



Nation Branding And Its Significance; A Literature Perspective

Tiwa Park, Professor, Communication Arts, Bangkok University, Bangkok.

ABSTRACT:

The marketers keenly focus on branding for developing effective positioning strategies. The branding concept is also positioned on the basis of country of origin and termed as nation branding. This study highlighted the important components and aspects of nation branding that can help marketers and researchers derive new strategies. Moreover, the research has focused on deep literature analysis for explaining the brand personality, identity and image. This analysis is limited to nation branding and its significance; future studies can quantitatively explain this concept.

KEYWORDS: Nation branding, Brand Personality, Brand Image, Brand Identity

INTRODUCTION:

The concept of nation branding is across the border phenomena that cover multiple nations' scope from one country to another. Since last decade, multiple empirical studies have been conducted in this domain. Dinnie, (2007) explained that nation branding is an emerging and new aspect of brand management which lacks in delivering theoretical understanding and needs further inquiries. The idea to brand the nations and/or countries is termed as nation branding (Fan, 2006). Despite the emergence of this concept, it's facing unlimited challenges for survival (Fan, 2010). One of the biggest challenges to nation branding is public diplomacy which alters nation branding due to high contextual similarities and differences among individual. The adverse role of public diplomacy on nation branding is consistent in life course of nations and/or general public of a country (Kaneva, 2011). Similarly, Mordhorst (2019) indicated dark side of nation branding and concluded that branding a nation is a silly task that may cause multiple problems like difference of opinion, disagreements in dialogue, self-serving behavior and poor cognitive abilities.

Nation branding is a multidimensional construct and composed of the country of origin (Peterson and Jolibert, 1995), branding of location or destination (Morgan et al., 2007), national identity (Kaplan, 1994) and public diplomacy (Tuch, 1990). Therefore, it is significant in developing local, multinational, political, economic and intellectual image as a whole (Echeverriet al, 2019). To some extent this is future research agenda for upcoming researchers (Haoet al., 2019). Several countries have taken multiple initiatives to promote national branding as it is divergent in nature (Szondi, 2010). Geographically rich and intellectually advanced nations, such as, China, USA, Japan, Spain, South Korea, New Zealand and Germany, have focused on nation branding and taken a commendable initiative that depicts their general public.

There is a dire need to develop the synergy among the national government and national organizations to do nation branding (Frig and Sorsa, 2018). The appointment of renowned brand ambassadors may help to promote the national image and it enhances the general public's socio-economic well-being and develops the country's image (De Chernatony, 2010). According to Dinnie, (2007) this is the socio-economic and techno-economic approach that stipulates the overall branding of a country. In other words, nation branding is a tool to commercialize the specific location, resorts, places, celebrates, agendas, social works and innovative ideas of a country to represent the national image (Sevin, 2014). The main intention behind promoting nation branding

is to develop the good reputation of a particular country at the international level, which is only possible through national, local brands and branding campaigns with sophisticated and rich-thick data (Graan, 2013).

It is the core responsibility of the national government to enhance national reputation at different avenues. Therefore, the government has to work on different tourism, hoteling, education and other business-oriented projects (Aronczyk, 2013). Similarly, Kaneva, (2011) noticed that there is a significant association between public policies, governmental missions and nation branding that encourages public funding, governmental goals and across commercial border competitions. On the cultural side, nation branding covers the scope of social values, morals, spiritual behaviours, coordination, power distance and psychological identities of individuals. Conversely, this fluctuates the public perception at local grounds and reshapes the country of origin image on international grounds (Valaskivi, 2013). Conclusively, national branding is crucial to develop nationhood (Rasmussen and Merckelsen, 2012) and ideological discourses (Kaneva and Popescu, 2014).

LITERATURE ANALYSIS

The importance of nation branding is acknowledged by marketers, educationists, theorists, politicians and the general public (Adbalmajid and Pappasolomou, 2018). Contemporarily, what, why and how are the critical research question in studying nation branding in any context (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira, 2017). Absolutist, royalists and moderators are the three distinct characters that develop nation branding (Bos, 2017). Evidently, these categories belong to nation branding but are different from each other, in a way, royalists believe in a holistic design that nation branding is and inner self trait intrinsically, moderators believe that nation branding could be developed with few or more efforts and absolutists argue that for nation branding a handsome effort is required and it can reward in more productivity. Absolutists argued that no holistic view is entertained on this side, and brands can be created through promotion, advertising and intensive placement (Garretson, Fisher and Burton, 2002). Whereas, royalists have different believe and according to them the nations can never be commercialized and promoted (Pamment, 2018). Conversely, only a few studies declared that nation branding has a significant role in developing country-level image and representation, resulting in better economic conditions (Browning, 2016). Many studies highlighted that the individuals of a nation have a significant contribution in developing national image through skills, media, competencies and identification (Ozbilgin and Yalkin, 2019). Moreover, they have segmented the nation branding as,

- Environment
- People
- Government
- Culture
- Structure
- Politic
- Industries and other

Currently, minimal research has been done on nation branding, which is a significant limitation (Pinchera and Rinallo, 2017). Many researchers supported nation branding (Yan, Wen and Zong, 2019) to develop and extend its framework, and multiple researchers have also criticized it that this concept is impractical (Widler, 2007) and imprudent (Varga, 2013). On the concept of nation branding, many inter-contextual studies (Masango and Naido, 2019; Sataoen, 2019) and cross

culture studies are available (Semedov and Kurbatova, 2020; Yousaf, Fan and Laber, 2020; Foroudiet al, 2020). Knott, Fyall& Jones, (2017) defined nation branding as the element of a nation that indicates a nation's peak performance in different aspects of society. To somewhat, nation branding comes in the scope of nationalism, national progression and national prestige (Modhorst, 2019) and mainly developed by science, information technology, traditional technical skills and competencies, innovation and higher education systems (Fetscherin and Marmier, 2010). Contextually, the values of Indian culture are a rich resource in developing nation branding. Furthermore, the efforts of work by the Slovenian nations is branding itself. "Through atlases to the bin" is famous national agenda of South Sudan that have developed national branding of this context. South Korea is among the top ten nations with high brand value in terms of nation branding. Similarly, Japan has a high brand value in the Airline sector, which is their national identity. Hence, commendable work is done to introduce the notion of nation branding with significant proves, and multiple critics suggested coming up with fresh insight to extend the knowledge.

Nation brand personality

In nation branding, societies and cross-cultural individuals are inclined towards nation brand personality (Aaker, 1997). It describes the national attributes represented in the personalities of the peoples as whole (Kim, Shim and Dinnie, 2013). Moreover, these attributes are also branded (Rojas-Mendez, Murphy and Papadopoulos, 2013). Compositely, by the sum of such branding and national personality attributes, a notion is developed by earlier studies which is termed as nation brand personality (Ishii and Watanabe, 2015). The practitioners intended to present the term of brand personality in terms of nation and present the policy framework at the national level (De Moya and Jain, 2013).

Nation brand personality is conceptualized as "the key personality attributes of a nation that have unique features and are well-defined in social settings". Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos & Alwan, (2015) further elaborated that national attributes, brand attributes, and individual personality are unique, differentiated, paradoxical elements but united to develop nation brand personality. Similarly, consumers are usually the comparers of brand personality of nations with any other nation that shows the ambiance of national individual (Tam, Kim and Kim, 2018). Comparatively, cross countries nations can understand the individuals of local country or personalities, or celebrities and other renowned factors that remained the identity of a particular nation (Handayani and Rashid, 2018). Thus, it is the finest path to analyze the brand personality of a nation in any settings (EcheverriCanas, 2014). Interestingly, literature also noticed that the congruent associations between personality traits of common national individuals are somewhat similar, represented by national image and nation personality- ultimately developing nation brand personality (Malhotra, 1988).

Nation brand personality is a multi-construct variable having multiple indicators; down to earth, family and/or nation driven, hardworking, spirited, motivated, confident, feminine, masculine, rugged, technical, competent, reliable, independent, leader, smooth, sincere and daring (Yousaf and Huaibin, 2014). These attributes are indirect in nature, associated through national attributes, national social segmentation and categories, national image, symbol and promotional devices, such as, electronic and print media (Batra, Lehmin and Singh, 1993). It's still unclear that which recent study provides perfect theoretical aspects and discussion on nation branding and nation brand personality conclusively (Veloutsou and Guzman, 2017).

In contrast to this, theorists have faced several limitations in identifying nation brand origin, development and association with other constructs. More limitations are also expected, in a way, personality traits are multi-dimension in nature and have different features with one another that are difficult to conceptualize with brand management or nation branding (Moon and De Pelsmacker, 2015). Therefore, to solve this puzzle, studies recommend incorporating the role of nation type as a potential moderator (Zhu et al, 2019; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). Before doing this, the literature suggest the following steps;

- Follow well-developed, advanced and robust research to decide whether nation type is a potential moderator between the constructs.
- Reduce the nation branding traits and make a fit, clearer and manageable framework of inquiry
- Address the nation brand personality findings in your study with symbolic results, so that, a holistic view of findings may be given to the concerned audience.

To present the high generalizability among the findings and in society, inquired direct to consider large number of expert individuals are required who can study the personalities and celebrities (Flight and Coker, 2016) just because on brand personality has link with nation branding from one stage to another which significantly impact on social, individual and psychographic cognitions (Rojas-Mendez and Hine, 2017; Guzman, Paswan and Fabrize, 2017). Hence, in the emerging interdisciplinary field of national branding, the knowledge of national image, nation branding and personality-based branding increasing interestingly and speedily and it needs a diverse focus to investigate and come up with brilliant findings contributing in national development (Usakli and Baloglu, 2011; Veloustsou and Delagdo-Ballester, 2018). However, the claim of brand personality is exaggerated towards national aspects, like, national growth, national development and identity, national prestige and image of the country (Haoet al, 2019) and this phenomenon covers the scope of socially identified personalities (Kim, Han and park, 2001; Ekinici and Hosany, 2006), academics like universities (Chapleo, 2011), non-governmental bodies, political associations, media and other public departments (do Paco, Rodrigues and Rodrigues, 2014; Ngo and O' Cass, 2011).

Nation Brand Identity

Brand recognition is also named as brand identity (Coleman, 2011). Since few decades, brand identity has become essential in social settings due to brand representation, multi-layer levels of demand or need fulfilment, and brand requirement activities (Uggla, 2000). Hakala&Lemmetynen, (2011) were pioneer in studying brand identity in terms of nation branding and drawn its significance towards the nation and general public. Promotional tools and campaigns actively support national public institutions in developing national brand identity (Dinnie, 2015). Similarly, the nation as a product, skill specification of a nation, nation identification and national brand equity have a significant role in developing nation brand identity (Anholt, 2011).

Kitchen et al., (2004) narrated that in presenting and developing a nation brand identity, integrated marketing channels have a significant impact and must be focused so that a stable and reputed identification of a nation can be developed. Ultimately, nation brand identity is highly favorable for the general public to reconstruct themselves as a prestigious image of the society at the national level (Jwaorski and Fosher, 2003). Nation brand identity is derived from the national counterparts country's responsible individuals have to induct such attributes in the respective nation (De Chematony, 1999). Following the declaration of Nandan, (2005), a country has to promote its

national identity as a unique brand to compete in the international community in a more presentable way and deliver national communication and value to the key beneficiaries.

Classical marketing mix is essential in developing nation brand identity (Balmer and Gray, 2003). Moreover, distinctiveness, individuality, rationality, emotionality and compatibility are well communicated through integrated marketing communication and marketing mix which transfer the national identity as a message in internal and external sphere of the community (Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan, 2019; Konecnik and Gartner, 2007). In addition, De Chernatony, (2010) highlighted to consider national presentation, nation brand personality, national positioning, national vision and brand culture of a nation in developing nation brand identity.

The more branded nations are developed, economically advance, culturally fit and highly stable around the globe (He and Balmer, 2017). National cognition, beliefs, sentiments, attitudes, moral practices, national vision and national perception about the nation is prerequisite to nation brand identity (Kaufmann, Loureiro and Manarioti, 2016). On the local level, each country has a multi-layer second order line of culture, context, custom, language, and social beliefs, which are the major criticisms and a barrier to developing national brand identity, reducing social satisfaction (Ong, Nguyen and Alwi, 2017). However, inquiring how customer, supplier, marketers, promoters, producers, placers, teachers, pilots, warriors, governmental agencies and media personalities are the key contributors to overcome this barrier and extend the nation brand identity (Eidet al, 2019). The national government will face fewer challenges in developing national identity across the board and enhance success to achieve national goals and boost national motivation to contribute and deliver in society consistently (Anees-ur-Rehman and Jhonston, 2019).

Schien (1984) highlighted the importance of nation culture and declared it a school of thought to develop national identity and national branding. It is further suggested for social leader promoting nation brand identity to categorize the culture of a country into three subsections to promote less national identity with lesser variances and faults

Nation Brand Image

A realistic picture of acceptance and offer representing the symbolic existence in the eyes of consumers is called nation brand image (Chinomona, 2016). This image can be the image of producer or supplier in terms of national development programs initiated in any country (Kim, Choe and Petrick, 2018). In other words, the memories, perceptions, and recall positions in consumer cognition are the brand image (Iglesias et al, 2019). Similarly, the nation's cognitive picture, which is already a brand, is called nation brand image that can compete and strive for national excellence (Nyadzayo and Khajehzadeh, 2016). Similarly, this image indicates the depiction of the nation in consumer's psychology based on certain associative factors. Certainly, this image extends service quality and national trust among the general public of a nation as a whole and industry-wise (Saleem, Zahra and Yaseen, 2017). Furthermore, Picon-Berjoyo, Ruiz-Moreno & Castro, (2016) revealed that nation brand image is a potential predictor of loyalty and significant in multiple mediators and moderating frame of work. Mainly, the country of origin has active role in promoting national brand image, national evaluation as a brand and national intentions to go for excellence (Kim, Chun and Ko, 2017). Considering, country of origin, evaluation and national image, Ross (2018) showed that narcissism, self-image congruence, and culture type have a significant role in developing national image and brand and national attachment as a brand. Endorsing these cited narratives of different scholars, Lee and Lee (2019) noted that the nation's brand image can attract foreign direct investment (FDI) to the local country from which the general

public belongs. Moreover, Handayani& Rashid, (2018) also deducted similar results in their research on brand image in nations. Thus, to attract foreign direct investment through national branding and national image, Saad and Idris, (2017) highlighted the value of communication in national branding and discussed its association with visual representation. However, nation brand image is a prerequisite to attract the flow of funds to national country and develop co-creation framework from bottom to upwards (Hakala and Lemmelyinen, 2011). This association of national brand image and co-creation further predicts kinship branding and brand evaluation (Mihailovich, 2006) and stabilizes the nation wise branding as a whole in developing context of inquiries (Hanadayani and Rashid, 2018).

Moreover, sponsorship of events and publicity of national celebrities, products, and brands is highly required to enhance the national image in a more constructive and presentable way (Gwinner and Eaton, 1999). These activities actively develop national awareness and national knowledge through sponsorship transferability (Smith, 2004). Moreover, these activities are vital in sharing an image from one community to another and image development activity executed by the concerned office (Gwinner, 1997). However, Donahay& Rosenberger III (2007) directed to effectively communicate national brand personalities to communicate national image and national equity.

Chein, Cornwell &Pappu, (2011) further suggested considering and working on image creation and sponsorship dealings during the construction of national image by following the sponsor portfolio. Thus, active involvement is a precondition (Grohs and Reisinger, 2014) and much convenient in enhancing the national brand image with the coordination and/or alliance of image promoters and sponsorships (Gross, 2014). Moreover, considering sport transection and national alliance in urgency is also a precondition to establish brand image on national side (Chiu and Pyun, 2019). These findings have high relevancy withthe context of national and international sports (Grohs, 2016), sponsored sports and games involvement (Alonso-Dos-Santos et al, 2016), brand communities (Dos Santos, Guardia and Moreno, 2018), and Singaporean context (Chiu and Pyun, 2016) to promote and/or transfer nation brand image.

CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Previous researchers claimed that electronic media, social media and marketers have developed the ideology of branding. On this, we came up with the new ideology by extending previous literature, this ideology is known as nation branding. Eventually, we believe that,

- Nations can be branded and can represent the productive, realistic and natural image of their selves in society as a whole (Fan, 2010)
- Nations are far more advanced in their existence, and nation branding is not an individualistic phenomenon. However, its phenomena that stand on nationalists views (Kaneva, 2011).
- The nation branding is significant to explore the positive and dark side of its branding in terms of cultural, social, economic and personnel development. Several pieces of evidence are comprehensively theorized in the above sections.

We found this idea as significant in terms of national development, economic development through FDI, social advancement, celebrity promotion if the idea to develop the national image is a primary focus for any country, otherwise vice versa. Conversely, few authors claimed nation branding as economic phenomena and other few described as social phenomena with some adoption and omissions. Hence, considering this contradiction in theoretical narratives, further inquiries are

required to compare and contrast this concept to develop the new knowledge. Similarly, multiple quantitative studies can also be initiated to assess the association between national image, national branding and national brand sponsorship.

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