THE VALUES EMBODIED IN SACRAL BUILDINGS

Pavol Budaj*, Ľudmila Lysá, Milan Droppa and Peter Madzík

Catholic University in Ružomberok, Department of Management, Nábrežie Jána Pavla II. č. 15, 058 01 Poprad, Slovakia

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Abstract

Success of a region is mostly perceived and measured by its economic or socialeconomic development. At the same time, this economic view is understood as determining in setting of strategic objectives and formulating perspectives of a region. In this article there are outlined bases for a more complex and systematic multidimensional approach to the issue of strategic marketing management in the Spiš region also in the context of current social and economic development of Europe and its surroundings. A system element of strategic management of a region must also be the ethic dimension, culture, history and preferred values or other qualitative factors of people. Only such an approach, which will take into consideration a wide spectrum of relevant system elements, can create a 'made-to-measure' control system for a monitored region. Proven Christian values, embodied also in sacral buildings in towns and villages of the region, may be a significant factor of development of tourism in one of the oldest historical regions of Slovakia. The objective of the article is to develop a research model for preparation and usage of sacral cultural monuments in tourism and an educational activity in the Spiš region and justification of this potential for perspective development of the region. The study also offers a review of the main results of sociological research aimed at perception of cultural and spiritual values in the surveyed region.

Keywords: tourism, human resources, sacral objects

1. Introduction

At these times and perhaps more than ever, it is necessary to look for dimensions of development of the society and formulate strategies for smaller organizational units, such as regions and villages. Perspectives of development of these units must stand on solid pillars. One of the determining pillars are the traditional values. For the personal life of a person, it is very important today to think about the way in which we want to know, achieve and live our own ideals and values, how they can become our true authentic equipment, that they can truly transform and make our lives in accordance with the voice of conscience on the natural plane in accordance with the Gospel love of our spiritual life.

Searching for a successful strategy and potential of development of a region is closely related to preservation of own identity in the dynamically changing and more open and connected world. Progress in conditions of the

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^{*}E-mail: pavol.budaj@ku.sk

existing globalization will not probably be possible without self-determination, especially in the spiritual and cultural area. In today's world, there are formed efforts to dominate by the globalization culture at the expense of the traditional proven indigenous culture, which often bring consequences in form of cultural failures and deformation of the value system. A control system is successful when it is 'made-to-measure' for an organizational unit. This is valid for enterprises or other organizational units including regions, even for efforts to ensure their sustainable development. The motto 'think globally, act locally' reflected to conditions of a region that wants to be successful means that a region must search for own competitive advantage, marketing difference on which it can build its future and performance. Competitive advantages can dynamically change over time. What stays, however, are the offered proven values and originality in terms of added value for a region, for its inhabitants living in family communities, for customers and other stakeholders. Spiš region. located in the area of the High Tatras, has unique natural conditions – there are four national parks, caves and karst formations located in its territory. Spiš region has a rich cultural and spiritual heritage, evidenced by a large number of historically unique sacral buildings and rare works of art, Cyrilo-Methodian traditions and traditions of Virgin Mary. Despite of these unique features, this region (materially) belongs to poorer regions of Slovakia and the poorest and the least productive in the whole central European geographical area. It is evidenced by e.g. the high rate of unemployment, which has been above the national Slovak average for a long time, or the volume of GDP, which moves only at the level of approximately one quarter of the volume of GDP per 1 inhabitant of the Bratislava region.

2. Marketing management of the region and values of the region

The human civilization has been connected with the term value in its whole history. Values can be understood in the philosophical, economic as well as marketing meaning. A man, as a thinking creature, is a crucial and irreplaceable element in the development of values, prioritizing of values, creating of a value system and building of value traditions. Nowadays, we are encouraged to think about values themselves. It is our common task today, in the age of 'collapse' of values, to simply define values and stand behind them by our own personal testimony. Today, it is our service for life to give answers to questions as: What are values in our lives? Is it possible to talk about the hierarchy of values? If so, based on what criteria is it possible to make such a distinction? [1] Mankind has had many offers and models to follow during its long history. In our geographical area, there has been offered for more than a thousand years the ideology promoting a certain way of living, based on the Ten Commandments. "To return to own roots means true and genuine humanism for the Slovak nation, respect for a man and his deepest values." [2]

Values, rules, norms as a necessary prerequisite of managerial doing of 'the right things in the right way' require, among others, understanding and respecting of natural laws and adoption of mental principles. Regarding natural laws, it is especially the highest natural and spiritual law – the law of unconditional love... [3] In our lives, some things are already so obvious, that we do not even significantly perceive them and we begin to notice them only when their lack occurs. The result is that we have to take care of the values and traditions which were built during centuries by our ancestors and develop them [4]. Lack of professionalism and lack of morale deny the conception of sustainable development in every region in a specific way. These elementary reflections about values became the foundation for the project focused on searching for bases and potential of development and increasing of performance of the Spiš region.

3. Performance factors of a region

The call for development of regional policy is typical for contemporary Europe, while this call is particularly a challenge to use own potential of villages, their inhabitants, what is inextricably connected with the request to improve this potential [5]. Performance and development of regions is considered in many scientific and professional studies by various approaches:

- through significant socio-economic factors, regional resistance, innovative intensity [6];
- through competitiveness [7];
- economic performance and research activity, etc.

In contrast to these rather 'hard' localization factors, other authors [8] emphasize also 'soft' localization factors such as quality of the environment, quality of life, image of a region, etc., or they emphasize the factor of ecological or environmental stability [6, p. 26, 124; 9], culture.

At the Department of Management in Poprad of Catholic University in Ružomberok, there is a conducted research, focused on factors of culture, traditions and values as factors of performance of the Spiš region and factors of development of tourism in this region. Culture is a cross-sectional element, influencing all tools of marketing mix of the region. "It represents shared traditions, values, interests, beliefs as 'binder', creating an implicit orientation for the social, economic and cultural mission of a region or a village and its understanding by people. Their religion offers the view on prevailing ethics and morale; it is a determinant of 'civilization' life style." [4, p. 15] Culture has always been a significant factor of performance and development of a region, a factor, which, however, must be understood. The cultural potential of regions may be a factor of development of tourism, cultural tourism, a source of working opportunities for inhabitants of a region and a 'fountain' of their cultural and spiritual needs through historical, cultural and spiritual objects. Tourism may be a significant source of incomes of a region and its villages [10] and it belongs to sectors with high added values and high share of human labour [11]. In the

context of historical and spiritual potential of the Spiš region, the factor of sacral buildings (except for several Jewish synagogues, there are mostly Christian sacral buildings) thus appears to be a significant potential for tourism, especially for tourism with religious themes. L. Hanus, the philosopher, reinforced this link by defining the relation of Christianity to culture: "The truth is proven again and again: culture is a natural human activity, it leads to natural improvement of an individual and the society. But also in its own field it can succeed only when it relies on the supernatural religious basis and when it advances towards the objective, which steps over the natural circle, towards sanctity, towards salvation. Only supernatural faith will assure a strong post of culture. Culture does not reach its top when it is limited against religion, but when it is engaged with it in order to serve its higher objective." [12] The important prerequisite for the use of cultural potential of a region is formation of suitable products of tourism. Encouragement of tourism development is also possible through religious tourism. Another option is organisation of concerts, events of folk culture together with an offer of traditional products of folk, artistic production and gastronomic regional specialties.

4. Marketing management of a region and its tools

Marketing management is a part of a systematic approach to management of any organizational unit. "One of the key sins of actual managerial paradigm of thinking and acting is long-term prolongation of thinking in the sense of premise: management equals to enterprise management. The consequence of prolongation of this never valid premise generated the idea, that e.g. organizations of the non-profit sector do not need any management and only the above standard intellect of executives and their practical experience are sufficient for regulation of outputs and development of their mission." [13]

A region, as a significant organizational unit, thus has to, within its marketing management, search for own marketing entities, which will point to its uniqueness and opportunity of their use within 'marketing of differences'. P. Kotler includes, in addition to products and services, also events, experience, people and places, among basic marketing entities, thus entities closely related to marketing of regions. Therefore, the role of regional marketing is to know everything what can a region or a village offer as 'own product', to know opportunities and barriers of development of a region, its strengths and weaknesses. "Success of regional marketing depends on the quality of this knowledge, on continuous monitoring and evaluation of the state of region and its environment." [14] Marketing is the most successful when it is 'made-tomeasure' for a specific region, in a specific time and when the whole society works on reaching the objectives. Marketing in conditions of a region can be beneficial only when there are clearly set strategic objectives within development. This development is based on a mission of region, its villages, and when the set objectives are 'worth effort and following'. Another assumption is that objectives are orientated on external and internal customers (including state and self-government organs) and they are reflected into planned, economically effective steps with stated priorities. Within the project stated in the Chapter 2, marketing objectives are oriented on huge potential of the Spiš region – tourism. "Marketing in tourism reports specific features. These include the risk of very short exposition of services, when there is less time to make a good or bad impression on a customer. When purchasing services in tourism, the impact of psyche and emotions have a more significant impact... Therefore, there must be a greater emphasis put on standard and image within marketing in tourism." [15]

The Slovak republic's entry to the European Union creates, within regional policy for regions in Slovakia, a large space for promoting the values of regions, for rational use of potential of towns and villages and their inhabitants. However, it also raises the request for improving of quality of this potential. Great potential, a perspective of development, on which it is possible to build marketing difference of the region and villages within the Spiš region, is its history, Christian values and traditions, which can be rationally interconnected within tourism with the religious theme. In the worldwide perspective, it is one of the most widespread types of tourism, which takes place outside of commercial facilities. Pilgrimages, religious tourism have their specifics connected with religious motives. Meaning of pilgrimages was emphasized also by Saint John Paul II, when during the visit to Slovakia in 1990 in Bratislava, has said: "How not to mention a great importance, which pilgrimages have had just in the recent years? Their echo crossed the border." The basic assumption of religious tourism is the existence of cultural, religious, material and immaterial heritage.

As a part of the holistic approach in the marketing activity of a region there must be a marketing situational analysis, marketing objectives and marketing action programs focused on the tools of marketing mix, minimally within the range of '5P', thus including the factor 'people'. People, understood not only as managers (especially in a self-administration and tourism businesses) but also citizens, are perhaps the most important tool (and in the Spiš region probably the weakest) of marketing instruments. The further analysed factor is marketing communication. Dynamic development of information and communication technologies offers various opportunities.

5. Characteristics of the studied region

The brief description of the studied region defined for the purposes of research is presented in Table 1.

The studied region consists of 6 districts of the Prešov and Košice regions and its borders are approximately consistent with borders of the historical Spiš county. The defined region represents 8.2% of the area of the Slovak republic and by the number of inhabitants 7.3% of the Slovak republic. 10.0% of towns of the Slovak republic and 6.9% of rural villages are located in the region's territory.

Table 1.	Brief	description	of the	studied St	piš region.

District	Number of towns	Number of villages	Region surface (km²)	Number of residents (31.12.2015)	Residential density (resid./km²)
Poprad	3	26	1 105.4	104 468	95
Levoča	2	31	421.0	33 396	79
Kežmarok	3	38	630.0	73 110	116
Stará Ľubovňa	2	42	707.9	53 471	76
Spišská Nová Ves	3	33	587.4	99 166	169
Gelnica	1	19	584.4	31 627	54
Total	14	189	4 036.1	395 238	98

A significant share of the inhabitants of the region is formed by people unprepared to react to challenges of our time, with life style often irreconcilable with principles of the Christian or civil society of the 21st century. Four districts of the Spiš region belong to the Prešov self-administration region, which reports the highest rate of unemployment (15.26% at the beginning of the year 2016) of all regions in the Slovak republic. From the studied districts, especially the Kežmarok district has a share on this negative result of the region, where the unemployment rate is higher than 20% on the long scale. Two districts of the Spiš region belong to the Košice self-administration region, which is on the third place with its rate of unemployment (14.18% at the beginning of the year 2016). Especially the district Gelnica has a share on this high unemployment, where the unemployment rate is almost 20% on the long scale. A significant share (approximately 15%) of the inhabitants of the region is represented by the Roma ethnicity, which raises many associations for the majority population and potential visitors, but also incontestable facts (according to the Statistical Office of the Slovak republic, 2011). E.g. almost 40% of inhabitants of the region achieved only "elementary" education or "high school education without school leaving examination", while "the level of achieved education reflects the socioeconomic capacity of people older than 25 years" [6, p. 150]. Numerous scientific studies prove these connections. The above stated social and economic data are neither aimed to provide a simplistic view nor a negative reference to the Roma ethnicity, because 'they are the Romani' but because of their preferred values and life, knowledge and skill potential in connection to the development of tourism in the region.

"The condition of practical research of the issue of religious tourism and elements of the primary offer of the target place in tourism is the synthesis of theoretical bases of various scientific disciplines." [16] There certainly must be included also various sociologic views. The empiric research conducted in the years 2006 and 2011 was focused on auto declaration of faith of the youth in the Spiš diocese (Spiš region being its substantial part). The results of research are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Auto-declaration of faith of the youth in Spiš diocese (% from total number of
629 respondents) [17].

Religious faith	Year 2006	Year 2011
Deeply faithful	7.5	9.6
Church-going	59.9	55.5
Not decided but with relation to religious tradition	14.0	15.4
Indifferent	8.1	6.5
Faithless	10.3	12.9
No respond to question	0.2	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0

The obtained results are definitely the assets in favour of the change aimed at a more effective use of sacral buildings in tourism. In comparison to the research results of this factor, e.g. in the Czech Republic (ČSÚ, SLBD 2011), it is the significant asset, because in the Czech Republic 44.7% of the total number of 10,436,560 inhabitants declared that they are non-believers and 6.8% declared to be believers not identifying themselves with any Church.

The existing research has found that in the 6 monitored districts there are almost 300 churches and hundreds of small sacral buildings (chapels, crosses, etc.). This quantity creates a great potential for the development of the region through specifically oriented tourism.

6. Focus of the research project and anticipated benefits

The project is focused on scientific comparison of differences and similarities of current understanding of sacral buildings and their use from the perspective of Sociology, History and Theology research, on searching the importance and attractiveness of sacral buildings for compatibility with and development of tourism. The objective of the project is to develop and verify the integrated approach to use of sacral buildings as a natural part of historical heritage of Slovakia and increase of performance of the Spiš region through more dynamic development of tourism with the accent on 'religious' tourism. The benefit of this increase of performance will be reflected in strengthening of the identity of the region and its villages with an expected positive impact on increase of incomes and creation of new work opportunities, but also on increasing of beauty and revitalization of villages in the region and their cultural and historical heritage. This 'global' benefit will be enhanced by benefits resulting from fulfilment of three partial objectives of the project:

- a system outline of personal development of people in the region so that they become a dynamic element of development of tourism with authentic living of their lives according to the 'Ten Commandments';
- system completion of valuable information about large and small sacral buildings in all villages and all six Spiš districts, identification of their

accessibility and other marketing factors and thus also creation of the assumption for entrance of sacral buildings into the policy of tourism;

specification of key tools of marketing communication mix and formation
of a unified model of communication with the use of modern information
technologies within tourism in the region.

The main scientific benefit is closely linked to these practical benefits: identification of differences and uniqueness of tools of marketing instruments in marketing management of the region, focused on religious tourism or tourism with the use of sacral buildings.

7. Research model proposal

Resulting from basic theoretical scope concerning the topic, marketing situational analysis, project goals and assumptions to meet the goals and to achieve predicted benefits (see previous chapters) we propose to divide the research model for preparation and utilization of sacral cultural monuments for tourism and education in Spiš region into three phases: preparation phase, executing phase and phase of proposals and practical measures.

Individual steps and outputs of each phase are proposed in Figures 1-3.

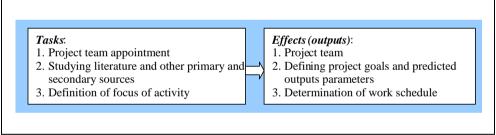


Figure 1. Tasks and planned outputs of preparation phase.

7.1. Results of executive phase of project solving

In the previous part there is a review of the main tasks and expected outputs of individual project activities. In this section there are the results of the research which was done in the surveyed region. The research was aimed at reviewing of human knowledge (task 6 in Figure 2) and reviewing of preferred values of people (task 7 in Figure 2). The total number of the research respondents was 403, with 40.6% men and 59.4% women. Age representation was recorded by four age intervals: from 19 to 25, from 26 to 40, from 41 to 55 and over 55 years. From the point of view of outputs utilization also another important identification attribute was used — Type of respondents (student, working here, tourist, passing this way). Apart from these identification attributes the research contained a few targeted questions — variables:

- knowing of sacred buildings in the region (measured in %),
- perceived importance of surrounding nature (measured in a scale 1-10).

- perceived importance of historical centre (measured in a scale 1-10),
- perceived importance of museum (measured in a scale 1-10),
- perceived importance of sacred buildings (measured in a scale 1-10),
- perceived importance of shopping centres (measured in a scale 1-10),
- perceived importance of aqua-park (measured in a scale 1-10),

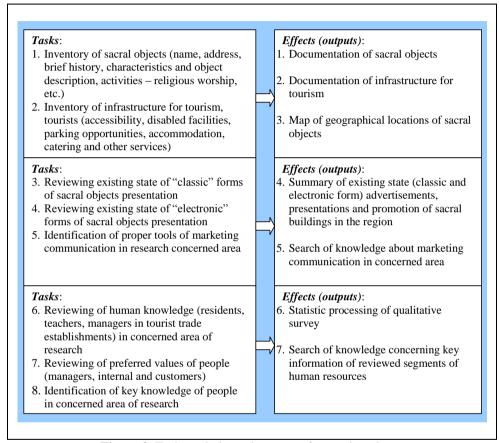


Figure 2. Tasks and planned outputs of executing phase.

At first we had to find out if there is a statistic difference among individual groups of respondents, who perceive the importance of values materialized in sacred buildings. The analysis showed that there is no difference between males and females and among individual types of respondents in the way they assess the importance of the values. To prove that, One-way ANOVA, which showed independence among individual groups (p-value was higher than 0.05) was used. But the difference was confirmed when age was taken into consideration – Figures 4 and 5.

Evaluation of the difference can be seen in the characteristic measures of positions -1^{st} quartile, median and 3^{rd} quartile. While the value of these three characteristics is lower in the case of young people (5, 7 and 9), in the case of older people is remarkably higher (7, 8 and 10).

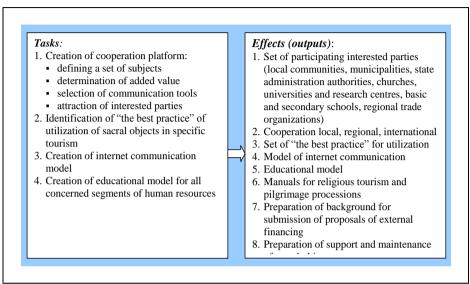


Figure 3. Tasks and planned outputs of proposal phase.

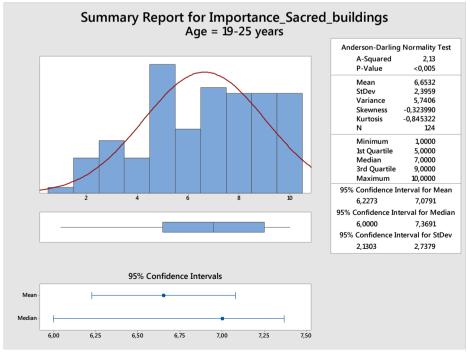


Figure 4. Importance of sacred building perceived by young people.

Our next search was aimed at verification of mutual links between importance of individual preferences – six variables concerning the importance from the point of view of its attractiveness for visitors and regional tourists. A bi-variant correlation analysis proved relatively strong connections between some variables and it was the reason for factor analysis utilization. Table 3 shows rotated factor loadings and communalities, obtained by this procedure.

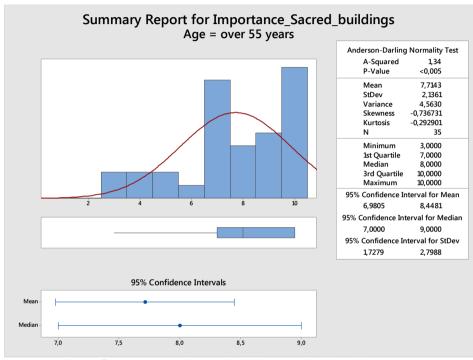


Figure 5. Importance of sacred building perceived by older people.

Table 3. Factor analysis results	Table	3.	Factor	anal	vsis	results
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Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Communality
Importance_Surrounding_nature	0.163	0.019	0.979	0.985
Importance_Historical_centre	0.831	-0.053	0.189	0.729
Importance_Museum	0.835	-0.050	0.109	0.711
Importance_Sacred_buildings	0.828	0.016	-0.002	0.686
Importance_Shopping_centers	0.002	-0.876	-0.091	0.776
Importance_Aquapark	0.058	-0.878	0.072	0.779
Variance	2.1031	1.5445	1.0191	4.6667
% Var	35.1	25.7	17.0	77.8

As seen from Table 3, based on three calculated factors it is possible to explain as many as 77.8% of the set variability. To interpret this table, the following should be said: 6 originally variables create three relatively isolated factors: Factor1, Factor2 and Factor 3 (their composition is represented by Pearson's correlation coefficients for individual variables). Factor1 includes variables such as historical centre, museum and sacred buildings, so it can be called the Aspect of cultural and spiritual traditions and values. Factor 2 covers especially two variables – shopping centres and aqua-park – and from this point of view it could be named as Aspect of relaxation and entertainment. The third factor includes the variable surrounding nature and can be named as Aspect of nature and tourism.

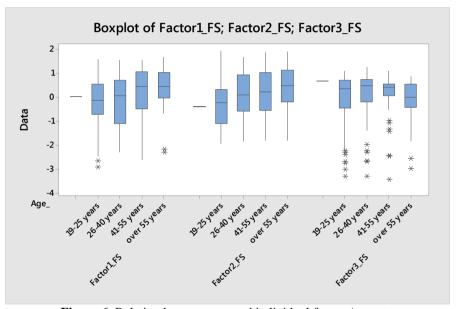


Figure 6. Relation between age and individual factors/aspects.

For the next processing of these three factors the so called Factor score was defined (FS) and it enabled to survey deeper relations between Factor 1 (Aspect of cultural and spiritual traditions and values) and next relevant variables. Our aim was to find out whether this aspect is influenced by any other identification attributes of respondents. The most important influence was identified again at the identification attribute 'Age' (Figure 6).

On Figure 6 we can see, that that the higher age brings the increase of the importance of Factor 1 (Aspect of cultural and spiritual traditions and values). Similar development can be seen at Factor 3 (Aspect of nature and tourism). At Factor 2 (Aspect of relaxations and entertainment) this relation is opposite (see negative values in Table 3).

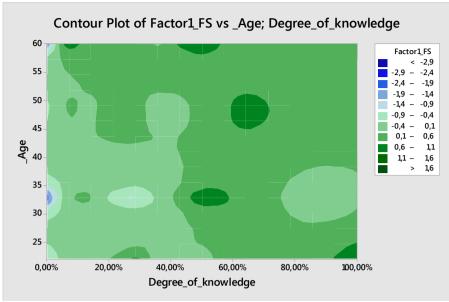


Figure 7. Relation between factor 1 and degree of knowledge.

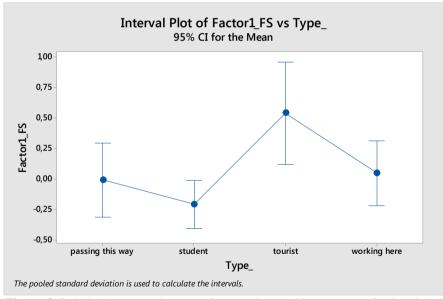


Figure 8. Relation between the type of respondent and importance of cultural and spiritual traditions and values (Factor 1).

Since it can be proved that the age of respondents and their orientation towards cultural values (aspect 1) are mutually connected, the natural task of the next investigation is comparison of this finding to the degree of knowledge of sacred building in the region. Figure 7 shows the result of comparison of three variables, whereby the intensity of green colour emphasizes areas with high perception of the Aspect of cultural and spiritual traditions and values (Factor 1).

Based on Figure 7 an interesting phenomenon can be seen – young generation which know less about the sacred buildings perceive the importance of cultural and spiritual traditions and values as relatively low – at the bottom on the left. But there is also a group of people at the age from 30 to 35, who know the sacred buildings but they do not consider them as important. The greatest importance is given to the buildings by people at the age from 45 to 50, who know them relatively well and also in a lower rate the same group of people at the age of 30 and 60.

We also achieved interesting results after processing two variables – type of respondent and Factor 1. In Figure 8 is shown the average level of importance of this factor regardless the type of respondent. As you can see this aspect is relatively important for tourists. On the other side, for the younger generation, especially students, the cultural and spiritual traditions and values are relatively unimportant (negative factor score). For other two groups of respondents this aspect achieves average importance.

8. Discussion and conclusion

The proposed model of marketing management of Spiš region is based on building the image of the area by traditions and proven values and by religious tourism. However, a modern but negative item of actual period which can be often seen not only in politics is rejection of historical heritage which was for more than a thousand years supported by proven values. The proof of traditional values is a high number of sacral buildings which classify our Spiš region as an 'old' historical European region and offer an opportunity to present this culture as a starting point of modern marketing management of Spiš region and its individual villages. This is not a topic which is not verified by practice and supported by relevant theory. According to S. Anholt, a scientist of worldwide reputation and expert in building areas image and an adviser of several states governments, the image of the region is influenced by people, investments, culture, tourism, administration of issues and products manufactured in this region [4, p. 20]. Good marketing should contain goals which are worth following them and well-considered ways for finding and fulfilling human and social needs. Cultural potential of regions and villages can be such a way. Moral and cultural system is embodied in institutions. Its existence is not restricted only to human heart and a sphere of personal conscience. There are churches, universities, print and electronic media, talented artists and other items which have an effect on creation of symbols and values. We should perceive and eliminate indicated risks or at least minimize the already existing ones [12, p. 145]. Actual knowledge about Spiš region shows that both natural heritage and rich cultural heritage present great potential and perspective of its development. The way of potential utilization goes through the proposed systematic approach by effective utilization of marketing tools. Practical benefit will be specification of key tools of marketing communication mix and establishment of single model of communication using modern communication technologies for promoting and advertising of sacral buildings within tourism in the region.

Submitted results of this sociological survey in the Spiš region present only a partial view concerning the topic – through the aspect of values perceived and preferred by people. The analysis showed that there are three relatively isolated groups/factors of importance and preference of respondents from the point of view of tourism offer – Factor1: Aspect of cultural and spiritual traditions and values; Factor 2: Aspect of relaxation and entertainment and Factor 3: Aspect of nature and tourism. It was proved that a key factor for perception of cultural and spiritual traditions and values (Factor1) is mostly the age. With reference to a historical context of the region we can suppose that old traditions and value presented an important pillar in education and upbringing in the past. This situation was not interfered with the negative approach of at that time communist political system. At present, however, these values lose their importance under the influence of liberalization, globalization and development of consumer society as well as due to a lower quality school educational system.

Next possibilities to understand relations between marketing communication and values materialized in sacred buildings can be presented surveying their support by different channels which are currently offered by modern information technologies.

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