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Theoretical Analysis of the Relationship between Urban Image Components and Urban Branding*

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Abstract

Problem statement: Nowadays, considering the age of globalization, urban branding is reflected very important by means of a great opportunity for cities existing in global competition. In this regard, the main purpose of urban branding is creating an attractive image for the city and the urban branding approach has centered on the concept of the city's image. For urban branding and effectiveness of city, the image of the city can be a tool and even a goal.

Research objectives: Regarding the importance of this issue, the objectives of this research are theoretical explanation of the components of city image and their relation to urban branding.

Research methods: The present study was conducted as a descriptive-analytic theoretical-practical study. The method of data collection is documentary-libraries.

Conclusion: The image of the city is formed in two ways: direct (experience of the environment) and indirect (influenced by the advertisement). Undoubtedly, it has a primary component which includes the design dimensions, physical structures, cognition, awareness, and the functional dimension of the environment. On the other hand, it includes the complementary component that encompasses the evaluative, affective, likeability, and emotional dimensions. They are formed after understanding the primary component. Branding focuses on the concept of image and utilizes physical, socio-cultural and infrastructural techniques to influence the primary component of the image. By this way, it also makes the space more attractive for the complementary component to emerge. The advertising technique also enhances the influence and impact of the two mentioned components in branding and ultimately enhances the image from the exterior point of view (tourists) and the interior point of view (citizens).

Keywords: *Urban image, Urban branding, Globalization, Primary component, Secondary component.*

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Problem Statement

The concept of city image is an issue that has evolved along with political, economic, social and even technological developments and has been addressed at different times depending on the circumstances. What is certain is that a person acts or reacts on the basis of an image taken from reality, not actuality itself (KhezzNejhad & HeidariChianeh, 2016, 7, Lang, 1987). This has been the prerequisite of many disciplines including environmental psychology, urban planning and architecture, landscape design, education, marketing, branding and even global news media to influence the minds and hearts of the target onlookers. This influence is done by enhancing image or visualization for achieving their goal. The more attractive the environment is to the observer, the more lasting an image is triggered in his mind and this image will be the foundational reason for his actions. To this end, the concept of urban branding is the management of the city's mental image using urban and landscape design tools, the use of social and cultural capacities alongside information technology. In fact, the purpose of branding is to establish a relationship between what the city offers (identity) and the perceived mental image of the city. Lang considers the positive mental image to be essential for sustainability of cities in the global competition. He contemplates the location branding strategy as important factor in this regard and, also he considers the importance of direct relationship between branding and mental image (Banerjee & Sideris, 2015, 854). Cities can be said to have the ability to identify that they can distinguish themselves from others and by this way they hope to win over their competitors; however this requires a marketing and brand awareness (Hospers, 2009,144), a brand that brings a unique distinction and image to cities (Rehan, 2013). For this reason, one of the concepts that has received much attention in recent years and has a direct and clear relationship with marketing implementation in cities is the concept of place branding or urban branding. In fact, the concept of urban branding has been introduced as a set of actions done with

various tools to gain competitiveness advantage between cities. This gain is done with the aim of attracting capital and tourism and enhancing local identity and introducing the city to its citizens; and ultimately improving the city's interior and exterior images (Prilenska, 2012, 12). The importance of city branding in the era of globalization has extended to a point that it has become one of the main tasks of cities in the field of competitiveness. In this respect, the role of the image of the city has great importance as one of the essential tools of branding and even as the purpose of it. In fact, branding needs to be a planned and conscious act of image conceptualization and representation in order to form perceptions needed for generating desirable and desired actions. In this context, urban branding puts environmental perceptions at the center of attention and employs mental imagery in a manner appropriate to urban conditions and high demand of social and economic development (Kavaratzis, 2008, 10). Given the above issues, the importance of identifying and enhancing the image of the city and linking it to urban branding as one of the most important measures of urban competitiveness becomes increasingly apparent. In this regard, the thought-provoking and key questions arise asking how the image of the city is formed? What are the main components of a city image? What is the relationship between image shaping and branding techniques? How do the objective and subjective perspective impact the components of the image and its relation to the formation of the image? How do branding techniques and tools affect image components? The purpose of this study is to answer the above questions and theoretically explain the relationship between city image components and urban branding.

Research Background

There have been numerous international and national studies on the subject of research. Each one has its own point of view and each one analyze the concepts of city image and urban branding. The following are some of the studies with relation to the subject of this

research: Hazime (2011) has done a study on brand equity in developing countries considering mainly Qatar and Abu Dhabi. The focus of this study was to identify the factors influencing the branding strategy of Qatar and Abu Dhabi through the analysis of brand practicing methods as well as analysis of the leading news stories about Abu Dhabi and Qatar in the Google News for 2009. Villar (2018) has done a research on city brand and social representation theory. According to his research, people make their own image of the city, but also share a public image of it. On the other hand, urban landscape design has proven to be one of the most effective tools for city image design and communication. Here, both elements are linked through the theory of social representation that conceptualizes the possibility of depicting the city as a social structure. According to this view of the city image, the status and situation of residents as the most important target audience of the city brand and the urban landscape is considered a key element in the calculation and strengthening of local identity. Sarvari and Majedi (2012), in a study titled "The Role of Urban Design in Branding Public Space", emphasizes that In the era of globalization and along with the persistence of investors to find attractive places for investment, cities are becoming the focal points for investors and the urban managers. They need to present a variety of attractions to draw financial capital and to compete with other cities. They seek to determine the role of public space design in the competitiveness of cities in the globalization process. The results of this study show that today the relationship between urban design and economic conditions of the city is reversed and this phenomenon has created a new model of urban public space management to attract investors and develop urban growth. Perlinska (2012), in a study entitled Urban Branding, a tool for urban recreation (in line with a theoretical framework), refers to the communicative nature of the image, linked with branding techniques and he presents a model of their impact on urban recreation. In the field of national studies, the following can be mentioned: In

their research, Gholipour et al. (2011) investigated the factors which influence the formation of city image in order to achieve to an effective urban branding in Tehran. The findings of this study show that economics and commerce dimension, scope of services, international city status, transport and communication infrastructure, social issues, protection of historical monuments, environment, architectural and urban attractions, self-analysis of citizens, culture and dimension of university and education are composing parts of Tehran's image. Moradi et al. (2019) acknowledge that cities today are experiencing a socio-economic downturn that has reduced their attractiveness. The four components of creative and cultural industries, place creation and creative cultural sites, cultural tourism and event planning and branding, are necessary for the cities in the competitiveness aspects, which enhances their competitive advantage over competing cities. Nourian and Mikaeili (2018), using the structural equation method, examined the image of the city of Urmia in order to determine its branding priorities, and concluded that the city of Urmia could create a unique brand based on history and culture, boundary and commercial location, nature, and by upgrading facilities and infrastructure. By analyzing the theoretical literature on place branding, YazdanpanahShahabadi et al. (2019) have come to the conclusion that this concept evolves over time and from a one-sided, tangible and intuitive, market-oriented and market-based dimension, moving towards a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary, interactive and participatory concept. In this evolution, the place brand has evolved from a marketing tool to an approach to address different aspects of location planning and management. In their paper, Nazemi and Mazaheri (2016) examined the impact of urban branding on sustainable urban landscape. The findings of the study about the effects of urban branding on sustainable urban landscape show that urban branding does not necessarily lead to the formation of sustainable urban landscapes. On the contrary, creating the sustainable urban landscapes

and, hence, achieving a special appearance for cities will make urban branding even more possible. Mohammadifar et al. (2016), in a study evaluated the necessities and consequences of branding for cities in the country with an emphasis on urban tourism economy. The results of this study showed that on the one hand, urban branding influences by a predictor variable for creating a desirable image and additionally by the level of citizens satisfaction. On the other hand, residents satisfaction influences directly and meaningfully the satisfaction level of other audience, including tourists. Rousta et al. (2016) presented a research using database theory and in-depth model interviews for urban branding in Iran. In this research they described a complex and multi-faceted branding process which involved large groups of activists with different goals and interests. They also have multiple implications in different economic areas (income growth, business prosperity, tourism development, investment inclination) and social areas (such as increased satisfaction, improved city influence and favorable image creation) as consequences of urban branding. In summary, based on literature, it can be concluded that the basis of branding is the image of the city or the image formed in the mind of the audience. Despite the studies performed on the urban brand, it seems that the perceptions and cognition of the environment, the process of image formation and its components, and especially how image formation relates to the urban branding concept, have not been addressed in these studies. Therefore, the difference and innovative aspects of the present study compared to previous researches are to fill the above-mentioned research gap as well as to complete and expand the existing topics and studies.

Research Methods

The present study is based on the onion model presented by Danaaeifard et al. (2004), considering the type of work done in this study from the point of view of paradigm, it is placed in the field of interpretation paradigm. The research seeks to develop the model of the relationship between city

image and branding which is considered theoretical aspect of this research and since its results can be used by urban managers, urban planners and architects it is considered an applied research too. The data was gathered through summarizing, interpreting, and deducing the empirical and theoretical backgrounds available in the first and secondary sources. In this regard, it has been attempted to identify the components of city image and urban branding, after evaluating the theories and guiding ideas of these two topics in the theoretical literature of the subject and then the relationship between these two issues has been considered. Figure 1 illustrates the stages of the research.

**• Theoretical Foundations
Urban Image and Branding**

Thought and the word image were first coined by economist Kent Boulding, in the sense of the individual’s perspective or whatever the individual has in relation to the environment around him (Ghoraba, 2013, 77). For the first time in Urban Studies, Kevin Lynch outlined the subject of imagery in his book in 1960 entitled “Image of the City”. He introduced the concept of the image of the city as an essential quality for human-urban communication. In fact, the image is the presentation or mental representation of the environment, formed by direct or indirect sensory interaction, interpreted through the observer’s value system, and stored in his or her memory. According

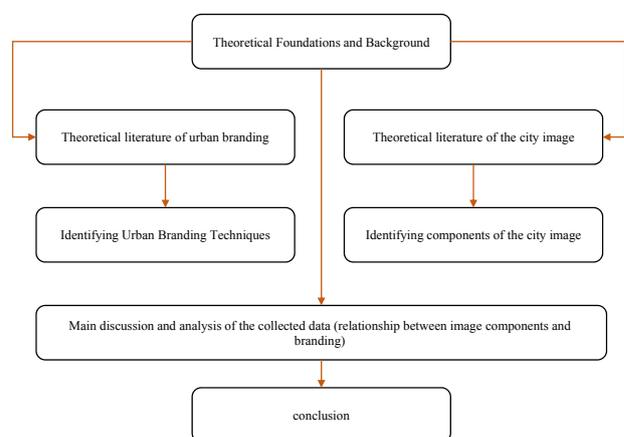


Fig. 1. Research steps. Source: Authors.

to Lynch (1960) images of the environment are formed in two ways and in a rotational process. In this process, environment presents variances and communication, and people select, organize, and combine environmental information with meaning, which results in emotional and behavioral responses (Fig. 2).

According to Lynch, the image is formed of three components of identity, structure and meaning. Although Lynch put forward these components, he merely emphasized the physical components of the urban environment and neglected the meaning. He used the 5 elements of edge, neighborhood, node, landmark, and path as organizing factors in people’s imagery which they were most used in identifying the mental map. The five elements that Lynch put forward were later redefined by other theorists such as Schultz, Golleg, and Appleiard.

Boulding (1961) views images as the product of experience, memories, attitudes, and immediate feelings. So the image of the city is more than just a mental map or visual information rather it encompasses all the physical and non-physical properties of the surrounding phenomena and places, and it includes all the meanings and emotions that the phenomenon evokes in the mind (Pakzad & Bozorg, 2016, 216). This matter is very important, as a result Philip Kotler (1994) views the image as a set of beliefs, opinions, and feelings that one has about a place (Li, Ali, & Kim, 2015, 197). Which is formed by expanding the mental structure based on the emotions caused by the flood of information (Reynolds, 1985, 70). It can be said that the environmental image is a product of personal experience influenced by shared values and norms. These images are the products which are filtered

by information sources, cultural and psychological factors (Stern & Krakover, 1993, 131) and it is influenced by memories, expectations, beliefs and opinions (Stylidis & Terzidou, 2015, 591). This image is the basis of the emotional response, action to the urban environment, the decision to travel, or the choice of location for travel, and even the purchase of various products. Pocock and Hudson (1978) divided the image of the city into two components; designative and evaluative (Richard & Wilson, 2004, 1934). Designative qualities include basic information about where and what. They refer to the mental map, in relation to basic characteristics such as distance, direction, location, or spatial variation. It can be said that the design aspects of the image are strongly related to the structure of the environment. The evaluative aspect of the image is associated with the meaning attached to the physical form. On the other hand, some people view the image as having three cognitive, affective, and conative components (Gartner, 1996, 457; Martinez -Luque, Del Barrio Garcia, Ibanez-Zapata, & Rodriguez Molina, 2007, 338). It is almost like the designative and evaluative aspects. Cognitive elements include attributes in which the individual recognizes or understands the characteristics of urban space and expresses the emotional elements of person’s attitude and feelings toward urban space through past experiences related to that place, residents, goals, and related organizations develops with it. Insufficient attention to meaning in Lynch’s studies was suggested by Nassar (1998) with the idea of image evaluation. According to Nasser, one can discover meaning by evaluating people’s environment, and he refers to likeability of this matter. Nassar sought to find meaning by

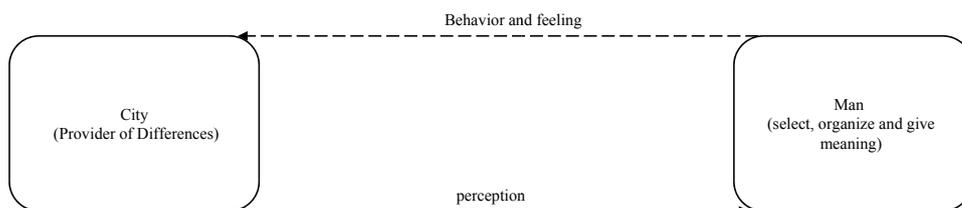


Fig. 2. Human-City Relationship. Source: Authors.

evaluating people in the visual environment around them, in fact, he instead of looking at the legibility or imageability of physical factors at the city, he was searching for the cause and purpose of a loving or amiability of visual environment in order to discover the concealed meaning in the observer's mind. Some distinguish between the meaning and quality of the environment so that in the process of exposure to the environment, the meaning is at the perception and cognition stage, but quality comes at the judgment and evaluation stage. What is evaluated as the quality of the environment is the external appearance and the end result of recognition of the three aspects of meaning, namely, functional, transactional and reactive facets (Rahmani & Nadimi, 2019, 51). Echnner and Ritchie distinguish between the functional and psychological components of the image, and explain three continuousness which support and reinforce each image: 1) Functional-Psychological; 2) Attribute-Holistic; 3) Common - Unique. They argue that the image of the destination must be understood both in terms of the specific characteristics of the destination (such as weather or facilities) and in terms of its overall effects (such as the mental image of the destination). In addition, these two scholars supplement the components of another dimension what they refer to as the Common - Unique dimension. In their view, two-dimensional evaluations (e.g. Functional-Psychological and Attribute-Holistic) are not sufficient to accurately identify the image of a destination and thus incorporate the Common - Unique dimension into the image dimension (Echner & Ritchie, 1991, 4). It can also be said that the image is formed by the experience of the environment or by the influence of the media. In other words, people understand and emplace the image in their mind via three processes. It includes firstly by planned interventions such as urban planning and landscape design; secondly by the way they experience and use that particular place; and thirdly by various forms of location presentation and display such as film, novels, painting, News reports and etc. (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005,

507). In landscape literature we find conceptual shared aims with the image and in some cases they are used interchangeably to the extent that these thematic commonalities exist, many studies point to the severe interplay and ambiguity between landscape architecture and urban design due to the many theoretical and practical commonalities, approaches, and expansions in their foundations and principles (Razzaghiasl et al., 2009, 89). Golkar views the urban landscape as the level of human contact with the phenomenon of the city, pointing out that a significant part of the environmental knowledge, emotions and behavior of citizens is influenced by it (Golkar, 2016, 96). Likewise, the landscape is the product of our understanding and experience of space, and the image associated with subjectivity and meaning is in fact an objective, subjective, dynamic and relative phenomenon that is the product of human interaction with the environment, society, and history (Mansouri & Foughi, 2018, 20). According to Cramona (2006), landscape is often seen as visual phenomena, at the same time it evokes memories, reminds experiences and elicits an emotional response (Sayafzadeh et al., 2013, 30). Pakzad views the urban landscape as a mental image that includes all available information from space that is sensible and information such as form, function and meaning are processed in the perception course (Pakzad, 2006, 37). According to Mansouri, the main goals of landscape architecture are summarized in three areas: aesthetics, functionality, and cultural-identity imageability (Mansouri, 2004, 69). These fields are equivalent to Canter and Rolf's physical model (form, activity, and meaning), which is also reminiscent of Lynch's three components. As can be seen, the subject of the landscape, like the image, also has commonalities, including the environmental context and the observer. Accordingly, some view it as an out-of-mind physical quantitative and measurable object (Zekavat and Pakzad), some view it as a particular outlook and looking for the perceptual aspect of the viewer's mind (Nassar, Kaplans and

Lang), Some like Aminzadeh and Golkar refer to the features of the objective and subjective aspects of the landscape separately (Mahan & Mansouri, 2017, 23). According to the above definitions, the city is a phenomenon of landscape, the fluid between the concepts and physics and the product of human perception of their living environment and landscape without audience does not make sense, and if there is no audience to perceive it, landscape does not emerge (Adelvand et al., 2015, 41). According to this perspective, it can be said that any image, whether positive or negative, on the one hand is related to an observer who interprets the environment and landscape, and on the other is related to a view that has a set of physical, natural, Social, cultural, and so on. This notion is closely related to the urban landscape referred to in the above definitions As a result, given the proximity of the subject, wherever it comes to the image, it is a landscape that combines objectivity and subjectivity.

With the onset of globalization and the era of competitiveness, especially with the spatial mobility of individuals and capital, and advances in ICTs, the interest in urban marketing has emphasized the image of the city and looking at the city as a commodity to be introduced and chosen (destination Tourism or place of residence). As a result, city managers have become concerned about the image and brand of their city from the point of view of citizens and people looking at it from the outside, especially tourists, trying to present a positive image of their city, thus considering the country or city as a place of study about the brand has been actively considered progressive (Kotler, 1996, Anholt 2005). In urban marketing, people are seen as customers in the city, and they care about how they feel and how they evaluate their physical and symbolic elements and how they ultimately shape their city (Kavaratzis, 2008, 52). Place marketing is the development and implementation of a management process that helps locations achieve their goals by adopting a market-based approach (Yazdanpanah et al., 2019, 20). One of the concepts that is directly

related to the implementation of marketing models in cities and is a complement to it is the concept of branding, which as a theoretical concept is based on the basic concepts of visualization and imagery. The term for cities began in the 1990s and has become a common term at the beginning of the 21st century (Dinnie, 2011, 3). In fact, urban branding is an attempt to design, shape, or alter the mental image of the audience, focusing on the unique attractions and potentials of a city, providing value creation for the tangible and intangible assets of cities (Rousta et al., 2016, 41). One of the goals of branding is to reinforce the image of the city based on its identity and to consider the local culture that will ultimately improve the quality of life of citizens (Rehan, 2013, 224). We can say the visual landscapes, services, culture, tourism, investment, technology, education, business, people, policies, plans and events of a city's assets are also reflective of its image. Understanding these values and assets, branding seeks to create a positive personality for the city and a unique brand aimed at influencing citizens and others.

Discussion and findings

Based on the above theories, interpretations and analyzes, some of the present research questions regarding the image formation process and its components can now be discussed and answered; As such, the image components can actually be divided into two primary and complementary components: The person first comes to the primary perception of the environment with regard to the external features of the environment, including the design dimension, visual fit and physical structure, identity (the environment differences) as well as its function and activity. Therefore it can be called a primary component. In the next step, the meaning of the environment, especially the connotative and symbolic meaning, will be discovered with regard to the personality characteristics of the observer, such as age, sex, education, experience, culture and memory and in a cognitive mental process, one evaluates the environment and then involves

impressions and emotions that lead to the liking or dislike of the environment. This component is defined as a complementary component because of its association with the primary component and because it emerges after understanding the primary component. It is through this component that one can discover the emotional burden of the environment and the user's preferences play an important role in identifying it. As mentioned before, the image of a city is a general feeling that people have about it and when the name of the city is associated with it, it can be positive or negative. Each of the components of the image in turn influences the formation of the image in the minds of the people. However, what is known as the overall image is about the city as a whole, which is a mixture of different components that evokes an inner sense of that city. For example, when people think or remember about a city and call it pleasant or unpleasant, they call it likable or dislikable. This is a comprehensive picture of a city that understand primary component by considering the personality traits, culture, gender, education, and discovery of the meaning of the environment, the city evaluates. This puts the person in an emotional and impression relation that can be either favorable or undesirable. Based on what has discussed in theoretical section, if one considers the landscape as a whole, the primary component can be regarded as objective and the complementary component as subjective (Fig. 3).

In the previous section, the process of forming the image of the city and its components were examined. In this section, in order to achieve the main goal of the research, the question appeared in this area is

discussed considering the theoretical examination of the connection between the components of city image and urban branding. In this regard, first the concept of urban branding is discussed and then the relationship between the two concepts of city image and branding is examined and analyzed.

The word city does not simply refer to office space or where people live, but emphasizes the social and cultural relationships of urban users. As a study subject, it has a variety of values, including the symbolic value attached to it by its residents and external observers, as well as the value and importance of its services in terms of tourism and investment and its value as a place of living for its citizens. Each of these values directly contributes to the importance of the city. Each city's image has been highlighted over the years and is largely understood by experience, and the people of the city, and even others, are aware of its quality and its relevance to the name of the city, and usually every city has identifiable images or certain core values that are understood by its people (Nourian & Mikaeili, 2018, 32). People come across and encounter the location via perceptions and images, so interacting with the environment may be based on direct experience of the environment or indirectly through media presentation. Accordingly, Kavaratzis (2004, 67) developed a place branding framework based on communication and image. According to him, each city contains objects or things that happen in the city which transfer messages about the image of the city. There are three different types of relationships that are associated with the image: Primary, secondary

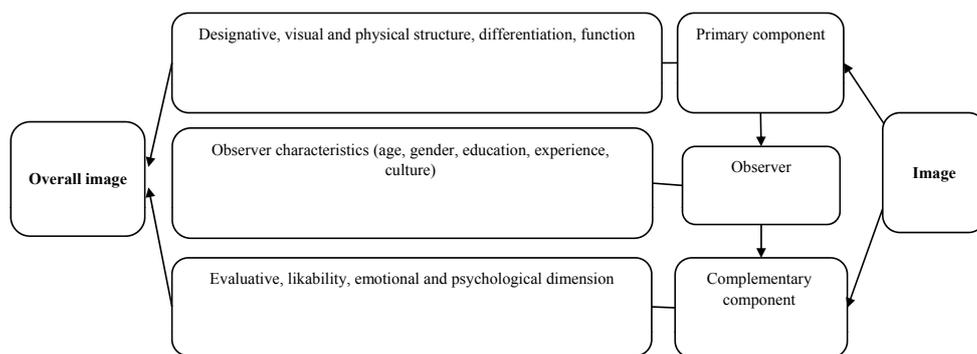


Fig. 3. Image Components. Source: Authors.

and tertiary communication. Primary communication is the communication effects of the city, which comprises four major parts: landscape strategies (strategies related to urban design, architecture, open spaces and general public spaces in the city), infrastructure projects (projects that their ease of access and development are related), organizational-administrative structure, and ultimately behavior, spatial interventions (landscape and infrastructure) aim to improve the physical quality of the city and non-spatial interventions (organizational structure and behavior) to improve the social and organizational environment. Secondary communication occurs through logo and slogan at this stage the use of marketing tools is considered. The third link is about verbal communication and advertising via word-of-mouth by visitors and others, this stage is influenced by the two previous stages. Ashworth (2009) discussed personal branding, building structure and urban design, and branding distinguished event. Table 1 shows the different strategies and techniques in urban branding.

According to Table 1, and according to what has been said by different researchers, the types of techniques offered can be divided into four parts: physical,

cultural and social, infrastructure and facilities and advertising. Flagship and important signature projects, symbolic monuments, historic textures and buildings, and urban design or landscape design of a city or area are among the physical indicators. Implements in urban branding includes events, festivals, cultures and social features of the local community along with the arts and traditions of the socio-cultural group, various amenities including accommodation for tourist. Services for tourists including hotels and guesthouses, access to city and location, traffic situation, information alongside shopping and leisure centers, citizens and tourists in the infrastructure and facilities group are part of implements in urban branding. It also contains the use of media, including television and the Internet and social media, along with slogans and logos which are among the advertising tools in urban branding. What can be considered certain is the use of all dimensions in order to make the urban branding strategy more successful (Fig. 4).

Conclusion

Regarding the relationship between branding and image of the city, it can be said that urban branding

Table 1. Different Strategies and Techniques in Urban Branding. Source: Authors' Studies.

Strategy and Technique	Scholar
Personality branding, Signature building and design, Hallmark event Branding,	Ashworth (2009)
Advertising and promotion, Large scale physical development, Public art, and civic statuary, Mega-events, Cultural regeneration, Public and private partnership	Hubbard and Hall (1998)
Design - Personality, Infrastructure-stable Environment, Basic Services- Service Providers, Attractions- Leisure & entertainment	Kotler et al (1999)
Primary communication (landscape strategies, infrastructure projects, Organisational and administrative structure, City's Behaviour), Secondary communication (logo, slogan), Tertiary communication (word of mouth, media advertising)	Kavaratzis (2004)
Iconic structure, Staging mega-events, Thematisation (creating a theme) and heritage mining (using the historic resources)	Richard and Wilson (2005)
Immaterial category (advertisements, logos and slogans), Material category (signature buildings, events, flagship projects and branding through planning strategies, urban redevelopments, institutional and infrastructure supports)	Jansson and Power (2006)
Contextualized (conservation and imitating), Non-contextualized (reproduction of familiar images, exotic or alien images)	Castello (2010)
Comprehensive program, Urban design, Architecture and landscape design	Gelder and Roberts (2007)
Hallmark cultural events, Restoration, Restoration and upgrading of heritage, Construction of symbolic buildings	Riza and et.al (2012)

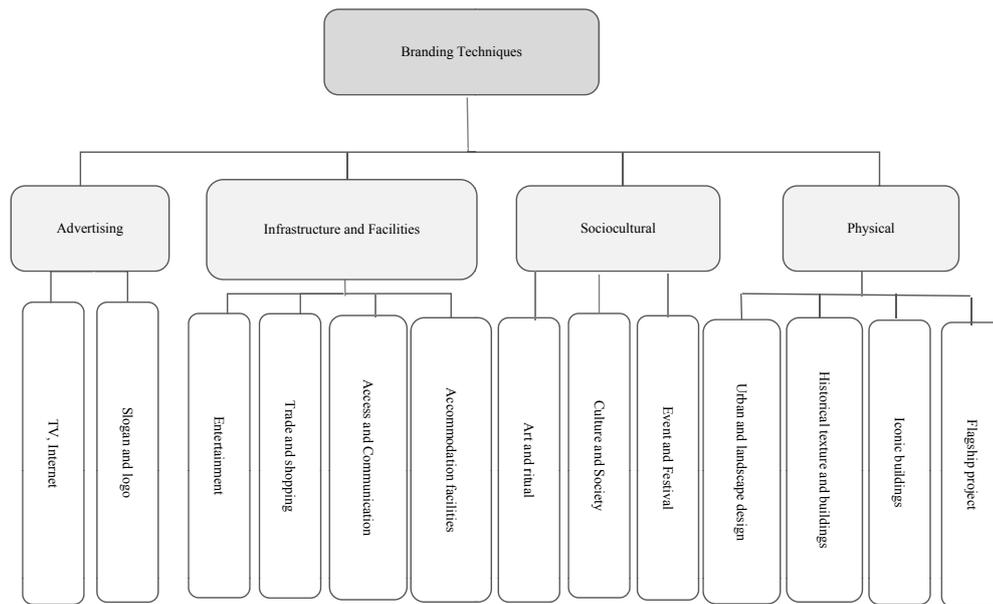


Fig. 4. Different Branding Techniques. Source: Authors.

is related to the concept of image and re-imagining of places. Creating, interconnecting and managing a city’s image is essential for branding because it is the individual perceptions and the image that shape the emotional and behavioral response. That is why urban branding must be a planned and conscious act of meaning, concept, and representation. Hence, it can shape perceptions for creation of desirable actions and it can fit the mental needs of customers in a competitive market. In this context, urban branding focuses on environmental perceptions and uses mental imagery in an appropriate manner in urban contexts. It uses mental imagery for more needs in social and economic development. The image of the city is very close to branding when it results from the process of sending different messages by the environment and formation of the image in the minds of the recipients. Building and managing a city image shapes the branding strategy since interactions between cities and their users occur through perception and imagery. Likewise, one of the goals of branding is to promote place and image values so that potential users are fully aware of the distinct advantages. Whatever the city offers (city identity), including the physical, natural, and social features and distinctions, and whatever these features perceive (city image) are

directly related to branding. Branding focuses on the image of the city with the help of various tools to enhance and possibly, to rebuild the image. The image is formed in a person’s mind both directly and indirectly; one may record an image of reality in his or her mind by being present in the environment and via direct involvement in the procedure of perception and cognition of the image. It may also form its own image indirectly through a variety of factors, including media and advertising or even advice from others. Branding techniques (physical, socio-cultural, infrastructure and facilities) provide the environment for direct experience, and advertising techniques indirectly shape the image by influencing the minds of the external audience, especially tourists (Fig. 5). On the other hand, the term image or mental image is used in many specialized texts, but it is sometimes found that there is no clear definition; the basis of the five indicators of road, edge, sign, node, and neighborhood is that it is synonymous with cognitive mapping, and some consider it to be a set of feelings and emotions about a place or city. Some also see the image as recognition tool of different benefits of a city to citizens or other groups in quantitative ways without identifying emotions and feelings of the image. But the present study, by examining

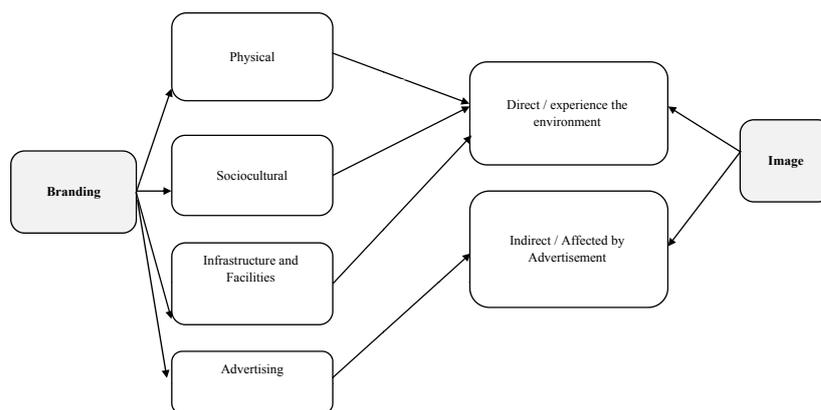


Fig. 5. Relationship between branding and city image in terms of image formation. Source: Authors.

various theories, has come to the conclusion that the image has two components, the elementary or primary, and the complementary. Firstly, by identifying the environment, then identifying the visual differentiation and physical structure, design, culture and functional characteristics of the environment, the primary component is formed. The complementary component, which is followed by the primary component and by understanding the meanings of the environment, is a complementary component of the primary component. It involves assessing the environment based on the observer's preferences, feelings, emotions, and the psychological characteristics of the environment. It is in this component that predominantly user preferences are identified by it. Sense of connectedness to the environment is identified by users; and even user feelings and emotional reactions, and psychological characteristics of the environment are identifiable. According to this component, the image of the city, in addition to its physical features, also includes symbolic and emotional meanings for the residents. So it can be said that the urban environment is not just a physical stimulus but it also presents values, feelings, beliefs and memories. Those are, the characteristics attributed to the urban environment enable people to build a strong link with the environment. These two components form a comprehensive or general image of a city or a place. Proper design of the environment and physical adaptations can influence the quality of the experience of the environment

and should be aligned to supervisor preferences. This promotes the weight of meaning aspect of the environment, engages the observer emotionally with the environment and captures a lasting image in his or her mind. The branding approach puts this concept of image at the center of attention. Because an attractive image is a valuable aid in global competition between cities. Four major branding tools are used to enhance the city's image; techniques or tools that include flag or flagship projects, symbolic buildings, urban and landscape design projects, the recreation of historical sites and building alongside social and cultural techniques (e.g. large events, festivals, popular culture, religion and the arts), along with infrastructure techniques including facilities for accommodation, shopping, leisure and access. It somehow makes the environment more attractive in design and structure from functional and physical aspects. This aims at the primary component of the image whatever is presentable, attractive and effective. It also causes the enhancement of the complement component and increment of the emotional burden of the environment. On the other hand, the technique of advertising using the media, especially television, internet, social networking and slogan and logo as a leverage or an added value, enhances the influence of previous techniques in the mind of the audience; additionally it reinforces the collective identity of the image from the perspective of citizens. It also enhances the image of tourists and investors from the outside (Fig. 6).

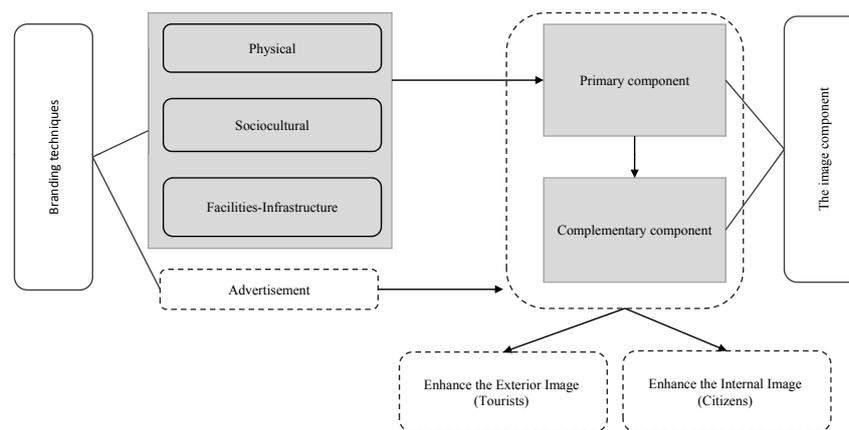


Fig. 6. Model of relationship between components of city image and urban branding factors. Source: Authors.

So today city managers and even citizens of different cities are concerned about their city’s image and identity and are trying to promote their city’s image in a competitive marketplace today in a variety of different ways. In addition to creating a distinct identity and a sense of pride in living in their city, they attract tourists and other people to improve economy. In general, the image is formed directly and indirectly in the mind of the audience this is an image of two introductory components that include physical features and proportions and then the design of the environment, differentiations and functions or activities of the environment. This image consists of two primary components that include physical features and proportions and then the design of the environment, differentiation and functions or activities of the environment. Moreover, the complementary component includes the emotions and impression that emerge after understanding the primary. These two components also represent the same objectivity-subjectivity presented in the landscape, the more attractive the primary component is, of course, it will have the complementary component or positive affective evaluation and that leads to the image’s durability and impact. Branding by understanding this by providing tools such as enhancing objective vision including landmark projects, iconic building, urban and landscape design, holding events and festivals, rituals and folk culture along with providing infrastructure such as accommodation, shopping malls, access, leisure and entertainment seek to

reinforce the primary component and thus influence the complementary (mental landscape) component. Ultimately, with a powerful tool called advertising, it will increase the influence of internal users (citizens) and external observers (tourists). Finally, it can be concluded that the results of this research are based on a proper understanding of image formation, understanding of its components and applying various branding tools. They are employed to enhance the image and achieve economic and social goals.

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