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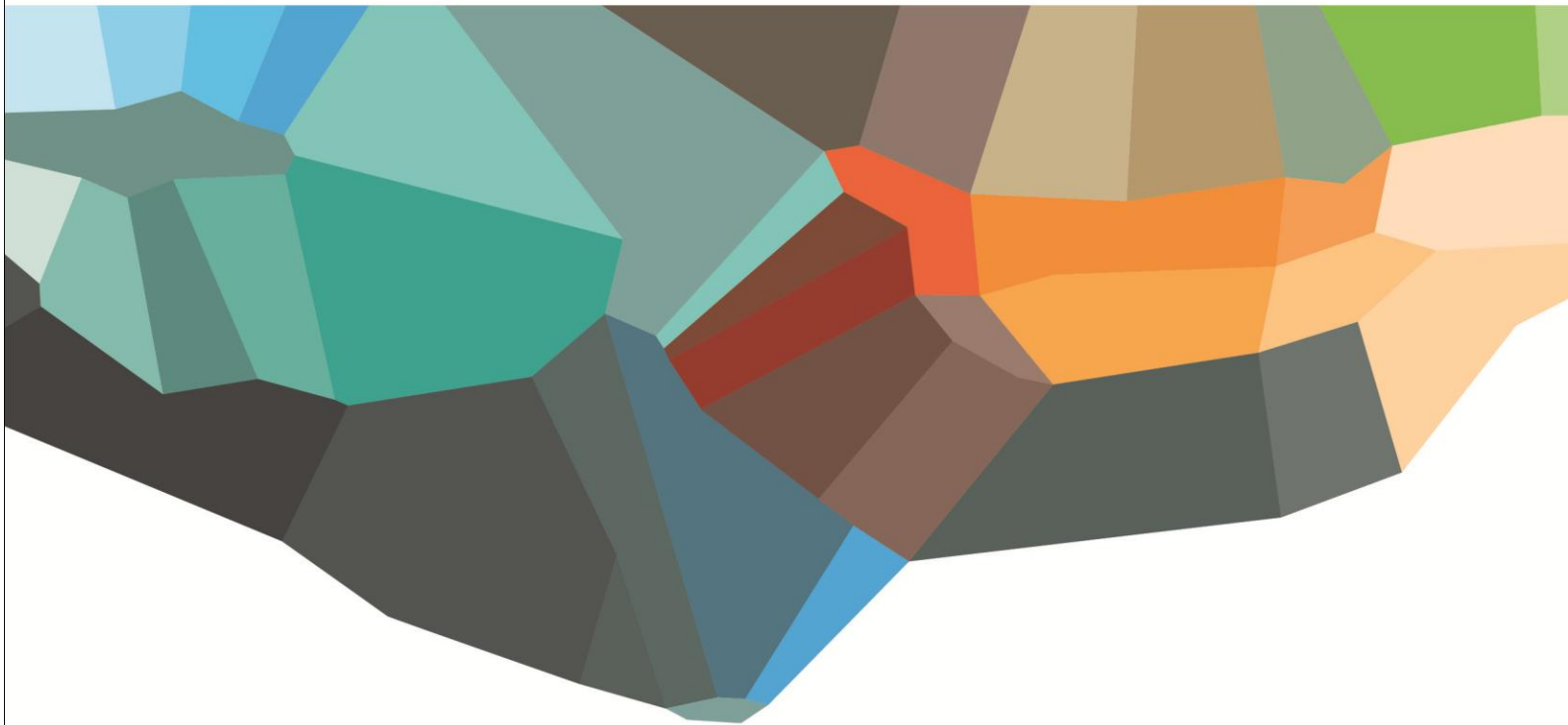
MASTER THESIS

BRAND PERRSONALITY OF TOURISM DESTINATION
The case of Kathmandu, Nepal

By

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ABSTRACT

Destination brand personality is a very young discipline, in which very few studies have been conducted during the past two decades. This study deals with the brand personality of a cultural tourism destination, Kathmandu Nepal. The study will figure out different destination personality dimensions of Kathmandu .

The findings of the study show that there exist five different personality dimensions for a cultural tourism destination. “Solidity”, “Attractiveness”, “Excitement”, “Honesty” and “Hospitality” dimensions were explored from the factor analysis. The findings suggest conducting more researches on different types of tourism destination so as to set a definite scale of brand personality for all types of tourism destination.

This study helps the marketers to position their destination depending upon the perceived personality dimensions. This leads to increase in number of tourists in their destination and in turn increase in revenue.

PREFACE

The logic behind the choice of topic is my passion towards “Branding and consumer behavior”. Seeing the future of tourism in Nepal pushed me to take this decision.

With the study of different articles, it is found that there have not been any researches on the brand perception of tourists upon cultural tourism destination. This gave the desire to make a contribution in the field.

In September / October 2013, primary data was collected and the task was completed in November 2013.

I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Tor Korneliussen at Bodø University College / University of Nordland for a good guidance.

Bodø, November 2013, Rajesh Kumar Sharma.

SUMMARY

Several studies were conducted on brand personality in the past. But, destination brand personality is relatively young field in which very few researches were made. Aaker (1997) found five brand personality dimensions (Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness) of 39 products and services. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) were the first researcher to make a research on destination brand personality using Aaker's (1997) model. Then after, Murphy et al. (2007b), Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010), and Kim and Lehto, (2012) respectively used Aaker's (1997) scale in their destination brand personality studies. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009) were not specific on destination choice. Murphy et al. (2007b) chose natural tourism destination; Whitsundays and Cairns region of Australia. Usakli and Baloglu's (2010) study was based on a gambling city, Las Vegas, whereas Kim and Lehto's (2012) research was based on country's (South Korea) brand personality. Thus, the main objective has been set by the present study to explore the brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu among international tourists. The study is limited to cultural tourism destination.

The study was conducted in two stages. First 30 respondents were asked to describe Kathmandu if it were a person. This resulted 7 new items other than 27 personality traits as described by Ekinici and Hosany (2006). In the second stage, questionnaire related to the "Destination Brand Personality of Kathmandu" were distributed among 393 respondents. There were 29 dropouts with 364 usable questionnaires which were analyzed using SPSS 19 with 5-point (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree) Likert scale.

The principal component analysis of the data identified five dimensions- "Solidity", "Attractiveness", "Excitement", "Sincerity" and "Hospitality". The total variance of 27.6% is explained by the dimension "Attractiveness" with eight personality traits. This verifies "Attractiveness" is the major personality dimension of a cultural tourism destination. The five dimensions closely resemble with Aaker's (1997) BPS model. This assures the existence of destination brand personality in the cultural tourism destination. Further research should explore the personality of various types of tourism destinations so as to build a universal measuring tool of brand personality to all types of tourism destination.

Dedicated to my wife, Anju Pathak Sharma.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement and Delimitation	4
1.3 Theoretical and Practical Consideration	5
1.4 Task Structure	6
2.0 THEORY	7
2.1 Branding	7
2.2 Destination Branding	7
2.3 Brand Personality	8
2.4 Destination brand personality	9
2.5 Literature review	10
3.0 METHOD	19
3.1 Research method	19
3.2 Setting and selection	19
3.2.1 Apparel Procedure	19
3.2.2 Sample size	19
3.2.3 Apparel Equipment	20
3.3 Measurement	20
3.4 Reliability and Validity	20
3.5 Data analysis	22
4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	24
4.1 Analysis	24
4.1.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Kathmandu	25
4.1.2 Brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu	27

4.2 Discussion	28
4.3 Chapter Summary	31
5.0 CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS	33
5.1 Conclusion	33
5.2 Implications	34
5.3 Limitations	35
REFERENCES	37
APPENDICES	45

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: A Brand Personality Framework	11
Table 2.2: Destination brand personality dimensions	12
Table 2.3: Explored destination brand personality dimensions	12
Table 2.4: Brand personality dimensions for the Whitsundays region	13
Table 2.5: Brand personality dimensions for the Cairns region	14
Table 2.6: Brand personality of a destination	15
Table 2.7: Destination personality items	16
Table 2.8: Brand personality items	17
Table 4.1 Exploratory factor analysis of Kathmandu	25

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu	27
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OVERVIEW OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire	45
Appendix 2 Reliability analysis of brand personality items	47
Appendix 3 Exploratory factor analysis of brand personality items	49

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Destinations boost the similar branding characteristics such as beautiful scenery, golden beaches, blue seas or friendly places in their advertisements (Ekinici et al., 2007; Murphy, Benckendorff, & Moscardo, 2007b; Usakli and Baloglu, 2010). However, there are number of destinations using such characteristics (Usakli and Baloglu, 2010). This type of boosting does not make a difference at present. If a destination wants to be recognized with a distinct brand, destination personality can be seen as a viable metaphor to succeed (Ekincy and Hosany, 2006). Keeping this in mind, the focus should be given to the different attributes so as to build a distinct brand image.

A separate brand personality shapes an exclusive memory for consumers and strengthens brand equity (Aaker, 1997; Lee and Suh, 2011; Park and Jung, 2010; Sung and Tinkham, 2005; Yi and La, 2002). In modern marketing, brand personality is emerging as a highly influential aspect of brand management (Kim and Lehto, 2012). People are described in terms of their perceived personalities; so are described the brands in terms of perceived human characteristics known as brand personality (Aaker, 1997). Aaker (1997) found five brand personality dimensions for the consumer brands and termed as brand personality scale (BPS). Aaker's (1997) BPS includes "sincerity", "excitement", "competence", "sophistication", and "ruggedness" dimensions.

Brand personality of a tourist destination creates a unique identity (Ekinici and Hosany, 2006), and can help to improve a tourist destination image (Hosany et al., 2006; Hosany et al., 2007). Brand personality can demarcate tourism destinations (Murphy et al., 2007b) and is essential to build any tourism destination as a brand (Ekinici and Hosany, 2006). Brand personality can give consumers symbolic effects (Aaker, 1996b) and make a holiday of a tourist destination to a status symbol and expression of a lifestyle (Aaker, 1996b; Clarke, 2000). A destination brand personality can affect the preference and choice of tourist destination (Crockett and Wood 1999, 2002, Murphy et al., 2007a), and raise interest for a tourism destination (Crockett and Wood, 2002). Tourists are more satisfied with a holiday visit, when the tourist's self is in accordance

with the perceived brand personality to tourism destination (Murphy et al., 2007a). Brand personality of a tourism destination can also upgrade the tourist's loyalty (Ekinici and Hosany,2006).

Destinations are more attractive than they were in the past. Kathmandu is the political as well as cultural capital of Nepal. Not only Kathmandu is rich in ancient traditions, it has become successful to be introduced with a modern city with advanced technologies too. However, the adoption of latest technologies is not harming the position of ancient technologies. The exquisite and solid art and architecture of Lichchhavi and Malla periods have retained the image of Kathmandu as cultural capital. Due to this reason, Kathmandu Valley had been enlisted in World Heritage List in 1979.

Number of cultural sites can be observed in Kathmandu. Some of the majors are as:

KATHMANDU DURBAR SQUARE

“Durbar” is a Nepali word which stands for “palace” in English. Kathmandu Durbar Square is the area around the old royal palace (Hanuman Dhoka Royal Palace). It is situated in the heart of the city, 15km away from Tribhuvan International Airport. Kathmandu Durbar Square comprises of Hanuman Dhoka Royal Palace, Taleju Temple (temple of Goddess named Taleju), Kumari Ghar (the residence of the Living Goddess, Kumari), “Kal Bhairav” (god of terror) and many small temples.

PATAN DURBAR SQUARE

Patan Durbar Square is situated in the heart of Lalitpur city, which is 10 km away from Kathmandu city centre. It consists of numerous art and architecture from the Malla period. The art and architecture are so brilliant that one may confuse whether it is modern or ancient. Thus, the art itself has a distinct name known as “Lalit Kala” (Lalit Art). “Krishna Mandir” (temple of

Lord Krishna), Bhimsen Mandir (temple of Lord Bhimsen), “Viswanath Mandir” (temple of Lord Shiva) and “Taleju Bhawani Mandir” (temple of goddess Taleju).

BHAKTAPUR DURBAR SQUARE

Bhaktapur Durbar Square is situated in the heart of Bhaktapur town, which 20 km east of Kathmandu city centre. It comprises of 55 Window Palace, Golden Gate, Lion’s Gate, Mini Pashupati temple (mini temple of god Shiva), Vatsala Temple (temple of goddess Vatsala) , Nyatapola Temple (5-storey temple) and Bhairav Nath Temple (temple of god Bhairav).

SWAYAMBHUNATH STUPA

Swayambhunath stupa is oldest monument in Nepal. It is situated 3 km west of the City centre. There are numerous shrines, monasteries and temples in its premises. According to “Swayambhu Puran” (a Buddhist scripture), Kathmandu valley was a big lake in the past. A flame appeared in the middle of the lake. The water was drained out by Manjushri (One of the thirteen Buddhas) and settled down the valley and named the valley as “Swayambhu” meaning “self-created”.

PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE

Pashupatinath temple is situated 15 km east of Kathmandu city centre and just a walking distance from Tribhuvan International Airport. This is the temple of Lord Shiva and is regarded as the holiest temple for Hindus. Thousands of Hindus from around the world visits the temple in different occasions, and especially in “Maha Shivaratri” (the day when lord Shiva is believed to was borned).The temple is famous for its golden roofs and silver gates.

BOUDDHANATH STUPA

Bouddhanath stupa is situated 16 km from Kathmandu city centre. Bauddhanath is the largest stupa in Kathmandu valley and is clearly visible when the airplane is landing at the Tribhuvan International Airport. The stupa is a centre for Buddhist pilgrims.

DHARAHARA:

“Dharahara” is a 50.5m high tower at the centre of Kathmandu city exhibiting its uniqueness since 1832. The tower was built by Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa during the reign of king Pratap Singh Shah. One can climb up and take a 360 degree view of Kathmandu valley here.

1.2 Problem Statement and Delimitation

Research on destination brand personality is relatively a new field of research, which is still on an exploratory stage (Ekinici and Hosany, 2006). It has not yet been developed any valid instrument to measure destination brand personality that is stable across destinations (Murphy et al., 2007b).

Ekinici and Hosany (2006) were the first researchers to examine the dimensions of a destination brand personality. They used Aaker's (1997) industry-neutral brand personality scale (BPS) and applied it to the tourist destinations. This has been followed up by Murphy et al. (2007b), Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010) and Kim and Lehto, (2012).

Studies by Ekinici and Hosany (2006), Murphy et al. (2007b), Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010), and Kim and Lehto, (2012) provided different numbers of dimensions, despite the fact that they all were based on Aaker's (1997) personality traits. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009) were not specific on destination choice. Murphy et al. (2007b) chose natural tourism destination; Whitsundays and Cairns region of Australia. Usakli and Baloglu's (2010) study was

based on a gambling city, Las Vegas, whereas Kim and Lehto's (2012) research was based on country's (South Korea) brand personality. The present study will emphasize on brand personality of cultural tourism destination as perceived by the international tourists.

This survey will be carried out with clear improvements compared to the previous surveys. An uncertainty factor in the studies of Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009) is that they interviewed respondents about their last-visited tourist destination. There is uncertainty associated with Murphy et al.'s (2007b) and Usakli and Baloglu's (2010) sample of respondents too. The sample comprises of a combination of visiting tourists as well as locals. Kim and Lehto, (2012) studied the destination brand personality of South Korea in the perception of only one type of travellers (i.e. U.S. citizens)

Different people perceive brand perception differently. Producers perceive their brand in one way while consumers perceive in another way. The focus of the study should be on the right aspect so that the outcome can help different relevant agencies to sort out their issues. Thus, keeping this in mind, the present study focused on brand personality of a cultural tourism destination as perceived only by the international tourists.

The research question is:

What are the brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu as perceived by the international tourists? Are these dimensions valid for all types of tourism destinations?

1. 3 Theoretical and Practical Consideration

The study contributes to the branding, branding personality, destination branding and destination branding personality literatures. This will be helpful for destination marketers understand the personality dimensions of their brands and sort out the best one.

The current research will be a further development step towards the measurement of brand personality of tourism destinations as conducted by Ekinçi and Hosany (2006), Murphy et al. (2007b) and Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010) and Kim and Lehto, (2012). Unlike previous studies, this survey deals with the brand personality of cultural tourist destination in the views of only international tourists, which is comparatively a new research topic in the field of destination marketing. This study will try to avoid the uncertainty of the present measuring instrument and will find out whether the current measuring instrument can be set as a standard for all the tourism destinations.

The destination marketing organizations (DMOs) can be well benefited if a standard measurement scale of brand personality is developed. Then, DMOs easily can figure out the best suited brand personalities for their destinations and promote them accordingly.

1.4 TASK STRUCTURE

The thesis contains five chapters. The first chapter is about the background, problem statement, contribution and the organization of the study. The second chapter shows a literature review on brand, branding and brand personality of products and destinations. The third chapter provides an intuition about the methods of data collection and data analysis. The fourth chapter analyses the data. The fifth chapter features the conclusions and recommendations with the significance of the findings and implications of the survey. The thesis ends with a list of references and appendices.

In regards to the chapters explained above, the thesis is structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Theory
3. Method
4. Analysis and Discussion
5. Conclusions, Limitations and Implications

2.0 THEORY

2.1 Branding

The term "brand" comes from the Old Norwegian word "brandr" meaning to burn, in the sense of branding cattle, for example clarify ownership of animals (Keller, 2003). Branding has a power to differentiate products by creating different brand elements and it can create value for a firm resulting financial profit (Keller, 1998). The American Marketing Association (2008) defines “a brand as name, term, sign, or combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitors.” Keller (2003) argues a brand for a new product is shaped by creating a new name, logo, or symbol and as a result of this it receives “awareness, reputation, and prominence in the marketplace”.

Aaker’s (1997:7) widely accepted definition of a brand is “to identify the goods or services of whether one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of the competitors.”

2.2 Destination Branding

A branding concept incorporating visitor experience into the process of branding is supported within a tourist destination context (Blain et al., 2005).

Ritchie and Ritchie (1998:103) defines a destination brand as “A name, symbol, logo and word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience”.

Destination branding is concerned with the promotion of the tourist of a country (Szondi, 2007), contributes to the improvement of the overall image and to the creation of a strong brand (Anholt, 2008).

Cai (2002:722) states “destination branding is a strategic combination of a consistent mix of brand elements to identify and distinguish a destination through positive image building and unlike typical goods and services, the name of a destination brand is relatively fixed by the actual geographical name of the place.”

Destination branding is more like an umbrella brand because it permits the individual operators’ brands of destination to have certain characteristics (Gnoth, 2002). In other words, destination affiliated products not only carry destination brand image but also characteristics of the products themselves. This type of branding plays a major role in creating a “halo effect,” i.e. consumers transfer their country image to the product when evaluating unfamiliar products and the country image serves as the halo effect on the products (Han, 1989).

2.3 Brand Personality

Brand personality is defined as the “set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997:347). It induces sentimental links between brands and consumers (Landon, 1974; Ekinci and Hosany, 2006), and gives the latter a tangible reference point, which is vivid, immortal, and more perfect than the sense delivered by a generic offering (Upshaw 1995; Ekinci and Hosany, 2006). In practice, brands can be attributed by personality traits, such as *youthful*, *energetic*, *extrovert*, or *sophisticated* (Keller 1998; Ekinci and Hosany, 2006). For example, one may use the word *masculine* to describe Marlboro cigarettes (Ekinci and Hosany, 2006), young to describe Pepsi (Aaker, 1997) and sophisticated to describe BMW (Phau & Lau, 2000).

Wells et al. (1957) created a checklist of attributes that could be associated with products for the first time. The concept of brand personality was first used by consumer researchers when Martineau (1958) described the symbolic dimensions of shops. Birdwell (1964) studied the relationship between consumers' self-esteem and perceived personality to cars. Dolich (1969) followed up with an analysis of the perceived personality of the car brands influenced consumer's self-image. Plummer (1985) argues that a brand is based on three dimensions: physical attributes, functional attributes and associations related to consumption and personality traits. He found that brands can be described by personality characteristics as "youthful", "colorful" and "noble. Aaker (1996a) argues that a brand's personality creates depth, emotion and

excitement of the relationship between brand and consumer, and that a brand with personality, not unlike a person, missing friends and can easily be overlooked. Aaker (1996a) adds that the brand personality makes a brand more interesting and memorable. Aaker (1996b) relates to measuring brand personality of a brand's value. In measuring brand value uses Aaker (1996b) what he calls "The Brand Equity Ten" consisting of ten factors grouped into five categories. Factor 'associations and differentiation "contains three variables, perceived value, brand personality and business associations (Aaker, 1996b).

Ekinci and Hosani (2006) believes that researches on brand personality have suffered from a lack of common theory and classification of personality attributes. Aaker (1997) began her research in the absence of common theory and gave a "Big Five" model of human personality traits called "Brand Personality Scale". Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) tested the content validity of Aaker's (1997) BPS, and concluded that a personification of brands is natural in regular conversations between consumers and advertisements. Brand personality has been seen as an important factor because it can help to differentiate a brand (Plummer, 1985; McEnally and De Chernatory, 1999). The research shows that in the same way as human personality traits are stable, the brand personality traits become fairly stable over time, even if the marketing activities are changed (Wee, 2004; Fennis and Pryn, 2007). Also by Brand extensions, it is found that the selected people are stable, even if the new products are different from the original ones (Diamantopoulos et al., 2005).

2.4 Destination brand personality

Ekinci and Hosany (2006) define destination personality as the set of human characteristics associated with a destination as perceived by the tourists rather than local residents' viewpoint. Destinations can be expressed by personality characteristics, such as Spain is *friendly* and *family oriented*; London is *open-minded*, *unorthodox*, *vibrant*, and *creative*; and Paris is *romantic* (Morgan and Pritchard 2002).

Destination image has been studied since the early 1970's, when Hunt (1975) conducted his influential research on image to their importance for tourism development. In the last three decades there has been a large increase in research on destination image, while research on the

destination personality is comparatively a new development in academic studies (Ekinci and Hosany, 2006). The only study of brand personality in tourism research prior to Ekinci and Hosany (2006) was, according to Ekinci and Hosany (2006) a study of the restaurant industry of Siguaw et al. (1999). After Ekinci and Hosany's (2006) research on destination brand personality, further contributions were given by Murphy et al. (2007a, 2007b), Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010) and Kim and Lehto, (2012).

Ekinci (2003) defines the relationship between a destination brand and a destination brand personality, with that brand personality is part of the brand: A destination brand personality builds a foundation of a successful destination brand (Ekinci, 2003). Ekinci and Hosany (2006) specifies the difference between a destination image and personality as: Brand Personality is a subcomponent of the image, because a vivid and attractive brand personality is the perceived image of a destination.

Ekinci and Hosany (2006) further developed and adapted Aaker's (1997) personality scale to tourist destinations, and found that tourists ascribe personality traits to tourist destinations. Ekinci and Hosany (2006) also found the marketing effects of brand personality if that destination brand personality has a positive implication on the perceived image of the tourists.

2.5 Literature review

Ekinci and Hosany's (2006) overview of previous measurements of the product and the brand personality, from Birdwell (1964) to Rojas-Méndez et al. (2004), shows that there were four measurements of brand personality before Aaker (1997) released her groundbreaking research.

Aaker (1997) developed the big five model of human personality, developed as the Brand Personality Framework. Each dimension (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness) consists of a set of traits. The traits are measured using 5-point Likert Scale (1 = not at all descriptive, 5 = extremely descriptive).

Aaker (1997) developed an instrument for measuring brand personality of consumer goods The work was based on 309 adjectives derived from "Big Five" personality traits recognized in

psychology to describe human personality. Aaker (1997) reduced these to 114 personality traits and asked respondents grade them whether personality traits could describe brand varieties. Aaker's (1997) principal component analysis resulted five dimensions and 42 personality traits. The set of personality traits that charged against each factor were factor analyzed again. This identified 15 traits that loaded on five factors (Aaker, 1997). Ekinici and Hosany (2006) termed these dimensions as "Brand Personality Scale":

Table 2.1: A Brand Personality Framework

BRAND PERSONALITY				
DIMENSIONS	TRAITS			
Sincerity	Down-to-earth	Honest	Wholesome	Cheerful
Excitement	Daring	Spirited	Imaginative	Up-to-date
Competence	Reliable	Intelligent	Successful	
Sophistication	Upper class	Charming		
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy	Tough		

Source: Aaker J. L. (1997). Dimensions of Brand Personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 352.

First attempt at adapting Aaker's (1997) industry-neutral brand personality scale to tourist destinations was made by Ekinici and Hosany (2006). They believed that the concept of brand personality could also be applied to tourist destinations, and wanted to test the validity of Aaker's (1997) measurement tool. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) justified the choice of Aaker's (1997) measurement instrument that it was the most stable, reliable and comprehensive way to measure brand personality.

Ekinici and Hosany (2006) checked the content validity in the first part of survey. A sample of British respondents was asked to appraise if Aaker's (1997) 42 personality traits were linked with last visited tourist destination. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) found 27 traits as 70% or more of respondents stated that they were well suited to describe the last visited tourist destination:

Table 2.2: Destination brand personality dimensions

Dimensions	Traits						
Sincerity:	Earthy	Family oriented	Honest	Wholesome	Original	Cheerful	Friendly
Excitement:	Daring	Exciting	Spirited	Imaginative	Up-to-date	Independent	
Competence:	Reliable	Secure	Intelligent	Successful	Confident	Responsible	
Sophistication:	Upper Class	Glamorous	Good looking				
Ruggedness:	Outdoorsy	Masculine	Western	Tough	Rugged		

Source: Ekinci Y. and Hosany S. (2006). Destination Personality: An Application of Brand Personality to Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(2), 131.

To test the validity of these 27 traits, Ekinci and Hosany (2006) examined two samples of respectively 148 and 102 respondents. They asked respondents how strongly the various 27 traits could be linked with the recent tourist destination they had visited. This study measured links with various tourist destinations. Respondents were asked to grade the links with a 5-point Likert scale. The data of Ekinci and Hosany (2006) were factor analysed to yield three dimensions as 12 personality traits:

Table 2.3: Explored destination brand personality dimensions

Factors	Traits				
Sincerity:	Reliable	Honest	Intelligent	Successful	Wholesome
Excitement:	Exciting	Daring	Original	Spirited	
Conviviality:	Friendly	Family-oriented	Charming		

Source: Ekinci Y. and Hosany S. (2006). Destination Personality: An Application of Brand Personality to Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(2), 133.

Murphy et al. (2007b) was the first study that measured the brand personality of two specific

destinations. Murphy et al. (2007b) studied the view of the travelers on a route between Whitsundays region and Cairns region in Queensland, Australia. The sample consisted of Australian and foreign tourists who had visited one, both or none of the destinations.

Murphy et al. (2007b) chose to use personality traits as Aaker (1997) had developed. But, only 15 personality traits were analysed rather than Aaker's (1997) 42 personality traits. Murphy et al. (2007b) added five personality traits that exactly matched the names of each of Aaker's (1997) five dimensions, so they analyzed a total of 20 traits in the survey.

Factor analysis of the data from the Whitsundays region identified 20 traits loaded on four factors (Murphy et al., 2007b):

Table 2.4: Brand personality dimensions for the Whitsundays region

Factors	Traits						
Upper class	Sophisticated	Successful	Intelligent	Charming	Reliable	Up-to-date	Competent
Honest	Sincere	Down-to-earth	Wholesome	Reliable	Outdoorsy		
Exciting	Cheerful	Spirited	Imaginative				
Tough	Rugged	Daring					

Source: Murphy et al. (2007b). Using Brand Personality to Differentiate Regional Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 11.

Factor analysis of the data from the Cairns region identified 17 traits loaded on three factors (Murphy, et al., 2007b):

Table 2.5: Brand personality dimensions for the Cairns region

Factors	Traits					
Sincerity:	Reliable	Honest	Intelligent	Down to earth	Wholesome	competent
Sophistication:	Up-to-date	Successful	Upper class	Imaginative	Cheerful	
Outdoorsy:	Rugged	Daring	Exciting	Tough	Spirited	Charming

Source: Murphy et al. (2007b). Using Brand Personality to Differentiate Regional Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 12.

- In their description of the results of the Whitsundays region, Murphy et al. (2007b) found the personality trait "reliable" was an element of two dimensions: upper class and honest, because reliable cross charged against both upper class (0585) and honest (0521). Although Murphy et al.'s (2007b) study of the Whitsundays region and Cairns region was done at the same time period and applied the same personality traits and research methods, factor analysis was done with different numbers of dimensions (3 and 4). Murphy et al. (2007b) concluded that the measuring instrument is unstable across tourist destinations.

Doctoral thesis of Li (2009) measured destination brand personality by asking respondents to describe the personality of last visited tourist destination. Li (2009) used the same 27 traits that Ekinci and Hosany (2006) used. Factor analysis of Li (2009) gave four dimensions as 19 personality traits:

Table 2.6: Brand personality of a destination

Factors	Traits					
Sincerity:	Sincere	Wholesome	Family-oriented	Down-to-earth		
Sophistication:	Upper class	Glamorous	Good looking	Confident	Successful	
Excitement:	Spirited	Daring	Exciting	Imaginative	Original	Cheerful
Ruggedness:	Rugged	Tough	Masculine	Western		

Source: Li X. (2009). An Examination of Effects of Self-Concept, Destination Personality, and SC-DP Congruence on Tourist Behavior. *PhD-Thesis*, 86.

Usakli and Baloglu (2010) analysed the destination personality dimensions of Las Vegas in order to find out the relevance among destination personality, self-congruity, and tourist's behavioral intentions. The study was conducted in two stages. Twenty-eight visitors were asked what would come in their mind instantly when they think about Las Vegas in the first stage. The analysis resulted with 9 unique traits, which were later added to the set of the personality traits. In the second stage, the same sample of visitors was used for the validity test of 42 personality characteristics of Aaker (1997). This analysis generated 23 personality characteristics loaded on 4 dimensions.

The three personality traits, exciting, independent, and unique, which were generated in the first stage, were also among the 23 items resulted in the content validity stage. Thus, the two stages yielded a total of 29 personality traits for the final study.

Usakli and Baloglu (2010) performed the exploratory factor analysis of those 29 personality items and resulted 24 personality traits loaded on five dimensions:

Table 2.7: Destination personality items

Factors	Traits						
Sophistication :	Feminine	Charming	Upper class	Good looking	Glamorous		
Sincerity:	Friendly	Cheerful					
Contemporary :	Unique	Up-to-date	Imaginative	Young	Trendy		
Vibrancy:	Energetic	Alive	Vibrant	Showy	Exciting	Sexy	Daring
Competence:	Leader	Successful	Confident	Indepen dent	Intelligent		

Source: Usakli A. & Baloglu S. (2010). Brand personality of tourist destinations: An application of self-congruity theory. *Tourism Management*, 32(1), 122.

Kim and Lehto (2012) conducted a research to find out the relationship between the projected and perceived destination brand personality of South Korea. Kim and Lehto (2012) followed a three-stage approach. The Korean Tourism Organization (KTO) Website was analyzed to find out the projected brand personality of South Korea in the first stage.

As a second stage, a survey was conducted to determine U.S. travelers' perceptions about the destination brand personality of South Korea (Kim and Lehto, 2012). Kim and Lehto (2012) asked the respondents to provide the first three words that come in their minds when they think of South Korea as a destination. On the other hand, they were also asked to indicate on a 1 to 5 likert scale (1 = perfectly descriptive, 5 = not at all descriptive) in order to know how strongly they associated South Korea as a tourist destination with the five brand personality dimensions and Aaker's (1997) 42 personality traits. Kim and Lehto (2012) used half of the sample to conduct an exploratory factor analysis to determine whether Korea's destination brand personality structure was consistent with Aaker's five-dimension model and used the other half of the sample to conduct confirmatory factor analysis.

In the third stage, the data from the two previous stages were compared to know the convergence or divergence of South Korea's projected brand personality with the US travelers' perception.

The analysis of KTO website identified four words associated with "competence" (developed, technological, etc.) dimension, seven with "sincerity" (family friendly, healthy, genuine, real, etc.) dimension, 16 with "excitement" (young, modern, etc.), two with "sophistication" (glamorous and fancy) (and three with "ruggedness" (thrilling).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of one-half of the sample resulted a seven-factor solution: Excitement, Competence, Sincerity, Sophistication, Ruggedness, Uniqueness, and Family orientation associating 40 personality traits.

Table 2.8: Brand personality items

Factors	Traits									
Excitement:	Trendy	Exciting	Cool	Young	Spirited	Contemporary	Up-to-date	Imaginative	Daring	Independent
Competence:	Corporate	Successful	Technical	Leader	Confident	Intelligent	Hard	Working	Secure	
Sincerity:	Sincere	Honesty	Real	Wholesome	Reliable	Down-to-earth	Friendly			
Sophistication:	Feminine	Good-looking	Glamorous	Charming	Smooth	Upper Class				
Ruggedness	Rugged	Tough	Masculine	Outdoorsy						
Uniqueness:	Original	Unique								
Family Orientation:	Sentimental	Family-oriented								

Source: Kim S. & Lehto X. Y. (2009). Projected and Perceived Destination Brand Personalities : The Case of South Korea. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(1), 124.

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the another half sample validated the dimension structure extracted by EFA.

3.0 METHOD

3.1 Research method

According to Wiley's website, "Research methods that take the approach of asking the person directly are known as self-report methods, and mainly take the form of interviews, questionnaires, and rating scales". The present study adopts self-report method as the self-report method is applicable for a descriptive analysis.

3.2 Setting and selection

This study was conducted among the tourists resting and site seeing the Kathmandu valley in the Swayambhunath Stupa premises between 03.09.2013- 15.10.2013. The respondents were familiar with the destination. Research on destination brand personality is an exploratory stage (Ekinci and Hosany, 2006) and the measurement scale seems to be unstable. So, it is important to eliminate the external sources of variability in the data through a range that is consistent and easy to control. This study used an accidental sample of tourists resting around the Swayambhunath Stupa. Accidental sample is a type of non-probability sampling, and is used to collect the data from accidentally or conveniently available population (Zikmund, 2003).

3.2.1 Apparel Procedure

The study was made in two stages. At first, a sample of 30 respondents was asked to describe Kathmandu if it were a person. This resulted 7 new items (Romantic, Magnificent, Superb, Sexy, Awesome, Peaceful and Love-at-first-sight) other than 27 personality traits as described by Ekinci and Hosany (2006). In the second stage, questionnaire related to the "Destination Brand Personality of Kathmandu" were distributed among 393 international tourists. The questionnaire contained 34(27+7) personality traits.

3.2.2 Sample size

Sudman (1976) recommends a rule of thumb of at least 100 observations per. Group to be analyzed. For factor analysis specifies Hair et al. (2010) that one should have a minimum of five observations per. variable, and that ten observations per variable is more acceptable. Based on 34 personality traits (variables) of this study, 340 (34 x 10) respondents were set as minimum to

ensure enough variety and precision. Out of 393, the study ended up with 364 observations with 29 drop-outs, and thus 10.3 observations per. variable were measured.

3.2.3 Apparel Equipment

The first part of the questionnaire is about respondents' characteristics. Respondents answer by entering numbers on sex, age, nationality and education and the number of visits they had been to Kathmandu. Respondents constituted 64.4% men and 35.6% women. Age of the sample was normally distributed and of 46.7 years in average. Youngest respondent was 13 and the oldest was 84 years. Only 2 (i.e. 0.05%) respondents were PhD degree holders. The education of 67 people was Master's Degree, 181 were Bachelor's and the rest had been to High school or less.

3.3 Measurement

The aim of this study is to measure how strongly respondents associate personality traits in the questionnaire with the cultural tourism destination Kathmandu. It is therefore important to determine what kind of personality traits and measuring scale questionnaire should contain. The measurement is done with a current measuring device used in published research.

The questionnaire had a closed answer option to produce accurate and reliable information that is easy to analyze. The study selects 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is about a measuring instrument's degree of stability and consistency in measurement (Hair et al, 2010). Cronbach's alpha measures the internal reliability and is widely used in the measurement of reliability, and the extent to which the measured variables are correlated (Hair et al., 2010). Generally, the reliability co-efficient is above 0.60 in exploratory research (Hair et al., 2010).

Psychological phenomena, such as personality traits, cannot be measured in the same ways as in chemistry and physics, where you can find direct physical evidence that something exists. Yet psychologists have attempted to develop methods of measuring psychological phenomena that attempt to maximize validity. Measuring instrument and method of this study is applied to

published studies of destination brand personality, and this may indicate good validity of the scale. Face validity is subjective and discretionary assessment of whether the questions are measuring what it measures. Face validity was tested by ten people. These stated that the traits were clear and understandable. The fact that the traits used to measure the variables in this study are drawn from psychology's "Big Five" model for the measurement of human personality traits, arguing for good academic validity. Internal validity is whether there are external factors, or other reasons that may affect the measurements. There was no special external conditions surrounding the collection of data that could affect the measurements. External validity is about the study results that can be generalized to other settings, but if it used a random sample, it may result only to a limited extent that can be generalized to other similar tourist destinations. Another aspect of generalizability is shown in the stability factors. This will depend on the sample size and how many observations one has per measurement variable (Hair et al., 2007b). With 361 observations of 34 personality traits, it suggested the factors identified could be stable.

Instrument validation is to check whether the questionnaire works for our purposes, and whether personality traits serve as measurement variables. Convergent validity indicates the extent to which personality traits that charge in one dimension are more consistent with each other than personality traits charging in other dimensions. Discriminant validity is the extent to which each trait is sufficiently independent of each other and measure different things. Construct validity tests the extent to which personality characteristics lying on same dimension, are highly correlated (Convergent validity) or lowly correlated (Discriminant validity). A factor analysis that identifies high factor loads and few cross charges indicating good convergent validity. Clear and interpretable factors and personality traits without cross charges indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. Factor analysis presented in the analysis show satisfactory discriminant validity with clear factor charges and only one variable cross charge against other factors. A correlation matrix depicts how personality characteristics correlate with each other. Correlation matrix shows that personality traits that charge the same factor correlate highly with each other than with personality traits that charge other factors.

3.5 Data analysis

PASW Statistics 19 was used for the factor analysis with accompanying Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, Barlett's test and calculation of Cronbach's Alpha.

Factor analysis comprises a group of multivariate statistical analysis aimed at reducing the amount of data by identifying dependencies between a large number of variables. Factor analysis attempts to identify variables underlying dimensions (factors), and the items that charge against various dimensions (Hair et al., 2010). There are two kinds of factor analysis, exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA), where EFA is the most commonly used. This study will use an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) because this is suitable to identify the dimensions underlying between variables. Factor analysis in previous researches on destination brand personality (Ekinici and Hosany, 2006; Murphy et al., 2007b; Li, 2009; Usakli, and Baloglu, 2010 and Kim and Lehto, 2012) gave different dimensions and supported the need of using exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

The first part of the factor analysis is to identify the factors to be examined, and to choose between the methods for extracting factors, principal component analysis and principal factor analysis (Hair et al, 2010).

The most common criterion for selecting factors is by looking at the Eigen Value, in which selection takes place on the basis of the total variance that each factor explains (Hair et al, 2010). Factor with intrinsic value of 1.0 or greater is considered, while factors with values below 1.0 are removed (Ho, 2006; Hair et al., 2010).

Another criterion in the choice of factors is considering to what extent the factors would be able to explain the variance and the extent to which the selected factors explain the variance in the material. In social research, where the information is less accurate, it is not uncommon to be satisfied enough by the factors that describe 60 percent of the total variance in the material, and in some cases also lower (Hair et al., 2010).

When the criteria and methods for extraction factors are determined, there is a choice of running rotation. There are essentially two general rotation methods, orthogonal and oblique (Hair et al., 2010). In this analysis, selected orthogonal analysis (Hair et al., 2010). The analysis applies the most commonly used type of rotation called VariMAX, where high correlations are maximized and low correlations are minimized (Hair et al., 2010).

The factors of each variable show the correlation between the variable and its factor; high loading indicates the variable is representative of the factor (Hair et al., 2010). This analysis used Hair et al. (2010) model, which indicates factor loading greater than 0.50 only are considered. A good factor structure also requires that the variables charging high against only one factor, and variables that charge high against two or more factors are usually deleted (Hair et al., 2010).

Variable communalities are also important for the variables in factor analysis, where one tries to divide the variable variance into three parts: common communalities, specific variance and error variance. A variable communality shows how much of the total variance in a variable is proportioned with other variables in the analysis. No statistical guidelines show how much high or low the communality is to be considered, but in many cases 0.50 is set as the minimum level to maintain variable (Hair et al., 2010).

One should not stare blindly at the results of a factor analysis when the indexes are to be constructed, and that statistical techniques must not remove the theoretical analysis. Factor analysis is a technique for mapping correlation patterns. Following method slavishly can combine things that do not belong together, because the variables that are highly correlated will usually end up in the same factor in the factor analysis. To interpret factors is to consider the factors that have a major or a minor importance, and finding common ground between the variables that charge highly against a factor (Hair et al., 2010). The variables that have the strongest loadings on a factor will most influence on the choice of name on the dimensions (Hair et al., 2010).

4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analysis

Before factor analysis was conducted, the data were analyzed using a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO) and Barlett's test. KMO of 0.799 indicated the sample size is adequate for the number of traits in the study (Hair et al., 2010). The Barlett's test with a value of 0.000 shows that there is sufficient correlation between the measurements of personality traits in the study (Hair et al., 2010). The KMO and Barlett's test are the bases to make the following factor analysis.

An exploratory factor analysis with a VariMAX rotation was used to identify the underlying dimensions in the data. Aaker (1997), Ekinici and Hosany (2006), Murphy et al. (2007b), Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010) and Kim and Lehto (2012) all used exploratory factor analysis to examine the relationship between personality traits. Factor analysis identified five factors with eigenvalues of 1.0.

Five factors explained respectively 37.2%, 27.6%, 7.1%, 6.3% and 5.9% variance in the analysis. The total of 84.3% variance is explained by these five factors.

4.1.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Kathmandu

Traits	Dimensions				
	Solidity	Attractiveness	Excitement	Honesty	Hospitality
Downtoearth	.773	-.092	.101	-.009	.047
Spirited	-.008	.070	.867	.005	-.151
Sincere	.255	-.236	-.041	.832	-.090
Wholesome	-.012	-.046	-.389	-.073	.785
Original	-.157	.785	.040	-.021	.042
Daring	.003	.044	.881	-.016	.025
Genuine	.162	-.142	.028	.899	.064
Family-oriented	-.023	-.055	.113	.044	.916
Uptodate	.888	-.215	.002	.052	-.006
Independent	.777	-.064	-.081	.088	-.048
Reliable	-.171	.919	.054	-.040	.042
Intelligent	.959	-.171	.058	.110	.016
Secure	.951	-.175	.057	.112	.016
Confident	-.173	.955	.043	-.093	-.052
Upperclass	.962	-.169	.061	.117	.025
Glamorous	.962	-.170	.066	.124	.035
Goodlooking	-.195	.899	.040	-.090	.002
Outdoorsy	.767	-.165	-.226	.040	-.134
Masculine	.817	-.215	-.063	.036	.010
Western	.767	-.150	-.216	.030	-.133
Tough	.962	-.170	.066	.124	.035
Rugged	.956	-.163	.067	.132	.044
Romantic	-.185	.962	.032	-.086	-.038
Sexy	-.183	.954	.036	-.105	-.039
Awesome	-.181	.964	.034	-.081	-.051
Loveatfirstsight	-.159	.904	-.050	-.106	-.074

Table 4.1: Exploratory Factor Analysis of Kathmandu

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on 34 personality items to reduce data and identify the underlying dimensions. Principal component analysis with the Varimax rotation was used. According to Hair et al. (2005), factor loadings greater than .50 are considered, therefore a cut-

off point of .50 was established to include items in the interpretation of a factor. After the factor analysis, 8 items exhibited low factor loadings ($<.50$) and were removed. The items eliminated from the analysis were "cheerful, friendly, imaginative, charming, peaceful, successful, magnificent, superb." After removing these items, the analysis was repeated. All items exhibited factor loadings greater than .50 and no items were cross-loaded.

The first factor has twelve personality traits that charge high cross loading on it; Down to earth, (0.773), Up to date (0.888), Independent (0.777), Intelligent (0.959), Secure (0.951), Upper class (0.962) / Glamorous (0.962), Outdoorsy (0.767), Masculine (0.817), Western (0.767), Tough (0.962), and Rugged (0.956). "Solidity" is chosen as the name for this factor because this term seems to be adequate for the twelve personality traits. It has an eigenvalue of 12.04 and has the explained variance of 37.2%.

The second factor has eight traits that charge high on it; Original (0.785), Reliable (0.919), Confident (0.955), Good looking (0.899), Romantic (0.962), Sexy (0.954), Awesome (0.964), Love at first sight (0.904). "Attractiveness" is chosen as the name of the factor because this term seems to be adequate for all the eight traits. The eigenvalue of 5.15 and explained variance of 27.6% are represented by the second factor.

The third factor has two personality traits that charge high on Spirited (0.867) and Daring (0.881). "Excitement" is chosen as the name of the factor as the two traits are best represented by it. The third factor has eigenvalue of 1.94 and explained variance of 7.11%.

The fourth factor also has the two traits that charge high on it; Sincere (0.832), Genuine (0.899). "Honesty" is chosen as the name of the factor because this describes the characteristics of the two personality traits here. The fourth factor has eigenvalue of 1.42 and explained variance of 6.3%.

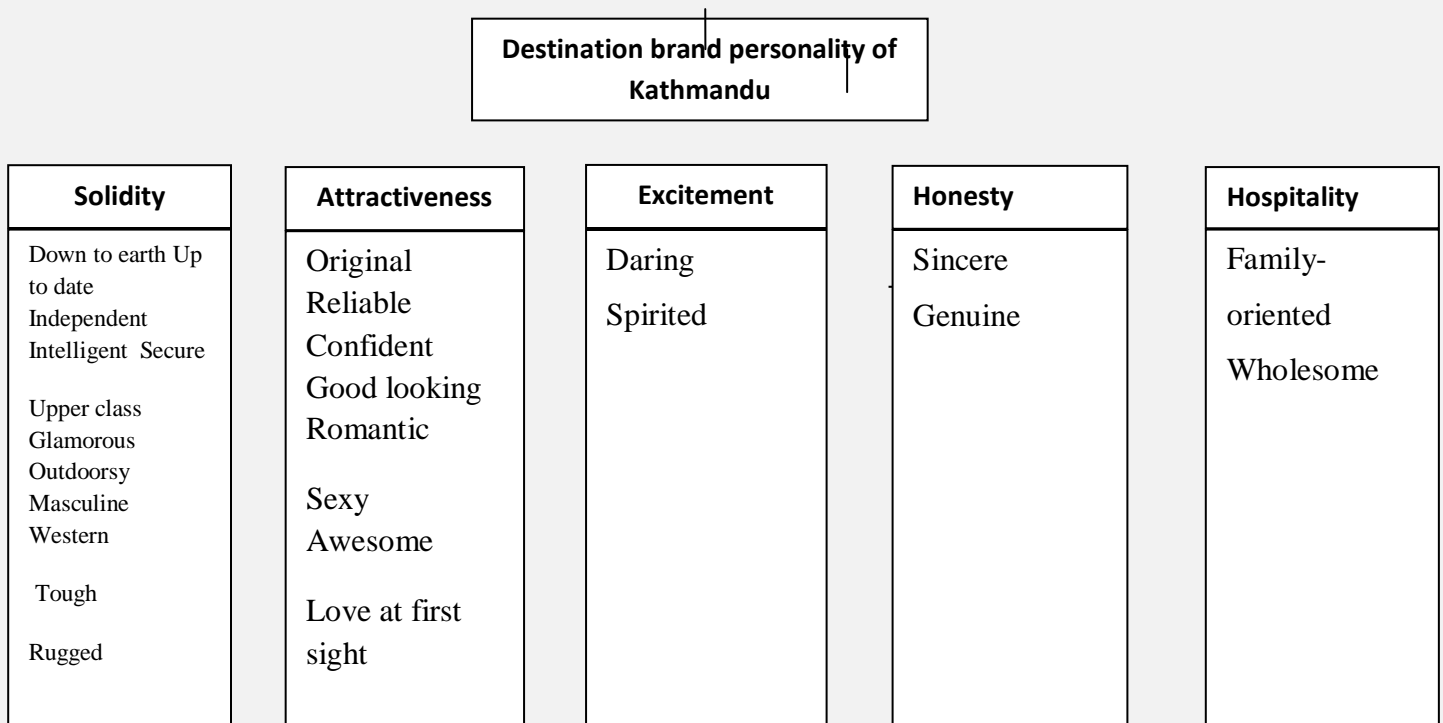
The fifth factor has again the two personality traits that charge high on it; Family-oriented (0.916), Wholesome (0.785). "Hospitality" is chosen as the name of the factor because the term

defines these two traits. The fifth factor shows the eigenvalue of 1.3 and the explained variance of 5.9%.

4.1.2 Brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu

In the following discussion, the term "factor" as used in the factor analysis also designated by the term "dimension". This is because the method of the literature uses the term factor, while the literature on brand personality uses the concept of dimension, when talking about the underlying dimensions in the data. Figure 4.1 summarizes the brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu identified through factor analysis. The 26 traits are distributed in five dimensions. Section 4.2 discusses the similarities and differences between the dimensions of this study and previous research

Figure 4.1 Brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu



The dimension “Solidity” has personality traits Down-to-earth, Up-to-date, Independent, Intelligent, Secure, Upper class, Glamorous, Outdoorsy, Masculine, Western, Tough and Rugged loading high on it. Personality features Original, Reliable, Confident, Good-looking, Romantic, Sexy, Awesome and Love-at-first-sight are charging on the dimension “Attractiveness”. Dimension “Excitement” has personality traits Spirited and Daring loaded on it. Sincere and Genuine are loading on “Honesty” dimension. Eventually, the dimension “Hospitality” loads Family-oriented and Wholesome as the personality traits. Personality features within each factor identified in the study of Kathmandu has conceptually more consistent meaning in comparison to the previous studies.

4.2 Discussion

The dimensions that emerged in the factor analysis of data from Kathmandu were discussed in relation to the results of factor analysis of the studies that have used the similar measurement variables: The study conducted by Aakar (1997), Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009) were chosen for the discussion because these studies used similar personality traits, and are therefore directly comparable with the current study. Factor analysis of the poll in Kathmandu identified five factors that are similar to the five factors founded by Aakar (1997) in the study of, “Dimensions of brand personality” , the four factors that Li (2009) found in the study of “An Examination of Effects of Self-Concept, Destination Personality, and SC-DP Congruence on Tourist Behavior” and the three factors founded by Ekinici and Hosany (2006) in the study of, “Destination Personality: An Application of Brand Personality to Tourism Destinations”.

Factor 1: “Solidity” identified in the survey of Kathmandu has the similarity with the factor "Ruggedness" identified by Li (2009). Four personality traits (rugged, tough, masculine and western) that charged against factor “Ruggedness were also included within the “Solidity” dimension in the current study. Aaker (1997) also gave the term “Ruggedness” for the identified dimension. The study of Ekinici and Hosany (2006) eliminated the dimension “Ruggedness” because they exhibited low communalities (<0.3).

The findings from Kathmandu confirm that “Solidity” or the equivalent term is a suitable dimension to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination. Factor analysis of Li (2009) also identified similar factors, showing that the dimension “Solidity” is a relevant dimension for describing mark personality of a tourism destination.

Factor 2: “Attractiveness” from Kathmandu has great similarities with the factor "Sophistication" of Aaker’s (1997) and Li’s (2009) study. The study of Ekinici and Hosany (2006) excluded the dimension “Sophistication” because they exhibited high cross loadings (>0.4).

Factor analysis of Li (2009) shows the traits (upper class, good looking, glamorous, confident and successful) charging against “Sophistication”. Aaker’s (1997) brand personality framework identified upperclass and charming loading against “Sophistication”.

Factor analysis of the data from Kathmandu and from Li (2009) show that the factor “Attractiveness” can be used as one of the dimensions to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination. “Love-at-first-sight” is the destination specific personality trait in the dimension “Attractiveness”.

Factor 3: “Excitement” of the study in Kathmandu has a great similarity with the corresponding factors identified in the factor analysis of Aaker (1997), Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009). Aaker’s (1997) identified daring, spirited, imaginative and up-to-date loading on “Excitement” dimensions. In the Li’s (2009) study, “Excitement” dimension loads spirited, exciting, imaginative, daring, original and cheerful. Likewise, exciting, daring, original and spirited were loaded on “Excitement” dimension.

All three factor analyses identify factors called “Excitement” as a good dimension to describe the brand personality tourism destination. All three factor analyses show that personality traits daring and spirited are charging as the stable factors.

Factor 4: “Honesty” of the study in Lofoten is very similar to factor “Sincerity” of the Aaker (1997), Ekinci and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009). Sincere and genuine charged against factor “Honesty” in Kathmandu. Down-to-earth, honest, wholesome and cheerful were loaded against “Sincerity” dimension in Aaker’s (1997) study. Factor analysis of Ekinci and Hosany charged reliable, sincere, intelligent, successful and wholesome in “Sincerity” dimension. In Li’s (2009) study, the factor “Sincerity loaded sincere, wholesome, family-oriented and down-to-earth as the personality traits.

Hospitality research to Jensen (2001) discusses the concept of "authenticity", and this term has meaning similar to factor “Honesty”. Jensen (2001) points out that tourism destination personality can be evaluated from the degree of authenticity, and Gunn (1988) find that the degree of authenticity is important as a tourist destination will be designed. The modern tourist perspective MacCannell (1976) describes tourists seeking authenticity. Dimension “Honesty” or “Sincerity” of different studies , and the term “authenticity” from other tourism research, may represent a possible link between the brand personality for tourist destinations and other tourism research on the marketing of tourist destinations.

Factor 5: The dimension “Hospitality” is the destination specific trait identified in the study of Kathmandu. Family-oriented and wholesome were loaded on the “Hospitality” dimension.

Factor analysis of Kathmandu and factor analysis of Ekinci and Hosany (2006) and factor analysis of Li (2009) are coherent. They show that “Excitement” is a good dimension to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination. These three studies show that personality traits daring and spirited show steady loading on this factor. Personality traits that charge on “Excitement” can associate with different disciplines of destination brand personality. Jensen (2001) argues that a tourism destination personality can be evaluated based on the level of entertainment that the resort offers. The modern tourist perspective of Cohen (1995) and Dann (1996) describes the hedonistic tourists who seek "events" and "play / fun". “Excitement” factor and its personality traits daring and spirited surrounding Jensen (2001) entertainment concept may represent a common academic area. Such factors may be quite useful for the researches in destination brand personality and other researches in marketing and branding of tourism

destinations.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This study found that five dimensions are well suited to describe the brand personality of the cultural tourism destination, Kathmandu. The results of Aakar (1997) and Li (2009) supports the five dimensions are well suited to describe the brand personality of tourism destination. Personality traits that charge for each factor identified in Kathmandu are more conceptually consistent than similar measurements of brand personality of tourist destinations.

The dimension “Solidity” identified in the present study and the dimension “Ruggedness” in the study of Aakar (1997) and Li (2009) have very close similarity . The Li’s (2009) study and Aaker’s (1997) study strongly support “Solidity” as a relevant dimension in this context. This verifies that the dimension “Solidity” is well suited to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination.

Dimension “Attractiveness” identified in this study and Li’s (2009) and Aaker’s (1997) “Sophistication” dimension are the same. This shows that the dimension “Attractiveness” is well suited to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination.

The dimension “Excitement” have been identified by all four studies. Although the dimensions possess different number of personality traits, they all justify that “Excitement” dimension is best suited to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination.

Dimension “Honesty” of this study and “Sincerity” of other three studies Aakar (1997), Ekinci and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009) have similar traits charging on them. Dimension “Honesty” identified in Kathmandu and dimension “Sincerity” identified in other three studies became a solid proof to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination.

Dimension “Hospitality” is the destination specific.

If one compares Aaker's (1997) five dimensions with the five dimensions identified in the surveys from Kathmandu and four dimensions identified in Li's (2009) study, they are appeared to be common. All the four dimensions "Solidity" or "Ruggedness", "Attractiveness" or "Sophistication", "Excitement", and "Honesty" or "Sincerity" were explored from the factor analysis. If one combines the two dimensions (Competence and Ruggedness) of Aaker (1997) to one dimension, then the new dimension will have a high similarity with dimension "Solidity" of Kathmandu. Similarly, if one merges the two dimensions (Honesty and Hospitality) of Kathmandu, it yields the "Sincerity" dimension of Li (2009). This shows that the five factors Aaker (1997) present is relevant to describe the brand personality of a tourism destination.

5.0 CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND LIMITATION

5.1 Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the destination brand personality dimensions of Kathmandu as perceived by the international tourists and find out whether these dimensions are applicable to other tourism destinations. After the analysis of an accidental sample of 364 questionnaires, the results indicate that the present study will contribute to different disciplines of brand personality of tourism destinations.

The study is based on the international tourists to Kathmandu to get the better understanding of the destination brand perception of visitors with different geographical backgrounds. There were a bit more male respondents (64.4%) than female respondents. Most of the tourists were from India and Japan. Over 70% tourists were visiting Kathmandu for the first time. The purpose of the visit was mainly for holiday and pleasure.

Five dimensions were produced from the factor analysis of the data from 364 usable questionnaires during the survey. These dimensions explained the total of 84.3% variance of the personality traits of Kathmandu. The first dimension “Solidity” is similar to “Ruggedness” of Aaker’s (1997) brand personality scale. But, it contains a bit more personality traits than Aaker’s (1997). Altogether 12 personality traits (Down-to-earth, Up-to-date, Independent, Intelligent, Secure, Upper class, Glamorous, Outdoorsy, Masculine, Western, Tough and Rugged) fall in “Solidity” dimension. The second dimension “Attractiveness” is similar to “Sophistication” of Aaker’s (1997) brand personality scale. Original, Reliable, Confident, Good-looking, Romantic, Sexy, Awesome and Love-at-first-sight loaded in “Attractiveness” dimension. The third dimension “Excitement” is same as “Excitement” of the Aaker’s (1997). But, Daring and Spirited are only charged in the “Excitement” dimension in the present study. “Honesty” being the fourth dimension loads Sincere and genuine. This is similar to “Sincerity” of Aaker’s (1997) scale. The fifth dimension “Hospitality” being the destination specific. It loads Family-oriented and wholesome as the personality traits. Kathmandu, being resided by the kind and honest people, takes the guests as god. This might be the reason why tourists perceive “Hospitality” as one of the personalities of Kathmandu. The five dimensions of the brand personality produced by

the exploratory factor analysis from the data of present survey conclude that there exist brand personalities of a tourism destination like that of consumer goods.

Unlike previous studies, the study focused on the brand personality perception of the international tourists of a cultural destination so as to find out the real personality dimensions of destination. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) focused only on the British tourists who have visited some destinations in the past three months, whereas Li (2009) focused on the leisure tourists who have taken at least one leisure trip during the past 18 months. These two studies could not create the required result as there were no specific destinations. The present study focused on the cultural destination, “Kathmandu”. Kathmandu was chosen as setting as it is culturally rich and is the destination for thousands of visitors every year.

Furthermore, the next finding of the study is that the personality dimensions have conceptually more consistent meaning than the previous studies; Ekinici and Hosany (2006) and Li (2009).

5.2 Implications

The present study contributes theoretical as well as practical contributions to the relevant authorities. The study shows the tourists attribute personality traits to tourism destinations same as the previous studies; Ekinici & Hosany (2006), Murphy et al. (2007b) and Li (2009), Usakli and Baloglu (2010) and Kim and Lehto, (2012). Five dimensions of destination personality emerged for Kathmandu. This validates Aaker’s (1997) five brand personality dimensions. However, only four out of five dimensions are similar to Aaker's (1997) study. “Excitement” is same as in Aaker’s (1997). “Solidity”, “Attractiveness”, and “Honesty” are similar to “Ruggedness”, “Sophistication” and “Sincerity” of Aaker’s (1997). The fifth dimension “Hospitality” is the destination specific for Kathmandu.

The study reveals that the measuring instrument applied in this study will work in empirical measurement of destination brand personality. This scale can be included in theoretical models

that can be tested empirically. The results of this study are also relevant to those working with the marketing of tourism destinations. The measurements show that tourists are able to associate personality traits with tourist destination Kathmandu, and that the various personality traits captured by the measuring instrument. A clear and attractive brand personality has several marketing effects for a tourist destination. Therefore, marketers of tourist destinations strive to create a clear and attractive brand personality for tourist destination. This measuring device used to measure the brand personality of its own tourism destination, and identify traits that build the various dimensions of brand personality. These traits could be implemented in marketing to build desired brand personality for tourism destination. For example if Kathmandu wants to build “Attractiveness” as brand personality, then Kathmandu should promote its relevant traits. Specifically, this means that the desired traits to be communicated through competitive funds used; such as products and services, marketing communication, distribution and pricing (Kotler, 2003).

The study has also specific practical implications for the destination marketers of Kathmandu. The perceived destination personality of Kathmandu has five dimensions: “Solidity”, “Attractiveness”, “Excitement”, “Honesty” and “Hospitality”. Destination marketers of Kathmandu could differentiate Kathmandu based on these personality dimensions or these dimensions can be utilized in brand positioning of Kathmandu.

5.3 Limitations

Nothing is perfect in the world. There are always some limitations in a research. The present study has also some limitations. First of all, the findings of this study are specific to one tourism destination (Kathmandu) and cannot be generalized to other tourism destinations. Second, the present study focused on the visitors to Kathmandu and therefore the results may not be generalizable to those who have not visited Kathmandu. Third, the results are limited to the time period of the data collection. The sample was surveyed between 03.09.2013-15.10.2013. This cannot represent average flow of tourists for the year 2013. Fourth, the study used accidental sampling in which only accessible and available visitors were surveyed for data collection. This does not reflect the real proportion of tourists visiting Kathmandu. Thus, it is recommended that future research should use random sampling technique to represent the whole population .

Further research should test these destination brand personality scales to other type of tourism destinations. Future studies, for example, attempt to develop specific scale for measuring brand personality of urban and constructed tourism destinations. In order to achieve sufficient accuracy, and uncover differences between similar and competing tourism destinations, the present research will be a useful future direction. Further research should also examine the possibility of developing a universal measuring device for all types of tourism destinations. Such a gauge can be used to compare different but competing tourism destinations. A universal measuring instrument may require a higher number of personality traits examined. One possible challenge with a universal measuring instrument can be to balance the number of measurement variables (personality traits) with precision. Detailed and distinct measurements require an adequate number of traits (measured variables), but too extensive questionnaire should be avoided which weakens respondents survey results. Future research should associate research on destination brand personality closer to other researches; marketing and branding of tourism destinations. Tourism destinations cannot implement isolated strategy for brand personality alone, but can it take as a part of an overall marketing strategy. This study has shown that the concept of brand personality is valid for inclusion in other theoretical models.

Future studies should look at the relationship between different types of tourism and what kind of brand personality that attracts them. It will be interesting to analyze the attitudes that the modern and post-modern tourist has to brand personality dimension “Attractiveness”.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am Rajesh Kumar Sharma, a student studying in University of Nordland Bodø, Norway. I am currently conducting a survey about the brand personality of Kathmandu. Please answer the following questions and assist me in this educational purpose. It will take just 5-10 minutes.

1. About you:

Sex: Male/Female

Age: Less than 16 / 16-24 / 25-34 / 35-49 / 50-66 / 67 and above

Nationality:

Education: High School or less/Bachelor's/Master's/PhD

Number of visits to Kathmandu:.....

2. Let's suppose Kathmandu is a person. How would you describe it as a person? For example: beautiful/sexy/good-looking. Please give 5 different characteristics that you feel are best suited to describe Kathmandu.

- a.....
- b.....
- c.....
- d.....
- e.....

Following are the suggested brand personality traits for Kathmandu. Please scale the following traits from 1-5 depending upon the degree of your agreement. 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

Down-to-earth	1	2	3	4	5
Family-oriented	1	2	3	4	5
Sincere	1	2	3	4	5
Wholesome	1	2	3	4	5
Original	1	2	3	4	5
Cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Daring	1	2	3	4	5
Genuine	1	2	3	4	5
Spirited	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Independent	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5
Charming	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Secure	1	2	3	4	5
Successful	1	2	3	4	5
Confident	1	2	3	4	5
Upper class	1	2	3	4	5
Glamorous	1	2	3	4	5
Good-looking	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoorsy	1	2	3	4	5
Masculine	1	2	3	4	5
Western	1	2	3	4	5
Tough	1	2	3	4	5
Rugged	1	2	3	4	5
Romantic	1	2	3	4	5
Magnificent	1	2	3	4	5
Sexy	1	2	3	4	5
Superb	1	2	3	4	5
Awesome	1	2	3	4	5
Peaceful	1	2	3	4	5
Love-at-first-sight	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX 2

Reliability Analysis

Notes		
Output Created		08-Nov-2013 18:57:47
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\Del1\Documents\Untitled2.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet2
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
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	N of Rows in Working Data	364
	File	
	Matrix Input	C:\Users\Del1\Documents\Untitled2.sav
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data for all variables in the procedure.
Syntax		RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=downtoearth familyoriented sincere wholesome original cheerful friendly daring genuine spirited imaginative uptodate independent reliable charming intelligent secure successful confident upperclass glamorous goodlooking outdoorsy masculine western tough rugged romantic magnificent superb sexy awesome peaceful loveatfirstsight /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA /STATISTICS=DESCRIPTIVE CORR.
Resources	Processor Time	00 00:00:00.125
	Elapsed Time	00 00:00:00.217

[DataSet2] C:\Users\Del1\Documents\Untitled2.sav

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	364	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	364	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.793	.806	34

APPENDIX 3

Factor Analysis

Notes		
Output Created		08-Nov-2013 19:16:36
Comments		
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	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	364
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	MISSING=EXCLUDE: User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	LISTWISE: Statistics are based on cases with no missing values for any variable used.

Syntax		<pre> FACTOR /VARIABLES downtoearth familyoriented sincere wholesome original daring genuine spirited uptodate independent reliable intelligent secure confident upperclass glamorous goodlooking outdoorsy masculine western tough rugged romantic sexy awesome loveatfirstsight /MISSING LISTWISE /ANALYSIS downtoearth familyoriented sincere wholesome original daring genuine spirited uptodate independent reliable intelligent secure confident upperclass glamorous goodlooking outdoorsy masculine western tough rugged romantic sexy awesome loveatfirstsight /PRINT INITIAL KMO EXTRACTION ROTATION /PLOT EIGEN /CRITERIA MINEIGEN(1) ITERATE(25) /EXTRACTION PC /CRITERIA ITERATE(25) /ROTATION VARIMAX /SAVE REG(ALL) /METHOD=CORRELATION. </pre>
Resources	Processor Time	00 00:00:01.092
	Elapsed Time	00 00:00:01.142
	Maximum Memory Required	85288 (83.289K) bytes
Variables Created	FAC1_8	Component score 1
	FAC2_8	Component score 2
	FAC3_8	Component score 3
	FAC4_8	Component score 4
	FAC5_8	Component score 5

[DataSet2] C:\Users\Dell\Documents\Untitled2.sav

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.799
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5490.496
	Df	561
	Sig.	.000

Excluded items with communalities less than 0.5: cheerful, friendly, imaginative, charming, peaceful, successful, magnificent, superb

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Downtoearth	1.000	.619
Familyoriented	1.000	.780
Sincere	1.000	.822
Wholesome	1.000	.774
Original	1.000	.645
Daring	1.000	.779
Genuine	1.000	.859
Spirited	1.000	.857
Uptodate	1.000	.838
Independent	1.000	.624
Reliable	1.000	.881
Intelligent	1.000	.965
Secure	1.000	.951
Confident	1.000	.955
Upperclass	1.000	.973
Glamorous	1.000	.976
Goodlooking	1.000	.856
Outdoorsy	1.000	.686
Masculine	1.000	.718
Western	1.000	.675
Tough	1.000	.976
Rugged	1.000	.964
Romantic	1.000	.970
Sexy	1.000	.958
Awesome	1.000	.972
Loveatfirstsight	1.000	.863

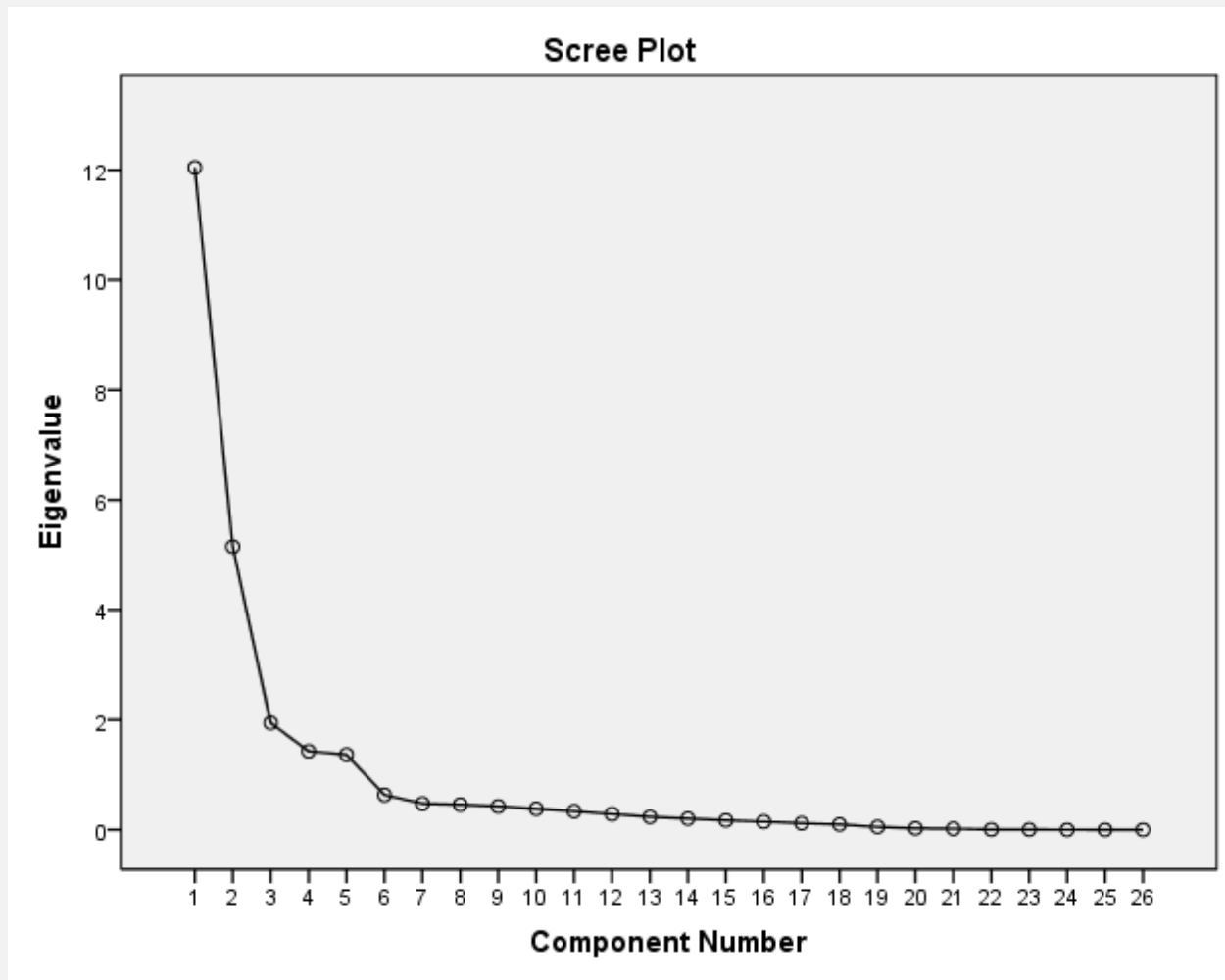
Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
Downtoearth	1.000	.619
Familyoriented	1.000	.780
Sincere	1.000	.822
Wholesome	1.000	.774
Original	1.000	.645
Daring	1.000	.779
Genuine	1.000	.859
Spirited	1.000	.857
Uptodate	1.000	.838
Independent	1.000	.624
Reliable	1.000	.881
Intelligent	1.000	.965
Secure	1.000	.951
Confident	1.000	.955
Upperclass	1.000	.973
Glamorous	1.000	.976
Goodlooking	1.000	.856
Outdoorsy	1.000	.686
Masculine	1.000	.718
Western	1.000	.675
Tough	1.000	.976
Rugged	1.000	.964
Romantic	1.000	.970
Sexy	1.000	.958
Awesome	1.000	.972
Loveatfirstsight	1.000	.863

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation S	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	%
1	12.047	46.336	46.336	12.047	46.336	46.336	9.689	
2	5.150	19.806	66.142	5.150	19.806	66.142	7.181	
3	1.943	7.473	73.615	1.943	7.473	73.615	1.851	
4	1.429	5.496	79.111	1.429	5.496	79.111	1.662	
5	1.367	5.257	84.368	1.367	5.257	84.368	1.553	
6	.632	2.431	86.799					
7	.475	1.828	88.627					
8	.457	1.758	90.386					
9	.425	1.635	92.021					
10	.380	1.461	93.482					
11	.336	1.293	94.775					
12	.285	1.095	95.870					
13	.235	.903	96.773					
14	.204	.783	97.556					
15	.171	.658	98.214					
16	.147	.566	98.780					
17	.118	.452	99.232					
18	.097	.374	99.606					
19	.051	.195	99.801					
20	.025	.097	99.898					
21	.019	.073	99.971					
22	.005	.018	99.989					
23	.002	.009	99.998					
24	.000	.002	100.000					
25	2.737E-16	1.053E-15	100.000					
26	-2.141E-17	-8.234E-17	100.000					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.



Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Downtoearth	.679	.366	.034	.089	-.123
Familyoriented	-.067	.131	.824	.260	-.111
Sincere	.474	-.071	.121	-.042	.759
Wholesome	.021	-.126	-.702	.515	-.025
Original	-.567	.555	-.042	.074	.090
Caring	-.045	.106	.755	.421	-.140
Genuine	.357	-.054	.118	.133	.835
Spirited	.025	-.111	-.305	.866	.014
Uptodate	.853	.324	-.016	.000	-.076
Independent	.685	.380	-.072	-.069	.003
Reliable	-.656	.659	-.043	.083	.088
Intelligent	.894	.401	.023	.051	-.031
Secure	.890	.393	.023	.050	-.029
Confident	-.686	.694	-.020	-.009	.044
Upperclass	.897	.404	.022	.061	-.024
Glamorous	.898	.403	.023	.072	-.019
Goodlooking	-.673	.631	-.041	.037	.042
Outdoorsy	.728	.288	-.157	-.217	-.033
Masculine	.793	.278	-.079	-.017	-.074
Western	.717	.301	-.152	-.212	-.042
Tough	.898	.403	.023	.072	-.019
Rugged	.891	.404	.020	.081	-.009
Romantic	-.699	.691	-.035	-.001	.054
Sexy	-.696	.686	-.032	-.001	.034
Awesome	-.696	.695	-.027	-.011	.058
Loveatfirstsight	-.648	.654	-.090	-.073	.037

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix ^a					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Downtoearth	.773	-.092	.101	-.009	.047
Spirited	-.008	.070	.867	.005	-.151
Sincere	.255	-.236	-.041	.832	-.090
Wholesome	-.012	-.046	-.389	-.073	.785
Original	-.157	.785	.040	-.021	.042
Daring	.003	.044	.881	-.016	.025
Genuine	.162	-.142	.028	.899	.064
Family-oriented	-.023	-.055	.113	.044	.916
Uptodate	.888	-.215	.002	.052	-.006
Independent	.777	-.064	-.081	.088	-.048
Reliable	-.171	.919	.054	-.040	.042
Intelligent	.959	-.171	.058	.110	.016
Secure	.951	-.175	.057	.112	.016
Confident	-.173	.955	.043	-.093	-.052
Upperclass	.962	-.169	.061	.117	.025
Glamorous	.962	-.170	.066	.124	.035
Goodlooking	-.195	.899	.040	-.090	.002
Outdoorsy	.767	-.165	-.226	.040	-.134
Masculine	.817	-.215	-.063	.036	.010
Western	.767	-.150	-.216	.030	-.133
Tough	.962	-.170	.066	.124	.035
Rugged	.956	-.163	.067	.132	.044
Romantic	-.185	.962	.032	-.086	-.038
Sexy	-.183	.954	.036	-.105	-.039
Awesome	-.181	.964	.034	-.081	-.051
Loveatfirstsight	-.159	.904	-.050	-.106	-.074

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

