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### What Makes a Host Unique? A Prototype Analysis

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# What Makes a Host Unique? A Prototype Analysis

Tyler Kennedy, Tasia Parsons, Lauren Zago, Dr. Benjamin Meagher (Faculty Mentor)  
Hope College

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## Background Literature

The concepts of hosting and hospitality have been in human culture for thousands of years. However, it has rarely been investigated through a psychological lens (cf., Meagher et al., 2022).

We performed a prototype analysis (Samuelson et al., 2014) to discover what people associate with the social role of a good host. Specifically, we test for conceptual overlap between this term and two related social categories: a good visitor and a good person.

Good Host			
Term	Study 1 Frequency	Study 2 Mean	Study 2 SD
Welcoming	43	6.4	0.819
Hospitable	8	6.36	0.913
Inviting	6	6.23	0.827
Accommodating	20	6.17	0.887
Friendly	42	6.14	0.96
Nice	15	6.09	1.006
Polite	12	6.08	0.889
Considerate	12	6.04	0.955



Good Visitor			
Term	Study 1 Frequency	Study 2 Mean	Study 2 SD
Leaves when appropriate	15	6.03	1.092
Respectful	58	6.02	0.965
Trustworthy	7	6	1.141
Considerate	24	5.99	0.944
Polite	42	5.96	1.042
Friendly	40	5.93	0.998
Courteous	20	5.89	1.004
Well mannered	10	5.88	1.027

## Study 1:

After collapsing synonymous responses, we found 68 terms for a good host, 70 terms for a good visitor and 62 terms for a good person. A 0.78 shared to unique ratio was found between host and visitor, 0.48 for visitor and person, and 0.40 for host and person, showing the importance of the home location in how these social roles are viewed.

## Study 2:

A pair of paired samples t-tests were conducted for each social category, in order to compare the mean rating of shared terms to the mean rating of unique terms. Across all comparisons, shared terms were rated as significantly more prototypical than unique terms, indicating substantial conceptual overlap. However, the effect size of this difference was weakest comparing a good host to a good person.

## Conclusions

We found more conceptual overlap than differences across our three categories. However, across both studies the least overlap was found between a good host and a generic good person, indicating that there are unique aspects of this role as a social virtue.

## Study 1: Methods

We recruited 300 participants through an online panel, who were then randomly assigned to one of three categories (good host, good visitor or good person). They were then asked to generate ten words to describe their assigned social category.

## Study 2: Methods

A new set of 313 participants through an online panel rated the terms generated in the first study by their prototypicality using a 7-point Likert scale.

## Study 2:

Good Person			
Term	Study 1 Frequency	Study 2 Mean	Study 2 SD
Trustworthy	26	6.27	0.88
Compassionate	25	6.24	0.86
Caring	35	6.16	0.921
Considerate	9	6.16	0.86
Honest	60	6.16	0.942
Sincere	12	6.12	0.968
Ethical	3	6.12	0.863
Understanding	17	6.1	0.842

Mean Comparison	t-test	p-value	Cohen's D
Only Host vs Host and Visitor	-5.317	<0.001	-0.521
Only Host vs Host and Person	2.088	0.39	-0.205
Only Visitor vs Visitor and Host	-4.46	<0.001	-0.437
Only Visitor vs Visitor and Person	-7.891	<0.001	-0.774
Only Person vs Person and Host	-3.681	<0.001	-0.359
Only Person vs Person and Visitor	-4.271	<0.001	-0.417



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Inviting	6	6.23	0.827
Accommodating	20	6.17	0.887
Friendly	42	6.14	0.96
Nice	15	6.09	1.006
Polite	12	6.08	0.889
Considerate	12	6.04	0.955
Respectful	11	6.03	1.061
Kind	38	6.02	1.07

Term	Study 1 Frequency	Study 2 Mean	Study 2 SD
Leaves when appropriate	15	6.03	1.092
Respectful	58	6.02	0.965
Trustworthy	7	6	1.141
Considerate	24	5.99	0.944
Polite	42	5.96	1.042
Friendly	40	5.93	0.998
Courteous	20	5.89	1.004
Well mannered	10	5.88	1.027
Nice	27	5.84	1.055
Pleasant	6	5.83	0.944

Term	Study 1 Frequency	Study 2 Mean	Study 2 SD
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Compassionate	25	6.24	0.86
Caring	35	6.16	0.921
Considerate	9	6.16	0.86
Honest	60	6.16	0.942
Sincere	12	6.12	0.968
Ethical	3	6.12	0.863
Understanding	17	6.1	0.842
Truthful	9	6.09	0.996
Kind	78	6.08	0.932

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## Study 2:

Two paired samples t-tests were conducted for each social category, in order to compare the mean rating of shared terms to the mean rating of unique terms. Across all comparisons, shared terms were rated as significantly more prototypical than unique terms, indicating substantial conceptual overlap. However, the effect size of was weakest when comparing a good host and a good person.

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Only Person vs Person and Host	3.681	<0.001	0.359
Only Person vs Person and Visitor	4.271	<0.001	0.417