DESTINATION TOURISM – EMPIRICAL STUDY BY KELLY GRID WITHIN ROMANIAN YOUTH

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Abstract: Each country has a tourist symbol that is easily recognizable worldwide, for instance, the Eiffel Tower means Paris - France, Big Ben means London - England, Taj Mahal - India etc. and some of these are perceived as that „thing" to which we dream all life. For most Romanians youth traveling is a „tabu" topic as „to travel" is one of the expensive activities of their spare time that a rather small percentage of Romanian tourists afford, but all of them „dream" to these famous tourist destinations. We have surveyed perception of these famous tourist destinations worldwide by means of both a qualitative method and statistical quantitative methods. Thus, we have used the Kelly grid (repertory grid interview) as a qualitative method for both generation of pairs concerning opposite attributes of „symbols" related to the world tourism within the youth in Romania (practically a group of students for the Economy of commerce, services and tourism specialization) as well as for data collection. For data collection we have used a statistical method, the principal component analysis. We consider that the results of this research emphasize significant features of Romanian tourists' perception in relation to these important tourist objectives, emblematic in the world, features that represent important variables in order to carry out the image studies, the policy and communication and promotion strategies of the tourist market „players", respectively: tour- operators, travel agencies, air operators etc.

Keywords: Kelly grid, principal component analysis, Romanian market, perception, image study

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism generally but, especially, foreign tourism contributes to the deeper or faster integration of a country in foreign circuits, having a series of indirect effects related to opening, free circulation and communication, cultural, artistic and knowledge effects, as well as a way of using the spare time (**Jivan**, 2004). Increase of importance concerning a tourist activity in more and more countries, emphasizes a more active presence in the economic and social life, but also a significant participation to the general progress generally and last but not least, the drive force of the socio-cultural development and environment. Under these circumstances, we sustain the above mentioned by data related to the development of foreign tourism in 1990 – 2012 (WTO, Tourism Highlights, 2013, p.3).

Therefore, in 2012, world tourism recovered more strongly than expected from the shock it suffered in late 2008 and 2009 as a result of the global financial crisis and economic recession. Worldwide, in 2012, there were 1.03 billion international tourist arrivals

worldwide, with a growth of 4.0% as compared to 995 million in 2011. The top 10 international tourism destinations in 2012 were according to data from table 1. Regionally, the top of first countries according to indicators *international tourist arrivals* and *international tourism receipts* is shown in table 1. What should be noted is that, eight of the top ten destinations appear in both lists, even though they show marked differences in terms of the characteristics of the tourists they attract (WTO, Tourism highlights, 2013).

Table 1 - International Tourist Arrivals and receipts

Arrivals					Receipts				
Rank	million		Change (%)		Rank	US $ billion		Change (%)	
	2012	2011	12/11	11/10		2012	2011	12/11	11/10
1.France	83.0	81.6	+1.8	+5.0	1.United States	126.2	115.6	+9.2	+11.7
2.United States	67.0	62.7	+6.8	+4.9	2.Spain	55.9	59.9	-6.6	+14.0
3.China	57.7	57.6	+0.3	+3.4	3.France	53.7	54.5	-1.5	+16.2
4.Spain	57.7	56.2	+2.7	+6.6	4.China, Macau, China	50.0 43.7	48.5+ 38.5	+3.2 +13.7	+5.8 +38.3
5.Italy	46.4	46.1	+0.5	+5.7	5. Italy	41.2	43.0	-4.2	+10.9
6. Turkey	35.7	34.7	+3.0	+10.5	6. Germany	38.1	38.9	-1.9	+12.1
7. Germany	30.4	28.4	+7.3	+5.5	7.United Kingdom Hong Kong	36.4 32.1	35.1 27.7	+3.7 +16.0	+8.2 +24.6
8. United Kingdom	29.3	29.3	-0.1	+3.6	8. Australia	31.5	31.5	+0.2	+8.1
9.Russia	25.7	22.7	+13.4	+11.9	9. Thailand	30.0	27.1	+9.6	+25.9
10. Malaysia	25.0	24.7	+1.3	+0.6	10.Turkey	25.6	25.0	+2.4	+10.1

(Source: calculated based on WTO, *Tourism highlights, 2013)*

France has the first place as regards arrivals of foreign tourists recording the same number of tourists in 2011 and 2012, 83 million, respectively 81.6. The United States is on the first place as regards inbound tourism, collecting $126.2 billion, and is on the second place concerning arrivals of foreign tourists. Countries such as China, Spain, Italy, Germany and United Kingdom, are in the top of the first countries regarding inbound tourism. This situation could be explained by the fact that, these countries are in the top of the most important tourist destinations, as we can notice in table 2. As regards costs within foreign tourism in 2012, situation is similar, the first place is occupied by China with US$ 102 billion, followed by the Germany with US$ 83.8 billion, United States with USD 83.5 billion., United Kingdom with USD 52.0 billion and Russia with USD 42.84 billion (WTO, Tourism highlights, 2011, p.10).

We can notice from this data that, countries that spend most money on tourism are strongly developed countries, and tourists here afford visiting the most important tourist objectives worldwide, and afford expensive holidays in any tourist destination.

Table 2 - Top Ten Tourist Destination in the world, in 2011

Rank	Tourist destination

1	*Taj Mahal*, Monuments & Landmarks in Agra, India
2	*Great Wall of China*, Forts and Fortifications in Beijing, China
3	*Eiffel Tower, Monuments & Landmarks in Paris, France*
4	St. Peters Basilica, Churches & Abbeys in *Rome, Italy*
5	Alhambra, Castles & Palaces in Granada, Spain
6	Empire State Building, Contemporary Architecture in New York City, United States
7	Monet's Gardens, Gardens in North East France, France
8	St. Pauls Cathedral, Churches & Abbeys in London, United Kingdom
9	Reichstag, Contemporary Architecture in Berlin, Germany
10	Westminster Abbey, Churches & Abbeys in London, United Kingdom

(Source: *Top Ten Tourist Destination*, May, 1st, 2011, available at http://articles.novelsoft.com.np)

Under these world economic and tourist circumstances for the „players" of the market operating in the field of tourism, apart economic, socio – demographic, political variables etc. that contribute to a balance between the demand and supply of tourist products and services are important and subjective variables, more difficult to quantify quantitatively, statistically, that are related to perception, own experience of life etc. Therefore color photos have been used with national „symbols" of world tourism: *Eiffel Tower, Moulin Rouge, Louvre and Versailles museums– Paris, France, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace– London, England, Burj Al Arab and Palm – Dubai, Rio de Janeiro Carnival– Brasil, Colosseum – Rome, Verona (Juliet balcony) and Venice – Italy, Kremlin and Red Square – Moscow, Russia, Dervish dancers– Turkey, Jesus Christ giant statue – Brasil, Forbidden City and Chinese Wall – China, Pyramides and Sphinx – Egypt, Sagrada Familia – Spain, Taj Mahal – India, Vatican, Schonbrunn Castle – Vienna, Austria.* Afterwards, data collected with the Kelly grids have been processed by means of the principal component analysis respectively (PCA) and descriptive statistics to check validity of the G. Kelly theory as regards perception of tourism specialization students related to world tourist destinations.

Thus, starting from all this considerations we carried out a study that enables both collection and quantification of such variables but especially their detailed, intrinsic interpretation. Thus we consider that, the mixed use of the *Kelly* grid and the data analysis statistical method i.e. the *principal component analysis* – showed in paragraphs two and three -, led to important results for the firms operating on the tourist market, results showed in paragraph four, previously being described the sample of subjects used in this research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Kelly personal construct theory considers that every person uses concepts that are individual to perceive the outwards and that drives its behavior and that, also, helps explain the behavior of other people. The development of this theory as a measuring tool in psychology has gained its position at the same time with the complex statistical methods and

computer related applications have become increasingly used. It has been used in order to convert the „fuzzy" areas (blurred) of behavior in statistics (Jerrard, 1998). Therefore it uses "*elements*", by "*constructions*" and *relations* that join elements to constructions and does have important implications for economic decision-making because every decision produces cognitive dissonance in individuals (Lester and Yang, 2009). The Kelly grid or „Kelly triads" (Bouroche**,** 1977, p. 51) is one of the methods that combines advantages of quantitative and qualitative analyses (Author, 2007), used in qualitative marketing research in order to know the consumers'/ users' perception of relevant characteristics as regards a product /group of products or services (Evrard et al, 2003), though there are authors who frame it in association with the insight interview, group, half-structured and decision protocol as being a qualitative method (Worcester and Downham, 1986) or resembles it with the Osgood's semantic differential (Jerrard, 1998) being presented in the specialty literature - in conjunction with ordination of preferences and differentiation of occasions – as a method recommended to identify product attributes (Vavra**,** 1997, p. 95).

Factors affecting tourist flows are promotion, availability and types of transport (Coshall, 2000), repertory grid posses great potential in the field of tourism research (Coshall, 2000), being applied – in tourism – for analysis of tourist's images of London's museums and art galleries, for exploring the nature of tourist's experience in case of American tourists visiting the United Kingdom (Botterill and Crompton, 1996), resident perceptions of tourist attractions on the Gold Coast of Australia (Lawton, 2005). Compared to other methods analyzing the self – concept, such as the Q factor analysis or the Osgood differential semantic, the Kelly grid shows the *major advantage* (Fournier, 1996), that enables the subjects to look inside their world in the relevant terms of personality, these dimensions being more important than dimensions required by the researcher. The main *disadvantage* (Mitchell and Kiral, 1999) of the Kelly grid is provided by restriction of mental and imaginative capability of subjects to reflect their experiences verbally in qualitative idiosyncratic terms.

3. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE KELLY GRID AND PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS

For this research in the stage of generating the Kelly grid „*constructions*", color photos have been used, „*elements*" of the following world tourist objectives : *Eiffel Tower, Moulin Rouge, Louvre and Versailles museums– Paris, France, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace– London, England, Burj Al Arab and Palm – Dubai, Rio de Janeiro Carnival– Brasil,*

Colosseum – Rome, Verona (Juliet balcony) and Venice – Italy, Kremlin and Red Square – Moscow, Russia, Dervish dancers– Turkey, Jesus Christ giant statue – Brasil, Forbidden City and Chinese Wall – China, Pyramides and Sphinx – Egypt, Sagrada Familia – Spain, Taj Mahal – India, Vatican, Schonbrunn Castle – Vienna, Austria.

Application of the Kelly grid is based on the perception of similarity or dissimilarity of the components of a triad of stimuli, selected from the relevant stimuli for each subject randomly comprised in research. Recurrence of some triads identical for the same respondent is not allowed.

The principal component analysis (PCA) is one of the descriptive data analysis methods that are applied quite often for quantitative data and mostly used to process data gathered by means of the Kelly grid (Coshall, 2000), being one of the factor analysis methods, but it shows methodological features compared to the „conventional" factor analysis. *The basic principle* of this method is to select the lowest number of components to recover as much as possible the total information contained in primary data, these new components expressing new attributes of individuals and built so as they are non-correlated between them, each of these new variables being a linear combination of primary variables. This method provides a graphic visualization of *the map of individuals* in the study according to similarities between them and the *map of variables* according to their correlations.

For inside interpretations we have used descriptive statistics, absolute frequencies respectively (Edwards et al., 2009), relative frequencies and average scores calculated by means of weighted arithmetic mean and SPSS 16.0 (Lawton, 2005) and Excel were used for data processing.

The sample used within this study consisted of 25 students for the specialization „Economy of commerce and services" (ECTS) of the „Petru Maior" University in Tîrgu Mureş, Faculty of Economic, Legal and Administrative Science for the IInd and the IIIrd years of education. We chose to use students as in the foreign literature are the most common type of individuals used, convergence points being identified between the Kelly theory and education (Latta and Swigger, 1992, Hunter and Beck, 1996, Plank and Green, 1996, Buckenham, 1998, Hunter and Beck, 2000, Coshall, 2000, Caldwell and Coshall, 2002, Lawton, 2005).

4. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

By applying the Kelly grid, 42 pairs of attributes have been generated using the Kelly

grid and color photos of tourist objectives used in research.

Afterwards there has been filled in, individually by subjects, the Kelly grid, using evaluation ranks from 1 to 5 (1 with significance it has no attribute, 5 - it totally has the attribute). Using of ranks has several advantages (Jerrard**,** 1998): using the *scatter plot* as a graph, shows the relations between constructions determined by the relative numerical position of elements on dimensions of constructions, the easiness of using statistical processing software.

In order to process data gathered by means of the Kelly grid, the PCA with varimax rotation has been applied several times and for the research only those pairs of attributes were kept that were correlating (positively or negatively) significantly (with values over 0.500), result 4 principal components that explain 73.92% of the total variance, the results of this analysis being shown in table 3.

Table 3 - Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.097	42.615	42.615	8.097	42.615	42.615
2	2.944	15.497	58.112	2.944	15.497	58.112
3	1.586	8.347	66.459	1.586	8.347	66.459
4	1.418	7.464	73.923	1.418	7.464	73.923
5	.860	4.526	78.449			
…..	……	…….	……..			
19	.064	.336	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Applying the PCA several times emphasized that within the 42 „*constructions*" generated by subjects there was redundant information that was not emphasizing anything quantitatively, statistically, thus justifying the use of the PCA data analysis statistical method to reduce the number of initial variables. Also, the PCA application will help us to a better visualization in vector space of the 24 tourist objectives „emblematic" in the world and used as „*elements*" of the Kelly grid, in line with the 19 „constructions" remained in study, respectively to identify through which subjective, perceivable attributes are characterized, and through what they differentiate better, respectively, these tourist objectives used in the study within the higher educated youth in Romania.

Based on the results shown in table 4**,** that contain the *principal component matrix* following the *Varimax rotation* normalization of proper vectors, as well as the coordinates of contributions as regards statistical units and variables on the factor axes, results the following

grouping of the 19 „constructions" of the Kelly grid on the four principal components:

1. **the first principal component** (PC1) explains that most total variance, 42.62% respectively consists of the following pairs of opposite attributes: *history – entertainment, symbolizes history and religion - symbolizes "dissoluteness", exotic landscape – conventional landscape, Gothic architecture focused on details and decorations – modernist architecture, cold colors – strong colors, for "day" tourism- for "night" tourism, one of the 7 wonders of the world – one of the 7....enjoyments of the world, for socialization – for meditation.* Thus it will be called „***history – present***".

2. **the second principal component** (PC2) fully consists of those constructions that were generated in case when triads of extracted pictures were containing monuments that were symbolizing religious aspects, respectively: *sacre - profane, sanctuary – historic monument, religious tourism – relaxation tourism, extravagance – purity, dedicated to divinity – dedicated to "common people", dedicated to spiritual relaxation – dedicated to "physical" relaxation*. It will be thus called „***spirituality – evanescent, earth-born***" and this component explains 15.5% of the total variance explained by the initial research variables;

3. **the third principal component** (PC3) consists of variables that describe alike the main goal of an activity for spending spare time, such as tourism but also the goal targeted mainly by young tourists, entertainment, „night" activities, dynamism, consisting of the following Kelly grid „constructions": *relaxation– stamina, relaxation tourism – event tourism, magnificence of buildings – magnificence of costumes* and *dynamism – static.* It will be thus called „***relaxation versus dynamism***" and it also explains 8.35 % of the total variance explained by all pairs of attributes;

4. **the fourth principal component** (PC4) consists of a single „construction", *urban localization – localization in nature* respectively that explains 7.46% of the total variance explained by the 19 pairs of attributes remained in study. It will be thus called „***urban versus nature***".

Table 4 - Rotated Component Matrix[a] and Component Score Coefficient Matrix

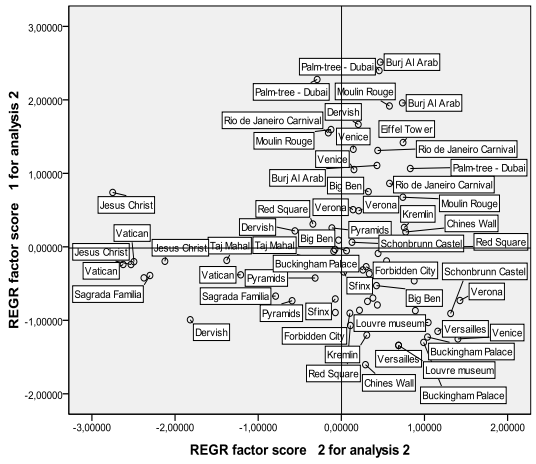
Initial variables, "constructions"	Rotated Component Matrix[a]			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
History – entertainment	.839			
Symbolizes history and religion - symbolizes "riot"	.756			
Exotic landscape – conventional landscape	-.717			
Gothic architecture focused on details and decorations- modernist architecture	.659			
Cold colors – strong colors	.636			

For "day" tourism- for "night" tourism	.633			
One of the 7 wonders of the world- one of the 7....enjoyments of the world	.627			
For socialization – for meditation	-.594			
Sacre- profane	.134			
Sanctuary - historic monument		.797		
Religious tourism - relaxation tourism		.793		
Extravagance - purity		-.741		
Dedicated to divinity - dedicated to "common people"		.677		
Dedicated to spiritual relaxation – dedicated to "physical rexalation"		.603		
Relaxation- vitality			.887	
Relaxation tourism - event tourism			.886	
Magnificence of buildings –magnificence of costumes			.713	
Dynamic - static			-.704	
Urban location – location in nature				922

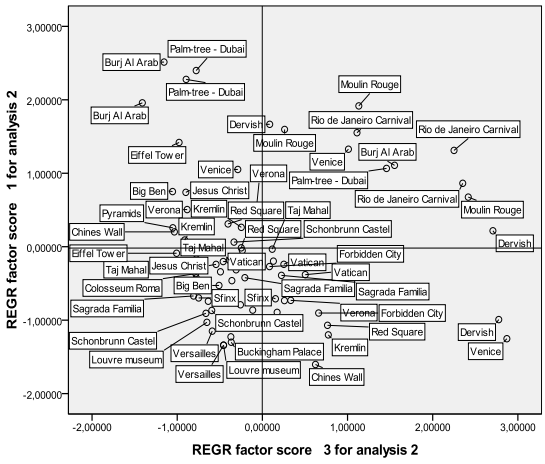
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

For a better visualization as regards „location" of the 24 tourist objectives in relation to the factor axes, their illustration has been carried out in two-dimensional space, grouping the four principal components two by two, the six graphs being illustrated in figure 1 (a) – (f)**.**

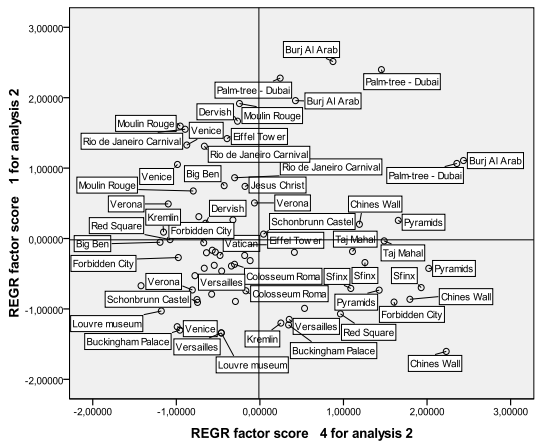
In figures 2 - 4 we illustrate, according to average scores, the 24 elements (world tourist destinations) on each of the four principal components.



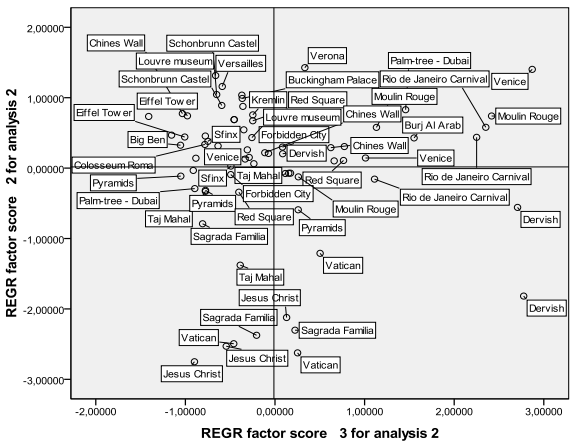
(a) – PC1 and PC2



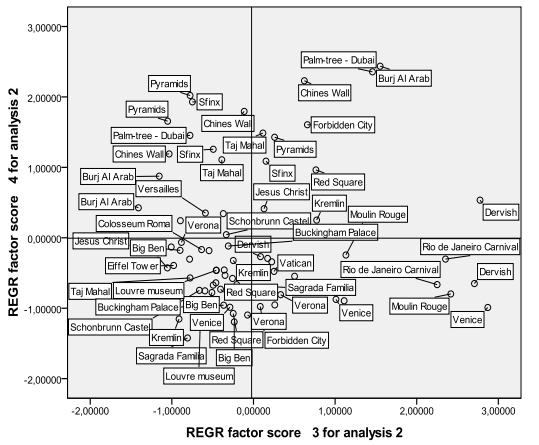
(b) – PC1 and PC3



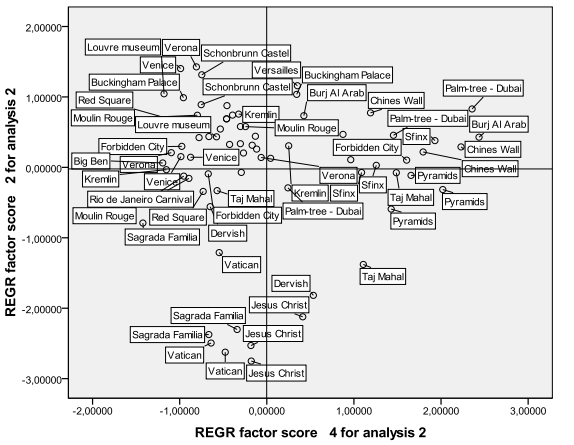
(c) – PC1 and PC4



(d) – PC2 and PC3



(e) – PC3 and PC4



(f) – PC2 and PC4

Figure 1 - Map of tourist objectives in two –dimensional spaces of Principal components

According to figure 3 it is therefore noticed that based on data in Appendix B (col. 1 - 8), it results that Buckingham Palace, Chinese Wall, Colosseum Rome, Louvre museum, Sfinx, Vatican and Versailles are historic destinations full of history, at the opposite side being Mouline Rouge dedicated to entertainment and that symbolizes "riot".

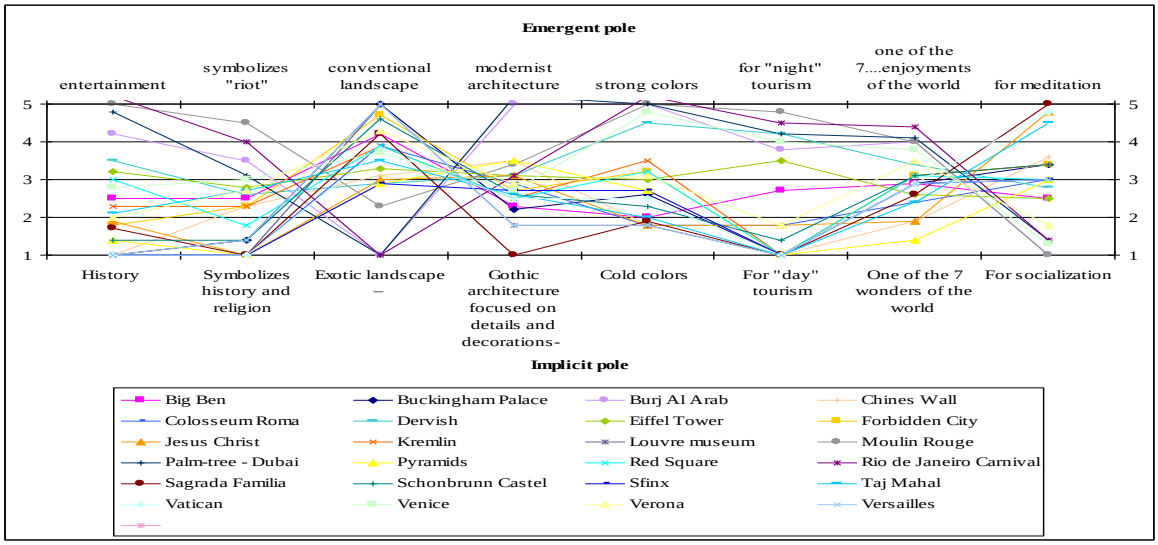


Figure 2 - Graph of the 24 "elements" on „constructions" of PC1

Destinations representing symbols of world history are: Colosseum Rome, Jesus Christ, Pyramids, Sagrada Familia and Vatican. Exotic landscape is provided by the most famous palaces in the world Buckingham, Louvre and Versailles, respectively the most conventional being perceived as the most modern constructions and with modern architecture, located in exotic locations, in Dubai, Burj Al Arab and Palm –tree, respectively. The tourist destination with gothic architecture and focused on details is Sagrada Familia.

The most "colored" destinations are the two exotic constructions in Dubai and Moulin Rouge, and those perceived as being defined by cold colors Chinese Wall, Colosseum Rome, Jesus Christ, the explanation being that all are stone constructions.

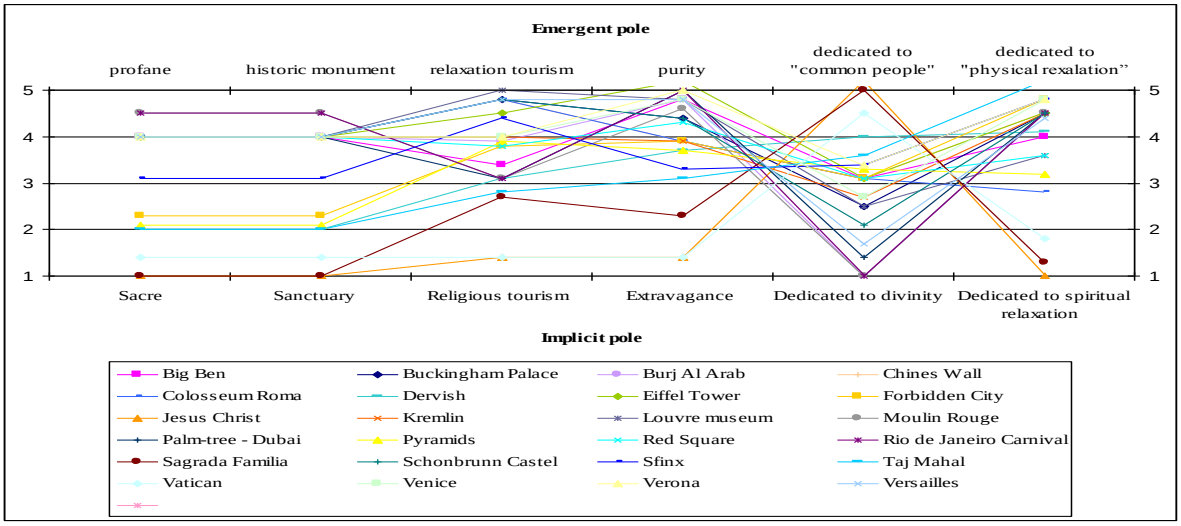


Figure 3 - Graph of the 24 "elements" on „constructions" of PC2

For "day" tourism are perceived the following tourist destinations Buckingham Palace, Chinese Wall, Forbidden City, Kremlin, Louvre museum, Pyramids, Red Square,

Sagrada Familia, Sfinx, Taj Mahal, Vatican and Versailles and for "night" tourism, Moulin Rouge. One of the 7....enjoyments of the world is, according to students' perception, Rio de Janeiro Carnival, Burj al Arab, and Palm-tree of Dubai or Moulin Rouge while one of the 7 wonders of the world is Pyramids. Tourist destinations perceived as socialization means are Burj Al Arab and Moulin Rouge while those dedicated to meditation are the halidoms, Sagrada Familia, Vatican, Taj Mahal, Jesus Christ, respectively.

Representation of the 24 *elements o*f the repertory grid on *constructions* that make PC2, emphasizes aspects as: destinations as Rio de Janeiro Carnival and Moulin Rouge are considered profane, while as holy destinations or sanctuary and for religious tourism are perceived all halidoms comprised in the study, respectively: Jesus Christ, Sagrada Familia and Vatican. The recreation tourism is perceived by students by means of tourist destinations on purpose to be visited, type museum, respectively: Louvre museum, Schonbrunn Castle, Buckingham Palace, Chinese Wall, Colosseum Rome, Sfinx and Versailles. The most extravagant targets of world tourism have been perceived as being: Verona, Rio de Janeiro Carnival, Eiffel Tower and Palm-tree of Dubai being followed closely by Burj Al Arab, Louvre museum, Venice and Versailles, at the opposite side being the religious ones, dedicated to divinity. The world tourist targets dedicated to "common people' are Rio de Janeiro Carnival and Moulin Rouge. For physical recreation are Sfinxul, Venice, Verona and Forbidden City and for spiritual recreation, Jesus Christ.

The third component made by the Kelly grid constructions locates the dance of Turkish dervish to the pole perceived as full of vitality (also perceived as magnificence of costumes and dynamic) and Rio de Janeiro Carnival (also perceived as event tourism and as magnificence of costumes and dynamic), and for recreation and implicitly as a type of tourism: Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Eiffel Tower, Jesus Christ, Louvre museum, Sagrada Familia, Schonbrunn Castle, Sfinx, Vatican and Versailles. Magnificence of buildings are framed Big Ben, Chinese Wall, Colosseum Rome, Eiffel Tower, Jesus Christ, Louvre museum, Pyramids, Sagrada Familia, Taj Mahal and Versailles.

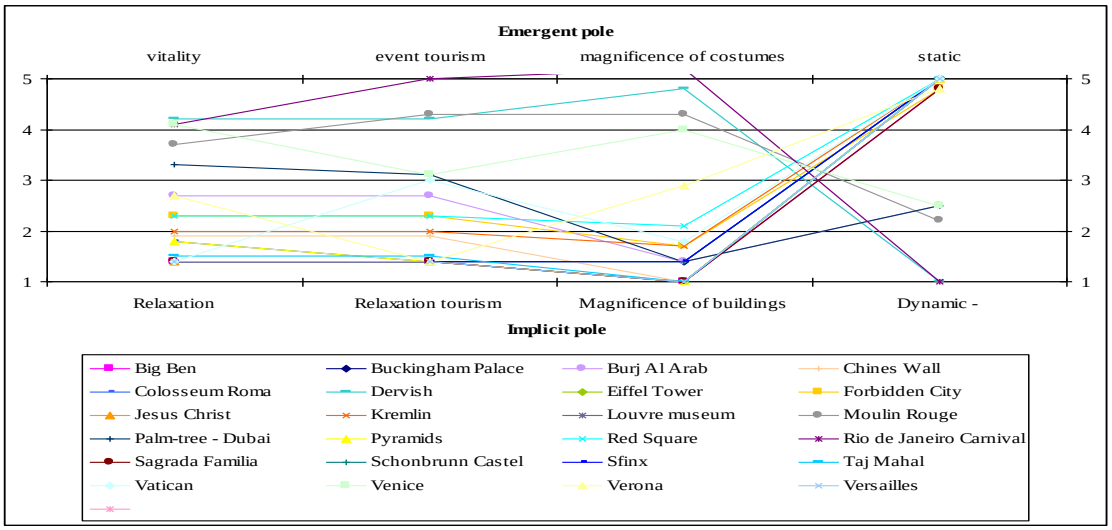


Figure 4 - Graph of the 24 "elements" on „constructions" of PC3

The fourth component comprises a single construction that polarizes tourist sights from studio in urban and nature location. Therefore, located in nature are – according to perceptions of individuals in studio – Chinese wall, Pyramids and Sphinx, the most urban locations being Big Ben, Colosseum Rome, Eiffel Tower, Louvre museum, Moulin Rouge, Rio de Janeiro Carnival, Vatican and Venice.

5. CONCLUSIONS

By applying the PCA method, a data reduction has been carried out, replacing the initial point cloud with a low dimension point cloud, for a convenient graphical plotting and to emphasize the features of the 24 tourist objectives of world significance used in the study as regards perception of attributes describing these tourist objectives/destinations, perceivable, subjective, economic, attributes grouped on four principal components:

- Principal component 1, named "*history versus present*"
- Principal component 2, named "*spirituality – evanescent, earth-born*"
- Principal component 3, named "*relaxation versus dynamism*"
- Principal component 4, named "*urban versus nature*"

As regards the basic principle of the Kelly grid, the personal construct theory respectively, we can thus notice (based on the correlation matrix analysis) that practicing tourism worldwide has multiple significance and connotations for the youth in Romania, related to the basic activity, tourism respectively. For them, sightseeing some tourist objectives „emblematic" in the world, also meaning *entertainment* and *exoticism, meditation, spirituality, socialization* etc. id est subjectively perceived variables through own experiences

and perceptions.

The results of this research are essential to think out a communication policy or strategy of a firm, as they – by combining the advantages of both the quantitative method and the qualitative one – explore and provide subjective perceptions id est marketing variables difficult to measure and especially to explain only in relation to the research qualitative methods.

Correlations obtained from matrix and results of this research thus confirm the Kelly personal construct theory, therefore this tool provides the opportunity of a quantitative, objective transfer of some qualitative, subjective variables. The players of the tourism world market that promote and market tourist packages respectively, that include these tourist objectives contained in this research should approach differently the future potential young tourists considering important aspects related to the perceivable visibility of each of these world tourist destinations.

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