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CONSISTENT DEVELOPMENT BASED ON CITY BRANDING: A CASE STUDY IN KERMAN

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ABSTRACT

What the feeling is raised in individuals when they hear or see the name of Kerman. What distinguish features Kerman has between the cities of Iran and in the world? With which values Kerman is tied to the mind of people ?All these questions are summarized in the understanding and application of branding knowledge.

Today's branding has gone beyond the products and services and has reached to the cities and places.

During recent decades, extensive studies done on the role of cities as drivers of innovation and growth in the local economy that have a tendency to follow the strategies of urban renewal and revitalization. The present study makes an effort considering the development of cultural, environmental, political, historical, economical, identified macroeconomic factors to sustainable growth, in Kerman and focus on its potential ability.

The importance of this research is to enable urban authorities to have a macro view of urban development and simplify understanding of economic growth in line with the growth in other areas.

In this study, data collection methods including search in Internet, study internal and external books and journal additionally in order to achieve theoretical foundations we take advantages from other researcher experiences. Also questionnaire is applied as main tool for data collection and obtains desired data and hypothesis test.

The statistical population is Kerman town in Iran and Sample size of 300 patients was determined according to Cochran formula. For data analysis descriptive and inferential statistics methods used including frequency t-test and Binomial test in SPSS.

This research findings show that, Kerman has cultural, social, historical and economic characteristics of competitive and has not environmental and political favorable conditions.

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Introduction

City branding is a mix of historical identity, social and cultural symbols of civilization, commercial activities, amenities and entertainment, politics and international relations of any city.

Towns in addition to history, culture, religion, size and population, which distinguish them from each other having another great potential which can remain unknown, but cities are in competition with each other, trying out all the potential for promoting the quality name and address of its own citizens to build national and international arena.

These days cities management takes away from their traditional and followed by tourists and residents to attend a special and unique experience.

In fact a successful management seen his hometown as a brand and treated with it as a living organism that had been born, grow and become more mature.

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Each city has characteristics that can create, maintain and preserve their attractiveness, with using the concepts of city branding and tourists; it is become to local income.

During recent decades, extensive studies done on the role of cities as drivers of innovation and growth in the local economy and tendency to pursue urban modernization and revitalization strategies are frequently seen. In this context, an increasing efforts has been to create an attractive urban spaces and improve the urban environment in order to attract visitors, investors and big companies.

In academic definition, brand is a symbol that are used to value creation for its products, if we consider the city as a major organization the city branding management seek value creation for all tangible and intangible assets, and its potential attractiveness as a product. This concept with emphasis on core values in urban areas, with convert urban attractions and images to salient and tangible identities presents city as a permanent product in the national and international arena. In addition, creation of city branding is functional support to all the brands that are produced and distribution in the areas of internal and external. [13]

Literature

Place branding (including place marketing and place promotion) is a new umbrella term encompassing nation branding, region branding and city branding Place branding is the process of image communication to a target market. The concept has been introduced several times by different thinkers such as Simon Anholt, Philip Kotler, Gold and Ward Avraham and Ketter Seppo Rainisto, and others.

This approach of the early '90s was acclaimed in northern Europe and was implemented as a tool for economic growth and local. With the development of many cities to benefit from the advantages of city branding The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in 1999 formed the Committee on Urban Development to investigate and develop innovative strategies to improve the management and quality of the urban.

Since then, many urban indicators such as economic indicators, quality of life, cost of living, health, attractive appearance, academic and research Indices, tourism, social and political opportunities and ..., annually basis are assessed and ranked cities based on the declared. [13]

City branding in Iran

Branding in Iran more paying attention through to brands and branding issues of trade and economic.

But this is not limited to commercial companies and identifiers phenomenon that is pervasive and can incorporate even whole cities into.

Iran with the goal of becoming the Muslim world metropolis having several geopolitical and geographical advantages to benefit of city branding.

Ancient monuments, breath-taking landscapes, cultural and religious background all the multilateral arena as a stimulus for city branding or creating a unique brand of religious history in the region.

As the a period of time Tehran named as muslim world metropolis or Shiraz as Gate of All Nations, but due to the lack of coherent and consistent structure, these concepts have been forgetfulness and neglect. [13]

City branding concepts:

City branding refers to all the activities that are undergone with the purpose of turning a City from a location into a destination. "Successful branding", says Robert Jones, consultant director at international brand consultancy Wolff Olins, "can turn a city into a place where people want to live, work and visit" City branding is often confused with City marketing. The difference comes from the fact that marketing uses consumer wishes and needs as its guiding principle for the operations of an organization, whereas in the case of branding a chosen vision, mission and identity play that role. City branding refers to the application of branding techniques to geographical locations in the widest sense of the word.

City branding creates a single brand for the city and extends it to all its offerings and interactions. From a customer point of view this creates a unique picture of the city at every level of interactions. This also helps in removing the need to present a case by case picture of the city for each of its offering to the customers. [1]

A city brand is its promise of value, a promise that needs to be kept Good branding can assist in making cities desirable, just as bad branding can assist in making cities undesirable. Some examples of well branded cities are New York City, San Francisco and Paris. It's seen that the successful city brands marketed their history, quality of place, lifestyle, culture, diversity, and proactively formed cooperative partnerships between city municipalities and government in order to enhance their infrastructure. [2]

Branding destinations styles itself as 'strategic place marketing' (Kotler and Gertner, 2004: P 46). It emphasizes proactive management of image in relation to enhancing a destination's position by:

Understanding environmental forces that affect its marketability

Monitoring the external environment in relation to opportunities and threats

Involving all relevant stakeholders including government, citizens and businesses to develop a shared image

Setting and delivering incentives and managing the factors that may affect buying decisions including image, attractions, infrastructure and people. [3]

(Kotler and Gertner, 2004)

(11-Destination Branding-Professor David Littelljohn-2006)

Place branding

Place branding (including place marketing and place promotion) is a new umbrella term encompassing nation branding, region branding and city branding. Place branding is the process of image communication to a target market. It is invariably related to the notion that places compete with other places for people, resources, and business; the global competition of cities is estimated to host 2.7 million small cities/towns, 3,000 large cities, and 455 metropolises.

Place identity

The place identity is how the place is wanted to be perceived. The place identity is a unique set of place brand associations that the management wants to create or maintain. The associations represent what the place stands for and imply a promise to customers from the place organization. (Modified from Aaker 1996). (p76) [4]

Place Image

A place's image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a place. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place. (Kotler et al. 1999). (p77)

(5-Seppo Rainisto-SUCCESS FACTORS OF PLACE MARKETING-2003)

Competition of a globalizing world

The struggle for attention and preference is not limited to the contest between countries and cities; even within cities there is a fierce competition between city centers vs. neighborhoods, big box retailers vs. main streets, shopping malls vs. traditional downtowns. This heightened competitive environment makes it important for places, no matter their size or composition, to clearly differentiate themselves and to convey why they are relevant and valued options. In 2005, the International Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus published a book on the subject called "Destination Brand Science," co-written by a destination marketing veteran, Gary C. Sherwin, emphasizing that brand development was not a logo or tag line, but instead a commitment to a community-wide strategy on what distinguished the community from others, as well as a community-wide effort to effectively communicate and create that unique destination experience to the customer. Rather than being advertising-based, this brand effort focused on delivering an exceptional experience that was memorable and emotional.

In fact, this view is also supported and defended by Joao R. Freire. He states that successful destination-brand management can be seen as an exercise of coordination where relevant variables; such as tourism infrastructures, quality of local services, and other destination-brand users need to be managed in order to achieve a coherent and desired destination-brand identity. Therefore, contrary to the popular perception that destination-brand building is solely an exercise in communication, destination branding is, in reality, an exercise of identification, organization and coordination of all the variables that have an impact on the destination image. [5]

Place marketing means designing a place to satisfy the needs of its target markets. It succeeds when citizens and businesses are pleased with their community, and the expectations of visitors and investors are met (Kotler et al. 2002a: 183) .[6], [7], [8]

Attraction factors for a place

An internationally competitive city has several criteria¹⁵ for which functions a city must perform. Sánchez (1997: 455-465) lists them as follows:

- Population over one million; a diverse, qualified labor force; the presence of great universities, of high-level research and of a complete infrastructure.
- International activities that earn the city a place in networks of economic, scientific and cultural exchange and make it a financial centre; a high volume of air traffic; being well-served by advanced telecommunication facilities.
- A high level of specialization and the availability of services at an international level; the ambition to serve as a location for the headquarters of international corporations.
- Facilities that allow the organization of international events such as congresses, trade shows and festivals.
- Resident communities of foreign officials and business leaders with their associations or clubs.
- A cultural infrastructure, including press agencies and book publishers, museums, monuments to be visited, cultural events of international renown; artistic manifestations that project it as a centre for business, culture, leisure and tourism far beyond the national borders.
- City should strive to remain distinct among the set of competitors in a global context, spanning the cultural, political and economic fields. (p 35)

In order for a city to be a good brand, it must possess defining and distinctive characteristics that can be readily identified. These are functional (functionality means observable benefits) as well as non-functional qualities. These include city appearance, people's experience of the city, people's belief in the city, what the city stands for, and what kind of people inhabit the city. (1-THE BRANDING OF CITIES-Julia Winfield-Pfefferkorn-2005-p2)

The weaker cities currently in need of a re-brand: Rochester and Berlin – had confusing non-distinctive brands, economic problems, and in some cases, negative history. Their brands were not identifiable and lacked awareness.(p3)

If a city is to be considered a brand, it must start with a brand's most important characteristics; its fundamental properties. This means that a good city must have the following:

- Offer attractive employment.
- Not be unduly expensive in relation to wages.
- Provide good and affordable housing.
- Have reasonable public transportation.
- Have good schools and recreational/cultural attractions.
- Have a reasonable climate.

The way that brands work for a city is how these qualities are projected: by word of-mouth, public relations, and in some cases, advertising. (p10).

ADDED VALUE

Real brands provide not only functional benefits but non-functional added value.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF ADDED VALUE?

1. People's Experience of the City:
2. Perception. How is the population perceived?
3. Belief in the City. Does it stand for something?
4. Appearance: What does the city look like? (24-26)

This is an important component of city branding. When the world changed from an industrial society to a service oriented society, cities worldwide became casualties of the 'new' economic war. Suburbs developed as well as 'edge cities'. This took much away from the main cities that were thriving in the industrial era. (p116)

(1-THE BRANDING OF CITIES-Julia Winfield-Pfefferkorn-2005)

[9], [10], [11]

Attraction factors of a place can be divided into hard and soft factors. These are shown in

Hard factors

- Economic stability
- Productivity
- Costs
- Property concept
- Local support services and networks
- Communication infrastructure
- Strategic location
- Incentive schemes and programmes

Soft factors

- Niche development
- Quality of life
- Professional and worldwide competencies
- Culture
- Personnel
- Management
- Flexibility and dynamism
- Professionalism in contact with the market
- Entrepreneurship
- Unexpected relevance's

Figure 2.14 Place Marketing Attraction Factors (Source: Kotler et al. 1999)(75)

Research

Methodology

The research method is descriptive - survey. To collection of secondary data used of internal and external journals, business books and related websites. Questionnaires and scales used to evaluate the collected primary data.

The questionnaire consisted of 82 questions for evaluation 6 dimensions are described below:

Count of question in each dimension

Cultural	Environmental	Social	Political	Historical	Economical
12	30	22	5	5	10

In this study, 16 descriptive questions and 5 questions in demographic issues was asked from respondents. To evaluate the six research dimension Likert scale is used as follow.

Totally agree	Agree	No comment	Disagree	Totally disagree
5	4	3	2	1

In this research besides extracting the best places and characteristics of the Kerman via written questions to assess six dimensions (cultural - environmental - social - political - historical - economic), we consider two hypotheses for each test:

- H0: Kerman has acceptable standards according to dimension x.
- H1: Kerman has acceptable standards according to dimension x.

The research Statistical is Kerman city in Iran. According to the census in 2011, has population about 700000. Sample size according to Cochran's formula is equal to 350 persons.

For questionnaire data analysis, SPSS software including descriptive and inferential statistical methods is used. Frequency table for demographic description of the sample and one sample t-test and binomial tests for evaluate the research hypotheses.

In t-test the percentage of error is $\alpha = 0/05$ and confidence level is $(1 - \alpha)0/95$, given that the sample size is 350, degree of freedom is equal to:

DF=n-1=349

- H0: $\mu \geq 3$
- H1: $\mu < 3$

According to the left-sided test, alpha error level of the test is: $t_2^\alpha = -1/96$

Binomial test, P = / 5 is considered.

Analysis of Findings:

Table 1-1. (demographic information)

Count	Gender	Count	Age	Count	Incom e	Count	Educational level	Count	occupation
184	Man	18	10-19	67	Low	24	Elementary and junior high	18	Student
166	Woman	132	20-26	271	Mediu m	91	Diploma	126	collegian
		48	27-34	12	High	31	Foundation degree	18	Education
		72	35-44			67	Bachelor's degree	72	Organization s and agencies
		37	45-58			125	MA	12	Industry
		18	59-70			12	Doctorate	6	Culture and Art
		25	>71					18	Engineering
								6	Services
								12	Health care
								50	Retired
								12	Housekeeper

Table 1-2. (Descriptive questions)

Questions	Responses based on the frequency
How long have you lived in Kerman?	The majority of respondents Between 20 and 30 years were living in Kerman.
What is the most important old symbol of the Kerman?	Jabalieh(Gabri Dome)
What is the most important new symbol of Kerman?	Kerman is a new symbol
What are 5 attractions in Kermant, please order in importance?	1-Ganjali Khan Complex 2-Shazdeh Garden 3- Jabalieh(Gabri Dome) 4-Kerman Market 5- Arg-é Bam
Which words are best sum up of Kerman for excellent reason for life?	Kerman is a quiet city
Why Kerman is a good place to establish a factory?	There are many mines in Kerman sometimes read it as paradise of miners
If Kerman is a famous personality, who can be?	Khwaju Kermani(was a famous Persian poet)
What is the difference between Kerman and other Iranian cities?	Kerman is a vast desert city
Which five words best sum up the character of the people of Kerman?	Hospitable,friendly, kind, gentle loose
What would you like introduce Kerman character to others?	Kerman is a historical city; Kerman is a vast desert city, Kerman with his beautiful carpet.
If you have foreign friends, who know they Kerman?	Nothing!!!
Where is the most beautiful place in Kerman?	Shazdeh Garden
Why Kerman is a good place to visit during holidays?	Beacouse of his historical places.
Where is the best historical place in Kerman?	Ganjali Khan Complex
Which is the most popular sport in Kerman?	Footbal.
Which is the best Stadium in Kerman?	Valfajr.

Hypothesis test:

Six dimensions of research will investigate via sample T-test and binomial test.

Dimensions	The T test statistic	The rejection zone Less than	Test Binomial >=3	P
Cultural	0/47	-1/96	0/63	0/5
Environmental	-3/8	-1/96	0/55	0/5
Social	0/14	-1/96	0/54	0/5
Political	-4/67	-1/96	0/57	0/5
historical	2	-1/96	0/84	0/5
economical	-0/7	-1/96	0/56	0/5

Due to error level 0/05 and degrees of freedom that is 349, the statistics in Table is -1/96, cultural, social, economical, historical dimensions aren't critical area then, Hypothesis H₀ is accepted for them. This means that in terms of these dimensions Kerman has acceptable characteristics and standard. These values may also gather by binomial tests.

Dimensions of environmental and political, despite taking binomial tests on the acceptability of H₀ hypothesis, with respect to the T- test and his distance to the statistics table we cannot accept H₀ hypothesis. That means Kerman has no necessary standard in political and environmental zone.

Summary of Results:

Kerman in terms of cultural, social, historical and economical characteristics has acceptable standards. In environmental and political dimensions, have no required specifications.

Cities are living organisms and like any living creature need elegance motivate and give more energy to the people who live within. Natural brands are the best brands for a city. As findings in this study historical features was nature branding of Kerman. Emphasizing the inherent characteristics of cities that have been achieved over a long period is the best way to introduce a city. But this does not mean that investment and effort to introduce the new face of a city are not allowed. Scholars interested in this field can self-design surveys and investigations made aware of the unique features of their city and if they are willing to recognize his city as a character in this way, act in partnership with other stakeholders.

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