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Cool People

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What does it mean to be a cool person? Is being cool the same thing as being good? Do the attributes of cool people vary across cultures? We answer these questions by investigating which values and personality traits are associated with cool people and whether these same attributes are associated with good people. Experiments with 5,943 respondents in Australia, Chile, China (Mainland and Hong Kong), Germany, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, and the United States revealed that many of the attributes associated with cool people are also associated with good people. Cool and good, however, are not the same. Cool people are perceived to be more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous, whereas good people are more conforming, traditional, secure, warm, agreeable, universalistic, conscientious, and calm. This pattern is stable across countries, which suggests that the meaning of cool has crystallized on a similar set of values and traits around the globe. We build on the results to advance a theory of the role that coolness plays in establishing social hierarchies and changing social and cultural practices and norms.

Public Significance Statement
Our research identifies six core attributes of cool people. Specifically, cool people tend to be powerful, hedonistic, adventurous, autonomous, open, and extraverted. Surprisingly, the attributes of cool people vary little across cultures.

Keywords: coolness, personality, values, cultural psychology, social perception

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From San Francisco to Santiago, Sydney to Seoul, people want to be cool (Belk et al., 2010; Heath & Potter, 2004; Rahman, 2013). The quest to be cool shapes who people admire, how they talk, where they shop, and what they do for fun. Social media users, for example, follow fashionable microinfluencers and megacelebrities, teens drop slang like *cheugy* and *drip*, Millennials scour thrift shops for vintage jeans and bootleg vinyl, and tech CEOs drive electric sport cars and (literally) blast themselves into space. *The Onion* jokes that consumers spend $14 trillion annually trying to look cool (The Onion, 2010). Satire aside, scholars agree that people spend an inordinate

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Todd Pezzuti and Caleb Warren contributed equally to this article. Data and syntax to reproduce the results are available on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/m7gps/?view_only=d3fec7aa6c994b0f873403b2dcde15a0). The authors preregistered the experiments in India (https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=rr89ku), South Africa (https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=hm7jr8), Mainland China (https://aspredicted.org/C4X_8X8), Hong Kong (https://aspredicted.org/78D_YKD), Germany (https://aspredicted.org/JCK_KX9), Turkey (https://aspredicted.org/4VM_LC1), and Nigeria (https://aspredicted.org/DD9_9MS). The authors also preregistered the supplemental experiments: Study 1S (https://aspredicted.org/P56_2SP), Study 2S (https://aspredicted.org/1QW_CLY), and Study 3S (https://aspredicted.org/ppsc-zmjw.pdf). The authors presented this research as a poster at the Society for Consumer Psychology conference in Huntington Beach in 2020 and a presentation at the European Marketing Academy in 2022.

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amount of time and money in their attempt to seem cool (Belk et al., 2010; C. Warren & Campbell, 2014).

But cool is not merely a frivolous way that people rid themselves of their resources. Growing evidence suggests that being seen as cool—or uncool—influences how people are evaluated by others (i.e., their status) and themselves (i.e., their self-esteem; Belk et al., 2010; Heath & Potter, 2004). Cool people are admired (N. B. Warren & Warren, 2024), liked (C. Warren et al., 2018), and perceived to be friendly, competent, and attractive (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012). By influencing status and self-esteem, being seen as cool or uncool likely impacts a range of important outcomes, such as access to resources, social inclusion, and well-being (Anderson et al., 2012; Bellmore et al., 2011; Rodkin et al., 2006; Straka et al., 2024).

We know that cool people have desirable attributes (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012), but it is less clear how cool differs from good. To better understand how individuals perceive and structure their social world, we need to know which attributes distinguish people who are seen as cool from people who are seen as generally positive. Thus, our first question is: Which attributes distinguish people seen as cool from people seen as generally favorable or good?

Our second goal is to determine whether the attributes associated with cool people are similar across cultures. Understanding whether the attributes associated with cool people are similar across cultures is important because it would shed light on whether cool retains a universal meaning or if it changes from person to person and place to place. Research often focuses on how cultures differ, but it is also important to understand cultural similarities, as doing so could potentially reveal how and why ideas spread across groups with different backgrounds, traditions, and values. More specifically, understanding if coolness is similar across cultures would offer a clue as to whether coolness serves a common social function regardless of a culture's values or if it merely reflects its idiosyncratic tastes. Thus, our second question is: Do the attributes associated with cool people vary across cultures and, if so, how?

We investigate which attributes distinguish cool people and if these attributes vary across cultures by running experiments in Australia, Chile, China (mainland and Hong Kong), Germany, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, and the United States. The experiments ask respondents to nominate a person who they think is cool, is not cool, is good, or is not good, and then to rate the attributes of this target person. Our data reveal a common set of personality traits and values that distinguish cool from not cool people more than they distinguish good from not good people: being extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous. Surprisingly, the data also reveal that the attributes associated with cool people vary little across cultures.

Cool Is Socially Constructed

The word "cool" first emerged in African American and bohemian subcultures, blossomed with the rise of the 1960s counterculture (Frank, 1997), and has since spread around the globe (Duggal & Verma, 2019; Irshad & Sadiq, 2020). Synonyms for "cool" (hip, swell, fresh, dope, phat, rad, fire, etc.) have fallen in and out of fashion, but "cool" continues to consistently be spoken and desired across generations, subcultures, and nations (Belk et al., 2010). Interpretive research suggests that different cultures use the word "cool" to denote some positive quality in people, objects, and behaviors (Belk et al., 2010; Zouaoui & Smaoui, 2019).

Although researchers do not agree about how to define cool (C. Warren et al., 2019), they do agree that coolness is in the eye of the beholder (Belk et al., 2010; Connor, 1995; C. Warren & Campbell, 2014). Coolness is socially constructed such that a person, object, or behavior is cool if people agree that it is cool and uncool if they agree that it is not. Thus, it is less important to know how scholars have defined coolness than to understand what people perceive to be cool and uncool. We therefore operationally define coolness as whether or not a person is subjectively perceived to be cool by an observer.

Is Cool Different Than Good?

Research shows a high overlap between being perceived as cool and being perceived as generally favorable.[1] Rodkin et al. (2006), for example, asked American school children to nominate classmates who they consider cool. They found that the children were most likely to nominate classmates who their teachers described as being "popular" and having "lots of friends." Dar-Nimrod et al. (2012) asked Canadian survey respondents to list adjectives they associate with coolness. The most frequently nominated attributes were all positive, including being "friendly," "competent," "trendy," "desirable," and "attractive" (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012). Research in applied fields converges with these studies by showing a close relationship between favorable attributes and cool fashions (Runyan et al., 2013), cool technologies (Bruun et al., 2016; Sundar et al., 2014), and cool brands (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2023; C. Warren et al., 2019).

The close relationship between coolness and positivity might suggest that coolness is not a distinct construct but rather another way of saying that something or someone is good or favorable (Moore, 2004; Rahman, 2013). Despite the apparent overlap between being cool and being good, anecdotal evidence and theory suggests that they are different. The lexical hypothesis, for instance, proposes that societies only preserve labels that communicate salient and socially relevant differences between people (Moore, 2004; Saucier & Goldberg, 1996). According to this view, cool would only maintain its place in the lexicon if it describes a quality that is salient, relevant, and different than being good or likeable. The word cool would have fallen out of fashion if it were just another way to say something is good. Another reason to believe that cool is a distinct construct is that not all good people are cool. A prototypical grandparent, teacher, or nun is good, but not cool. If being good is not enough to make a person cool, then what is?

What Attributes Are Distinctly Cool?

Early writing on coolness suggests that people become cool by not expressing emotion (Majors & Billson, 1992; Pountain & Robins, 2000; Stearns, 1994). This view is consistent with the metaphor of temperature and emotion in which cool refers to being calm or emotionally restrained. Scholars that adhere to this view

[1] We compare "cool" to "good" because the meaning of good is broad. "Good" suits our purpose because the word captures a wide range of positive meanings rather than any one specific quality or trait. Therefore, understanding how "cool" differs from "good" can help illuminate what makes someone or something distinctly cool rather than generally positive.

argue that restraining emotion is cool because it demonstrates self-control, ease under pressure, and mastery (Majors & Billson, 1992; Pountain & Robins, 2000; Stearns, 1994; Thompson, 1973). Some argue that the association between emotional restraint and coolness emerged in Black culture (Majors & Billson, 1992; Pountain & Robins, 2000; Thompson, 1973). These scholars discuss how, during slavery and segregation, Black individuals practiced emotional restraint to assert autonomy, preserve their dignity, and protect themselves from potential dangers posed by openly expressing anger or frustration. The cultural legacy of managing one's emotions in the face of adversity within Black culture has helped frame restraint as dignified, rebellious, and ultimately cool. The idea that being inexpressive is cool permeates pop culture. Rapper Kanye West, for instance, has said that he does not smile for photographs because "it just wouldn't look as cool" (Vena, 2015).

Does restraining the expression of emotion actually make people cool? C. Warren et al. (2018) conducted experiments to address this question. Somewhat surprisingly, they found that American participants rated athletes, runway models, unknown people, and even James Dean as being *less cool* after viewing photos in which the person shows no emotion compared to photos of the person smiling. This result is consistent with research showing that people who are inexpressive tend to make a negative impression (Harker & Keltner, 2001; Tackman & Srivastava, 2016). It also suggests that regardless of cool's original meaning, that restraining emotional expression is no longer a prerequisite to being seen as cool. These studies, however, offer little evidence that cool is distinct from good.

A second factor discussed within the literature is autonomy. According to this view, people (and objects) become cool by following their own character or motivations irrespective of the norms, beliefs, and expectations of others. C. Warren and Campbell (2014) tested this view and found that displays of autonomy do indeed make things seem cool, as long as the autonomy seems appropriate. Moreover, autonomy can influence perceived coolness without influencing how good or favorable a thing seems. American participants, for instance, rated a water bottle with an unconventional design as being more autonomous and more cool, but no more good, than a water bottle with a conventional design. Although these findings identify one attribute that seems to distinguish coolness from goodness in commercial products, it is not clear whether autonomy similarly distinguishes cool from good people nor if there are other attributes that distinguish cool from good.

What besides autonomy is distinctly cool? Scholars have suggested—typically without empirical evidence—a lot of possibilities, including youth, self-control, poise under pressure, rebellion, self-confidence, spontaneity, hedonism, status, irony, trendiness, mastery, uniqueness, and popularity (Belk et al., 2010; Bird & Tapp, 2008; Nancarrow et al., 2002; Pountain & Robins, 2000). Dar-Nimrod et al. (2012) attempted to tease apart coolness and goodness by asking Canadian respondents to rate attributes as being more cool or more desirable. Being rough, rebellious, ironic, hedonistic, autonomous, calm, and adventurousness emerged as traits that are more cool than desirable. This survey-based approach has helped researchers identify a broader set of attributes that relate to coolness but it is limited in three ways. One, it asks only about which attributes are cool without including a "not cool" control condition. Thus, there is a risk that these studies have identified attributes that are common in cool and uncool people. Two, respondents are accustomed to evaluating people and their behavior, not individual traits. That is, respondents often consider other people to be cool or uncool, but do not typically think about whether traits like being extraverted or conscientious are cool or uncool. Thus, their method may not have captured the way that people typically think about or use the word cool. Three, like most research on coolness, it exclusively samples respondents from a relatively Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) culture (Henrich, 2020).

Is Cool Stable Across Cultures?

People across the globe describe others as being cool or uncool (e.g., Belk et al., 2010; Zouaoui & Smaoui, 2019). In non-English-speaking countries with Latin alphabets, such as those where Spanish, French, and Portuguese are spoken, cool is spelled the same as it is in English. People in Spain and Latin America, for instance, say things like, "Ella es muy cool" which translates to "She is really cool." Even in countries with languages based on non-Latin alphabets, such as South Korea and Turkey, people use the word cool, often pronouncing it similarly to how it is pronounced in English.

Do different cultures use the word cool in the same way? There are two possibilities. One is that the meaning of cool is fluid, adapting to local tastes, desires, and values as it spreads. This possibility is aligned with theories that explain how cultures adapt and modify innovations to fit their own needs (Canato et al., 2013; Rice & Rogers, 1980; Robertson, 1995). If the meaning of cool depends on local tastes, desires, and values, then the attributes associated with cool people should vary depending on what the culture values. Autonomy, for instance, may only be cool in the United States, Australia, and other relatively WEIRD countries because people in these cultures value independence, are skeptical of power differences, and are more likely to tolerate counter-normative behavior (Henrich, 2020; Stamkou et al., 2019). Cultures that value interdependence, accept power differences, and are less tolerant of rule-breaking, such as those in Asia and Latin America (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis, 2001), may not think that autonomous people are cool. If cool were merely another label for "favorable" or "good," then we would expect its meaning to fluctuate to reflect the values of each culture.

The other possibility is that coolness has become an adaptive social construct with a similar function across cultures. If cool plays a similar role across cultures, we might expect a consistent set of attributes to distinguish cool people from not cool people and from good people, regardless of the cultural, social, and demographic differences of the sample. Moreover, identifying these attributes would give us a clue as to why cultures value coolness, have embraced the concept, and why it has spread with its meaning intact.

Method

Our research attempts to better understand what makes people cool by (a) identifying attributes that are distinctly cool, rather than positive in general, and (b) testing whether coolness is stable across cultures, rather than being associated with different attributes in different places.

To build this understanding, we asked respondents in 13 cultural regions to identify someone who (a) they think is cool, (b) they do not think is cool, (c) they think is good, or (d) they do not think is good. We then asked the respondents to rate the personality (Gosling et al., 2003) and values (Schwartz, 2003) of this person. We choose

good as a descriptor because people perceived to be good tend to possess favorable attributes (Dion et al., 1972; Goodwin et al., 2014), which allows us to determine whether an attribute is specifically cool or generally positive.

Based on previous research (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012; Rodkin et al., 2006; C. Warren et al., 2018), we expected that most of the attributes that differentiate cool from not cool people would also differentiate good from not good people. However, we also expected that some of the attributes would better distinguish cool from not cool people, whereas others would better distinguish good from not good people. Given the results reported in C. Warren and Campbell (2014), for example, we expected autonomy to be more related to being cool than to being good. Given the widespread belief that emotional control is cool (e.g., Majors & Billson, 1992; Pountain & Robins, 2000; Stearns, 1994), we might also expect being calm to be more cool than good, although the results of C. Warren et al. (2018) potentially suggest otherwise. Because the literature does not make clear predictions about most of the attributes (e.g., extraversion, power, capability, etc.), we did not specify predictions about which attributes would be more cool than good. We likewise did not predict if or how these attributes would vary across regions.

Transparency and Openness

We collected the data for the main experiments over a 5-year period from 2018 to 2022 and preregistered the later experiments in India (https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=rr89ku), South Africa (https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=hm7jr8), Mainland China (https://aspredicted.org/C4X_8X8), Hong Kong (https://aspredicted.org/78D_YKD), Germany (https://aspredicted.org/JCK_KX9), Turkey (https://aspredicted.org/4VM_LC1), and Nigeria (https://aspredicted.org/DD9_9MS). The data from these experiments were collected before, during, and after the pandemic (2018–2022). We also preregistered three supplemental experiments, Study 1S (https://aspredicted.org/P56_2SP), Study 2S (https://aspredicted.org/1QW_CLY), and Study 3S (https://aspredicted.org/ppsc-zmjw.pdf) which we collected in 2023 and 2024. We posted the data and syntax to reproduce the results in the Open Science Framework at https://osf.io/m7gps/?view_only=d3fec7aa6c994b0f873403b2dcde15a0. The Sample subsection of the Methods section reports how we determined sample size, the Design subsection shows the manipulation, Appendix A lists the measures, and Supplemental Material (p. 2) explains all data exclusions. In accordance with the Transparency and Openness Promotion Guidelines (Nosek et al., 2015), we report all manipulations and measures.

Sample

We ran the main experiments with 4,261 respondents in the United States, Australia, Germany, Spain, Turkey, Mexico, Chile, India, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region of China), China (Mainland), South Korea, South Africa, and Nigeria. We selected these countries because they are located on six different continents and their cultures vary along well-studied dimensions, including individualism, tightness, power distance, and levels of democracy, industrialization, wealth, and education (Gelfand et al., 2011; Henrich et al., 2010; Li et al., 2017; see Table 1 for details).

We recruited participants either through online recruiting platforms (Amazon's Mechanical Turk, Prolific, Qualtrics Panels, Credamo) or university subject pools. We excluded participants who were not familiar with the word "cool" before assigning them to a condition (details in the Supplemental Material, p. 2). The American, Australian, South African, Indian, Hong Kong, and Nigerian respondents completed the experiment in English. The Mexican, Chilean, and Spanish respondents completed the experiment in Spanish. The German respondents completed the survey in German, the Turkish respondents in Turkish, the Chinese respondents in Chinese, and the South Korean respondents in Korean. We wrote the original survey in English and hired translators to translate the survey into the appropriate language (Spanish, German, Turkish, Chinese, Korean) and back-translate the survey to English. We met with the translators to resolve any discrepancies between translations. Because the word "cool" is used in different countries (Belk et al., 2010; Zouaoui & Smaoui, 2019), we did not attempt to translate this word.

The sample size of our first experiment, in Chile, was limited by the number of undergrads who were willing to take the study. Then, to get a stable estimate of effect sizes, we attempted to recruit 1,000 respondents for the U.S. experiment. Based on the results from the U.S. sample, we aimed for approximately 300 respondents for the subsequent experiments, as this would give us sufficient power to detect the small-to-medium effect sizes (Cohen's $f = .16$) that we observed in the U.S. sample (Cohen, 1992; Faul et al., 2009). The final sample sizes varied depending on the number of participants that we were able to recruit and the number who passed the screening criteria and reading checks (see Supplemental Material, p. 2). We never looked at the data within a country before the collection process was complete and never adjusted the sample size based on the initial results.

Design

Respondents were asked to think of a specific person. The type of person depended on the condition to which they were assigned in a 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) between-subjects experiment. That is, respondents thought of someone that they perceive to be cool, not cool, good, or not good, depending on the condition (see Table 2). We attempted to minimize other potential differences in the target persons by asking everyone to think of a nonfamous person who they like, although we ran replications of the experiment that did not include these additional instructions to ensure that the results were robust (see Supplemental Studies 1S–3S).

Measures

Because we wanted to get a broad sense of the attributes related to coolness, we asked respondents to evaluate the target person on two established and general scales measuring a person's values and personality: the Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz, 2003) and a measure of the Big Five Personality Traits (Gosling et al., 2003). The measures used 7-point scales (e.g., "This person likes doing things in his/her own way"; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), and demonstrated adequate reliability (Appendix A).

We used the Portrait Values Questionnaire because it measures core values that are recognized across different cultures (Schwartz, 2003). Moreover, scholars have suggested that coolness is based on many of the attributes that are measured in the questionnaire,

Table 1
Information About the Samples

		Recruitment			Survey	Participant demographic					Culture of region (secondary)			
Region type	Country	*N*	Source	Date	Language	$Age_{average}$	Age_{range}	Male	Female	Other	Individualism[a]	Power distance[b]	Tight[c]	Human development index[d]
WEIRD regions	United States	844	Mturk	5/19	English	37.3	19–73	422	422	0	91	40	5.1	.921
	Australia	281	Prolific	5/21	English	33.4	18–75	132	144	5	90	38	4.4	.951
	Germany[e]	344	Prolific	6/22	German	30.3	18–70	190	150	4	67	35	7.0[e]	.942
	South Africa	240	Prolific	5/21	English	29.4	18–71	102	138	0	65	49	NA	.713
	Spain	264	Prolific	5/21	Spanish	28.5	18–64	158	106	0	51	57	5.4	.905
Non-WEIRD regions	India	326	Mturk	5/21	English	31.9	21–54	243	81	1	48	77	11.0	.633
	Turkey	308	Qual.	7/22	Turkish	32.7	18–60	203	105	0	37	66	9.2	.838
	Mexico	250	Prolific	10/19	Spanish	27.3	18–59	163	87	0	30	81	7.2	.758
	Hong Kong[f]	324	Student	10/22	English	19.4	17–29	106	211	7	25	68	NA	.952
	Chile[f]	206	Student	10/18	Spanish	23.4	18–55	118	86	2	23	63	NA	.855
	China	285	Cred.	6/22	Chinese	30.9	18–56	106	179	0	20	80	NA	.768
	South Korea	294	Qual.	4/21	Korean	29.6	18–40	102	192	0	18	60	10.0	.925
	Nigeria	293	Qual.	7/22	English	30.4	18–68	177	113	3	20	80	NA	.535

Note. WEIRD = countries that are relatively Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic; Qual. = Qualtrics Panels; Cred. = Credamo. Countries that are WEIRD tend to score higher on individualism and lower on power distance and tightness; NA = tightness score for the country was not available.
[a] Individualism score for the country; from The Culture Factor Group (n.d.). [b] Power distance score for the country; from The Culture Factor Group (n.d.). [c] Tightness score for the country; from Gelfand et al. (2011). [d] Human Development Index rating for the country (Human Development Reports, n.d.). [e] Average of score from former West Germany and East Germany; from Gelfand et al. (2011). [f] We also analyzed the data treating these samples as being WEIRD, because college students tend to think and behave more like people in WEIRD countries, regardless of where they are from Henrich (2020).

Table 2
Instructions in Each of the Four Conditions

Not good person	Good person
"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who you like but who you do *not* consider to be a good person. Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you personally like this person and he or she is not a good person nor famous."	"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who you like and who you consider to be a really good person. Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you personally like this person and he or she is a good person but not famous."
Not cool person	**Cool person**
"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who you like but who you do *not* consider to be a cool person. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you personally like this person and he or she is neither cool nor famous."	"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who you like and who you consider to be a really cool person. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you personally like this person and he or she is cool but not famous."

including autonomy (C. Warren & Campbell, 2014), adventurousness (Ferguson, 2011), and power (C. Warren et al., 2018). The Portrait Values Questionnaire measures 10 attributes: autonomy, hedonism, adventurousness, power, conformity, warmth (caring for friends and family), universalism (appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature), capability, a focus on security, and a focus on tradition. We modified the 42 items from the original Portrait Values Questionnaire so that respondents indicated the extent to which they think the target person possesses the values rather than measuring the extent to which respondents hold the values themselves (see Appendix A).

Respondents next rated the personality of the target person on five attributes measured by the short-form Big Five Personality scale. The attributes include openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Gosling et al., 2003). We kept the items from the original scale but adapted the instructions so that respondents rated the target person rather than themselves. Unlike the other 14 attributes included in our study, neuroticism has a negative valence. To make neuroticism easier to compare with the other attributes, we reverse-scored the neurotic measure and relabeled it "calm."

One way that researchers analyze data when dealing with many measures is by conducting factor analyses to reduce the measures to a smaller number of dimensions. In our research, however, the 15 attributes have already been reduced from a larger number of scale items and validated as independent factors in prior research (Gosling et al., 2003; Schwartz, 2003). Therefore, we were hesitant to try to further reduce the number of measures, given that they had already been validated. Regardless, we ran a series of factor analyses both on the full set of 52 items and on the 15 aggregate attribute measures. Neither the items nor the attribute measures loaded cleanly onto a smaller number of dimensions (Supplemental Material, p. 6), so, consistent with prior research, we decided to analyze the 15 attributes as separate dependent variables.

Finally, we collected manipulation check measures, which we discuss in the Supplemental Material (p. 13), as well as demographic and exploratory measures, which we also report in the Supplemental Material (p. 16). For instance, in the initial samples (Chile, United States), we included items to measure beliefs about cultural dimensions (Gelfand et al., 2011; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998; Yoo et al., 2011). We did not observe consistent interactions between these individual difference measures and the coolness manipulation, so we did not include them in subsequent studies nor discuss them further (but we make the data available in the Open Science Framework at https://osf.io/m7gps/?view_only=d3fec7aa6c994b0f873403b2dcde15a0.

Results

Question 1: Which Attributes Are Distinctly Cool?

We tested if cool is distinct from good by estimating mixed linear models. The models treated characteristic type (cool vs. good) and characteristic presence (is vs. is not) as crossed, fixed factors and region as a random factor. This model lets us test whether the fixed effects of characteristic type and presence generalize across both participants and regions by treating the variance from both individual participants and regional differences as part of the error term. The interaction between characteristic type and presence indicates whether the difference between cool and not cool people is larger, or smaller, than the difference between the good and not good people. If cool is a distinct construct, then we should observe that at least some of the attributes differ more between cool and not cool people than they differ between good and not good people.

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012), we observed a strong overlap between coolness and goodness in that nine of the attributes that differentiated cool from uncool people also differentiated good people from not good people. However, consistent with the prediction that cool is distinct from good, the interaction was significant for 14 of the 15 attributes ($ps < .002$). Only one attribute, being capable, was equally cool and good (see Figure 1 for the effects and confidence intervals [CIs]).

We decomposed the interaction between characteristic type (cool vs. good) and characteristic presence (is vs. is not) to test whether the difference between cool and not cool people was larger than the difference between good and not good people for each attribute. Figure 1 uses blue circles to illustrate the differences between cool and not cool people and red circles to illustrate the differences between good and not good people. The lines through the circles depict the 95% CIs. For example, the top row shows that participants rated the "cool" person as being 1.07 points more extraverted than the "not cool" target person, 95% CI [.83, 1.31], on the 7-point scale. Participants rated the "good" person as being .36 points less extraverted than the "not good" person, 95% CI [−.60, −.11]. The distance between the blue and red circles illustrates the magnitude of the interaction indicating the extent to which the characteristic is

distinctly cool. We report these interactions, along with their CIs, in the columns on the right of Figure 1.

As Figure 1 illustrates, six attributes are more cool than good (i.e., the difference between cool and not cool people is larger than the difference between good and not good people): being extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous ($p < .001$).

Cool people were rated as being more extraverted than not cool people ($M = 5.18$ vs. 4.11), $t(46.13) = 8.85$, $p < .001$. Good people, on the other hand, were rated as being less extraverted than not good people ($M = 4.61$ vs. 4.97), $t(47.69) = -2.94$, $p = .005$. Cool (vs. not cool) people were also rated as being more hedonistic ($M = 5.33$ vs. 4.33), $t(49.14) = 12.27$, $p < .001$, and powerful ($M = 4.43$ vs. 3.45), $t(60.88) = 9.56$, $p < .001$. Yet, good (vs. not good) people were rated as being equally hedonistic ($M = 5.05$ vs. 5.18), $t(50.72) = -1.27$, $p = .21$, and equally powerful ($M = 4.15$ vs. 4.09), $t(62.91) = .52$, $p = .60$.

Being adventurous, open, and autonomous were associated with both cool and good people but were more closely associated with coolness. Cool (vs. not cool) people were rated as being more adventurous ($M = 5.50$ vs. 3.54), $t(49.00) = 17.00$, $p < .001$; open ($M = 5.73$ vs. 4.14), $t(50.95) = 15.51$, $p < .001$; and autonomous ($M = 5.86$ vs. 4.63), $t(49.05) = 12.83$, $p < .001$. These differences were larger than the difference in ratings between good and not good people on being adventurous ($M = 4.90$ vs. 4.25), $t(50.33) = 5.64$, $p < .001$; open ($M = 5.38$ vs. 4.57), $t(52.52) = 7.86$, $p < .001$; and autonomous ($M = 5.56$ vs. 5.07), $t(50.39) = 5.15$, $p < .001$.

The remaining attributes were not distinctly cool. They were either equally associated with being cool and being good (capable), more associated with being good than being cool (calm, conscientious, universalistic, agreeable, warm), or associated with being good but not with being cool (secure, traditional, conforming; see Figure 1).

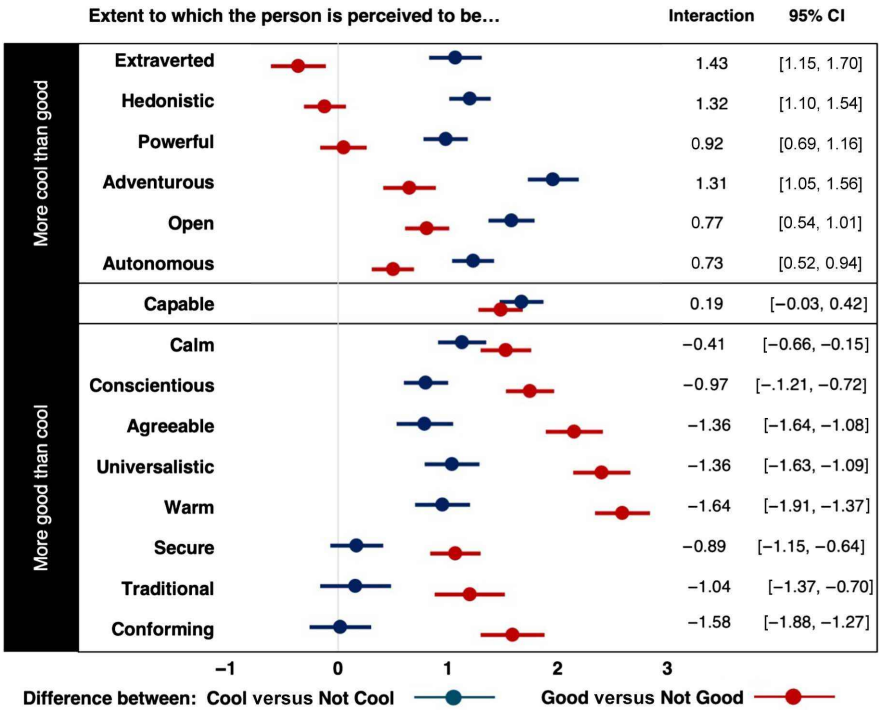
Question 2: Is Cool Stable Across Cultures?

To examine if cool is stable across cultures, we began by testing whether the attributes associated with cool people differ along dimensions that have explained other cultural differences, such as whether participants are from a WEIRD culture or a highly developed region. We tested whether the effects differed in WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultures by dividing the regions into WEIRD and non-WEIRD categories based on their cultural history (see Henrich, 2020). The countries representing the five WEIRD regions—United States, Australia, South Africa, Germany, and Spain—score higher on individualism and lower on power distance and tightness than the countries representing the eight non-WEIRD regions—India, Turkey, Mexico, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Chile, China (mainland), South Korea, and Nigeria.

Testing the effects on the 15 attributes with 2 (WEIRD: yes, no) × 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) analysis of variance models revealed a similar pattern in the WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultures (see Figure 2). The pattern on the six distinctly cool traits was the same for WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultures. In both WEIRD and non-WEIRD regions, cool people were perceived to be more extraverted, powerful, hedonistic, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people (ps $< .001$). Moreover,

Figure 1

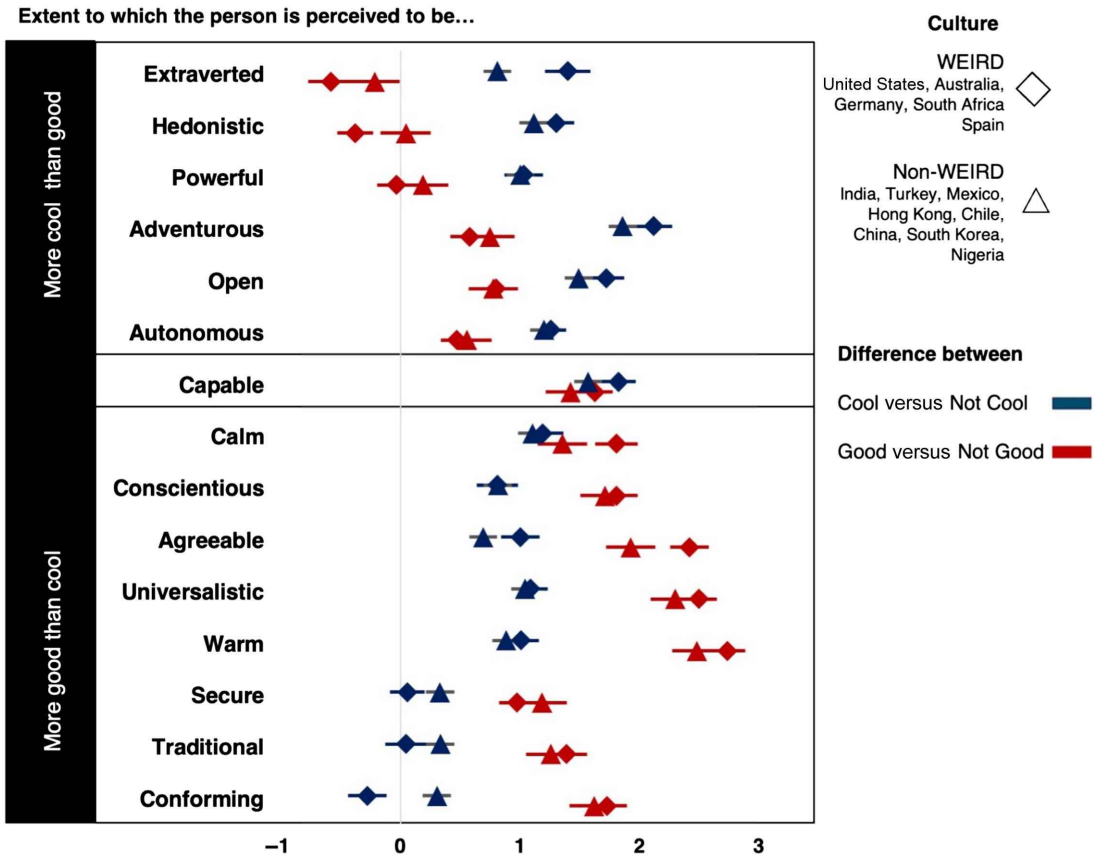
The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Differentiate Cool From Not Cool People (Blue) and Good From Not Good People (Red) Across 13 Cultural Regions



Note. CI = confidence interval. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 2

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Differentiate Cool From Not Cool People (Blue) and Good From Not Good People (Red) in WEIRD and Non-WEIRD Cultures



Note. WEIRD = Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

these six attributes were more associated with coolness than goodness in both WEIRD and non-WEIRD regions (*p*s < .001).

As a robustness check, we reran the analysis while recoding the participants from the student samples in Chile and Hong Kong as being WEIRD, as Henrich (2020) reported that university students tend to be psychologically WEIRD. The results did not change.

Next, we compared the effects among participants who live in relatively more developed countries to those who live in relatively less developed countries. We did this by running a linear model that crossed characteristic type (cool vs. good) and characteristic presence (is vs. is not) with a continuous measure of the region's development called the Human Development Index (HDI; see Table 1), as reported in the 2021 Human Development Report (Human Development Reports, n.d.), with each of the 15 attributes as dependent variables.

To interpret the results, we conducted spotlight analyses (Spiller et al., 2013) by estimating the difference between the "cool" and "not cool" conditions and the "good" and "not good" conditions at 1 *SD* above the mean (HDI = .952, similar to Hong Kong and Australia), at the mean (HDI = .834, similar to Turkey and Chile), and 1 *SD* below the mean (HDI = .707, similar to South Africa and Mexico) on the HDI score. As illustrated in Figure 3, the effects were similar regardless of whether participants came from a relatively more or less developed region. Regardless of the region's development, cool people were perceived to be more extraverted, powerful, hedonistic, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people (*p*s < .001), and these six attributes were more associated with coolness than goodness (*p*s < .001).

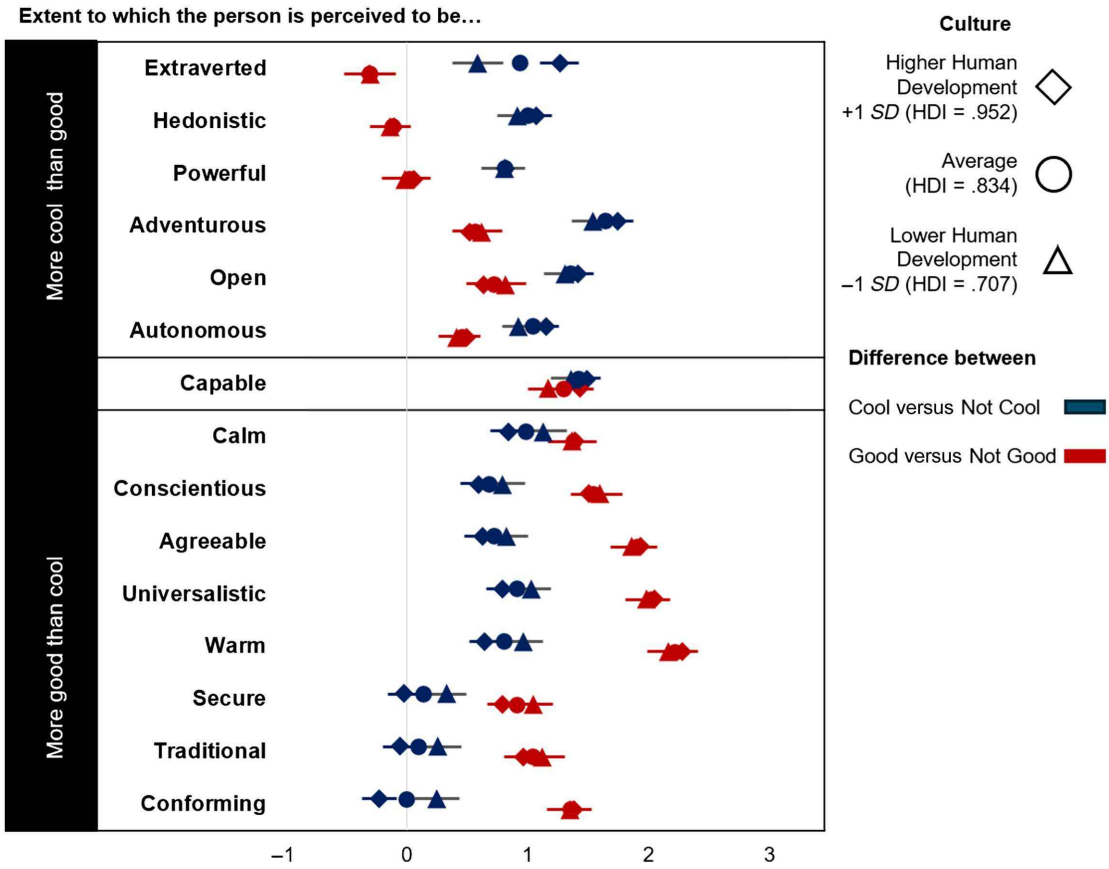
Finally, instead of attempting to categorize the regions, we checked for differences across all 13 using a 2 (characteristic type) × 2 (characteristic presence) × 13 (region) analysis of variance and each of the 15 attributes as dependent measures. We used this analysis to plot the extent to which each attribute is more associated with being cool or with being good in each country (Figure 4).

The pattern of results was similar across regions. Although the extent to which some of the attributes were associated with cool people varied between regions, this variation tended to be relatively small, and we could not find cases in which certain regions showed a systematically different pattern than others.

Figure 4 shows that the extent to which the attributes are relatively cool or good is similar across regions. Specifically, the circles in Figure 4 indicate the difference between cool and not cool people compared to the difference between good and not good people. For example, the black circle to the right of *Extraverted* indicates that in the United States the difference between "cool" and "not cool" people on extraversion was 1.78 points larger than the difference

Figure 3

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Differentiate Cool From Not Cool People (Blue) and Good From Not Good People (Red) in Cultures Lower and Higher on the Human Development Index



Note. HDI = Human Development Index. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

between "good" and "not good" people on the 1–7 scale. The purple circle indicates that in Chile the difference between "cool" and "not cool" people on extraversion was 2.23 points larger than the difference between "good" and "not good" people. With two exceptions (being open in Turkey and being autonomous in Nigeria), being extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous were more associated with cool people than good people everywhere. Appendix B provides additional details about the results within each country.

Robustness Checks

We conducted a series of robustness checks to test whether the results generalized across demographic differences in the participants and methodological differences in the manipulations.

Gender of Participant

We tested whether the attributes associated with cool and good people depended on the gender of the participant by estimating a 3 (gender: male, female, other) × 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) analysis of variance on each attribute controlling for country as a fixed factor. For both male and female participants,[2] cool people were perceived to be more extraverted, powerful, hedonistic, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people ($ps < .001$), and these six attributes were more associated with coolness than goodness ($ps < .002$). The few gender interactions that were significant were small ($\eta_p^2 < .002$), and in no case did gender change the direction of an effect.

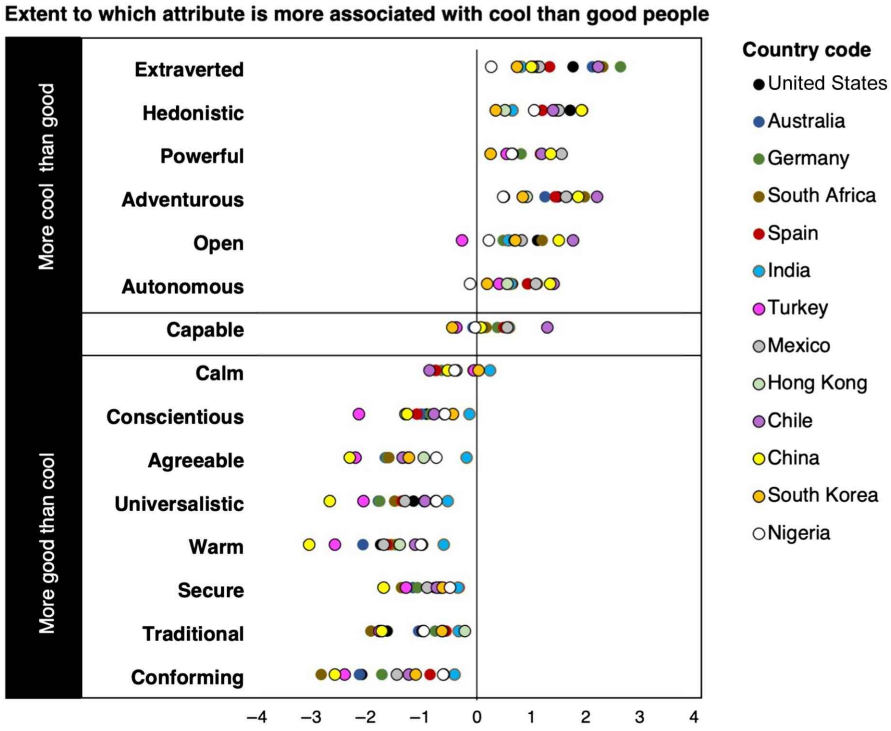
Age of Participant

To test for age effects, we estimated a 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) × continuous (age) analysis of covariance on each attribute controlling for country as a fixed factor. The few age interactions that were significant were small ($\eta_p^2 < .002$), and in no case did the direction of an effect change within the range of ages in our sample. Regardless of participants' age, cool people were perceived to be more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people, and these differences were larger than the differences between the good and not good people.

[2] We do not have enough data from participants in the "other" gender category to draw meaningful conclusions about them.

Figure 4

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Are Perceived to Be More Cool or More Good (i.e., the Size of the Characteristic Type by Characteristic Presence Interaction) in Each Country



Note. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Education of Participant

We tested whether the effects depended on the education of the participants in the United States, Australia, Germany, South Africa, Turkey, India, China, and Nigeria, the regions in which we measured educational attainment. Because the education measures differed between countries (see Exploratory Measures and Demographics section in the Supplemental Material), we transformed the education measure within each sample to a standardized *z*-score. We then used this standardized education measure to predict each of the 15 attributes using 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) × continuous (education) analysis of covariance models that controlled for country as a fixed factor. Only two of the 45 interactions involving education were significant and, in neither case, did the direction of an effect change. Regardless of the participant's level of education, cool people were perceived to be more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people, and these differences were larger than the differences between the good and not good people.

Cool Versus Favorable

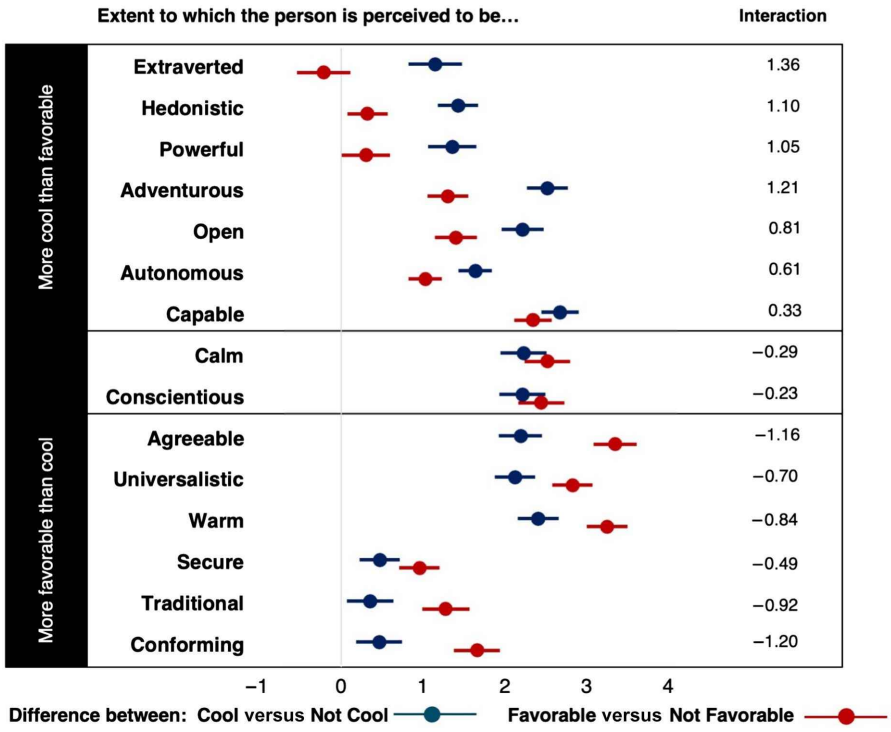
We ran a preregistered supplementary experiment with 762 respondents from the United States recruited online to address two potential concerns with the original version of the study. The original study asked respondents to think of a person that they consider "good" or "not good" to assess whether the attributes are generally positive. One concern is that "good" might have a meaning that is distinct from being generally positive. To address this concern, the supplementary experiment asked participants to think of a person who they "have a favorable opinion of" or "do not have a favorable opinion of" rather than a person who they think is "good" or "not good." Two, the original study asked participants in all four conditions to think of someone who they "like," which may have made it more difficult for them to think of someone who they think is "not good" or "not cool" compared to someone who they think is "good" or "cool." To address this concern, we did not include the "like" requirement in the supplemental study. Despite the change in the manipulation and instructions, the results closely followed the pattern that we observed in the original study (see Figure 5). Participants rated cool people as being more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous than not cool people ($ps < .001$), and these differences were larger than the differences between the favorable and not favorable people on all six attributes as indicated by significant interactions between characteristic type and characteristic presence ($ps < .001$; see Supplemental Study 1S for more detail).

Cool but Not Good

We conducted a second replication study by adapting a method that Dwyer et al. (2017) used to assess differences between happiness and meaning. But instead of exploring differences between happiness and meaning, we tested how 364 online participants in the United States rate either a person who they think is "cool but not

Figure 5

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Differentiate Cool From Not Cool People (Blue) and Favorable From Not Favorable People (Red) in the United States



Note. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

good" or a person who they think is "good but not cool" on each of the 15 attributes. Conceptually replicating our earlier studies, participants rated cool people as being more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous than good people ($ps < .001$; see Figure 6). Also as in earlier studies, participants rated cool people as being equally capable ($p = .67$) but less calm, conscientious, universalistic, agreeable, warm, secure, traditional, and conforming than good people ($ps < .001$; Supplemental Study 2S).

More Cool or Less Cool

We conducted a third replication to address a concern with the "not cool" and "not good" conditions. Asking participants to think of a person "who you do not consider to be a cool person" or "who you do not consider to be a good person" may have prompted unintended, negative connotations. We thus ran a third supplementary experiment that manipulated the level of coolness and goodness of the target person by asking participants to think of a person who they consider to be "more cool than most people you know," "less cool than most people you know," "more good than most people you know," or "less good than most people you know." Despite the difference in the wording, the results replicated the pattern in the previous experiments (see Figure 7). Participants rated targets who are more cool as being more extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous than targets who are less cool ($ps < .001$), and these differences were larger than the differences between more good and less good people on all six attributes, as indicated by significant interactions between characteristic type and characteristic level ($ps < .001$; Supplemental Study 3S).

General Discussion

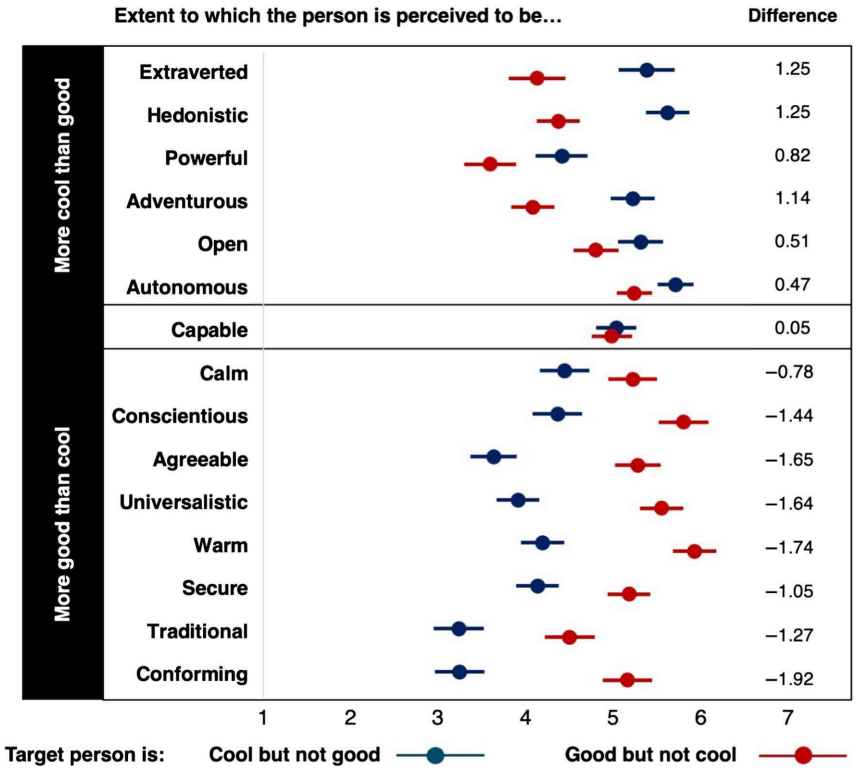
People across the globe use the word cool and want to be cool, but what does it mean to be a cool person? Does this meaning change across cultures or has coolness spread across continents with its meaning intact?

Our research begins to answer these questions. We show that people perceived to be "cool" have different attributes than people perceived to be "favorable" or "good." Specifically, being extraverted, hedonistic, powerful, adventurous, open, and autonomous are more associated with cool people than with good people. In contrast, being calm, conscientious, universalistic, agreeable, warm, secure, traditional, and conforming are more associated with good than with cool people. Being capable is both cool and good, but not distinctly either.

How does cool vary across cultures? Aside from small differences, it varies less than we might expect. The attributes associated with cool people were similar in 13 regions spanning continents and cultures (see Figures 2–4). The stability of the effects is surprising considering the extent to which these countries differ in their values, practices, languages, and beliefs. The United States, Australia, Germany, South Africa, and Spain are WEIRD. Their geography, history, and other factors have led to cultures that are relatively loose, individualistic, and less accepting of formal power differences (Gelfand et al., 2011;

Figure 6

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Characterize People Who Are Cool but Not Good (Blue) or Good but Not Cool (Red) in the United States



Note. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Henrich, 2020; Hofstede et al., 2010). In contrast, India, Turkey, Mexico, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region), Chile, China, South Korea, and Nigeria are less WEIRD. These regions have tight, collectivistic cultures where people tend to be more concerned with formal hierarchy. Given these differences, we might expect that being open and adventurous would be more cool to people in the United States, Spain, and other loose, individualistic cultures than to people in Chile, China, and other tight, collectivistic cultures. Conversely, we might expect power to seem less cool to people in Germany, Australia, and other regions with weaker power distance beliefs than to people in India, South Korea, and other regions with stronger power distance beliefs. However, cool people were seen as being more adventurous, open, and powerful than uncool people in every culture we sampled.

Research examining cultural influence usually focuses on cultural differences rather than similarities. However, understanding what is constant across cultures is important, as it sheds light on universals that define the human experience (Briley et al., 2014; M. W. Morris et al., 2015). Considering that coolness is embedded with sociocultural meaning and that it helps shape the sociocultural landscape, it is surprising that the attributes associated with cool people tend to be the same across cultures. Focusing on similarities in what is considered cool shows that people, and cultures, have more in common than previously thought.

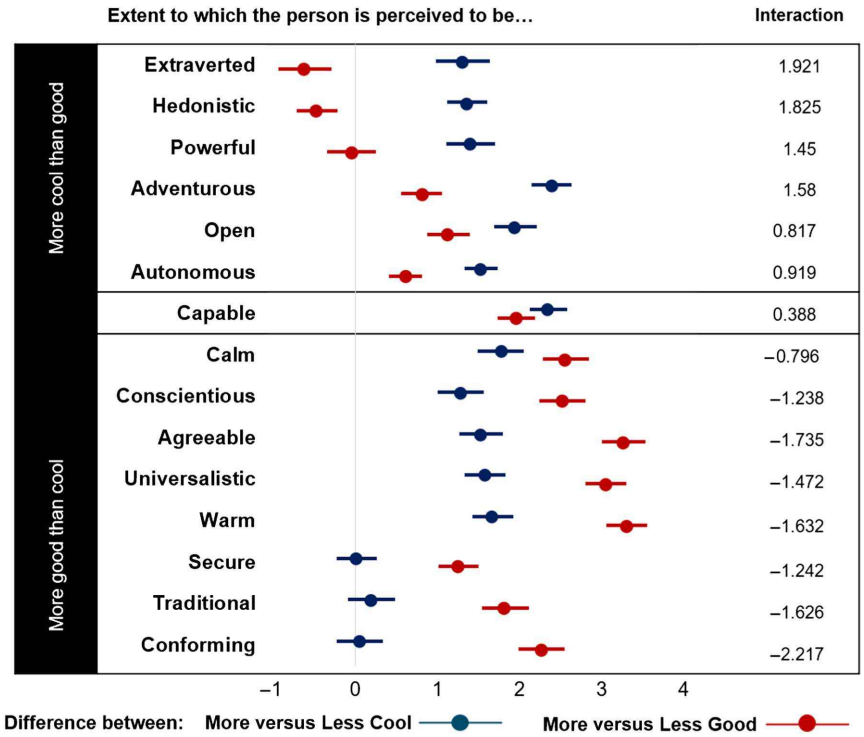
Identifying meaningful similarities across cultures offers important implications (M. Morris, 2024). Psychologists, for example, could explore whether a universal concept like coolness can be harnessed to foster a global collective identity and improve cooperation. For instance, highlighting how people everywhere become cool by being open and autonomous could potentially reduce prejudice based on race, gender, or other social categories. Cultural universals are also theoretically important. Just as finding cross-cultural similarities among other judgments and behaviors has advanced psychological science (e.g., Coetzee et al., 2014; Cunningham et al., 1995; Glick et al., 2000), understanding cultural invariance in what makes people cool could deepen our understanding of social perception, interactions, structures, and change.

Boundary Conditions

There are several factors that could influence the extent to which being powerful, extraverted, hedonistic, autonomous, adventurous, and open make people cool. One of them is how a person expresses the attribute. To seem cool, a person most likely needs to express the attribute through appropriate behaviors. C. Warren and Campbell (2014), for instance, studied how different levels of autonomy influence perceptions of coolness. They found that a rock band seemed more cool when it displayed moderate levels of autonomy (e.g., not trying to write songs that everyone likes) than extreme autonomy (e.g., not caring at all what others think about their music). The same likely applies to the other cool attributes. For example,

Figure 7

The Extent to Which 15 Attributes Differentiate People That Are More Cool From People That Are Less Cool (Blue) and People That Are More Good From People That Are Less Good (Red) in the United States



Note. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

a hedonistic person who parties all night, abuses drugs, and has reckless sex will likely strike most people as being irresponsible rather than cool.

It is also possible that, in some contexts, certain traits could amplify or diminish each other's coolness. Power combined with adventurousness—perhaps best exemplified by Richard Branson, a powerful CEO who has visited outer space, ballooned across the Atlantic, and races speedboats—will likely enhance coolness by making the person appear bold and exciting rather than static or rigid. Power combined with hedonism and autonomy, on the other hand, may not seem as cool. Investors and pundits, for example, did not think it was cool when Tesla's CEO, Elon Musk, smoked marijuana on the Joe Rogan Experience podcast. In fact, Tesla's stock price dropped 9% the next day, reflecting concerns over his behavior (Eisenstein, 2018). Seeing a powerful figure like Elon Musk smoking marijuana on the most popular podcast in the world, however, might have seemed cool to college kids and people with countercultural ideologies (C. Warren & Campbell, 2014).

Regardless of how people behave, they are unlikely to seem cool if they appear to be exerting too much effort (N. B. Warren & Warren, 2024). Trying too hard may make a person seem inauthentic, which is uncool (Jones, 1964; M. Morris & Anderson, 2015; Nancarrow et al., 2002). Consequently, behaviors associated with being powerful, extraverted, hedonistic, autonomous, adventurous, and open may not seem cool if they seem forced (M. Morris & Anderson, 2015; Nancarrow et al., 2002). Similarly, caring too much about having any attribute may also negatively affect its ability to make a person cool. For example, overarching ambitions for money and authority may attenuate (or possibly reverse) the tendency for powerful people to seem cool.

Finally, although our data show that people from 13 different cultural regions perceive cool people similarly, it is possible that the meaning of cool varies between the general population and subcultural niches. Because we operationalized culture broadly (e.g., the United States, China, Spain), we were not able to test whether individuals in certain subcultures, such as punks (Hebdige, 1979), ravers (Thornton, 1996), or streetwear enthusiasts (C. Warren et al., 2019), view cool people as having a different, and potentially more subversive, set of attributes. This is another question that future research could address.

Building a Theory of Coolness

Early jazz musicians innovated more than a new genre of music. They also developed a unique lexicon, which included describing individuals with a relaxed and emotionally restrained style as cool in the 1940s (Dinerstein, 2020). By the 1960s, youth all around the United States had adopted the term to describe certain types of people, products, and behaviors (Dinerstein, 2020; Moore, 2004). Over time, the term spread through societies and across cultural borders.

Although cool emerged in subcultures removed from, and often opposed to, commercial, mainstream society, the commoditization of cool by global corporations, like Nike and MTV, as well as by Hollywood, advertisers, and other cultural intermediaries, eventually changed its meaning (Frank, 1997). Once a symbol of countercultural defiance, cool became more mainstream and less subversive. While fashion, music, and film industries have been at the forefront of this transformation, companies in other industries, such as soft drinks (e.g., Pepsi) and technology (e.g., Apple) have helped redefine and commercialize it. Our research suggests that this more commercially friendly version of coolness has spread and is consistently associated with people who are perceived to be hedonistic, powerful, extraverted, autonomous, adventurous, and open.

The observation that the attributes of cool people are prevalent and stable across cultures suggests that coolness may serve a common social function. What might this function be? Relatedly, why do people strive to be cool and admire cool people? In conjunction with prior work (Quartz & Asp, 2015; C. Warren & Campbell, 2014; C. Warren & Reimann, 2019; N. B. Warren & Warren, 2024), our research points to a possible answer: Coolness may have emerged, and spread, as an alternative status hierarchy that promotes creativity and innovation.

Status, which refers to the relative amount of prestige, respect, admiration, and deference that a person receives from a group (Anderson et al., 2015; Bellezza, 2023), plays an important role in social life by motivating individuals to contribute to the collective goals of their group (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Ridgeway, 2019). People who are perceived to contribute more to the group earn status. The attributes and behaviors that are granted status change depending on the economic and existential needs of the group (Gurven & von Rueden, 2006; Jencks, 1979; Macmillan et al., 2015). Skilled hunters earn more status in hunting tribes just as successful manufacturers earn more status in industrial economies. Status confers preferential access to sustenance, mates, and other valued resources and is thus a fundamental human desire (Anderson et al., 2015). To earn status, people do things that the group values, such as give away their possessions (e.g., chiefs in indigenous tribes of the Pacific Northwest), protect the community from invaders (e.g., knights in medieval Europe, samurai in Tokugawa Japan), or build business empires (e.g., millionaires in the modern industrial age).

The function of coolness—and the reason why it may have appealed initially to bohemian subcultures and later spread across the globe—could be to encourage cultural innovation, which has become increasingly important, especially in economies that rely more on information than tradition, agriculture, or manufacturing. As our research shows, cool people tend to be open, adventurous, autonomous, extraverted, powerful, and hedonistic. These attributes are more common in people who are likely to challenge convention (e.g., being autonomous and open), seek novelty (e.g., being adventurous and hedonistic), and encourage others to adopt new practices and ideas (e.g., being extraverted and powerful).

Just as social class, which is closely tied to signals of wealth, became the central status hierarchy in an "industrial age" that valued economic production (Veblen, 1899/1912; Warner et al., 1949; Weber, 1947), coolness may be replacing—or at least complementing—class as the status hierarchy for the contemporary "information age." Our research was not designed to test this hypothesis. Yet, if the hypothesis that coolness functions as an increasingly important status hierarchy were to be correct, we should observe four patterns. Three of these patterns are consistent with existing data, including our research, and a fourth calls for future research.

One, if coolness is a form of status, then people should want to be cool. They should also want to own cool products, since the qualities of the products and brands people use influence their image and self-concept (Solomon, 1983). Research from interpretive interviews to brain scanning converges on the conclusion that people want to be cool, or at least avoid the stigma of being seen as uncool (Belk et al., 2010; Quartz & Asp, 2015). For instance, participants in an functional magnetic resonance imaging machine showed increased blood flow to brain regions associated with pleasure (e.g., the striatum) when they considered owning cool products but showed increased blood flow to regions associated with pain (e.g., the insula) when they considered owning uncool products (Quartz & Asp, 2015).

Two, if coolness is a form of status, then people should admire others who they consider cool. Consistently, Dar-Nimrod et al. (2012) reported that the five attributes that Canadian students most frequently associate with coolness were all admirable: being friendly, competent, trendy, desirable, and attractive. Our research similarly finds that nine of the 15 positive traits and values that we assessed are associated with both cool people and good people. Moreover, research that has directly measured the extent to which a person seems cool shows a strong relationship between perceived coolness and both liking (C. Warren et al., 2018) and esteem (N. B. Warren & Warren, 2024). Likewise, despite attempting to manipulate coolness and goodness orthogonally, we found a strong correlation between the extent to which a person was rated as being cool and being good ($r = .50$, $p < .001$; see Supplemental Material, p. 13).

Three, if coolness motivates the spread of innovation, then coolness should be associated with creating and diffusing new ideas. Prior research reports that products and brands can become cool by being novel (Im et al., 2015), original (C. Warren et al., 2019), rebellious (C. Warren et al., 2019), and autonomous (C. Warren & Campbell, 2014). Our data, likewise, reveal that cool people are autonomous, adventurous, open, and hedonistic, all of which make a person more likely to seek new and different experiences. Research also suggests a relationship between being cool and being influential. The practice of coolhunting is based on the premise that cool people lead trends (Gladwell, 1997; Southgate, 2003), and survey research shows a strong correlation between coolness and being popular (C. Warren et al., 2019), trendy (Dar-Nimrod et al., 2012) and fashionable (Rahman, 2013). Our findings that cool people are extraverted and powerful further supports the idea that cool people not only have traits that make them more receptive to innovation, but also traits that make them more likely to spread new ideas, products, styles, and behaviors.

Four, if coolness is a social reward for motivating innovation, then cool status should be more prevalent in information economies compared to economies that rely more on industry, farming, or hunting and gathering. Because information economies place increasing value on ideas, culture, and symbols rather than on material production, subsistence, or survival skills, coolness may serve as a marker of status in these environments. Leisure also becomes increasingly emphasized in information economies, as success is often linked to participation in cultural trends rather than

labor or production, which allows cultural innovators—such as artists and athletes—to showcase and shape what is considered cool.

Our method does not let us test the extent to which coolness was valued or prevalent in a culture, but historical analysis suggests that cool people were first recognized and admired in countercultural niches, such as mid-20th century African American jazz clubs and beatnik coffee shops that valued improvisation and creative expression (Belk et al., 2010; Heath & Potter, 2004). The desire to be cool spread as societies shifted their focus from industry to information, and coolness continues to play a larger role in cities (San Francisco, New York, London, Tokyo, etc.) and industries (fashion, entertainment, technology) where economic success depends on creativity (Florida, 2012; C. Warren et al., 2019).

Stronger evidence that coolness is a status hierarchy that incentivizes innovation would come from showing that people care more about being cool, and value cool people, in cultures that depend more on information than industry, farming, or hunting and gathering. Despite sampling respondents from across the globe, our respondents are relatively WEIRD, at least compared to people in small-scale agrarian economies and hunter–gatherer tribes (Henrich, 2020). Out of convenience, we sampled respondents with access to the internet, and out of necessity, we recruited only respondents who were familiar with the slang meaning of the word "cool." Because we restricted our samples to internet users and did not ask the extent to which our respondents value cool people, our data cannot test whether coolness is more valued in cultures that prize innovation. Nor are we aware of data from other studies that could speak to this hypothesis. We thus call for future research to directly test which cultures value cool people and products as well as what role, if any, coolness plays in cultures further removed from the global, information economy.

Conclusion

Cool has been described as an American (specifically, African American) innovation that spread alongside Coca-Cola, rock-and-roll, iPhones, and other markers of globalization (Frank, 1997; Zouaoui & Smaoui, 2019). Our work reveals that as the word of cool has spread, its meaning has crystalized on similar values and traits across the globe. The fact that cool people are seen as having a similar attribute profile around the world, and that these attributes are distinctly cool rather than good in general, makes a strong case that coolness is a meaningful construct that can help explain how people understand, order, and structure their social world. Our findings also suggest a possible function of coolness: a social reward that incentivizes cultural change in economies that have become increasingly dependent on creativity. If coolness emerged as a status granted to those who inspire and facilitate cultural change, then perhaps we should not be surprised that cool people from San Francisco and Santiago to Sydney and Seoul show traits and values—being adventurous, open, autonomous, hedonistic, extraverted, and powerful—that would make them more likely to question convention, innovate, and persuade others to change.

Constraints on Generality

We recruited respondents that had access to the internet and who are familiar with the slang use of the word "cool." Despite sampling from 13 cultural regions, additional research is needed to determine whether the effects generalize to populations living in rural regions without internet access. We do not believe that the effects depend on other characteristics of the respondents, materials, or context.

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(*Appendices follow*)

Appendix A

Attribute Measures and Their Reliability Statistics

Attribute	Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz, 2003)
Adventurous	This person likes surprises and is always looking for new things to do.
$\alpha = .868$	He/she does lots of different things in life.
	This person looks for adventure and likes to take risks.
	He/she has an exciting life.
Autonomous	This person is good at thinking up new ideas and being creative.
$\alpha = .756$	This person likes doing things in his/her own way.
	This person makes his/her own decisions about what to do.
	This person is free to plan and choose his/her activities.
Universalistic	This person thinks it is important that every person in the world be treated equally.
$\alpha = .922$	This person wants justice for everybody, even for people he/she does not know.
	It is important to this person to listen to people who are different.
	Even when this person disagrees with others, he/she still wants to understand them.
	This person cares a lot about nature.
	Looking after the environment is important to him/her.
Capable	This person has a lot of different abilities.
$\alpha = .857$	People admire what he/she does.
	This person is successful.
	He/she impresses other people.
Conforming	This person believes that people should do what they are told.
$\alpha = .793$	He/she follows rules at all times, even when no one is watching.
	It is important for this person to always behave properly.
	He/she avoids doing anything people would say is wrong.
Hedonistic	Having a good time is important to this person.
$\alpha = .789$	This person likes to spoil himself/herself.
	This person seeks every chance to have fun.
	It is important to this person to do things that give him/her pleasure.
Powerful	He/she is rich.
$\alpha = .793$	This person has a lot of money and expensive things.
	This person is in charge and tells others what to do.
	People do what he/she says.
Secure	It is important to this person to live in secure surroundings.
$\alpha = .759$	This person avoids anything that might endanger his/her safety.
	It is very important to this person that his/her country be safe from threats from within and without.
	He/she is concerned that social order be protected.
Traditional	He/she thinks it is important not to ask for more than what you have.
$\alpha = .776$	He/she believes that people should be satisfied with what they have.
	Religious belief is important to him/her.
	This person tries hard to do what his/her religion requires.
Warm	It is important to this person to help people.
$\alpha = .913$	This person cares for other people.
	This person is loyal to his/her friends.
	This person devotes himself/herself to people that are close to him/her.

Attribute	Big Five Personality Traits (Gosling et al., 2003)
Agreeable	Critical, quarrelsome (reverse-scored)
$r = .398$	Sympathetic, warm
Conscientious	Dependable, self-disciplined
$r = .515$	Disorganized, careless (reverse-scored)
Extraverted	Extroverted, enthusiastic
$r = .524$	Reserved, quiet (reverse-scored)
Open	Open to new experiences
$r = .423$	Conventional, uncreative (reverse-scored)
Calm	Calm, emotionally stable
$r = .495$	Anxious, easily upset (reverse-scored)

(*Appendices continue*)

Appendix B

The Extent to Which Cool, Not Cool, Good, and Not Good People Were Perceived to Have the 15 Attributes in Each Region

Attribute	Is the attribute cool?			Is the attribute good?			Cool × Good
	Cool	Not cool	η_p^2	Good	Not good	η_p^2	η_p^2
Extraverted							
United States	5.34 (1.42)	4.10 (1.71)	.076*	4.55 (1.46)	5.08 (1.47)	.015*	.078*
Australia	5.06 (1.38)	3.99 (1.71)	.054*	3.98 (1.55)	5.04 (1.69)	.054*	.103*
Germany	5.37 (1.27)	3.40 (1.62)	.206*	4.46 (1.36)	5.13 (1.41)	.026*	.178*
South Africa	5.26 (1.68)	3.73 (1.85)	.087*	4.36 (1.72)	5.14 (1.74)	.025*	.099*
Spain	5.47 (1.28)	4.08 (1.64)	.102*	4.79 (1.41)	4.73 (1.65)	.000	.048*
India	4.76 (1.32)	4.52 (1.58)	.003	4.52 (1.28)	5.08 (1.53)	.018*	.018*
Turkey	5.73 (1.33)	3.95 (1.51)	.201*	5.45 (1.10)	4.77 (1.29)	.028*	.042*
Mexico	5.31 (1.52)	4.19 (1.88)	.057*	4.78 (1.44)	4.81 (1.66)	.000	.030*
Hong Kong	4.63 (1.38)	4.05 (1.55)	.022*	4.54 (1.42)	5.00 (1.39)	.011	.031*
Chile	5.60 (1.35)	3.62 (1.64)	.172*	4.79 (1.60)	5.04 (1.72)	.003	.112*
China	5.56 (1.16)	4.93 (1.68)	.027*	4.95 (1.47)	5.31 (1.34)	.008	.030*
South Korea	4.87 (1.27)	4.10 (1.29)	.036*	4.41 (1.24)	4.38 (1.49)	.000	.018*
Nigeria	4.42 (1.58)	4.81 (1.66)	.008	4.34 (1.48)	4.99 (1.55)	.021*	.002
Hedonistic							
United States	5.46 (1.03)	4.18 (1.39)	.115*	4.84 (1.27)	5.27 (1.34)	.014*	.104*
Australia	5.11 (1.05)	4.30 (1.16)	.058*	4.49 (1.13)	5.15 (1.25)	.040*	.092*
Germany	5.61 (0.93)	3.92 (1.29)	.215*	4.99 (1.16)	5.22 (1.33)	.004	.140*
South Africa	5.76 (1.07)	4.08 (1.13)	.203*	5.23 (1.22)	5.49 (1.27)	.006	.147*
Spain	5.73 (0.79)	4.69 (1.21)	.118*	5.24 (1.02)	5.39 (1.11)	.003	.077*
India	5.39 (0.87)	4.54 (1.30)	.079*	5.16 (0.95)	4.95 (1.00)	.005	.023*
Turkey	5.89 (1.04)	3.74 (1.35)	.287*	5.32 (1.20)	4.62 (1.50)	.034*	.076*
Mexico	6.06 (0.73)	4.50 (1.35)	.204*	5.45 (1.09)	5.40 (1.23)	.000	.105*
Hong Kong	4.90 (1.08)	4.42 (0.95)	.030*	4.81 (1.00)	4.85 (0.97)	.000	.016*
Chile	5.84 (0.99)	4.43 (1.46)	.150*	5.42 (1.17)	5.40 (1.24)	.000	.076*
China	5.55 (0.81)	4.50 (1.60)	.102*	4.72 (1.29)	5.59 (0.89)	.060*	.146*
South Korea	5.34 (0.99)	4.54 (1.30)	.052*	5.17 (1.02)	4.72 (1.27)	.021*	.006
Nigeria	5.23 (1.39)	4.55 (1.42)	.028*	4.85 (1.40)	5.22 (1.36)	.009	.034*
Powerful							
United States	4.24 (1.30)	2.97 (1.23)	.103*	4.02 (1.26)	3.93 (1.49)	.001	.046*
Australia	4.01 (0.97)	3.46 (1.29)	.026*	3.69 (1.16)	3.75 (1.39)	.000	.016*
Germany	4.11 (1.13)	3.35 (1.31)	.047*	3.82 (1.09)	3.87 (1.46)	.000	.025*
South Africa	4.50 (1.15)	3.21 (1.26)	.113*	4.13 (1.26)	4.38 (1.41)	.005	.085*
Spain	3.99 (1.28)	3.08 (1.25)	.064*	3.58 (0.95)	3.83 (1.51)	.005	.051*
India	5.01 (1.09)	4.16 (1.34)	.062*	4.93 (1.01)	4.71 (1.22)	.004	.017*
Turkey	5.09 (1.18)	3.56 (1.28)	.172*	4.53 (1.25)	3.54 (1.32)	.066*	.012
Mexico	4.45 (1.18)	2.97 (1.26)	.141*	4.08 (1.13)	4.15 (1.64)	.000	.082*
Hong Kong	4.41 (0.96)	3.72 (1.09)	.058*	4.33 (1.07)	4.29 (1.06)	.000	.024*
Chile	4.04 (1.10)	3.10 (1.26)	.067*	3.84 (1.35)	4.09 (1.38)	.004	.052*
China	4.85 (1.19)	3.76 (1.49)	.087*	4.44 (1.15)	4.71 (1.36)	.005	.063*
South Korea	4.23 (1.17)	3.79 (1.37)	.013*	3.97 (1.25)	3.77 (1.36)	.003	.002
Nigeria	4.56 (1.24)	3.72 (1.37)	.041*	4.46 (1.34)	4.25 (1.72)	.003	.012
Adventurous							
United States	5.47 (1.01)	3.40 (1.41)	.243*	4.88 (1.32)	4.29 (1.43)	.025*	.076*
Australia	5.21 (1.09)	3.52 (1.21)	.193*	4.65 (1.18)	4.22 (1.42)	.016*	.062*
Germany	5.48 (0.99)	3.05 (1.21)	.365*	4.77 (1.11)	4.01 (1.38)	.047*	.111*
South Africa	5.84 (0.87)	3.34 (1.37)	.347*	5.18 (0.94)	4.66 (1.60)	.023*	.144*
Spain	5.16 (0.98)	3.30 (1.27)	.230*	4.53 (1.30)	4.10 (1.38)	.014	.079*
India	5.86 (0.87)	4.22 (1.24)	.211*	5.41 (1.10)	4.63 (1.30)	.053*	.034*
Turkey	5.83 (1.01)	3.24 (1.50)	.358*	5.15 (1.29)	3.05 (1.40)	.230*	.009
Mexico	5.73 (0.90)	3.26 (1.37)	.338*	4.79 (1.23)	3.96 (1.45)	.054*	.099*
Hong Kong	5.12 (0.96)	3.91 (1.29)	.138*	4.80 (1.07)	4.51 (1.18)	.007	.040*
Chile	5.51 (0.83)	2.86 (0.99)	.418*	4.69 (1.28)	4.24 (1.40)	.018	.192*
China	5.78 (0.89)	4.11 (1.77)	.199*	4.98 (1.13)	5.16 (1.13)	.003	.124*
South Korea	5.10 (1.03)	3.87 (1.33)	.097*	4.48 (1.35)	4.09 (1.29)	.013	.027*
Nigeria	5.39 (1.35)	3.88 (1.57)	.116*	5.34 (1.56)	4.31 (1.31)	.059*	.007

(*Appendices continue*)

Appendix B (*continued*)

Attribute	Is the attribute cool?			Is the attribute good?			Cool × Good
	Cool	Not cool	η_p^2	Good	Not good	η_p^2	η_p^2
				Open			
United States	5.81 (1.06)	4.06 (1.46)	.191*	5.11 (1.13)	4.47 (1.46)	.031*	.045*
Australia	5.66 (1.01)	4.29 (1.14)	.170*	5.46 (0.95)	4.66 (1.21)	.066*	.018*
Germany	5.73 (1.12)	3.91 (1.17)	.258*	5.70 (0.90)	4.36 (1.25)	.141*	.011
South Africa	6.15 (0.84)	3.96 (1.49)	.304*	5.90 (0.85)	4.90 (1.46)	.084*	.062*
Spain	5.38 (0.90)	3.99 (1.28)	.135*	5.13 (1.35)	4.54 (1.54)	.025*	.025*
India	5.58 (1.11)	4.38 (1.29)	.105*	5.18 (1.12)	4.55 (1.50)	.029*	.012*
Turkey	5.81 (1.15)	4.01 (1.41)	.217*	5.68 (1.00)	3.60 (1.50)	.232*	.003
Mexico	5.80 (0.98)	4.06 (1.32)	.214*	5.41 (1.16)	4.49 (1.31)	.007*	.029*
Hong Kong	5.35 (1.05)	4.35 (1.11)	.100*	5.08 (1.10)	4.78 (1.16)	.008	.024*
Chile	5.83 (1.10)	3.69 (1.20)	.310*	5.16 (1.14)	4.78 (1.18)	.013	.127*
China	6.17 (0.74)	4.53 (1.77)	.200*	5.49 (1.10)	5.36 (1.19)	.001	.088*
South Korea	5.08 (1.23)	3.99 (1.08)	.095*	4.73 (1.06)	4.34 (1.10)	.017*	.023*
Nigeria	6.10 (1.05)	4.59 (1.45)	.136*	5.97 (1.23)	4.67 (1.61)	.107*	.002
				Autonomous			
United States	5.90 (0.76)	4.78 (1.13)	.149*	5.69 (0.82)	5.23 (1.06)	.029*	.029*
Australia	5.88 (0.83)	4.91 (0.98)	.122*	5.54 (0.80)	5.18 (1.07)	.019*	.027*
Germany	5.85 (0.75)	4.25 (1.14)	.277*	5.58 (0.83)	4.90 (1.02)	.056*	.056*
South Africa	6.17 (0.69)	4.61 (1.02)	.284*	5.87 (0.76)	5.43 (1.02)	.032*	.093*
Spain	5.74 (0.76)	4.51 (1.30)	.154*	5.35 (1.11)	5.05 (0.94)	.010	.048*
India	6.10 (0.74)	5.03 (1.04)	.145*	5.81 (0.91)	5.36 (1.00)	.028*	.026*
Turkey	6.22 (0.84)	4.08 (1.37)	.329*	5.86 (1.01)	4.14 (1.33)	.207*	.008
Mexico	6.02 (0.68)	4.32 (1.33)	.253*	5.62 (0.96)	5.00 (1.17)	.041*	.064*
Hong Kong	5.37 (0.97)	4.60 (1.01)	.079*	5.14 (0.94)	4.93 (0.96)	.005	.020*
Chile	5.89 (0.66)	4.31 (1.39)	.247*	5.60 (0.96)	5.43 (0.84)	.004	.111*
China	6.07 (0.56)	4.75 (1.57)	.182*	5.52 (1.02)	5.55 (0.87)	.000	.095*
South Korea	5.42 (0.97)	4.71 (1.06)	.050*	5.10 (0.99)	4.58 (1.13)	.034*	.002
Nigeria	5.52 (1.43)	5.24 (1.17)	.006	5.59 (1.39)	5.18 (1.13)	.012	.001
				Capable			
United States	5.68 (0.94)	3.88 (1.34)	.242*	5.67 (0.91)	4.00 (1.31)	.215*	.001
Australia	5.52 (1.04)	4.05 (1.24)	.181*	5.56 (0.89)	4.02 (1.27)	.197*	.000
Germany	5.58 (0.86)	3.56 (1.25)	.287*	5.41 (1.00)	3.76 (1.48)	.188*	.006
South Africa	5.84 (0.80)	3.97 (1.27)	.275*	5.95 (0.73)	4.24 (1.42)	.246*	.001
Spain	5.49 (0.82)	3.61 (1.38)	.260*	5.21 (1.05)	3.83 (1.31)	.150*	.012
India	5.93 (0.82)	4.39 (1.19)	.227*	5.76 (0.88)	4.81 (1.18)	.094*	.020*
Turkey	5.77 (1.08)	3.54 (1.29)	.345*	5.59 (1.12)	2.97 (1.08)	.372	.007
Mexico	5.89 (0.87)	3.63 (1.26)	.349*	5.61 (0.93)	3.90 (1.36)	.230*	.015
Hong Kong	5.15 (0.94)	4.25 (1.36)	.078*	5.18 (1.14)	4.27 (1.15)	.067*	.000
Chile	5.75 (0.74)	3.57 (1.31)	.353*	5.53 (1.02)	4.63 (1.19)	.077*	.083*
China	5.82 (0.73)	4.61 (1.47)	.155*	5.80 (0.78)	4.66 (1.15)	.120*	.000
South Korea	5.22 (1.05)	4.29 (1.29)	.070*	5.22 (0.99)	3.84 (1.22)	.173*	.010
Nigeria	5.64 (1.22)	4.25 (1.41)	.119*	5.57 (1.41)	4.14 (1.25)	.128*	.000
				Calm[a]			
United States	5.49 (1.31)	4.25 (1.71)	.083*	5.46 (1.31)	3.46 (1.51)	.191*	.017*
Australia	5.13 (1.15)	3.95 (1.66)	.080*	5.23 (1.30)	3.58 (1.56)	.146*	.007
Germany	5.37 (1.03)	4.35 (1.59)	.075*	5.41 (1.11)	3.74 (1.43)	.159*	.015*
South Africa	5.52 (1.18)	3.97 (1.78)	.129*	5.36 (1.26)	3.73 (1.50)	.143*	.000
Spain	4.83 (1.36)	3.87 (1.59)	.052*	4.97 (1.42)	3.25 (1.56)	.141*	.017*
India	5.43 (1.20)	4.18 (1.62)	.086*	5.07 (1.37)	4.06 (1.58)	.054*	.002
Turkey	5.09 (1.25)	3.84 (1.29)	.131*	5.05 (0.97)	3.76 (1.21)	.118*	.000
Mexico	5.01 (1.46)	3.71 (1.71)	.079*	5.16 (1.40)	3.45 (1.77)	.126*	.004
Hong Kong	5.02 (1.00)	4.47 (1.32)	.029*	4.96 (1.19)	4.03 (1.18)	.066*	.007
Chile	5.09 (1.23)	4.23 (1.50)	.048*	5.31 (1.28)	3.57 (1.60)	.158*	.024*
China	5.75 (1.08)	5.36 (1.48)	.015*	6.04 (0.59)	5.11 (1.37)	.067*	.013
South Korea	5.04 (1.13)	3.93 (1.29)	.085*	5.13 (1.17)	4.04 (1.32)	.099*	.000
Nigeria	5.71 (1.18)	3.64 (1.79)	.191*	5.59 (1.35)	3.10 (1.69)	.261*	.005
				Conscientious			
United States	5.69 (1.25)	4.79 (1.50)	.052*	5.75 (1.14)	3.91 (1.58)	.184*	.028*
Australia	5.39 (1.21)	4.83 (1.44)	.020*	5.55 (1.19)	3.95 (1.70)	.143*	.033*
Germany	5.07 (1.33)	4.40 (1.68)	.026*	5.40 (1.20)	3.87 (1.73)	.106*	.020*
South Africa	5.68 (1.22)	4.90 (1.35)	.039*	6.05 (1.21)	3.96 (1.70)	.225*	.052*
Spain	5.08 (1.35)	4.19 (1.61)	.053*	5.60 (1.12)	3.61 (1.30)	.209	.041*

(*Appendices continue*)

Appendix B (*continued*)

Attribute	Is the attribute cool?			Is the attribute good?			Cool × Good
	Cool	Not cool	η_p^2	Good	Not good	η_p^2	η_p^2
India	5.53 (1.29)	4.61 (1.72)	.051*	5.44 (1.18)	4.38 (1.48)	.062*	.001
Turkey	5.58 (1.35)	4.61 (1.61)	.065*	6.16 (1.04)	3.02 (1.42)	.373*	.135*
Mexico	5.29 (1.26)	4.44 (1.48)	.051*	5.73 (1.13)	3.56 (1.38)	.254*	.060*
Hong Kong	5.04 (1.37)	4.58 (1.33)	.019*	5.35 (1.06)	4.28 (1.19)	.075*	.014*
Chile	5.27 (1.21)	4.66 (1.32)	.026*	5.75 (1.11)	4.35 (1.75)	.116*	.022*
China	5.78 (1.09)	5.59 (1.28)	.004	6.14 (0.61)	4.66 (1.47)	.158*	.072*
South Korea	5.26 (1.17)	4.44 (1.10)	.055*	5.33 (1.09)	4.06 (1.16)	.145*	.009
Nigeria	6.18 (1.26)	4.58 (1.87)	.121*	6.21 (1.11)	4.01 (1.86)	.211*	.009
			Agreeable				
United States	5.48 (1.20)	4.39 (1.47)	.077*	5.59 (1.24)	3.18 (1.40)	.293*	.059*
Australia	5.33 (1.06)	4.51 (1.43)	.054*	5.53 (1.24)	3.02 (1.15)	.349*	.107*
Germany	5.32 (1.04)	4.34 (1.43)	.078*	5.90 (0.88)	3.27 (1.43)	.348*	.102*
South Africa	5.26 (1.06)	4.47 (1.39)	.048*	5.56 (1.11)	3.14 (1.41)	.326*	.097*
Spain	5.28 (0.99)	4.13 (1.38)	.115*	5.55 (1.06)	3.42 (1.15)	.295*	.045*
India	5.34 (1.14)	4.24 (1.51)	.083*	5.03 (1.27)	3.73 (1.20)	.104*	.001
Turkey	5.35 (1.48)	4.28 (1.57)	.077*	6.03 (1.01)	2.73 (1.34)	.395*	.141*
Mexico	4.92 (1.12)	4.29 (1.35)	.036*	5.29 (1.02)	3.39 (1.25)	.244*	.067*
Hong Kong	4.50 (0.95)	4.53 (1.29)	.000	4.89 (1.00)	3.94 (1.07)	.080*	.049*
Chile	5.04 (0.91)	4.41 (1.32)	.041*	5.36 (1.03)	3.35 (1.16)	.284*	.088*
China	5.89 (1.02)	6.12 (0.82)	.007	6.34 (0.64)	4.23 (1.35)	.335*	.253*
South Korea	4.88 (1.10)	4.54 (1.14)	.010	5.55 (1.06)	3.95 (1.26)	.213*	.070*
Nigeria	5.71 (1.18)	3.83 (1.75)	.189*	5.81 (1.13)	3.17 (1.44)	.322*	.019*
			Universalistic				
United States	5.35 (0.99)	4.16 (1.38)	.117*	5.52 (1.00)	3.16 (1.24)	.344*	.060*
Australia	5.04 (1.29)	4.29 (1.37)	.047*	5.54 (0.84)	2.98 (1.24)	.368*	.127*
Germany	5.12 (1.13)	4.03 (1.42)	.103*	5.70 (0.98)	2.92 (1.13)	.393*	.114*
South Africa	5.48 (0.98)	4.41 (1.39)	.099*	5.79 (0.90)	3.20 (1.27)	.400*	.102*
Spain	5.15 (1.10)	4.10 (1.38)	.096*	5.72 (0.90)	3.28 (1.30)	.343*	.080*
India	5.81 (0.84)	4.40 (1.29)	.184*	5.69 (0.84)	3.74 (1.32)	.285*	.016*
Turkey	5.54 (1.28)	4.09 (1.50)	.156*	5.98 (0.94)	2.44 (1.19)	.475*	.148*
Mexico	5.54 (1.07)	4.02 (1.25)	.187*	5.78 (0.77)	2.93 (1.41)	.442*	.081*
Hong Kong	4.54 (1.10)	4.19 (1.04)	.015*	4.90 (0.89)	3.58 (1.04)	.157*	.053*
Chile	5.35 (1.08)	3.90 (1.45)	.164*	5.71 (0.87)	3.30 (1.35)	.332*	.404*
China	5.55 (1.08)	5.87 (0.76)	.013	6.14 (0.50)	3.75 (1.46)	.382*	.302*
South Korea	4.80 (0.97)	4.02 (1.07)	.060*	4.91 (0.94)	3.37 (1.12)	.238*	.033*
Nigeria	5.91 (1.16)	4.10 (1.54)	.178*	5.90 (1.23)	3.34 (1.54)	.311	.019*
			Warm				
United States	5.91 (0.92)	4.91 (1.49)	.090*	6.31 (0.67)	3.54 (1.34)	.434*	.136*
Australia	5.59 (1.15)	5.08 (1.38)	.024*	6.12 (0.72)	3.51 (1.32)	.392*	.172*
Germany	5.70 (1.10)	4.58 (1.32)	.119*	6.20 (0.83)	3.58 (1.15)	.388*	.100*
South Africa	6.08 (0.97)	4.92 (1.54)	.116*	6.49 (0.60)	3.76 (1.28)	.431*	.111*
Spain	5.75 (0.91)	4.52 (1.49)	.142*	6.22 (0.80)	3.32 (1.11)	.456*	.125*
India	6.05 (0.71)	4.55 (1.39)	.190*	5.99 (0.91)	3.87 (1.45)	.304*	.019*
Turkey	5.47 (1.30)	4.46 (1.38)	.082*	6.21 (0.95)	2.59 (1.35)	.483*	.211*
Mexico	6.09 (0.81)	4.72 (1.52)	.168*	6.40 (0.69)	3.31 (1.28)	.500*	.136*
Hong Kong	5.06 (1.10)	5.00 (1.21)	.000	5.66 (1.01)	4.17 (1.04)	.172*	.095*
Chile	5.99 (0.97)	4.55 (1.60)	.174*	6.56 (0.54)	3.97 (1.30)	.382*	.059*
China	5.59 (1.00)	6.06 (0.68)	.033*	6.28 (0.50)	3.66 (1.31)	.471*	.403*
South Korea	5.09 (1.01)	4.36 (1.20)	.051*	5.45 (0.97)	3.71 (1.06)	.276*	.055*
Nigeria	5.99 (1.44)	4.25 (1.74)	.127*	6.08 (1.54)	3.31 (1.66)	.278*	.026*
			Secure				
United States	4.82 (1.16)	4.53 (1.24)	.008*	5.19 (1.01)	4.11 (1.33)	.094*	.027*
Australia	4.30 (0.93)	4.85 (1.13)	.032*	4.68 (1.08)	4.04 (1.15)	.043*	.072*
Germany	4.38 (1.15)	4.66 (1.10)	.008	4.79 (0.96)	3.96 (1.26)	.059*	.056*
South Africa	4.91 (1.17)	4.99 (1.24)	.001	5.54 (1.03)	4.22 (1.25)	.137*	.081*
Spain	4.76 (1.02)	4.33 (1.26)	.019*	5.03 (1.00)	4.28 (1.18)	.053*	.005
India	5.56 (1.00)	5.00 (1.10)	.040*	5.73 (0.85)	4.82 (0.94)	.090*	.007
Turkey	5.39 (1.30)	4.80 (1.25)	.032*	5.72 (0.93)	3.82 (1.31)	.217*	.068*
Mexico	5.09 (1.12)	4.43 (1.31)	.037*	5.51 (0.95)	3.93 (1.41)	.178	.036*
Hong Kong	4.46 (1.00)	4.46 (0.92)	.000	4.75 (0.78)	4.07 (0.98)	.057*	.032*

(*Appendices continue*)

Appendix B (*continued*)

Attribute	Is the attribute cool?			Is the attribute good?			Cool × Good
	Cool	Not cool	η_p^2	Good	Not good	η_p^2	η_p^2
Chile	4.26 (1.02)	4.37 (1.21)	.001	4.89 (1.22)	4.25 (1.16)	.035*	.025*
China	5.38 (1.10)	5.94 (0.67)	.046*	5.90 (0.65)	4.74 (1.13)	.148*	.171*
South Korea	4.59 (0.99)	4.44 (0.81)	.003	4.81 (0.92)	4.02 (1.08)	.084*	.026*
Nigeria	5.88 (1.29)	4.80 (1.57)	.072*	6.08 (1.24)	4.50 (1.35)	.147*	.008
			Traditional				
United States	4.18 (1.41)	4.00 (1.46)	.002	4.89 (1.33)	3.05 (1.31)	.181*	.082*
Australia	3.22 (1.05)	3.49 (1.21)	.006	3.89 (1.34)	3.08(1.28)	.052*	.046*
Germany	3.07 (1.09)	3.27 (1.02)	.005	3.25 (1.13)	2.69 (1.04)	.031*	.031*
South Africa	4.27 (1.44)	4.47 (1.57)	.003	5.10 (1.20)	3.34 (1.32)	.169*	.111*
Spain	3.43 (1.15)	3.16 (1.30)	.007	3.79 (1.22)	2.95 (1.06)	.058*	.015*
India	5.33 (1.06)	4.44 (1.35)	.071*	5.34 (0.96)	4.11 (1.22)	.120*	.005
Turkey	4.29 (1.45)	4.02 (1.51)	.005	5.03 (1.36)	2.96 (1.32)	.192*	.091*
Mexico	3.87 (1.39)	3.60 (1.34)	.005	4.25 (1.28)	2.98 (1.22)	.103*	.035*
Hong Kong	3.90 (1.06)	3.59 (0.97)	.013*	4.16 (1.00)	3.63 (0.96)	.031*	.003
Chile	3.48 (1.19)	3.17 (1.20)	.009	3.99 (1.08)	3.04 (1.17)	.074*	.018
China	4.46 (1.31)	5.18 (0.98)	.043*	4.89 (0.95)	3.85 (1.54)	.074*	.111*
South Korea	3.74 (1.20)	3.60 (1.32)	.001	3.94 (1.35)	3.16 (1.23)	.050*	.016*
Nigeria	5.46 (1.29)	4.62 (1.56)	.042*	5.82 (1.23)	4.00 (1.53)	.178*	.030*
			Conforming				
United States	4.22 (1.53)	4.35 (1.51)	.001	5.22 (1.17)	3.22 (1.41)	.200*	.123*
Australia	3.65 (1.13)	4.37 (1.47)	.036*	4.65 (1.22)	3.21 (1.46)	.132*	.145*
Germany	3.81 (1.24)	4.16 (1.21)	.012*	4.50 (1.12)	3.09 (1.20)	.138*	.118*
South Africa	3.85 (1.44)	4.66 (1.51)	.043*	5.13 (1.04)	3.06 (1.30)	.232*	.224*
Spain	4.14 (1.19)	3.93 (1.36)	.004	4.74 (1.14)	3.65 (1.18)	.088*	.031*
India	5.27 (1.04)	4.44 (1.13)	.065*	5.41 (1.00)	4.16 (1.35)	.125*	.008
Turkey	4.73 (1.26)	4.33 (1.35)	.015*	5.42 (1.12)	2.58 (1.03)	.386*	.203*
Mexico	4.45 (1.23)	4.21 (1.37)	.005	5.00 (1.19)	3.27 (1.24)	.189*	.080*
Hong Kong	3.98 (1.07)	3.93 (1.02)	.000	4.26 (1.11)	3.59 (1.13)	.042*	.020*
Chile	3.71 (1.26)	4.21 (1.35)	.019	4.48 (1.30)	3.72 (1.26)	.040*	.056*
China	4.65 (1.25)	5.44 (0.82)	.067*	5.55 (0.68)	3.72 (1.32)	.245*	.265*
South Korea	4.85 (1.15)	4.33 (1.05)	.027*	5.28 (0.89)	3.63 (1.05)	.257*	.068*
Nigeria	5.25 (1.40)	3.98 (1.82)	.076*	5.35 (1.48)	3.46 (1.51)	.160*	.010

Note. The table shows means, standard deviations (in parentheses), and effect sizes.
[a] Reverse score of the extent to which the target person was rated as being neurotic.
*$p < .05$.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERAL: COOL PEOPLE

Table of Contents

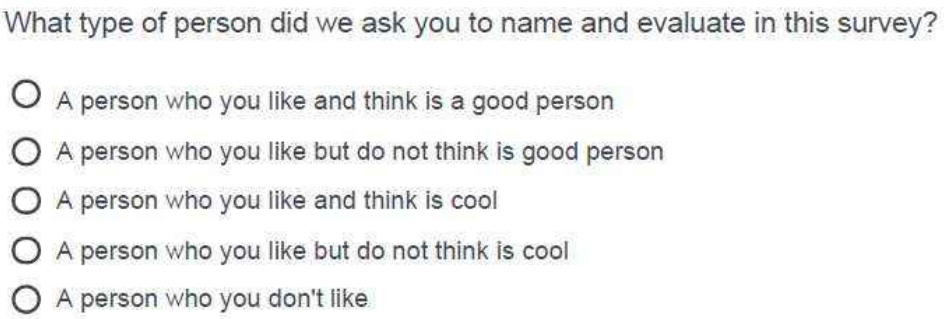
Screening and Reading Checks

We used reading and attention checks in each sample. In addition, we screened out people from participating in some of the samples based on their comprehension of the word cool or the English language more generally. This section of the supplemental material reveals the reading check and filtering questions we used for each sample as well as the number of respondents who did not pass the check or filter.

1. Post-manipulation Reading Check (all countries)

Participants responded to a question asking them to indicate the type of person they were asked to nominate and evaluate:

Version 1 (used in USA, Chile, Mexico, Spain, and South Korea)



Version 2 (used in India, Australia, South Africa, China, Germany, Nigeria, Turkey, Hong Kong)

We removed 160 Americans, 35 Chileans, 32 Mexicans, 29 Spaniards, 255 Indians, 18 Australians, 56 South Africans, 114 Chinese, 55 Germans, 78 Nigerians, 109 Turks, and 129

people from Hong Kong who failed the reading check. Qualtrics organized and recruited Korean participants using their own panel of research participants and gave us only the data from people who passed this screening measure. Qualtrics did not tell us with how many Koreans were automatically directed out of the survey for missing this question.

2. American Slang Check (India, Australia, South Africa)

Before they were assigned to a condition in the experiment, participants in the India, Australian, and South African samples responded to two questions that tested their comprehension of American slang:

In order to participate in the study, we need to make sure that you are familiar with basic American English slang. Please select the best definition for the word that is underlined in the following sentences.

"That woman in the black coat is shady"

- ○ is sexy
- ○ is ugly
- ○ looks suspicious
- ○ has dark skin
- ○ is wearing sunglasses

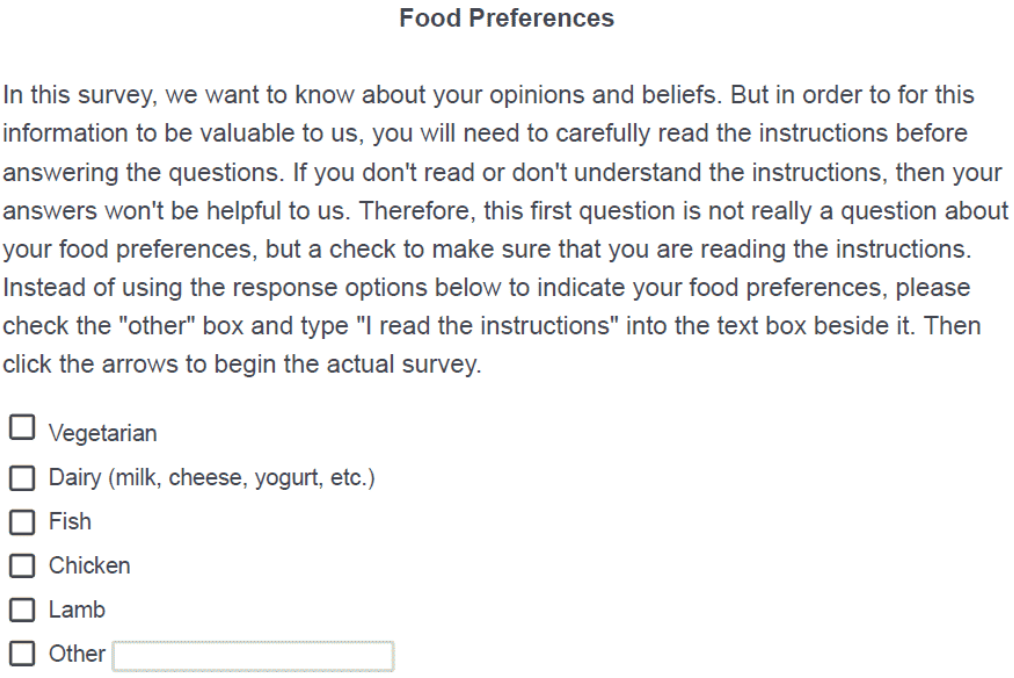
"She has a crush on her neighbor"

- ○ wants to hurt; plans to damage
- ○ likes; is physically attracted to
- ○ is angry with; is mad at
- ○ envies; wants to be similar to
- ○ has compromising information about; plans to blackmail

The correct response for “shady” is looks suspicious and the correct response for “has a crush on” is likes; is physically attracted to. We directed participants who missed either question (4 Australians, 14 South Africans, 456 Indians) out of the study before assigning them to a condition.

3. Instruction Check (India, Turkey, Nigeria)

Before being assigned to a condition, participants in India, Turkey, and Nigeria responded to an item that assessed whether they were reading the instructions (see below). As pre-registered, we excluded 85 Indian participants, 193 Nigerian participants, and 199 Turkish participants for failing this reading check.



4. Familiarity with the word cool (Nigeria, Turkey, China, Hong Kong)

As pre-registered, we excluded 92 Hong Kong participants for responding “no” to the question: “Are you familiar with the word “cool” in the context of describing certain types of people.” As preregistered, we excluded 22 Nigerians and 17 Turks for not responding “yes” to the question: “Are you familiar with the slang word cool, which can be used to describe a person (not a temperature)?” Additionally, we asked Chinese participants to respond to the item, “Before we get started, we would like to ask you if you are familiar with the word "cool" used to describe a person.” All participants marked “Yes.”

5. English Primary School (India)

We asked whether Indian participants studied at a school with English as the primary language. As pre-registered, we excluded the 16 participants who did not answer “yes”, before assigning them to a condition.

6. Nationality, Country of Residence, and Age (South Korea)

In South Korea, we recruited only participants who were 40 years old or younger based on advice that younger Koreans would be more familiar with the word “cool.” Before being assigned to a condition, participants in South Korea indicated their nationality, the country where they currently live, and their age. Qualtrics directed participants out of the survey if they marked a nationality other than Korean, if they were living in any country other than Korea, or if they were older than 40.

7. Country of Residence and Age (Turkey, Nigeria)

Before being assigned to a condition, participants in Nigeria and Turkey indicated where they live by selecting one of three options: Nigeria, Turkey, Other. Qualtrics directed eight people out of the survey for marking “Other.” They directed two Nigerians and eight Turks out of the survey for being too young, i.e., less than 18 years of age.

8. Age (China)

One Chinese participant indicated an age of 16 and was excluded from the analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analyses

We ran a series of factor analyses to see if we could reduce the fifteen attribute measures to a smaller number of dimensions.

We began with a principal components analysis on the 52 items measuring the fifteen attributes extracting factors with an Eigen value greater than one while allowing the factors to rotate. The solution extracted nine factors explaining 65% of the variance (see Table S1). The first factor included items measuring warmth, universalistic, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The second factor included items measuring open, hedonistic, and adventurous. The third factor included items measuring powerful. The fourth factor included items measuring calm, agreeable, conscientious, and open. The fifth factor included items measuring adventurous and capable. The sixth factor included items measuring traditional. The seventh factor included items measuring secure. The eighth factor included items measuring extraverted. Finally, the ninth factor included items measuring conformity. The solution, however, was problematic in that many of the items did not load onto any of the factors, and some of the established measures loaded partially onto more than one factor.

Next, we ran a second principal components analysis on the 52 items extracting a three-factor solution, as we observed a large bend in the Scree Plot after three factors. The three factors explained 49% of the variance (see Table S2). The first factor included items measuring warm, autonomous, capable, conforming, universalistic, traditional, calm, agreeable, and conscientious. The second factor included items measuring autonomous, adventurous, hedonistic, capable, powerful, extraverted, and open. The third factor included items measuring conforming, secure, traditional, and powerful. Again, the solution was not ideal because some items did not load onto

any of the factors, other items cross-loaded onto more than one, and the factors do not cleanly divide the value and trait measures established in prior research.

Finally, we ran a third principal components analysis on the 15 aggregate attribute measures extracting factors with an Eigen value greater than one while allowing the factors to rotate. The solution extracted three factors explaining 68% of the variance (see Table S3). The first factor included the universalistic, calm, agreeable, conscientious, warm, and open measures. The second factor included the autonomous, adventurous, hedonistic, capable, powerful, extraverted, and open measures. The third factor included the conformity, security, traditional, and powerful measures. Even when we used the aggregate attribute measures rather than the individual items, the solution was not ideal in that two of the attributes (open and powerful) cross-loaded onto more than one factor. We also worry that the factors combine attributes that we would be hesitant to see as the same, such as being capable and extraverted. However, the factors that emerged from this analysis were easier to interpret in that Factor 1 included the attributes that participants perceive as more good than cool, Factor 2 included the attributes that participants perceive as more cool than good plus *capable* (which they saw as equally cool and good), and Factor 3 included the attributes that were seen as good but not cool, with the exception of *powerful*, which loaded on both this and Factor 2.

Table S1. *Nine-factor solution with 52 items.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
warm 1	.763								
warm2	.771								
warm3	.686								
warm4	.658								
autonomous1									
autonomous2					.711				
autonomous3					.750				
autonomous4					.587				
adventurous1		.587							
adventurous2									
adventurous3		.595							
adventurous4		.475							
hedonistic1		.765							
hedonistic2		.487							
hedonistic3		.788							
hedonistic4		.651							
capable1					.405				
capable2									
capable3									
capable4									
conforming1									-.588
conforming2									-.434
conforming3									-.483
conforming4									-.517
universalistic1	.821								
universalistic2	.824								
universalistic3	.772								
universalistic4	.695								
universalistic5	.784								
universalistic6	.783								

secure1							.578		
secure2							.514		
secure3							.405		
secure4									
traditional1									
traditional2									
traditional3						.912			
traditional4						.907			
powerful1			.940						
powerful2			.930						
powerful3			.471						
powerful4			.421						
Calm				.520					
Calm (R)				.842					
Extraverted								.766	
Extraverted (R)								.932	
Agreeable (R)	.709								
Agreeable				.733					
Conscientious	.426								
Conscientious (R)				.685					
Open		.451							
Open (R)				.412					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

Table does not show factor loadings < .4.

Table S2. *Three-factor solution with 52 items.*

Item	1	2	3
warm 1	.793		
warm2	.825		
warm3	.767		
warm4	.716		
autonomous1	.440	.551	
autonomous2		.571	
autonomous3		.572	
autonomous4		.563	
adventurous1		.681	
adventurous2		.658	
adventurous3		.766	
adventurous4		.709	
hedonistic1		.680	
hedonistic2		.516	
hedonistic3		.743	
hedonistic4		.677	
capable1	.471	.474	
capable2	.506	.420	
capable3		.451	
capable4		.552	
conforming1			.643
conforming2	.566		.423
conforming3	.525		.458
conforming4	.497		
universalistic1	.777		
universalistic2	.766		
universalistic3	.752		
universalistic4	.763		
universalistic5	.663		
universalistic6	.655		
secure1			.449
secure2			.552
secure3			.401
secure4			.494
traditional1	.477		
traditional2			.418

traditional3			.598
traditional4			.617
powerful1		.434	.489
powerful2		.475	.498
powerful3		.463	.514
powerful4		.477	
Calm	.665		
Calm (R)	.462		
Extraverted		.612	
Extraverted (R)			
Agreeable (R)	.764		
Agreeable	.650		
Conscientious	.668		
Conscientious (R)	-.508		
Open		.647	
Open (R)			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
Table does not show factor loadings <.4

Table S3. *Three-factor solution with 15 attribute measures.*

Attribute	1	2	3
autonomous		.732	
adventurous		.820	
hedonistic		.820	
capable		.556	
conforming			.740
universalistic	.662		
secure			.753
traditional			.759
powerful		.553	.580
calm	.760		
extraverted		.634	
agreeable	.879		
conscientious	.684		
warm	.706		
open	.492	.633	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
Table does not show factor loadings <.4

Manipulation Checks

The experiments included manipulation checks, which participants completed after rating the target person on the 15 attributes. The coolness manipulation check included two items: “Do you think the person is cool?” and “Would your friends think the person is cool?” ($r = .854$, $p < .001$). The goodness manipulation check included two items: “Do you consider the person to be a good person?” and “Would your friends consider the person to be a good person?” ($r = .863$, $p < .001$).

If our goodness and coolness manipulations were effective, we should see an interaction between the characteristic type and characteristic presence on the manipulation check measures. If the manipulations were perfectly orthogonal, then participants should perceive the “cool” person to be more cool than the “not cool” person, but “good” and “not good” people as equally cool. They should similarly perceive the “good” person to be more good than the “not good” person, but see the cool and not cool people as equally good. Given the evidence that there is a large overlap between coolness and overall positivity (e.g., Dar Nimrod et al., 2012; Warren et al., 2018), a more realistic expectation is that the measure of perceived coolness should depend more on whether participants nominated a “cool” compared to a “not cool” person than on whether they nominated a “good” compared to a “not good” person, whereas the measure of perceived goodness should depend more on whether participants nominated a “good” compared to a “not good” person than on whether they nominated a “cool” compared to “not cool” person.

As predicted, a mixed linear model treating country as a random factor revealed that participants rated a “cool” person as being more cool than a “not cool” person ($M = 6.13$ vs. 2.73), $t = 22.73$, $p < .001$. A “good” person also seemed more cool than a “not good” person ($M = 5.32$ vs. 3.73), $t = 10.63$, $p < .001$, although this difference was smaller than the difference

between a “cool” person and “not cool” person, $t = 11.16$, $p < .001$. Analogously, participants rated a “good” person as being more good than a “not good” person ($M = 6.48$ vs. 3.25), $t = 26.77$, $p < .001$. A “cool” person was also seen as more good than a “not cool” person ($M = 6.18$ vs. 5.30), $t = 7.35$, $p < .001$, although this difference was smaller than the difference between a “good” and “not good” person, $t = 17.85$, $p < .001$. The pattern held in all thirteen regions in that the cool vs. not cool manipulation always influenced perceived coolness more than perceived goodness, whereas the good vs. not good manipulation always influenced perceived goodness more than perceived coolness (see Table S4).

Overall, these results show two things: (1) we were able to effectively manipulate coolness more than overall goodness in the “coolness” conditions, just as we were able to effectively manipulate goodness more than coolness in the “goodness” conditions; (2) the manipulations were not completely orthogonal in most of the regions; cool people seem more good than non-cool people, just as good people seem more cool than non-good people. Across conditions, the correlation between the measures of coolness and goodness was moderate to large ($r = .50$, $p < .001$). The observation that the manipulations were not completely orthogonal causes our tests to be more conservative, that is, it makes it more difficult to detect differences that resulted because of the coolness and goodness manipulations, but it does not call into question any differences that we do observe. The manipulations were completely orthogonal in one of the samples, Hong Kong, in which we observed the same pattern of results as the other samples.

Table S4. *The effects on the cool and good manipulation check measures in each country.*

Measure	Coolness manipulation			Goodness manipulation			Interaction
	Cool	**Not Cool**	η_p^2	**Good**	**Not Good**	η_p^2	η_p^2
Coolness score							
USA	6.27 (.79)	2.59 (1.40)	.486*	5.58 (1.36)	3.61 (1.72)	.212*	.093*
Australia	5.97 (.92)	2.58 (1.16)	.448*	5.11 (1.40)	3.70 (1.75)	.124*	.122*
Germany	6.13 (.86)	2.37 (.92)	.543*	5.32 (1.53)	3.29 (1.66)	.228*	.104*
S. Africa	6.60 (.55)	2.88 (1.58)	.494*	6.10 (1.09)	3.91 (1.89)	.257*	.077*
Spain	5.94 (.83)	2.68 (1.35)	.413*	5.03 (1.70)	3.77 (1.64)	.089*	.113*
India	6.29 (.74)	3.16 (1.31)	.458*	5.79 (1.13)	4.16 (1.70)	.175*	.085*
Turkey	6.16 (1.08)	2.36 (1.23)	.541*	5.51 (1.40)	2.48 (1.53)	.381*	.021*
Mexico	6.40 (.71)	2.60 (1.29)	.519*	5.52 (1.44)	3.60 (1.69)	.210*	.115*
Hong Kong	5.62 (.89)	3.13 (1.29)	.324*	4.55 (1.60)	4.25 (1.58)	.006	.143*
Chile	6.16 (.75)	2.46 (1.03)	.520*	4.63 (1.59)	4.24 (1.61)	.011	.294*
China	6.08 (.94)	2.58 (1.24)	. 461*	4.66 (1.69)	4.45 (1.70)	. 003	.256*
S. Korea	5.56 (.95)	3.42 (1.56)	.223*	4.80 (1.34)	3.32 (1.48)	. 144*	.015*
Nigeria	6.58 (.67)	2.74 (1.52)	.532*	6.51 (.88)	3.75 (1.86)	.379*	.044*
Goodness score							
USA	6.40 (.76)	5.40 (1.68)	.083*	6.53 (.76)	2.92 (1.40)	.538*	.233*
Australia	6.21 (1.10)	5.55 (1.60)	.038*	6.57 (.55)	3.10 (1.27)	.525*	.265*
Germany	6.16 (1.18)	5.30 (1.38)	.074*	6.56 (.55)	2.91 (1.09)	.554*	.280*
S. Africa	6.48 (.72)	5.34 (1.66)	.111*	6.63 (.74)	3.22 (1.34)	.535*	.202*
Spain	6.19 (.96)	5.22 (1.82)	.069*	6.51 (.72)	3.17 (1.43)	.449*	.175*
India	6.27 (.79)	4.98 (1.41)	.142*	6.18 (.84)	3.90 (1.56)	.324*	.045*
Turkey	5.95 (1.22)	5.08 (1.55)	.060*	6.55 (.71)	2.75 (1.47)	.501*	.247*
Mexico	6.47 (.83)	5.43 (1.41)	.114*	6.62 (1.56)	3.05 (1.28)	.596*	.273*
Hong Kong	5.73 (1.00)	5.47 (1.48)	.006	6.06 (.84)	3.67 (1.39)	.312*	.166*
Chile	6.46 (.72)	5.29 (1.74)	.118*	6.76 (.49)	3.52 (1.41)	.485*	.168*
China	5.84 (.98)	6.29 (.66)	.029*	6.49 (.54)	2.92 (1.38)	.614*	.523*
S. Korea	5.38 (1.22)	4.94 (1.27)	.045*	6.01 (.99)	3.58 (1.28)	.380*	.116*
Nigeria	6.55 (.69)	4.57 (1.92)	.229*	6.77 (.41)	3.61 (1.77)	.437*	.050*

Notes:

* indicates that the effect is statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The Cool, Not Cool, Good and Not Good columns show the means (standard deviations) for the four conditions.

The "η_p^2" columns under coolness manipulation and goodness manipulation show the effect size of the Cool vs. Not Cool and Good vs. Not Good contrasts. The "Interaction" column shows the effect size (η_p^2) of the characteristic type (cool vs. good) by characteristic presence (is vs. is not) interaction.

Exploratory Measures and Demographics

Measure: Trendy

Measured in: USA

1. The person wears fashionable clothing.
2. He/she keeps up with the latest trends.
3. This person has a good style.
4. He/she is trendy.

Measure: Collectivism

Source: Triandis, H. C., & Gelfand, M. J. (1998). Converging measurement of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 74*(1), 118–128. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.1.118

Measured in: USA

1. If a coworker gets a prize, I would feel proud.
2. The well-being of my coworkers is important to me.
3. To me, pleasure is spending time with others.
4. I feel good when I cooperate with others.
5. Parents and children must stay together as much as possible.
6. It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want.
7. Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required.
8. It is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups.

Measure: Individualism

Source: Triandis, H. C., & Gelfand, M. J. (1998). Converging measurement of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 74*(1), 118–128. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.1.118

Measured in: USA

1. I'd rather depend on myself than others.
2. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others.
3. I often do "my own thing."
4. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.
5. It is important that I do my job better than others.
6. Winning is everything.
7. Competition is the law of nature.
8. When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused.

Measure: Collectivism

Source: Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lenartowicz, T. (2011). Measuring Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural values at the individual level: Development and validation of CVSCALE. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *23*(3–4), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2011.578059

Measured in: Mexico, Chile

1. Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group.
2. Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties.
3. Group welfare is more important than individual rewards.
4. Group success is more important that individual success.
5. Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.
6. Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer.

Measure: Power Distance

Source: Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lenartowicz, T. (2011). Measuring Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural values at the individual level: Development and validation of CVSCALE. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *23*(3–4), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2011.578059

Measured in: USA, Chile

1. People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions.
2. People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently.
3. People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions.
4. People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions.
5. People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions.

Measure: Uncertainty Avoidance

Source: Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lenartowicz, T. (2011). Measuring Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural values at the individual level: Development and validation of CVSCALE. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *23*(3–4), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2011.578059

Measured in: USA, Chile

1. It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I'm expected to do.
2. It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures.

3. Rules and regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me.
4. Standardized work procedures are helpful.
5. Instructions for operations are important.

Measure: Masculinity

Source: Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lenartowicz, T. (2011). Measuring Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural values at the individual level: Development and validation of CVSCALE. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *23*(3–4), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2011.578059

Measured in: Chile

1. It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women.
2. Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition.
3. Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men.
4. There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman.

Measure: Tightness/Looseness

Source: Gelfand, M. J., Raver, J. L., Nishii, L., Leslie, L. M., Lun, J., Lim, B. C., Duan, L., Almaliach, A., Ang, S., Arnadottir, J., Aycan, Z., Boehnke, K., Boski, P, Cabecinhas, R., Chan, D., Chhokar, J., D'Amato, A., Ferrer, M., Fischlmayr, I. C…. & Yamaguchi, S. (2011). Differences between tight and loose cultures: A 33-nation study. *Science, 332*(6033), 1100–1104. DOI: 10.1126/science.1197754

Measured in: USA, Chile

1. There are many social norms that people are supposed to abide by in this country.
2. In this country, there are very clear expectations for how people should act in most situations.
3. People agree upon what behaviors are appropriate versus inappropriate in most situations in this country.
4. People in this country have a great deal of freedom in deciding how they want to behave in most situations.
5. In this country, if someone acts in an inappropriate way, others will strongly disapprove.
6. People in this country almost always comply with social norms.

Measure: Materialism

Source: Richins, M. L., & Dawson, S. (1992). A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research, 19*(3), 303–316. https://doi.org/10.1086/209304

Measured in: Chile

1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.
2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.
3. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.
4. The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.
5. I like to own things that impress people.
6. I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own.
7. I usually buy only the things I need.
8. I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.
9. The things I own aren't all that important to me.
10. I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.
11. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.
12. I like a lot of luxury in my life.
13. I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know.
14. I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.
15. My life would be better if I owned nicer things.
16. I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things.
17. I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.
18. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.

Measure: Education

How many years of schooling did you complete? Count any level of education (primary, secondary, university, etc.) starting with primary school. (USA)

Coding note: Some participants entered text rather than their number of years. To analyze the data, we recoded these cases as follows:

- Recoded words into numbers (e.g., “four” → 4)
- Recoded undergraduate degrees (e.g., “undergrad,” “BA,” etc.) to 16
- Recoded masters degrees (e.g., “Masters,” “MA,” etc.) to 18
- Deleted numbers that appeared to indicate the year the participant graduated (e.g., “1998”)
- Deleted text that appeared unrelated to the question (e.g., “nice”)

Which of the following best describes your highest achieved education level? Some Primary School, Primary School, Secondary School, National Certificate/ Associates degree, Bachelor’s degree, Graduate degree (Australia, South Africa, Nigeria, Turkey)

Which of the following best describes your highest achieved education level? Some High School, High School Graduate, Some college, no degree, Associates degree, Bachelor's degree, Graduate degree (India)

What is your highest level of education? High school diploma (without college entrance qualification), High school diploma (with college entrance qualification), Apprenticeship, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Promotion, Other. (Germany)

What is the highest education level you have achieved? Some Primary School or Middle School but did not graduate (1), Middle School degree (2), High School or Vocational School degree (3), Associate degree (4), Bachelor's degree (5), Graduate degree (including Masters and Doctorate; 6) (China)

Which of the following best describes your highest achieved education level? Some Primary School. Primary School degree, Secondary School degree, Associate degree or equivalent, Bachelor's degree, Graduate degree (Masters, Doctorate, etc.) (Hong Kong)

Measure: Father's Education

Education level of your father: Incomplete basic education, complete basic education, incomplete secondary education, complete secondary education, incomplete superior education, complete superior education, incomplete masters, complete masters, incomplete doctorate, complete doctorate (Chile)

Which of the following best describes your father's final educational background? Junior high school graduate or younger, high school graduate, some college, university, graduate degree. (Korea)

Measure: Mother's Education

Education level of your mother: Incomplete basic education, complete basic education, incomplete secondary education, complete secondary education, incomplete superior education, complete superior education, incomplete masters, complete masters, incomplete doctorate, complete doctorate (Chile).

Which of the following best describes your mother's final educational background? Junior high school graduate or younger, high school graduate, some college, university, graduate degree. (Korea)

Measure: Ethnicity

Measured in: USA

Are you…? White (non-Hispanic), Hispanic, Black/African American, Asian, Other

Measure: Income

Measured in: Chile

Income of your family (twenty choices ranging from 0 to more than 5,000,000 Chilean Pesos a month)

Measure: Big-Five Inventory-Korean Version (BFI-K)

Source: Kim, S. Y., Kim, J. M., Yoo, J. A., Bae, K. Y., Kim, S. W., Yang, S. J., Shin, I. S., & Yoon, J. S. (2010). Standardization and validation of big five inventory-Korean version (BFI-K) in elders. *Korean Journal of Biological Psychiatry, 17*(1), 15–25. https://koreascience.kr/article/JAKO201013067171117.page

Measured in: South Korea

Please tell us whether you agree that the person you nominated has the following traits.

1. Conservative.
2. Trustworthy.
3. Lazy.
4. Laid back and relieves stress well.
5. Has little interest in art.
6. Likes to get along and is sociable.
7. Good at seeing other's faults.
8. Does job thoroughly.
9. Gets nervous easily.
10. Imaginative.

Measure: Geographic Location

Where are you from? (Chile)

In which country do you live? (USA)

What country do you live in? (Australia and South Africa)

In which state do you live? (USA)

Which province and city do you live in? (China)

What country do you live in? (Germany, Nigeria, Turkey)

Where are you from? Hong Kong, Mainland China, Macau, Taiwan, Somewhere else, please specify (Hong Kong)

Measure: Language

Is Spanish your native language? (Chile)

Which statement best reflects your ability to understand English? English is my native language, I am fluent in English, I am not Fluent in English, None of this makes sense to me. (India)

What is your first language? Cantonese, Mandarin Chinese, English, Other, please specify (Hong Kong)

Measure: Gender

Australia, Germany, Hong Kong SAR, India, Nigeria, South Africa, and Turkey
All supplemental experiments (Study 1S–3S)
Which gender do you most closely identify with?
Male
Female
Other (text box)

Mexico and Spain
Gender:
Feminine
Masculine

Chile
Gender:
Feminine
Masculine
Other

China
What is your gender?
Male
Female
Other (text entry)

Korea
What is your gender?
Female
Male

USA
Are you…?
Male
Female

Study 1S: Supplemental Replication, Cool vs. Favorable

Sample. We recruited participants in the United States using CloudResearch Connect. As described in the preregistration (Link: https://aspredicted.org/P56_2SP), we excluded participants who indicated that they evaluated the wrong type of person. The final sample includes 762 participants. The average age is 39.32 (Range: 18–77). There are 359 females, 391 males, and 12 identified with other genders.

Procedure. Participants were asked to think of and evaluate one of four types of people depending on the condition to which they were assigned in a 2 (characteristic type: cool, favorable) × 2 (characteristic presence: is, is not) between-subjects design. Participants read one of the prompts in Table S5 and completed the same attribute and manipulation check measures as the main study.

Table S5. *The manipulations in the supplemental study, Study 1S.*

Not Favorable:	**Favorable:**
"Please think of someone you know, who **you do not have a favorable opinion of**. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you do not have a positive opinion of him or her."	"Please think of someone you know, **who you have a favorable opinion of**. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you have a positive opinion of him or her."
Not Cool:	**Cool:**
"Please think of someone you know, who **you do not think is cool**. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you do not think they are cool."	"Please think of someone you know, who **you think is cool**. Who you nominate isn't important as long as you think they are cool."

Results. The results showed the same general pattern observed in the main experiment (see Table S6 for details).

Table S6. *The extent to which cool, not cool, favorable, and not favorable people were perceived to be cool and favorable and the extent to which they have the Big 5 personality traits and 10 core values in Study 1S.*

Measure	Coolness manipulation			Favorable Opinion manipulation			Interaction
	Cool	**Not Cool**	η_p^2	**Favorable**	**Not Favorable**	η_p^2	η_p^2
Extraverted	5.20 (1.49)	4.06 (1.75)	.062*	4.77 (1.50)	4.99 (1.55)	.002	.045*
Hedonistic	5.45 (.96)	4.03 (1.39)	.149*	5.09 (1.15)	4.77 (1.29)	.009*	.050*
Powerful	4.55 (1.23)	3.19 (1.56)	.099*	4.14 (1.39)	3.84 (1.59)	.005*	.032*
Adventurous	5.52 (.94)	3.00 (1.27)	.351*	4.88 (1.25)	3.58 (1.37)	.126*	.059*
Open	5.82 (1.01)	3.61 (1.41)	.282*	5.31 (1.24)	3.91 (1.32)	.136*	.026*
Autonomous	6.02 (.74)	4.39 (1.22)	.254*	5.76 (.84)	4.74 (1.10)	.119*	.023*
Capable	5.96 (.83)	3.29 (1.37)	.415*	5.71 (.91)	3.37 (1.32)	.353*	.005*
Calm	5.51 (1.20)	3.28 (1.61)	.249*	5.48 (1.31)	2.96 (1.34)	.298*	.003
Conscient.	5.86 (1.04)	3.65 (1.62)	.246*	5.77 (1.18)	3.32 (1.58)	.285*	.002
Universal.	5.29 (1.11)	3.17 (1.41)	.281*	5.26 (1.09)	2.44 (1.18)	.410*	.021*
Agreeable	5.52 (1.12)	3.33 (1.55)	.269*	5.60 (1.24)	2.25 (1.17)	.463*	.049*
Warm	5.94 (.89)	3.53 (1.62)	.331*	6.05 (.91)	2.80 (1.31)	.475*	.030*
Secure	4.67 (1.13)	4.20 (1.25)	.019*	5.00 (1.07)	4.00 (1.30)	.075*	.010*
Traditional	3.85 (1.37)	3.50 (1.47)	.008*	4.24 (1.41)	2.97 (1.33)	.095*	.027*
Conforming	4.21 (1.37)	3.75(1.59)	.014*	4.73 (1.27)	3.07 (1.25)	.154*	.045*
Manipulation Checks							
Cool	6.40 (.83)	1.91 (1.03)	.679*	5.80 (1.28)	1.89 (1.18)	.617*	.017*
Favorable	6.42 (.80)	2.86 (1.73)	.536*	6.36 (.91)	1.82 (1.06)	.653*	.042*

Notes:

* indicates that the effect is statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The Cool, Not Cool, Favorable, and Not Favorable columns show the means (standard deviations) for the measured attribute in each of the four conditions.

The "η_p^2" columns under coolness manipulation and favorable opinion manipulation show the effect size of the Cool vs. Not Cool and Favorable vs. Not Favorable contrasts. The "Interaction" column shows the effect size (η_p^2) of the characteristic type (cool vs. favorable) by characteristic presence (is vs. is not) interaction. This reveals whether an attribute more strongly distinguishes cool from not cool people or favorable from not favorable people.

Study 2S: Supplemental Replication, Cool but Not Good vs. Good but Not Cool

Sample. We recruited participants in the United States on Prolific. As described in the preregistration (Link: https://aspredicted.org/1QW_CLY), we excluded participants who indicated that they evaluated the wrong type of person. The final sample includes 364 participants. The average age is 43.50 (Range: 19–85). There are 189 females, 172 males, and 3 identified with other genders.

Procedure. Participants were asked to think of and evaluate one of two types of people, "cool but not good" or "good but not cool," depending on the condition to which they were assigned. Participants read one of the prompts in Table S7 and completed the same attribute and manipulation check measures as the previous studies.

Table S7. *The manipulations in the supplemental study, Study 2S.*

Cool but Not Good:	**Good but Not Cool:**
"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who **you consider to be cool but not good.** Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think he or she is a cool person but not good person."	"Please think of someone you know, a non-famous person, who **you consider to be good but not cool.** Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think he or she is a good person but not a cool person."

Results. The results showed the same general pattern as observed in the previous studies (see Table S8 for details).

Table S8. *The extent to which cool but not good and good but not cool people were perceived to be cool and good and the extent to which they have the Big 5 personality traits and 10 core values in Study 2S.*

Measure	Cool but Not Good	Good but not Cool	η_p^2
Extraverted	5.38 (1.54)	4.13 (1.68)	.131*
Hedonistic	5.62 (1.20)	4.37 (1.37)	.192*
Powerful	4.41 (1.44)	3.59 (1.36)	.080*
Adventurous	5.22 (1.23)	4.08 (1.37)	.161*
Open	5.31 (1.31)	4.80 (1.36)	.035*
Autonomous	5.71 (.95)	5.24 (1.08)	.050*
Capable	5.03 (1.18)	4.98 (1.17)	.001
Calm	4.44 (1.61)	5.22 (1.50)	.059*
Conscient.	4.36 (1.59)	5.80 (1.17)	.207*
Universal.	3.63 (1.40)	5.28 (1.08)	.301*
Agreeable	3.91 (1.46)	5.55 (1.17)	.278*
Warm	4.19 (1.38)	5.93 (.95)	.346*
Secure	4.13 (1.24)	5.18 (1.05)	.173*
Traditional	3.23 (1.46)	4.50 (1.45)	.160*
Conforming	3.24 (1.52)	5.16 (1.32)	.311*
Manipulation Checks			
Cool	5.25 (1.26)	3.36 (1.59)	.306*
Good	3.53 (1.63)	6.21 (1.05)	.484*

Notes:
* indicates that the effect is statistically significant at $p < .05$.
The "Cool but Not Good" and "Good but not Cool" columns show the means (standard deviations) for the measured attribute for each condition.
The "η_p^2" column shows the effect size of the difference between the "Cool but Not Good" and "Good but not Cool" conditions.

Study 3S: Supplemental Replication, Less Cool (Good) vs. More Cool (Good)

Sample: Study 3S recruited participants in the United States using CloudResearch. As described in the preregistration (https://aspredicted.org/ppsc-zmjw.pdf), we excluded participants who indicated that they evaluated the wrong type of person. The final sample includes 558 participants. The average age is 38.35 (Range: 18–73). There are 280 females, 272 males, and 6 identified with other genders.

Procedure. Participants were asked to think of and evaluate one of four types of people depending on the condition to which they were assigned in a 2 (characteristic type: cool, good) × 2 (characteristic level: more than most people, less than most people) between-subjects design. Participants read one of the prompts in Table S9 and completed the same attribute and manipulation check measures as the main study.

Table S9. *The manipulations in the supplemental study, Study 3S.*

Less Good Person:	**More Good Person:**
"To begin, please think of someone you know who **you consider to be less good than most people**. Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think this person is less good than most people you know.	"To begin, please think of someone you know who **you consider to be more good than most people.** Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think this person to be more good than most people you know."
Less Cool Person:	**More Cool Person:**
"To begin, please think of someone you know who **you consider to be less cool than most people.** Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think he or she is less cool than most people you know.	"To begin, please think of someone you know who **you consider to be more cool than most people.** Who you nominate isn't important, as long as you think he or she is more cool than most people you know.

Results. The results showed the same general pattern as observed in the previous studies (see Table S10 for details).

Table S10. *The extent to which more cool, less cool, more good, and less good people were*

perceived to be cool and good and the extent to which they have the Big 5 personality traits and 10 core values in Study 3S.

Measure	Coolness manipulation			Goodness manipulation			Interaction
	More cool	**Less cool**	η_p^2	**More good**	**Less good**	η_p^2	η_p^2
Extraverted	5.20 (1.55)	3.89 (1.80)	.076*	4.40 (1.53)	5.01 (1.49)	.019*	.084*
Hedonistic	5.52 (1.02)	4.16 (1.26)	.129*	4.66 (1.35)	5.12 (1.28)	.018*	.121*
Powerful	4.40 (1.33)	3.00 (1.54)	.102*	3.87 (1.23)	3.91 (1.69)	.000	.058*
Adventurous	5.44 (.97)	3.05 (1.34)	.293*	4.72 (1.29)	3.91 (1.52)	.048*	.085*
Open	5.70 (1.00)	3.75 (1.41)	.223*	5.20 (1.15)	4.06 (1.48)	.093*	.025*
Autonomous	5.95 (.77)	4.43 (1.29)	.219*	5.57 (.80)	4.96 (1.12)	.045*	.049*
Capable	5.78 (.86)	3.43 (1.34)	.329*	5.57 (.90)	3.60 (1.48)	.266*	.007
Calm	5.45 (1.22)	3.68 (1.64)	.162*	5.61 (1.27)	3.05 (1.48)	.302*	.020*
Conscient.	5.57 (1.23)	4.28 (1.81)	.087*	5.76 (1.17)	3.24 (1.56)	.280*	.043*
Universal.	5.19 (1.19)	3.61 (1.56)	.158*	5.62 (.88)	2.57 (1.39)	.427*	.078*
Agreeable	5.50 (1.18)	3.97 (1.59)	.144*	5.86 (1.02)	2.59 (1.38)	.448*	.100*
Warm	5.76 (1.05)	4.08 (1.62)	.184*	6.25 (.76)	2.94 (1.38)	.483*	.099*
Secure	4.58 (1.16)	4.56 (1.32)	.000	5.16 (1.05)	3.91 (1.29)	.123*	.062*
Traditional	3.87 (1.35)	3.68 (1.39)	.003	4.68 (1.40)	2.86 (1.37)	.186*	.081*
Conforming	4.12 (1.45)	4.06 (1.60)	.000	5.10 (1.15)	2.83 (1.27)	.263*	.142*
Manipulation Checks							
Cool	6.25 (.99)	2.34 (1.28)	.511*	5.59 (1.37)	2.52 (1.62)	.406*	.025*
Good	6.08 (1.13)	4.50 (1.96)	.134*	6.48 (.73)	2.64 (1.56)	.492*	.139*

Notes:

* indicates that the effect is statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The More cool, Less cool, More good, and Less good columns show the means (standard deviations) for the measured attribute in each of the four conditions.

The "η_p^2" columns under Coolness manipulation and Goodness manipulation show the effect size of the More cool vs. Less cool and More good vs. Less good contrasts. The "Interaction" column shows the effect size (η_p^2) of the characteristic type (cool vs. good) by characteristic level (more than most people vs. less than most people) interaction. This reveals whether an attribute more strongly distinguishes people who are more cool than most people from people who are less cool than most people or people who are more good than most people from people who are less good than people.