text was mined from all levels in the hierarchy of each city website. However, any textual information relating to the practicalities of being in the city such as hotel reservations, transport links, addresses,

opening times, weather forecasts, city maps, discounts, special offers and the like, was omitted from the data set. After selection, textual information for each city's website was converted into an analyzable format. That is, all textual information from each of the ten websites was copied into individual word documents pertaining to each capital city.

3.2 Data analysis

Content and correspondence analysis were used to analyze the text datasets for each city. Content analysis was used to profile the DBP for each city, whilst correspondence analysis was used to analyze the relative positioning of the cities based on their DBP's.

According to Bryman (2011), content analysis is "an approach to the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner" (p. 291). Whilst there is increasing interest in the content analysis of websites and social media sites by researchers for analyzing the messages communicated by organization's (Cormany & Baloglu, 2011; Govers & Go, 2005), it is important to acknowledge that content is not specifically designed for the generation of research findings, and, as such, this approach has limitations.

The first step in data analysis was the compilation of a synonym dictionary for Kaplan et al. (2010)'s place brand personality scale, consisting of six dimension and 87 personality traits. The six place brand personality dimensions with their respective number of traits are: excitement (31), malignancy (22), peacefulness (14), competence (7), conservatism (6), and ruggedness (7). Using Thesaurus.com, a product of Dictionary.com, synonyms were identified for the six dimensions and their associated traits. Only synonyms that had been identified by both researchers were selected. This process generated a final list of 2,044 synonyms. These were categorized according to Kaplan et al. (2010)'s dimensions and the

synonym dictionary was entered into WordStat. Using WordStat's exclusion function, words with low semantic value such as conjunctions and pronouns were excluded from the dictionary.

Secondly, we imported the Word documents of the text derived from our ten city websites into WordStat, and selected the option 'Content Analyze', to load the text into QDA Minor. QDA Minor then produced contingency tables for each city showing brand personality dimensions and traits for each city website, on the basis of Kaplan et al. (2010)'s dimensions. Next, in order to create a scale that encompassed all of the European cities, the five most cited traits for each of Kaplan et al. (2010)'s personality dimensions were identified.

Finally, correspondence analysis was used to explore the relative positioning of the cities based on their personality dimensions. Correspondence analysis is a statistical technique that provides a graphical representation of cross tabulations or contingency tables that is converted into a joint space map by decomposing the chi-square statistic of the frequency matrix (Bendixen, 1995; Greenacre, 2016; Sourial et al., 2010). Correspondence analysis is suitable for exploratory data analysis (Hoffman & Franke, 1986; Whitlark & Smith, 2001). Using QDA Minor, a correspondence map showing the positioning of the ten cities was produced.

Author(s)/Title	Destination(s) Studied	Sample	Method	DBP Dimensions Found
Dickinger and Lalicic (2016)	Vienna (Austria)	International visitors, Trip advisor user generated content	Survey Content analysis of social media	Excitement, sincerity, sophistication, competence, ruggedness
Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2015)	Patras (Greece)	Local residents, past visitors, non-visitors	Elicitation Survey	Excitement, sincerity
Sahin and Baloglu (2014)	Istanbul (Turkey)	First-time visitors	Content analysis of brochures and websites Survey	Significant variable(s) based on purpose: Relaxation – cognitive, Fun/excitement – personality, Experience new things – affective image and personality.
Papadimitriou, Apostolopoulou, and Kaplanidou (2013)	Athens (Greece)	Residents	Survey	Excitement, sincerity
Xie and Lee (2013)	Beijing (China)	Foreign tourists	Survey	Excitement, sophistication, competence, ruggedness.
Usakli and Baloglu (2011)	Las Vegas (USA)	Visitors	Elicitation Survey	Sincerity, sophistication, competence, vibrancy, contemporary
Kaplan et al. (2010)	Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir (Turkey)	College students	Elicitation Survey	Excitement, competence, ruggedness, malignancy, conservatism, peacefulness,
Hosany, Ekinici, and Uysal (2006)	3 unspecified UK cities	British nationals	Survey	Excitement, sincerity, conviviality
Ekinic and Hosany (2006)	Various destinations European cities	British travellers	Survey	Excitement, sincerity, conviviality

Table 1: Studies on the destination brand personality of cities

European Capital City	Tourist Arrivals to the Country	Official Website	Number of Words mined from City websites
1 Paris, France	84,452	www.visitparisregion.com - Paris Convention and Visitor Bureau	125, 945
2 Madrid, Spain	68,215	www.esmadrid.com/en - Tourism Board	131, 613
3 Rome, Italy	50,732	www.turismoroma.it - Tourism Board	123, 093
4 Berlin, Germany	34,972	www.visitberlin.de - Tourism Board	137, 348
5 London, United Kingdom	34,436	www.visitlondon.com - Tourism Board	81, 421
6 Moscow, Russian Federation	31, 346	www.moscow.info - Tourism Board	36, 341
7 Vienna, Austria	26,719	www.wien.info - Tourism Board	100, 398
8 Athens, Greece	23,599	www.thisisathens.org - Athens Convention and Visitor Bureau	75, 738
9 Warsaw, Poland	16,728	www.warsawtour.pl/en - Tourism Board	37, 482
10 Amsterdam, Netherlands	15,007	www.iamamsterdam.com – Amsterdam Convention Bureau	61, 694

Table 2: Top ten European capital cities of most visited countries by rank order.

4. Findings

4.1 Scale development

Based on the frequency of occurrence of each synonym under each trait for each city and in turn for each dimension, the top five traits under each dimension for each city were identified. The traits shown in Figure 1 are the top five traits in terms of frequency of occurrence in the dataset across all ten cities. The scale in Figure 1 has the same dimensions as in Kaplan et al. (2010)'s scale. The personality traits listed under the dimensions, however, differ from those in Kaplan's scale, because they have their origin in the synonym list developed for this research.

Projected Destination Brand Personality Scale for European Capital Cities					
Competence	Conservatism	Excitement	Malignancy	Peacefulness	Ruggedness
Leader	Villager	Elite	Shrewd	Sincere	Coward
Mature	Poor	Popular	Respectable	Modern	Ruggedness
Clever	Religious	Extraordinary	Self-seeking	Decent	Rough
Reticent	Devout	Creative	Stingy	Tolerant	Rebellious
Strong	Cool	Stylish	Barefaced	Peaceful	Harsh

Figure 1: The projected destination brand personality scale

4.2 The projected destination personalities of ten European capital cities

The frequency of associations between each of the European capital cities and the brand personality dimensions is presented in Table 3. Table 3 presents a number of findings. Firstly, it displays the total number of words in the dataset for each city. This is related to the size of the dataset, so comparing cities is difficult, however it is argued that cities with more words in the dataset, such as Paris, are being more proactive in communicating their DBP than those with fewer words in the dataset, such as Warsaw. Table 3 also presents the dimensions and their traits that occur most frequently in the combined dataset (total row). ‘Excitement’ is significantly more in evidence in projected personality than any of the other dimensions. That is, all ten cities want to communicate a sense of excitement to potential and actual visitors although some DMO’s are more diligent than others. Other important dimensions are peacefulness, and competence, respectively.

Figure 2 presents the data in Table 3 in bar graph format. This has the advantage of displaying the level of occurrence for a specific dimension, as a percentage, of the total occurrences of dimensions for that city. In relation to Athens, for example, ‘conservatism’ has 188 incidences (Table 3) of the total incidences for all personality dimensions of 2462; the graph shows that for Athens, ‘conservatism’ contributes 8% to its projected DBP profile. Furthermore, the graph clearly shows that for every city ‘excitement’ constitutes a significant proportion of its projected DBP (from 45% to 66%). It also shows which cities are being more proactive in communicating this dimension, with London, Amsterdam and Vienna taking the lead. The second most important dimension is ‘peacefulness’, which may be attributed to the relaxation and leisure that tourists often seek. Possibly consistent with its high ranking on excitement, London is the lowest city on peacefulness, with Madrid, Rome, Athens, Warsaw, and Moscow, respectively emphasizing peacefulness the most. Rankings of

‘competence’, ‘malignancy’ and ‘conservatism’ are all relatively low suggesting that, whilst these DBP dimensions may feature more strongly in perceived DBP, these are not personality dimensions that places seek to promote. Finally, ‘ruggedness’ is very low for all cities; ruggedness is argued to be more likely associated with country and coastal locations.

European Capital City	Destination Brand Personality Dimensions						<i>Total</i>
	Competence	Conservatism	Excitement	Malignancy	Peacefulness	Ruggedness	
Paris	355	154	2314	192	709	115	<i>3 839</i>
Madrid	332	193	1689	174	729	81	<i>3 198</i>
Rome	265	171	1460	203	662	81	<i>2 842</i>
Berlin	368	146	1928	219	761	90	<i>3 512</i>
London	332	93	2035	201	384	53	<i>3 098</i>
Moscow	118	67	431	91	226	31	<i>964</i>
Vienna	239	90	1678	125	581	75	<i>2 788</i>
Athens	245	188	1231	160	562	76	<i>2 462</i>
Warsaw	82	93	454	85	217	23	<i>954</i>
Amsterdam	169	54	1110	109	341	32	<i>1 815</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2 505</i>	<i>1 249</i>	<i>14 330</i>	<i>1 559</i>	<i>5 172</i>	<i>657</i>	<i>25 472</i>

Table 3: Distribution of destination brand personality dimensions

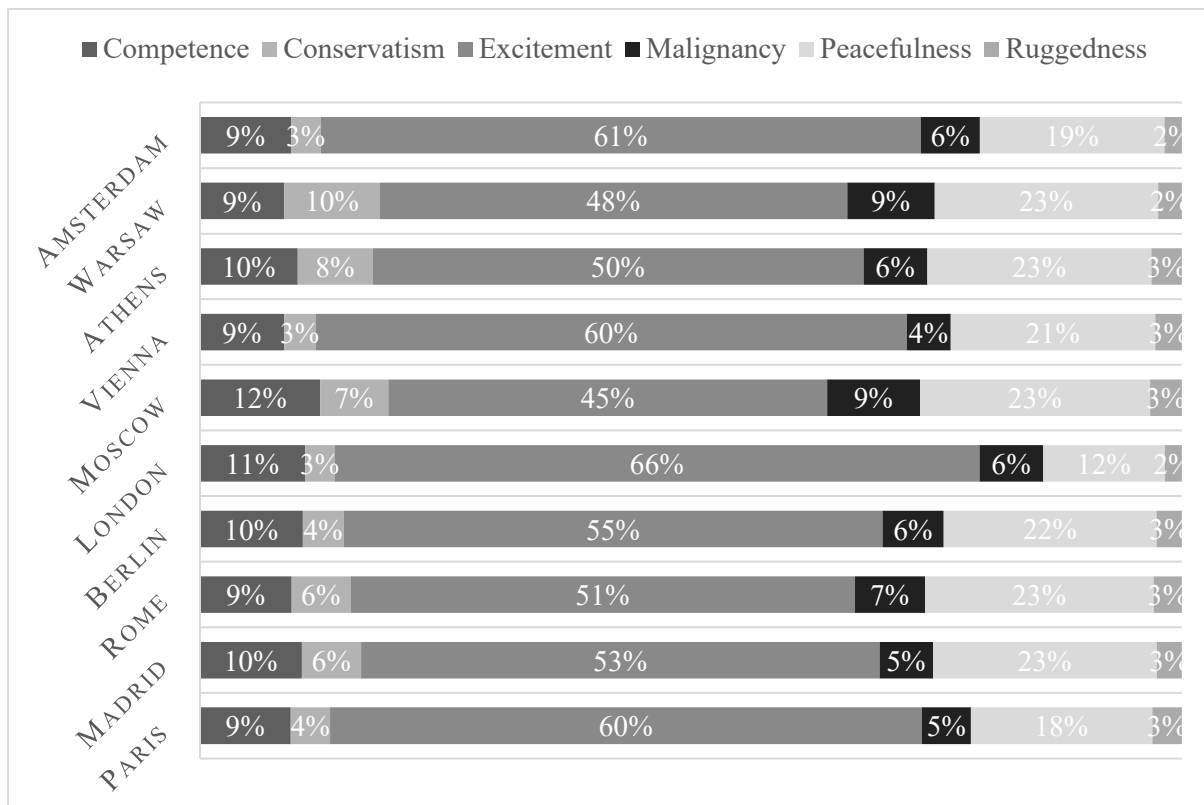


Figure 2: Relative frequency of destination brand personality dimensions for each European capital city

4.3 Correspondence analysis

In support of the correspondence analysis, a chi-square test was conducted using the data in Table 3; the test confirms a significant association between destination brand personality dimensions and projected city destination personalities (χ^2 , 561.5338; Df, 45; $P < 0.001$).

The correspondence map (Figure 3) reveals the positioning of the city websites in relation to the DBP dimensions but also how the websites (columns) and the dimensions (rows) relate to each other (Sourial et al., 2010; Yelland, 2010). In order to determine the dimensionality of a correspondence map, the eigenvalues and the cumulative proportion explained by the dimensions must be examined (Greenacre, 2016; Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006). The cumulative proportion accounts for 91% of the total variance, with eigenvalues and explained proportions of 0.017 and 0.765 for the first dimension, and 0.003 and 0.144 for the second dimension respectively (Table 4). For ease of interpretation (Bendixen, 1995; Greenacre, 2016; Pitt et al., 2007; Sourial et al., 2010), a two-dimensional correspondence map is chosen to present the results (Figure 3).

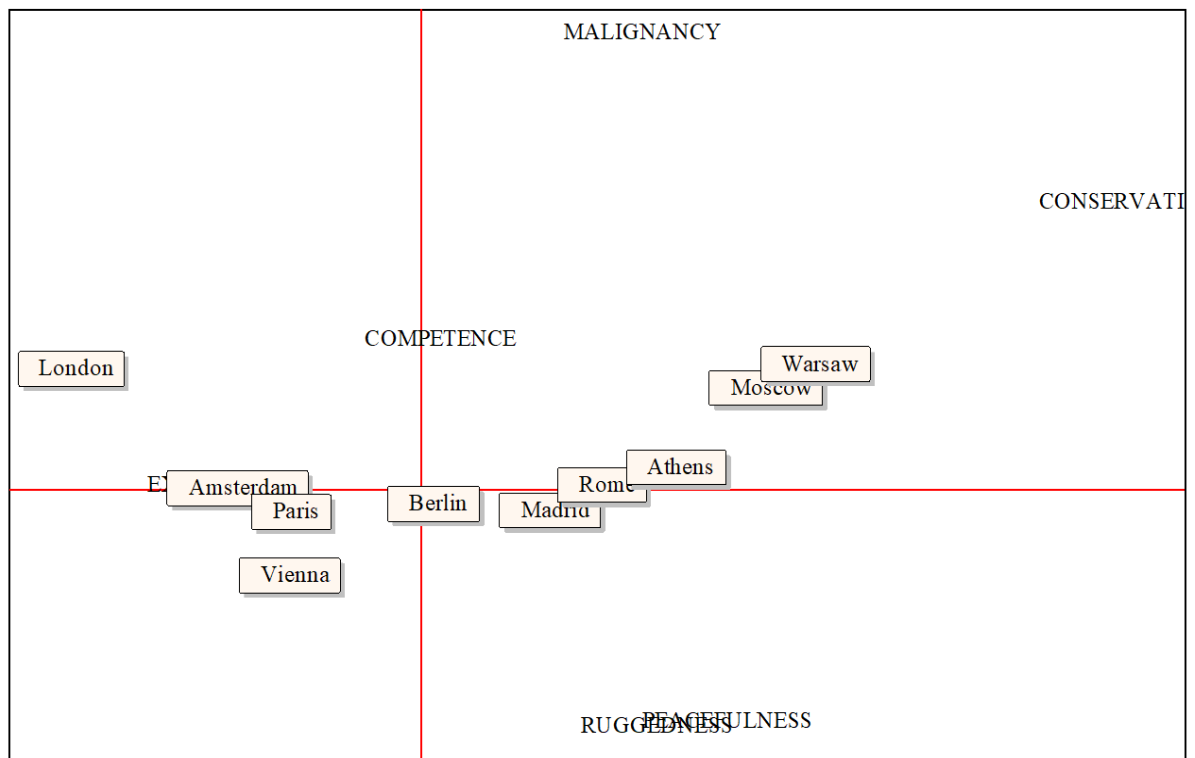


Figure 3: Correspondence analysis: map of ten European capital cities' projected DBP. The point of origin is where the axes meet. (Figure as presented in the output from QDA Miner)

Eigenvalues			
<i>Eigenvalues</i>	<i>Percentages</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	
0.017	76.500	76.500	
0.003	14.404	90.904	
0.001	5.163	96.067	
Variable Coordinates			
<i>Item</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>
Amsterdam	- 0.114	- 0.007	- 0.026
Athens	0.157	0.014	0.038
Berlin	0.007	- 0.022	- 0.048
London	- 0.217	0.104	0.004
Madrid	0.079	- 0.027	0.008
Moscow	0.213	0.087	- 0.089
Paris	- 0.081	- 0.029	0.031
Rome	0.111	- 0.004	- 0.012
Vienna	- 0.082	- 0.088	0.008
Warsaw	0.243	0.108	0.066
Words/Categories Coordinates			
<i>Item</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>
Competence	0.055	0.817	- 1.433
Conservatism	2.637	1.582	3.004
Excitement	- 0.776	- 0.010	0.375
Malignancy	0.809	2.547	- 1.710
Peacefulness	1.133	- 1.342	- 0.645
Ruggedness	0.866	- 1.376	0.708

Table 4: Correspondence analysis detail

Figure 3 indicates a more similar distribution of synonyms among the dimensions of ‘ruggedness’ and ‘peacefulness’ relative to the total distribution of all synonyms within the dimensions. Equally, relative to all dimensions, ‘malignancy’ and ‘conservatism’ have distributions that are more singular in nature. In addition, the map reveals the similarities amongst projected city DBP with three clear groupings; Warsaw and Moscow (1), Athens, Rome and Madrid and potentially Berlin (2), and Amsterdam, Paris and Vienna (3). London’s DBP stands alone. Further, on closer inspection, while Warsaw and Moscow have similarities, they along with London, are situated further away from their corresponding points of origin when compared to the entire sample of the websites.

However, when examining the relationships between the columns and rows, interpretation of the correspondence map should be made with caution given that columns and rows are scaled independently (Sourial et al., 2010; Yelland, 2010). For example, it is inaccurate to infer the prevalence of closeness between a city website (column) and personality dimension (row) based on their proximity on the correspondence map. Therefore, while the distance between the websites and the dimensions has no interpretable meaning, the simplest way to determine the strength of the relation is to draw a line from the categories corresponding points in the plot to the point of origin (Provalis Research, 2010; Yelland, 2010). If the angle between the two lines is ‘acute’, then the dimension occurs more often in the observed city website than it does on average in the whole sample. Conversely, if the angle is ‘obtuse’, the dimension occurs less often in relation to the observed city website than in the overall sample. Table 5 presents interpretation of the correspondence map, while Figure 4 provides a visual example of the interpretation with respect to Moscow and the dimensions of ‘malignancy’ and ‘excitement’; it appears that the dimension of ‘malignancy’ occurs more often than average in Moscow, while ‘excitement’ occurs less often.

Destination Brand Personality Dimensions												
European Capital City	Competence	Degree A/O	Conservatism	Degree A/O	Excitement	Degree A/O	Malignancy	Degree A/O	Peacefulness	Degree A/O	Ruggedness	Degree A/O
Paris	O	110	O	170	A	15	O	130	O	130	O	120
Madrid	O	93	A	35	O	170	A	80	A	30	A	35
Rome	A	83	A	25	O	180	A	70	A	40	A	50
Berlin	O	130	A	70	O	130	O	110	A	10	A	5
London	A	70	O	135	A	20	A	90	O	160	O	150
Moscow	A	70	A	10	O	160	A	50	A	60	A	65
Vienna	O	130	O	170	A	35	O	150	O	100	O	90
Athens	A	80	A	20	O	185	A	60	A	40	A	55
Warsaw	A	65	A	5	O	160	A	50	A	60	A	70
Amsterdam	O	100	O	150	A	9	O	115	O	140	O	130

Table 5: A = acute, O = obtuse

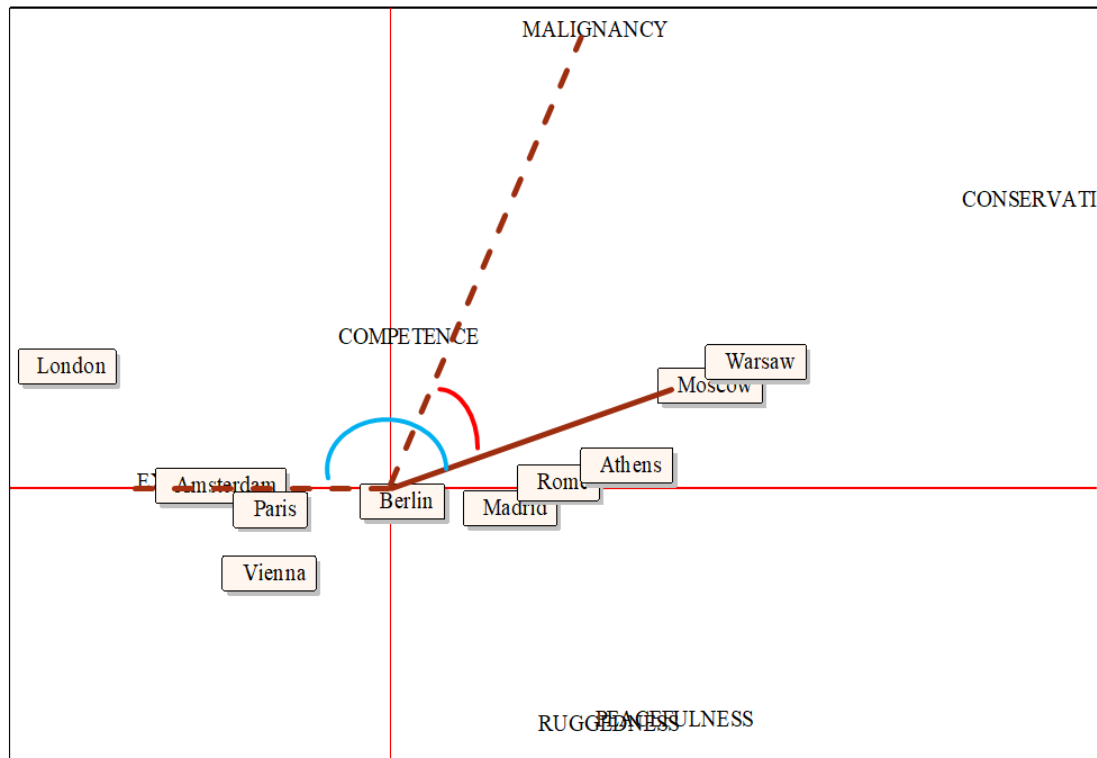


Figure 4: Visual example of the interpretation of the correspondence map.

4.4 Interpretation of correspondence analysis and its exemplification

The following comments on the findings from the correspondence analysis as reported in Figure 3 and Table 6; interpretation of the results is dependent on whether the angle between the city website and the DBP is obtuse or acute, and on the size of these angles. Care needs to be taken in interpreting this data. For example, whilst Vienna is positioned closer to ‘excitement’ on the correspondence map, London has a stronger association with the dimension, as indicated by the smaller acute angle (Table 5). Interpretation is further supported with various illustrative comments from the city websites.

Amsterdam, Paris, London and Vienna’s projected DBPs are more strongly associated with ‘excitement’ than those of the remaining cities. An examination of the content of these websites illustrates this summary to be a reasonable representation. Amsterdam is presented as a tourism destination with contemporary architecture and neighborhoods as cultural

hotspots. For instance, Oots is “ethnically diverse and strikingly spacious...[it] is known for its wide streets lined by monumental...and...vibrant cultural mix”, whilst Noord has “vast green expanses and charming little villages plus some of the city's most cutting-edge architecture, exciting festivals, artist studios and stylish waterside hangouts with beautiful terraces”. Paris is portrayed as “futuristic, audacious and original”. Its communications emphasise luxury, elegance and romance, in respect of the city’s cuisine, fashion and architectural design. Similarly, the website for London communicates both the history, and the cosmopolitan nature of the city. For instance, “with its alternative vibe, Camden [town] is abuzz with famous markets, live music venues and street performers. Away from the bustle, there’s also a picture-pretty canal and some gorgeous green spaces to explore”, while the West End is “...this dazzling area [that] is home to spectacular shopping streets, a top-notch restaurant scene and a world-famous theatre district”.

Rome, Athens, Madrid and Berlin are most strongly associated with ‘peacefulness’. Arguably, because of their tumultuous pasts, all of these cities’ websites are characterized by a strong grounding in history and culture and suggest an appreciation of the value of peace. Rome’s DMO website presents the city’s heritage in relation to each of its classical, archeological and religious landmarks; it looks back to a time when Rome was the capital of the known world, and acknowledges its role as the seat of the Catholic Church. Athens website boasts of “...historic walk[s] and...charming old-style neighborhoods, oases away from the hustle and bustle of the city center...”. Finally, the website for Berlin acknowledges the city’s rich, textured and tangible past; “...you can still sense Berlin’s turbulent past at the city’s many memorial sites along the Berlin Wall trail”, but also characterizes the city as a destination that embraces personal freedom and creativity. For instance, the district of

Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg “...is not just the coolest in Berlin, but the hippest location in the entire universe...”

In relation to ‘conservatism’, Warsaw and Moscow are the strongest cities associated with this personality dimension. Moscow is portrayed as a traditional Russian city; it is “...a living museum to a millennium of political, religious and cultural history”. The website demonstrates how the city’s soviet past collides with its capitalist present and how the Orthodox Church has helped to define the city. Moscow’s novel theatres have reclaimed leadership in the dramatic arts, and its traditional markets have been revived; the city continues to refurbish itself.

Finally, Madrid, Rome, Athens, Warsaw and Moscow, project interesting profiles in that relative to the other cities (excluding Berlin), they do not exhibit a strong association with ‘excitement’. Furthermore, given that, they all have acute angles for the remaining dimensions, they do not communicate a personality that is more strongly aligned with one personality dimension. This could be regarded as a strength or a weakness. Given that people typically have a range of personality traits, and the extent to which one or more of those traits dominates varies between individuals, destinations that have a more balanced appeal, may also find a position in the marketplace.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1 Implications for theory

There is increasing evidence that an alignment between a visitor’s personality, and DBP has a significant impact on intentions to purchase products, travel to and develop ties with a place (Murphy et al., 2007a; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2015; Usakli & Balogulu, 2011). This evidence has fuelled interest in understanding the nature of destination

personality, and how that personality can be captured and communicated in the destination branding process. However, there are a number of gaps in theory development and testing in the realm of DBP. The most significant of these are discussed below.

5.1.1 Developing a projected destination brand personality scale

A key challenge is the development of one or more measurement scales for DBP.

Researchers have approached the development of measurement scales using various methods, with most adopting or adapting Aaker's scale for product brand personality (e.g. Bekk et al., 2015; Dickinger & Lalicic, 2016). However, there is a lively critique in the literature (e.g. Huang et al., 2014; Pan et al., 2017) that suggests that a scale that was originally proposed for product brands is unsuitable for capturing the multi-faceted personality of a place or destination. Others have developed their own scale, based on an initial elicitation process (e.g. Kaplan et al., 2010; Kumar & Nayak, 2014; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013) but with considerable variation in the scales generated. This variation may result from the differing nature and culture (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2017; Matzler et al., 2016; Sung & Choi, 2010) of the destinations studied, the respondents, or the research process. Additionally, with the exception of studies that have used Aaker's scale, there is a limited number of studies that have sought to replicate scales (Apostopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2015; Kumar & Nayak, 2014; Upadhyya, 2012). Indeed, those using scales other than Aaker's, have adopted a range of different scales (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Kaplan et al., 2010; Kuma & Nyak, 2014; Pike 2009; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013). Hence, it would appear that further research is needed to establish whether it is possible to develop a generic scale, and if so, to establish its dimensions and traits. Accordingly, this research, whilst grounded on the practice of other researchers (e.g. Kumar & Nayak, 2014; Rojas-Mendez et al., 2013), uses the only other scale

developed for cities, Kaplan et al. (2010)'s scale as a point of departure, and demonstrates the transferability of Kaplan et al. (2010)'s dimensions to a different context. It is noted, however, that the traits identified by Kaplan et al. (2010) and those identified in this study differ, possibly due to the nature and cultural backgrounds of the cities studied.

Arguably however, the most important distinction is that this study focusses on projected DBP, whereas Kaplan et al. (2010), in common with most other researchers, explore perceived DBP (e.g. Hosany et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2013). One of the two studies to examine projected DBP, Kim and Lehto (2013), found significant differences between the projected DBP (as communicated through official tourism websites), and the perceived DBP based on a survey.

5.1.2 Profiling the relative positioning of destination brand personalities

One of the primary purposes of destination branding is to ensure that the destination's identity is communicated in a competitive marketplace, in which destination substitutability presents a significant challenge (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Hence, it is not sufficient to be able to characterize and communicate a destination's personality. It is also essential to be able to manage its positioning relative to other destinations. Given the importance of understanding DBP positioning, the body of research in this field is surprisingly limited. Only six studies have considered the relative positioning of destinations on the basis of DBP to varying extents and from various angles; all have studied the positioning of nations, of which five have focused on perceived DBP (e.g. d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Ishii and Watanabe, 2015; Kim et al., 2013). Only Pitt et al. (2007) undertook a study that focussed on projected DBP and positioning, studying this for ten African countries using content and correspondence analysis. Given the importance of measuring projected DBP, and of

positioning, and the paucity of studies of these topics, this research makes a significant contribution by demonstrating the value of the approach adopted by Pitt et al. (2007).

5.2 Implications for management

There is no research on whether DMO's are consciously intending to communicate a specific and distinct destination brand personality. In addition, it may be that they do not all have a planned branding strategy, and it is certainly the case that investment in destination branding will vary between cities. If (as it should be) (Hanna & Rowley, 2011), it is the DMO's intention to strategically communicate a distinct DBP, then a projected DBP scale can assist DMO's by increasing their awareness of the personality dimensions and traits embedded in their communications through various digital channels, including websites and social media. In addition, the application of a projected DBP scale would support DMO's in monitoring and managing their projected personality over time, and exploring the consistency of the projected DBP through different channels, including social media those in which the voices of visitors, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders might predominate. Indeed, Kendall and Gursoy (2007) suggest that since projected DBP data is relatively easy and inexpensive to gather, efficiencies in the processes associated with assessing the positioning of destinations can be achieved through analysing DBP's of competitor destinations. Finally, it would be beneficial for stakeholders, DMO's and academics to collaborate in exploring best practice regarding approaches to the measurement or assessment of the relationship between perceived and projected DBP for specific cities and other destinations.

For managers, this research also draws attention to the issue of the positioning of destinations, relative to potential competitor destinations. More specifically, for capital cities, an analysis of their projected personality relative to that of other destinations, could inform

strategic development and investment, leading to a more coherent and stronger identity, reinforced by more focussed communication. On the other hand, it is important to acknowledge that changing a DBP is likely to be a lengthy process, with many political nuances, since DMO's are accountable to a diverse range of publics and stakeholders (Pike, 2009). However, importantly, the use of correspondence maps is a reminder that no destination (or product, organisation or person) positions itself on only one dimension, but rather combines elements of different dimensions, with some being more central to their identity than others are, but all are contributing to the destination's success.

5.3 Limitations and further research

This study has widened the ongoing debate regarding the development of a measurement scale for destination and place brand personality. The study offers an insight into projected DBP based on European cities using Kaplan et al. (2010)'s rather than Aaker's (1997) scale, however it has not resolved the issues associated with the measurement of DBP. Hence, there is considerable scope for further research into the measurement of DBP, including scale development(s) and their applicability in different contexts (e.g. tourism, product evaluation) and cultures. Particularly pressing is research into projected DBP, given the increasing use of digital platforms, including social media, by both DMO's and travellers, to communicate the essence of destinations. A further interesting line of investigation would be the role of images and moving images in communicating the projected DBP.

In addition, this research has contributed to exploring approaches for positioning destinations on the basis of their DBP. In this context, it has also demonstrated the application and value of correspondence analysis. Notwithstanding, there is significant scope for further research in relation to the positioning of various destinations such as coastal

regions, tourist attractions, winter sports venues, and districts within cities. Moreover, research on profiling destination personality that explores the role of culture in the formulation of both projected and perceived DBP, as well as on the relative positioning of perceived vs projected DBP is needed. This should include further research into the nature and roles of self-congruity in people's responses to destinations and places. It would also be beneficial to undertake investigations with DMO's that explore their view on the importance of DBP in marketing communications, including their notions of dimensions and traits, and of relative positioning.

Finally, there is an emerging body of research into the role of social media in destination branding. Whilst this is beyond the scope of this study, it is an important consideration for further research. For example, building on de Rosa et al. (2017)'s research that compares the communicative capacity of DMO websites with forum discussion on TripAdvisor, there is scope for further exploration of the relationship between the projected DBP's of DMO communication and peer traveller communication. Dickinger and Lalicic (2016) compare the outcomes of content analysis of Trip Advisor reviews and a survey that explored the DBP of Vienna. Interestingly, the dimensions of excitement, sophistication and ruggedness were much more strongly represented in tourist's comments on Trip Advisor, than they were in the survey. Going forward, research into DBP must not only consider scales, perceived and projected DBP, and positioning, but also the variety of channels and players.

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