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Research Paper

Future Studies of Urban Branding Development in Qom Metropolis

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Future Studies,
Urban Branding,
Urban Development,
Competitiveness,
Qom City.



Received:

05 April 2022

Received in revised form:

10 June 2022

Accepted:

07 August 2022

pp. 65-82

Globalization and competitiveness have influenced metropolises to consider branding. Branding is a tool for conveying the city's image and achieving various urban development goals. The world is changing rapidly. Uncertainty is one of its features that should be known. Foresight is necessary to prepare for these uncertainties and develop appropriately and flexibly.

This research is exploratory in terms of its practical purpose and in terms of the nature and method of descriptive-analytical research. The required information was collected through field studies and documents. In the field studies, a researcher-made questionnaire was a data collection tool. The mutual effects analysis method was used in Mic Mac software and the GBN scenario writing method to analyze the data.

The results of the research indicate that among the 64 selected factors, 33 key factors were selected as effective ones, which continuous and effective management, good governance, the city's role in the national economy, power structure and service delivery methods as effective drivers for branding. The investigation of uncertainties also showed that the increase or decrease of the role of urban associations and informal organizations and community-based groups and social movements, the expansion or non-expansion of Iran's political relations with other countries, and how Iran interacts with the process of globalization.

The increase or decrease of the transnational functions of Qom city are considered as three uncertainties with the highest priority for Qom city. Finally, four scenarios were drawn for the future of the Qom metropolis..

Citation: Mohebi, Z., Sasanpour, F., Shamaei, A., & Fasihi, H. (2022). Future Studies of Urban Branding Development in Qom Metropolis. *Geographical planning of space quarterly journal*, 12 (2), 65-82.

<http://doi.org/10.30488/GPS.2022.326356.3507>

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Today, cities compete with each other under the influence of global competition under urban branding. The place brand builds brand equity concerning the regional and local identity (city). Urban branding is a tool to convey the city's image and achieve various urban development goals. Effective urban branding also requires a clear vision of the place's future and a comprehensive strategy for brand growth, as well as the implementation of effective policies and information about progress to domestic and foreign audiences. Rapid technological advances, and new concerns have already changed how municipalities are managed in many cities worldwide (Ibid). In this way, the planner, with the lever of control and management of the future, will deal with the desired architecture of the future. Therefore, we need an active approach for the brand in order to have a coherent and capable intellectual horizon and to appear sufficiently and strongly in verbal communication, formal and organizational communication, and marketing and branding relations. It seeks to answer the following question:

-Considering the key factors, trends and driving forces, how can the grounds for the realization of urban branding (Horizon 2042) be provided in Qom? And finally, what are the scenarios facing Qom branding?

Methodology

The present research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of nature and research method. Topics related to theoretical foundations of documentary study (books and articles, dissertations, reports, urban statistics and statistical yearbooks of the province, urban development plans of Qom, etc.) and in the field section of the researcher-made questionnaire have been used. The statistical population of the dissertation in Qom and the sample of the dissertation according to the type of questionnaire (futures research) Delphi method (30 experts) was exerted. Future research methods (GBN scripting) have been used to answer the research questions.

Results and discussion

Experts scored key factors in the interaction matrix (33 * 33). The relationships of these factors relative to each other were analyzed in Mick Mac software. Mick Mac software output eventually extracted six factors as key drivers that were repeated in direct and indirect methods. The next step identified uncertainties based on key drivers and documentary studies. Three factors "increasing or decreasing the role of urban associations and informal organizations and community-based groups and social movements", "expanding or not expanding Iran political relations with other countries and the process of globalization", and "increasing or decreasing transnational functions" are the ones at the highest level of uncertainty and importance, respectively, and are the same as critical uncertainties. In the next stage, the correlation between uncertainties was examined, and the increase or transnational functions and the expansion or non-expansion of Iran's political relations with other countries and globalization have a high degree of correlation) were expressed. The second fundamental uncertainty is (increasing or decreasing the role of urban associations and informal organizations and groups based on consensus and social movements). According to the indicators of importance and depth of uncertainty, the axes of different branding scenarios in Qom were selected and introduced.

At this stage, taking into account the logic of the scenarios and referring to all environmental factors identified in the previous steps and drivers, the loading of each scenario was done, and the scenarios as a model of the future in full in four scenarios (the first scenario of Manijan city presented the second scenario of Gol-e-Abrisham city, the third scenario of Mosques and Minarets city, and the fourth scenario of Seventy-two Nations city).

Conclusion

Qom metropolis has basic issues and problems in social, economic, physical, and managerial dimensions. Examination of the scenarios showed that with the continuation of the current trend, the city would have problems in terms of economy and identity

and not have a promising future, and this shows that the city should have an approach to its future that is different from the current approach and make fundamental changes in city planning. Due to the role of Qom city in the national arena, the type of future plan that is considered for it should be noticed in the economic and identity discussion of the city. In Qom metropolis, with the help of the brand, in addition to maintaining domestic capital, it is possible to attract foreign investors. A different brand is formed according to the behavior of the city.

Funding

There is no funding support.

Authors' Contribution

Authors contributed equally to the conceptualization and writing of the article. All of the authors approved the content of the manuscript and agreed on all aspects of the work declaration of competing interest none.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declared no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to all the scientific consultants of this paper.