


# Chapter 3

## Brand Personality Dimensions in the Hotel Sector: A Case Study

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter addresses the gap in literature regarding brand personality metrics in the hotel industry. Despite extensive studies on various brands globally, limited research exists in the hotel sector. Brand personality is pivotal for differentiating hotels and attracting their target market. Aaker's five-dimensional brand personality scale (BPS) was employed in a case study at Hotel Garden in Pristina, Kosovo. This study, employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, engaged 68 participants. Hotel Garden demonstrated higher scores in sincerity, competence, excitement, and sophistication, aligning with Aaker's dimensions, while ruggedness received less emphasis. Findings underscore the need for brand-aligned strategies, highlighting the role of human resources and organizational culture. This chapter explores the findings and offers strategies that, when applied to human resources, should take into account the relationship with BPS.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the hotel industry, brand personality is vital since it shapes customer perception and helps create enduring relationships. Similar to characters in a story, hotel brands have unique qualities that influence the visitor experience (Rahimian et al. 2021). Customers may view a brand to be amiable, luxurious, adventurous, traditional, or to represent a variety of feelings and values. Hotels may create a distinctive identity that stands out in a competitive market, attracting customers and fostering brand loyalty (Li et al., 2020), by comprehending and developing a consistent brand personality.

Studying brand personality (Aaker, 1997) is crucial for developing a strong reputation and drawing in a particular target market in the hotel industry, in addition to serving as a strategy for distinction (Hankinson, 2001; Rahimian et al. 2021; Chen, Chen & Wang, 2024). From the time of booking to the hotel stay, a guest's expectations are shaped by the brand, which has a direct effect on their happiness and loyalty. Additionally, brand personality directs communication, marketing, and design strategies, coordinating all business aspects to produce a cohesive and unforgettable experience (Kapferer, 2008; Guan et al., 2021). By allocating resources towards comprehending and cultivating their brand identity, hotels have the ability to establish a sentimental bond with their customers, surpassing the simple business deal and providing an entirely engaging encounter.

The understanding of the significance of story and emotional experience in customer purchasing decisions resides at the core of brand personality study in the hotel industry (Fournier, 1998; Wang et al., 2021). In addition to drawing guests, hotels with a strong and relevant brand identity can also cultivate passionate advocates who spread the word about their great experiences. The literature on brand personality in the hotel context is becoming an invaluable tool for managers due to the growing competition and desire for personalized experiences. It offers basic insights for developing strategies that go beyond simply providing services and create enduring emotional connections (Morgan et al., 2011; Šerić & Mikulić 2020).

It is important to highlight that a hotel's brand personality can only be built through its employees (Gulati et al., 2023). Human resources become essential players in determining how customers feel about a business (Khdour & Wright, 2021; Michael et al., 2023) which in turn helps to define the brand's personality. The way hotel staff and visitors interact fosters an atmosphere that makes the brand's values and character qualities easy to communicate and incorporate. In addition to being vital in continuously providing top-notch services, skilled workers who share the brand's vision also serve as living representatives of the company's essence. Employees play a pivotal role in the brand narrative by creating enduring emotional bonds with visitors and solidifying the hotel's unique image in the market, whether through interpersonal interactions, attentive service, or efficient problem-solving (Kapferer, 2008; Michael et al., 2023). In this scope, in this chapter we analyze the feasibility of Aaker's five dimensional Brand Personal Scale (BPS) in a famous Kosovan hotel (Hotel Garden). This chapter also covers a gap in the research by discussing how human resources contribute to the development of brand reputation and how brand personality is perceived, then outlining potential management implications.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. The theoretical underpinnings of brand personality are presented first, followed by pertinent research questions. The qualitative and quantitative technique is then explained. The discussion and analysis of the findings, together with a presentation of the limits and some key points for further research, round out the paper.

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