

Persian translation of this paper entitled:

تبیین مدل مفهومی برندسازی مکان: مروری بر ادبیات نظری
is also published in this issue of journal.

Developing a Conceptual Model for Place Branding: A Review of Theoretical Literature*

Mohammad Reza Yazdanpanah Shahabadi¹, Hasan Sajadzadeh^{**2}, Mojtaba Rafeian³

1. Ph.D. in Urban Design. Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran.

2. Department of urban design, Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran

3. Department of urban and regional planning, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.

Received 2018/06/30

revised 2018/08/25

accepted 2018/09/09

available online 2019/04/22

Abstract


Place branding has been adopted by policymakers and decision makers since 1990s to promote the place competition for attracting financial and human capital. This concept is discussed in various scientific disciplines. Each field has conceptualized this concept in a different way. Thus, the present study attempts to clarify the dimensions of this concept with a step-by-step approach. The aim of this study is to provide a background and theoretical basis for the concept of “place brand” and “place branding” in a conceptual model which clarify the different dimensions of place branding. Therefore, in this study a depth analysis will be done in the literature to explain the concepts, approaches, models, scales and methods of assessment. Descriptive-analytic research method was used in this present study.

The results showed that despite extensive theoretical literature about place brand and place branding, yet there is no consensus on it. The variety of disciplines involved in this topic (such as economics and marketing, social sciences, political science, environmental sciences) reflects the various dimensions that have been added to the concept of place branding. In this research, three periods for place brand is depicted: past, present and future. In this progress, the concept of place branding has evolved from a marketing tool to an approach to involving various dimensions of urban planning and management. In these periods, place branding has changed from a monotonic phenomenon which is based on visual and tangible dimensions and a top-down process to the multifaceted, interdisciplinary, interactive, and collaborative concept. Finally, by summarizing the concepts which is explored and refined, the theoretical and conceptual model for place branding is presented.

Keywords : *Place brand; Place branding; Place marketing; Conceptualization; Conceptual Model of Place Branding.*

Introduction and statement of the problem

In the age of globalization, competitiveness is

 *This article is based on M. R. Yazdanpanah Shahabadi's Ph.D. Thesis which is written under supervision of Prof. Sajadzadeh and advisement of prof. Rafeian in Bu Ali Sina university, Hamedan, Iran.
**. Corresponding author: +989188370039, Sajadzadeh@basu.ac.ir

inevitable. Competition is taking place among countries, regions, and cities with the aim of attracting more financial and human capital. In this context, place branding is widely viewed as a tool for competition among places. Making positive

and attractive images is a tool for attracting global flows of investment and people and, consequently, for creating a boom in local development (Kovács & Musterd, 2013: 100).

Jon Lang maintains that the sustainability of cities in the global competitive market requires a positive mental image and proposes the place branding approach in this regard (Banerjee & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2015). Place brand and branding are new concepts in the literature on urban economics which were introduced into environmental studies such as geography and urban planning and design in the 1990s (Kavaratz, 2005). Since the emergence of this concept, many scholars have attempted to explore its dimensions and principles and develop strategies to implement and realize it. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the evolution of this concept by studying the literature and to develop a conceptual model as the basis for further research by examining the discussed notions. Accordingly, the questions of this research are as following:

How is the concept of place branding explained in the existing theoretical literature ?and how has it been evolved over time?

What are the key components and conceptual areas associated with place branding?

What models have been used to apply branding to different places on different scales?

How can the success of a place brand be assessed?

What notions are being further developed in connection with place branding?

Research methodology

A meta-analysis is the combination of data from several independent primary studies that address the same question to produce a single estimate like the effect of treatment or risk factor. It is the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis and results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings (Glass, 1977). Pigott (2012) defines meta-analysis as a quantitative statistical analysis of the results of different studies . The meta-analysis is considered as a systematic review that uses precise

and systematic methods for identifying, selecting, and evaluating relevant research, and collecting and analyzing data from relevant researches. In a systematic review, topics such as types of research collaboration, research methodology, scale, variables used, and the theoretical framework of articles are discussed (Pigott, 2012).

In this paper, a systematic overview was done in related published articles by using a meta-analysis method.

The articles were selected by searching the two scientific databases "Scopus" and "Google Scholar". The domain of research was limited to 203 published academic articles between 2000-2017. The articles included key words of "place branding" or "place brand" in their title. Government reports, articles published in conferences and theses were excluded from the scope.

This search showed that articles with the above keywords were indexed in these two scientific databases after 2004 and before that, there are only a few reports of "citations" which there are no access to their original text in the internet.

As shown in figure 1, the overall studies of place branding and the number of researchers who have researched in this area have increased significantly over the past years.

Of the 203 papers reviewed in this study, 12 articles (8.8%) are review articles. 122 papers (60%) of articles are experimental and 63 articles (31%) are theoretical articles. (Table 1 and Fig 2).

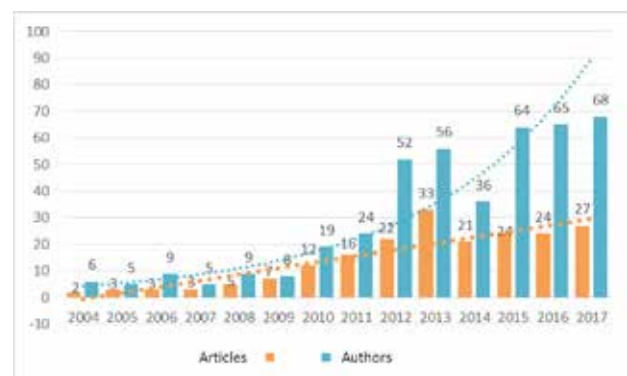


Fig.1. Growth of published articles and authors 2004-2017 in scientific publications, Source: authors.

Table 1. Categorization of selected articles according to paper type, Sources: authors.

Paper Type	Number	Percentage
Experimental	122	60.09
Theoretical	63	30.03
Review	18	8.8

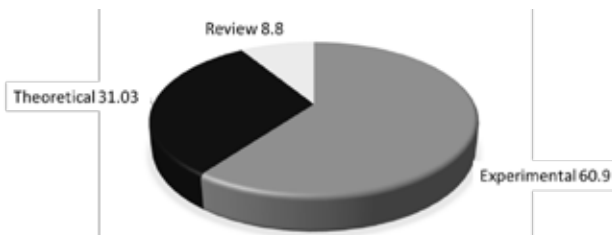


Fig. 2. Categorization of articles according to paper type, Source: authors.

Literature and theoretical foundation

A review of place branding - from marketing to city branding –The literature pertinent to the place brand concept included different keywords, such as place marketing, place branding, city branding, and destination branding. Despite the similarities between these words, differences can be found in their meanings.

"Place marketing" is a kind of strategic planning and management which is aimed at satisfying the diverse needs of the target market as much as possible (Gertner & Kotler, 2004).

Place marketing is the development and implementation of a management process that helps places to achieve its goals by adopting a market-based approach (Kavaratzis, 2004).

The most important feature of this type of strategic planning is the focus on economic development

(Govers & Go, 2009).

The goal of marketing is to attract new businesses, strengthen traditional and local businesses, expand international trade and boost tourism. The main goal of place marketing is national and global investors which are outside the place (Gertner & Kotler, 2004). The strategies offered in place marketing mainly focus on financial tools and management processes (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008).

To answer this question "What's the Difference between Place Branding and Place Marketing? There is a lot of confusion about those terms: Is branding a part of marketing? Or does Place Marketing form part of Place Branding? Essentially, the answer depends on whether you refer to Branding 1- as a marketing tool or Branding 2.0, as a holistic concept and process of developing, managing and communicating a place (Kalandides & Kavaratzis, 2009).

Place Branding is the idea of finding or creating unique items that are different from anywhere else. So this place can compete with other places (Ashworth, 2009:2).

Place branding, intending to develop a good reputation for a place and increase place attachment among residents. (Kavaratzis, 2004). Baker defines the place brand as a set of thoughts, feelings and expectations that people imagine about a place. Brand strategy entered the field of urban development, regeneration and quality of life from the business world. From this perspective, place brand is a comprehensive concept and approach and it differs in the following cases from place marketing (Table 2).

Table 2. Differences between Place Branding and Place Marketing, Source: Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008: 153.

Place Marketing	Place Branding
Focuses on HOW the place communicates its offerings	Focuses on WHO and WHAT creates a place
Is a market-driven process, using marketing techniques	Is Place Making: requires strategic decisions, investment, collaboration and buy-in from all place stakeholders
Is about satisfying needs of target markets (short- to mid-term process - campaigns)	Develops a comprehensive place brand identity
Is demand-driven, outward focused	Is supply-driven, inward-focused
Short term process	Is about building a reputation (long term process)

The term "branding" for cities has been used since the early 1990s and since 2000 has been a common term (Dinnie, 2011:3). Kavaratzis introduces city branding objectives to attract investors and tourists, strengthen local identity and introduce it to the citizens (Kavaratzis, 2004: 70).

John Lang, states that the brand is a multi-dimensional concept. It has many physical social and psychological characteristics. He brings a direct relationship between branding and city image (Banerjee & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2015: 854).

Generally, three key tools 1. Events; 2. labeled buildings; 3. assets are considered in city branding (Ashworth, 2009).

The "destination brand" is meaningful in terms of tourism and tourist attraction Pike (2010) states the broadest use of place brand is the brand of the tourism destination (Pike, 2010).

Findings

In this section, in order to systematically study the selected articles, these articles are categorized in terms of conceptual evolution, methodological approach, related themes, scales of place, and related academic disciplines.

• Classification articles according to the scientific area

Reviewing the literature emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of place branding. As shown in Table 2 and fig. 3, 37.9% of all selected articles are in the field of management (77 cases), 21.6% are in the field of economics and urban economics (44 cases), 18.7% are in environmental sciences, including geography, urban planning and design (38 cases), 8.8% in classical marketing (18 cases), 10.8% in political science (22 cases), and 1.9% in other sciences (including social sciences, environmental psychology, behavioral sciences and communications) (See Table.3 and Fig. 3).

64.5 percent of articles in management field are on strategies and processes, 15.7 percent are on place brand image, 9.8 percent focuses on stakeholders organizations, their identification and place brand experience (such as the partnership between the private and the public sector). The remaining 9.8 percent of the articles emphasize the evaluation of brand equity. In the field of economics, most articles (73.8%) focus on tourism and attracting tourists. (For example see: Pike, 2010;

Table 2. Differences between Place Branding and Place Marketing- Source: Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008: 153

Scientific Areas	Numbers	Percentage	Sub Categories	Percentage
Management	77	37.9	Strategy and Process	64.5
			Brand Image	15.7
			How to organize, identify, and manage stakeholders	9.8
			Evaluating the brand value of the place	9.8
Economic	44	21.7	Tourism and Tourist Attraction	73.8
			Brand equity, providing benefits for all stakeholders	26.2
			Place Image	46.7
Environmental sciences,(geography, urban planning and design)	38	18.7	Place Identity	40.8
			Regeneration	8.3
			Place Brand Infrastructure	3.9
Classical Marketing	15	7.4	-	-
Political Science	10	4.9	-	-
Social Sciences	17	8.4	-	-
Other	2	1	-	-

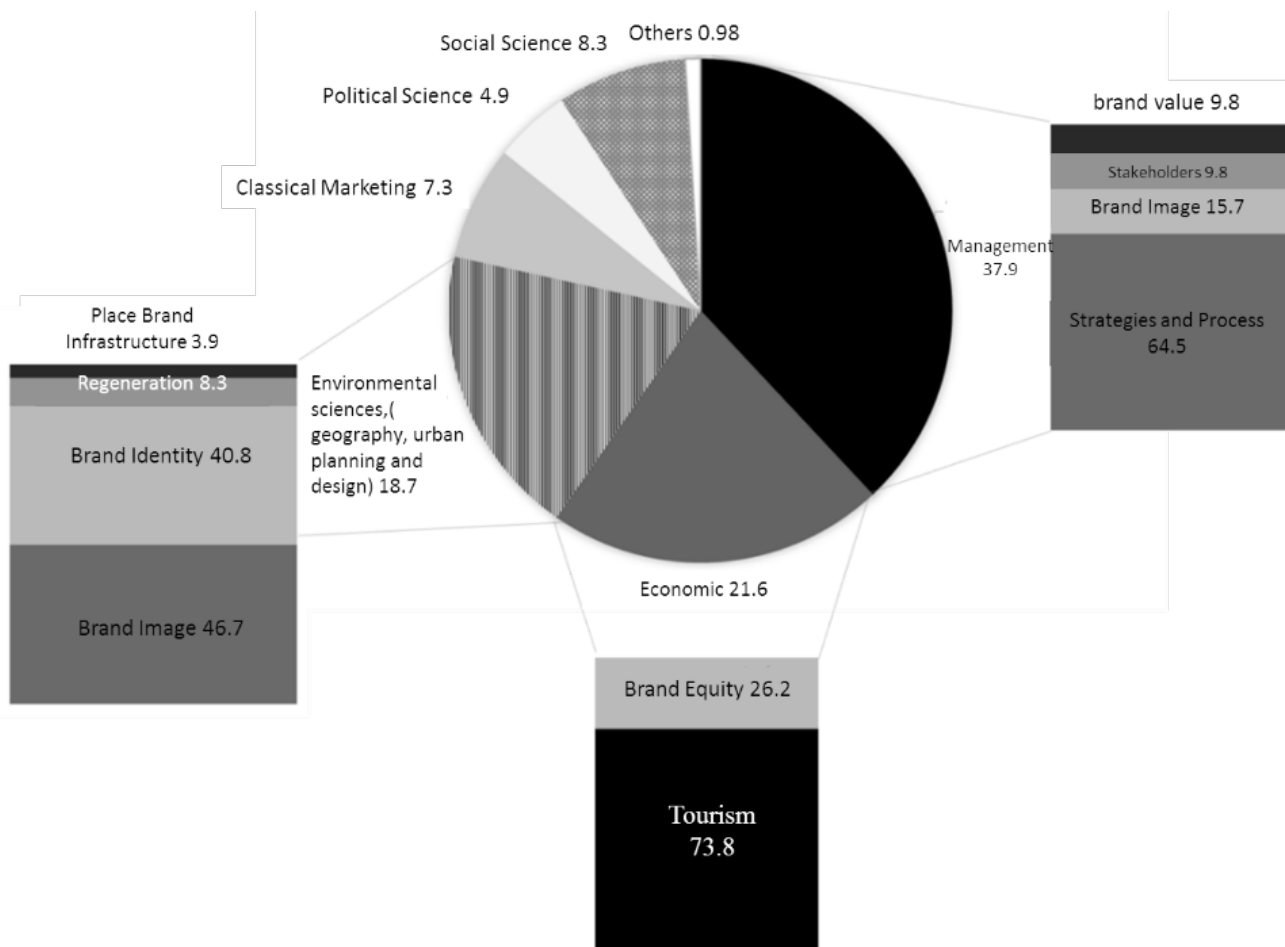


Fig.3. Scientific areas involved in place branding studies, Source : authors.

Campelo, Aitken, Thyne & Gnoth, 2014; Zenker, Braun & Petersen, 2017; Kladou, Kavaratzis, Rigopoulou & Salonika, 2016). Other articles in the field of economics (26.2%) have investigated brand equity and the interests of all stakeholders. The image of place in environmental sciences (46.7%) is the most discussed topic in relation to the place brand. After that, the place identity (40.8%), regeneration (8.3%), and the city brand infrastructure (3.9%) are the most important issues that have been studied in terms of place branding.

• Classification articles according to the themes

The review of the articles found in this research led to the identification of the following themes in dealing with place brand: brand identity, stakeholder's aspect, place brand image, brand strategy and process, sustainable aspect, place brand architecture

(umbrella branding) ,place brand experience, place brand value, brand loyalty, brand articulation, and place brand expression. In the Fig. 4 and Table 4, the themes identified in these articles are presented separately.

Most articles have investigated “place brand identity”. (63 articles equivalent to 31%). The findings show that in the place brand identity research, various aspects including culture, safety, sense of place, political issues, events, environmental issues and tangible and intangible assets of the place have been considered.

After place brand identity, the place brand image is addressed more than the rest of the themes (57 articles, 28%). The concept of the place brand image is related to the concept of perception. “Image” is studied based on the two theories of Lynch (1960) and Strauss (1961). Lynch emphasizes the image

Table 4. Themes in dealing with place brand: authors, 2018.

Theme	Numbers	Percentage
Place brand Equity	7	3.45
Brand loyalty	8	5.91
Brand articulation and place brand expression	12	5.91
Place brand experience	7	3.45
Place brand architecture	11	5.24
Sustainable aspect	5	2.64
Brand strategy and process	12	5.91
Place brand image	31	15.27
Stakeholder's aspect	47	23.15
Brand identity	63	31.03

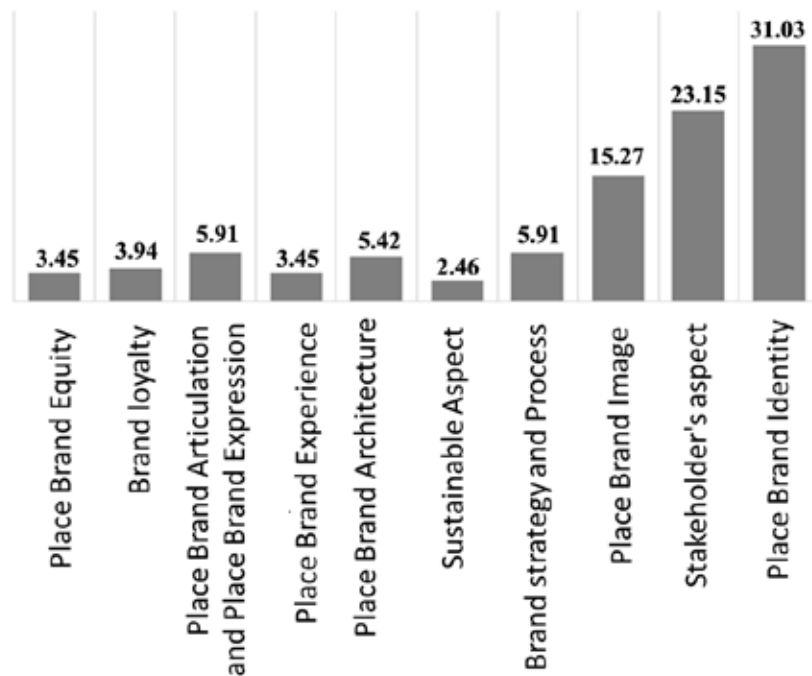


Fig.4. Themes in dealing with place brand. Source: authors, 2018.

of the residences based on a "cognitive map," but Strauss focuses on "associations" and "meanings." Attractive job opportunities, rich activity nodes, attractive and affordable residential neighborhoods, schools, leisure and cultural centers, appropriate public transportation, well-known sports teams, low crime rates, suitable climate, recognizable signs, distinctive and distinguished skyline, prominent areas are the components that have been expressed to define a positive city brand image (Gertner & Kotler, 2004).

In recent years, the role of ‘the bottom-up’ in the branding process and the definition of "collaborative branding" have attracted the attention of many researchers (e.g. Ind & Bjerke, 2007; Gregory, 2007; Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Thirty one articles (15.2%) have examined this them in this review (Table 5).

• **Classification articles according to the scales**

The articles studied in the field of place branding include various scales such as multifunctional buildings, urban centers, cities, regions and countries. Most studies (including more than 78%)

Table 5. concepts related to place brand, Source: Authors, 2018

Concepts related to place brand	Concepts
Place Brand Identity	Hanna and Rowley (2013) identify brand identity as the “core” of place branding. Place identity is the central stage of the branding process, which determines what stakeholders want (Hanna & Rowley, 2013). Brand identity is distributed through various strategic elements such as brand infrastructure. The brand identity is based on the place identity that makes the place unique (Kalandides, 2011).
Stakeholders	In selected articles, how to identify stakeholders, providing all group’s benefits and defining collaborative processes to involve all stakeholders have been explored (Eshuis, Braun & Klijn, 2012; Kalandides & Kavartzis, 2014 ; Kavartzis & Kalandides, 2015 ; Zenker & Rütter, 2014). some of the article focus on the perceptions of stakeholders (Braun, Kavartzis, & Zenker, 2013 ; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013; Zenker & Rütter, 2014 ; Zenker & Seigis, 2012). Identifies various stakeholders involved in the place branding process. He divides them into three categories: visitors, residents- business and industries, managers and policy makers. Visitors are divided into two categories: Leisure tourist and business tourist. He considers companies, guilds, and investors and owners in these categories (Zenker & Seigis, 2012).
Place Brand Image	Place brand image is an understanding that takes place in the minds of the users from the place brand identity (real or imaginative). Place brand image has been created over time through advertising campaigns and is confirmed through direct experience of users. In the place brand image, we are following the perceptions of people from their place and brand (Braun, Kavartzis, & Zenker, 2013).
Place Brand Architecture	This term defines the relationships, structures, and links between the various stakeholders and the place brand. Place Brand Architecture is different from the product brand architecture, because the brand manager of a product is likely to be free in creating or removing brand communication with other products and organizations. In the case of places, there may be elements that cannot be eliminated because they are shaped through geographical, historical, political, marketing, and media relations. However, brand managers can prioritize these relationships and links based on their advantage.
Place Brand Value	The Place Brand Value is a value that is added to place because of brand. This added value first embraced financial and economic implications and now it also includes social concepts
Place Brand Experience	Place Brand Experience is the stakeholder’s experience of the place brand. The place brand experience is a three-stage cycle that begins with the person’s perception about the place before entering it. This cycle continues with the actual experience of the place (the experience of the place) and ends with the memories of the place experience (Gilmore & Dumont, 2003). Each stage includes inputs and outputs. The inputs and outputs in each stage are:
Place Brand loyalty	In the marketing literature, brand loyalty is a position that shows how likely a customer prefers this brand to other brands, especially when that brand changes the price or other aspects of the product or service (Buil, De Chernatony & Martínez, 2013). Brand loyalty includes both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions. In attitudinal dimension, it is important that consumers have a positive attitude towards the place. In the behavioral dimension, it is important that consumers buy the products again and introduce it to others. Brand loyalty is especially important in tourism and tourist attraction (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009).
Place Brand Expression	Place brand expression is the interpretation of the brand. In Place brand expression, processes and related frameworks are explained through verbal and visual tools such as slogan design, logo, color palette, and photo (Hanna & Rowley, 2011).



were conducted on the scale of city and country. Subsequently, the scale of the region with 13% and the scale of city centers and multi-functional buildings with 9% are the most studied (Fig. 5). The remarkable point is that early studies on place branding have focused on the scale of country and city in order to attract tourists, but in recent years smaller scales have been proposed, such as city centers, historical zones and multi-functional buildings.

• Classification articles according to the methodological approaches

Reviewing the articles suggests that researchers have used quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. 62% of the reviewed articles (126 cases) used qualitative methods, 23.1% (47 cases) used quantitative methods and 3.4% (7 cases) used mixed method. The remaining 18.2% were theoretical and conceptual studies (Table 6 and Fig. 6).

In qualitative methods, data are collected through interviews (deep interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group), field observations, secondary resources (reports, books, articles, web content and social networks), Brain storming, or a combination of them. In quantitative studies, the questionnaire was the most important tool for data collection (for example, see Govers &

Go, 2016; Fullerton, Kendrick, Chan, Hamilton & Kerr, 2007). The methods of data analysis in qualitative studies are content analysis, grounded theory and Delphi. Grounded theory has often been used to explain the processes and formulate place branding models in different scales (For example, see Aitken & Campelo, 2011; Hanna & Rowley, 2011; Gambetti, Graffigna & Biraghi, 2012). Review articles focusing on theoretical literature in the field of place branding have used content analysis and meta-analysis methods (For example: Dinnie, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2005; Hankinson, 2010).

In quantitative methods, correlation and regression analysis (Tobiasa & Wahl, 2013; Fullerton, et al., 2007), structural equations models (Klijn, Eshuis & Braun, 2012), analysis of variance, factor analysis, descriptive statistics analysis and f-test (Konecnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012) have been used.

In studies that carried out through correlation and regression, the relationships between place branding concepts with the place attachment and place belonging (Zenker & Rütter, 2014; Campelo, et al., 2014), placesatisfaction (Insch & Florek, 2010) attracting the creative class (Cleave & Arku 2015; Vanolo, 2015), attracting tourists (Eshuis, Braun & Klijn, 2012; Herget, Petru & Abrahám, 2015) and

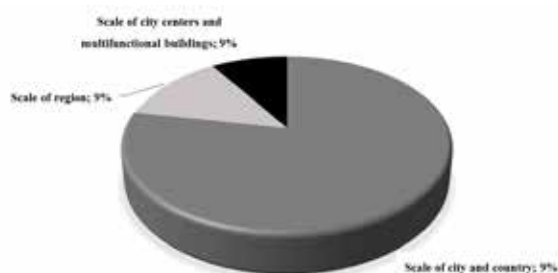


Fig.5. Scales of places in place branding studies.

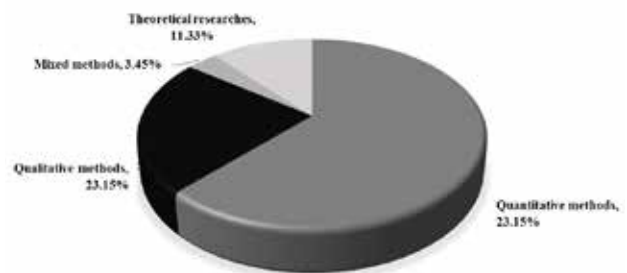


Fig.6. Methods used in the reviewed articles, Source : authors.

Table 6. Methods used in the reviewed articles, Source : authors.

Methodology	Number	Percentage
Quantitative method	126	62.07
Qualitative method	47	23.15
Mixed method	7	3.45
Theoretical researches	23	11.33

social welfare (Gilboa, & Herstein, 2012) have been explored.

The Models of Place Branding

Implementation of a place brand proposition requires a strategic approach. In this point of view, it is focused on competitive place identity as well as the relative advantages of the place with regard to other places. In Table 7, nine place branding models are presented in detail. As seen in this table, these models consist of multiple layers and key elements. In these models, the place brand conceptual framework is commonly discussed at the branding center. Requirements, implications and strategies are in the next levels. It is worth noting that these models are presented at various scales ranging from country to multi-functional buildings.

Beneficial image model associates the notion of branding with consumption values and defines an optimal image for place branding as an image that responds to all values and preferences of the users in selecting a place. This model is based on perceptions of users (Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000).

Relational network brand model considers all the relationships which are needed for place branding. This model classifies all relationships into four main types: primary service relationships, consumer relationships, brand infrastructure relationships, and media relationships, all of which contribute to the formation of the core of the brand (personality/ situation/ reality).

In 7A destination branding model which was developed for branding small cities and tourist destinations. In this model, place branding begins by assessment of the current place situation and seeks to activate the advantages of place by means of a strategic approach.

Strategic place brand management model (SPBM) aims at implementing a comprehensive approach to the management of place brand. The basis of this model is to examine other models and recognize their strategic deficiencies. Lang (2011) presents the idea of place branding process with an emphasis

on the image of place according to the process of urban planning. This process has a strategic structure and aims at recreating a new image in the mind of the audience to increase competitiveness at an international level. The 4D model of place brand management which has been implemented in Abu Dhabi, UAE, seeks to attract various audiences of place during the process of branding so that it could simultaneously pursue social and economic goals. Paradigmatic branding process model for megaprojects of entertainment, residential areas, sport, and tourism uses grounded theory to determine the different aspects of recreational, residential, sport, and tourist megaprojects in Iran. Table 7 summarizes a comparison between the models of place branding in terms of their scale and key elements.

Approaches in assessing the success of place branding

Evaluating the success of place branding means evaluating the value of brand equity. The brand equity was first defined by Farquhar, Herr & Fazio (1990). He considers the brand equity as an extra value of a product (Farquhar, Herr & Fazio, 1990). Aaker (1991) defines brand equity as: "A set of assets and liabilities associated with a brand. It is the indication that adds or reduces the value which is created by the product or service (Aaker, 1991: 348). There are two general approaches to assessing the success of place brand value. Customer-centricity approach and brand-centricity approach.

Customer-centricity approach examines the economic value which is added by applying place brand (Jacobsen, 2012). Theorists have criticized this approach. Thus, this approach focuses only on quantities such as stock market value, earnings from licensing, acquisition costs, prices, and margin squeeze. In a brand-centricity approach (in place branding, target groups) customer satisfaction and customer interests are important.

Ashworth and Voogd (1990) argue that the purpose of the brand is to maximize the effectiveness of both economic and social dimensions in a place. They

Table 7. Objectives, Scale and Key Elements of Different Place Branding Models, Source: authors.

Models	Goals/ Scale	key Component(s)
Beneficial Image Model (Tapachai and Waryszak 2000)	Exploring perceptions and impressions of a beneficial image based on the consumption values and offering suggestions regarding to each position / country	Consumption Values: (functional/ social/ epistemic/ conditional) Beneficial Image
Brand Communications Model (Kavaratzis 2004)	It sees the place branding as a communication model and arranges all the communication needed / city	Image communication Primary communication: (Landscape strategies, Organizational and administrative structure, Infrastructure projects, city's Behavior) Secondary communication: (Advertising, Public relations, Graphic design, Use of logo) Tertiary communication: (word of mouth) Core Brand (Personality/ Positioning/ Reality)
Relational Network Brand (Hankinson 2010)	Offers and organizes all the relationships related to place branding / Not mentioned	Primary Service Relationships Consumer relationships Brand Infrastructure Relationships Media Relationships
7A Destination Branding Model (Baker 2007)	Providing a branding process in small cities and destinations/ Cities and Destinations	Assessment Analysis and Advantage Architecture and Alignment Articulate Activation Adoption Action and Afterward
Operational plan model for place branding (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009)	Offers a five step process for place branding. This process determines scheduling and tasks roles in each activity / model scale: countries, cities and destinations	Generic brand management competencies (Brand identity, Consistency, Competence in coordinating interrelated resources and capabilities, Resource-base development competence, External communication competence, monitoring competence Relational management competence (Organizational identity building) Network-relational management competence (Internal communication competence) Network management competencies (Mobilization competence, Cooperation building competence, Decision making competence, Leadership competence)
The Strategic Place Brand Management Model (SPBM) (Hanna and Rowley 2011)	Embracing a holistic approach to place brand management / Not mentioned	Brand Evaluation Leadership Stakeholder Engagement Infrastructure (Regeneration) Brand Identity Brand Architecture Brand Articulation Marketing Communications Brand Experience Word of Mouth
Place branding Process (Lang 2011)	Providing a place branding process like planning process / Cities and places	Place Image Asset of Place Visioning Projects planning Strategies Evaluation
The 4D Model of Place Brand Management (Balakrishnan and Kerr 2013)	Definition a framework for creating and managing place brand in Abu Dhabi/ city	Deciding: (Linking strategies/ Innovative place brand strategy) Designing: (Brand architecture/ Creative design/ Stakeholders Relationships/ Demand analysis) Delivering: (Brand Value/ Brand Loyalty/ Brand Experience/Brand Management/ Brand Promise/ Brand Culture) Determining: (Social and Economic Objectives/ Tangible and Intangible Outcomes)
Paradigmatic Branding Process Model for Megaprojects of Entertainment, Residential, Sport and Tourism (Divandari, Ekhlasi & Rahmani, 2014)	A branding process for multipurpose megaprojects, which considers branding issues from the initial phases of planning and constructing regarding to local characteristic / Megaprojects	Core categories (Persian unique identity, Project innovation, Place making, Distinctive and unique landmarks, Project distinctive theme Culture building, Synergistic composition of subprojects) Contextual conditions Intervening conditions Facilitators Strategies

believe that individuals must be satisfied with living in a place (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990). Therefore, in assessing the place brand value, users' satisfaction and the social consequences of the place brand are also considered.

Another way to evaluate place brands is rankings based on various indicators. In this part, there are two of these indicators:

1. Ranking based on Anholt Index: Dynamics, People and urban Facilities: Anholt considers six criteria for the evaluation of place brands. The criteria and indicators are shown in Table 8.

In 2015, 35 cities were prioritized according Anholt's criteria. According to this survey, London is ranked first in the place brand. Paris, Rome and Barcelona are in the next ranked. (Anholt, 2006).

2. Ranking according to the Saffron Index - European City Brand Barometer - In this rating, the ratio of city brand strength is measured in comparison with the assets of the city.

Assets include infrastructure, culture, and environmental conditions. The assets of each city according to historical attractions (weighting 20%), local food and restaurants

(weighting 15%), ease of access for pedestrians or public transportation (weighing 15%), low costs (10% weight) , Favorable climate (10% weight), shopping (10% weight), and economic wellbeing (weighing 10%). In contrast, place brand strength is measured by four criteria: power absorption of place, place image, word of mouth and repetition in the media (weight of each is 25%).

Discussion

A meta-analysis of research in the field of place branding reflects the structural evolution of this concept. This evolution is observed in a variety of dimensions such as changes in disciplinary fields, effective dimensions, nature, goals, processes, agents, and scale. Accordingly, place branding can be generally divided into initial, late (or current), and future periods (Table 8).

In the first period (late 90's), we can witness the emergence of the notion of brand in marketing science. In this period, redefining a new image of the product in the minds of customers as an added value was the main basis of branding and the focus

Table 8. Criteria and Indicators of Anholt Index, Source: Anholt, 2006.

Criteria	Indicators
Visualization and Immediacy (The position of the city in the international arena)	Quality of familiarity with each city the reason of reputation of cities How much has every city been effective in culture and science of the world? An opinion poll on the city administration method in the last thirty years
Place (People's imaginations about the city)	The likelihood of the people's imagination of visiting the city and its surroundings How beautiful is the city? How favorable weather city?
Potential Power (The economic and educational opportunities of the city for visitors, businessmen and immigrants)	How easy is it to find a job in the city? How much is the city suitable for business? How much is the city a good place for obtaining higher education degrees?
Sense of Place (The fascination and imagination of people's imagination about living in the city)	Creating attractive and diverse events for short and long term visitors in the city
People's Behavior	Are the citizens have a friendly behavior towards others, or are they cold and prejudiced? How easy is it to adapt to different languages and cultures? How do target groups feel safe in the city?
Prerequisites	Is it easy to find affordable housing? What do people think about general standards and public facilities (schools, hospitals, public transport, sports facilities, and so on?)

was on increasing profits and, maintaining the audience over time (Kalandides & Kavaratzis, 2009). Concepts such as logos, slogans, and visual features of the environment (tangible dimensions) were the major elements of place branding in this period (Gertner, 2011). In this period, branding was only a tool that served marketing and profits of a limited group of place agents. Branding processes were often based on top-down elitist designs offered by experts in marketing and, sometimes, in communication sciences. Branding occurred on the scale of cities and, less frequently, nationwide and relied on market opportunities (outbound opportunities) to meet the needs of the place for new audiences (e.g., Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000).

Place branding in the current (late) period has been developed in various conceptual dimensions and has formed a wider field of knowledge. In addition to marketing and communication sciences, we are now witnessing the presence of a broader range of scientific disciplines, including social sciences, environmental sciences (urban geography, planning, and design), management, environmental psychology and behavioral sciences, and political science. (Hanna & Rowley, 2008) This is indicative of conceptual evolution and addition of new dimensions to place branding. Branding in the present time is not just an instrument for increasing the number of foreign audiences and maximizing profits. It also serves as a tool for planning and managing the place. Meanwhile, along with the visual and tangible dimensions, the functions of the environment and events with an emphasis on the relative advantages of place have received considerable attention. In the process of place branding, experts seek to bring together a variety of place agents. This effort, however, seems to aim at seeking the agents' support for the idea of the brand rather than forming original interaction in the place branding process (Pant, 2005). In this period, scales such as urban areas, urban neighborhoods, urban spaces as well as brand poles are emphasized. Novel concepts are being formed in new research within the field of place branding. Among these

concepts are context-based branding, the role of spatial interactions and relationships in place branding, place assets, collaborative processes and the role of local agents in place branding, management of the value of place brand, strategic view of place brand, and the interdisciplinary interaction in branding. Thus, the future of place branding can be thought of as an interdisciplinary concept resulting from the interaction of various specializations in an attempt to achieve a common understanding; an understanding that is necessary due to a focus on the context and interactions between the different types of knowledge accumulated in the local community. On this basis, the goals of place branding are not confined to economic, physical and environmental dimensions, and a comprehensive approach to development is based on social, cultural, economic, functional, and physical contexts so that it could bring about a positive image of the internal assets of place. This approach necessitates a hierarchical view of place branding (from urban to national space) so as to make possible a homogeneous development at all levels of the place. In Table 9, these three periods are compared with each other.

Conclusion

The present study attempts to present a concise review of the definitions, dimensions, goals, research methods and models of place branding. Fig. 7 summarizes the concepts associated with place branding in the form of a conceptual model and proposes an all-embracing approach to urban planning and management. This conceptual model is based on the features of the third period of place branding (i.e. future of branding). In this model, by refining the concepts extracted from the literature, the different dimensions of place branding are classified and represented through components such as a conceptual layer, a strategic layer, effective contextual conditions, branding requirements, and expected implications.

The basis of this model is a holistic view of place branding not as a tool but as a comprehensive and

Table 9. The evolution of the phenomenon of place branding, Source: authors.

	The early period of place branding	The late period of place branding	The future of place branding
Disciplinary field	Marketing	Multidisciplinary	Interdisciplinary
Effective dimensions	The importance of visual and tangible dimensions (logo, slogan, etc.)	The importance of environmental function and event planning in the place	The generally recognized importance of place
Nature	Place brand as a marketing tool	Place brand as an environmental planning and management tool	Place brand as an approach
Purpose	Attracting new audience groups	Increasing competitive ability/ improving quality of life	Recreation / place-making
Process	Top-down process	Formal participation	Interactive process
Effective agents	Professionals	Professionals/ target audience groups/ some local agents of place	Internal agents of place, external audience (target)/ professionals/ creative groups
Scale	Often at the level of country and city	Added regional scales and urban spaces	Network-based and hierarchical approach to place brand
The fundamental nature of branding	Focus on the outbound opportunities of place	Recognized importance of the relative advantages of place	Focus on the internal assets of place

multifaceted approach to spatial development. The conceptual layer of place branding phenomenon is a result of interactions among identity, image, and the specific value of place brand. The core component of the branding process is brand identity which is the goal of all the strategies and plans of place. Identifying this identity and trying to achieve it requires the participation of all stakeholders as well as a collective agreement. This identity, which has a dynamic and changing nature, forms the brand image via brand experience. This image is indeed the character of place brand and can be of enormous value if it leaves a positive impact on the audience. This value, if maintained by the audience (which is referred to in the literature as loyalty to the place brand), can be a stimulus to the full development of the place.

To realize this core concept, we need to adopt strategies that vary from one place to another. In more recent approaches to place branding, these strategies emphasize not only physical and tangible, but also non-physical and abstract dimensions of place. These

strategies will be shaped by identifying place assets and combining them with the preferences of different groups of internal and external audience in order to achieve the main themes of place brand. Strategies related to place brand architecture, expression of place brand, advertising, marketing, and communications, continuous assessment of place brand, and ongoing revision fits into the strategic layer of place branding. An important feature of modern approaches to place branding is spotlighting contextual conditions. In general, the highest level of a place identity is the identity which is based on the inner values of the place, and it highlights the importance of addressing the context of the place. Among the factors that affect the adopted strategies are economic, social and cultural conditions which govern a place, its historical context, the structure of political and managerial power, characteristics of environmental functions, natural and built features of environment, and sense of belonging as well as a sense of place among internal and external audience groups.

As mentioned earlier, branding is a context-oriented

approach which may vary from one place or scale to another. However, some of the Prerequisite can be considered as general elements for place branding. These requirements include high-quality public services to enhance environmental comfort, taking advantage of a unique design language based on the characteristics of the local context, special attention to easy access to the place especially through the varied possibilities of high-quality public transport, creating an integrated place management structure to accelerate the realization of place brand objectives, focusing on special and unique events in the place, taking into account specific functions in the space, and defining unique logos, slogans, and narratives for the place. Also, new approaches tend to focus on the endogenous nature of place brand. In fact, in the present approach to place branding, place is a phenomenon not based on external opportunities but based on internal assets. Therefore, it is very important for both audiences and investors to pay attention to creativity in the development of

strategies as well as creative advertisement networks to introduce this internal potential. These dimensions form the requirements layer of place brand.

The major implications of place branding in this approach include increasing place prestige, added value, increasing investment in the place, attraction of creative social classes, economic, social, and cultural privileges for the inhabitants as a result of their involvement in the process of place branding, and enhancement of environmental qualities as well as functional refinement of the place. All of these factors will somehow increase the quality of life, thereby creating 'sense of attachment' among the residents and 'sense of place' among the external audiences of the place. The consequences can be summarized into two general categories, namely, place making and place regeneration.

Thus, this model represents the different dimensions which should be considered in the branding process so that it can be used as a new approach to urban planning and management. The key concepts of



Fig.7. The conceptual model of place branding

this approach are a special focus on the internal assets of place, interaction among agents, attention to the micro- and macro-contextual conditions, and a strategic approach to the notion of place brand. Finally, this way of thinking about place branding will result in a new approach to urban planning and regeneration. This approach to place branding looks beyond specific ideas such as designing logos and slogans or creating specific architectural designs and turns this phenomenon into a multifaceted, comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and interactive field of study.

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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

yazdanpanah Shahabadi, M., Sajadzadeh, H. & Rafieian, M. (2019). Developing a Conceptual Model for Place Branding: A Review of Theoretical Literature. *Bagh- e Nazar*, 16 (71):19-34.

DOI: 10.22034/bagh.2019.86870

URL: http://www.bagh-sj.com/article_86870_en.html

