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GÖDÖLLŐ

MATE
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THESESES OF PhD DISSERTATION

HUMAN RESOURCES AS A FACTOR OF INCREASING COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

- THESESES OF PhD DISSERTATION -

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1. Introduction

The scope of the dissertation is to study the possessed, expected and developed competencies within the tourism and accommodation sector. The topic is very significant in many aspects. Human recourses is one of the main factors what can affect the competitiveness of any accommodations by making them attractive for tourists. According to this statement, more professional the staff is, guests will be more satisfied, therefore the popularity of the accommodation will grow which results higher profit. This allows creating more employment, also makes the location more attractive, which benefits the actual location and other sectors within the tourism. This also increases the GDP as tourism is one of the sectors that effects the economy. To have an effective team of staff, a professional development and training is essential. In one hand, the training of new joiners and continuous development is very important. However, development should start at the universities and this is essential for the training for future employees. One of the main focuses of the dissertation is to examine the development of the personal and interpersonal competencies at universities and accommodations. The impact of the competencies on success at accommodations is considered essential based on the studies of researches in the tourism. Present research's goal is to study what competencies universities develop for their students, also to measure the level of competencies of tourism students and to find out what skills tourism professionals expect from new employees. Furthermore, to compare if these are in line with the skills what front desk employees use at their work. The attitude and the personal competencies of leaders have a great impact on the behavior of employees. Leaders can be role models for their employees only if they are aware of their own skills, competencies, even their flosses, in other words, their self-awareness is high. Therefore, it is important to examine the level of the leader's competencies and their self-awareness. Guests are also very important stakeholders of the tourism industry, as online ratings are becoming more and more important and this has a great impact on the competitiveness of accommodations. Guests leave their online reviews which are also can be considered as feedback for leaders and employees. This is why it is important to examine the opinion of the guests as it could give a different point of view. Cultural comparison is an important dimension of the research, therefore Hungarian and Spanish stakeholders of the accommodation industry are

compared in all questions of the research. The importance of cultural differences is becoming significant due to globalization. Present research studies the stereotypes in the aspect of personality traits of front desk employees.

The main focus points of the research will present new findings in the field of tourism, as an overview of competencies of all stakeholders comparing Hungarian and Spanish professionals has not been studied.

2. Objectives of the research

The research's aim to give a complex, 360 degrees overview for all stakeholders of the accommodation industry about the human factor, education of tourism and measurement of competencies focusing on competitiveness. Goals of the research are the followings:

1. To examine the skills, competencies and the self-awareness of the leaders of the accommodation industry.
   Results could be useful for leaders in the industry as it can show the developmental areas which could be key at competitiveness. Also could highlight the importance of development and could strengthen the attitude towards investing in human capital.

2. To find out the opinion the front desk employees and students of tourism studies about their own level of competencies. Afterwards to compare these with the competencies are being developed at universities of tourism, furthermore with the competencies front desk employees use at their everyday job.
   Results could give an intel for leader, employee and new hire training in the accommodation field. Also, they could be helpful for adjusting the expectations towards fresh graduates as new employees. Even could decrease the fluctuation by implementing all these changes above.

3. To discover the opinion of all the stakeholders of the accommodation industry about tourism education, traineeship and the effectiveness of competency-development during the studies.
   Results could decrease the gap between tourism education and the expectations of tourism professionals. Furthermore, could provide information about how to make education more personalized for students. Also could draw the attention to the communication between accommodations and universities about adjusting the traineeships on both sides.

4. To study the correspondence and differences about competencies, attitudes, personality traits and opinion of Hungarian and Spanish stakeholders in tourism.

Results could indicate or reject the existence of stereotypes based on cultural differences. Also can point out the importance of the cultural differences as they are part of our globalized world and everyday life. Therefore, education of cultural differences is important, not only in the tourism industry.

2.1. Hypothesis

Based on the goals of the research, the following hypotheses are lined up:

H1: The Hungarian and Spanish leaders of the accommodation industry both possess high empathy level.

H2: Possessed and actual communication, conflict resolution and empathy level correspond of both Hungarian and Spanish leaders in the accommodation industry.

H3: Hungarian and Spanish front desk employees are observed more extroverted then they believe they are.

H4: The developed skills and competencies during tourism studies are in line with the competencies are applied in the accommodation industry.

H5: Traineeships are considered less effective by the students of tourism than leaders and employees of the accommodation industry.

3. Methods of the research

3.1. Sample

Participants are Hungarian and Spanish leaders and front desk employees of the accommodation industry, students of tourism and international travelers. The total sample contains 487 participants and seven groups are created by their characteristics (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of the sample
(Source: own editing. HU: Hungarian, ES: Spanish)

	Leaders HU	Leaders ES	Employees HU	Employees ES	Students HU	Students ES	Guests
Participants	10	10	82	64	105	71	145
Sex							
Female	7	6	51	39	88	50	98
Male	3	4	31	25	17	21	47
Age	36-50	36-50	27-35	27-35	18-26	18-26	27-35

Groups are created for having 360 degrees overview of the accommodation industry, therefore all questions can be examined from all point of views of all stakeholders, this way results will be punctual. The guest group is also can be considered as control group, as their perspective is more like outsider then the other group's. However, the results of the research cannot be considered as representative for all stakeholders of the industry due to the number of the sample. Characteristics as sex and age are not relevant, as they are more like additional information about the sample, but groups are not created by these. Employees of 3-5 star hotels and hostels are examined, as they have similar job requirements and responsibilities in their roles as leaders and front desk employees. Therefore, Apartments and Campsites are out of the scope of the research.

Leader's groups: participants as volunteers were contacted personally by recommendations and previous researches. Furthermore, leaders of Hungarian and Spanish hotels and hostels were contacted directly through LinkedIn.

Employee groups: participant leaders recruited their volunteer employees. The Hungarian Hotel and Restaurant Association, Conferedación Española de Hoteles y Alojamientos Turísticos and Asociasión Empresarial Hotelera de

Madrid were contacted but no answer was received from any of them. Online methods were helpful in recruiting participants:

- www.booking.com: accommodations were shortlisted in Budapest, Madrid and Barcelona. Search date was Tuesday, as weekends are more busy, therefore not all accommodations are listed due to no vacancy. All searches were filtered by type of accommodation (hotels, hostels) and number of starts (3-5).
- Websites of accommodations: websites of the shortlisted accommodations were searched for collecting contact information. This email list was used for contacting leaders and employees.
- Forum: www.hostelmanagement.com was the platform where leaders and employees of hostels were contacted.
- Facebook: tourism groups were contacted and the questionnaires were shared on these sites (Szállásmarketing, Turizmus online)

Student groups: personal and online methods were used for contacting Hungarian and Spanish students. All universities were contacted in Hungary and Spain where tourism is on the list of the academic program. Institutes who participate in the research: Budapest Gazdasági Egyetem, Nyíregyházi Egyetem, Szent István Egyetem, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

Guest group: everyone who has ever travelled and spent a night at any accommodation is considered as potential participant. Online methods were used, mainly on Facebook groups.

Participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. According to the General Data Protection Regulation all participants were informed about the use of the data collected in the questionnaires.
Collection of answers was slow as the respondent rate was very low. Most leaders did not answer or most of the time they rejected the participation because of lack of time or overload of work.

3.2.Questionnaires

First, personal data was collected in the questionnaires with taking consideration of the anonymity of participants:

- Sex,
- Age,
- Location of living,
- Role at work (in the questionnaires of leaders and students),

- Education (in the questionnaires of leaders, employees and guests),
- Status of current studies ,
- Average income (in the questionnaires of leaders, employees and guests),
- Plans for future employment (in questionnaire of students),
- Frequency of travelling (in questionnaire of guests).

Four types of questionnaires were created for the four types of groups. All questions were adjusted for the type of group. Questionnaires were available in Hungarian, Spanish and English. Translation to English was necessary as international staff can be working in Hungary and in Spain as well and the group of guests is completely international.

Different types of questions were applied: pick an answer out of a list and text questions. 5 points Lickert scale was used to determine the rating of the answer. The text questions were open ended versions or answers were maximized to three. The main focus points of the questions are the followings:

- Skills and competencies of leaders,
- Skills and competencies of employees,
- Personality traits (extroversion-introversion),
- Tourism education,
- Traineeships,
- Development of skills and competencies.

Questionnaires were created by Google Form, than row data was analyzed in Excel. Most questionnaires were filled out online, and some of them on paper. Collection of data was ongoing between March and October 2018.

3.3. ProfilesXT competency test

ProfileXT was designed to measure competencies and other behavioral aspects in the working environment. It contains three major parts: interests, cognitive skills, behavioral characteristics. Interests are those factors that function as motivations at work. If the interests of a person are fulfilled at work, he tends to feel satisfied and work happily at his position. Although, if the work is not able to satisfy these interests, people would feel less motivated because the factors are missing that make them like their job. Cognitive functions predict how people think, their way of processing information and their speed of learning new things. Behavioral characteristics give information about inter- and intrapersonal skills and shows how people apply these competencies in everyday life. The test is available online, answers are being processed

automatically. Before taking the test, respondents receive all information and except the process of data handling according to General Data Protection Regulation. Graphical and textual reports are available at the platform as well, they are sent out by email automatically. Graphical reports contain scales from 1 to 10. Scales are not linear therefore, lower rating does not mean unsatisfactory result and high rating does not corresponds with great result. The values are compared with standardized average ratings on normal distribution. Therefore, values on the scales are considered as variance from average. Average behavior is on ratings from 4 to 7. All respondents have a personal profile which is analyzed by the combinations of scales. Only a certified person is able to analyze the personal profiles. Analyzation of groups is calculated by average scores and deviation of the personal profiles.

ProfilesXT was selected as a method in this research because the results and analyzation give appropriate and solid results of behavior and competencies. The test was applied only in case of the leaders groups. All participants (10 Hungarian and 10 Spanish) filled out the test and received their results and feedback of their profiles.

3.4.Analysis of data

The first A hypothesis was examined by analyzation of the relevant scales of ProfilesXT test. The questionnaires for leaders, employees and students contain a question ("What are the three most important skills what make a leader effective?") that is analyzed as complimentary results with descripted statistics.

The relevant scales of ProfilesXT test and questions of leader and employee questionnaires ("Rate the following competencies by how good are you at them." "Please rate the following competencies by how good your boss is at them") were compared to examine the second hypothesis. The competency list was created based on the tourism literature. Ratings are ranked on a 5 point Lickert scale. Answers were analyzed by calculating the averages of each group. Afterwards, group's averages were compared by 2 sample t test because it is suitable for the comparison of 2 independent normal distribution. The requirements of applicability (correspondent variance, normal distribution, independent samples) were supported by the process of collecting sample and its results.

The third hypothesis was examined by analyzing the questions of all groups questionnaire ("Please rate the following statements by the level of your agreement"). Statements were listed based on the personality types of Jung. 5 point Lickert scale was used and answers were analyzed by calculating the average score of each statement. Afterwards 2 sample t test was applied for the comparison of the average scores of the groups. The test is also suitable for the

comparison of 2 independent normal distribution. The requirements of applicability (correspondent variance, normal distribution, independent samples) were supported by the process of collecting sample and its results. The comparison gives information whether there are any differences between the self-concept and other group's perception about the level of extroversion of front desk employees. To examine the direction of differences (if there is any) one-tailed t test was used.

The fourth hypothesis was examined by analyzing questions of the questionnaire for students ("Please rate the following skills by how good are you at them". What are the competencies or skills that are being developed during your studies?") and the questionnaire for employees (" What are those skills or competencies that you use at your daily job?") The first question of student's rates on a 5 point Lickert scale, results were analyzed by calculating the averages of each skills. The average ranges were compared by descripted statistics. The answers of a free text question were summarized to measure the opinion of students about the developed skills during their studies. These results were compared with the answers of employees most used skills and competencies at their job. The leader questionnaire has a similar question about new joiners' skills ("What are the skills or competencies you are looking for when you are hiring a new front desk employee?") These summarized answers were compared with students' skills and the answers of employees most used skills at their job. Furthermore, all these results were compared with the opinion of guests about the skills of front desk employees should possess ("Please rate how important for you the statements about front desk employees when you are staying at an accommodation?") These statements were descriptions of situations what corresponds with actual skills. As an additional information, questionnaires contain some questions about the skills what should be developed during tourism studies in their opinion ("If you would make the developmental plan for tourism students, which three skills would you put on the list?"). These answers were also summarized.
The skills and competency list in case of the above questions were created by analyzing job posts on the webpages of Profession.hu and AHC Budapest. CV online provided lists of the expected competencies for front desk employment, therefore these were used for creating the questions as well.

The fifth hypothesis was examined by comparing the leader; employee and student questionnaires' similar questions ("Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements"). Statements are about the traineeships that are based on the literature of tourism studies. The answers were analyzed by calculating the average scores of each statement for every group. Results were compared with 2 sample t test.

The data analysis is being summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of data analysis
(Source: own editing)

Hypothesis	Analysis
1.	Analysis of the relevant scales of ProfilesXT test and comparison of relevant questions of leader questionnaire.
2.	Comparison of relevant scales of ProfilesXT and relevant questions of leader's and employee's questionnaires. Calculation of averages of the answers, afterwards comparison the answers of groups with 2 sample t test.
3.	Analysis of relevant answers of the questionnaires of all groups by calculating averages and using 2 sample t test to compare the opinion of the groups. Afterwards there has been an analysis with one-tailed t test to find out the direction of differences.
4.	Analysis of relevant questions of student questionnaires by calculating averages and compares them with descripted statistics.
5.	Analysis of relevant questions of leader's, employee's and student's questionnaires. Calculation of averages and comparison with 2 sample t test.

4. Results

4.1. Analysis of the first hypothesis

H1: The Hungarian and Spanish leaders of the accommodation industry both possess high empathy level.

Empathy skills are analyzed by different scales of the ProfilesXT test. The combination of Hungarian leader's assertiveness (6.4) and Accommodating (5.8) scales show not too dominant communication style. They only express their opinion when the other party's communication style is similar than theirs. If the other party is more dominant, they tend to draw back but this does not mean they agree with the person. It is important for them to listen to others and seek for compromise. Therefore they are able to let it go, but only if the other party does the same. Hungarian leaders' conflict resolution style is called compromising conflict resolution style. Accommodating scale is one of the important ones by analyzing empathy at the test. Higher scores assume higher empathy, however for being empathetic; Assertiveness scale must be on average score. In case of a lower Assertiveness scale, communication is more passive, conflict resolution style is more accommodating or avoidant. Higher values show more dominant style both in communication and conflict resolution. High Accommodating score itself does not mean high empathy, it shows more like thoughtful and mindful behavior. When scores are high, people tend to adjust their behavior to others will, just to measure up to expectations. Spanish leader's Assertiveness (6.1) and Accommodating (3.6) scales show not too dominant communication style, however they tend to fail to listen to others or ask for different point of view or accept other opinion.

Objective Judgement scale is also important in the analyzation of empathy. Lower scores show high level of intuition; however this does not mean high empathy itself, because combination with other scales result different behavior. Hungarian leaders' high Objective Judgement score (7.1) combines with the Assertiveness and Accommodating scales which results rational, logical ways of communication, also tend to pay attention to other's opinion. They seek for balance between logical and emotional attitude, which results thoughtful, consistent and realistic behavior. Spanish leaders have low Objective Judgement scores (4.3). The combination of Accommodating scale results lower empathy level because of dominant, inpatient, emotional attitude, and less diplomatic communication style. Their Human interest score (5.6) results a very emotional, temperamental reaction to unfairness. This does not correspond to empathy, it comes from firm belief.

Independence scale also effects empathy skills. Hungarian leaders score (4.7) with the previous scales result balances control over their employees as they are able to adjust the level of control how the employees need and are comfortable with. This means leaders are conscious and have a sense of what people need in order to be the best themselves at work. Spanish leaders have high score (8.1) which means they are not too sensitive to other people's needs, but they let them be regardless how much control they would need. With a low score on Manageability, it could be hard to follow that they really expect form their employees. Rules are not too clear, as they can change their mind very often as their Objective Judgements applies. These functions underline the low level of empathy.

Attitude scales show the level of confidentiality to others. Hungarian leaders have high score (7.6) which means they trust their employees, however Spanish leaders have low level of trust, as their score is low (4.4). This also means they are not able to move on easily and forgive others for mistakes. Their temper makes it difficult to see the situations or conflicts in an objective way.

In summary, the combinations of scales show high level of empathy of the Hungarian leaders and low level of empathy of the Spanish leaders.

The first hypothesis fulfills partially, as the Hungarian leaders' empathy level is high but the Spanish leader's is low.

4.2. Analysis of the second hypothesis

H2: Possessed and actual communication, conflict resolution and empathy level correspond of both Hungarian and Spanish leaders in the accommodation industry.

To examine the hypothesis, relevant ProfilesXT scales were compared to the questionnaires results in case of the Hungarian and Spanish leaders (Table 3).

Table 3: The comparison of the skills of Hungarian and Spanish leaders
(Source: own editing)

	Hungarian Leaders		Spanish Leaders	
	ProfileXT	**Questionnaire**	**ProfileXT**	**Questionnaire**
Communication	Objective	4.1	Emotional	4.1
Conflict resolution	Compromising	3.9	Dominant	4.2
Empathy	High level	3.9	Low level	4.5
Self-control	Average level	3.8	Low level	4
Optimism	High level	4.3	Low level	4.4
Stress management	Solution focused	3.8	Emotional focused	4.1
Building relationships	Average level	4.3	Average level	4.3
Flexibility	Inflexible	4.1	Flexible	4.6
Problem solving	Systematic	4.4	Fast paced	4.6
Sense of reality	High level	4.5	Low level	4.4
Decision making	Slow paced	4.1	Fast paced	4.2

The first column shows the results of the analysis of the relevant scales of ProfilesXT. The second column contains the average scores of the 5 point Lickert scale of the questionnaire. Leaders rated the skills and competencies on a list according to their belief of the level they possess. Three categories are created based on the rules of rounding; therefore average scores can be measured: low scores (1-2.5), average scores (2.5-3.5), and high scores (3.5-5). This indicates that both Spanish and Hungarian leaders rated their own level of the skills high.

In summary, the self-awareness level of Hungarian leaders is higher if we take a look at the three skills, communication, conflict resolution, and empathy. Furthermore, looking at the other skills and competencies, the Hungarian's self-awareness is punctual in 6 cases and unpunctual in 4 cases. Spaniards self-awareness is punctual in 3 cases and unpunctual in 7 cases (Table 4). This means, Hungarian's self-awareness is 60% punctual, Spanish leader's self-awareness is 30% punctual. Three categories were created in order to determine the level of these percentages: low level (0-33%), average level (33-66%) and high level (66-100%). According to these categories, Hungarian's self-awareness is on average level, Spanish' self-awareness is on low level.

Table 4: Self-awareness of Hungarian and Spanish leaders'
(Source: own editing)

Self-awareness	Leaders HU	Leaders ES
Accurate	Communication, conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, problem solving, sense of reality	Stress management, flexibility, decision making
Inaccurate	Self-control, building relationships, flexibility, decision making	Communication, conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, building relationships, problem solving, sense of reality

Comparing the self-awareness of the Hungarian and Spanish leaders, conclusions are the followings:

- Self-awareness of Hungarian leaders is more precise than their Spanish counterparts in: communication, conflict resolution, optimism, stress management, problem solving, sense of reality.
- Self-awareness of the Spanish leaders is more accurate than their Hungarian counterparts in: flexibility, decision making.
- Self-awareness of both groups is low in: self-control, building relationships.

The answers of the Spanish and Hungarian leaders are not very different, but there are significant differences in case of some competencies regarding the perceived success of the leaders as Table 5 shows below.

Table 5: Differences between the answers of Hungarian and Spanish leaders (Source: own editing)

	Leader HU	Leader ES	p score
Communication	4.1	4.1	1.00
Conflict resolution	3.9	4.2	0.34
Empathy	3.8	4.0	0.55
Self-control	3.9	4.5	0.23
Optimism	4.3	4.4	0.81
Stress management	3.8	4.1	0.43
Building relationships	4.3	4.3	1.00
Flexibility	4.1	4.6	0.10
Problem solving	4.4	4.6	0.53
Sense of reality	4.5	4.4	0.78
Decision making	4.1	4.2	0.75

Analyzing the results of the 2-sample t test, it can be observed that on a 2% probability level, there is a significant difference only regarding Flexibility.

Results regarding self-awareness of Hungarian and Spanish leaders can be summarized as follows:

- Hungarian leaders have better self-awareness regarding the highlighted skills then the Spanish group.
- Hungarian and Spanish groups see their communication skills similarly, but the tests show there is a difference in case of communication style. The communication style of Hungarians can be considered more efficient.
- There is a difference between the Hungarian and Spanish groups regarding the conflict resolution style. Hungarian leaders usually seek compromise as opposed to the dominant style of Spanish leaders.
- The perceived level of empathic skills of Hungarians is similar to their actual empathy level.
- The perceived level of empathic skills of the Spanish group is different from the actual levels. They perceived themselves more empathetic than the level suggested by the test.

- Self-awareness level of Hungarian leaders is average (60% accuracy), while the level for Spanish leaders is low (30% accuracy).

The second hypothesis can be partially accepted, as the perceived skills of Hungarians are the same as the actual values, but Spanish leaders differ in all three cases.

4.3.Analysis of the third hypothesis

H3: Hungarian and Spanish front desk employees are observed more extroverted then they believe they are.

In order to be able to compare the results, questions of each questionnaire were the same for all groups. The questions related to the extraversion personality trait. Participants marked on 5-points Lickert scale how much they consider the characteristic to be true for front desk employees. The questions are based on the personality typology of Jung, worded positively. The employees answered the question in relation to themselves, while the members of the other groups (leaders, students, guests) answered the questions in general in relation to front desk employees.

Average scores were calculated for each question and then used a 2-sample t test to measure the difference of the scores of the groups. Afterwards, one-tailed t test was used to assess the direction of the deviation in case there is any. Then average scores of the groups were compared in order to assess the magnitude of the difference of the opinions (low, medium, high). Comparison was made separately for the Hungarian and Spanish groups as well which made it possible to compare the results of the countries. In both cases, employee samples were compared with the group sample of leaders, students and guests of the two countries. Finally, the average scores of Hungarian and Spanish groups were analyzed to assess if the opinion of the other groups is different from the opinion of front desk employees (Table 6).

Table 6: Comparison of the opinion about the level of extroversion of
employees and other groups
(Source: own editing)

	p score	One-tailed t test
Hungarian employees and other groups	0.012881646	0.006440823
Spanish employees and other groups	0.676189733	0.003749135
Hungarian and Spanish employees and other groups	0.104012638	0.052006319

***The third hypothesis is rejected, because the front desk employees of the
accommodation industry in Hungary and Spain are not considered more
extraverted by others as they perceive themselves.***

Findings regarding the extraversion trait of the Hungarian and Spanish front
desk employees can be summarized as follows:

- Comparing the full employee sample with the other groups, their
  opinion is similar regarding their extraversion; both others and they
  themselves perceive their extraversion level as medium.
- There is a difference between the Hungarian employee groups and
  others; the employees considered the statements more true than the other
  groups.
- Hungarian employees gave higher scores to these statements: "If
  anything (both happy or sad) happened to them, they tell other people",
  "They work better in team settings than alone.", "They like being the
  center of attention."
- Hungarian employees gave lower score to the following statement:
  "They rather initiate than responding."
- Perceived opinion of the Spanish employee group of themselves is the
  same as the other group's.
- Spanish employees consider the following statements relevant for
  themselves: "If anything (both happy and sad) happened to them, they
  tell to other people", "They like if there are many guests around them."
- Spanish employees consider the following statements less relevant for
  themselves: "Receptionists are sociable, and open-minded.", "Their
  reaction speed is fast" "It is easy for them to find a common voice with
  customers."
- When there was a difference of opinion between the employees and the
  other groups, the level of the difference was higher in case of the
  Hungarian group than the Spanish group.

4.4.Analysis of the fourth hypothesis.

H4: The developed skills and competencies during tourism studies are in line with the competencies are applied in the accommodation industry.

First, it was measured with descriptive statistics which skills and competencies the Hungarian and Spanish students think are their good at. This gives us information about which skills need further development in case of the students. Afterwards, relevant parts of the questionnaire were analyzed referring to the experience and opinion of the students about which competencies were developed during their studies. This indicates weather they really focused on the competencies that needed to develop or not. Finally, these results were compared with the skills used by the employees during their work, which results in the answer for the hypothesis. In order to fully round up the hypothesis, it was also analyzed - besides the opinion of the students and the employees - what the other participants of the hotel industry think are the most relevant skills necessary for a front desk employee; what competencies leaders search for in a job interview and what competencies guests require.

The questionnaire also gives information about which competencies make a Front desk employee effective in the opinion of the stakeholders in the hotel industry. This result was compared with how much these are aligned, which competencies need to be improved and what is the expectation of the guests.

Main results of the hypothesis:

- According to students, most of the skills and competencies are their strengths. The lowest scores in the Hungarian group are customer focus and problem solving, in the Spanish group the building relationship skills which is worth developing.
- The improvement of the self-awareness of students is of utmost importance.
- Out of the lowest scored skills of Hungarian and Spanish students, problem solving is the only one where they think they focus on during their study.
- The Hungarian employees use problem solving, communication skills, customer focus, self-control, flexibility and precision most of the time during their day-to-day work. According to the opinion of the students, problem solving, communication and self-control is being developed most during their studies out of these skills.
- According to the results it is worth putting more emphasis during the study on customer focus, flexibility and precision.

- Spanish employees indicated communication skills, flexibility, customer focus, positive attitude and load capacity as the most used competencies, out of which only communication was highlighted by students as a skill improved during their studies.
- Hungarian leaders consider communication, problem solving and reliability as the most important skills. The first two of these were highlighted by employees as well as the most used skills during work and also by students as skills to be developed during their studies.
- Spanish leaders consider communication skills and motivation important. Not so much problem solving which is considered by students as the most developed skill, even though employees did not consider it as most used during work either.
- The guests highlight communication skills and precision as the most important skills for them in an accommodation. Communication is being developed during their studies, employees use it and leaders expect it at job interviews. Precision however was not highlighted by any of the groups as an important skill.
- Hungarian leaders, employees and students all think that communication skills, problem solving and stress management need to be developed at universities.
- Spanish leaders, employees and students all agree that communication and problem solving would be important to develop.

As a summary, it can be seen that communication skills and problem solving are the skills where there is the highest level agreement among all Hungarian groups. These are the skills that are developed at the university; employees use them and are expected by both leaders and guests. However, it can also be seen, that many other skills would be useful to develop based on the opinion and expectation of the leaders, employees and students. These are customer focus, flexibility, precision and stress management.

In the Spanish groups, communication skill is the only one where all the groups are in agreement. For problem solving it can be seen that there is a focus on it during the studies, and all other group would require it, but the employees themselves do not use it as often at their job. Besides these, there are several other competencies expected which are not being developed; these are customer focus and stress management.

In addition, based on the answers of the students, self-awareness is another skill which needs to be developed as soon as possible.

Fourth hypothesis can be partially accepted, because in two cases in the Hungarian sample and in one case in the Spanish samle, the number of used

and expected skills and competencies matches however in both samples, there are several skills not being developed but are being expected.

4.5.Analysis of the fifth hypothesis.

H5: Traineeships are considered less effective by the students of tourism than leaders and employees of the accommodation industry.

To examine the hypothesis, the same questions were raised about the Tourism and Hospitality faculty traineeships to Hungarian and Spanish leaders, employees and students: "Please mark below how much do you agree with the statements." Participants scored the statements on a 5-point Lickert scale: 1 - Completely disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Somewhat agree, 4 - Agree, 5 - Completely agree. Results were summarized by statements and groups and average values were calculated. 2 sided t test was used to compare the averages with a significance level of 5%. First the Hungarian and Spanish sample separately, then both together.

This shows weather the average scores are similar, meaning the opinions of the groups are the same for the given statement. Besides this, it is also important how much the groups agree with the statements. 3 categories were created: 1-2.5 - they disagree with the statement, 2.5-3.5 - they somewhat agree with the statement, 3.5-5 - they agree with the statement (Table 7).

Table 7: The average scores of the opinion about traineeships of Hungarian and Spanish sample
(Source: own editing)

	Leaders HU	Leaders ES	Employees HU	Employees ES	Students HU	Students ES	Average scores of the statements
Students have various opportunities for traineeships during their studies	3.2	2.7	2.8	2.4	3.6	3.4	**3.0**
Traineeships are considered important and are controlled by the universities	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.4	3.2	**2.8**
Traineeships are an advantage to get a job after graduation	3.5	4	3.6	3.3	4.1	4.0	**3.8**
There are enough professional traineeships for students during their studies	2.2	2.6	2.3	2.3	3.1	2.6	**2.5**
There are several traineeships available for students and it is easy to get them	2.5	3	2.5	2.4	3.3	2.7	**2.7**
The success of a job interview can depend on the location of traineeship	3.3	4.1	3.7	4.1	4.1	3.2	**3.8**
Average scores of the teams	**2.9**	**3.2**	**2.9**	**2.8**	**3.6**	**3.2**	

Main statements of the hypothesis:

- Hungarian and Spanish leaders gave medium or negative scores for the availability of courses.
- Hungarian leaders find the number of opportunities very few.
- According to Spanish leaders and Hungarian employees the experience and the place of the traineeship has an impact on finding a job later on.
- Spanish employees especially scored low on the availability and number of opportunities for traineeships.
- Hungarian and Spanish students have higher scores then the other groups.

- They especially agreed that the students have opportunities to practice and it helps them to find work and the job interview is greatly dependent on the kind of traineeship the student participated in during their studies.
- Spanish students highlighted that the experience help them in getting a job.
- Hungarian students have different opinions regarding all of the statements compared to leaders and employees.
- The opinion of Spanish students is the same that of the opinion of leaders and employees in that the number of potential traineeship opportunities are moderately extensive.
- The opinion of Hungarian and Spanish students is different from the leaders and employees in regards to traineeships.
- Students have a more positive opinion about traineeships.

Altogether, it could be observed, that the opinion of students is more positive regarding the traineeships then the groups of leaders and employees, therefore the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 8 shows the summary of the results for all the five hypotheses.

Table 8: Results of the hypotheses
(Source: own editing)

Hypothesis	Result
H1: The Hungarian and Spanish leaders of the accommodation industry both possess high empathy level.	Partially fulfilled
H2: Possessed and actual communication, conflict resolution and empathy level correspond of both Hungarian and Spanish leaders in the accommodation industry.	Partially fulfilled
H3: Hungarian and Spanish front desk employees are observed more extroverted then they believe they are. .	Not fulfilled
H4: The developed skills and competencies during tourism studies are in line with the competencies are applied in the accommodation industry.	Partially fulfilled
H5: Traineeships are considered less effective by the students of tourism than leaders and employees of the accommodation industry.	Not fulfilled

5. Conclusions and suggestions

Results of the research can be useful at various fields and different levels. Based on the outcome, several suggestions can be made for both Hungarian and Spanish leaders about their level of skills and competencies and their developmental areas. Furthermore, consequences of students' and employees' behavior and skills could be useful information for leaders as well. Finally, conclusions about tourism education and traineeships are also valuable asset for them.

Employees and students also can benefit from the results about their skills and studies.

Results for universities also can be useful as the expectation of the tourism professionals are important to know about.

Suggestions for leaders of the accommodation sector:

1. **Developmental areas for Hungarian leaders** are flexibility and making decisions. They have few self-knowledges about self-control, building relationships, flexibility, and decision making.
   Developmental areas for Spanish leaders are conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, self-control. Their self-awareness level is low in case of communication, conflict resolution, empathy, self-control, building relationships, and sense of reality.
   First step is to get self-knowledge about their strengths and developmental areas. Afterwards, these areas can be developed either in group or personal developmental methods. For leaders continuous development and working on their skills is crucial, just as important as developing their employees. **Results of the research can be base of intercultural communication, coaching sessions, or personal developmental trainings.**

2. **Because of the unrealistically high ratings of leaders' own skills it is very important to inform them, that low level of skills can be developed.** To accept that lower level of skills is perfectly fine for leaders is a crucial part of their development. The aim is to achieve to have growth mindset instead of fixed mindset. In other words, creating a leader attitude which means they are able to take on their developmental areas, develop those and their employees at the same time. **This attitude will lead to reforms and will be able to adapt to changes, therefore to sustainable competitiveness.**

3. The opinion about the skills of their bosses of the Spanish employees is not that positive than the leaders rated them about their skills. This result also

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supports **the importance of self-awareness, as leaders are not able to be role models for their employees, which indicates that employees would not follow their leader willingly. This can have a negative impact on the competitiveness of the accommodation.**

4. **Hungarian and Spanish employees** rate their extroversion level average, which is in line with other groups' opinion about the front desk employees' extroversion level. Average score means that **most of the front desk employees find important to work in a friendly and positive environment, which can positively effect competitiveness.** Therefore, leaders can lean on this positive attitude even in times of crisis. Also, leaders should take into consideration that this personality type need a lot of positive feedback and motivation as well.

5. **The expectations of leaders towards fresh graduates are very high.** Guests also have very high expectations towards the accommodations; therefore it is understandable that leaders would need well trained employees to be able to keep the service on high standards. Although, expecting to have all skills developed of a freshly graduated person might not too realistic. Development should start at the universities to have a strong basic skillset, but should be continued at the accommodation sector by personalized plans, coaching or trainings. **Therefore, it is crucial for leaders to be in line with strong developmental focus.**

6. Professional experience is expected by leaders when they hire an employee. **For students to be able to get the experience, accommodations should open more traineeship**. As investing in trainees could be beneficial if they stay as employees after their traineeship.

Suggestions for front desk employees:

1. Leaders' expectation towards fresh graduates and new employees is very high. As front desk employees work together with them, could be important information for employees by **finding suitable work for them and increase the expectations systematically in line with their training.**

2. The extroversion level of front desk employees is average, which means the mostly like to be with other people and seek for interactions. Also means that high volume of interactions can be overwhelming form them if they are not able to relax after a peak season; otherwise they easily can burn out.

Suggestions for students:

For students it is important to be aware of the unrealistically high level of ratings on their skills and competencies. Finding their real strengths and developmental areas are part of the process of growth, which will result higher level of self-awareness. This is important for them in order to **find out whether they have the potential for leadership and to develop the areas to be able to become a leader**.

Suggestions for universities:

1. **Hungarian and Spanish students** believe all skills and competencies are their strengths on the list. This result suggests that **development of students should be started by increasing self-awareness and realistic self-reflection.**

2. Hungarian students think, their personal skills and competencies are not developed during their studies. This is an important feedback for universities, as this mean students find their education more theoretical than practical. Therefore, **the relation between own perception and objective facts regarding competencies should be monitored by a standardized method.**

3. There is a positive feedback for Spanish universities about the development of communication as students believe it is developed during their studies.

4. Hungarian students believe trustworthiness is their strength, but it is not developed at the university. They rated customer focus and problem solving as their lowest skills, therefore development could be focusing on them. Hungarian employees apply communication, problem solving, customer focus, independency, flexibility, preciseness skills at their everyday job. Among these, students think problem solving, communication, independency competencies are developed during their studies. **Developmental focus should be customer focus, flexibility and preciseness.** Hungarian leaders, employees and students think, communication, problem solving and stress management skills should be developed at the university.

5. Spanish students find friendliness their strength and building relationships as their least developed skill, therefore education could be focusing on it. Spanish employees apply communication, flexibility, customer focus and positive attitude at their daily job. Among these, only communication is

being developed during studies. **Spanish leaders, employees and students agree on communication and problem solving should be in focus at development.**

6. Education plays a very important part in the **success of fresh graduates at the labor market.** As professions always change, expectations are changing continuously as well. It is very important for the education system to keep up with these changes and develop all the competencies what professionals expect. Therefore, communication of education system and the accommodation industry is crucial. Recent researches give information about new trends, but this is not enough. The **goal** is to build personal relationships so **professionals of the accommodation industry can communicate with educational system. Based on this finding, further researches could study the requirements of the educational output, also could compare the results with present research's findings.**

7. Professional experience is key for fresh graduates, therefore more traineeships should be provided for students for them to be able to gain experience, therefore communication and building solid relationships with accommodations is important.

6. New academic findings

1. **Data analysis is 360 degrees, therefore results give holistic information about the hypotheses, and this methodology is new in the sector.** All stakeholders participate in the research (leaders, employees, students, guests), therefore results answer the questions of the research from different angles. This allows creating a global development on multiple levels with intercultural aspects. **In order to increase competitiveness, all stakeholders' weak areas should be developed. Methodically, increasing competitiveness can be optimized my using the 360 degree methodology**. Small steps, like examine and develop competitiveness gives long term results globally for example effect the growth of the economy and helps at handling cultural differences. Therefore, one of the conclusions of this research is that results should not being analyzed one by one, it gives information in a global point of view. Results add up to system approach (changes in small parts of a system results the change of the complete system) by giving idea about the concrete developmental areas.

   Based on the results above, developmental areas are the followings:

   Hungarian leaders: self-control, building relationships, flexibility, decision making.
   Spanish leaders: conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, self-control.
   Hungarian employees: customer focus, flexibility, preciseness.
   Spanish employees: flexibility, customer focus, positive attitude.
   Hungarian students: communication, problem solving, stress management.
   Spanish students: communication, problem solving.

2. **To make real knowledge about communication styles and other inter- and intrapersonal skills of leaders will result more effective communication with other cultures. Finding of this research can be a globalized basic knowledge which can help all tourism professionals to understand better multicultural communication.** Results of the dissertation underline the cultural behavioral differences and specifies the behavioral characteristics of Hungarian and Spanish leaders what could make difficult to understand each other. Hungarian leaders are trustworthy and inflexible especially at decision making. Spanish leaders are fast paced and active, their communication style and conflict resolution is emotional, less objective. Other studies indicate that intercultural communication is one of the weaknesses of leaders. Based on the findings of present study, it can be developed.

3. Hungarian and Spanish **employees' extroversion level is average according to their own perception and other stakeholders of the accommodation sector.** The results of present study **do not show cultural differences** in this matter. This can be considered as new academic finding, as results are based on the feedback of all stakeholders.

4. **It is important to create demand for development in case of the Hungarian leaders, as it is key of increasing competitiveness. If leaders are not able to change and develop, they will fail to keep up with the ever-changing global trends, therefore competitiveness is not sustainable in long term.** Hungarian leaders are more successful at components of emotional intelligence, their communication style is objective and their self-awareness is higher in case of communication, conflict resolution and empathy than Spanish leaders, this make them more competitive. However, based on findings of other researches, openness to development is lower in case of the Hungarian leaders and they also believe their competencies level is good enough for being successful which thought is supported by the results. Although, findings of present research discovered their weak areas they need to develop which they are not aware of (self-control, building relationships, flexibility, decision making).

5. **Results give important information for Spanish leaders about the level of their competencies what they are not aware of (communication, conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, building relationships, problem solving, sense of reality) and areas need development (conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, self-control).** Previous studies indicate that Spanish leaders think that interpersonal skills are not important for being successful. Present study contradicts this, as Spanish leaders find many interpersonal skills important (empathy, communication, patience). Results show low self-awareness and many areas they need to develop. Other recent studies discovered that Spanish leaders believe that development is very important to be able to be successful. This attitude will make them competitive on long term.

6. **The research gives new academic result about what are the competencies front desk employees use at their daily job, what are the expectations of guests, how realistic are the expectations of leaders towards fresh graduates and how useful the developed competencies of students are at the actual front desk job.** Results support the findings of previous studies about the gap between the expectations of tourism

professionals and the developed competencies of students. Present research adds up information about competencies what are developed during their studies; employees use them at their job and are important for guests and leaders. These are communication and problem solving in Hungary. According to Hungarian leaders, employees and students, it is important to develop customer focus, flexibility, preciseness, and stress management at universities.

Communication is developed for Spanish students; this is the skill what leaders and guests expect and employees use at their job. According to Spanish leaders, employees and students, customer focus and stress management should be developed at universities.

The research draws the attention to the work on both universities and accommodation professionals need to put in to decrease the gap between the expectations and developed areas. Actual trend and expectations should be considered by creating the educational plans. This could be a strong base for fresh graduates, than leaders can continue the development at the establishments. It is important to underline that putting up high expectations is not enough for being competitive, learning is a lifelong project.

7. **One of the key findings of the research is the importance of self-awareness for leaders and students**. Other studies examined the leadership skills in the accommodation sector, however measuring strengths and weaknesses are not enough to see the complete picture to make developmental plans. This research studies both the actual and the perceived competencies as well. This gives the information about lack of self-awareness in case of leaders (Hungarians: self-control, building relationships, flexibility, decision making. Spaniards: communication, conflict resolution, empathy, optimism, sefl-control, building relationships, sense of reality). False self-concept can be harmful for leaders and students as well. Without having real knowledge about strengths and weaknesses, leaders are not effective and they are not able to develop others either, which results less effective employees, therefore competitiveness will decrease.

Most students aim to be leaders at some point of their career, for this self-awareness is key. Without having a realistic self-concept, they are not able to see if they have any leadership potential and what are the competencies they need to develop to become a leader.

8. Studies implicate that **among the emotional intelligence components, empathy will be the most important factor that effects leader competitiveness by 2030. This research finds that empathy is already**

the most important factor in 2020. This finding is based on the opinion of all stakeholders of the accommodation industry (leaders, employees, students, guests) both in Hungary and Spain. Therefore, it is **important to develop it not only for leaders, but for students and employees as well**.

Further possibilities for research

The research includes various topics; therefore there are thoughts and aspect that are not examined, because it would extend the range of the dissertation. Although, they could inspire further researches:

- Examination of leaders' competencies by creating specific aspects (for example sex, age, accommodation types, etc.).
- Study the requirements of the educational output and compare the results with present research's findings.
- Further examination of student's self-awareness by personality tests or the ProfilesXT test.
- Perceived and real competencies of leaders could be studied in other cultures and countries.
- Looking for possibilities for standardization in the sector, focusing on the competitiveness using the 360 degrees methodology.

7. Summary

The dissertation compares the opinion of the main participants of the accommodation industry within tourism in Hungary and Spain (leaders, front desk agents, tourism students and guests) about leadership and employee competencies. Also compares the competencies what the industry requires to be an employee in the field and what students learn during their studies. Some important competencies were also examined in case of the leaders, employees and students. The dissertation focuses on emotional intelligence, self-awareness, conflict resolution and communication among the leadership competencies. In case of the employees and students, mainly examines the level of personal and interpersonal competencies and skills. In this chapter all results of the research is summarized and compared with other studies of the relevant literature.

The first hypothesis draws conclusion about emotional intelligence of Hungarian and Spanish leaders using a competency test. Afterwards examines closely empathy, one of the components of emotional intelligence.
Many studies in the literature emphasize the importance of hospitality leader´s interpersonal skills, apart from professional skills. Most of them found communication, influencing others, building relationships and teams as key competencies for a successful leader. There are also some researchers who found that leaders believe, professional competencies, like language or IT skills are more important than interpersonal skills to be successful as a leader. However, these results were contradicted in later studies which are closely exam the specific competencies of successful leaders. Studies focusing on communication, the effects of quality and quantity of communication are highlighted. Successful leaders mostly apply assertive communication style and active listening, which has a positive impact on employee satisfaction, efficient change management, and the atmosphere at work. Other studies concentrate on the impacts of conflict resolution styles. Those leaders, who are able to apply different conflict resolution styles flexibly in different situations, are most likely more successful than others. In most situations solution focus is key, which also has a positive impact on previously mentioned aspects. Mentioned researches concentrate on the competencies separately. However, Bar-On´s emotional intelligence model suggests that EQ is a complex competency, and the components are connected to each other. Also, to determine which component the leader is good at, effects the leader´s successfulness. More component is applied or even developed successfully, better the leader will operate.

The first hypothesis of present research states that the empathy level of Hungarian and Spanish leaders are high. The results of the ProfilesXT competency test show that the empathy level of the Hungarian leaders is higher than the Spanish leaders. In case of the Spanish leaders the difference with the Hungarian group significant, because according to the test's scales, Spanish leaders have low empathy level. Therefore, the first hypothesis is partially fulfilled, as only the Hungarian group scored high on the scales what measures empathy (Accommodating, Objective judgement, Independency, Attitude).

Other researches from the emotional intelligence's literature found that leaders with high level of empathy are able to create better atmosphere within their team, which has a positive impact on the team's performance as well. Certainly, the high performance of a team does not only depend on the leader's empathy scale, there are other components of EQ are needed. According to Goleman's emotional intelligence model, a successful leader possesses the following competencies: emotional awareness, emotional (self)-control, adaptability, goal orientation, positive attitude, empathy, organizational awareness, influencing, coaching, conflict resolution, team work, inspiring leadership. Among these competencies, present study's test measures self-control, adaptability, positive attitude, empathy, conflict resolution. Results state that the Hungarian group scored higher in most of the competencies than the Spanish group.

An additional part of the first hypothesis determines that empathy is the most important competency among any leadership competencies what makes a leader successful. Other results in the literature also state that empathy is one of the most important competency in this regard. Maybe not all studies found that it is the first in the ranking, even though, it also impacts other aspects that effect competitiveness, such as atmosphere at work, performance of the team, effectiveness and profit. The results of the dissertation states that all team's opinion is that empathy is an important competency to be an efficient and successful leader. The comparison of the Spanish and Hungarian groups show that the Spaniards rank empathy higher than Hungarians or international guests.

Goleman's theory suggests that the emotional intelligence predicts leader effectiveness, more than intelligence. Although, Agut found that Spanish leaders believe that interpersonal skills are less important to be a successful leader, as they find professional skills, such as language skills and IT skills more useful. Other studies contradicted this finding and highlight the importance of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. Based on these above, the conclusion could be drawn that Spanish people are less successful in leadership because they seem to give less importance of competencies what make them effective in reality. The dissertation's results partially support this

conclusion. Even though, Spanish leaders find interpersonal skills very important in leadership, Hungarians scored higher in most of the emotional intelligence components, then Spaniards. Therefore, they believe it is important but Hungarians seem better at these competencies. This finding also contradicts Agut's results. Even though, Spanish leaders have a strong believe about the importance of the interpersonal skills. Accordinng to the latest research of the Next Tourism Generation, development for the leaders of the accommodation industry is essential. Comparing this finding with the results of present research, conclusion can be drawn that Spanish leaders' skills need some development at the moment, but they find very important to be better at them in the future. Hungarian leaders however found to be less open for development and they believe to possess a skillset to be successful in the industry. Present study confirms that, however stresses the importance of continious development to be able to keep up with the new trends of the industry. In summary, Hungarian leaders are more competitive at the moment, but the attitude of Spaish leaders thowards development will make them more sustainable in competitiveness in long term.

The second hypothesis' main focus is self-awareness of the leaders which is examined in several perspectives: communication, conflict resolution, and empathy.

Communication style has an impact on how leaders build relationships with their team. Aggressive communication style is the less effective in most of the situations, as employees lose trust in their leader, therefore will have difficulties to express their thoughts, needs or ideas. As a result, the moral and team atmosphere becomes less open and their motivational level will decrease as well. Employees would follow the instructions of their boss because they are afraid of the consequences and not because they are motivated to do their jobs. Short term this could seem effective, as many leaders think that their team is good performer as their numbers show they are. However, thinking in longer terms, this only makes employees less motivated and less eager to perform, therefore competitiveness also decreases and fluctuation increases. In the other hand, passive communication style also has a negative impact on the effectiveness. In those teams where leaders do not express their clear expectations, employees will also lose their motivation as they will not be aware if they are doing a good job as they receive less or no feedback on their performance. In most situations, assertive communication style is the most effective. Leaders who are able to learn this competency are able to express direct and clear expectations, able to say no if needed, often give positive or even negative feedback on performance. This will raise the motivation level in teams, therefore the productivity which results higher competitiveness. In the

hospitality industry communication is essential for leaders and employees as well. Most results of researches in communication in the industry found that not only this is one of the most important competency in order to succeed in an establishment, but leaders and employees also believe their communication skills are well developed, based on the believe that they need it the most.

In the research of present dissertation the results of the ProfilesXT competency test are compared with the results of the questionnaire of the leaders. This will give the information about any correspondents with leader's possessed communication skills and their belief of their skill level. Results show that Hungarian and Spanish leaders both would prefer to be assertive communicators. In regard of the emotional aspect of communication, Hungarian leaders are more pragmatic, while Spanish leaders tend to be more emotional driven in general, according to test results. The effectiveness of emotional communication style depends on different situations, but in working environments those leaders seem to be better team builders who's communication style show less affections because it is easier to understand their messages. Also, Spanish leaders show lower empathy and self-control level, which also has an impact on their communication style. It seems that Hungarians' pragmatic style is more effective in most situations. Hungarian and Spanish leaders also indicated high ratings on their communication style in the questionnaire. Spanish leaders evaluated their skills higher, but their communication style is effective in less occasions, therefore Hungarian leaders's self-awareness is more punctual. According to Hungarian and Spanish Front desk agents, communication is the most important competency what a leader needs to possess, this means they also find it very important how their leader communicates with them.

The second part of the hypothesis examines the self-awareness regarding the conflict resolution style with the same comparison method as the first part.
The conflict resolution style has an impact in multiple levels. The leader's chosen style effects the stress and motivational level of the employees, and determines the quality of their relationships and communication. Those leaders who's conflict resolution style is dominant, they tend to give less opportunity to cooperate, therefore they will more often win. They are less open to discuss ideas and find solutions together, also they make decisions on their own. This results higher level of stress among employees, also will be less loyal to their boss. Those leaders, who prefer solution focused decisions and are able to cooperate with their team members, are more effective, as the employee stress level is much lower, therefore both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation level is high, they are able to perform better. In the hospitality industry it is challenging to be flexible in applying different conflict resolution styles with their

employees or guests as both needs different style. Sometimes even though they are solution focused, they also need to be accommodating as they say, "guests are always right". However, with their employees the best they can do is to be cooperative and solution focused as well.

According to the results of the ProfilesXT test, Hungarian leaders mostly choose solution focused conflict resolution style, and Spanish leaders rather apply dominant style which results that Hungarians are more successful in conflict resolution than Spaniards. However, the self-awareness in this aspect is also important, as they need to be aware of the impacts of the style they use. The Hungarian group's self-awareness is more punctual, than the Spanish group's. The results of the questionnaire show that both groups ranked high on the conflict resolution style, Spanish leaders even higher than Hungarians. Hungarian leaders' style is more effective and they are also aware of this. In the other hand, Spanish leader' style is nonadoptive in many situations, but they think they are highly skilled, therefore their self-awareness show lower level.

Looking back to the first hypothesis's results of empathy, there is an answer to that question in the third part of the second hypothesis, whether the leader's self-awareness was punctual. The questionnaire's result show that the rates are also high in both groups for the empathy competency, which correspondents with the Hungarian high level of empathy in the test and conflicts with the Spanish leader's low level. Hungarian leader's self-awareness is punctual in this case as well.

In addition, self-awareness has high importance for leaders, because they need to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses in order to make an impact on competiveness. According to the results of this research, Hungarians have higher level in most of the aspects of self-awareness, which implicates that they are more aware of the way they impact others like communication style, conflict resolution, or others. In case of the Spanish leaders, even though they believe empathy and communication are very important competencies, they are not aware of their weaknesses of lack of skills.

The third hypothesis studies the extraversion personality trait of the Front desk agents. Examines, that whether the Front desk agents are more social and open-minded, as their role suggests they should be. The hypothesis states that the leaders, students of hospitality and also the guests find Front desk agents more extroverted than they find themselves.

According to the "Big Five" personality model, extroversion and introversion is one of the most important dimensions what describes our personality.

Extroverts prefer greater social life, they open to others easier and more talkative. Also can be more dominant. In the other hand, introverts tend to be the opposite, as they feel more comfortable with fewer people, prefer less but deeper relationships, open slower to others, and take more energy for them to socialize. Based on studies on personality and job preference, the level of extroversion has an effect on what kind of jobs we choose. People with high level of extroversion tend to choose jobs where they can interact with people. These types of employees tend to perceive the atmosphere more positive and are able to make it better as well. Also, they are more satisfied with their job and would be more goal oriented. To motivate them, it is important to give enough feedback and reward their performance.

The results of the dissertation show that the Front Desk agents and the other groups perception of the extroversion level is very similar. They all see them (and themselves) moderately extroverted. Leaders, students and guests also find Front desk agents moderately extroverted. Analyzing separately the two groups, Hungarian employees feel more extroverted than other groups find them so. This difference is not applicable in case of the Spanish employees, because all groups' opinion is at the moderate level. In the reality it means, that the extroversion level of employees is not higher than the stereotypes would suggest. According to studies, extroverts choose occupation where they find themselves with a lot of people around and high demand of connections, because they prefer this type of working style. For the leaders in hospitality it is an important information about extroverts, that they like to be in good atmosphere and tend to make effort to have it at work. They also communicate more to others. This means, if employees are friendly and open-minded because it comes by their personality and not because they learnt it, this effects positively other colleagues and guests will feel the more naturally friendly atmosphere. In other words, extroverts' personality effects the atmosphere positively, which makes them and the team perform better, this way the competitiveness also increases. It is also important to understand that in a team, where all employees are extroverts, the atmosphere will be most certainly very good, but this can be overwhelming for others, like introverts. Also, extroverts tend to use their time to socialize, more than introverts, which can have an impact on their productivity as well. As a conclusion, ideally a team should contain both extroverted and introverted employees as well.

The forth hypothesis examines the students' competencies while they study at tourism courses and expectations of the tourism professionals of competencies of fresh graduates and employees. The hypothesis states that the competencies what are being developed during the tourism studies are very close to what employees use on the daily basis.

There are several studies from few years ago about the difference between expectations of the hospitality professionals and the capability of fresh graduates. They found that fresh graduates underperform when they start their carrier in the field. There is no fit between the requirements and the competencies what students learn during their studies. The reason behind this, that professionals find fresh graduates under skilled, even though, in some cases even the opposite happens, that they are over educated for certain jobs. Also, sometimes the expectations of the field are too high, as they expect the fresh graduates to be as ready and skilled than their employees. Hungarian and Spanish studies have similar results in the topic.

Despite these results, the hypothesis of the dissertation states that the expectations of the professionals in the field correspond with the competencies the students learn during their education. The reason why this hypothesis was stated, that after these studies, competency based education was introduced in many of the European countries, therefore education started to focus on developing competencies and attitude of students next to teaching professional knowledge. For this reason it would have been possible that the discrepancy between the field and education has decreased.

At first, the competency level of students were measured by a questionnaire. According to the results, all Hungarian and Spanish students believe, all of their competencies are on a quite high level. This finding correspondents to other studies results of Y and Z generation, which also found that they rate their competencies and skills high and their self-esteem is also on a high level. These studies also found, that their level of competencies and skills in reality are on lower level, that they rate their own, which indicates that their self-awareness is not too high. This also results, that by the time they enter the labor market, they can get disappointed and loose interest, as they are not able to fulfill the expectations of the field, but they believe they are on the required level. This is the reason why it is very important to harmonize their studies, their self-awareness and the expectations of the professionals in hospitality. If these three aspects are very different, the above mentioned discrepancy will not decrease.

According to the Hungarian students' opinion, the development focus in their studies is on professional knowledge and very low importance on the competencies. In the few cases of development, the courses concentrate on independency, communication and problem solving.

Spanish students say that the development of communication has very high focus during their studies. Also, it pays attention on problem solving and team work.

Both Hungarian and Spanish employees believe that the most important competency they use the most during their work is communication and guest oriented attitude.

Communication and problem solving competencies are ranked high by hospitality leaders as expected competencies for employees.

Guest's expectations are very high, most competencies were ranked as very high importance, especially clear and fair communication.

Communication and problem solving are the only competencies that ranked very high in all groups and questions. Meaning by they are developed during hospitality studies, employees use them on daily basis, furthermore leaders and guests both expect an employee to possess them. According to the opinion of leaders, employees and students, competencies like guest oriented attitude, flexibility, preciseness and stress tolerance.

In case of the Spanish participants, communication is the only competency what all groups agree about, as it is developed during studies, employees apply them and it is expected to possess but leaders and guests. In case of problem solving, it seems that it is developed during studies and three groups think it is important. However, employees do not use it on daily basis, leaders don't expect it to possess, but guests very much so. Therefore it seems to have disagreement about this competency's importance. Furthermore, guest oriented attitude and stress tolerance are one of the main competencies employees use and leaders expect to have, but they are not in the focus of the development in education of hospitality.

By the results of CHEERS study, it can be seen that the expectation of professionals about fresh graduates' competencies are higher than their competency level in the reality. This correspondents to the results of present study, as leaders – also guests - have high expectations in case of most competencies. Expectations are not only high, but also vary, as they marked many competencies as important to possess. Other studies focusing on the expectations of corporate environment emphasize the development of the most important competencies, which are preciseness, independency, capability of working hard, teamwork. Among these, teamwork and independency also mentioned by leaders as important competencies for employees to possess, but they believe communication and problem solving are more important, what not many other studies highlight. This also could mean, that expectations change by the time, therefore employees also have to be very conscious about the changes as well. In order to be competitive, it is key that all participants of hospitality to be proactive and active. From the educational point of view, it is important to make sure, they keep the educational goals and plans updated, as well as the developmental of competencies. Leaders in hospitality can actively react to changes by recognizing that development does not end when someone

graduates and make an effort to further develop their new employees. Of course, being open minded as a student and employee is essential.

The forth hypothesis partially fulfills the assumptions, as there are two competencies what corresponds with expectations and development in case of Hungarian sample, and one competency in case of the Spanish sample. However, more competencies are not being developed what should be important to do so in case of both nations.

The fifth hypothesis examines the traineeships of hospitality students by comparing all the opinion of all the participants. It states that students find the traineeships less useful than leaders or employees. The hypothesis' based on the literature and practice, as having relevant experience at a job interview make candidates more competitive and get jobs faster than others without any experience. In addition, a traineeship give opportunity to leaders to train fresh graduates in the way that could be employed by them in the future because they already have relevant knowledge and experience.

The research of present study compares the opinion of leaders, employees with students' point of views. In summary, students have better opinion about the traineeships than leaders or employees. Hungarian and Spanish leaders have quite low opinion about the traineeships. According to the Hungarian leaders, there are very few options available for students to complete the traineeship. Spanish leaders agree that professional experience makes candidates more competitive than others. The opinion of Hungarian and Spanish employees is even lower than the leaders'. Both groups believe, the available opportunities are very few, however, both Hungarian and Spanish students think they have enough options to complete the traineeship. Interesting how opposite the opinion of leaders and employees are compared to students. Therefore, the hypothesis does not fulfills the assumption. This finding also can be explained with the high expectations of leaders and employees with fresh graduates about competencies and professional knowledge, however, students do not feel this way. For students to be able to complete a traineeship, accommodations could open more traineeship programs as well as universities could look for more options. In order to achieve this, communication should be working both ways, this would make demand and supply meet.

Cultural comparison is an important aspect in the research. There are some fundamental differences between Hungarian and Spanish culture, however, some similarities can be found as well. According to the cultural comparison of Hofstede, there are four dimensions where the two cultures differs and 2 dimensions of where they correspond. The results of this study from 2010

show, that power distance in Hungary is lower, than in Spain. Hungarian culture is more individualist, Spanish culture is more collectivist. Hungary tends to be more masculine, while Spain is more feminine. Hungarians think more long term, while Spaniards rather think short term. Both countries' uncertainty avoidance index is low and tend to be restraint.

Other studies compare leaders in different cultures. Some of them state the characteristics of the Hungarian leader are: precise, punctual, ambitious, risk taker, self-reflective, team builder, sympathetic, good at time management, IQ level is high, motivator, firm. The characteristics of Spanish leaders are: innovative, team builder, open minded, honest, have high level of digital competency.

The results of current study show that Hungarian leaders are assertive communicators, able to compromise, inflexible, precise, punctual, accommodating, realists, empathetic, slow decision makers. Spanish leaders are dominant communicators and handle conflict in a dominant was as well, not too empathetic, emotional driven, open minded and fast decision makers. Result suggest that there are many differences between Hungarian and Spanish leaders' characteristics. All in all, Hungarian leaders seem to be very punctual and objective, Spanish leaders more like easygoing, opened and firm, just like national stereotypes suggest.

Considering the extroversion in perspective of stereotypes, results contradict them, as Front desk agents are not that extroverted and others don't see them that either. According to stereotypes, an average Spanish person is extroverted and open-minded, however results show that others find them moderately extroverted. Stereotypes don't really find Hungarians particularly extroverted, even though, Front desk agents' extroversion level was found very close to the Spanish agents. This result could be explained by the reason that others observe them in their job and this does not include high level of extroversion.

The stereotypes are also can be examined in case of students self-reflection about their strengths. Hungarian students rated trustworthiness as their best competency, Spanish students found friendliness as their best competency. This correspondents with national character or stereotypes as well. Even other nations find Hungarians trustworthy and Spaniards friendly, according to other studies.

5. Publications

MTMT közlemény és idéző összefoglaló táblázat				
Somlai Réka adatai (2021.01.30)				
Közlemény típusok	**Száma**		**Hivatkozások [1]**	
Tudományos közlemények	Összes	Részletezve	Független	Összes
I. Tudományos folyóiratcikk	3	---	---	---
külföldi kiadású szakfolyóiratban idegen nyelven	---	0	0	0
külföldi kiadású szakfolyóiratban magyar nyelven	---	0	0	0
hazai kiadású szakfolyóiratban idegen nyelven	---	1	0	0
hazai kiadású szakfolyóiratban magyar nyelven	---	2	0	0
II. Könyvek	0	---	---	---
a) Könyv, szerzőként	0	---	---	---
idegen nyelvű	---	0	0	0
magyar nyelvű	---	0	0	0
b) Könyv, szerkesztőként [2]	0	---	---	---
idegen nyelvű	---	0	---	---
magyar nyelvű	---	0	---	---
III. Könyvrészlet	1	---	---	---
idegen nyelvű	---	0	0	0
magyar nyelvű	---	1	0	0
IV. Konferenciaközlemény folyóiratban va konferenciakötetben	4	---	---	---
idegen nyelvű	---	2	0	0
magyar nyelvű	---	2	0	0
Közlemények összesen (I.-IV.)	8	---	0	0
Absztrakt [3]	1	---	0	0
Kutatási adat	0		0	0
További tudományos művek [4]	1	---	0	0
Összes tudományos közlemény	10	---	0	0

Hirsch index [5]		---	---	---
Oktatási művek	0	---	---	---
Felsőoktatási művek	0	---	---	---
Felsőoktatási tankönyv idegen nyelvű	---	0	0	0
Felsőoktatási tankönyv magyar nyelvű	---	0	0	0
Felsőoktatási tankönyv része idegen nyelven	---	0	0	0
Felsőoktatási tankönyv része magyar nyelven	---	0	0	0
Oktatási anyag	0	---	0	0
Oltalmi formák	0	---	0	0
Alkotás	0	---	0	0
Ismeretterjesztő művek	0	---	---	---
Folyóiratcikk		0	0	0
Könyvek	---	0	0	0
További ismeretterjesztő művek	---	0	0	0
Közérdekű vagy nem besorolt művek [6]	0	---	0	0
További közlemények [7]	1		0	0
Egyéb szerzőség [8]	0	---	0	0
Idézők szerkesztett művekre	---	---	0	0
Idézők disszertációban, egyéb típusban	---	---	0	0
Összes közlemény és összes idézőik	11	---	0	0