UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Do you see who we are?

Communicating brand personality via current logo and slogan of Republic of Moldova

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ABSTRACT

This study examines brand personality of Moldova which is communicated via logo and slogan by applying Aakers brand personality dimensions. Atomic model is applied in order to analyse the brand components and their relations in communicative perspective. Survey designed for this thesis aimed to answer which brand personality dimensions can be identified in logo and slogan as tangible elements of the brand and the which personality dimensions should be reflected in nation (intangible element) according to local people of Moldova.

Results show that only one personality trait - friendliness - can be identified as existing in all the components. The local people of Moldova considered the nation to be sincere and the logo seem to communicate the same personality dimension. However, slogan communicates excitement as the most important personality dimension and thus does not reveal the intangible component identified by the local people. Only the dimension of competence seemed to be present in all three components and ranked at the same second place. Further analysis should be conducted which would present with more precise results.

Keywords: nation branding, Moldova, brand personality, logo and slogan, atomic model, visual and textual communication.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Nowadays, most destinations declare to have exquisite attractions, breathtaking surroundings, one-of-a-kind culture and heritage, and amicable people. The necessity for the places to develop an exceptional identity to diversify themselves from opponents has become more significant than before. Ertörün and Suma (2011) states that the position of tourism is a beneficial impact on the long-term growth of small economies. Additionally, it was also stated that global tourism environment might enable the developing countries to ease and leave the poverty. Yet countries are continually competing for foreigners attention and to do so they have to differentiate from one another. Therefore it has become a trend to apply the method of nation branding which can bring benefits to various sectors (Chaykina, Guerreiro, & Mendes, 2014). Strong nation brand might guarantee immediate identification if the nation expresses itself with strength and consistency which can be achieved by creating a consistent visual and verbal identity via logo and slogan (Papp-Váry, 2010; Rodriguez, Asoro, Lee, & Sar, 2012). However, to establish a brand only by means of tangible elements of logo and slogan might not be enough. A brand has to have an identity, contain emotional value, appeal to the consumers or, in the case of nation branding, to the tourists, to create relationships between place and a visitor (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998; Yoon, 2004). One of the intangible, emotional components to which a tourist can appeal might be the brand personality, which is a major segment of brand identity (Geuens, Weijters, & De Wulf, 2009; Freling & Forbes, 2005; Balaji & Raghavan, 2011; J. L. Aaker, 1997; Mustamil, Chung, & Ariff, 2014; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Brand personality, which according to J. L. Aaker (1997, p. 347) refers to "human characteristics or personality traits that can be associated with a brand", can help to differentiate one brand from another and create the emotional meaning to the consumer (J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995). As Atomic Model suggests, the brand is combined from both tangible and intangible elements, which in turn might suggest that intangible elements should be expressed via tangible ones. This poses the idea that in order to be successful, nation brand has to incorporate both types of elements, and be sure that visual and verbal identity is consistent. Yet, as stated by Kapferer (1998, as cited in Konecnik & Go, 2008, p.1) "before knowing how we are perceived, we must know who we are". Thus when it comes to nation branding, it has to represent the personality as it is understood by the people living in that country.

The author of this thesis comes from Moldova and this is her personal interest into analyzing the subject. This thesis attempts to analyse the relations between tangible and intangible elements, the logo and slogan, and local people perceptions regarding the nations personality. Previous studies attempted to analyse the brand personality by analysing their tourism web pages (Pitt, Opoku, Hultman, Abratt, & Spyropoulou, 2007), yet there were

no analyses done regarding logos or slogans, even though it is the most used way to express the brand. Moreover, there were little attempts to analyse the aforementioned relations. Thus this thesis presents a new approach towards analysing the brand personality, brand and brand communication. For the analysis the case of the Republic of Moldova was chosen. The Republic of Moldova is a small developing country, and as such it must find creative ways to establish reputation and communicate its national brand. The analysis might help to get an insight on whether the approach can be applicable for further analysis. And as for practical part it might reveal the strength of nation brand of Moldova and give a brief conclusion whether it has a chance to be successful.

1.1.1 *Case of Moldova*

Historical Overview

Case study is an approach of studying a phenomenon in which an individual has a particular interest The case of the Republic of Moldova was chosen for this thesis. The Republic of Moldova is a small Eastern European country, landlocked between Romania and Ukraine. In the Middle Ages, it took part of the larger Principality of Moldova which contained some sections of the present day Romania. In the year 1812, Moldova was adjoined to the Russian Empire, but after the First World War, in 1918, it declared independence, however, later in the year 1940 it was rejoined with Romania. In the same year, Moldova was divided and annexed by the Soviet Union and became as the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldavia. The southern parts, that had access to the Black Sea, were captured and handed over to the Ukrainian SSR. When the Iron Curtain fell apart, in 1991, Moldova declared independence.As mentioned in the article by Florek and Conejo (2007, p. 55) "Moldova is currently transitioning towards a market economy and has made significant progress towards macroeconomic stabilisation". According to the scholars, constitutional reforms have been favorable in constructing private economy, liberalising prices and attracting direct investments. Nonetheless, 50 years of the occupation by the Soviet Union has left a mark on the country. Regardless of the progress, the Republic of Moldova stays as one of the poorest countries in Europe. It is ranked as 114 according to Human Development Index, which makes it one of the lowest ranking countries in the region (United Nations Development Program, 2013).

Being a landlocked country, Moldova does not hold back from being an attractive tourist destination which ca fascinate the visitors. Tourism is one of the way to support the country economically. The article "Moldova: The challenges of the tourism industry" (tourism-review.com, 2014) presented an overview of the statistics in of the tourism industry of Moldova. In 2013 tourism services increased by 1.6%; the total of tourists that arrived and departed expanded by 4.4% and 6.1%. In order to guarantee the growth in numbers, Moldova has to promote itself and be identified as a brand by various countries and customers. Developing the visual and verbal identity is a small, yet valuable, step in building the brand of the country. This includes development of the logo and slogan which are designed to present the basic elements in marketing communication.

Current Logo and Slogan of Moldova

A logo, slogan, and a brand name present the three components of a brand identity which create the companys relation with the world. Each of

the components has a specific activity: brand name presents the identity of a product and performs as a brand image protector; logo is a graphic pattern which can either incorporate the commercial name, or it can be a totally abstract design, which appears as a key factor in the growth and internalization process of recognition of the brand among different languages and cultures; slogan should indicate the essential benefit of a product, which forms a catch through which the customer captures the idea of the brand, and enhances everything that makes the brand different (Abdi & Irandoust, 2013). The scholars presented the activity of these components. A brand name presents the product identity and performs as a brand image protector; logos are graphic patterns incorporating commercial name or totally abstract designs, which appear as a key factor in the growth and internalization process of recognition of the brand among different languages and cultures. As for the slogan, it indicates, at least, essential benefit of a product, which forms a catch through which the customer captures the idea of the brand, and enhances everything that makes the brand different.

Figure 1.: Logo and slogan of Republic of Moldova

This thesis focuses mainly on the logo and slogan of the brand of Moldova. The Tourism Agency of the Republic of Moldova cooperated with USAID CEDD II Project and on November 20, 2014 the national brand of the tourism sector was launched. The program to promote tourism products, generically called "National Brand of Tourism Sector", aims to increase the number of visitors in Moldova . The international advertising campaign of tourism brand of Moldova launched on November 24, 2014 and the communication company Euronews broadcasted a promoting video of Moldovan tourism on the television. The main concept of the logo (Fig. 1), as one of the components of the brand, is "The Tree of Life", which signifies the values and characteristics of tourism in Moldova. These values are hospitality, naturalness, honesty and authenticity. Each branch is completed by adding a symbolic detail, disclosing the significance of the traditions and the way of

life of the people of Moldova. The second component of the brand is the slogan "Discover the routes of life". It aims to encourage the tourists to pursue new discoveries, hospitality, history, wine, gastronomy and Moldovan traditions (Cember, 2014).

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this thesis is to reveal if the logo and slogan are communicating the same brand personality of Moldova or are they sending different messages about it, thus to see if the verbal and textual messages are congruent. In addition to this, it also aims to see if the people of Moldova recognize their, as nations, personality traits in the visual message (logo) and verbal message (slogan), in order to see if the components (logo and slogan) incorporate the personality of the people or the nation and establishes a brand of Moldova. In order to conduct the research and to evaluate the personality of the brand Aakers dimensions of brand personality will be applied.

The main research question is: How well do the tangible elements (logo and slogan) communicate intangible element of brand personality for nations brand?

In order to answer the main research question, the subsidiary research questions have to be answered:

What personality characteristics should be included when creating a nations brand according to the local people of Moldova?

What personality characteristics is the current logo and slogan of Moldova communicating according to the local people?

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This paper is divided into six sections:

Section 2 provides with a revised literature and the theoretical background regarding brand, brand personality, nation branding, visual and textual communication, and Aakers Brand Personality Dimensions which is serving as a tool to evaluate the brand personality of Republic of Moldova.

Section 3 presents the methodological framework of this thesis. This section will explain the methodological approach of the study, tools methods used for data collection, and analysis. It as well presents ethical considerations, credibility, and limitations of the study. Section 4 presents the results after data was gathered and analysed. Results are divided and presented as 3 categories: "Logo", "Slogan" and "We as Moldavians are..."; which is followed by the ranking of dimensions identified in these categories and their relations.

Section 5 provides with the discussion, which focuses on presenting the findings of the study with the relation to the theoretical background. It provides with an answer whether the logo and slogan of Republic of Moldova are communicating the same message or the same personality of the brand, and if Moldavians and their, as nations, personality is presented by the logo and slogan.

Finally section 6 presents the conclusions and suggestions for the future research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 BRAND PERSONALITY

For decades, researchers have tried to explain the concept of a *brand* which is not only about advertising via messages, but through the time it became a "collection of expectations, hopes, relations which arises from a company or product" (Ranjbar, 2010, p. 16–17).Every researcher creates his own definition, or a distinction of an existing one. As for example, Sahin and Baloglu (2011, p. 70) presented the definition of a brand as defined by American Marketing Association, which is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition. However a more detailed interpretation of the concept of the brand was defined by Kapferer (1997, as cited in Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009, p.6):

> A brand is not only a symbol that separates one product from others, but it is all the attributes that come to the consumers mind when he or she thinks about the brand. Such attributes are the tangible, intangible, psychological and sociological features related to the product.

In order to have a better insight on the brand, researchers attempted to divide it into diverse components. These components represent various visions and understandings about the brand. For example scholars Bailey, Schedler and Grossman were more focused on the tangible, visual elements, logo and product design of the brand, avoiding the examination of the deeper relationships in its formation. On the contrary, scholar Kapferer directs to the intangible, emotional and representational components, because according to the author these elements create a belief and meaning in the consumers minds (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). This leads to the idea that a brand is structured from two essential categories of elements - tangible and intangible. Tangible elements represent the physical and visual components, which can be perceived by 5 human senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste). Intangible elements represent the non physical and non visual components, but can be identified as the symbolic components which can create emotions and meanings. Because scholars were focusing on one of the categories of elements (either tangible or intangible) they had a particular mental model for the analysis of the brand or understanding how it is supposed to be constructed. Those models can be classified into ones focusing on the functional capabilities (related to the brands tangible elements, that can be assessed rationally) or the ones focusing on the symbolic features (the intangible elements of the brand, which can be only assessed emotionally). However, the Atomic model proposed by De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) seeks to combine these two approaches into one and state that a brand has to be constituted of both tangible and intangible elements which in turn should support one another.

Authors Maurya and Mishra (2012) as well stated that the brand is a package of tangible and intangible characteristics that intensifies the allurement of a product or service apart from its functional value. Regarding this research atomic model is applied. The intangible element of the brand of Moldova is its personality and the tangible elements are the logo and slogan. The brand personality of Moldova is a hidden component which has to be expressed, supported and therefore communicated through the tangible elements of logo and slogan. Like humans, brands may incorporate personality traits. The process of identifying or transferring human characteristics (such as personality traits), to inanimate objects (as for example to brands, places, tools, animals) on a regular basis is called anthropomorphism (Parker, 2009).

A simple example would be referring to a car as She is wild. According to Gutherie (1997, as cited in Ekinci & Hosany, 2006) people are doing this either because they are eager to interpret the world around them by putting labels and concepts related to themselves and their self-schemas, or because they are not satisfied with what is non-human and are trying to project human domain onto non-human one. Thus, when it comes to brand personality, people are seeking to relate the products and, as according to J. L. Aaker (1997) and J. L. Aaker, Benet-Martinez, and Garolera (2001), personality characteristics identified with a brand are as one of a kind as those identified with an individual, and individuals aim to communicate themselves through the brands they purchase. Murphy, Moscardo, and Benckendorff (2007) presented several ways in which personality traits can be identified with the brand. The first one considers the fact that personality can be directly illustrated in the imaginary of the brand user. The other perspective considers that a series of human characteristics can be correlated with an ordinary user of the brand. The third way is that it can be viewed as an association with impression of the worker of the company and /or product brand endorsers. This perspective becomes relevant for this research. As this thesis seeks to analyse the intangible element of brand personality of Moldova, it is necessary to consider the perspective through which the brand personality will be analysed - is it the one considering the personality of the consumer who is going to purchase the product, or the one considering the impression of the worker or product endorser. For this research the later perspective was chosen. It seeks to view whether the personality of the people of Moldova is associated with the brand and whether it is communicated via logo and slogan. This explains why it was chosen to analyse the perspective of the local people of country (as product endorsers) rather than the visitors (as product consumers).

2.2 NATION BRANDING

The notion of branding is wide applied to products, services and companies, but it can also be used for countries (Kim, Shim, & Dinnie, 2013). As defined by Fan (2006, p. 6) nation branding seeks to apply techniques used in branding and marketing communication in order to promote an image of a nation and aims to "create a clear, simple, differentiating idea built around emotional qualities which can be symbolised both verbally and visually and understood by diverse audiences in a variety of situations". According to Pitt et al. (2007) branding the countries in countless ways becomes the same as branding products, services and other branded offerings. Just as products can be understood in some special manner by large groups of individuals

which will identify themselves with particular qualities and characteristics of it, nations can as well be identified as having some specific characteristics with which individuals can relate. Therefore just as brands, destinations, nations and places can have human personality traits too since through the time brand personality became one of the fundamental aspects of any brand (J. L. Aaker, 1997). Examples provided by Ekinci and Hosany (2006) show that Europe is considered to be traditional and sophisticated; Wales is honest, welcoming, romantic, and down to earth; Spain is friendly and family oriented; London is open minded, unorthodox, vibrant, and creative; and Paris is romantic.

Because of the massive competition between countries, it is essential to them to communicate their existence to the world by presenting an image in the minds of visitors. Thus, communicating nations brand personality can be the first move for the government to recognize its international image within the markets of target countries (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007). It is known that brand personality concept was more focused on the products and companies rather than the nations. However, Kim et al. (2013) pointed that the names of the countries may help consumers in their decision-making process to acquire a product. The scholars specified that consumers tend to be interested to personality traits related to the country, for instance, French "sophistication"; Russian "strength"; Japanese "serenity" and Brazilian "passion" (Kim et al., 2013). It is therefore possible and can be considered as being useful to analyse the nations brand personality as understanding it and promoting it correctly may catch the attention of the possible visitors and therefore create a mutual benefit. An important notion was made by Fan (2006) who presented two different meanings of nation branding. The first one considers image of a country as a product, which can be used by companies or organizations to promote their sales and exports. The second one is to advertise a country or a place as a tourism destination, or inward investments, settlements. Yet the most important note made by the same author is that in general nation branding not only involves marketing but as well almost all of the aspects of nations character. That is to say, nation brand has to involve the nation itself and in this case the personality of a nation. Thus if the brand of Moldova seeks to promote its nation brand it has to consider the intangible elements that should be represented by logo and slogan. The nations character comes from the people that create the nation and thus the personality of the people represents the personality of the brand. Therefore, as mentioned earlier the focus will be put not on the consumers of the brand but on the ones that are standing behind it - the local people.

2.3 AAKER'S DIMENSIONS

Many scholars have tried to understand the personality of the brand, however analysis on it has remained restricted because of deficiency of both the conceptual framework and a decent, credible, and generalizable scale to determine the brand personality (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Correspondingly, J. L. Aaker (1997) has elaborated a strong and accurate scale to measure brand personality, which is named brand personality scale (BPS). The scholars BPS measures "the extent to which a given brand possess any of these personality traits" (Freling & Forbes, 2005, p. 405). The process of developing the framework of brand personality was inspired by the "Big Five" human personality framework created by Norman (1963, as cited in Freling &

Forbes, 2005). The scholars George and Anandkumar (2012, p. 33) note that the fundamental origin used to obtain candidate traits incorporated "personality scale used by psychologists, personality scale used by marketers and original qualitative research of personality traits associated with a number of brands". As a result, J. L. Aaker (1997) suggested a measure consisting of 42 individual personality traits, 15 facets, and 5 dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Table 1). The sincerity dimension is illustrated by the traits such as wholesome, down-to-earth, and honest; excitement is illustrated by the traits such as daring, imaginative, and exciting; sophistication is illustrated by the traits such as glamorous, smooth, and charming; and ruggedness, is illustrated by the traits such as strong, masculine, and western (Freling & Forbes, 2005).

Table 1.: BPS developed by Aaker (George & Anandkumar, 2012, p.35)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Facets	Traits	
1	Sincerity	• Down to earth • Honest • Wholesome • Cheerful	1. Down to earth 3. Small town 5. Sincere 7. Wholesome 9. Cheerful 11. Friendly	2. Family-oriented 4. Honest 6. Real 8. Original 10. Sentimental
2	Excitement	• Daring • Spirited • Imaginative • Up to date	1. Daring 3. Exciting 5. Cool 7. Imaginative 9. Up to date 11. Contemporary	2. Trendy 4. Spirited 6. Young 8. Unique 10. Independent
3	Competence	• Reliable • Intelligent • Successful	1. Reliable 3. Secure 5. Technical 7. Successful 9. Confident	2. Hard working 4. Intelligent 6. Corporate 8. Leader
4	Sophistication	• Upper class • Charming	1. Upper class 3. Good looking 5. Feminine	2. Glamorous 4. Charming 6. Smooth
5	Ruggedness	• Out doorsy • Tough	1. Out doorsy 3. Western 5. Rugged	2. Masculine 4. Tough

Parker (2014, p. 64) mentions that Aakers framework is "the dominant paradigm in brand personality research, and evidence illustrates the BPS are reliable and generalizable across different brands and product categories". However, Aaker specifies that the BPS may not be ideal in different cultures. For this reason, the researcher appointed for additional studies to identify the extent to which personality dimensions are resistant in different cultures. Ekinci and Hosany were the first researchers to analyze the applicability and validity of Aakers brand personality framework in the area of tourism destination (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). The scholars supported that the travelers assign personality traits to destinations, for this reason the brand personality theory can be related to the tourism destinations. Ekinci and Hosany (2006) came to conclusion that destination personality includes three salient dimensions: sincerity, excitement, and conviviality. The first two are considered to be main factors. Conviviality was new and particularly applicable to tourism destinations (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). Usakli and Baloglu (2011, p. 16) marked that "since then, empirical studies on destination personality began to emerge in the tourism literature.

In the research done by Pitt et al. (2007), scholars examined 10 official tourism websites of African countries in order to determine brand commu-

nication by applying Aakers brand personality dimensions. Their focus was to analyse what the country "says" about itself and to accentuate the efficiency of the content analysis of the online communication as an applicable study approach. They identified that some African countries were constructing strong online brand personality by forming a clear and precise position which was communicated explicitly. The results showed that the dimensions ruggedness and competence were communicated and can be considered as creating a strong brand personality on the websites of the countries of South Africa and Angola. But in the case of the website of Malawi, no clear brand personality dimension was communicated. The scholars presented that it was situated in partly in between ruggedness and excitement, sincerity, and sophistication. The scholars examined the websites at a particular point in time and their assessment may or may not be applied any longer.
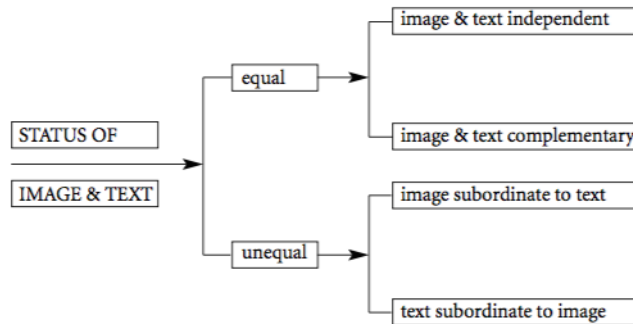
This thesis attempts to apply Aakers brand personality dimensions to evaluate the three components of logo, slogan and nations identity. As it was noted no previous study attempted to analyse the logo and slogan even though these components are the one that are used most often to represent the brand.

2.4 TEXTUAL AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION

It was stated that brand is strong if its visual and verbal components are consistent, therefore the messages sent by logo and slogan should be congruent. The relationship between text and picture as defined by Allwood (2008) should be descriptive, because pictures are providing with iconic details and words is a more abstract and symbolic information. Words can include focus, recognition and outlook to a pictorial representation. In other words, the text should complement the image in order to create a better communication of a message. Kornalijnslijper (n.d.), for example, marked that when the image and text modes are arranged jointly, their material content most likely relates to one another. Martinec and Salway (2005, as cited in Kornalijnslijper, n.d.) were aiming to explain and examine connection between an image and a text as modes, and define the types of multimodal relations they have. The authors proposed a model called generalized system of image-text relations, where the relations between the text and image can be: image serves the text; text serves the image, image is equally dependent to the text, text and image are equally independent. The model includes two types of relationships, first one being a status relation and second one being a logico-semantic relation. Regarding this thesis only the status relation is analysed in order to examine the relation of logo and slogan and what kind of relation they form together.

The two modes of image and text can have a status relation of being independent, complementary or dependent (Fig. 2). The status relation signifies that among text and image there is a proportionate status (Kornalijnslijper, n.d.). In an equal relationship the modes (image and text) become independent or complementary to one another. In case of independent relation status text and images can exist in parallel and the meaning will not be lost, while on the contrary if the status is complimentary the text and image are equally dependent and cannot exist without one another as the meaning would be lost. In the case of unequal status, if one mode is subordinate to another they are dependent upon one another, as for example if text explains only one part of the picture.

Figure 2.: System of image-text status relations (Martinec and Salway, 2005, p. 351)

		image & text independent
	equal	
STATUS OF		image & text complementary
IMAGE & TEXT		image subordinate to text
	unequal	
		text subordinate to image

This research seeks to understand the relation status between the logo and slogan as image and text modes. If they seek to represent the brand personality and if the brand is considered as being strong if both modes are consistent, we should seek to find the complementary relation status between the two, which should communicate the same congruent message regarding brand personality. If the two are equally independent and can serve as stand alone modes it might be considered as sending messages that are not consistent and brand might not be strong enough.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH METHOD

This research is examining "What personality characteristics nation has according to local people", "What personality characteristics logo and slogan communicates" and "How well do the tangible elements communicate the intangible elements of the brand". In order to answer these questions the qualitative research methods are applied. Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, and Namey (2005) marked that qualitative research is efficient in collecting data about particular cultural values, opinions, behaviors and social contexts of certain populations. However, regarding the specifics of this research it is unavoidable to use some quantification, and as Given (2008) noted in general quantitative analysts may not be able to avoid it. In order to generate the results the method of survey was used in order to gather the required data. Survey is designed to gather data which is focused more on personal perceptions and perspectives, rather than pure evidence and numerical data. Yet the quantity becomes an important issue for the research, as the numerical data plays a role in identifying which Aaker brand personality dimensions prevails each other. This thesis is considered to be a deductive research, since the starting point of the theory and case of interest, which leads to determine hypotheses or research questions (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014).

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

3.2.1 *Survey as data collection*

Survey as data collection method provides a quantitative process for the reason of obtaining as much as possible participants from Moldova, who are identifying personality traits in logo, slogan and Moldovan nation. Additionally, the qualitative process will take part in analyzing the participants perception of their attitudes, beliefs, values towards logo, slogan and Moldovan nation. This study is conducted by using an online survey, because the important advantage of online survey is speed and low cost (Burns & Bush, 2003), and "they are visual, interactive, and flexible; they do not require interviewers to be present" (Szolnoki & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 58). The scholars, Szolnoki and Hoffmann (2013), mention that busy people most of the time avoid participating in the telephone survey, but have preference in answering posted questions. Another reason for choosing this method is the distance. The author of this thesis was not able to collect the required data in the country of Moldova. Besides the advantages of the online survey, there are some disadvantages. One of the downside of the online survey is that the participants procrastinate or forget to complete it. Another one is

that the question or the intention of the researcher may not be clear to the participant and there is no direct connection in order to respond to the questions from the respondent.

To conduct the research Google Forms were used as a tool of online surveying (see the Appendix 1). The survey is focused on gathering data to identify the personality traits for logo, slogan and nation of Moldova. The participants had to select 10 traits from 25 listed ones, which represent 5 dimensions of brand personality according to Aaker. The participants were provided with a multiple choice option (choosing more than one trait). The survey was conducted in two languages, English and Romanian, and included the image of current logo and slogan of Moldova. The survey included 5 required questions, which are: to select 10 characteristics for logo; to select 10 characteristics for slogan; to select 10 characteristics for We as Moldavians are...; gender, and age. As an optional question, the survey included a box for the comments about the logo and slogan, regarding what impression individuals have towards them. The process of sending the survey began on June 22, 2015 and data was gathered during one month. Before posting the online survey on social media, the pilot version was sent to several participants that understand and speak English and Romanian. The pilot version included all 42 traits from 5 dimensions of brand personality. However, from the feedback provided it was decided to reduce the number of traits to five of each traits per dimension. It was done so because the participants stated that the list is too long and others might fill it in with little to no consideration. The translation from English to Romanian was verified by several bilingual participants before it was posted on social media. As it was not clear if the participants understand or know English, it was decided that survey will include the translation in Romanian. It was also decided to leave the English translation, because for those who do speak English this would have helped to understand the concepts.

3.2.2 *Participants*

The participants were recruited through the social media sites where the survey was posted. The following social medias were selected: Facebook, Instagram and odnoklassniki. The participants from Moldova that are using these social medias could easily enter the online survey as it was a public access. With the help of the Facebook social networking platform, the survey was posted on social groups Republic of Moldova Tourism Agency- a government organization (Agentia Turismului a Republicii Moldova) and Our Association in Sweden (Asociatia noastra in Suedia) and personal wall. Another social media used to post the survey was Instagram, which permits members to upload, edit and share photos and videos on different social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr). The survey was posted in the section for comments under the pictures on the social groups of @visitmoldova, @imiplacemd, @discovermoldova, @nascutiinmmd, @moldova mea. Finally odnoklassniki, which is a social networking platform (similar to Facebook), mostly used by users from Russia and some of the former Soviet Union countries, that allows to post and share information, video and pictures was used to post the survey on the authors of this thesis wall.

In total there were 70 respondents that participated in the survey, 18 male and 52 female. As mentioned before, the individuals received survey via different social medias. The participants were from different age groups. 38

of the participants were between 18-25 years old, 25 of the participants were between 26-35 years old, 6 participants were between 36-50, and only one participant was above 50.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

After the data was gathered it was extracted from the summary of responses provided by Google Forms. Data regarding the personality traits was grouped according to the dimensions they belong and inserted in the tables for each of the component of the brand (logo, slogan, and "We as Moldovians are.."). Three tables were generated with the summarized results (see Appendix 2).

The following step was to extract the traits that were mentioned and rank them from those that were mentioned the most often to the least. Only the first ten of the traits were presented in the tables for each of the component (see Appendix 3). Dimension to which each trait belongs was presented. Next step was to evaluate how many times which dimension appeared. Table 8 (see Appendix 4) is presenting these results which were later used in the diagrams.Finally the dimensions were placed in the diagrams (circles) which present their ranking after counting of how many times they were mentioned in the Tables 5, 6 and 7 (see Appendix 3) from each component. First component that was evaluated was the nations personality ("We as Moldavians are") in order to evaluate the intangible element of the brand. Second the diagram with the ranking of the dimensions which present logo and slogan were created. These two diagrams were merged and the overlapping dimensions were evaluated as to see what is the relationship between the logo and slogan, and whether they send a congruent message. Finally, all of the circles were merged to identify the dimensions which are on the same place and to demonstrate the similarities between ranking of dimensions in each of the component - logo, slogan and "We as Moldavians are...". This final diagram presents which personality dimension the logo and slogan presents. The last step was to evaluate how well is the brand personality (according to local people) communicated via logo and slogan.

3.4 CREDIBILITY

According to Given (2008, p. 138) credibility is defined as "methodological procedures and sources used to establish a high level of harmony between the participants expressions and the researchers interpretations of them". In this research, the participants as well as the data collection method were selected appropriately for the conducted analysis. In this way, by illustrating the procedure of data gathering and including the questions and answers from the questionnaire the research can be considered as credible.

3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Reliability in the research is the extent to which we can rely on the source of the data and, therefore, the data itself, while validity presents relevance and appropriateness to the research question and the directness and strength of its association with the concepts under scrutiny (Pierce, 2007, p. 83). Data for the research was gathered through survey, which makes it a quantitative method, but it seeks to examines the qualitative aspect of the data, such as perception, believes, values of the participants towards the logo and slogan.

The reliability aspect, in this case, presents the questions from the survey that were presented for the participants. The questions were structured in an understandable manner, so the individuals could give a reliable answer. Before the survey was posted officially, a few volunteers participated in the analysis of the pilot version of answering the survey to determine that the questions are clear and do not need to be changed. For the validity aspect, after the data was gathered, merging the theories with the responses will present if the result provides with an answer to the research questions that were determined in the beginning of the study. Thus, the study gathered theoretical concepts which are supported by the information about brand personality, the dimensions of brand personality, and visual and textual communication.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

All the participants received the information regarding the purpose of this study before answering the survey. It was published on the walls of social media platforms or send as private messages. The participants were assured that the study will not disclose their identity, because the survey is confidential.

3.7 LIMITATIONS

This study has the following limitations. The first one is the translation from English to Romanian. In the way that most of the traits are not presenting the same meaning when translating to another language. This creates an obstacle for the participants in truly understanding the meaning of the characteristic, thus creating an impaired response.

The social channels were limiting the demographic aspect of age. As not so many, older participants can or know how to enter and respond to an online survey.

A very common limitation for online survey is the risk that the respondents will not take the task seriously and avoid participating in it. Even if the participants do take the task seriously, by not presenting the explanation of each trait, the respondents may answer randomly, as they dont really know what the labels mean or how to apply them to the logo/slogan.

4

RESULTS

Three tables in the Appendix 2 display the results from the survey regarding "Logo", "Slogan" and "We as Moldavians are...". The results reveal the perception of local people from Moldova towards the tangible elements "Logo", "Slogan" and intangible "We as Moldavians are". Out of 70 participants, none of them ignored any trait and all of them were selected at least once. In the Table 2 "Summary of the results regarding Logo" (see Appendix 2) it can be observed that from the dimension "Sincerity" traits that were chosen the most often are *original* (46 times), *friendly* (42 times), and *family-oriented* (37 times); for the dimension "Excitement" the most selected traits were *trendy* (45 times), *up to date* (36 times), and *unique* (35 times); for the dimension "Competence" the most selected traits were *successful* (38 times), *hard-working* (28 times), and *intelligent* (22 times); for the dimension "Sophistication" the chosen traits were *charming* (27 times), *good looking* (21 times), and *feminine* (10 times); finally for the dimension "Ruggedness" the traits chosen were *outdoorsy* (26 times), *western* as well as *rugged* (5 times), and *tough* (2 times).

Table 3 "Summary of the results regarding Slogan" (see Appendix 2) presents that in the dimension "Sincerity" the most selected traits were *friendly* (41 times), *original* (35 times), and *family-oriented* (27 times); in the dimension "Excitement" the traits were *spirited* (34 times), *unique* (29 times), and *up to date* (26 times); in the dimension "Competence" the traits were *successful* (43 times), *confident* (31 times), and *intelligent* (30 times); in the dimension "Sophistication" the traits were *charming* (15 times), *good looking* (12 times), and *feminine* together with the trait *glamorous* (5 times); in the dimension "Ruggedness" the traits were *outdoorsy* (25 times), *western* together with the trait *ruggedness* (7 times), and *tough* (4 times). Finally the Table 4 "Summary of the results regarding We as Moldavians are..." (see Appendix 2) it can be depicted that in the dimension "Sincerity" the most selected traits were *friendly* (55 times), *family-oriented* (44 times), and *cheerful* (38 times); in the dimension "Excitement" the traits were *spirited* (37 times), *daring* (30 times) and *unique* (27 times); in the dimension "Competence" the traits were *hard-working* (45 times), *confident* (31 times), and *intelligent* (25 times); in the dimension "Sophistication" the traits were *good looking* and *charming* (21 times), *glamorous* (8 times), and *upper class* as well as trait *feminine* (3 times); lastly, in the dimension "Ruggedness" the traits were *outdoorsy* (21 times), *tough* (14 times), and *rugged* (11 times).

Further, the Tables 5, 6, 7 (see Appendix 3) present the results of the most often chosen trait for tangible elements "Logo" and "Slogan" and intangible "We as Moldavians are...". For each table the traits are ranked from 1st place (mentioned the most often) to 10th place (mentioned less often). Table 5 presents the "Summary of the results for Logo" (see Appendix 3) where the 1st place with 65.7% belongs to the trait *original*, 2nd place with 64.3% is the trait *trendy*, 3rd place with 60% is the trait *friendly*, 4th place with 54.3% is

the trait *successful*, 5th place 52.9% is the trait *family-oriented*, 6th place with 51.4% is the trait *up to date*, 7th place with 50% is the trait *unique*, 8th place with 48.6% is the trait *spirited*, 9th place with 40% are the traits *hard-working* and *cheerful*, 10th place with 38.6% is the trait *charming*. Table 6 presents the "Summary of the results for Slogan" (see Appendix 3) the 1st place with 61.4% is the trait *successful*, 2nd place with 58.6% is the trait *friendly*, 3rd place with 50% is the trait *original*, 4th place with 48.6% is the trait *spirited*, 5th place with 64.3% are the traits *trendy* and *confident*, 6th place with 42.9% is the trait *intelligent*, 7th place with 41.4% is the trait *unique*, 8th place with 38.6% is the trait *family-oriented*, 9th place with 37.1% is the trait *up to date*, 10th place with 35.7% is the trait *outdoorsy*. For the Table 7 "Summary of the results for "We as Moldavians are..." (see Appendix 3) the 1st place with 78.6% is the trait *friendly*, 2nd place with 64.3% is the trait *hard-working*, 3rd place with 62.9% is the trait *family-oriented*, 4th place with 54.3% is the trait *cheerful*, 5th place with 52.9% are the traits *spirited*, 6th place with 42.9% is the trait *daring*, 7th place with 38.6% is the trait *unique*, 8th place with 35.7% are the traits *outdoorsy, honest and intelligent*, 9th place with 32.9% are the traits *original and reliable*, 10th place with 30% is the trait *good-looking*.

The most dominant trait in logo, slogan and "We as moldvians are..." is the trait *friendly*. No other traits score as similar as this. The other traits that run in all three are *family-oriented, unique and spirited*. However, when it comes to "We as Moldavians are..." rankings and traits are rather different from logo and slogan. It presents such values as *hard-working, cheerful, and honest* which are not presented by logo and slogan. While on contrary, logo and slogan present such traits as *trendy, successful and original* which are not identified as important traits in "We as Moldavians are...".

By presenting the 10 traits from each component ("Logo", "Slogan" and "We as Moldavians are..."), it is uncomplicated to identify the dimensions of brand personality that are mentioned repeatedly. This is displayed in the Table 8 "Brand Personality Dimension Results" (See Appendix 4). In the component of "Logo" the dimension "Sincerity" and "Excitement" was observed 4 times, "Competence" was observed 2 times, "Sophistication"- 1 time, and "Ruggedness"- 0 times. In the component of "Slogan" the dimension "Sincerity" and "Competence" was observed 3 times, "Excitement"- 4 times, "Ruggedness"- 1 time and "Sophistication"- 0 times. Finally in the component "We as Moldavians are..." the dimension "Sincerity" was observed 5 times, "Excitement" and "Competence"- 3 times, "Sophistication" and "Ruggedness"- 1 time.

After detecting the dimensions from the Table 8 (see Appendix 4), further step that was taken was to present them in circles. The first circle (Fig. 3) presents the participants perceptions about Moldavian nation personality, in other words the intangible element of the brand. The dimensions were placed according to how many times it was repeated in the Table 8. As a result, on 1st place is the dimension "Sincerity", 2nd place "Excitement" and "Competence", 3rd place "Sophistication" and "Ruggedness".

Figure 3.: Final Dimentions of BP regarding *We as Moldavians are...*

The second and third circle (Fig. 4) present the participants perceptions about the current logo and slogan, in other words the tangible elements of the brand. For the circle representing dimensions chosen for "Logo" they were ranked in the following order: 1st place is the "Sincerity" and "Excitement", 2nd place "Competence", 3rd place "Sophistication" and 4th place "Ruggedness". For the circle representing "Slogan" the order is: 1st place "Excitement", 2nd place "Sincerity" and "Competence", 3rd place "Ruggedness" and 4th place "Sophistication". By merging the two circles of "Logo" and "Slogan", it was illustrated that the dimensions "Competence" and "Excitement" are sending the same message, according to the theory by Martinec and Salway, as these dimensions are depicted from both parts on the same place in the ranking.

Figure 4.: Final Dimensions of BP regarding *Logo* and *Slogan*
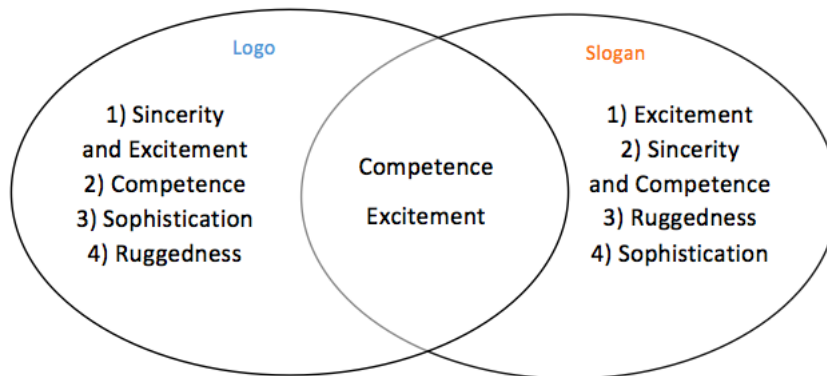
The third diagram (Fig. 5) is presenting the all of the three components merged into one in order to see the overlapping dimensions accordingly to their rankings. The diagram displays which of the dimensions each of the component shares and communicates between one another. When merging the component "We as Moldavians are..." and the component "Logo" the dimensions are "Competence", "Sophistication" and "Sincerity", when combining the "We as Moldavians are..." and with the component "Slogan" the dimensions are "Competence" and "Ruggedness".

Figure 5.: Final Dimensions of BP for the 3 components

We as moldavians are …

Competence
Ruggedness

Competence
Sophistication
Sincerity

Competence

Competence
Excitement

Logo

Slogan
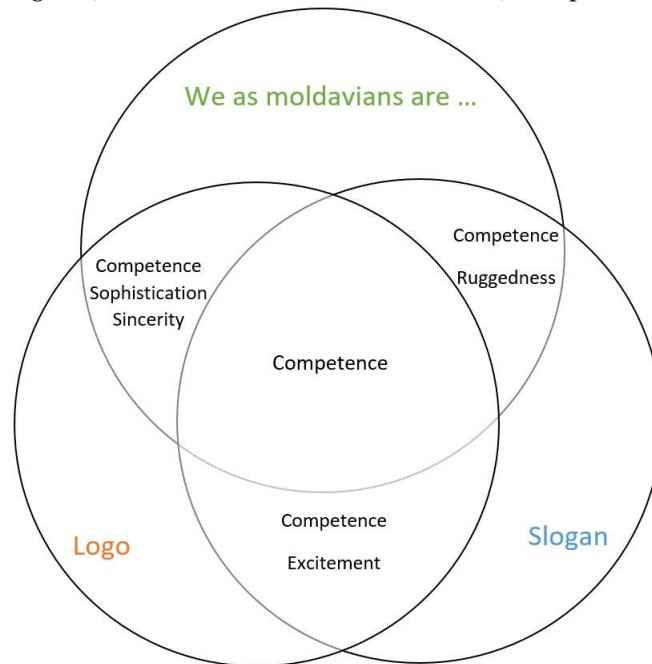
As a result and focus of the research was to identify which common dimensions are communicated, as well as if the tangible element and intangible element support each other. It was depicted that the 3 components are sharing only one dimension which is "Competence". This demonstrates that logo, slogan and "We as Moldavians are..." are communicating only one personality dimension which does not score highest in any of the components. The highest ranking dimension of sincerity regarding the brand personality is only communicated by the logo, thus the logo is the one presenting the closest message. Slogan seems to communicate a bit different message, focusing on more of the excitement dimension.

5

DISCUSSION

The participants from Moldova have selected the traits that found to be the best suited for the current logo and slogan of Moldova. The final results that are presented in Figure 5, are illustrating the correlation between all 3 components (logo, slogan and We as Moldavians are). In addition, the results display that these components are communicating the strong brand personality dimension of Competence. When analysing the components apart, it is revealing their separate correlation with each other. As in logo and "We as Moldavians are..." share the dimensions of Competence, Sophistication and Sincerity, the only combination that has 3 dimensions. In a sense, it may represent that local people are viewing nation identity more in logo and at the same time "We as Moldavians are...", is presenting more the individuals as a nation. The traits that were selected and were present in both components are original, family-oriented, cheerful and hard-working (Table 5 and 7).

The second aspect, is the combination between logo and slogan. These components should represent the nation as a brand the best, as it is seen the dimensions that were selected are Competence and Excitement. The traits that were present in both sides are hard-working, spirited and unique (Table 5 and 6). The comments from individuals present their thoughts about the logo and slogan as a whole. Some of the participants commented that:

"Sunt alese foarte reusit si se potrivesc unul cu altul. Radiaza foarte bine caracterul obiceiurilor noastre" (They are chosen very successful and match each other. They radiate very well the character of our habits.);

"Acest logo este colorat, vesel, original, aminteste de portul national, modelele de pe covoarele traditionale. Aminteste de istoria noastra, dar si de viitor. Sloganul e simplu, direct, care te chem la aciune, adic s ndrzneti s vizitezi Moldova" (This logo is colorful, cheerful, original, reminds me of the national costume and traditional patterns on curtains. Reminds me of our history, but reflects the future. The slogan is simple, direct, calling you to action to dare to visit Moldova.).

The third component is "We as Moldavians are..." and slogan. These components share only 2 dimensions, which are Competence and Ruggedness. As mentioned previously, it seems that logo is considered to present nation mare than slogan. The traits that were found in both components are hard-working and outdoorsy (Table 6 and 7). Moreover, the trait outdoorsy was voted 35,7% in slogan and "We as Moldavians are...".

The golden middle of all 3 components presents the strong BP of Moldova, which is Competence. This dimension is communicating a clear and specific message of nations identity. For a further representation of the results, the research questions that will determine and discussed.

5.1 TANGIBLE/INTANGIBLE ELEMENTS AND VISUAL/TEXTUAL COMMUNICATION

The first question is *"What personality characteristics should be included when creating a nation brand according to local people?"*

According to the Figure 3 from the section "Results", Moldavians consider that brand position of the nation are mostly sincere, followed by excitement and competence. It seems that the dimension Sincerity is representing them the best and is meaningful for them. According to J. L. Aaker (1997), the three dimensions from BP are connected with the three of the "Big Five" human personality. In this case Sincerity is connected with Agreeableness, which "capture the idea of warmth and acceptance"(J. L. Aaker, 1997, p. 353). Their most indicated personality traits are cheerful (54,3%); friendly (78,6%); family-oriented (62,9%); original (32,9%) and honest (35,7%). This also indicates that the personality characteristics are ranked high and that none of them was excluded. All these characteristics should be included in logo and slogan as to represent the nations identity as a brand, which are considered to be intangible elements.

The second research question is *"What personality characteristics is the current logo and slogan of Republic of Moldova communicates according to local people?"*

The Figure 4, presents the dimensions of logo and slogan, which were classified. Firstly, will examine the dimensions from logo, which on the 1st place is Sincerity and Excitement; 2nd place-Competence; 3rd place-Sophistication and 4th place-Ruggedness. The leading traits are original, trendy, friendly and successful. This can be taken from the aspect of the symbols used in logo that communicate the traits. As for example, observing the image of logo, the branches end with a specific symbol that relates to the nation and country, such as "Hearts", which symbolize hospitality, openness and kindness of Moldovan people, which make this component communicate about the friendliness of the inhabitants or "Rose", situated on top of the tree of logo, is extensively spread folklore symbol, which illustrates the meaning of Moldovian people- wisdom, love, family, commitment and beauty (Tree of Overlays, 2015). The slogan has the classification of dimensions, on the 1st place Excitement, 2nd Sincerity and Competence; 3rd Ruggedness and 4th Sophistication. For this component the leading traits are successful, friendly, original and spirited. The communication from this part sends an impression for tourists to follow history and Moldovan traditions (Cember, 2014). A participant specified that *"They really characterize our nation and rise the desire to discover this country."*

When combining both components, it is observed that only two dimensions are communicating the same message, which are Excitement and Competence. These are the other two dimensions of BP that are related to "Big Five" human personality dimensions (Extroversion and Consciousness) , which according to scholar, Excitement and Extroversion "connote the notions of sociability, energy, and activity" and Competence and Consciousness "encapsulate responsibility, dependability and security" (J. L. Aaker, 1997, p. 353). With this in mind, the inhabitants of Moldova recognized the personality characteristics presented by visual and text message. This means that logo and slogan are complementing each other and support one another. As reported by the participants, the impressions are:
"Noi vom cunoaste mai bine alte tari si pe noi ne vor cunoaste mai bine in lume"
(We will know better other countries and others will get to know us better

in the world.);

"Logoul si sloganul se potrivesc si redau prin imagine traditia, simbolul Moldove-nesc. Este ceva sugestiv fara sensuri ambigue" (The logo and slogan match and reflect through the image the tradition and the Moldovan symbol. It is something suggestive without ambiguous meanings.)

But there were a few respondents who thought that the slogan, by itself, is not sending any impression about the nation, although by combining logo and slogan creates a whole vision of the nation:

"Perplexed, I don't actually understand the slogan..what routes of life, what is it all about? it has nothing to do with Moldova, it's more like a chapter title from a philosophy book than a sentence that is supposed to describe Moldova. However, those 2(slogan and logo) are tightly coupled. I can see some routes there in the logo, although I can only guess about their meaning. Could it be the Moldova's biodiversity and why is there an opium poppy as the main route, or is it the lots of traditions/nations that one can find there - and again the poppy question. There are so many good words to describe Moldova and they combined these ones. Wouldn't it be more appealing if you saw a slogan, say 'Moldova - experience the Alice's in wonderland trip'?(and the poppy would be at the right place)."

According to Kornalijnslijper (n.d.), image and text combined jointly, their meaning is likely to relate to one another. For a deeper interpretation of communication in visual and text message is taken the status relation type (Martinec & Salway, 2005). Taking this into consideration the status relation is divided in two parts, equal and unequal. For this research analysis the appropriate concept of equal status is complementary, where according to Martinec and Salway (2005) the modes (image and text) are linked with one another or change each other equally. Accordingly, logo and slogan are completing each other, by communicating the same message.

As from the perspective of tangible elements, the logo and slogan are representing the brand (Moldova) that sends a message to visitors, they are the visual elements that create first impression.

The last question is *"How well do the tangible elements (logo and slogan) communicate intangible elements of brand personality for nations brand?"*

As mentioned previously, logo and slogan communicate similar messages, which make them to support each other, with this in mind it makes them congruent. However, as research suggest, by implementing "atomic model" in evaluation of brand personality, it necessary to analyse the fact if tangible elements (logo and slogan) support the intangible element (personality). In the first 3 of classification of the traits from 3 components (Tables 5, 6, 7), one particular trait stood out, which is friendliness. In the table for logo it is on the 3rd place with 60% of votes, in the table of slogan it is on 2nd place with 58,6%, and in the table for "We as Moldavians are..." it is on 1st place with 78,6% of votes. In this manner, the brand communicates one message, which is friendliness.

However, other traits communicated by logo and slogan, originality and trendiness, are not to be identified as personality traits in the perception by people of Moldova. From one point of view, it seems that the trinity does not support each other and brand does not function as unity (tangible elements do not support the intangible). From other point of view, if applying country background of Moldova, the country is young in the eyes of foreigners and is struggling to become a tourism attraction. Therefore, visual and verbal communication (logo and slogan) are trying to make an impact on consumers (tourists). Since the main function of logo and slogan is to make an impression and attract people to use the product (in this case to

visit the country), then the congruity of logo and slogan communicates the right message. And since all three components, logo, slogan and "We as Moldavians are...", identified friendliness as important trait as a meaningful trait, it could be said that on this part by applying the atomic model, brand personality has tendencies to be strong.

Beside the personality trait "friendly", the dimension that is shared and expressed strongly between all three components is Competence. According to J. L. Aaker (1997), this dimension includes some of the traits such as, reliable, successful, confident, hard-working and intelligent. The statement of a participant: *"Logoul si sloganul se potrivesc si redau prin imagine traditia, simbolul Moldovenesc. Este ceva sugestiv fara sensuri ambigue"* (The logo and slogan match and reflect through the image the tradition and the Moldavian symbol. It is something suggestive without ambiguous meanings.) reflects that inhabitants selection of the traits, represents the idea of the communication in logo and slogan, by that creating a message of intangible element (personality) that is send through tangible elements (logo and slogan). Consequently, by perceiving a strong, positive BP, it "is likely to be associated with positive consequences" (Freling & Forbes, 2005, p. 409). The scholars imply that it may contribute as a base for distinction, thus making an influence on consumers (visitors) perception and choice.

Friendliness as a personality trait and the dimension Competence are significant for people from Moldova. Therefore, they are identified as intangible element and are supported by tangible elements.

5.2 BRAND PERSONALITY AND NATION BRANDING

Moldova can be considered as having brand personality by accommodating the personality traits of the nation. Adapting the definition of brand by Kapferer (1997, in Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009) that claims that brand is not representing only symbol which can be differentiated from one another, but it incorporates the attributes that are in consumers mind, such as tangible, intangible, psychological and sociological components that are presented in brand. Thus, by establishing what personalities traits (intangible elements) are persisting in the country, it will be possible to relate to the tangible element (logo and slogan). Only, in this case the analysis will be conducted from perspective of participants and inhabitants of Moldova and not from consumers who evaluate the personality of brand. Thus making an exchange of roles in determining brand personality. There were several participants who expressed the impression of logo and slogan that:

"Ca a fost elaborat prin chibzuinta, uitandu-ma la el imi face impresia ca vizitand Moldova voi trai momente placute. El este atractiv. (As it has been made with deliberation, looking at it makes me feel like visiting Moldova I would live pleasant moments. It is attractive.)

"Mi-a lasat o impresie placuta si calda, plina de un caracter national si modern" (It left a good and warm impression, filled with national character, and modern).

According to Freling and Forbes (2005, p. 405) "A favorable brand personality is thought to increase consumer preference and usage, increase emotions in consumers, increase levels of trust and loyalty, encourage active processing on the part of the consumer, and provide a basis for product differentiation". In this case the inhabitants communicate the preferences, emotions, trust towards the visual elements that express personalities. It makes a relationship between tangible elements and the inhabitant. Accord-

ing to Blackstone (1993, in Yoon, 2004) the brands and the consumers need to be viewed as co-equivalent parts of a single system. Consequently, the visual elements and consumer, in this case inhabitants, are presenting a unit of the brand Moldova and its personality. Correspondingly, J. L. Aaker (1997) mentioned that personality traits associated with a brand are presenting in the same manner an individual, thus the consumer intends to communicate themselves through brands. By adapting this statement, it can be viewed from another perspective, in the way that the brand (Moldova) is incorporating the nation's characteristics, in the same manner the nation is viewing their personality traits in logo and slogan, by all means to present itself and send the favorable message.

Notably, nation branding focuses on presenting themselves, through visual elements, towards visitors in a technique that "even language could not convey" (Pitt et al., 2007, p. 835). As Fan (2006) pointed that nation branding "create a clear, simple, differentiating idea built around emotional qualities which can be symbolised both verbally and visually and understood by diverse audiences in a variety of situations" (p. 6). This statement can be confirmed by participant's view: *"O modalitate de a promova tara natala cu a ei traditii si cetateni primtre alte tari din lume* (One way to promote the native country with its traditions and citizens among other countries in the world.); *"Noi vom cunoaste mai bine alte tari si pe noi ne vor cunoaste mai bine in lume* (We will know better other countries and others will get to know us better in the world). The scholars view supports the intention of the nation of Moldova, in the way of presenting themselves through personality aspects illustrated in visual and verbal elements.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has investigated the use of Aakers brand personality dimension scale in order to analyse the current logo and slogan of Moldova. As the aim of the study was to detect if logo and slogan (visual and textual elements) are communicating congruently; what personality characteristics the local people of Moldova identify in logo, slogan and what personality characteristics they have as a nation; if all three components (logo, slogan and We as Moldavians are) communicate the same brand personality dimension, and if tangible and intangible elements support each other. The study illustrates that the application of Aakers brand personality dimensions as a tool is suitable for determining the brand personality dimensions in the logo and slogan. As a result of the analysis of the components all three of them illustrate the same dimension, which is Competence. Yet, this dimension is not the primary one, and this means that the main personality dimension of Sincerity, which was most often identified by local people is not expressed well, especially by the slogan which expresses Excitement. Yet, the result indicates that tangible elements (logo and slogan) to some extent support the intangible element (personality), especially the personality trait of friendliness. Atomic model proved to be useful for the analysis of nation brand. Finally, logo and slogan can be considered sending congruent message regarding rand personality. The relationship between the two can be considered as supportive one.

The downside of this research is that the number of the participants can be viewed as a rather small one in order to detect the brand personality dimension for the whole country. However, it also shows that determining the brand personality dimension appears to be a correct way to analyse and construct the brand and can be used by the marketing specialists if they seek to change or improve the elements of logo and slogan.

The limitation that occurred throughout the process of conducting the research was that the traits of the dimensions were too abstract and most of the participants had difficulties in understanding them. The restriction created misinterpretations of the traits and some of the participants were asking what do the concepts mean. Therefore when applying Aakers brand personality dimensions for further analysis this limitation should be considered. Overall, abstract terms (such as down-to-earth) which are not clarified by the author creates some difficulties when applying them. A more clarified or simplified concepts (traits) would ease the application.

Future Research
The research presented in this paper can be analyzed in a more broader way. The examination of the dimensions between logo, slogan and We as Moldavians... can be done more profoundly. To a degree that by determining if the other dimensions are more effective and represent the brand better than the chosen one, by adapting various methods for analysis. In addition,

by focusing only on the perception of the inhabitants towards the logo and slogan, as a further investigation could be analyzing the perception of customers (visitors) towards logo and slogan of Moldova. In this way, collecting the perception from both parts, can be detected the similarities and differences of identifying the brand personality in logo and slogan.

Also, by applying the Aakers BPS on other logos and slogans from different countries, could create an analysis between them, thus determining what kind of communication the visual and verbal elements are sending to visitors from each country and do the tangible element(s) support the intangible element(s).

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A

Google form survey was provided to Moldavian participants.

Figure 6.: Survey

Logo and Slogan of Moldova

This Logo and Slogan represent the nation (identity) of Moldova. It was launched on 24th of November, 2014 for promoting the tourism in Republic of Moldova. This survey is designed in order to answer the question on whether logo and slogan contains the personality of the nation and whether the logo and slogan complement each other when sending a message of nation identity. Please, respond to the questions by selecting different characteristics, or "personality traits", that this national brand has according to your perceptions. Thank you!

Acest Logo şi Slogan reprezintă naţiunea (identitatea) a Moldovei. Acesta a fost lansat pe 24 noiembrie 2014 cu scopul de a promova turismul în Republica Moldova.
Acest studiu este conceput pentru a răspunde la întrebarea dacă logo-ul si sloganul conţine personalitatea naţiunii şi dacă logo-ul şi sloganul completează reciproc la trimiterea unui mesaj de identitate a naţiunii. Vă rog, să răspundenţi la întrebările prin selectarea diferitor caracterisitici, sau "trăsături de personalitate", pe care acest brand naţional dispune în funcţie de percepţiile dumneavoastră. Vă mulţumesc!

* Required

discover
the routes of life
MOLDOVA

Logo *

Please look at the logo and select 10 characteristics that suit it. (Vă rog atrageți atenția la logo și selectați 10 caracteristici care i se potrivesc.)

- ☐ Family-oriented (Orientat spre familie)
- ☐ Daring (Îndrăzneț)
- ☐ Trendy (Modern)
- ☐ Honest (Cinstit)
- ☐ Confident (Încrezut)
- ☐ Reliable (Sigur)
- ☐ Feminine (Feminin)
- ☐ Upper-class (De o clasa-superioară)
- ☐ Masculine (Masculin)
- ☐ Tough (Dur)
- ☐ Charming (Fermecător)
- ☐ Intelligent (Inteligent)
- ☐ Up-to-date (Actual)
- ☐ Original (Original)
- ☐ Outdoorsy (Campenesc, în aer liber)
- ☐ Western (Occindental)
- ☐ Glamorous (Cu caracter de glamour)
- ☐ Hard-working (Muncitoresc, harnic)
- ☐ Spirited (Spiritual)
- ☐ Cheerful (Voios)
- ☐ Friendly (Prietenos)
- ☐ Unique (Unical)
- ☐ Successful (Reușit)
- ☐ Good-looking (Chipeș)
- ☐ Rugged (Viguros, robust)

Slogan *

Please look at the slogan and select 10 characteristics that suit it. (Vă rog atrageți atenția la slogan și selectați 10 caracteristici care i se potrivesc.)

- ☐ Honest (Cinstit)
- ☐ Friendly (Prietenos)
- ☐ Up-to-date (Actual)
- ☐ Spirited (Spiritual)
- ☐ Confident (Încrezut)
- ☐ Hard-working (Muncitoresc, harnic)
- ☐ Upper-class (De o clasa-superiaoră)
- ☐ Feminine (Feminin)
- ☐ Rugged (Viguros, robust)
- ☐ Tough (Dur)
- ☐ Family-oriented (Orientat sper familie)
- ☐ Daring (Îndrăzneț)
- ☐ Intelligent (Inteligent)
- ☐ Good-looking (Chipeș)
- ☐ Masculine (Masculin)
- ☐ Successful (Reușit)
- ☐ Reliable (Sigur)
- ☐ Unique (Unical)
- ☐ Trendy (Modern)
- ☐ Glamorous (Cu caracter de glamour)
- ☐ Charming (Fermecător)
- ☐ Cheerful (Voios)
- ☐ Original (Original)
- ☐ Outdoorsy (Campenesc, în aer liber)
- ☐ Western (Occidental)

We as Moldavans are... (Noi ca Moldoveni suntem...) *

Please select 10 characteristics that suit "We as Moldavans are...". (Vă rog selectați 10 caracteristici care se potrivesc.)

- ☐ Confident (Încrezut)
- ☐ Friendly (Prietenos)
- ☐ Feminine (Feminin)
- ☐ Successful (Reușit)
- ☐ Outdoorsy (Campenesc, în aer liber)
- ☐ Rugged (Viguros, robust)
- ☐ Cheerful (Voios)
- ☐ Family-oriented (Orientat spre familie)
- ☐ Masculine (Masculin)
- ☐ Honest (Cinstit)
- ☐ Original (Original)
- ☐ Daring (Îndrăzneț)
- ☐ Up-to date (Actual)
- ☐ Upper-class (De o clasa-superioară)
- ☐ Reliable (Sigur)
- ☐ Western (Occidental)
- ☐ Tough (Dur)
- ☐ Intelligent (Inteligent)
- ☐ Trendy (Modern)
- ☐ Spirited (Spiritual)
- ☐ Hard-working (Muncitoresc, harnic)
- ☐ Unique (Unical)
- ☐ Glamorous (Glamour)
- ☐ Good-looking (Chipeș)
- ☐ Charming (Fermecător)

What kind of impression did the Logo and Slogan of Moldova left to you? (Ce impresia v-a lăsat Logo și Slogan?)

[text box]

Gender (Gen) *

- ○ Male (Masculin)
- ○ Female (Feminin)

How old are you? (Ce virsta aveti?) *

- ○ 18-25
- ○ 26-35
- ○ 36-50
- ○ 50 and above (dupa 50)

[Submit]

APPENDIX 2

Table 2.: Summary of the results regarding *Logo*

Dimension	Traits	Results
Sincerity	Cheerful	28 times
	Friendly	42 times
	Family-Oriented	37 times
	Original	46 times
	Honest	14 times
Excitement	Daring	18 times
	Up to date	36 times
	Trendy	45 times
	Spirited	34 times
	Unique	35 times
Competence	Reliable	17 times
	Successful	38 times
	Confident	16 times
	Hard working	28 times
	Intelligent	22 times
Sophistication	Upper class	9 times
	Good looking	21 times
	Feminine	10 times
	Glamorous	2 times
	Charming	27 times
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy	26 times
	Western	5 times
	Rugged	5 times
	Masculine	1 time
	Tough	2 times

Table 3.: Summary of the results regarding *Slogan*

Dimension	Traits	Results
Sincerity	Cheerful	23 times
	Friendly	41 times
	Family-Oriented	27 times
	Original	35 times
	Honest	22 times
Excitement	Daring	22 times
	Up to date	26 times
	Trendy	31 times
	Spirited	34 times
	Unique	29 times
Competence	Reliable	24 times
	Successful	43 times
	Confident	31 times
	Hard working	19 times
	Intelligent	30 times
Sophistication	Upper class	4 times
	Good looking	12 times
	Feminine	5 times
	Glamorous	5 times
	Charming	15 times
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy	25 times
	Western	7 times
	Rugged	7 times
	Masculine	3 time
	Tough	4 times

Table 4.: Summary of the results regarding *We as Moldavians are...*

Dimension	Traits	Results
Sincerity	Cheerful	38 times
	Friendly	55 times
	Family-Oriented	44 times
	Original	23 times
	Honest	25 times
Excitement	Daring	30 times
	Up to date	9 times
	Trendy	15 times
	Spirited	37 times
	Unique	27 times
Competence	Reliable	23 times
	Successful	14 times
	Confident	31 times
	Hard working	45 times
	Intelligent	25 times
Sophistication	Upper class	3 times
	Good looking	21 times
	Feminine	3 times
	Glamorous	8 times
	Charming	21 times
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy	25 times
	Western	4 times
	Rugged	11 times
	Masculine	2 time
	Tough	14 times

APPENDIX 3

Table 5.: Summary of the results for *Logo*

Place (%)	Trait	Dimension
1st (65.7)	Original	Sincerity
2nd (64.3)	Trendy	Excitement
3rd (60.0)	Friendly	Sincerity
4th (54.3)	Successful	Competence
5th (52.9)	Family-oriented	Sincerity
6th (51.4)	Up to Date	Excitement
7th (50.0)	Unique	Excitement
8th (48.6)	Spirited	Excitement
9th (40.0)	Hard-working	Competence
(40.0)	Cheerful	Sincerity
10th (38.6)	Charming	Sophistication

Table 6.: Summary of the results regarding *Slogan*

Place (%)	Trait	Dimension
1st (61.4)	Successful	Competence
2nd (58.6)	Friendly	Sincerity
3rd (50.0)	Original	Sincerity
4th (48.6)	Spirited	Excitement
5nd (64.3)	Trendy	Excitement
(44.3)	Confident	Competence
6th (42.9)	Intelligent	Competence
7th (41.4)	Unique	Excitement
8th (38.6)	Family-oriented	Sincerity
9th (37.1)	Up to Date	Excitement
10th (35.7)	Out doorsy	Ruggedness

Table 7.: Summary of the results regarding *We as Moldavians are...*

Place (%)	Trait	Dimension
1st (78.6)	Friendly	Sincerity
2nd (64.3)	Hard-working	Competence
3rd (62.9)	Family-oriented	Sincerity
4th (54.3)	Cheerful	Sincerity
5th (52.9)	Spirited	Excitement
6th (42.9)	Daring	Excitement
7th (38.6)	Unique	Excitement
8th (35.7)	Out doorsy	Ruggedness
(35.7)	Honest	Sincerity
(35.7)	Intelligent	Competence
9th (32.9)	Original	Sincerity
(32.9)	Reliable	Competence
10 (30.0)	Good-looking	Sophistication

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Table 8.: *Brand Personality Dimensions Results*

Dimension	Logo	Slogan	We as moldavians
Sincerity	4	3	5
Excitement	4	4	3
Competence	2	3	3
Sophistication	1	0	1
Ruggedness	0	1	1