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The Connection Between Music and Country Image – in Case of Hungary¹

Kinga JENTETICS²

Music is the unique identifier of a country in forms of national anthems and pop icons. With the help of music associations are awakened: in case of the Beatles' rhythms, the pop culture of the United Kingdom unfolds, meanwhile listening to ABBA songs pictures us to Sweden. But how is it working in case of Hungary? In this study I will show the general model of musical country branding, moreover it is applied specifically to the example of Hungary. A primary research (expert interviews, focus group interviews, questionnaire) helps me to identify all elements of the model. In the end of the study, recommendations are given for improvement of the musical country branding.

Key Words: music, country image, country branding, creative class, cultural marketing

JEL Codes: M31, M38, Z11, Z18

A zene és az országimázs kapcsolata – Magyarország példáján keresztül

A klasszikus és a könnyűzenei műfajok egyedi azonosítói egy országnak, amelyek akár nemzeti himnuszok vagy ikonikus popalakok formájában is megmutatkozhatnak. A tanulmányban az országimázsformáló erők közül a könnyűzenei műfajokra helyezem a hangsúlyt, hiszen a könnyűzene erőteljes asszociációkat képes szülni: például a Beatles ritmusai az Egyesült Királyság popkultúráját tárják elénk, míg az ABBA hallatán Svédország jut eszünkbe.

De miként mutatkozik meg a zenei országimázs Magyarország esetében? A tanulmány során bemutatom a kreatív országmárkázás kulturális alapú megközelítését, amelyre támaszkodva elkészítettem a zenei országimázs modelljét. Mindezt Magyarország példáján keresztül értelmezem és alkalmazom, melyhez primer kutatási módszerek is a segítségemre voltak (szakértői interjúk, fókuszcsoportos interjúk, kérdőíves felmérés). Végül pedig a zenei országmárkázás javítására teszek javaslatokat.

Kulcsszavak: zene, országimázs, országmárkázás, kreatív társadalmi réteg, kulturális marketing

Jel kód: M31, M38, Z11, Z18

¹ This paper is based on the study presented at the Economic Section of the 31st National Scientific Students' Associations Conference where it was awarded First Place in the Session of Brand, Brand Building and Image. The study was prepared under the supervision of Barbara Jenés assistant research fellow.

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Introduction

Music is the element of our lives and every nation's culture too. The classical and pop music genres are unique elements of a country image, which may be manifested in national anthems or iconic pop figures. In this article the pop music genres will be in the focus, since pop music can be a source of a wide range of associations. When we listen to a song featuring a country's original characteristics, the nation itself pops into our mind with all of its typical symbols, inhabitants – briefly the image of a country.

But how music is able to mediate the country image in case of Hungary? The main objective of my paper is to uncover the linkage between music and country image and to draw a model based on *Anholt-hexagon (2003)* that can be used by practitioners as well. Therefore I will review the relevant literature in this field focusing on the creative class (*Florida, 2002*) and their connection to each other. The paper's novelty lies in the synthesis of theoretical approaches, which were not applied and connected to each other before according to my secondary research. Nevertheless, the topic's nature requires several examples from practical life as well: I analysed different international and Hungarian case studies where it was applicable.

Because of the novelty of the topic it was necessary to collect primary data besides secondary ones. Therefore, I conducted in-depth interviews with experts from the music industry, focus group interviews with visitors and I designed a questionnaire in order to gain quantifiable data from visitors especially in case of Hungary. During the primary research I applied different creative techniques (combining audio, visual and audiovisual elements) in order to identify the main associations of respondents. In the primary research part the Hungarian focus from a practical point of view is enhanced, especially because there is no direct literature available on this topic.

Methodology

In the research method I differentiated three phases depicted on Figure 1. First of all, by secondary research I analysed and synthesized the literature background of country branding, the phenomenon of creative class and its possible relation to each other. In the primary research I focused on questions could not be answered directly after my secondary research. During qualitative research phase I conducted in-depth interviews with practitioners and focus group interviews with visitors. As part of the quantitative method I designed a survey to get some quantifiable insights from visitors in the field of country and music, especially in case of Hungary.

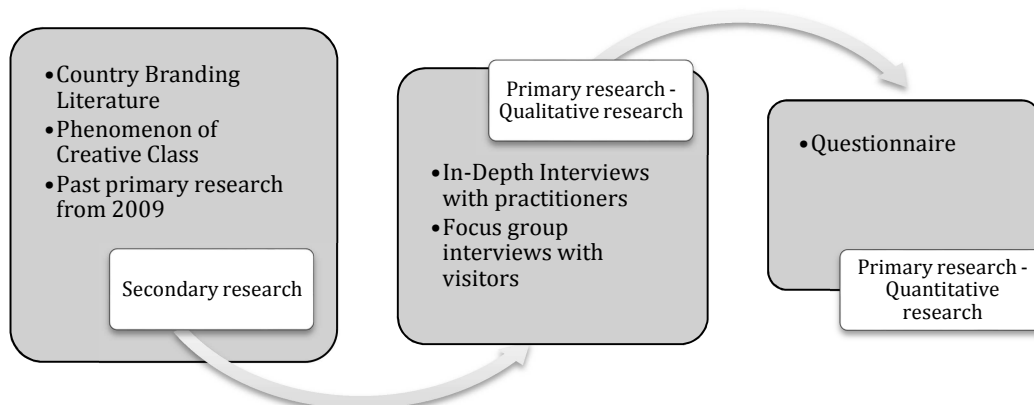


Figure 1. The research methodology

Source: Author's edition

It is important to note that secondary research and qualitative research were intended to apply the exploratory part of my research, meanwhile the questionnaire helped me to collect quantifiable data for further generalizations for the given population.

The population of this study consists of university students and entrants which decision was based on more reasons. Most importantly, considering my resources they could be reached very easily through my social network (both domestically and internationally). When adequate resources are available a representative sample could be drawn. (Note: for depth interviews the population consists of practitioners who are related to the music industry.) Regarding the research methods the following populations are targeted in the study:

1. *In-depth interviews with practitioners* – 8 experts were asked with the help of a guideline in order to identify key linkages between music and country branding. The sample consists of practitioners from music business sector, involved in the technology and innovation field as well artists.
2. *Focus group interviews with university students* – two groups of 6-8 Hungarian people and one international group with 6 people with the help of a guideline in order to identify basic attitudes, perceptions towards music and its relation to countries. The international group was an online focus group regarding geographical distances. Three of them have visited Hungary already; the others have not been to Hungary before. Furthermore, music branding options are discussed too in order to find a possible way to improve country image with the help of music. Through these interviews it was possible to gain colourful insights for consumer behaviour and psychology and differentiate between the internal and external musical image of nations.
3. *Online questionnaire designed for university students* –152 people answered in order to get quantifiable data to make generalizations in the topic for the given population. Besides general attitudes towards music the main associations are analysed between countries and music with a special focus on Hungarian music and festival culture.

During the sampling phase convenience sampling was applied in all stages of the research design. In addition, sampling was supported by snowball sampling as well, where existing study subjects are used to recruit more respondents into the sample. (Malhotra, 2006) These methods were used via *online survey* and *virus mechanism*. However, online sampling is limited, because some questions may be not clear or respondents just simply do not answer some questions. For avoiding these constraints I pre-tested the survey and made settings to force people for answering all questions.

Theoretical background , Literature review

It was necessary to identify the key terms and definitions of my research area from different dimensions and aspects in order to synthesize the various perspectives. The following terms will be touched: country image, country and place branding, cultural diplomacy, creative class.

In the past few decades national leaders noticed the importance of country image: all countries around the world using brand management techniques (*Kotler and Gerner, 2002*) in order to differentiate themselves, increase the revenue from tourism, encourage foreign direct investment and motivate export activities (*Papadopoulos, 2004*).

The country image is the sum of different believes, ideas, impressions, which people carry in them from a country (*Kotler, 1993*). Country image means an internal and external opinion and view system pictured from a folk, a nation, a country; the objective and subjective psychological content of heterogenic and generalized value judgement” (*Szeles, 1998, p.124*). To simplify, thus the country image means what people from a nation think about themselves and what other people think about them.

In this study the strategic aspect of country branding is applied according to *Anholt (2007)*. This view indicates the nation's people and inhabitants who can benefit from an improved national reputation. This approach covers a strategic view combined with an umbrella perspective of the country where the nation brand consists of six main areas, called the *Anholt-hexagon*: tourism, export, governance, investors, people and culture (*Anholt, 2003*). Furthermore, place branding appears in my study, since place branding/regional branding brings together the public and private sectors in an attempt to achieve similar goals (*Kau, 2006*).

In form of the political dimension, public diplomacy has a lot in common with nation branding by influencing general attitudes in connection with design and implementation of international politics. Besides the practice of traditional diplomacy it embodies distinguished dimensions of international relations (*Anholt, 2007*). Cultural diplomacy is the barter of thoughts, ideas, information, art, lifestyles, value systems, traditions and other cultural aspects according to the *Cultural Diplomacy Institution (2012)*. Furthermore, cultural diplomacy has interests in networking opportunities through culture, art and education. It can be viewed as a proactive process advertising national institutions, value systems and original cultural traits on a bilateral and multilateral level. So cultural diplomacy appears as “soft diplomacy” built on cultural barter. As an example Dizzy Gillespie could ease the tense atmosphere in people's life worldwide through his jazz music during the time of cold wars (*Leonard, 2002*).

In my definition cultural diplomacy is one of the supporting pillars of country image especially in the Culture element of Anholt's hexagon patronized by different organizations, institutions (owned by state or private investors) and the government itself to promote the cultural exports of a country which activity can provide a significant growth in GDP according to the new approach of creative economy.

Nevertheless, for understanding how culture and music may influence country image, it is of crucial importance to analyse how creative industries operate. Thus, modelling creative industries is drawn upon three aspects based on geographic and cultural evaluations: global, British and European model (*Söndermann, 2007*). Regarding Hungary the European model is scrutinized where the cooperation of three different actors is enhanced: for-profit sector, non-profit sector and government sector. In the private sector creative industries follow a for-profit approach as long as during governmental interference the state is responsible for promotion and financial support of cultural products, moreover for provision of law framework and infrastructure hand in hand with tenders and aims. The non-profit sector is a sum of associations and organizations offering added cultural service, but without any financial goal. This approach will be applied by further analysis of my paper's topic where government has a crucial role in cultural marketing.

When it is about creative industries, the existence of creative employees is important in their development. *Florida (2002)* introduced the term of creative class, which is “a fast-growing, highly educated, and well-paid segment of the workforce on whose efforts corporate profits and economic growth increasingly depend” (*Florida, 2002*). Members of the creative class are involved in a wide variety of work in different industries – from technology to entertainment, journalism to finance, high-end manufacturing to the arts. Despite the wide variety of professionalism they share common values such as creativity, individuality, difference, and merit.

The creative class appears as a new target group in place branding according to *Zenker (2009)* who differentiates the possibly defined target groups more specific and diverse than *Kotler (1993)*: besides tourists, residents and business groups, more likely the creative class, students are enhanced in his model. In his sense, the development of a creative class and their perpetual attraction to a country is vital, because creative class embodies all artistic people who are main mediators for expressing country image. The key to economic growth and a

positive country image lies not just in the ability to attract the creative class, but to translate that underlying advantage into creative economic outcomes in form of new ideas, new high-tech businesses and regional growth.

The linkage between music and country image – introducing the Musical Platforms

Country image reflects music as the main indicator of identity: music supports the national identity moreover in international communication musical elements are globally understood. In order to visualize the main linkages, it is essential to analyse which platforms are involved during the strategic process. *Rein and Shields (2007)* found some platforms in the field of sport marketing that can be adopted for music marketing with some alterations. The platforms suggested in my interpretation are the following: *event platform, musician platform, institutional platform, digital platform, place platform*. The connection between them is depicted on Figure 2, which shows that all platforms are linked to the other. But how are these platforms manifested in practice? In the following I will demonstrate the practical view of musical platforms with examples.

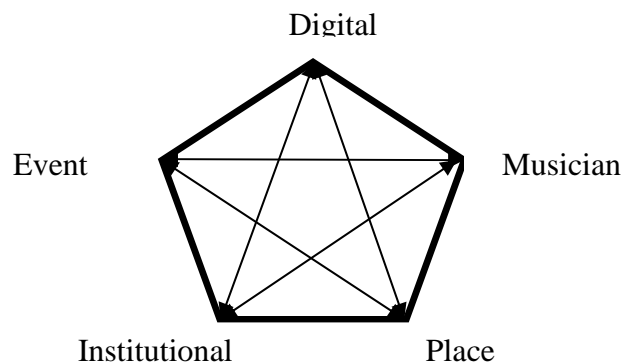


Figure 2: The Musical Platforms of Nation Branding

Source: Author's edition

Event platform of musical identity is one of the most crucial one in terms of country branding. It has a touristic importance attracting more visitors to destinations, and forming associations toward a destination. Three main events can be differentiated: music festivals for residents, music conferences and showcases for professionals and any other event organized by a brand within music branding strategy.

Festivals are tools for building a socio-cultural sense of belonging and providing a quality of life element. They are also an important part of cultural consumption in general, especially in Europe, where music festivals have their tradition expressing European citizenship because of cultural heterogeneity (*Trbovic, 2011*). Festivals reflect the *internal nation identity* by collecting representatives of the country and when people interact, are inspired and entertained expressing values of belonging, openness, and creativity. Besides, festivals boost *external image* when a local festival goes global as a touristic attraction spreading the positive experiences toward the host country into the world.

Institutional platform gives an organizational background for musicians in two ways: 1. top-down approach manifested in governmental institutions; 2. bottom-up approach manifested in local professional alliances and new companies. Music Export institutions, local music organizations and local media may create and support cultural intermediaries, voluntary organisations interests and lobby groups and may involve business and professional associations too.

Artist platform has the main elements of the image and personality of musicians (individual performer or band) who may build or complement the positive brand image by its

differentiator factor. Artists are the main figures of creative class filling in the role of opinion leaders in form of bands or solo musicians as icons. Associating a place with a cultural icon is an attempt to imbue a place with a creative character (Evans, 2003).

Place platform embodies all creative countries and cities where the representatives of the creative class may be found. However, countries may be differentiated according to their creativity. Florida (2011) stated that Singapore has an outstanding creative country branding strategy whereas its clear objective was to attract more creative industry players from music and film industries to the state with beneficial taxonomy and economic solutions.

Digital platform provides a section where technology and art may cross their roads providing genuine engagement for the audience. Music is fundamentally social since ancient ages, which is manifested in sharing different musical videos through social media sites today.

Results of the empirical research

In-depth Interviews with professionals

For exploring more insights from the practical side as well, I conducted interviews with eight practitioners from different areas of the music industry. Overall, creative tourists were mentioned who “*want to experience the living Hungary in a rational way*” (Újfalusi, 2012). Unfortunately the interviewee mentioned that creative tourists are not targeted in the Hungarian tourism strategy, despite the fact that a shift in tourism paradigm passes.

Hungarian cultural diplomacy was a crucial issue among interviewees. In fact, according to Balázs Weyer it is a missing attempt from governments’ perspective, which covers a lot of future branding opportunities. In his esteem “*through promoting Hungarian literature, folk dance and folk music Hungary could improve its image*”.

Interviewees found that there is no quality public musical education, which may be the source of every issue in cultural diplomacy. The focus of music education should be shifted to music history that would not stop at the work of Kodály and Bartók, but brings the modern music culture into focus as well. According to Gábor Újfalusi, there is an opportunity for teachers to design a curriculum supplemented with rock history or popular music, but teachers still do not want to get involved in it. The cause for this phenomenon is still uncovered, although a final goal should be to equip all secondary schools with separate music classrooms and to provide them with the opportunity of playing a musical instrument too.

Gábor Lepés highlighted some musical ‘Hungaricums’³ – besides *classical music*, operetta is very famous and well-known outside of Hungary embracing the stigma of ‘*pop-operetta inbound tourism*’. In addition, *gypsy and rockabilly* genres are popular associations with Hungarian music abroad – according to Gábor Lepés the Hungarian band, Mystery Gang was involved in a commercial of McDonalds in 2010 and their artwork is appreciated in the USA. In his opinion Hungary has a rich folk song treasure that should be exploited by modern covers of Hungarian musicians too. Furthermore, Balázs Weyer mentioned some representatives of Hungarian folk music who are famous overall the world such as Muzsikás, Sebestyén Márta, Kerekes Band. In addition, “*Hungarian folk dance has been awarded for the UNESCO cultural heritage in 2011*”, which is an indicator that musical Hungaricums do still exist and valued by international scene as well, especially when they are mixed by other transit genres providing a bridge between traditional and modern sounding. For instance, the

³ Hungaricum: expression for typical and unique Hungarian products or phenomena representing great value for Hungarians.

popular song by Quimby ('Most múlik pontosan') was covered by Csík band, a Hungarian folk band. Their original aspect of this song made them extremely popular.

Regarding country image issues according to András Berta Sziget takes an initiative to influence Hungarian nation image in a positive way. They attract the youth who are open-minded for new cultures and experiences and if those visitors enriched with new cultural experiences they will spread it to the world voluntarily with the power of social media and word-of-mouth. "*Sziget is the only showcase festival of Hungary.*" (Berta, 2012)

Hungarian music export is an ambiguous part of the research, since the interviewees had different opinions about it. According to Ákos Takács (Red Bull), Hungarian music has a big potential and Red Bull has the aim to support it financially with the unsecured interest to appeal to the customers' emotion. On the other hand, other Hungarian music professionals have negative opinions about the Hungarian cultural diplomacy, moreover, education is bleeding from several parts, so Hungarian music export is still in its infancy phase (Bátorfy, 2012). However there are plenty of potentials which are not exploited yet especially in transit genres and musical Hungaricums such as gypsy, world music, rockabilly or operetta tourism.

Focus group interviews with visitors

During the focus group interviews visitors were asked about their relationship with music and the associations of country and music in a context. For sampling method, I used a filter survey for indication of country of origin. Two groups were differentiated according to their nationality: two of them were Hungarian groups of students and one of them was international group with university students from Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands, Russia, France and Serbia. During the focus group interviews I concentrated on the following question blocks: general attitudes to music; the relationship between brands and music; general and musical associations towards countries; festival culture and Hungarian country image and music.

I identified two types of people according to their attitude to music: one person determined music as „*the most important thing in my life, I could not imagine a day without music*” and the opposite person just noted that “*music does not play a special role in my life. Usually I listen to music in my father's car in the weekend.*” I labelled the different groups according to their involvement in music as ‘*dedicated*’ (listening to music more than an hour per a day) and ‘*neutral*’ (listening to music an hour or less per a day). During the focus group interviews there was a perpetual distinction in answers and behaviour among those group members. Overall, the key findings are summarized in the phenomenon that musical associations came from countries with developed cultural diplomacy (United Kingdom, United States, Sweden), meanwhile in case of Hungary the city brand of Budapest was meaningful. Ruin bars, traditional spas were mentioned besides active nightlife. Unfortunately there was no strong relationship between musical motives and the country image which may be developed with active cultural diplomacy in the future.

Questionnaire among university students

The quantitative research phase was supported by an online questionnaire in order to map different music consumption behaviours, associations toward music and countries and festival culture in Europe. The questionnaire design was based on the previous research experiences from 2009 on the same topic. I used Qualtrics software to edit and distribute the survey and SPSS software to analyse data. The survey embodied 19 questions divided by six different blocks: general attitudes to music and music consumption; brands and music; countries and music; festival culture; Hungarian music and demographics.

During the virus mechanism 152 respondents were reached with an average age of 25.52 years and with 53% male and 47% female respondents. 89 of the respondents came

from Hungary, building up for 55.89% of the population. Other answers came from Switzerland, Germany, Indonesia, Denmark, Netherlands, US, UK, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and 1-1- respondents from Australia, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, South-Korea etc. University students and career entrants mostly engaged in management or business related jobs are in majority of the given population depicted in the following figures. The data is not representative for the whole population, but accordingly some generalization for university students and entrants can be drawn.

The design contained only one open question, because according to past experiences people answered open questions less than multiple choice ones. (“*What do you think about Hungarian music? Please, supplement the statement: Hungarian music is...*”) In addition, I concentrated on the creative approach of questionnaire design with pictures to demonstrate associations toward countries and music, besides to evoke some interest in respondents. During the survey I used Likert-scale for evaluation of different statements and semantic differential scale to place different features of Hungarian music on a scale of seven.

The main result of the questionnaire was that the relationship between countries and music was strong. This result was supported by creative technique measurements where respondents should match pictures of pop musicians with different countries according to their country of origin.

As it was already pretested in the focus group interviews, I could distinguish between ‘dedicated’ (47% listens to music more than one hour per day) and ‘neutral’ (53% listens to music one or less than an hour) groups in sense of their music consumption. After using variance analysis with ANOVA statistics and crosstabs it may be concluded that the “dedicated” group visits musical festivals more frequently. Among festival visitors the touristic attraction of festivals was significantly stronger than among non-visitors – ANOVA statistics show 0,05 significant values, meanwhile the Levene statistics are above 0,05 and may be rejected (see Table 1).

Table 1. ANOVA significances according to frequency of music festival visiting and according to country of origin

Statements	According to frequency of music festival visiting		According to country of origin	
	ANOVA significance	Levene significance	ANOVA significance	Levene significance
1. Music influences the picture of a country I have in mind	,012	,459	-	-
2. Musical events are good touristic attractions	,000	,963	,001	,648
3. Government should support musical events	,002	,273	,011	,950
4. Hungarian music is classical in my mind.	-	-	0,003	0,430
5. People should study music	,021	,456	,004	,742

Source: Author’s edition

In addition, a strong national identity appeared among Hungarians, since the role of government considered to be more important in financial support and education of cultural products which reflects *the model of Söndermann (2007)*. (Statement 3. and 5. in Table 1) However, these gaps could be filled by the application of cultural diplomacy on a strategic level (for instance in case of music education). Hungarian musical nation image is much stronger among inhabitants, which show a relatively strong national identity in case of Hungary with musical characteristics like exotic and modern. Furthermore, there is a direct relationship between country image and music according to both international and Hungarian respondents (Statement 1.).

Considering Hungarian music, the first question was a spontaneous association with Hungarian music where the results depicted in Figure 3 turned out.

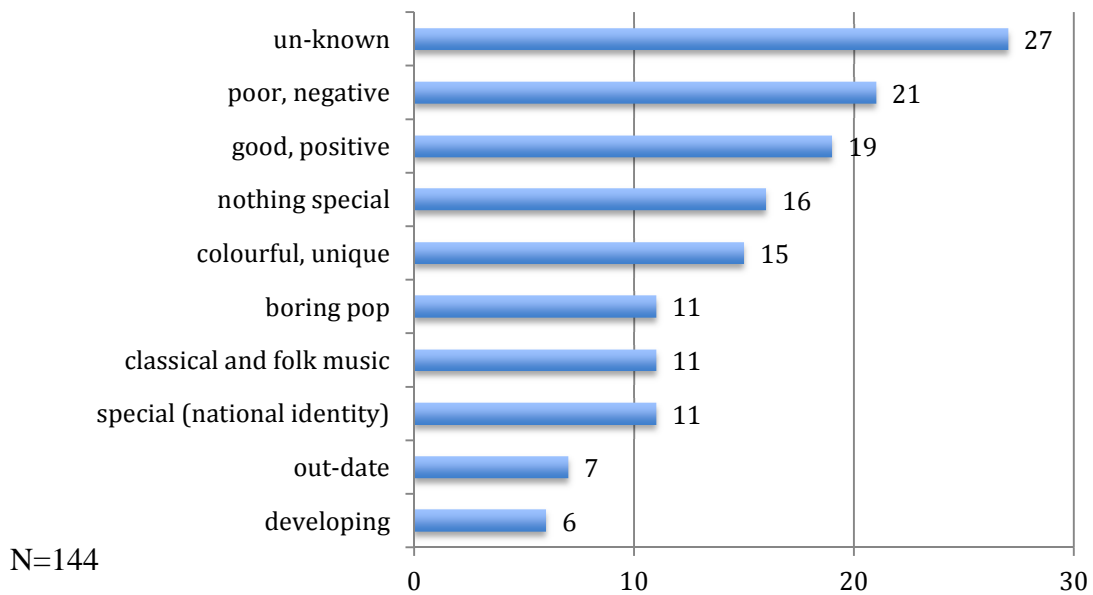


Figure 3. Spontaneous Associations toward Hungarian Music

Source: Author's edition

Mostly the respondents did not know about Hungarian music or they had negative associations towards it. (*'poor', 'nothing special', 'out-date', 'boring pop'*) Although there are some positive associations toward the quality of music and the national identity what makes Hungarians feel to be special (traditional roots and language were mentioned in this dimension). Unfortunately, pop music is underdeveloped and boring according to the respondents, but they can see an opportunity in underground music scene, folk and gypsy music besides classical music representatives from history. The uniqueness of Hungarian music was manifested in the group of *'colourful'* where there was an answer: *"You can find any kind of music genre here in a wide variety of places which makes Hungary so different from other cultures."*

Furthermore, respondents were asked to evaluate Hungarian music on a semantic differential scale of seven degree. The main results are differentiated according to their country of origin in Figure 4.

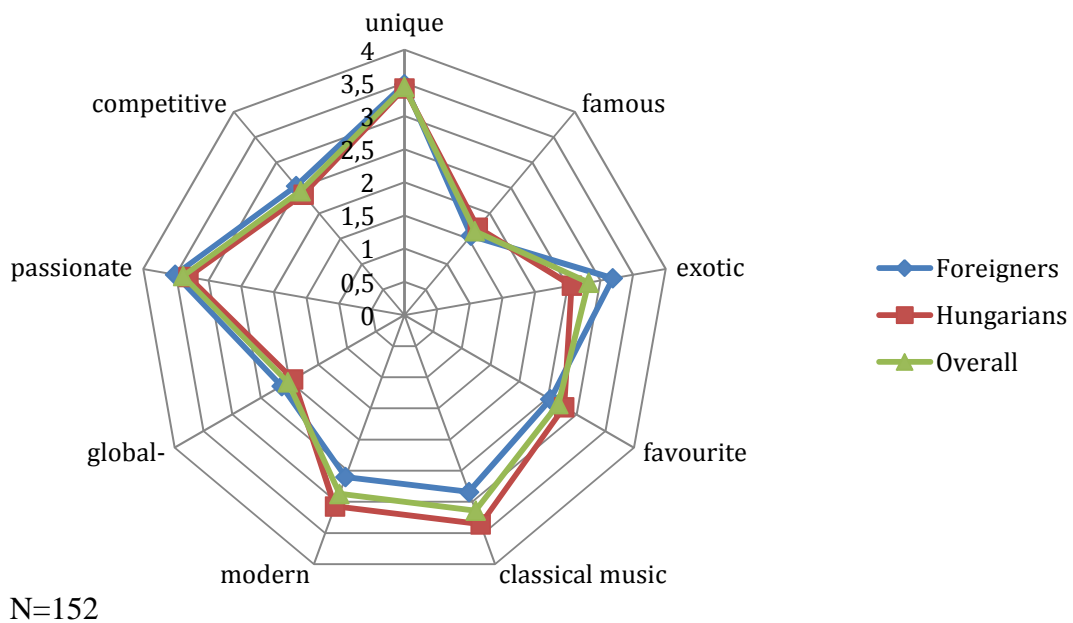


Figure 4. Hungarian Music according to the Population

Source: Author's edition

Regarding the evaluation of Hungarian music Hungarians could picture it much more precisely with higher average answers, meanwhile the lack of information and patriot feelings could distort the results of foreign respondents. Nevertheless, it is a conspicuous difference that Hungarians prefer to identify Hungarian music with the adjectives of 'classic'. According to the external image, to the foreigners Hungarian music may be identified with gypsy music on the contrary, which was the opposite pole of the semantic different scale of 'classic'.

Musical country image of Hungary

Musical country image may be formed in the Anholt-hexagon by adding the before-mentioned musical platforms. Anholt-hexagon embodies six areas of country image: governance, investment and immigrants, people, culture and heritage and export (Anholt, 2007). The model of musical country image is synthetized in Figure 5. The novelty of this model is summarized in the following.

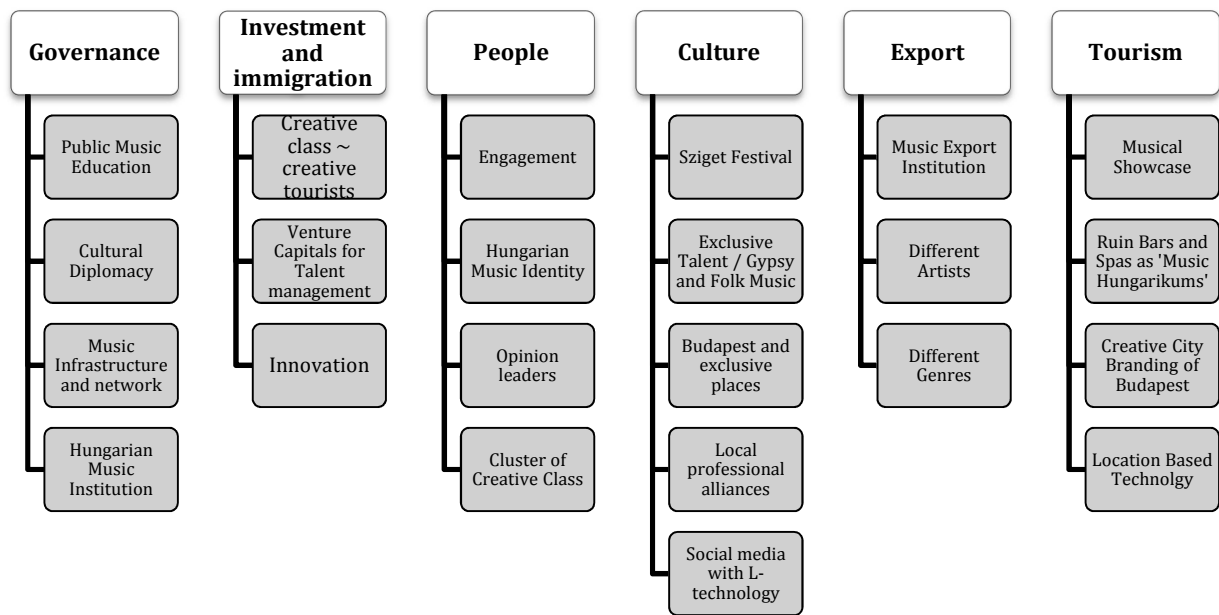


Figure 5. The Musical Aspect of Nation Image in case of Hungary

Source: Author's Edition

The first dimension is 'governance' where music has an influencing role in everyday politics by demonstrating different values and thoughts about political directions and events in a popular way (Pedelty - Keefe, 2010). The connection between music and politics, especially political expression in music, has been seen for instance during the campaign of Obama in 2008. All four elements should be manifested in an institutional education system, which gives freedom to the cluster of creative class. Furthermore, public music education is of crucial importance in order to improve the Hungarian Musical Nation Identity on a long-term according to the interviewees too. In case of Hungary there is no internationally accepted Hungarian Music Institution or Music Export Institution, which makes it difficult to build a strong musical image.

Regarding the institutions the bottom-up approach has been increased: for instance the Org4Org that is the representation of the Hungarian music in the Central Eastern European region. Weyer (2012) thinks that cultural diplomacy covers a lot of potentials in field of cultural diplomacy, especially in case of music and literature. Weyer (2012) imagines a regional franchise institution system with cooperation of the Palace of Arts.

'Investment and immigration' is manifested in the concept of *creative class*, since creative people are concentrated in one place, they are willing to relocate if the environment offers them a liveable place considering career opportunities, art and entertainment events. In music industry the business model of sponsorship is worldwide accepted where business angels support artists financially. Immigration embodies the creative country branding aspect, which is supported by the case of Singapore too where the knowledge based country branding is the crucial element of the strategy. Hungary has an outstanding quality in human resources in the CEE region (Egedy-Kovács, 2010), so competitiveness may be increased by employment of the creative class.

In the 'people's' dimension Hungarian musical identity may be increased by the education of popular music history. The results of the primary research showed that not only classical, but popular music appears as part of the identity: gypsy, world or folk music,

rockabilly, jazz or operetta. In addition, unique transit and mix genres may be the base of a genuine Hungarian music.

The '*culture*' dimension may be valued by the musical platforms, which appear among the dimension '*tourism*' too. The Sziget Festival as the most important element of the '*event platform*' and as the only showcase in Hungary develops the country image of Hungary among foreigners. However, counter to the *model of Söndermann (2007)* there is no support from the side of the government, despite the fact that Sziget was nominated for the Best European Major Festival in 2012 (*Festival Awards, 2012*).

The '*institutional platform*' shows a restructuring of public media and cooperation of the national music industry in case of Hungary. The '*artist platform*' focuses on the identification of unique talents and unique music genres whereas professional talent management is needed. The '*place platform*' highlights the crucial role of creative city branding and the cultural role of Budapest. Budapest has advantages regarding low labor costs, outstanding geographical situation moreover there are many entertainment options. For instance, location based technologies such as social music pub supports the creative aspect of the city branding which is a crucial element of the '*digital platform*'.

In the '*export*' dimension a Hungarian music export institution is necessary which could market Hungarian music with the support of its wide international network. Musical Hungaricums may be the products for this cultural export activity such as the Sziget Festival, ruin bars or spas.

Discussion

In the focus group interview a sample based on music consumption behaviour could be applied in future distinguishing between 'dedicated' (listening to music more than an hour per day) and 'neutral' (listening to music less than an hour).

Further research development could focus on creative elements, since the nature of topic requires customer insights. According to some feedbacks, the survey was evaluated by one of the mediators in the viral effect: "*I promise you, it's the most interactive survey you've seen in a while!*" For creative elements audio and video files could be embedded into the survey, although there is a risk that the willingness of filling in the survey will consequently decrease, since there are several situations when sounds are limited.

In addition, the focus should divide into two target groups with two personalized survey design for improving response rate: 1. International music image for Hungary in Hungarian, 2. External music image for Hungary in English.

Conclusion

In this study the reader could understand the new understanding of country image which was analyzed from the creative aspect. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between music and the reputation of a country. In addition it turned out that music influences the image of a country through five different platforms. These platforms integrate the '*place*' as a creative city or country itself; the '*artist*' as a symbolic icon; any '*digital platforms*' where the message can be communicated in an innovative way; '*events*' where icons and visitors can contact; and the '*institutional background*' that supports the international musical network of a country through cultural diplomacy. According to international examples, Hungary could build a country branding strategy on music, which is moving forward from traditional values into the direction of modern understanding of a creative country.

In case of Hungary the option of creative place branding, high level of innovative music education and cultural diplomacy were highlighted. Furthermore, musical Hungaricums were identified such as the Sziget Festival, transit music genres and local ruin bars and spas.

For improving the musical country image several tools may be applied after a thorough SWOT analysis of the country itself. More likely a reform in public education and infrastructure could develop the musical nation image in case of Hungary, when instruments would be provided in every school in order to learn how to play them. Thus, Hungarian musical identity and cultural openness may be accelerated which should grow exponentially with a profound cultural diplomacy strategy. Musical institutional infrastructure, export institutions may be found when international musical events are touristic attractions too with talented Hungarian musicians. However, all three actors (government, business and non-profit sectors) are needed on a same involvement level, where the musical country branding is a mutual long-term goal.

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