Perception of Destination Branding Measures: A Case Study of Alexandria Destination Marketing Organizations

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SUPPLIERS AND ORGANIZERS in the tourism sector seek to attract tourists by differentiating and marketing their products and services. While developing their marketing and sale methods they are now more and more using branding as one of their major tools, especially in the current intense global competition. Destination branding is not yet fully used in the tourism business sector of various countries such as Egypt. This study aims to investigate the branding perspective of destination marketing organizations (DMO's) in Alexandria. To achieve a high result, a survey approach was used to collect data from 100 respondents, official and public sectors using a completed questionnaire technique, a Likert scale and statistical models to test and interpret the research outcomes. The research findings explained that marketing organizations in Alexandria have not enough awareness of any destination branding's concept and that they are only implementing parts of a branding process.

INTRODUCTION

As tourism is one of the largest sources of economic activity in the world, travel and tourism generates economic activity worldwide representing over 12% of total global GDP (UNWTO 2006). The industry also accounts for over 200 million jobs direct and indirect. Tourism is not only one of the world's largest, but also one of its fastest growing industries. The importance of tourism and the entry of many new

destinations into the market have forced all to emulate and compete in the battle at a global level (Riege et al. 2001) to win many tourist markets (Konecnik 2002). This intense global competition in the tourism industry forces destinations to develop strong, unique, and competitive destination brands. Most tourist boards spend lots of money on 'selling' the country around the world. Blue skies, golden sands, and snow-capped mountains are only a tiny part of the reality of a country, but because these images are often so aggressively promoted, they have a disproportionate effect on people's perceptions of the country as a whole (Klooster 2004), so branding is the best solution for tourist destinations.

The concept of branding a tourist destination is not well known in Egypt until now. This research aims to shed light on the importance of branding for destinations, to investigate the branding perspective of destination marketing organizations (D M O's) in Alexandria, as well as to show how far parts of any branding concept are or are not implemented.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Destination Branding

Most tourism activities take place at a particular destination, therefore the destination itself forms a pillar of any modelling that is done for the tourism system (Pike 2004). Destination can be seen as an area that includes all services and goods a tourist consumes during his or her stay (Terzibasoglu 2004; W T O 2007). This destination appeal shape should transfer to a unique and competitive destination brand which expresses the reality of the destination and conveys the tourist perspective.

The destination marketing organizations (D M O's) and the enterprises are involved in the building and marketing of destination tourist services (Grängsjö 2003). This is why a tourist destination concept should focus on both customers and producers. The marketing success of a destination is dependent not only on the called push factors (market demand forces) but also on the pull factors (supply-side factors), that have a major impact on the branding success of a particular destination (http://fama2.us.es).

Destination appeal and experiences offered are shaped by:

Attraction
Public and private amenities
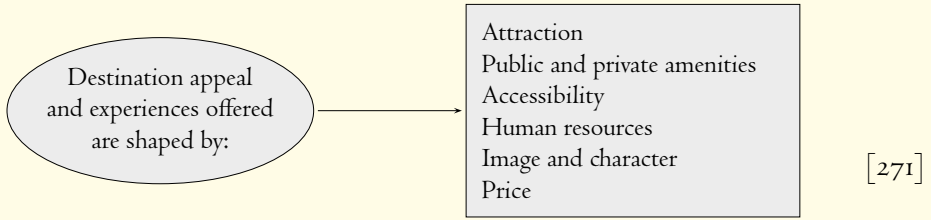Accessibility
Human resources
Image and character
Price

FIGURE 1   Elements of destinations (adapted from WTO 2007

Destination branding is defined as: selecting a consistent element mix to identify and distinguish it through positive image building (Cai Liping 2002), i.e. how consumers perceive the destination in their minds. Destination branding conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience (Goeldner, Ritchie, and Mac-Intosh 2000; Kaplanidou and Vogt 2003).

The desire to become a recognizable destination presents a marketing challenge (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens 2006). For marketers, branding is perhaps the most powerful marketing weapon available to contemporary destination marketers confronted by tourists who are increasingly seeking lifestyle fulfilment and experience rather than recognizing differentiation in the more tangible elements of the destination product, such as accommodation and attractions (Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride 2004). A successful destination brand needs to convey the expectations, or promise, of a memorable travel experience that is distinctively associated with that destination (Ritchie and Crouch 2003; Blain, Levy, and Ritchie 2005; Knapp and Sherwin 2005).

Benefits of Branding

According to Kotler, brands' benefits, are two-fold; they serve as a 'major tool to create product/services differentiation,' and they represent a promise of value from a consumer's viewpoint (Kotler and Gartner 2002).

Clarke (2000) has identified six benefits of branding related to tourism destination products:

1 as tourism is typically high involvement, branding helps to re-
duce the choice,
2 branding helps in reducing the impact of intangibility,
3 branding conveys consistency across multiple outlets and through
time,
4 branding can reduce the risk factor attached to decision making
about holidays.
5 branding facilitates precise segmentation,
6 branding helps to provide a focus for the integration of pro-
ducer effort, helping people to work towards the same outcome.

Benefits of branding for the community as a whole:

- Creates a unifying focus to aid all public, private, and non-profit
sector organizations that rely on the image of the place and its
attractiveness.
- Brings increased respect, recognition, loyalty, and celebrity.
- Corrects out of date, inaccurate or unbalanced perceptions.
- Improves stakeholder income, profit margins, and increases
lodging tax revenues. Increases the ability to attract, recruit,
and retain talented people.
- Enhances civic pride and advocacy.
- Expands the size of the 'pie' for stakeholders to get a larger
share, rather than having to rely on pricing to steal their share
(www.destinationbranding.com).

Brand Image

A country's image results from its geography, history, proclamations,
art and music, famous citizens, and other features. The entertainment
industry and the media play a particularly important role in shap-
ing people's perceptions of places, especially those viewed negatively
(Simonin 2008). This image can be seen as the sum of beliefs and im-
pressions people hold about places. Images represent a simplification
of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected
with a place, they are a product of the mind trying to process and pick
out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place
(Kotler, Heider, and Rein 1993). The image is a reflection, sometimes
distorted, of its fundamental being, a measure of its health, and a mir-

ror to its soul. It speaks to the way a country exists in people's minds and hearts as well as to the position it occupies in relations to other countries (Simonin 2008).

Destination image has a key role for tourism marketers. Several researchers (e. g. Mayo and Jarvis 1981; Woodside and Lysonski 1989) have illustrated that destination image and tourists' purchase decisions are positively correlated; this is an important issue in an individual's travel purchase related decision making, since the individual traveller's (dis)satisfaction with a travel purchase depends on a comparison of his/her expectation about the destination or a previously held destination image, and on his/her perceived performance of the destination (LaPage and Cormier 1977), it is an important determinant (Ritchie and Couch 2003).

Brand Equity

Brand equity is the value of a brand based on the extent to which it has a high brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, strong brand associations, and other assets such as patents, trademarks, and channel relationships (Kotler and Armstrong 2001). It stems from the greater confidence that consumers place in a brand than they do in its competitors. This confidence translates into consumer's loyalty and their willingness to pay a premium price for the brand.

Brand equity includes many dimensions such as performance, social image, value, trustworthiness, and identifications (Lassar, Mittal, and Sharma 1995). For the marketer, the brand is a value; the brand name of the product marketed by them should lead to attaining brand equity. For the consumer, a brand which accumulates benefits means benefits in the sense of utility and service. A brand is said to have equity when the consumers prefer to buy a branded one instead of an unbranded commodity. When consumers are able to recall the brand name and its attributes for the long period (Krishnakumar 2009), they react more (less) favourably to an element of the marketing mix for the brand than they do to the same marketing mix element when it is attributed to a fictitiously named or unnamed version of the product or service (Keller 1993).

From this point of view, brand equity is the extension of brand loyalty and brand knowledge (Krishnakumar 2009).

Brand Identity

Brand identity is a part of the brand's overall equity, the total perception of a brand in the marketplace, driven mostly by its positioning and personality (Upshaw 1995). Brand identity clearly specifies what the brand aspires to stand for and has multiple roles:

1 It is a set of associations that the brand strategist seeks to create and maintain.
2 It represents a vision of how a particular brand should be perceived by its target public (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000).
3 Upon its projection the brand identity should help establish a relationship between a particular brand and its clientele by generating a value proposition potentially either involving benefits or providing credibility, which endorses the brand in question.

Aaker (1996) has developed a comprehensive brand identity planning model. At the heart of this model is a four-fold perspective on the concept of a brand. To help ensure that a firm's brand identity has texture and depth, Aaker, 1996 advises brand strategists to consider the brand as:

1 a product;
2 an organization;
3 a person; and
4 a symbol.

Each perspective is distinct. The purpose of this system is to help brand strategists consider different brand elements and patterns that can help clarify, enrich, and differentiate an identity. A more detailed identity will also help guide implementation decisions (Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000). The most important thing to keep in mind about a brand identity is that it lives entirely in the mind of the beholder. An identity is not what marketers create, but what consumers perceive as what has been created (Upshaw 1995).

Brand Positioning

The brand positioning task consists of three steps:

1 Identifying a set of possible competitive advantages upon which to build a position.
2 Selecting the right competitive advantage.
3 Effectively communicating and delivering the chosen position to a carefully selected target market (Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride 2004).

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Marketers focus on differentiation branding through relationships and emotional appeals rather than through discernible, tangible benefits (Westwood et al. 1999), as it is clear that the most difficult task facing any destination is the quest for true differentiation. To create a fair, rounded and attractive picture of a country in people's minds, a balance must be maintained between the different images (Anholt 2002).

Brand positioning is what a brand stands for in the mind of consumers and prospects relative to its competition in terms of benefits and promises (Upshaw 1995). Brand positioning is a very important stage which involves the establishment of a fit between the supply and the demand perspectives on the destination attributes (Ndlovu 2009).

Promotional mix plays an important role in positioning a destination. In order to promote tourism experiences, marketers have to think beyond traditional advertising techniques. As well as communicating the obvious, in marketing campaigns they need to bring brands to life by dazzling consumer senses, touching their hearts and stimulating their minds (Widdis 2001).

Applying the Tourist Destination's Branding Model to Alexandria
Although some writers have asserted that destination branding is difficult, as a tourism product consists of many components (Riege et al. 2001; www.scribd.com), others have asserted that successful cases from the tourism industry show that the complicated constructs of culture, history, and nature can be effectively used to create and market a unique image of a tourist destination (Saarinen 1997; Poimiroo 2000; Ooi 2001).

Alexandria is the second largest city in Egypt and is known as The Pearl of the Mediterranean. The city has an air about it that is more
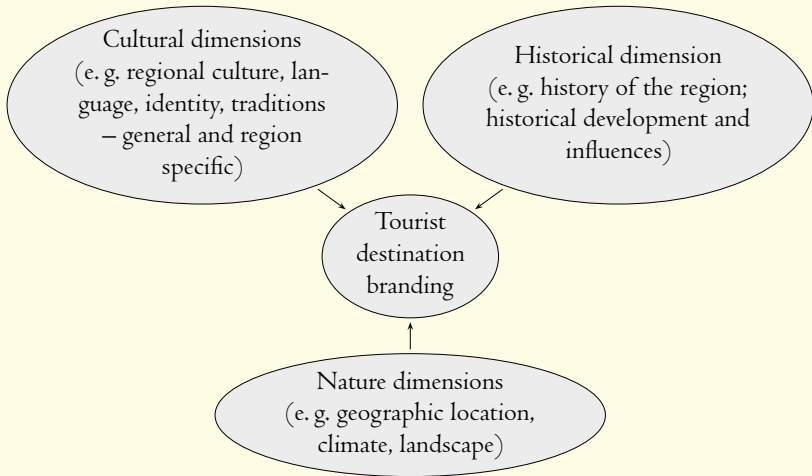
FIGURE 2   Tourist destination's branding model (adapted from Saarinen 1997; Ooi 2001; Iliachenko 2005)

Mediterranean than Middle Eastern. The ambience and cultural heritage, along with an exotic Orient flavour, is truly captivating and attracts travellers from all over the world.

Founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BC, Alexandria became the capital of the Greco-Roman Egypt. This was also the center of learning in the ancient world. From the 19th c, Alexandria became the focus for Egypt's commercial and maritime expansion. The city came to be known as the city of commerce and cosmopolitanism. Alexandria, apart from its historical heritage, is rich in its natural beauty, beautiful sites and entertainment options. No wonder, it has evolved as an ideal tourist destination (www.asiarooms.com).

Nature Dimension: Alexandria is famous for its natural assets. It is distinguished by its strategic location, moderate climate, and its beautifully fine sandy beaches which cover a large area (www.sis.gov.eg). Alexandria is a year-round resort, in winter the sun still shines along the white sand coast while yachts race in the harbour; in summer, sun lovers seek out the cooling sea breezes (www.discoveralex.com).

- The Beaches, stretching from east to west: Maamura, Montaza, Assafra, Miamy, Sidi Bishr, San Stefano, Glym, Stanley, Rushdy,

Sidi Gaber, Sporting, Ibrahimia, and Shatby; all of which lie along the seafront boulevard, the 'Corniche.' On the western perimeter lie Al-Bitash and Hanoville beaches.

- Alexandria Corniche: one of the best places to watch the sun set over the Mediterranean Sea, the Corniche is a seaside prom-enade that stretches the length of the city and is constantly bustling with activity (www.alexandria.world-guides.com).
- Gardens in the city such as the Montazah Palace Gardens, the Antoniadis Gardens, and the Shallalat Gardens (http://egypttourinfo.com).

Historical Dimension: Alexandria was the site of one of the seven won-ders of the ancient world (the lighthouse), which was the tallest man-made structure on earth (www.teflcourse.com) and unfortunately does not exist any more. Generations of immigrants from Greece, Italy and the East settled here and made the city an international center of com-merce and Bohemian culture.

The city is rich with historical sites such as:

- Pompey's Pillar,
- the Roman Amphitheatre,
- the Catacombs of Kom al-Shoqafa,
- Al-Shatby Necropolis,
- the Tombs of Al-Anfushi,
- the Tombs of Mustafa Kamel (Rushdy),
- the Fort of Qaitbay,
- the Mosque of Mursi Abul Abbas (www.2travel2egypt.come).

Over its long history, Alexandria has been the cradle of several civi-lizations of the ancient world: Pharaonic, Hellenistic and Roman. This multicultural museum lies safely under Alexandria's Mediterranean coastal waters, and during the Fifth Century B C it formed part of the ancient city of Alexandria, which was devastated by earthquakes and tidal erosion. A project was initiated in 1992 by the Supreme Council for Antiquities, in cooperation with the European Institute of Sub-merged Antiquities, to make a topographic survey of the area of royal facilities at the submerged parts, specifically the Eastern Port, which

commands a major historical importance (www.boutiquestyle.net; www.2travel2egypt.com).

Culture Dimension: Culture in Alexandria relates to both immaterial components (e. g. beliefs, values, customs, etc.), and tangible compo-

nents (e. g. languages, artifacts, cultural and archaeological sites attractions, etc.). Furthermore, immaterial components can themselves be made tangible through codification and transmission, whether in oral, written or artistic forms (www.efah.org).

Museums are part of the city culture such as: the Hydro-Biological Institute and Museum, the Greco-Roman Museum, the Royal Jewellery Museum, and the Museum of Fine Arts (http://egypttourinfo .com). Also the Alexandria Library, Bibliotheca, was inaugurated in 2002 as a resurrection of the ancient Great Library of Alexandria, which had formed the cornerstone of ancient intellectual life, and is a source of light and enlightenment (http://exoticholidays.com).

Many writers have accented Alexandria, such as Ibn Battuta:

Alexandria is a jewel of manifest brilliance, and a virgin decked with glittering ornaments. It lights up the west with her glory, it combines beauties of the most diverse description, because of its situation between orient and occident. There every wonder is displayed for all eyes to see, and there all rare things arrive.

There's also Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet:

The pale lengthening rays of the afternoon sun smear the long curves of the Esplanade, and the dazzled pigeons, like rings of scattered paper, climb above the minarets to take the last rays of the waning light on their wings.

He described it as 'The capital city of Asiatic Europe, if such a thing could exist.'

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not any branding concepts are applied to tourism destinations in general and specially

in Alexandria, the second largest city in Egypt with an economical as well as cultural importance. Specially, because the Egyptian tourist authority (www.egypt.travel) declared in its strategy 2009–2014 that they will develop a brand strategy for tourism in all destinations and communicate this throughout the industry.

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By using Alexandria as a case study, we also intended to test the awareness of branding concepts within the involved organizations and indicate which destination branding techniques are currently being applied. We focused on both governmental and non-governmental organizations associated with branding.

The hypotheses tested in this study were as follows:

H1 *Tourism marketing organizations in Alexandria have no awareness of the concept of destination branding.*

H2 *Although some tourism marketing organizations in Alexandria believe they practice destination branding, they are only implementing parts of the branding process.*

H3 *There are many positive results in applying the concept of destination branding in Alexandria.*

To achieve the objectives and hypotheses of this study, the research methodology depends on conducting interviews with a number of experts working in the tourism sectors and public sector officials representing the various tiers of local government and their agencies, such as: Ministry of Tourism in Egypt, Egyptian Tourism Authority, Egyptian Tourism Federation, Egyptian Tourism Development Authority, and Alexandria Tourism Authority, in addition to managers of non-governmental organizations operating in the field of tourism marketing in Alexandria.

The research targeted 150 respondents in governmental and non-governmental organizations from August 2009 to January 2010. The response rate (table 1) reached 80% and 66% for governmental and non-governmental organizations, respectively.

Most of the non-respondent organizations mentioned many reasons such, 'they are not ready to deal with the questionnaire; they are too busy, these data are confidential, etc.'

Literature, site visits, and interviews were used to formulate con-

TABLE 1 Response rate

Category	(1)	(2)	(3)
Number of organizations	5	140	145
Number targeted	10	140	150
Number shared	8	92	100
Response rate	80%	66%	67%

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) governmental organizations, (2) non-governmental organizations, (3) total.

TABLE 2 DMO's response to attractions in Alexandria

Attractions	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Archaeological sites	6	5	50	33	4	4	.255	1.084	.271
Museums	11	17	28	39	3.7	3.7	.277	1.178	.318
Religious sites	11	17	33	28	3.5	3.5	.315	1.338	.382
Old buildings	6	17	33	33	3.7	3.7	.311	1.319	.356
Beaches	–	6	28	61	4.3	4.3	.244	1.036	.241
Library of Alexandria	–	5	28	61	4.3	4.3	.244	1.036	.241

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) mean, (7) std. error, (8) std. deviation, (9) CV.

clusions and recommendations to brand Alexandria as an international tourist destination.

The Likert scale was used to analyze officials responsible and experts towards the objectives of the study by answering a number of questions using the five-point scale '5–1 (strongly agree–strongly disagree.') Statistical models were used to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results in table 2 show that there are many tourist attractions in Alexandria, such as: library of Alexandria, beaches, archaeological sites, museums, old building, and religious sites.

Results in table 3 show types of tourism that could be promoted in the city, such as: underwater monuments tourism, culture tourism, recreation tourism, religious tourism, and health tourism.

About the meaning of destination branding, the results in figure 3 show the following:

TABLE 3   Response to type of tourism could be promoted in Alexandria

Type of tourism	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Culture tourism	5	11	56	28	4	4	.189	.802	0.200
Recreation tourism	6	4	50	34	4	4	.255	1.084	.271
Religious tourism	6	33	33	22	3.6	3.6	.257	1.092	.303
Health tourism	22	17	39	11	3	3	.294	1.248	.416
Underwater monuments tourism	–	16	56	28	4	4	.159	.676	.169

NOTES   Column headings are as follows: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) mean, (7) std. error, (8) std. deviation, (9) CV.
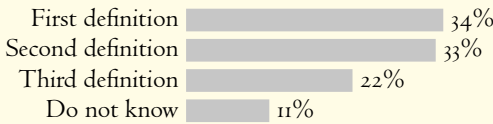
First definition ████████████ 34%
Second definition ███████████ 33%
Third definition ███████ 22%
Do not know ███ 11%

FIGURE 3   Meaning of destination branding

1 34% of the respondents chose the first definition which was 'setting a logo to a destination in the marketing plan.'
2 33% of the respondents chose the second definition which was 'Use a slogan to a destination and marketing to it.'
3 22% of the respondents chose the third — the correct— definition which was 'a collective of creative activities which help achieving competitive advantage, identify and differentiate one destination from those of another.'
4 11% of the interviewees did not know the concept of destination branding.

The above results show that 67% of the interviewees chose incorrect definitions of the destination branding. This result proves the first hypothesis of this study.

Results in table 4 show the elements which may be used to brand Alexandria as a tourism destination, such as: good image, reputation, customs of local people, peace and safety, culture assets, infrastructure, a slogan or a logo of Alexandria, emotional appeal, and nature assets.

Results in table 5 show proposed elements suggested for branding Alexandria's strategy:

TABLE 4   Response to branding elements which could be used to brand Alexandria

Branding elements	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Should a slogan or a logo exist?	11	6	22	33	28	3.6	.303	1.289	.358
Nature assets	17	–	–	44	39	3.8	.332	1.409	.370
Culture assets	11	–	5	56	28	3.8	.278	1.182	.311
Emotional appeal	11	6	27	28	28	3.5	.304	1.293	.369
Good image	–	11	–	45	44	4.2	.222	.942	.224
Reputation	6	–	5	50	39	4.1	.232	.985	.240
Customs of local people	–	11	17	44	28	3.8	.227	.963	.253
Infrastructure	5	11	17	17	50	3.9	.307	1.304	.334
Peace & safety	5	6	6	22	61	3.9	.285	1.211	.310

NOTES   Column headings are as follows: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) mean, (7) std. error, (8) std. deviation, (9) CV.
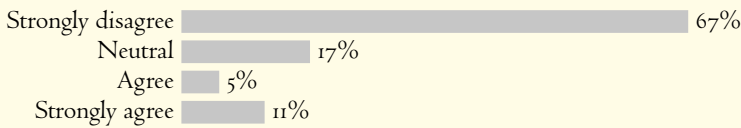
FIGURE 4   Level of practising destination branding

1 raise awareness of branding importance between stakeholders,
2 rebuilding Alexandria's image,
3 collaboration between tourism participants' efforts.
4 brand equity,
5 identify a new tourism market,
6 brand identity, and
7 best marketing activities.

Results in figure 4 show that 67% of the respondents do not practice the branding process for Alexandria as a destination, and 17% of them are neutral, while 16% of the respondents practice branding.

The above results show that most tourism marketing organizations in Alexandria do not practice branding.

Results in figure 5 show that 72 of respondents do not know about the logo and slogan of Alexandria ('Pearl of the Mediterranean'), while 28 do know about it.

TABLE 5   Points of view of respondents about elements of branding Alexandria's strategy

Elements	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Rebuilding Alexandria's image	6	–	–	44	50	4.3	.228	.970	.225
Raise awareness of branding importance between stakeholders	–	6	11	44	39	4.1	.202	.857	.209
Collaboration between tourism parties' efforts	5	–	5	34	56	4.3	.242	1.028	.239
Identify a new tourism market	6	–	11	44	39	4.1	.241	1.022	.249
Best marketing activities	5	6	–	28	61	4.3	.268	1.137	.264
Brand equity	6	–	5	33	56	4.3	.242	1.028	.239
Brand identity	5	–	11	39	44	4.1	.245	1.043	.254

NOTES   Column headings are as follows: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) mean, (7) std. error, (8) std. deviation, (9) cv.
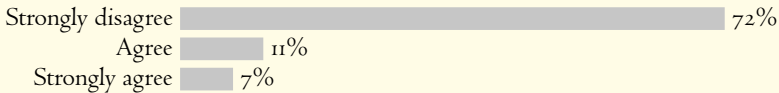
Strongly disagree | 72%
Agree | 11%
Strongly agree | 7%

FIGURE 5   Awareness about current logo and slogan of Alexandria

Strongly disagree | 78%
Neutral | 6%
Agree | 11%
Strongly agree | 5%

FIGURE 6   Studying and analyzing the competitors

Hence there is a negative result about the awareness between DMO's about the logo and the slogan of Alexandria.

In figure 6, the results show opinions of respondents about studying and analyzing its competitors to achieve competitive advantage; 84 of the respondents do not agree, while 5 of them strongly agree, and 11% of them are neutral. About effective strategies for competitor's success, the results in table 6 show many strategies such as:

1 more theme targeted marketing,
2 more knowledgeble staff,
3 theme target market,
4 low cost policy,

TABLE 6　Effective strategies to support Alexandria's branding for confronting competitors

Strategies	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Low cost policy	39	28	17	5	11	2	.318	1.352	.676
Theme targeted marketing	39	11	6	22	22	2.7	.400	1.699	.629
More theme targeted marketing	11	—	6	50	33	3.9	.285	1.211	.310
More knowledgable staff	17	6	—	27	50	3.8	.360	1.529	.402

NOTES　Column headings are as follows: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree, (6) mean, (7) std. error, (8) std. deviation, (9) CV.
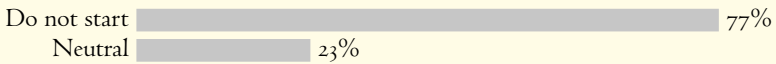
Do not start　77%
Neutral　23%

FIGURE 7　Activities used for branding Alexandria

The results in table 6 and results in figure 7 show that there is no homogeneity in the branding policy for Alexandria. There is a lack of guidelines, and most of the DMO's try different methods on a more or less individual basis than on a city guidelined strategy. These results prove the second hypothesis of this study.

About the positive results in the case of applying branding for Alexandria, the results show that all respondents see 'there are many positive effects such as: Raising the number of tourists either domestic or foreign to Alexandria, encouraging investments either local or foreign in Alexandria, establishing infrastructure, building new units of accommodation to allow tourists to spend more time, and raising awareness of tourism among the local people.' The above findings prove the third hypothesis of the study.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study shows clearly that there is no branding concept in Alexandria. Also no concrete plans exist, neither in the governmental nor in the nongovernmental organizations. On the contrary, most of the people questioned and interviewed did not even have a clear vision of what to identify within Alexandria so as to put it as a lead in their strategy plan.
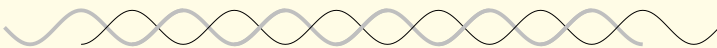
In spite of the fact that Alexandria is the second important city to Egypt and is a unique city by its culture, and its nature, it has not been properly included in the map of international tourism. The share of Alexandria is about 1.2% of the total of international tourism in Egypt (Egyptian Ministry of Tourism 2009), and this province has not received its fair share from marketing efforts at the local, regional, and international level.

The findings reveal that, although D M O's have the same opinion about multi-potential tourism attractions in Alexandria, they trace different perceptions of branding and do not agree on one or two outstanding identification objects to develop a brand based on a specific image of Alexandria, that everyone, – local or visitor – can relate to as characteristic.

To unify the D M O's it will be necessary to appoint a committee with a controlling function. This committee should consist of members of all involved governmental and non governmental organizations that can put all items together and send out the brand image that was agreed upon to all tourism organizations, for implementing the brand marketing process. Since this study examined the D M O's perspective about branding Alexandria, future research should be developed to test the perspective of tourists about the city.

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