

# Brazil's image and Brazilian personality: a systematic review from the viewpoint of cordiality

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to identify the characteristics of Brazilian personality, associating them with the cordial man of the book *Raízes do Brasil (Roots of Brazil)*. In addition, it aims to present an agenda for future management studies, suggesting works in several managerial areas which may be influenced by traits of the Brazilian personality.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A systematic review of studies on Brazil's image was developed, so that it was possible to identify the main characteristics of the Brazilian personality. The main personality traits found were compared to those identified in the cordial man, from the book *Raízes do Brasil*.

**Findings** – The results indicate the main traits of Brazilians' personality: sensual, cunning, cheerful, creative, hospitable, friendly and cordial. These traits are directly related to cordiality, mentioned in some studies, and also indirectly through words alluding to the character of the cordial man. These traits are related to the Brazilians image abroad and have created a confused image of Brazil.

**Research limitations/implications** – Regarding the theoretical contribution, the future studies agenda presented suggests the development of papers that relate Brazilians' personality traits to other areas besides tourism, such as negotiation, organizational culture, exports, foreign direct investment, talent attraction and public diplomacy.

**Practical implications** – This study indicated that in practice, the Brazilian Government should develop marketing actions to promote a more consistent image of Brazil, reinforcing its positive aspects and creating new associations that allow Brazil to bring not only tourists but also residents, companies and investors for the country. These positive aspects, regarding the country citizens, can be their affability, hospitality, extraversion and generosity, which can improve the foreigners' impressions on Brazil.

**Originality/value** – The originality of the study is to relate the concept of cordial man to the Brazilian people, showing the main features of their personality and also in the elaboration of an agenda indicating suggestions for future studies that relate the personality traits of Brazilian people with other areas.

**Keywords** Personality, Country image, Brazilian people, Cordial man

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

In an age of increasing globalization, countries around the world face intense competition for development factors: exports, investment, tourism, students and skilled labor (Rojas-Méndez, Papadopoulos, & Alwan, 2015). Thus, to be successful, countries must be distinctive and improve their image (Hakala, Lemmetyinen, & Kantola, 2013).

Country image can be understood as the totality of all the descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a given country (Martin & Eroglu, 1993). In other words,

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it comprises a number of associations that connect a given country to other information from consumer memory (Giraldi, 2016) and relates to the mental representation of a country and its population, including cognitive beliefs about the country's economic and technological development stages, as well as emotional assessments of its social and political systems (Wang, Li, Barnes, & Ahn, 2012).

People have different views of countries, shaped by a variety of influences (Samiee, 2010). According to Rojas-Mendez (2013), associations with a country are increasingly broad, since the level of exposure to foreign products, international media, travel and tourism, migration and the internet is increasingly larger.

To understand how countries are viewed one must consider the following aspects: tourism, government environment, direct investment, immigration, exports, people and culture (Anholt, 2007). Prominent among them is people, an aspect that appears in several assessment scales of a country's cognitive image (Baloglu & Mangaloglu, 2001; Basaran, 2016; Mak, 2017; Papadimitriou, Kaplanidou, & Apostolopoulou, 2018). The image foreigners have of a country's residents may be influenced by previous stereotypes or personal experiences from business or vacation trips (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002; Fan, 2010; Moghavvemi, Woosnam, Paramanathan, Musa, & Hamzah, 2017), therefore the residents play a decisive role in building and maintaining the image of a place (Braun, Eshuis, & Klijn, 2014; Moghavvemi *et al.*, 2017). In this sense, the population's support is indispensable for a country to change and strengthen its international reputation (Warren & Dinnie, 2018; Moghavvemi *et al.*, 2017), and understanding its traits may help foment such support and also manage the country's image (Anholt, 2010). An alternative to understand how the "people" element, that is part of the country's image, is formed is to understand the personality of that people, that is, their main traits, as well as their origin (Silva and Giraldi, 2016). These personality traits are related to the fact that a country has a series of human characteristics associated with consumers and such associations may affect their intentions toward the nation (Rojas-Mendez, 2013).

It is in this sense that this paper seeks to survey and understand the main traits of the personality of the Brazilian people. The goal of the research is to identify, through a systematic review of studies on Brazil's image, the characteristics of the Brazilian personality, associating them with the cordial man of the book *Raizes do Brasil (Roots of Brazil)*. In addition, based on that review, it aims to present an agenda for future management studies, suggesting works in several managerial areas which may be influenced by traits of the Brazilian personality.

The concept of cordial man, which appears in Sérgio Buarque de Holanda's work *Roots of Brazil*, consists of the idea of cordiality, that is, Brazilians' behavior is viewed as being dictated by the heart. In this sense, Holanda (1995) states that cordiality reflects traits of Brazilians' character such as hospitality, generosity, aversion to ritualism and coexistence without over-politeness, characterized by intimacy and individuality.

The concept of cordiality is used in this research as a parameter to compare the characteristics of Brazilian personality that emerge from the literature in the systematic review. Using the cordial man's perspective is a relevant theoretical contribution to the paper, since it addresses the theme of country image and personality from another perspective and may constitute a distinct and multidisciplinary comparison that makes it possible to understand the personality traits of Brazil. In addition, another important theoretical contribution concerns the methodological procedure used in this study, which can be replicated by researchers when studying other nations.

Furthermore, in practical terms, understanding the personality of Brazilians may contribute to several managerial areas. The study of their personality may contribute, for example, to manage negotiations between national and international companies (Pedroso, Massukado-Nakatani, & Mussi, 2009); to understand actions related to Brazilian organizational culture (Chu & Wood, 2008); to boost exports of domestic products (Lourenção & Giraldi, 2017); and also to drive investments (Papadopoulos, Hamzaoui-Essoussi, & Banna, 2016),

attract talent (Sidhu, Ho, & Yeok, 2011) and manage Brazil's image as a tourist destination, since the citizens' personality may contribute to attract tourists (Moghavvemi *et al.*, 2017). Thus, outlining Brazilians' personality may bring to light positive characteristics of Brazil's image that need to be reinforced through marketing strategies in those areas and others that need to be improved to strengthen the country's image internally and worldwide so as to contribute to these several managerial areas reported.

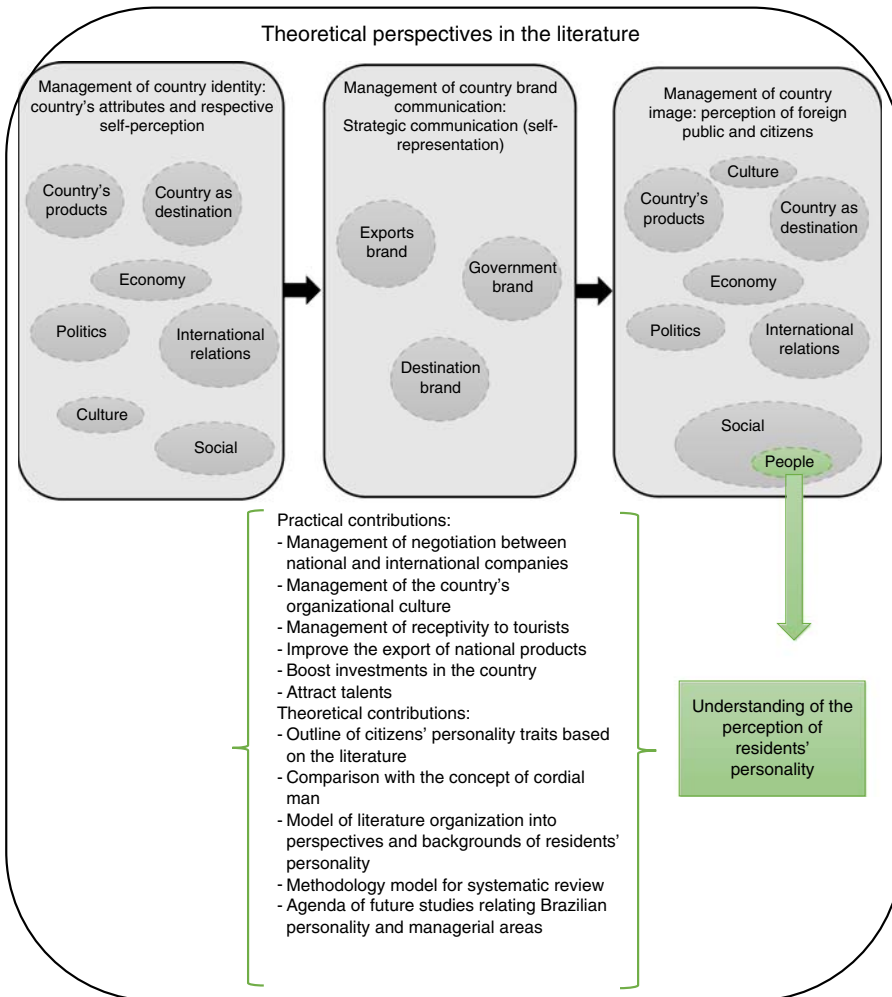
## 2. Literature review

*2.1 Organizing the literature: theoretical perspectives and backgrounds of residents' personality*  
Studies on the subject of place management are fragmented and address different perspectives, so it is difficult to build a clear and organized picture on this topic. Starting out with those considerations, this section aims to develop a model that addresses the different contributions on the subject, one whose framework helps in understanding the secondary data analysis featured in the outcomes of this study. The developed model addresses concepts related to three theoretical perspectives which, albeit related, are distinct, namely: management of country identity, management of country brand communication and management of country image. These three perspectives are theoretical backgrounds that lead to the study of residents' personality, which is the topic addressed in the goal of this study.

Regarding the three theoretical perspectives featured in the model in Figure 1, one sees that identity management is related to the country's attributes and its respective self-perception, that is, it refers to the nation's internal perception (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2014). Country identity presents characteristics of the nation that can be used in the management of country brand, which is considered a self-representation developed for the strategic communication of local attributes (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2014). In this sense, country brand is seen as the manageable part of the image, that is, it is considered an intentionally manageable tool for the purpose of improving the country's image (Knott, Fyall, & Jones, 2016). Finally, country image is understood as being mental representations (Dinnie, 2016) composed of cognitive and emotional elements that people have about a particular country (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009). Moreover, this acquired perception can be related to the internal public, that is, the image the internal public has of its own country (Zenker, Braun, & Petersen, 2017) or to the foreign public (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2014).

The model presented in Figure 1 also indicates the contextualization of each of the theoretical perspectives in the literature. In this sense, country identity can be represented by several characteristics belonging to the nation. One of the ways of communicating those aspects is through the development of country brands. The brands are used in different contexts, but all use the country's name to indicate their origin. In this sense, the literature shows the existence of studies on: export brands, which use the country's name to promote its products abroad (Lourenção & Giraldi, 2017; Castro & Giraldi, 2018); government brands, which also uses the country's name, but in this case with the purpose of publicizing government actions for the internal public (Ocke, 2013; Zenker *et al.*, 2017); and destination brands, which aims to publicize the country abroad with the goal of attracting tourists (Bassols, 2016).

Last comes the contextualization of country image, the focus of this work. The literature on country image includes studies on the perception of the country's products (Wang *et al.*, 2012); perception of the country as a tourist destination (Mak, 2017); as well as perception on political (Alvarez & Campo, 2014), economic (Ferreira, Lourenção, Giraldi, & Oliveira, 2018), international relations (Mariutti, 2015) and cultural (Lee & Bai, 2016) issues, besides social aspects (Oliveira & Martins, 2009). This paper focuses on the understanding of one of the social aspects of a country, the personality of its citizens (Moghavvemi *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, the understanding of personality traits may offer practical and theoretical contributions, which were also pointed out in Figure 1.



Source: Elaborated by the authors

**Figure 1.** Organizing the literature: theoretical perspectives and backgrounds of residents' personality

### 2.2 Brazilians' personality: the cordial man

Regarding the personality of the Brazilian people, there are many complexities involved that require investigation, such as the miscegenation between Indians, Portuguese and blacks, the issue of the Brazilian way of working things out (*jeitinho brasileiro*) and the concept of the cordial man. The miscegenation at the origin of the Brazilian people was explored by Holanda (1995), Ribeiro (1995), Freyre (1996) and Prado Júnior (1996), and, according to those authors, involves the cultural and social diversity of Brazil and its people generated by its historical background. In other words, miscegenation refers to the social and historical conditions of the ethnic mix in Brazil and, symbolically, relates to the nationalist aspirations linked to building the nation (Kunz & dos Santos, 2015). "It was the miscegenation between the three peoples that enabled the emergence of the Brazilian identity" (Giarola, 2012, p. 138).

In turn, the famous *jeitinho*, a term coined by Da Matta (1986), refers to a way of dealing with contradictions and paradoxes (universal laws vs personal situations) in a typically Brazilian way: “By effecting a personal mediation between the law, the situation in which it should be applied and the people involved, in such a way that nothing changes, other than the law being somewhat demoralized” (Da Matta, 1986, p. 80), thus reflecting aspects of Brazilian behavior.

On the other hand, the concept of the cordial man, which appears in Sérgio Buarque de Holanda’s *Roots of Brazil*, consists of the idea of cordiality. The word cordiality, as far as the characterization of Brazilian behavior is concerned, is inserted in the literature of human and social sciences as part of academic efforts related to the great systematizations of nationality (Moreira, 2013), that is, this word consists of a way found to synthesize the character of Brazilians and understand their identity.

Holanda (1995) states that cordiality reflects traits of the Brazilian character, such as hospitality, generosity, aversion to ritualism and coexistence without over-politeness and characterized by intimacy and individuality. However, cordiality is confused or equated with kindness (Feldman, 2013). According to Cândido (1995), the cordial man does not presuppose kindness, but merely the predominance of apparently affectionate behaviors, being viscerally inadequate to impersonal relationships that derive from an individual’s position and occupation rather than his personal and family character. In addition, cordiality is pointed out by Sérgio Buarque as the vector capable of transforming reality (Feldman, 2013).

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda uses cordiality as an attempt to explain the character traits of Brazilians, and hence can aid in describing their personality. Therefore, the cordial man is used in this research as a parameter to compare the characteristics of Brazilian personality that emerge from the literature in the systematic review.

### 3. Methodology

A systematic review of the literature was carried out for this research. Churchill (1991) argues that one of the most efficient ways to better understand a problem is by searching the literature. In addition to the systematic review performed by collecting and analyzing scientific articles, secondary data were also obtained through the book *Roots of Brazil* by Sergio Buarque de Holanda for comparison and discussion of the content of those articles based on the concept of the cordial man.

Thus, the bibliographical survey searched for papers in Portuguese and English using the following filters: keywords: English – Brazilian people; Brazilian people personality; Brazil image; Image of Brazil; Brazil’s image; Brazil’s reputation; Brazil reputation; Brazil’s brand image; Brazil brand personality; Brazil country of origin image; Portuguese – *povo brasileiro*; *personalidade povo brasileiro*; *caráter povo brasileiro*; *imagem Brasil*; *reputação Brasil*; *imagem marca Brasil*; *personalidade marca Brasil*; *jeitinho brasileiro*; *jeitinho brasileiro imagem*; database: Scopus; Web of Science and Google scholar; period of papers: 2001–2016.

The keywords were chosen considering that the systematic review was delimited to the study of academic papers addressing the subject of Brazilian personality. However, knowing that personality is one of the aspects of the study of people and that people, in turn, is one of the aspects of a country’s cognitive image, the search also included keywords related to the area of country image.

The databases were chosen for being acknowledged and widely used. Regarding the time frame, a more recent period was chosen, given that Brazil received international attention in recent years due to three mega-events held in the country: the 2007 Pan American Games, the 2014 Soccer World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games. It is believed that mega-events afford a country visibility in international media (Buarque, 2015).

Moreover, the Olympic Games can drive change and improvement of a country's image (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002), and consequently alter the standard of living of the nation's residents (Tomlinson, Bass, & Bassett, 2011), generating greater interest in Brazil and its image in the academic field. In addition, the research aimed to understand the personality traits of the Brazilian people in a more recent period (2001–2016) because, in this way, the results can make greater contributions to the management of those traits in related areas (negotiations, investments, exports, tourism) nowadays.

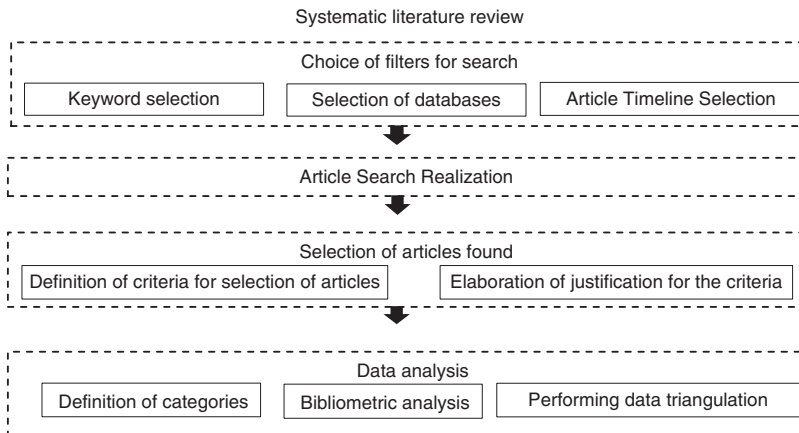
The search was followed by a selection of the papers found to sort out those that were adequate to be part of the literature review of this paper. The criteria used to select the articles were: the articles should address in some part of the text the characterization of Brazilian personality traits; and articles should belong to the field of applied social sciences and not be linked to other areas of knowledge such as anthropology and sociology.

The first criterion was established due to the difficulty of finding works whose main scope addressed Brazilian personality only, despite the wide range of keywords listed and the several studies related to Brazil's image. The second criterion was due to the fact that with regard to the Brazilian people, there is an intersection with other fields of study, such as anthropology and sociology, which are not the goal of this study, since it is focused on the issue of country image.

The data analysis stage was performed by classifying the data in the following categories and subcategories: (1) Brazilian personality in journals; (1.1) frequent words about Brazilian personality in journals; (1.2) positive words of Brazilian personality in journals; (1.3) negative words of Brazilian personality in journals; (2) comparison with the cordial man; (2.1) positive aspects of personality present in journals and associated with the concept of cordial man; (2.1) negative aspects of personality present in journals and associated with the concept of cordial man.

Following the categorization of results, a bibliometric analysis was performed which enable data triangulation (Bardin, 2009), in order to compare the personality traits of the articles found in the literature with the concept of cordial man discussed in the book *Roots of Brazil*. This method made it possible to highlight the main features of the Brazilian personality and compare the data sources of this study.

Figure 2 was designed to help future studies replicate the method used for the systematic review and data analysis.



Source: Elaborated by the authors

**Figure 2.** Method used for systematic review and data analysis

#### 4. Results and discussion

The results are divided into four parts. The first consists of the basic characteristics of the papers found in journals, the second covers the analysis of the definition of Brazilian personality in journals, the third part deals with the relations between the personality traits found in journals and the cordial man of *Roots of Brazil* and, finally, the fourth part presents an agenda of future studies relating the Brazilian personality to several managerial areas.

##### 4.1 Characteristics of academic papers found

From the systematic review of the academic studies, 37 papers containing Brazilian personality traits were found, featured in Table I. A large proportion of studies were found as of 2012, since five papers on the subject were found in that year. In 2013, in turn, three studies were observed, followed by three in 2014, seven in 2015 and four in 2016. Therefore, the studies carried out in the last five years accounted for 59 percent of the works of the bibliographic review, characterizing a recent theme in the literature. This growth in the number of works may have been due to the increase in Brazil's visibility and concern with the Brazilian image in the international scenario resulting from the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games.

It is also worth mentioning that the main scope of most studies was the analysis of Brazil's image, many of them focusing on Brazilian tourism, that is, Brazil's image as a tourist destination. Additionally, it should be noted that these works interviewed different groups. Thus, the images analyzed were obtained from interviews with foreigners, some of whom had never been in Brazil while others had already visited the country. There were also studies that looked for characteristics of the country's internal image, interviewing actual Brazilians. Therefore, the words reported regarding the personality trait of the Brazilian people (one of the aspects of the country's image) included perceptions of different publics, both foreign and Brazilian.

##### 4.2 Personality of the Brazilian people in journals

In order to identify the words used to describe Brazilian personality that appeared most often, those cited in at least three different academic papers were selected. Thus, Figure 3 features the frequency with which those words appeared in the journals found in the systematic review. The word cited most often was "sensual," mentioned in 14 papers of a total of 37 studies analyzed.

According to Alfonso (2014), in the years 1970–1990, EMBRATUR consolidated Brazil's tourism image as an erotic and exotic country. The author reported that the graphic promotional material produced by the entity, such as folders, posters and the like, contained images of half-naked women on paradisiacal beaches depicting the beauty of Rio de Janeiro and the Northeast region. However, from the 1990s, social movements started criticizing this eroticized image of Brazilian women. According to Gomes (2011), non-governmental organizations began to denounce the issue of sex tourism in Brazil, arguing that advertising associated with half-naked women could encourage it. Feminist movements began to criticize the commodification of women's image in the media and, finally, the Black Movement and Black Feminism Movement also condemned severely the image of the hypererotized mulatta, which ignored the sexual violence suffered by enslaved African women and their female descendants in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

Currently, Brazil seeks to build a different image and EMBRATUR is carrying out several initiatives to reposition Brazil's tourism image abroad. Gomes (2011) states that Brazil no longer wants to be viewed as an exotic and erotic country, but rather as an emerging, modern country with unique traits. The author reports that this is prevailing discourse in the agency's Aquarela Plan and Brazil brand.

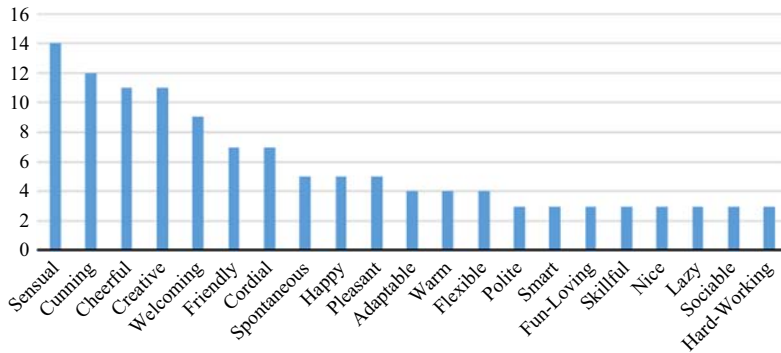
Title	Journal	Authors	Year
A prevalência de imaginários estereotipados do Brasil no exterior e o papel das mídias na sua manutenção	<i>Revista Interdisciplinar de Mobilidade Humana</i>	Badet	2016
O jeitinho brasileiro: uma revisão bibliográfica	<i>Horizonte Científico</i>	Prado	2016
O olhar do outro: barreiras culturais à comunicação, novas narrativas e marca país Brasil	<i>Revista Científica Hermes</i>	Chibás	2016
Personalidade de País e Auto Congruência: um estudo sobre o Brasil	<i>Turismo em Análise</i>	Silva and Giraldi	2016
A Negatividade Fenomenológica do “Jeitinho Brasileiro” Contida no Ser Corrupto dentro da Administração Pública	<i>Revista Clareira</i>	Pereira	2015
A representação do Brasil na publicidade das Havaianas	<i>Revista de Comunicação Midiática</i>	Kunz and dos Santos	2015
Discursive constructions of the Germany–Brazil semi-final match during the FIFA 2014 World Cup: The limits of football as a soft power resource	<i>South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research</i>	Chari	2015
Imagem do país de origem e estratégia em mercados externos: análise da empresa brasileira natura cosméticos	<i>Revista Brasileira de Marketing</i>	Sutter, MacLennan, Fernandes, and Oliveira	2015
Negative film plot and tourists' image and intentions: The case of city of god	<i>Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing</i>	Loureiro and Araujo	2015
One country, two cups – the international image of Brazil in 1950 and in 2014: A study of the reputation and the identity of Brazil as projected by the international media during the two FIFA World Cups in the country	<i>International Journal of Communication</i>	Buarque	2015
Aqui é o país (não só) do futebol: uma análise da campanha publicitária brasileira para a Copa do Mundo de 2014 no exterior	<i>Cadernos Unifoa</i>	Souza and Fagundes	2015
Focus on Brazil: Country images held by Malaysian learners of Brazilian Portuguese	<i>Calidoscópio</i>	Nikitina <i>et al.</i>	2014
Home country image attributes as source of competitive advantages: International Brazilian fashion industry study	<i>Review of International Business</i>	Sutter, Polo, and MacLennan	2014
The country of origin effect on Brazilian beef trade in Europe: The moderating role of gender, age, and product involvement	<i>Journal of Food Products Marketing</i>	Guina and Giraldi	2014
Country brand identity: An exploratory study about the Brazil brand with American travel agencies	<i>Tourism Planning and Development</i>	Mariutti and Giraldi	2013
The image of Brazil as a tourism destination: An exploratory study of the American market	<i>International Journal of Business Administration</i>	Mariutti, Giraldi, and Crescitelli	2013
Turismo e identidade no Brasil: imagem idealizada x estereótipo	<i>Cadernos de Estudos e Pesquisas do Turismo</i>	Silva and Mattar	2013
A Imagem do Brasil no Exterior e o Turismo: A Operacionalização do Plano Aquarela em Portugal	<i>Revista Rosa Dos Ventos</i>	Gomes	2012
Brand personality dimensions in the Brazilian context	<i>Brazilian Administration Review</i>	Muniz and Marchetti	2012
Differences on the image of Brazil in external markets according to consumers' age, gender, knowledge about the country and country of residence	<i>International Journal of Business Science and Applied Management</i>	Guina and Giraldi	2012
O jeitinho brasileiro: analisando suas características e influências nas práticas organizacionais	<i>Gestão e Planejamento</i>	Flach	2012
The role played by country knowledge and product familiarity in the country-of-origin effect: A study on Brazilian Beef in Europe	<i>Journal of Globalization, Competitiveness and Governability</i>	Guina and Giraldi	2012
Brazil's image as a social representation process	<i>African Journal of Business Management</i>	Giraldi and Scaduto	2011
O marketing turístico e o reposicionamento da imagem do Brasil no mundo: uma análise do plano aquarela da EMBRATUR	<i>Tourism and Management Studies</i>	Gomes	2011

(continued)

**Table I.**  
Characteristics of  
academic papers  
found in journals

Title	Journal	Authors	Year
Imágenes recíprocas y estereotipos entre la población brasileña y autóctona en el contexto multicultural español	<i>Convergência</i>	Ripoll	2010
Where fantasy becomes reality?: How tourism forces made Brazil a sexual playground	<i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento	2010
A Hospitalidade e Cordialidade Brasileira: o Brasil percebido por estrangeiros	<i>Turismo em Análise</i>	Oliveira and Martins	2009
A imagem do Brasil como destino turístico nos websites das operadoras de turismo europeias	<i>Observatório de Inovação do Turismo</i>	Chaga and Danta	2009
Imagens e estereótipos do Brasil em reportagens de correspondentes internacionais	<i>Rumores</i>	Paganotti	2007
A relação entre o jeitinho brasileiro e o perfil empreendedor: possíveis interfaces no contexto da atividade empreendedora no Brasil	<i>Revista de Administração Mackenzie</i>	Pedroso, Massukado-Nakatani, and Mussi	2008
A representação do povo brasileiro no Jornal nacional	<i>Contemporanea</i>	Guimarães and Coutinho	2008
Publicidade e identidade nacional	<i>Revista Anagrama</i>	Ribeiro	2008
British travellers' image perspectives of Brazil as a tourism destination	<i>Observatório de Inovação do Turismo</i>	O'Neil	2007
O processo sucessório em organizações familiares e a exclusão da mulher	<i>Psicologia &amp; Sociedade</i>	Macêdo, Caixeta, Guimarães, Macêdo, and Hernandez	2004
Dazed and confused? An exploratory study of the image of Brazil as a travel destination	<i>Journal of Vacation Marketing</i>	Rezende-Parker, Alastair, Morrison, and Ismail	2003
Criatividade na cultura brasileira: uma década de estudos	<i>Revista Portuguesa de Psicologia: Teoria, Investigação e Prática</i>	Weschler	2001

**Table I.** Source: Elaborated by the authors



**Figure 3.** Most frequent words about the Brazilian personality in the journals

Source: Elaborated by the authors

However, the data analysis of this study showed that the word sensual appeared most often in the analyzed papers describing the Brazilian personality. Thus, one may conclude that despite the repositioning of Brazil's image desired by EMBRATUR, several marketing initiatives are still necessary to consolidate the new image as planned.

After the word *sensual*, the following appeared more often in Figure 3: *cunning*, *cheerful*, *creative*, *welcoming*, *friendly* and *cordial*, being these then the characteristics that define the personality of Brazilians based on the papers found in the literature review. The first two words that describe the Brazilian personality (*sensual* and *cunning*) were the most mentioned in the journals and have a negative connotation in characterizing the personality of the Brazilian people. Therefore, this is also a sign that more robust marketing initiatives are required for the country brand, aimed at consolidating the new image desired by EMBRATUR for the Brazilian people, changing the perception of a *sensual* and *cunning* people to a new image of tourist destination.

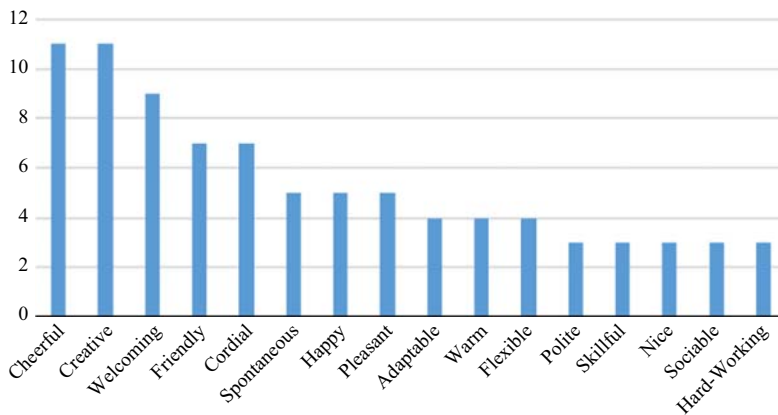
In this sense, EMBRATUR itself developed the *Aquarela Plan* in 2005 to come up with strategies and actions to design and reposition Brazil's image as a tourist destination abroad. This plan shows the intention of conveying natural diversity, the country's living culture and the people's characteristics with words such as: *welcoming*, *devoted*, *hopeful* and *cheerful*, *young* and *modern*. Among them, the idea of *hospitality* and *cheerfulness* seem to pervade the words that characterize the personality of Brazilians found in the literature review, but the notions of *devotion*, *hope*, *youth* and *modernity* still have to be worked out.

Another criticism that can be made considering the characteristics traced in this study to the personality of the Brazilian is that since most studies are focused on the tourism sector, the words found are mostly linked only to the destination image of Brazil. However, some Brazilian sectors that promote abroad to increase their exports may not fit this image of tourist destination communicated by EMBRATUR (Capellaro & Giraldi, 2015). This is the case, for example, of the information technology sector, which aims to consolidate an image of technological development, with *capacity* and *commitment* (Ringer, Giraldi, Capellaro, & Amui, 2013).

Thus, the Brazilian Government, in terms of country brand management, should also be concerned with consolidating an image of Brazil that favors exports, investment and immigration (Dinnie, 2008). It should not, therefore, be restricted to the country brand built by EMBRATUR that aims to promote the image of Brazil only as a tourist destination abroad.

The systematic review also pointed the existence of a large number of recent studies on the destination image of Brazil. However, it was possible to verify the need for studies that have as main scope the management of the image of Brazil for exports, investments and immigration.

When the characteristics are explored in two poles (positive and negative connotations on the Brazilian – Figures 4 and 5), this emphasis on personality traits continued to be linked to tourism.



Source: Elaborated by the authors

Figure 4. Positive words that characterize the most frequent Brazilian personality in journals

As can be seen in these graphs, the positive traits of the Brazilian who stood out were: cheerful, creative, hospitable, friendly, cordial, spontaneous. The most frequent negative aspects were: sensual, cunning, party-goer, lazy and smart. The meaning of each of these connotations was discussed in the next topic, which compared these traits to the view of the cordial man, from *Raizes do Brasil*.

#### 4.3 Comparison with the cordial man

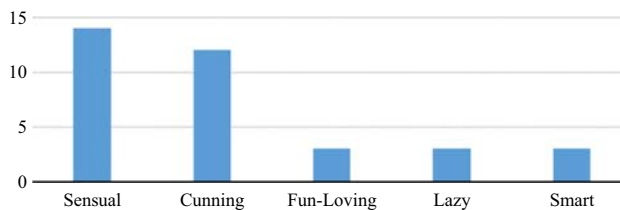
The cordial man is directly associated with the book *Roots of Brazil* of 1936, by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, in which the author states that the Brazilian contribution to civilization is precisely cordiality, since Brazil gave the world the cordial man (Holanda, 1995). In this way, 7 articles among the 37 found in the systematic review pointed directly to “cordial” or “cordiality” as one of the Brazilian characteristics: Guimarães and Coutinho (2008), Scheyerl and Siqueira (2008), Oliveira and Martins (2009), Paganotti (2007), Buarque (2015) and Prado (2016). This characteristic was fundamental in delineating the personality of the Brazilian (Item 3.1).

Most of these works took as reference the book by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda to draw this adjective for the Brazilian, except for Guimarães and Coutinho (2008), Paganotti (2007) and Buarque (2015), whose analysis of the Brazilian image was based in international and national newspaper articles, respectively, from which that word emerged and a profound criticism of its meaning was not made.

However, the work of Buarque (2015) can be highlighted, since he classified the question of the Brazilian’s character as being part of the dimension of people of the country image, considering this aspect as part of Brazilianism and one of the most relevant elements of the international image projected by Brazil, which is important information. Guimarães and Coutinho (2008) also related the cordiality with the Brazilianism, being able to be conceived as a positive trait of the Brazilian character.

On the other hand, among the articles based on Sérgio Buarque de Holanda’s concept of cordiality, Prado (2016) raised the question “State versus Family” in the book *Roots of Brazil* to contextualize the cordial man, and his characteristics of personality and intimacy in interpersonal relationships.

In addition, Oliveira and Martins (2009) entered the origins of cordiality: Iberian heritage, rurality of the colonial country and the Brazilian racial amalgam, based on the work of Holanda (1995). In this respect, reflecting on *Roots of Brazil*, it was first noticed that the Iberian heritage is related to the “personality culture,” which generated weakness in the forms of organization (individual merit and responsibility led to recognition), weakness in social structures (lack of social cohesion) and lack of hierarchical regularity, and consequently, the only apparent sociability of Brazilians, who always seek their individual side. Cândido (1995) calls this apparent sociability of the Brazilian derived from the individualism of “cordial mentality.” Thus, there is a dialogical view of this Brazilian cultural aspect, bringing on the one side its hospitality,



**Figure 5.**  
Negative words that characterize Brazilian personality more frequent in journals

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors

as a positive aspect, and on the other side, one of its problems: the personalism (Oliveira & Martins, 2009).

Second, the rural inheritance, according to Holanda (1995) culminated in a society organized in a familiar way, which is linked to the characteristics of conviviality without too much politeness and characterized by the intimacy and personality, delimited by the author himself in explaining the cordial man. According to Cândido (1995), the Brazilian, raised in a family structure model, received strong guidelines on “relations of sympathy”, therefore he does not believe that the impersonal relations, characteristic of the State, are pleasant. Due to that, he seeks to transform impersonal relationships into the personal and affective pattern he is used to.

As for the racial question, Holanda (1995) affirmed that the miscegenation and not strong differentiation of social classes led to an absence of racial pride, which may be related to the question of racial tolerance, which according to Oliveira and Martins (2009) leads to the happy and receptive side of the Brazilian. However, Scheyerl and Siqueira (2008), who also presented the cordiality as characteristic of the Brazilian, pointed out that the Brazilian is superficially affable and supports a disguised racism.

Thus, it is believed that the cordial man can be understood as an exacerbation of affection (Cândido, 1995), that is, the Brazilian is emotional, rejects formalities, ignores ethics and cannot discriminate between private and public (Prado, 2016).

The cordial man is therefore directed by the heart, and its virtues are, according to Holanda (1995), legitimate expressions of an extremely rich and overflowing emotive background, which has been seen in seven of the identified studies: Oliveira and Martins (2009), Muniz and Marchetti (2012), Nikitina, Don, and Cheong (2014), Chari (2015) and Kunz and dos Santos (2015) and Prado (2016).

In them, the emphasized aspects of Brazilian personality are: emotion, irrationality, passion, affection, which was consistent with the definition of cordial man.

Thus, cordiality is reflected in positive aspects of the Brazilian character, such as hospitality and generosity, as well as personality, intimacy, pointed out by Holanda (1995), but also has negative traits such as personalism/individualism, sociability and apparent affability, indicated above.

Thus, at the same time that cordiality is passive, it is aggressive (Prado, 2016). It would then be a mistake to suppose these virtues of the cordial man can signify manners, civility (Holanda, 1995).

Of the 37 articles found, more than half (31) reported positive traits of Brazilian personality that may be associated with cordiality. These positive traits were: friendly, receptive, open, hospitable, generous, cheerful, happy, nice, nice, extroverted, charming, good-humored, smiling, simple, natural, warm, peaceful, authentic, spontaneous, creative, interpersonal abilities in relationships, has plurality. The most frequent, based on Item 3.1 were: cheerful, creative, hospitable, friendly, cordial and spontaneous.

The hospitality and generosity highlighted by Holanda (1995) can be noted in the friendly, receptive, open, hospitable and generous features of Brazil's image. As for impersonality, familiarity, and intimacy in relationships can be seen in the traits of sympathy, humor, human warmth, creativity, extroversion, joy, authenticity, spontaneity, simplicity highlighted. Plurality, in turn, is a characteristic linked to the question of miscegenation, and is also coupled with cordiality.

Still, only 13 articles reinforced the negative side of the Brazilian's character, which can also be associated with the cordial man. This number was much lower than the number of studies that outlined positive aspects of the Brazilian character that can be linked to the cordiality, which showed that in the literature the descriptions of Brazilian personality are more positive than negative, which is natural, since studies on the image of Brazil have been investigated, and when it comes to its people, it is one of the most positively evaluated

aspects of the country, along with its natural attractions and culture (Rezende-Parker, Alastair, Morrison, & Ismail, 2003; O’Neil, 2007; Tomlinson *et al.*, 2011). At this point, Buarque (2015) placed the character of the Brazilian and his Brazilianism as one of the most important elements of the image that the country projects in the international scenario.

In addition, it is up to government and country-brand management to develop communications to contain negative perceptions and reinforce positive perceptions (Dinnie, 2008). Brand development consists of creating an image and communicating it internally and externally, based on the country’s positive values and relevant perceptions to promote development (Domeisen, 2003).

In addition, among the 13 articles, only Chari (2015) and Favaro and Leite had an exclusive focus on the negative traits of the Brazilian personality – that can be related to the cordial man – while the rest confronted these negative exteriors of the Brazilian with its positive points, thus encompassing both sides of the concept of cordiality exposed by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda. When the two sides of the Brazilian personality are opposed, it is possible to create a mental confusion in the minds of international stakeholders in forming the image of Brazil, which may be one of the reasons why the country has a confused and unconsolidated image, as pointed out by Mariutti and Tench (2016) and Rambalducci, Rambalducci, Feitosa, and Feitosa (2008).

The negative elements that emerged in the articles researched that were strictly related to the cordial man were: patriarchal, authoritarian, lazy, searches for shortcuts, wants to take advantage, clever, male chauvinist, does not care about norms (is corrupt and indolent), tolerant to the wrong actions, barbaric, rude, violent, cunning, with dubious, racist morality; affable only superficially; He does not speak what he really thinks. These elements as well as the positive elements are in Table II.

Among the negative aspects of Brazilian personality, patriarchalism and authoritarianism are related to one of the origins of the cordial man: the society of rural and patriarchal roots addressed by Holanda (1995). The apparent affability and the fact that the Brazilian does not really speak what he thinks are related to the “cordial mentality” set forth by Cândido and which shows the weaknesses of the cordial man, who can therefore be barbaric, rude, violent, racist, chauvinist, characteristics evidenced in the case of Brazil and that showed the aggressive side of cordiality (Prado, 2016), and consequently of the Brazilian.

Still, the Brazilian presented as negative aspects: laziness, the search for shortcuts and advantages, the cleverness, the little respect with the rules, the dubious moral and the cunning (*malandragem*), the latter being mentioned in several studies, which may be due to the fact that the figure of the lazy cheeky Brazilian still resists as one of the most striking Brazilian identity representations (Scheyerl & Siqueira, 2008).

First, these traits have been related to the idea of personalism, which also derives from the historical origins of the cordial man, and it is precisely the fact that Brazilians seek only their individual goals, regardless of established rules, institutions or hierarchies.

**Table II.**  
Cordial man and  
personality  
characteristics of  
the Brazilian

Characteristics of the Brazilian personality found in the literature	
Positive aspects that can be associated with the concept of cordial man	Friendly; receptive; open; hospitable; generous; cheerful/happy; friendly; nice extroverted; charming; good humored; smiling; simple; creative; natural; warm; pacific; authentic; spontaneous; has ability in interpersonal relationships; has plurality
Negative aspects that can be associated with the concept of cordial man	Patriarchal; authoritarian; lazy; searches for shortcuts; wants to take advantage; clever; male chauvinist; does not care about norms (it is corrupt and indolent); tolerant of wrong actions; barbarian; rude; violent; cheeky with dubious morals; racist; affable only superficially; he does not speak what he really thinks
<b>Source:</b> Elaborated by the authors	

Second, cleverness, dubious morals and the search for advantages are jointly characteristic of the *malandro*, the cunning man, which was accentuated by Da Matta (1986) as the one who lives on the street without working and makes the most of a minimum effort, which sums up the law with the person in his will to win, that is, the *malandro* always chooses to be in the middle of the road, bringing together, almost always human: law (impersonal and impossible) with friendship and personal relationship, always considering that each man is a case and each case must be treated in a special way.

Still, the *malandro* is considered by this author the professional of the Brazilian *jeitinho*, which is according to Da Matta (1986), the pacific way Brazilians solve problems relating the personnel with the impersonal. Prado (2016) comments that if, on the one hand, the *jeitinho* as a problem-solving strategy leads to the breaking of social norms, on the other hand it is accepted and recognized as a mechanism, especially when associated with resources to alleviate the interpersonal cost of disrespect to norms, by the use of sympathy to avoid conflicts.

Both *malandragem* and *jeitinho* have thus exposed the face of the Brazilian's personality that can have negative consequences, such as a smart image, an individual who only thinks about himself and taking advantage. Thus, the so-known "Brazilian way" – a way found to get around obstacles and bureaucracy, has its facet of cordiality, for it is through cordial relations that the way in which the Brazilian *jeitinho* breaks the impersonality of bureaucracy to achieve certain personal ends (Oliveira & Martins, 2009).

Finally, there is still the stereotype of the Brazilian woman, sensual and attractive, who is very much linked to the image of Brazil, being even the most cited in the studies. However, this characteristic does not seem explicitly integrated with the concept of cordial man, most times being accompanied by other characteristics of the Brazilian, except for the article by Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento (2010).

#### 4.4 Agenda: suggestion of future studies about personality and managerial areas

The systematic review of this study made it possible to identify suggestions for future studies in managerial areas that are affected by the characterization of the Brazilian personality. The results indicate the studies that address traits of the Brazilian personality are largely studies of the tourism area, that is, studies that verify how tourists perceive the residents of Brazil.

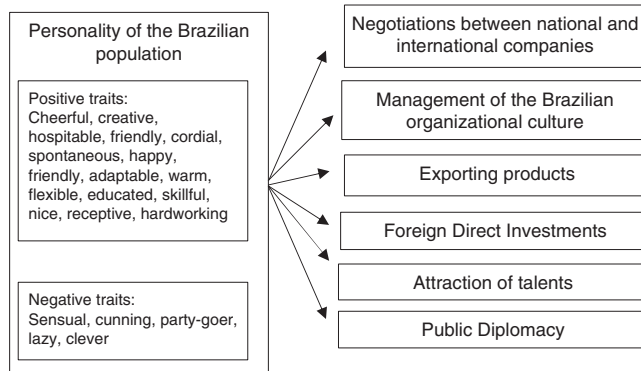
Therefore, it is seen that the image of the country as well as the personality of the residents can contribute to attract tourists. Due to this, some studies already indicate that for the management and strengthening of the international reputation in the tourism of a country the support of its population is indispensable (Moghavvemi *et al.*, 2017; Warren & Dinnie, 2018).

However, it is important to verify the impact of Brazilian personality traits in other managerial areas, besides tourism. Due to this, Figure 6 presents an agenda with suggestions for future studies for several areas that may also be affected by the traits of the Brazilian people's personality, but which have not yet been dealt with in the literature. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that, since the systematic review of the literature was restricted to studies on the Brazilian people, the agenda is also developed for studies of the personality of the Brazilian people. However, studies on personality of other peoples can also contribute to the literature in the various managerial areas presented.

### 5. Final considerations

This research showed through a systematic review of studies about the Brazilian country image and its dimensions over a period of 16 years (2001–2016) that the main characteristics of Brazilian personality are: sensual, cheeky, cheerful, creative, hospitable, friendly and cordial. These were the ones that appeared the most in the articles found.

**Figure 6.**  
Agenda: studies on  
Brazilian personality  
and managerial areas



**Source:** Elaborated by the authors

However, three points should be highlighted. The first is that although the review covered a period of 16 years, most articles (59 percent) were related to the last five years, which may reflect the greater visibility of Brazil as the site of two major mega-events in the period: World Cup 2014 and the 2016 Olympics. The second is that the localized studies had different groups interviewed: foreigners and Brazilians.

The third is that most articles emphasized Brazilian tourism, which can be seen in the very words found to describe the Brazilian people, such as the word *sensual*, meaning the land of beautiful and attractive women, or the word *malandro*, highly cited and extremely linked with Brazil as a tourist destination. This indicates that besides the fact that the image of Brazil as a destination has stereotypes, requiring marketing actions to design and reposition the image of Brazil abroad, there is still a much greater need for action plans to promote other sectors internationally, as well as consolidate an image of Brazil that also favors exports and investments.

In general, the articles found and consequently the personality traits of the Brazilian reported were related to the cordiality of *Raizes do Brasil*. In fact, a significant part of the studies cited the term, associating with the concept defined by Holanda (1995) of cordial man. Another part of the articles was based on the definition of the cordial man and mentions words related to his emotional aspect. However, most of the articles made an indirect reference to the cordial man, highlighting positive points, negative points or both of the personality of the Brazilian, and thus revealing two faces of the cordial man: his friendly side, cheerful and hospitable, but at the same time superficially affable, cheeky and sometimes violent.

The positive aspects appeared more frequently, which can be derived from the fact that the Brazilian people are one of the faces of the image of Brazil with stronger and more positive associations projected internationally. Among these aspects could be underlined: the hospitality, the generosity and the cheerful and friendly characteristic of the Brazilian.

Negative aspects have arisen in fewer works, but when confronted with the positive aspects, they have probably indicated one of the reasons why the image of Brazil is often considered confusing. Among the negative aspects of the Brazilian character were: cheekiness, cunning, violence and rudeness. The cheeky is still one of the most remarkable representations of Brazilian identity, and can be associated also with the Brazilian way.

Still, this paper presented some limitations, such as: the use of only periodical articles for the systematic review, without integrating books and other sources about the image of Brazil and the personality of the Brazilian; the use of the concept of cordial man in depth, without considering other works, such as *Casa Grande Senzala*, which may be a suggestion

for future studies; and the difficulty of finding Brazil's image studies in the literature that were not linked to tourism, indicating that future research should emphasize other sectors and turn more toward exports, investments.

Finally, this research contributed to the literature of Brazil's image and Brazilian image itself, bringing a different perspective, that of the cordial man, which allows us to understand the personality of the Brazilian and its origins. Studies on the image of Brazil are still scarce, especially considering the population dimension of this image, which has many complications involved, among which the concept of cordial man.

In addition, this study indicated that in practice, the Brazilian Government should develop marketing actions that seek to promote a more consistent image of Brazil, reinforcing its positive aspects and creating new associations that allow the country not only to attract tourists, but also residents, companies, investors. These positive aspects, as far as the people are concerned, can be their affability, hospitality, extroversion and generosity, which can improve the impressions of foreigners on Brazil.

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