

# Identification of Ice Hockey World Championship International Sports Event through Brand Personality

Eva Čáslavová, Andrej Višněvský

**Abstract**—This research focused on the dimensions of brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship sporting event. The authors compared the elements in relation to different demographic groups including gender, age, level of education and student status of the population of Prague. Moreover, the differences of opinions of respondents who had experience of visiting a sports event and those who had not were assessed. In the research, the modified brand personality scale was used. This modified scale consists of five dimensions: responsibility, activity, toughness, individuality and emotionality, none of which was previously tested. The authors had an intentional sample of 291 respondents from Prague available, ranging in age from 18 years to 75 years, with either a high school or university education. The respondents rated the characteristic features in a seven-point Likert Scale and the data was collected in November 2012. The results suggest that the Ice Hockey World Championship is most identified with these dimensions: responsibility, emotionality and activity. Men had higher mean scores (4.93) on the Likert Scale in the emotionality dimension, while women had higher mean scores (4.91) in the activity dimension. Those respondents with experience visiting an Ice Hockey World Championship match had the highest mean score (5.10) in the emotionality dimension. This research had expected to show more pronounced mean values (above six) on the Likert scale in the emotionality and activity dimensions that more strongly characterize the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship, however this expectation was not confirmed.

**Keywords**—Brand personality dimensions, ice hockey, international sport event, sports marketing.

## I. INTRODUCTION

A successful international sporting event should aim for a long-term positive image in the eyes of the general public. It should also be able to deal with the threat of negative situations, such as doping scandals, corruption, adverse weather conditions, or the unsportsmanlike conduct of athletes, as well as be adaptable to changes in marketing and sponsorship over time. Although it is not possible to have control over most external influences, a positive image can help counter many negative situations with minimal financial loss or loss of reputation. Brand image consists of all of the elements associated with the brand in the customer's mind [1]. These elements consist of: Attributes and benefits of the brand; a model of a typical brand user, the heritage - all brand

history as a current value of the brand, and brand personality as a characteristic feature of the brand [2]. Every consumer submits brands to a subjective evaluation based on their unique experience, which is influenced by individual personality. We can therefore say that the consumer's evaluation of the brand is a conflict between the personality of the individual and the personality of the evaluated brand. When there is relative agreement of these personalities, a positive relationship with the brand occurs.

Scientists point to brand personality as a key aspect of image, because it has a significant behavioural relevance [3], [4]. Some scientists even see brand personality as the sole measurement for brand image [5]. Brand personality is a communication tool for growth of consumer preferences and it makes it possible to differentiate a brand within its product category [1], [4], [6]. The authors think that personality is a good tool for brand identification from the point of view of the consumer. Especially in sports, where specific products, such as international sporting events and professional sports clubs are labelled with all the necessary elements of a brand: a name, a logo, colours, slogans, jingles, etc. In the case of international sporting events, there are specifics, such as organizing the event in a different country every year, or the modification of the brand logos according to the needs of the host country. In the case of professional sports clubs, there are specifics, such as the loyalty of fans (consumers), who are faithful to the club throughout their lives, and also the opportunity to use sports celebrities for advertising campaigns.

An example of a significant international sporting event held among countries with a hockey tradition is the Ice Hockey World Championship. Because of the stable politics of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), which has been organizing the Ice Hockey World Championship for a long time, there is a high probability that this event has a very positive image throughout Europe. However, it cannot be said that this brand's image has a global impact. In the US, the National Hockey League is a more prestigious and popular sporting competition than the Ice Hockey World Championship. Identification of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship in the Czech Republic can therefore contribute to the understanding of the Czech consumer's relationship to this international sporting event.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The basic prerequisite for the identification of brand personality is choosing the measuring scale correctly. Measuring scales are based on theoretical concepts that develop various kinds of methodological approaches. There

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are two significant approaches to measuring brand personality: a psychological approach and a consumer-symbolic approach. The psychological approach was pioneered by J. L. Aaker who created the first measurement scale of brand personality comprised of 42 characteristics. Personality characteristics were generated by three sources: The Big Five model of personality, the personality scale of academics and practitioners, and qualitative research [4]. Apart from the scale, she also composed a definition of brand personality as the set of human characteristics associated with brand [4]. After some time, this scale was criticised and a new definition was created by Azoulay and Kapferer. Brand personality is the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands [7]. The second definition therefore removes the personality traits that cannot be applied in the context of brands. The consumer-symbolic approach then describes brand personality from a broader perspective and includes not only psychological aspects of personality, but also social and cultural aspects that enter a person's everyday life [8]. Because the consumer-symbolic concept is currently only developed by the method of qualitative research and does not have as much support from researchers, we chose to use the better-known and time-tried psychological approach.

Based on Kapferer and Azoulay's definition, a new measuring scale of brand personality emerged in 2009, according to Geuens, Weijters and De Wulf. The goal was to create a practical scale with a small number of characteristics that could be used for brands of different kinds of products across different states, with a satisfactory level of validity and reliability [9]. It consists of only 12 characteristics in five dimensions: responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity, and emotionality [9]. This measuring scale was also used for brands in the field of sport [10]. However, in recent years it has shown that a general measuring scale is not ideal for sport brands. This is proven by the creation of specific measuring scales for sports event brands [11] and sports club brands [12]. Our research is based on the study "The brand personality of large sport events" by Čáslavová and Petrůčková, which measured the brand personalities of three international sporting events: the FIFA World Cup, Tour de France, and the Summer Olympic Games using the Aaker measuring scale from 1997 [13]. Another study by Petrůčková only used two sports events: the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, and was based on the measuring scale of Geuens, Weijters and De Wulf from 2009 [10]. Based on the results of these studies in the Czech sports environment, Petrůčková suggested a modified scale from the authors Geuens, Weijters de Wulf, and specifically, exchanged some characteristics and renamed the dimensions of brand personality, which could then better encompass the specific nature of the sports events. The suggestions were as follows: changing down to earth to trustworthy, ordinary to unique, romantic to exciting, and in the case of dimensions, to change the aggressiveness dimension to toughness, and simplicity to individuality [10]. Therefore, the decision was taken to try the modified measuring scale to measure the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship as perceived by the

Czech population. This modified brand personality scale can be seen as useful only for the Czech environment, because the realized suggestions for the characteristic changes and new labels for the dimensions have not been tested in any other country.

The dimensions and characteristics of the modified scale of brand personality are:

1. Responsibility – trustworthy, stable, responsible,
2. Activity – active, dynamic, innovative,
3. Toughness – durable, bold,
4. Individuality – unique, simple,
5. Emotionality – exciting, sentimental.

Although a number of studies focused on brand personality have been realized on samples of high school and university students, we wanted to try to include the wider public in the research, because we wanted to compare brand personality dimensions using different demographic groups. We limited our choice of respondents to people who live in Prague. Apart from the better control of respondents, it was deemed appropriate to complete the study in a city where the Ice Hockey World Championship had already taken place, as it meant that the inhabitants already had some knowledge of the event. The method of a purposive available sample was used to acquire the respondents. The research was planned for November. Since the Ice Hockey World Championship is held in May, November was selected because it falls halfway between the previous and the following iteration of the event. The authors are of the opinion that in November, the respondent's opinion has the least probability of being influenced by specific and emotional events and that makes it possible to measure a more stable and less invested perception of brand personality.

### III. RESULTS

The first step was an evaluation of all the respondents to reveal the general outlook of the Prague population on the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship. The data was then evaluated on several levels according to each demographic group to understand the attitudes and relationships within the different groups of the population according to gender, age, and education. The questionnaire contained the filter question: "Have you ever attended an Ice Hockey World Championship match?" This question allowed us to distinguish those respondents with direct experience of attending an Ice Hockey World Championship match, since we assumed that personal experience is different from the experience mediated by the mass media, which will manifest in the perception of brand personality. The respondents evaluated the characteristics of the brand personality using a seven-point Likert scale, where a higher value represented a higher level of agreement with the given characteristic. The collected data served to calculate the average score of the brand personality dimension. The standard deviation was also calculated, measuring the level of distraction of respondents' answers on the Likert scale. A higher standard deviation therefore meant that the respondents' opinions differed more. Using the statistic of mode, the most frequent response on the

Likert scale was determined. These three statistics proved to be suitable for previous studies of this kind. The last monitored statistic was the polychoric correlation coefficient, which was used to measure the conformity of answers of respondents between two characteristics in one dimension. A higher correlation coefficient is interpreted as a higher tendency of respondents to respond to characteristics in the same dimension with a similar value on the Likert Scale. The correlating characteristics can therefore depict their dimensions better and so the results of their mean, standard deviation, and mode can be seen as more relevant than those of the characteristics that only a minor correlation.

#### A. A General Evaluation of All Respondents

The research included 291 respondents: 190 men and 101 women. Most of the respondents (194) were in the age range of 18 years to 28 years, the second most numerous group, was the age range of 19 years to 38 years (37 respondents), while 21 respondents were aged between 39 years and 48 years and 23 respondents were older than 59 years. About two thirds of the respondents (62 %) had finished a secondary education, and 38 % had a higher education. Altogether 165 (57%) people were students at the time of the data collection, while 126 (43%) were not.

Table I summarizes the general results of all the 291 respondents. If we focus on the mean values of the dimensions, we see that they range close to responses with the value of four, which signifies a neutral response on the Likert Scale, and five, which signifies a slight agreement of the respondent. The highest evaluated dimension was responsibility, with the mean of 5.15. The emotionality (4.84) and activity (4.74) dimensions followed. In the responsibility and activity dimensions, the respondents were in relative agreement on their evaluation of brand personality because the standard deviation was low. On the other hand, the emotionality dimension was perceived very individually, and as such, responses were more dispersed. Despite that, the most frequent response of the respondents in the emotionality dimension was the highest value of the scale (seven), meaning complete agreement.

TABLE I  
BRAND PERSONALITY: GENERAL RESULTS

Dimensions	N	Mean	SD	Mode
<i>Responsibility</i>	291	5.15	1.56	6
<i>Activity</i>	291	4.74	1.59	5
<i>Toughness</i>	291	4.38	1.63	4
<i>Individuality</i>	291	4.64	1.75	5
<i>Emotionality</i>	291	4.84	1.92	7

SD = standard deviation

TABLE II  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: GENERAL RESULTS

Characteristics	Correlation	Dimension
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.60	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	0.55	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	0.53	Emotionality

Table II shows significant values (> 0.50) of the polychoric correlation coefficient between two characteristics in one dimension. As mentioned above, a higher correlation value in the respondents' responses shows a dependency of the perceived characteristics and increases in the significance of the dimension. On the other hand, a low value of characteristic correlation shows a different perception in a dimension. The characteristics of trustworthy and stable attained the highest value of a correlation coefficient (0.60) in the responsibility dimension. It shows the tendency that the characteristics of the dimensions that had very positive results in the mean value, standard deviation, and mode, also had a high correlation coefficient.

#### B. Evaluation According to Levels of Demographic Groups

The differences in perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship according to gender will be assessed first. The authors think that men and women have a different relationship to international sports events depending on the sport type and the main target group of the sporting event's marketing. Table III shows the measured results for both groups. The mean values showed the biggest differences between men and women in the emotionality and activity dimensions. While men see the Ice Hockey World Championship most importantly as a responsible and emotional brand, women see it more as a responsible and active one.

There is an apparent general higher dispersion of responses of male respondents. The authors therefore believe that the brand of the Ice Hockey World Championship impacts men, as the main target group, more individually and in a more diverse manner, which causes the higher dispersion of responses for them than for women. Focusing on the most frequently chosen response shows that in the activity dimension, women most frequently chose the neutral value (four), while in the emotionality dimension they most frequently chose the highest value (seven). The mode values therefore interpret very opposing tendencies in these two dimensions than the values of mean and standard deviation. It can therefore be said that women see the Ice Hockey World Championship only as a responsible sporting event, because only the responsibility dimensions show unanimous and consistent tendencies of the results.

Another demographic feature compared is the respondents' age. The study focused on differences in the perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship for respondents in five age groups, ranging from 18 years to 75 years. The authors see the effect of age on the perception of brand personality as important, because each age group shows a differently intense interest in the Ice Hockey World Championship. A major problem for evaluation of age groups was the extremely low number of respondents in most groups, because the majority of the respondents were in the age group 18 years to 28 years. Therefore, the very low number of respondents meant that an extreme opinion of one respondent could change the mean value and the standard deviation value.

Despite this limitation, the authors tried to interpret the results for all five age groups.

TABLE III  
BRAND PERSONALITY: MEN VS. WOMEN

Dimensions	N M/W	Mean		SD		MD	
		M	W	M	W	M	W
<i>Responsibility</i>	190/101	5.10	5.24	1.60	1.46	6	6
<i>Activity</i>	190/101	4.65	4.91	1.61	1.55	5	4
<i>Toughness</i>	190/101	4.32	4.49	1.63	1.61	4	5
<i>Individuality</i>	190/101	4.67	4.59	1.77	1.72	4	5
<i>Emotionality</i>	190/101	4.93	4.66	1.88	1.97	7	7

M = men, W = women, SD = standard deviation, MD = mode

TABLE IV  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: MEN VS. WOMEN

Characteristics	Correlation		Dimension
	M	W	
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.56	0.50	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	-	0.54	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	0.51	-	Emotionality

M = men, W = women

Table V shows the mean values for the dimensions for the different age groups. It was determined that the most significant difference in the mean values was between the youngest and the oldest age group. While the youngest age group, 18 years to 28 years is characterized by high mean values in almost all the dimensions, the oldest age group, 59 years to 75 years, is characterized by very low values, close to the neutral value four. The age group 29 years to 38 years has a similar tendency: in all the dimensions, it achieved low and almost similar mean values and therefore it did not show any major inclination to any dimension. This surprised the authors, as they assumed that the age group 29 years to 38 years belonged to a significant generation interested in international sporting events. On the other hand, the remaining age groups, 39 years to 48 years and 49 years to 58 years had more noticeable results.

TABLE V  
BRAND PERSONALITY: AGE-MEAN

Dimensions	18 - 28	29 - 38	39 - 48	49 - 58	59 - 75
<i>Responsibility</i>	5.30	4.66	5.03	5.12	4.71
<i>Activity</i>	4.81	4.66	4.44	4.73	4.51
<i>Toughness</i>	4.38	4.26	4.60	4.03	4.57
<i>Individuality</i>	4.70	4.61	4.57	4.50	4.33
<i>Emotionality</i>	4.98	4.56	5.10	4.44	4.13

A very interesting result was noted for the age group 39 years to 48 years, which had a higher mean value for the emotionality dimension (5.10) than for the responsibility dimension (5.03). Considering the low means in the remaining dimensions, it can be stated that the age group 39 years to 48 years characterized the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship most clearly. The older generation of respondents, between 49 years and 58 years, did not see the emotionality dimension (4.44) as very typical for this sports event. It was therefore presumed that with growing age,

emotionality stopped playing a significant role and a different dimension moved to the foreground - for example activity, which reached the second highest mean value for this group (4.73). When looking at the youngest age group 18 years to 28 years, it can be seen that the responsibility dimension reached the mean value of 5.30, which is the highest mean value in this study. This result was quite surprising, because the authors had presumed that this age group would have the emotionality and activity dimensions as dominant.

Table VI shows the standard deviations of the dimensions in the different age groups. The brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship was perceived most consistently by the respondents in the oldest age group, ranging from 59 years to 75 years. The authors believe that this is caused by the generally low interest in the Ice Hockey World Championship in this age group. Respondents with a low level of interest do not have a relationship to the sporting event and so their evaluation of the brand personality is very neutral, which manifests in the low mean values in Table V. And since most respondents in this age range share this opinion, the response dispersion is also low. On the other hand, the highest dispersion was noted for the age group 49 years to 58 years, especially in the toughness (2.15) and individuality dimensions (2.13). The authors believe that the result is partly influenced by the low number of respondents in this age group, since the standard deviations in the responsibility and emotionality dimensions reached the usual values. The age groups 18 years to 28 years and 39 years to 48 years, which were interpreted based on the means as significant in their perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship, had a similar value of standard deviation as the results of the whole sample of respondents. The opinions of both the groups are therefore dispersed according to expectations. Only in the case of the age group 39 years to 48 years it must be noted that there is a relatively low dispersion (SD = 1.76) of responses in the emotionality dimension. The age group 29 years to 38 years, which was surprising in its low mean values, had higher values of standard deviations than the other groups in all dimensions. It therefore had a higher level of response dispersion, which suggests that this group is very independent and diverse in opinions.

TABLE VI  
BRAND PERSONALITY: AGE-STANDARD DEVIATION

Dimensions	18 - 28	29 - 38	39 - 48	49 - 58	59 - 75
<i>Responsibility</i>	1.51	1.75	1.67	1.58	1.17
<i>Activity</i>	1.64	1.45	1.53	1.82	1.19
<i>Toughness</i>	1.58	1.62	1.62	2.15	1.53
<i>Individuality</i>	1.75	1.72	1.65	2.13	1.52
<i>Emotionality</i>	1.92	1.97	1.76	1.94	1.66

The last observed statistic for the groups divided according to age is the mode, meaning the most frequently chosen response in a given dimension. The mode values correspond to the previously determined findings for the values of mean and standard deviation. The lowest mode values were naturally determined for the age group 59 years to 75 years. This fully

corresponds with the neutral and consistent perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship. On the other hand, the problem that arose in the age group 49 years to 58 years for the high dispersion of responses was probably caused by the small number of respondents, which also showed in the mode values. The toughness and individuality dimensions in particular had very frequent responses with the highest value (seven) on the Likert scale, but despite that they were evaluated as dimensions with a mean close to the neutral value of four. This explains the high standard deviation. The remaining three age groups reached the same mode values in all the dimensions that corresponded with the previous findings and were not surprising.

To conclude the evaluation of age groups, it is also necessary to point out the achieved values of the polychoric correlation coefficient for the age group 18 years to 28 years, where there were enough respondents to calculate this statistic. Once again, there is a correlation of correlates in the responsibility, activity, and emotionality dimensions. Moreover, these correlations have the highest value in the whole study. This age group therefore had the highest tendency to evaluate the characteristics in the dimensions with the same values and its results can be seen as the most significant.

TABLE VII  
BRAND PERSONALITY: AGE-MODE

Dimensions	18 - 28	29 - 38	39 - 48	49 - 58	59 - 75
<i>Responsibility</i>	6	6	5	7	5
<i>Activity</i>	4	5	6	7	5
<i>Toughness</i>	4	5	5	6	6
<i>Individuality</i>	5	5	4	7	4
<i>Emotionality</i>	7	6	6	7	5

TABLE VIII  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: 18-28 YEARS OLD

Characteristics	Correlation	Dimension
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.62	Responsibility
<i>Stable vs. Responsible</i>	0.52	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	0.63	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	0.69	Emotionality

Another demographic feature was achieved in education. The study included respondents who have completed secondary or higher education. The results can therefore show how level of education influences the perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship, since the differences between these groups are the highest in the study. When focusing on the achieved mean values, the most marked difference is apparent in the emotionality dimension, where the respondents with a secondary education had a mean value of 5.05, while respondents with a higher education had a mean value of only 4.49. The authors believe that people with secondary education experience sports events with a higher amount of emotion, while people with a higher education are more emotionally detached. The second biggest difference in mean values between the groups according to education was in the individuality dimension. People with secondary and higher

education therefore only agree in one dimension, responsibility, where both groups had an average above five. When looking at the level of response distraction through the standard deviation, one can see that people with a lower level of education have a more consistent view on the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship than people with a higher education. The authors presume that because they believe people with a higher level of education are natural individualists with a unique personal view, this manifests as bigger differences inside the group in the evaluation of a sports event's brand personality. The mode again differed the most in the last two dimensions of both the groups, where the biggest differences in mean values was recorded. Respondents with a secondary education most frequently chose the highest value on the Likert scale for the characteristics in the emotionality and responsibility dimensions.

The polychoric correlation coefficient had significant correlation values (> 0.50), most importantly in the case of respondents with a secondary education. In the case of participants with a higher education, the significant correlation was overstepped only in the case of the characteristics trustworthy and stable in the responsibility dimension. The dimensions therefore have a better information value for respondents with a secondary education.

TABLE IX  
BRAND PERSONALITY: LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Dimensions	N	Mean		SD		MD	
		S/H	S	H	S	H	S
<i>Responsibility</i>	179/112	5.23	5.01	1.50	1.64	6	6
<i>Activity</i>	179/112	4.86	4.54	1.58	1.59	5	4
<i>Toughness</i>	179/112	4.51	4.17	1.57	1.69	4	5
<i>Individuality</i>	179/112	4.80	4.38	1.71	1.77	7	5
<i>Emotionality</i>	179/112	5.05	4.49	1.90	1.89	7	5

S = secondary education, H = higher education, SD = standard deviation, MD = mode

TABLE X  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Characteristics	Correlation		Dimension
	S	H	
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.55	0.51	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	0.57	-	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	0.60	-	Emotionality

S = secondary education, H = higher education

Considering that a large portion of the available respondents were students, the authors decided to find out whether people preparing for a future career see the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship differently than people who have graduated. The problem of this comparison is the different specifications of both groups. Students are a clearly specified group of respondents, where one can expect a lower age, while non-students are a very broad and undefined respondent group. It can therefore be expected that the results of the non-student group will show a higher standard deviation. On the other hand, the results of brand personality

perception are affected by the different stages of life for respondents in both groups, varying levels of purchasing power and diverse leisure activities that can decrease or increase interest in the Ice Hockey World Championship. Table XI therefore shows the comparison of students and non-students in mean values, standard deviation, and mode values. When comparing the mean in five dimensions, one can see that the biggest differences are in the responsibility and emotionality dimensions. The students therefore see the Ice Hockey World Championship most importantly as a responsible and emotional brand, more so than the group of other respondents. The students' results are therefore similar to those of the respondent groups between 18 years and 28 years. While the respondents between 18 years and 28 years reached slightly higher mean values, the students' opinions have a smaller standard deviation in all the five dimensions. In the case of the mode statistic, both groups (participants between 18 years and 28 years and students) had identical values. When focusing on the group of non-students, one can see that the only more significant mean value appears in the responsibility dimension (4.97). According to Table XI, the presumption regarding the higher standard deviation as a result of the broad group of non-students was confirmed.

TABLE XI  
BRAND PERSONALITY: STUDENT VS. NON-STUDENTS

Dimensions	N		Mean		SD		MD	
	G/H	G	H	G	H	G	H	
<i>Responsibility</i>	165/126	5.28	4.97	1.44	1.67	6	6	
<i>Activity</i>	165/126	4.81	4.64	1.59	1.60	4	5	
<i>Toughness</i>	165/126	4.36	4.40	1.54	1.74	4	5	
<i>Individuality</i>	165/126	4.65	4.62	1.70	1.81	5	5	
<i>Emotionality</i>	165/126	4.97	4.67	1.91	1.91	7	6	

G = students, H = non-students, SD = standard deviation, MD = mode

TABLE XII  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: STUDENTS VS. NON-STUDENTS

Characteristics	Correlation		Dimension
	G	H	
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.54	0.51	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	0.58	-	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	0.66	-	Emotionality

G = students, H = non-students

Apart from the demographic data, the respondents were also asked about their direct experience with Ice Hockey World Championship matches. Based on their negative or affirmative answer, the sample was again divided into two groups and their values were compared according to brand personality dimension perception. In the case of any big international sporting or cultural event, there is a big disparity in the perception of what is mediated by mass media, like television, Internet, or radio, and what the participant experiences while attending the event directly. Therefore, the aim of this study was also to capture the respondents' opinions based on personal experience with the Ice Hockey World Championship. The expectation was, that in Table XIII, the mean values would be more different in the dimensions

between groups. However, the results show, that the responsibility, activity, and toughness dimensions achieved very similar results in both groups. In the case of respondents without personal experience visiting the Ice Hockey World Championship, the responsibility dimension had the highest mean value. Since this mean value was higher than that of the group of respondents who had personal experience, which was 5.03, the authors assume that mass media can help co-create the perception of a sports event. The most marked differences were noted in the responsibility, activity, and emotionality dimensions. The respondents who had a personal experience with the sports event assigned the highest mean value to the emotionality dimension (5.10). This mean value is one of the highest in the emotionality dimension. It can therefore be said that personal experience with the Ice Hockey World Championship contributes to a positive perception of emotionality as a typical attribute of this sports event. When focusing on the standard deviation values and their differences between the groups, it can be seen that the group with a personal experience of the sports event has higher values. Since the response dispersion for the respondents is very high, the authors explain it as a consequence of the diverse individual experiences of the respondents, which impacts on their judgement. On the other hand, the group of respondents without personal experience visiting the Ice Hockey World Championship had a tendency to give much more consistent responses. The authors once again presume that the more consistent opinion is a consequence of the mediation of the sports event by the media, which maintain a certain constant manner and style of presentation. The mode values noted in Table XIII correspond to the abovementioned tendencies. The group without personal experience with an international sports event most frequently chose only values five or six on the seven-point Likert scale, while the group with personal experience most frequently chose four and seven.

TABLE XIII  
BRAND PERSONALITY: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

DISCERNED PROMINENT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES								
Dimensions	N		Mean		SD		MD	
	I/J	I	J	I	J	I	J	
<i>Responsibility</i>	88/203	5.03	5.20	1.83	1.42	6	6	
<i>Activity</i>	88/203	4.72	4.74	1.72	1.53	4	5	
<i>Toughness</i>	88/203	4.36	4.39	1.69	1.60	4	5	
<i>Individuality</i>	88/203	4.78	4.58	1.83	1.71	7	5	
<i>Emotionality</i>	88/203	5.10	4.72	1.99	1.88	7	6	

I = personal experience, J = no personal experience, SD = standard deviation, MD = mode

TABLE XIV  
HIGHEST CORRELATIONS (> 0.50) OF CHARACTERISTICS: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Characteristics	Correlation		Dimension
	I	J	
<i>Trustworthy vs. Stable</i>	0.64	-	Responsibility
<i>Active vs. Dynamic</i>	0.53	-	Activity
<i>Exciting vs. Sentimental</i>	-	0.50	Emotionality

I = personal experience, J = no personal experience

#### IV. DISCUSSION

There are several reasons why the Ice Hockey World Championship was chosen as a brand for the study of brand personality. Hockey is generally one of the most popular sports in Czech Republic. It exceeded football in the number of the national team's high-level successes. Hockey was also very popular in the Czech mass media, most importantly on the Czech public television. While a charge was imposed on the television broadcast of football; hence making it less accessible, hockey has a long-term stable format of broadcasting on a sports channel, which the Czech public has become accustomed to. Furthermore, the Czech car manufacturer, Škoda Auto, has been associated with the Ice Hockey World Championship since its partnership began in 1992. An important fact that persuaded the authors that this sports event is suitable for the purpose of this study is that the Ice Hockey World Championship was hosted by the Czech Republic in 2004. At the time of the data collection, the respondents could therefore draw not only on what they perceived through the mass media, but also on their own experience, which they gained when the event was hosted in Prague in 2004. Before the study started, the authors presumed certain tendencies in the perception of the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship as perceived by the Prague population.

##### *A. General Results of All Respondents*

In the case of the general evaluation of all respondents, high mean values were expected ( $> 6$ ) in two dimensions: emotionality and activity. The authors expected that the Ice Hockey World Championship is perceived very much as an active brand, full of emotion, since hockey is presented as the fastest collective sport in the world, with fast-paced, action-packed unpredictable matches. Instead, the highest mean value was just a little bit over five, in the responsibility dimension. This dimension was surprising, not only in the general evaluation, but also during the assessment of demographic groups. That means that although the long-term marketing communication with the public is very specific, with a goal to invoke specific emotions and perceptions regarding the event, and although the communication uses the natural attribute of hockey - activity - it does not necessarily mean that these traits will be reflected in the brand personality of the Ice Hockey World Championship. On the other hand, low mean values ( $< 3$ ) were expected in the individuality and toughness dimensions, based on the general attributes of hockey as a team sport, especially at the international level, where the national team is more patriotic. In the case of the toughness dimension, it was expected that the low value would be a result of the style of the game, which is less tough on the international level than in the NHL. However, the mean results were surprising once again, since the values were close to neutral. Despite these surprising findings, the emotionality and activity dimensions had higher mean values than the individuality and toughness dimensions, and so the expectations were at least partly fulfilled. The authors, however, expected smaller differences between the

dimensions in the values of the standard deviation, so it was surprising that the individuality and emotionality dimensions had such a high result. This trend also appeared during the evaluation of respondent demographics. There may be several factors that cause a higher standard deviation in the last two dimensions. In an ideal case, it is actually the respondents' opinion, which would then be very varied in the case of emotionality and individuality. Another explanation could be the apathy of respondents towards completing the questionnaire, which influenced their judgement, or some respondents' misunderstanding of these dimensions in connection to the Ice Hockey World Championship.

The analysis of the dimension evaluation from the point of view of its quality was followed by a calculation of the polychoric correlation coefficient between two characteristics inside a dimension. The mean values, standard deviation, and mode values in themselves do not make it possible to find out whether the participant responded to the characteristics inside one dimension with similar values on the Likert Scale or not. It is generally expected that if a respondent sees a brand as very responsible, they should express this agreement with high values on the scale in all the three characteristics - trustworthy, stable, and responsible - in the responsibility dimension. If the respondents realize this assumption, the polychoric correlation coefficient reaches a higher significant value. In this study, the significant value of the correlation coefficient was set to  $> 0.50$ . However, the characteristics that did not reach the significant values of the polychoric correlation coefficient are definitely not seen as inappropriate or not representative for the given dimension. There are much more complicated confirmation factor analyses for confirming the suitability of a characteristic for a dimension, but those were not the aim of this study. However, it would be good to check the achieved results of the polychoric correlation coefficient with a repeated measurement.

##### *B. Results of Demographic Groups*

The analysis of the results of the different demographic groups was realized to provide an insight into the perception of brand personality from the point of view of various structures in the population. A major weakness of this study was an imbalance in the number of respondents in the different age groups. In the future, the authors would therefore like to focus on a better quality of the sample specification and a better realization of the respondent selection, which would ensure higher validity and reliability of the research. The Ice Hockey World Championship speaks to the wider public in all age categories. The PR campaigns of international sports events are generally tailored for specific age categories and that is why the authors see the demographic feature of age as the most important. The problem that applies most importantly to the higher age group is the comprehension of the term "brand personality". The authors have encountered frequent questions about what brand personality means.

When no marked expression of agreement or disagreement with brand personality was acquired in the general evaluation of all respondents, the authors were curious to see if any more

extreme values would appear for the different demographic groups. But even in the case of individual demographic groups, there were no major differences of opinion. In all these cases, the responsibility, emotionality, and activity dimensions were dominant. This leads the authors to the conclusion that the perception of brand personality is quite stable and consistent across structures in the population, regardless of gender, age, and education. The individual demographic groups differed quite strongly in which of the abovementioned three dimensions they preferred as the most precise for the Ice Hockey World Championship. For example, men, individuals with a secondary education, students, and people with a personal experience of visiting the sports event seemed to prefer the emotionality dimension, judging from the mean value; while women, individuals with a higher education, and people without a personal experience visiting the sports event, preferred the responsibility dimension. The authors therefore think that it would be good to strengthen the emotionality of the Ice Hockey World Championship through communication with those demographic groups where it achieved lower mean values.

As was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the responsibility dimension had high mean values both in the general evaluation by all the respondents and overall in all the demographic groups. This dimension contains very positive characteristics, which are the goal of any international sports event. At present, with very frequent doping scandals in various sporting fields, the characteristics, trustworthy and responsible, are very valuable. For the brand of the Ice Hockey World Championship this proves that it has not encountered any major negative event recently that would influence the perception of its personality. It would therefore be good to measure the brand personality in the responsibility dimension for those international sporting events that were affected by some negative incidents, such as doping or corruption.

#### V.CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to identify an international sports event, the Ice Hockey World Championship, by analysing the perception of the brand personality by the Prague population. Apart from a general evaluation, the study focused on various kinds of demographic groups in order to find out how the perception differs according to gender, age, and education. And finally, the study focused on the influence that personal experience visiting a match of the sports event had on the identification of the brand personality. The responses were drawn from a seven-point Likert scale, where a higher value represented a higher level of agreement. In the results, the study focused on mean values, standard deviation, mean value, and polychoric correlation coefficient values. The study has shown that the Ice Hockey World Championship is best expressed by the responsibility dimension, both in the general evaluation and in the case of the demographic groups. Only the age group 39 years to 48 years and those respondents who have personally attended an Ice Hockey World Championship match perceive the brand personality of the sports event most

strongly through the emotionality dimension. For the other groups and for the general evaluation, emotionality and activity were seen as the second and third most fitting dimensions of brand personality. On the other hand, the least fitting dimensions of the Ice Hockey World Championship are toughness and individuality. The results also showed that the mean values of all dimensions were in the range of 4.03 to 5.30, which is not a very big range in the case of a seven-point scale. It can therefore be stated that the study results did not reach any extreme values that would strongly characterize the brand of the international sports event. The polychoric correlation coefficients showed significant values ( $> 0.50$ ) for the characteristic pairs trustworthy vs. stable in the responsibility dimension, active vs. dynamic in the activity dimension and exciting vs. sentimental in the emotionality dimension. This means that the respondents have a tendency to respond to these characteristics inside one dimension with a similar value on the Likert Scale, which increases the significance of results in these dimensions.

The main shortcoming of the study was the small number of respondents in the older age groups, which may have influenced the comparison of values between the age groups. Sometimes, the authors encountered a lack of understanding of the term "brand personality" with the older generation of respondents. Another limit was created by the modification of the measuring scale for the needs of the brand personality of an international sports event, which has so far not been tested or verified in any way.

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