
**Nation Branding: An Integrated Framework for Developing a Nation
Brand for Palestine from Stakeholders' Perspectives**

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Abstract

This doctoral dissertation explores the factors that are essential for developing a nation brand in order to develop an integrated and holistic framework that will add to the theory of nation branding. Particularly, this current study explores and builds on the stakeholders' views and attitudes in Palestine to develop a nation brand for Palestine, taking into consideration specific criteria regarding the informants who should participate in this process.

The discussion is founded on an extensive review of relevant literature on nation branding and nation brand, drawing information from previously developed models. The purpose of the detailed literature review is to (a) study the existing nation-branding models, (b) identify the key factors that contribute to the development of a nation brand, and (c) uncover any gaps in the existing literature. The first phase results in the development of a conceptual framework for building the nation brand. The research builds on the secondary data in the preliminary stages of the study.

The philosophical position of the researcher leads the researcher to adopt the constructivist, interpretivist paradigm. Accordingly, the methodology adopted was a triangulation of deductive and inductive approaches.

The second phase of the research focuses on collecting primary data in order to verify the preliminary framework and refine it to bring it in to line with what the empirical evidence reveals. The qualitative research method adopted is semi-structured in-depth interviews.

The research findings of the study present a significant contribution to the theory of nation branding and nation brand by developing an integrated and holistic framework that brings together all the essential factors and variables that are perceived to be instrumental in the creation of a strong nation brand and takes into consideration the stakeholders' views. The research's contribution to practice is also significant owing to the findings that could facilitate the Palestinian government's mission to develop a nation brand. The findings of the current study revealed a wide

range of sectors and natural channels (brand communicators) that could play an essential role in developing a nation brand. A wide range of strong recommendations concluded that strategic visionary leadership is key to developing a nation brand. Coordination and communication among and between the stakeholders and the leadership are key motivators in the nation-branding process. Feedback was revealed as a new essential element. The empirically tested conceptual framework reflects many other aspects that are detailed in the final chapter.



Dedication

To my husband, who supports me with love, kindness and understanding. To my parents, who are the reason for my presence in this life. Finally, to my children (Sara, Mohammed and Mona), who continue to give beautiful meaning and value to my days – thank you for your patience, love and understanding.

To Palestine, my homeland.

على هذه الأرض ما يستحقّ الحياة. سيدة الأرض
أم البدايات أم النهايات. كانت تسمى فلسطين. صارت ،
تسمى فلسطين. سيدتي. أستحق، لأنك سيدتي، أستحق الحياة

Mahmoud Darwish

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I would like to express my love for and appreciation of my incredibly supportive husband, Rami, who has been by my side through the years of research, and without a single complaint.

Finally, my profound gratitude to God Almighty, with whom all becomes possible.

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Nicosia and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in Cyprus or overseas. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University .

SignedJilan Abdalmajid.....

Date20.12.2018.....

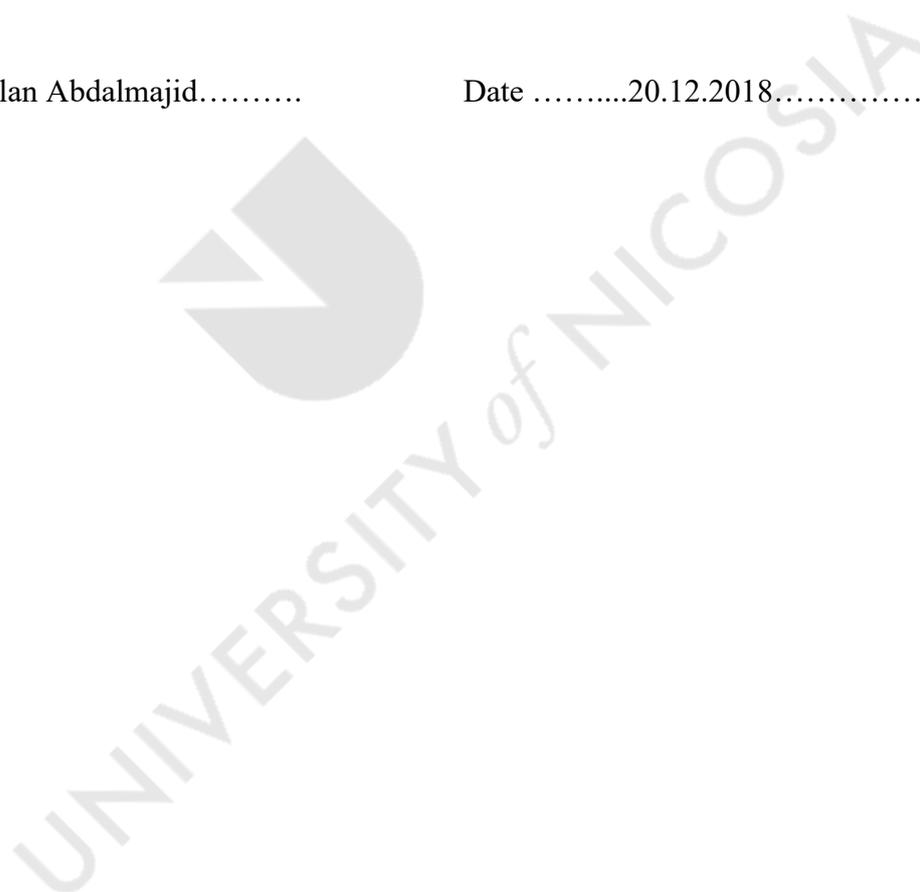


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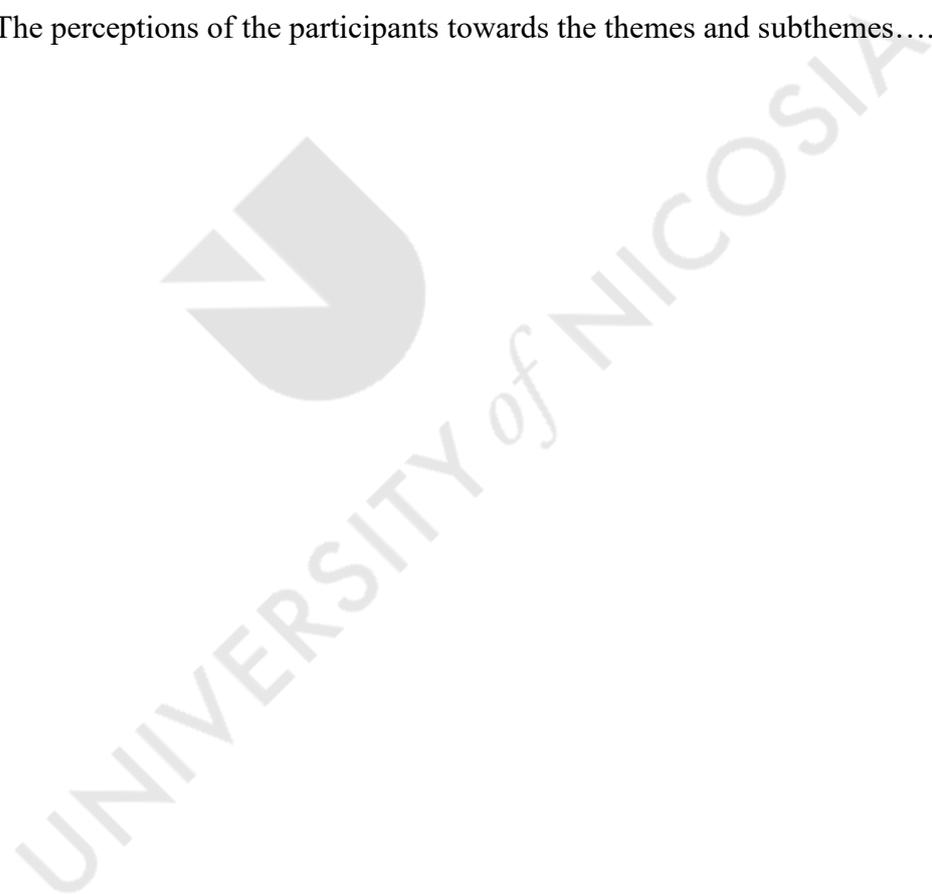
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Abbreviations

PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and cultural organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
LR	Literature Review
FIST	Fully Stakeholders' Approach
RQ	Research Question
RO	Research Objective
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-Ireland
NBDM	national branding development model developed by Erm and Arengu (2003).

Publications

BOOK CHAPTERS

Abdalmajid, J. and Pappasolomou, I., 2018. Contemporary Nation Branding Under Complex Political Conditions: The Case of Palestine. In *Innovation and Capacity Building* (pp. 187-205). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

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Abdalmajid, J., Pappasolomou, I. & Melanthiou Y (2017). "Nation Branding: An Integrated Framework for Developing A Nation Brand for Palestine. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Colloquium on Corporate Branding, Identity, Image and Reputation, UK, 143-145.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Chapter

As this study investigates the area of nation branding and developing a nation brand for Palestine, it provides insight into the current situation regarding geopolitical issues and highlights relevant historical developments. This chapter begins with an overview highlighting the importance of the study. This is followed by the broader research questions that guide this thesis, and the main aim and objectives. Next, the chapter elaborates on the problem statement and gaps in the literature, followed by the rationale for choosing a suitable empirical context to provide answers to the research questions. This is followed by a brief presentation of the theoretical and practical implications of this current study. The final section of this introduction chapter outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.2 The Importance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in the belief that all research increases knowledge and shapes human understanding. For this study, the researcher chose the area of nation branding and, more specifically, developing a nation brand in order to enrich and add to the current knowledge of these concepts. These areas still lack clear conceptualisation, as many scholars admit in their research.

1.3 The Broader Research Questions, Aim and Objectives of this Study

This research study is guided by the following main research questions:

- 1- What are the key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand?

- 2- What are the different views and attitudes of the stakeholders towards developing a nation brand for Palestine?
- 3- What could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for any country, including Palestine?

The aim of this study is to formulate an integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine from the stakeholders' perspectives.

The researcher set the following objectives in order to achieve the overall aim of the study:

- 1- To carry out an extensive literature review in the field of nation branding in order to identify the key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand;
- 2- To propose a preliminary framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on secondary data;
- 3- To explore and assess the views of various stakeholders towards the development of a nation brand for Palestine, and, consequently, to redevelop the proposed framework based on this assessment;
- 4- To contribute to knowledge and to provide practical and theoretical recommendations to marketing researchers and practitioners in the field of nation branding, thereby assisting the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine.

1.4 The Problem Statement and Gaps in the Literature

Branding the nation is not a luxury, but, on the contrary, an imperative (Cvijanović, Simić & Vukotić, 2018). Varga (2013), as well as Zeineddine and Nicolescu (2018), argue that nation branding is a relatively new phenomenon, which emerged shortly after the Second World War (Aronczyk, 2013). The past few decades have witnessed exponential growth in the use of branding techniques by nations envisaging *“the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy, trade and investment, tourism and export promotion”* (Varga, 2013). As an emerging area of

interest, nation branding is driven largely by practitioners, but, paradoxically, not only is there a lack of progress in conceptual development but there is also a relatively small amount of adequate research on this topic (Fan, 2010; Zeineddine & Nicolescu, 2018).

Bhatia and Panda (2018) argue that the application of the principles of branding for countries is relatively new and is still in the developmental stage. The concept of nation branding is challenging and needs a lot of thought. Novčić Korać and Šegota (2017), Fetscherin (2010) and Bolin and Miazhevich (2018) also argue that there is a need to progress research on nation branding and developing a nation brand as the whole area is still in its early stages. Kotsi et al. (2018) also argue that, however much progress has been made in the past few years, the field of nation branding still remains in its infancy. This is partly because place branding (and its subfield of nation branding) is considered a minor factor in every involved discipline and field of studies with which it interacts (Kaneva, 2017).

Handayani and Rashid (2013) argue that, as nascent notion and a minor factor in related fields and disciplines, it is appropriate to conduct theoretical research to enrich nation branding (Kaneva, 2011; Fan, 2010).

This gap in the literature is also stressed by Zeineddine (2017), who argues that most of the modern literature has focused on the competitive identity (nation brand) of major countries – i.e. the USA, China, Western countries – while there is a shortage of integrated studies on the Middle East. Research can be rendered difficult without detailed analysis and exploration (Foroudi, Gupta, Kitchen, Foroudi & Nguyen, 2016). The prior experience of those in the field (Freire, 2005; Szondi, 2007) indicates that, when analysing the competitive identity of a nation, researchers need to take a comprehensive approach that combines both the strategies applied and the factors that practically interfere with the nation-branding process (Anholt, 2007).

Based on the aforementioned argument, many researchers, to date, admit that nation branding is a controversial phenomenon, that this field is still unsaturated and that there is an urgent need for conceptual development of the subject.

There is also another gap in the literature in terms of the availability of a holistic model that can be implemented to develop a nation brand. Hankinson (2007) argues that there is no universal approach to developing a nation brand as each destination differs in many aspects.

The third gap in the literature is the role of stakeholders in developing a nation brand. Stakeholders are discussed in the literature in terms of their identification and salience (Dinnie, 2015) rather than their role in developing a nation brand. Knott et al. (2012) argue that the examination of stakeholder perceptions has been identified as an important research area. Boaz et al. (2018) also argue, however, that the literature referring to “stakeholder engagement” is diverse Diverse; it is expanding rapidly, but it still has little overlap with the subject of nation branding. Kotsi, et al. (2018) also stress the need for more research to understand how to find a common stakeholder perspective.

The literature review chapter includes a detailed discussion of the above-mentioned gaps.

1.5 Choosing a Suitable Empirical Context/Rationale

In order to provide the best possible answers to the research questions and to achieve the research objectives of this study, the researcher must identify the correct empirical context. This thesis will empirically investigate the theory of nation branding in Palestine. The reasoning behind choosing this empirical context relates to the nature of the area under investigation and the gap that exists in the literature.

Palestine was chosen for the research study due to its unique geopolitical, economic and cultural identity as a new emerging state (Abdalmajid & Pappasolomou, 2018). In today’s globalised world,

one important factor for guaranteeing sovereignty and stability, building viable economic structures and ensuring state legitimacy is to expand international links and attract inward investment. To do this, the country must first become internationally recognised and gain a reputation for being a reliable partner (Issac et al., 2015). The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO, hereafter) has worked towards the international recognition of the State of Palestine since the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed the establishment of the State of Palestine on 15 November 1988 in Algiers. The declaration was acknowledged by about 80 countries by the end of that year (United Nations Educational, Scientific, 1989). At its 43rd session, in 1989, the General Assembly acknowledged the proclamation of the State of Palestine and decided that the designation “Palestine” should be used in place of the designation “Palestine Liberation Organization” in the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 43/177, para. 3). In an attempt to resolve the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian cause, the Oslo Accords signed between Israel and the PLO in September 1993 established the Palestinian Authority as a self-governing interim administration in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. To this day, Israel does not recognise Palestine as a state and maintains *de facto* military control over all the territories. As of 29 November 2012, 138 of the 193 member states of the United Nations and an additional two non-member states have recognised the State of Palestine as a non-member state.

The development of a nation brand for Palestine has not really been a priority for the state’s government, and the only initiative in this respect to date is the “National Export Strategy”, which was launched in 2014 and aimed merely to develop a strategy for branding Palestinian exports (Pal Trade, 2014). The Palestinian government has announced both its 2017–2022 sectorial strategy for the development of the national economy and the 2014–2018 national export branding strategy. Another, private, project to brand Palestine (A Strategic Framework for Branding in Palestine) merely promotes exports from Palestine (Pal Trade, 2018). These strategies emerged from an

acknowledgement of the global development of nation brands and the importance of developing a nation brand for Palestine (Pal Trade, 2014).

Given the above parameters, which are important for choosing an empirical context for this thesis, this subsection discussed why Palestine is an appropriate country upon which to focus this research. The next subsection gives insight into the natural evolution of Palestine's "brand" as a vision and a strategy, thereby highlighting the rationale behind choosing Palestine as an empirical context.

1.5.1 Historical Background

After the Nakba of 1948, and the UNSC division decision 181 in 1947, Israel declared its state according to the UN decision, whereas the Arabs refused to acknowledge it. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forcibly displaced either to neighbouring countries or to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. After the 1967 war, Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and Sinai penoncelle. In 1964, the national struggle of the Palestinians addressed the first stage of developing the nation brand of Palestine. The PLO was recognised as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In his speech at the United Nations in New York in 1974, Yasser Arafat said: *"Today, I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. I repeat, do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."*

The PLO did not work solely on the political level to brand Palestine and Palestinians as a nation; rather, it created several departments to revive Palestinian culture among Palestinians everywhere. Culture and heritage were always part of the nation-brand channels that have played an important role in branding Palestine since 1964. The Palestinian poems and revolutionary songs were an essential factor in Palestinians continuing their resistance against extinction. The second stage of the Palestinians' national plan to develop their nation brand began after the signing of the Oslo

peace agreement with Israel in 1993. A new era began with what was called the new Palestinian diplomacy on the international front. New criteria and political discourse hold new approaches for branding Palestinians (Al-Balaawi, 2017).

Recognition of the State of Palestine by the UNGA in 2012 was the third, and indeed the turning, point of the Palestinian struggle towards not only building their state on the 1967 borders (as recognised by the United Nations decisions 181, 193, 242, 338) but also promoting their nation brand at the same time. This stage was legally, politically and culturally managed to reflect who the Palestinians are and what Palestine should be. The determinants of the Palestinians' work to brand Palestine were based on several factors and elements.

In his speech at the United Nations in 2012, President Mahmoud Abbas outlined and shaped the new era of the Palestinians' struggle towards building the State of Palestine. He branded Palestine "a State of Law". He said: *"In our endeavour today to acquire non-member state status for Palestine in the United Nations, we reaffirm that Palestine will always adhere to and respect the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations and international humanitarian law, uphold equality, guarantee civil liberties, uphold the rule of law, promote democracy and pluralism, and uphold and protect the rights of women."* When the researcher interviewed President Mahmoud Abbas in September 2017, he pointed out the importance of launching a national campaign to brand Palestine and insisted on involving all Palestinians in developing the nation brand. The stakeholders of Palestine should include all Palestinians, especially the young generation.

To date, branding Palestine has not been deliberately managed. In a very competitive world, countries have to create a strong and distinguished nation brand in order to compete for market shares but also to ensure the respect and trust of other countries (Abdalmajid & Pappasolomou, 2018). It is the time for Palestine to deliberately create and manage its nation brand in order to gain a high and a strong status among nations and ensure market shares in this highly competitive world.

The important parameters that were taken into consideration in the above discussion, which included insight into the historical and political aspects as well the natural development of Palestine's "brand", guided the researcher in investigating developing a nation brand in the newly established State of Palestine.

1.5.2 The State of Palestine – Branding the New State

Since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994, Palestinians have been engaged in institution building within the framework of the Oslo Accord. However, in view of continued Israeli occupation, ensuing government programmes and initiatives implemented by the international community did not impose an independent agenda (Bröning, 2011). In a speech delivered in Cairo in June 2009, Obama explicitly declared that *"now is the time for Palestinians to focus on what they can build"*, and he specifically asked the Palestinian Authority *"to develop its capacity to govern, with institutions that serve the needs of its people. America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own"* (The White House, 2009).

In August 2009, the 13th government of the Palestinian National Authority programme "Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State" decided on a state-building agenda over the next two years. The programme sets out the national goals and government policies that centre around the objective of building strong state institutions capable of providing, both equitably and effectively, for the needs of the Palestinian citizens, despite the occupation. The report of the World Bank in 2010 stated that, if the Palestinian Authority maintains its current performance in institution building and delivery of public services, it is well-positioned for establishing a state at some point in the near future.

In April 2011, a new United Nations report highlighted the progress made by the Palestinian Authority in building institutions necessary for a functioning state, while stressing the need for Israel to roll back “measures of occupation” and for an urgent resumption of negotiations between the two sides. The report, entitled “Palestinian State-building: A Decisive Period”, states: *“In the limited territory under its control and within the constraints on the ground imposed by unresolved political issues, the PA [Palestinian Authority] has accelerated progress in improving its governmental functions.”* Prepared by the office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), the report notes that, in the six areas where the United Nations is most engaged, governmental functions are now sufficient for a functioning government of a state. These are governance, rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection and infrastructure and water. For each sector, the report provides a detailed assessment of progress to date in light of strong Palestinian reform efforts and donor engagement. It notes Israeli measures to facilitate movement and access, which have also supported economic activity.

In 2012, the United Nations General Assembly accorded Palestine “Non-Member Observer State” status in the United Nations (UNGA/11317, 2012). Since then, the State of Palestine continues its efforts to gain recognition as a full member state. This effort began long ago, and the Palestinians continue to implement an ambitious state-building programme. The United Nations study echoed findings by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which, in separate reports prepared for the donor’s conference, said that the Palestinian Authority was well-positioned to run an independent state (Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Meeting, Brussels, 13 April 2011).

Building the state is not only a political concern. Countries work to promote their economy, culture, society, tourism, sport, heritage, etc. to gain market shares (Anholt, 2007). In order to ensure a strong position in a very competitive world, Palestine must develop a strong nation brand

and promote it. This is a necessity (Isaac et al., 2015). Promoting Palestine has been managed politically and culturally for years. The political aspects will be illustrated in the next subsection. Culturally, the PLO and, recently, the State of Palestine have played a large role in maintaining identity. Koffia, embroidery, poems, Dabkeh (folk dance) and many other national symbols have promoted the “Palestine brand” since 1948.

To frame the efforts of the Palestinians to promote their nation brand, Dr Nabbel Ramlawi in his book *The Palestinian Diplomacy* argued that nation branding in Palestine has been naturally managed by the Palestinians throughout decades of their struggle (Ramlawi, 2014).

Nation branding is not only advertising campaigns or promoting a nation’s image; it is an overall strategy that targets every relevant aspect of the nation. This has been supported by Zeineddine (2017), who argues that, as the nation-branding field has developed, it has been admitted that advertisement campaigns are just one element of the overall strategy and, at best, produce a short-term effect. The need to create a nation brand entails making every effort to develop a comprehensive plan.

1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

The outline of the present thesis is guided by the aforementioned research objectives.

Chapter 1 introduces the field of research and provides an overview of the thesis. It analyses the rationale behind choosing the right empirical context and then presents an evaluation of the country in which the empirical research is taking place, both historically and practically. It also describes the theoretical background and gives insight into the problem and the literature gap that this research will address.

Chapter 2 reviews, discusses and analyses the existing literature in the area under investigation. Accordingly, the research questions and the design of the preliminary framework that will be tested during the primary research phase arise from the literature. The literature review chapter begins by presenting, discussing and analysing several relevant concepts, models and theories of nation branding and developing a nation brand in order to identify factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand as well as to identify gaps in the literature. This discussion will reveal many This discussion will unearth many research questions, emerging from the literature presented and discussed in Section 2.11.2 of the literature review chapter that have been formed and revealed from the literature have been presented in Section 2.11.2 of the literature review chapter. This chapter finishes by presenting the preliminary framework that will be further tested during the primary research phase.

Chapter 3 discusses the researcher's philosophy and the methodology and rationale behind choosing the methods used to carry out the current study. The philosophical approach that is followed for the collection of the primary data is the constructivist/interpretivist approach. Furthermore, the researcher analyses and evaluates the deductive and inductive approach that is used for the purpose of this research. This chapter, therefore, analyses the rationale behind the decisions taken. The researcher also explains the use of secondary and primary data collection and the rationale for using both methods. Furthermore, and based on the fact that this research deals with views and attitudes that are difficult to quantify, the researcher justifies using the qualitative method to collect the primary data. NVivo 11 software is used to analyse the data. The rationale behind using this specific software as the data analysis method, and an evaluation of how the collected data is analysed, concludes this chapter.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings and the data analysis. The data obtained from the primary research is interpreted, discussed and analysed in depth. The results of this analysis are presented as themes and subthemes that resulted from the interpretation of the outcomes. NVivo 11 software assists the researcher throughout the process of: (1) transcribing the interviews recordings, and (2) drawing the key lines of the data analysis method (the IPA method).

Chapter 5 includes the final conclusions that emerged from the data analysis. The findings are presented and considered in light of the research objectives and the relevant research questions that emerged from the literature. The final framework is also presented. The chapter includes a summary of the conclusions. Furthermore, it includes the research limitations and avenues for further research. The researcher also presents the strengths of this study. Finally, the contributions to both theory and practice are presented, as well as recommendations to the Palestinian government for developing a nation brand.

1.7 Conclusion to the Chapter

This introductory chapter provided an overview of the thesis. It included an overview of and background to the topic being researched and the country that was chosen for the current thesis. Furthermore, it outlined the broader research questions, aims, objectives and literature gap addressed by this research. Next, it highlighted the study's contributions to both theory and practice. Finally, it presented an overview of the structure of the thesis.



Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter both presents and extensively analyses the existing literature in the area under investigation. It begins with an introduction to the topic, followed by an evolution of the concept. Then, the researcher highlights relevant and related definitions of the concepts of nation branding, nation brand, country of origin, destination branding and public diplomacy as well as other relevant concepts such as national identity and core brand values. An assessment of the gaps in the research follows. Delving deeper into an analysis of the topic of this thesis, the researcher then concentrates on the elements and factors that are essential for developing a nation brand by examining several relevant models in order to identify these factors. The researcher then builds on the revealed factors and elements and, according to the three respective theories of Anholt (2003), Hankinson (2007) and Dinnie (2008), proposes the initial conceptual framework. The seven research questions that emerge from this conceptual framework move this thesis from one stage to another in order to answer the questions.

Introduction to the Topic

Nations of the world are, generally speaking, a unique and eclectic mix of essential components, including location and people who share a common history, culture, religion, traditions and norms, industries, customs and natural resources. A successful brand will embody and represent the diverse positive elements that comprise the nation.

Branding a nation is a complex phenomenon. The techniques used are largely taken from the corporate world and adapted to the particular circumstances of nations (Olins, 2002). In particular, any credible branding process must begin with in-depth research and analysis, including obtaining the input of stakeholders. With this information, as well as an articulation of the nation's vision, nation-brand building can begin in earnest.

This literature review chapter examines existent studies and theories in the field of nation branding in order to identify its contents and to analyse different related elements and factors that are essential for developing a nation brand. This will form the basis of the present study. The review draws on key references, relevant information, criticism and associations of the concept of nation branding and nation brands in order to provide valuable insights into some issues concerning developing a nation brand in a specific context.

Nation branding is a relatively recent phenomenon and emerging area of interest (Dogan & Petkovic, 2016) that sprouted shortly after the Second World War (Aronczyk, 2013). The past few decades have witnessed an exponential growth in the use of branding techniques by nations envisaging "*the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy, trade and investment, tourism and export promotion*" (Varga, 2013). However, the concept still lacks clear conceptualisation (Dogan & Petkovic, 2016), and there seems to be a relatively small amount of research available which covers this topic adequately. Consequently, the researcher is limited by a lack of variety of references for this research.

As an emerging area of interest, nation branding is driven largely by practitioners, but there is, paradoxically, a lack of progress in conceptual development. As a result, there is an urgent need for conceptual and theoretical development of the subject (Fan, 2010).

While acknowledging that this is a relatively new subject, the origin of nation-branding research can be traced to four different sources, namely: country of origin (COO) (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 1993, 2002), place or destination branding (Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Morgan et al., 2003) and, more recently, public diplomacy (Van Ham, 2001; Melissen, 2005; Fan, 2008) and national identity (Smith, 1991; Bond et al., 2003). There are a number of comprehensive literature reviews on the topic of nation branding which have been presented by researchers and practitioners, such as Anholt (1998, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008), Olins (1999, 2002, 2003, 2005), Mselle (2007), Dinnie (2008, 2015), Szondi (2009), Lee (2009), Fan (2010), Kaneva (2011) and Aronczyk (2013). Unlike previous studies on COO and place branding, which have a clear focus on promoting specific economic interests (export, tourism or inward investment), nation branding is concerned with a country's whole image on the international stage, covering political, economic and cultural dimensions (Quelch & Jocz, 2004; Fan, 2006).

For the purposes of this research, more than 200 sources on nation branding and relevant concepts were reviewed. These sources were all published between 1997 and 2018, and they range from scholarly articles to book-length studies. The sample of literature reviewed comprises around 50 articles published in academic journals (including theoretical and empirical studies), 15 books or chapters in edited volumes, 10 graduate theses, 20 reports or essays published by so-called "think tanks" and private branding agencies, as well as several academic papers presented at conferences.

The amount and quality of previous research conducted in this area affected the way the researcher used the references throughout the literature review chapter. Therefore, despite three decades of evolving research on the subject of nation branding, there is currently only a limited amount of valid or wide-ranging research and/or references available to the researcher which adequately address this topic (Fan, 2010). Zeinaddein (2017) also argues that nation branding, to date, still lacks empirical research studies and integrated models.

In conclusion, what nation branding refers to, how a nation brand relates to nation branding and what nation branding should or could accomplish will guide the researcher in the next sections in highlighting the root and definitions of such concepts and attempting to explore diverse interpretations of nation brands, nation branding and other relevant concepts in order to further enrich this current study and to achieve the main aim of this thesis.

2.2 Evolution of Nation Branding

The correlation between countries that have produced strong brands and those that are strong brands themselves is indisputable; yet, the cause of this is unclear (Fan, 2006). Does the nation brand emerge as a result of the success of a national industry, or do the mysterious and intangible benefits of the nation brand initiate a country's success? How can nations develop a nation brand?

Fan (2006) suggests that it is important to identify and understand the elements of the nation brand, the message that the nation brand is trying to communicate, and its target audience. It is also necessary for researchers to identify the interrelations of the nation-brand concept with other areas of study and, therefore, come to understand how nation brand can impact the process of nation branding.

This section and the following subsection give an overview of the contexts of nation branding and nation brand. Firstly, the researcher highlights and discusses different relevant concepts of nation brand and nation branding. The main focus is on several related domains, such as country of origin and place/destination branding, to clarify their relevance to nation branding. As nation branding interrelates with the discipline of international relations (Szondi, 2009), the researcher also briefly examines the domain of public diplomacy. Encompassing the main discourses in these relevant contexts, the researcher then moves to the broader context of existing theories involved in developing a nation brand, and finally identifies the relevant factors that are essential for

developing a nation brand and thus form the holistic and integrated framework for developing a nation brand.

In order to understand different interrelationships, it is both helpful and necessary first to study definitions of some key concepts.

2.2.1 What is a Brand?

Brands penetrate almost every aspect of life: economic, social, cultural, sporting and religious. The existent literature provides different definitions of the word “brand”. A brand is, according to the classic definition by the American Marketing Association (1960, p. 10), “*[a] name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*”. Aaker (1996, p. 68) offers a more sophisticated definition of the brand: “*A brand is a multidimensional assortment of functional, emotional, relational and strategic elements that collectively generate a unique set of associations in the public mind.*” Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) see the brand as an impression in a client’s mind of a product or service. It is a sum of tangible and intangible elements, which makes the selection unique.

There are many definitions of the term “brand”, which mostly centre on either visual manifestations or deeper definitions that go beyond the visual aspects of the brand and attempt to capture its essence. To be successful, Holt (2004) argues that the brand must exist effectively with the prevailing zeitgeist. Popular culture and trends in societies drive and influence strong brands. It is important to understand how brands become icons through creative interaction with their environment and how this process could be suitably adapted for other nations.

In this section, the researcher highlighted several definitions of “brand” in order to present the wider interrelated image of the area under investigation in this study.

2.2.2 Brand Values

Jeff and Nebenzahl (2001) recount how the German television network approached identity consultants to create a national brand for Germany in 1999. The main objective was to change consumer perceptions of Germany from “a nation” of “mechanical perfection” (cold and unemotional) to a country that is also “exciting and surprising”. Germany, in 2018, retained its status as ranked third in the world in terms of nation-brand value nation-brand value, whereas Singapore’s nation-brand strength came out on top, with the country retaining its status as a prominent destination for investment, education and a high standard of living (Brand Finance, 2018).

According to the Brand Finance report on nation brands 2015, Scotland brands itself very well as a nation. In an advertising campaign a few years ago, the main focus was on highlighting all the things that were invented in Scotland. Jamaica also does a good job of promoting itself as a lively, yet hard-working, country, and its personality shines through in a way that is beneficial for attracting tourists as well as investors. Jamaica’s famous athletes have aided the country brand enormously as well. In complete contrast to this, the Baltic countries have not been as proactive in promoting themselves or in creating memorable national brands. Estonia is an innovative, super tech-savvy country that also has one of the most beautiful capital cities in Europe. But, if you say “Estonia” to the average person outside the country, they are likely to look at you blankly.

Countries that have successfully adopted nation-branding strategies, such as Poland, Spain, South Africa and the UAE, all linked them to concrete structural changes in the political and economic dynamics of the nation, as well as in the perceived role of the nation in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Spain provides a clear example of these changes and is considered the original success story of nation branding. In the late 1970s, the democratisation and decentralisation of the country’s institutions were part of Spain’s effort to raise its population’s standard of living and to

create new ties with the rest of Europe. Aside from these political changes, Spain witnessed a revolution in the areas of cultural production such as the Bilbao Museum, Santiago Calatrava Telefonica Communications Tower, FIFA World Cup of Soccer 1982, and Barcelona Olympic Games 1992. As an example of a country's transition being "a grand experiment", Poland has, since 1989, been proactive in promoting its own national political and economic discourse. Poland aspires to three central goals: normality, integration and a return to European inclusion. In the 2017 global rankings of a nation's value, Poland ranked 23rd.

2.2.3 What does the Term "Nation" Mean?

Nations throughout the world have been significantly affected by brands. People live in a system in which they act, think and are perceived within brands and a branded culture (Jaworski & Fosher, 2003). It has been acknowledged that every nation has a unique name and image in its people's minds, either its nationals or foreigners, thus making it a brand (Olins, 2002).

The word "nation" refers to a large group of people who share the same language, history and culture and who live in a particular location under one government (Fan, 2006). Wilder (2007) defines this term as a social construct and as a unit that has an essence of unique characteristics which are woven intrinsically. The other most frequently referenced and authentic definition is that of The United Nations (UN), which defines a nation as "*a human-centred state*" (Ali & Rehman, 2015). "Nation" is sometimes defined as "A Country", "A State", or "The People of a Particular Area" (Fan, 2006). Irrespective of how these terms are defined in different disciplines and areas of study, they are used interchangeably in the literature of nation branding; this research paper follows the same trend.

2.2.4 Nation as a Brand

Many scholars and practitioners define the nation as a brand according to their understanding and interpretation. The literature reviewed for this research revealed a plethora of different definitions

of a nation brand. Anholt (1996, 2016), for example, identifies the nation brand as the sum of people's perceptions of a country across the following six areas of national competence: exports, governance, tourism, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, and people. Fan (2010) defines the nation brand as the sum of all perceptions of a nation in the minds of international stakeholders, and which may contain people, place, culture/language, history, food, fashion, famous faces (celebrities) and global brands, among others. A nation's "brand" exists with or without any conscious efforts in nation branding as each country is perceived in a certain way by its international audience, be it strong or weak, clear or vague.

Dinnie (2008) defines nation brand as the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provides the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences. On their part, Walsh and Wiedmann (2008) define nation brand as a very complex brand identity that is the result of a specific national reality, its perceptions and evaluations by many different internal and external stakeholders (brand images), and a specific overall reputation. Nation brands can be both a positive means for encouraging responsible citizens (Anholt, 2007; Kaneva, 2011) and a tool for propaganda (Kaneva, 2011). A recent definition by Haigh (2015) states that a nation brand is the sum of people's perceptions influencing its economic performance in four major areas: investment, tourism products, services and, finally, people.

At the heart of the concept is the notion of a nation brand as the perception of a nation in the minds of different stakeholders across six areas of national competence: exports, governance, tourism, investment, culture and heritage, and people. It is a composite of brand identity and image encompassing a nation's reality as well as stakeholders' perceptions (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008).

Many countries see that a key part of their job is to try to build a good nation brand, or otherwise a good reputation that is genuine and faithful to their social, economic and political aims. France, Spain, Germany, Australia, Libya, Nigeria and many other countries invest in developing

strategies to manage their reputations (Dinnie, 2008). In recent years, countries such as New Zealand (Morgan et al., 2002), Spain, Switzerland, Ireland and Estonia have also undertaken systematic approaches to brand development. Developing a nation brand requires long-term commitment over a period of several years, and nations should acknowledge this and adopt a long-term strategic view (Dinnie, 2008).

Important brand factors include political, economic, social, cultural and natural environment attributes that are related to the country's sovereignty and sovereignty, territory and citizens, and these should be considered when developing the nation brand (Kim et al., 2013). In this regard, governments are presumed to represent the people of a nation, and, therefore, there is no getting away from the fact that branding the nation is a highly politicised activity (Dinnie, 2015). This example demonstrates that nation brand, as a concept, has many facets and related concepts that need to be analysed. The name, image, identity, stakeholders, culture, politics and vision are facets and factors that should be clearly defined.

Brand development has become the new design focus (Blair et al., 2015) for many countries; a country being rich or poor does not necessarily need to affect their decision to create a nation brand. The widespread impact of information technology and communication makes the world accessible at the push of a button. To be able to survive, compete and acquire part of the market shares, countries should differentiate themselves and develop their own brand (Dinnie, 2008).

It is evident that, before discussing the process of developing a nation brand, several concepts should be explored and identified.

2.3 Nation Branding: Definitions, Origins and Interrelations with Related Concepts

The application of branding techniques to nations is a relatively new phenomenon, but it is growing in frequency (Kaneva, 2011). Nations are becoming more conscious about their country branding

as they recognise the need to fulfil their objectives and compete not only in the domestic market but also globally.

Different countries have adopted different strategies in order to manage challenges that they face and use nation branding in order to differentiate themselves on the world stage. To fulfil major objectives such as attracting tourists, stimulating inward investment and boosting exports, countries have to build a unique brand reputation and position in order to embrace nation branding. Germany, Scotland, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, South Africa, Egypt and many other countries have developed nation-branding strategies to confront the challenges of globalisation and preserve their shares in the very competitive global market (Dinnie, 2008). This section will explore different factors that are relevant to nation branding as a concept. Through reviewing the different definitions by many scholars, the researcher will be able to identify the factors that are essential for developing a nation brand.

2.3.1 What is Nation Branding?

Anholt (2007) argues that nation branding can be seen as the application of marketing strategies to individual countries with the aim of creating and promoting a distinct self-image and international reputation that will most effectively serve a nation's interests.

Gudjonsson (2005) argues that nation branding integrates an economic, social, political and cultural discipline, which should deal with the overall planning of the nation's communication and build a long-term relationship with other nations and societies. Fan (2006) defines nation branding as applying branding and marketing communication techniques to promote a nation's image, with image promotion as the ultimate goal, and Lee (2009) identifies nation branding as the ways in which a whole country differentiates, symbolises and communicates itself to all of its audiences, which relates to building and managing a nation's brand identity and image.

Quelch and Jocz (2004) and Szondi (2007) argue that nation branding is concerned with a country's whole image on the international stage, covering political, economic and cultural dimensions. In the same context, Martinovic (2002) argues that branding a nation means getting rid of negative labels and inventing a new one based on the country's real potential and its genuine character (i.e. the key features of the economic, social and cultural activities of its population). Kaneva (2011) defines nation branding as a means of building and maintaining a country's strategic advantage with the purpose of economic growth.

The previous different definitions reveal that the concept of nation branding is centred mainly on the following measures: identity/image, brand management/communication and the nation's culture. The political and economic dimensions are key concerns of nation branding as well. The definitions also indicate the relevance of another important factor: the national identity, as well as the target audiences.

These elements and factors provide nation branding with an important notion of how a nation brand could be developed using a systematic and holistic approach, which can be connected to performance in nation branding.

Teslik (2007) argues that nation branding refers to the application of corporate-branding strategies to individual nations. This definition opens the door to exploiting similarities between corporate branding and nation branding. Hankinson (2007) also argues that corporate brands, in contrast, share similarities with destination brands and that the emerging literature on corporate branding can, therefore, make an important contribution to the understanding of the particular problems of destination-brand management and how it might be improved.

In this section, the researcher reviewed definitions of the concept of nation branding in order to highlight different related elements and factors that could assist the researcher in Determining how to achieve the aim of this study.

2.3.2 Nation Branding – Origins

Gudjonsson (2005) argues that nation branding occurs when a government or a private company uses its power to persuade whoever has the ability to do so to change a nation's image. Nation branding uses the tools of branding to alter, confirm or change the behaviour, attitudes, identity or image of a nation in a positive way. Nation branding is a supporting programme to increase a nation's prosperity by adding to the value of its brands. Nation branding is not a process to brand a nation. Nation branding is not just a marketing activity. Zeineddine (2017) argues that, as the nation-branding field has developed, it has become clear that advertising campaigns are just one element of the overall strategy and, at best, produce a short-term effect. Nation branding is a long-term strategy for a country and its position in the world (Qobo, 2017). It can be perceived as a holistic development which influences the entire nation (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). It encompasses activities ranging from country naming to managing the nation brand (Lee, 2009). A critical step in the design of a nation brand is to identify the underlying principles and critical factors whilst acknowledging the fact that certain basic principles and factors may be perceived differently in different countries (Dinnie, 2015).

Nation branding is about creating a nation's values and benefits for its people and sustaining its competitiveness in this era of globalisation (Lee, 2009). Countries are embracing nation branding in order to differentiate themselves on the world stage, to strengthen their economic performance (Dinnie, 2008) and to attract investors, tourists, entrepreneurs and cultural and international sporting events (Anholt, 2007). Anholt (2007, pp. xi) defines nation branding as:

“the systematic process of aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country around a clear strategy for achieving a strengthened competitive identity. It can be as modest as linking the promotions ..., or it can be a decades-long policy of coordinating all internal and external national strategies ... into a coherent, planned process.”

The fact that nation branding has mainly evolved within the marketing discipline (Kaneva, 2011) leads nations to focus on the domains of country of origin (export branding) and place development (destination/place branding). In addition, nation branding has combined with the discipline of international relations (Szondi, 2009; Dinnie et al., 2015). Fan (2010) also classifies the interpretation of nation branding into four levels: (i) export branding, (ii) destination/place branding, (iii) public diplomacy/political branding, and (iv) national identity/cultural branding.

The discourse of nation branding finds its strongest representation in the field of marketing (Kaneva, 2011). For deeper insight into the concept of nation branding, the next section will focus on the domains of country of origin and place development, and will explicate their relevance to nation branding. In addition, nation branding also combines with the discipline of international relations (Van Ham, 2001). Therefore, there will be a brief examination of the domain of public diplomacy. At this stage, this section also acknowledges that nation branding is the broad picture that will help to draw the basic lines and highlight the essential factors for developing a nation brand.

In order to broaden the picture and gain a better understanding of the concept, the researcher will dig deeply into nation-branding interrelations with other concepts, as explained by Fan (2010), who argues that the origin of nation-branding study can be traced to four different sources, namely country of origin (COO) (Papadoplous & Heslop, 2002), place or destination branding (Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Morgan et al., 2002) and, more recently, public diplomacy (Van Ham, 2001; Melissen, 2005; Fan, 2008) and national identity (Smith, 1991; Bond et al., 2001).

2.3.3 Nation Branding and Country of Origin Effect

Country of origin (COO) research has been used for decades in the international business and marketing context and provides nation-branding studies with a basic principle (Lee, 2009). The

country of origin – the “made in” – theme has a long history. Morello (1993) reports that “made in” labels have been used to identify product origins for at least 100 years (Banister & Saunders, 1978; Gaedeke, 1973; Li, Dant & Wortzel, 1995; Nagashima, 1977). German automobiles, Japanese electronics and French wines and cosmetics, for example

Present an image of the country that also reflects that country’s beliefs (Erickson, Johansson & Chao 1984; Bloemer, Brijs & Kasper, 2009). It could be argued that the perception of a product or company’s brand across its territorial boundaries touches on some core country of origin considerations (Ntamo & Oday, 2011), and, therefore, the country of origin theory opens the door to a better understanding of the role that could be played in developing not only the image of the nation but also the concept of the brand identity. The image of countries as origins of products is one of many extrinsic cues (Eroglu & Machleit, 1989) that later help to develop the concept in a broader way.

Products can be discontinued, modified or withdrawn from the market and relaunched, repositioned or replaced by improved ones. Not all nations have all of these attributes. This is why many researchers studied and developed this idea so as to integrate it into the holistic process of nation branding. (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002).

In this regard, Kotler and Gertner (2002) reflect on how national images could affect attitudes towards a country’s products and services so as to attract tourists, businesses and investment. Once countries attach to a certain product, investors and businesses are inclined to maximise the potential for themselves. That leads countries to give more attention to nation branding and its use as a strategic management move. The move came about through Anholt (2003), who proposed using country of origin more creatively throughout branded exports and that is should be used by companies in the midst of nation branding desiring to build and develop the economies of their own countries in preparation for emerging markets.

In that sense, nation branding is a method for expanding market access at international levels (Abimbola, 2006), while the country of origin effect is just one side of nation branding (Jaworski & Fosher, 2003). Anholt and Hildreth (2005) hold the view that what is gained from the “country of origin” or “made in” labels is only symbolic of the value or class of the product. Nation branding is a much greater and more complex branding phenomenon. Nation branding concerns aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country with a clear strategy (Anholt, 2007).

Although the relevance of country of origin for establishing nation branding is huge, it cannot stand alone due to the perception of consumers (Lee, 2009). Anholt (2003) has shown how branded exports and companies combine with nation branding and how they can accomplish economic development for emerging markets by using country of origin more creatively. In particular, the importance of the role of government has been established as essential in undertaking a comprehensive nation-branding programme; thus, there is a political dimension. The previous discussion highlighted several factors that are considered essential for developing the nation brand. Shifting from COO to a more comprehensive nation-branding concept entails considering several factors. The nation brand has different channels, not just export. Communication is a different factor that should be considered. In the next section, the researcher explores other factors that may stem from the relation between nation branding and destination branding.

2.3.4 Nation Branding and Destination/Place Branding

Papadopoulos (1993) has indicated that “[a] focus on the ‘made-in’ images of products does not mean that one should think of country images in the sense of ‘made-in’ product labels alone”. In

this regard, the product does not mean only the goods and services but also countries marketing themselves as attractive locations and geographic destinations for tourism or foreign investment.

Destinations can be branded in a similar way to products and services (Kotler, Haider & Rein 1993; Hankinson, 2007). According to Kotler et al. (1993) and Lee (2009), the concept of destination brand has been developed based on place branding. It is recognised and practised “consciously or unconsciously” throughout the place-development context of marketing and place-marketing literature.

It is clear from the available literature that there is no single accepted definition of branding a place. However, researchers have investigated some similarities or differences between place marketing and branding, and these reflect how the concept of nation branding has evolved (Lee, 2009).

Saraniemi (2009, p. 68) identifies destination branding as:

“... an identity management that is holistic, dynamic, co-created and committed, and is based on the core values of the destination and its stakeholders both on the demand and supply side, in order to build a promise uniquely associated with the place.”

Destination branding is the practice of applying branding strategies and marketing techniques to the economic, political and cultural development of cities, regions, countries and nations (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009; Ryan & Silvanto, 2010).

Destination branding can use the same methods as corporate branding (Balakrishnan, 2008). It begins with a strategic vision in the performance of the place (LaBonte, 2003), and the vision must be clear to facilitate and to attract more tourists and investment (Hankinson, 2005). The strategic

vision relating to any place or destination which needs to attract tourists or businesses or to find markets for their exports and position their country in the global marketplace necessitates the countries applying strategic marketing management tools and conscious branding among various stakeholders (Kotler & Gertner, 2002).

It is a very important strategic decision for a place to begin systematic place marketing. A decision to create a common place's marketing programme requires all parties to agree on the common goals (Rainisto, 2003).

Lee (2009) stresses the five success factors that represent the abilities which a place can actively influence: "planning group", "vision and strategic analysis", "place identity and place image", "public-private partnerships" and "leadership".

A destination or place could be a single town, city, resort or other relatively limited entity, but it could also be a whole nation (Hankinson, 2007; Dinnie & Fola, 2009). Hankinson (2007) argues, within the same context, that corporate brands share similarities with destination and place brands and that the emerging literature on corporate branding can, therefore, make an important contribution to the understanding of particular problems of destination- and place-brand management and how it might be improved. Hankinson (2007) mainly suggests that destination-brand management requires strong, visionary leadership and organisation-wide commitment from the highest level downwards to achieve a set of brand values which encapsulate the place's brand promise. Nation brand, therefore, requires strong visionary leadership.

The discussion above highlighted that the visionary leadership, the core values, communication, place image, place identity and stakeholders are key factors that should be considered when developing a nation brand.

2.3.5 Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy

Tecmen (2017) argues that nation branding is a central public diplomacy instrument, particularly for developing countries. Three different elements are involved in this argument: the political factors are strongly involved in any country's management – nation branding has been politically approached and discussed in literature from the angle of public diplomacy (Szondi, 2008). Both nation branding and public diplomacy have impacts on developing countries. Public diplomacy is one of the six natural channels in Anholt's nation-brand theory (Anholt, 2000).

Anholt (2007) argues that most countries communicate with the rest of the world and create their reputation around six natural channels. Countries work around these channels to develop their nation brand as nation brand is composed of people's perception of a country around these natural channels. These natural channels are tourism, investment, export, culture and heritage, people and policy/public diplomacy/governance, and they render the nation brand viable.

Some scholars consider nation branding from a political and diplomatic perspective. They see it as a coordinated government effort to manage a country's image in order to promote tourism, investment and foreign relations (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011). In light of this, nation branding is seen as a powerful political tool, especially for small, peripheral nations eager to strengthen their economic position and to compete against the economic, financial or military clout of superpowers (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011). On the other hand, Imran (2017) argues that, using soft power tools, nation branding communicates a nation's policies and its culture to the public face of international diplomacy. Nation branding represents the desire of concerned countries to persuade people to pay attention to their particular nation state and its achievements, and to believe in its qualities. One of the main goals of public diplomacy is to cultivate and communicate a certain image or reputation of a nation state to international audiences, and this is also true of nation branding.

Szondi (2008) differentiates between public diplomacy, which traditionally means government communication aimed at a foreign audience in order to achieve a good reputation in the hearts and minds of people, and modern public diplomacy, which often embraces more than just communicating a government's policies. Large countries, such as the USA and Russia, often use the term to describe the process by which they attempt to manage the entire national reputation.

Van Ham (2008) emphasises that one of the important elements of public diplomacy is building strong personal and solid institutional relationships which link and communicate with foreign nations by concentrating on values and equity instead of classical diplomacy. In relation to this study, this will assist not only with developing the nation brand but also with getting feedback from foreign audiences, thus assisting the work undertaken and the development of the weaker elements in any future strategy. It will also provide an opportunity for investigating and exploring the views of the stakeholders who will participate in any future communication strategy.

To have an effective impact on developing a nation brand, the government and its public diplomacy body should revise, understand and analyse the messages before sending them to diverse nations (Lee, 2009).

Dinnie (2015) argues that the involvement of governments in connecting the concept of public diplomacy with that of nation branding strengthens its role as the initiator and coordinator of the nation-branding process.

The previous discussion emphasised the strong relationship between nation branding and public diplomacy, and the fact that public diplomacy could be a key factor in developing the nation brand. In broader settings and according to the above discussion on the evidence derived from the existing

literature, the following research question arises: What impact could public diplomacy have on the development and communication of the nation brand, as well as feedback from external audiences?

2.3.6 Nation Branding and National Identity

National identity plays a key role in nation branding; knowing and understanding its core features is considered to be a prerequisite for developing a nation brand as the essence of any nation brand derives from its culture (Dinnie, 2008).

The concept of national identity has been developed through a range of social theories. As a social phenomenon, national identity involves feeling proud to be a citizen of a particular country, appreciating the nation's problems and participating in problem solving, believing the country is fulfilling its goals, taking personal pride and joy in achievements, introducing oneself openly as a citizen, and encouraging friends and close acquaintances to see one's country in a positive light (Karkatsoulis et al., 2005). Grimson (2010) argues that national identity is all about the feeling of belonging. This has direct relevance when developing a brand. It might not appear clearly in any framework or model, but national identity provides the motive not only for developing the brand but also for actively communicating it, both domestically and internationally.

What makes sense about the previous definitions and meanings of national identity is that a nation brand is rooted in the reality of the nation's culture, which is perhaps the most authentic differentiator that any brand could wish to have.

Smith (1991) argues that national identity dimensions and fundamental features include historic territory, or homeland; common myths and historical memories; a common, mass public culture; common legal rights and duties for all members; and a common economy with territorial mobility for members. The culture and heritage channel of Anholt's (2003) hexagon model embraces, in its essence, the concept of national identity.

Talking about brand identity as the logo or slogan of the product, and then trying to brand the nation in the same way simply does not work. The aspect of a nation brand has some parallels with national identity, and the application of branding techniques to nations is now a growing field that challenges nations globally (Dinnie, 2008). Although national identity scales can provide a certain degree of useful insight with regard to nation-brand development and communication, it should be noted that national identity is only one form of identity on which overall personal identity may be constructed (Anholt, 2007).

Kirloskar-Steinbach (2004) argues that national identity is a socially constructed phenomenon rather than a given, and that it underpins the nation-branding paradigm. This gives governments space to manoeuvre and to highlight certain aspects of their national identity in order to shape their national image perceptions and their overall nation brand.

As the sense of belonging to a state or nation, or a sense of solidarity with a particular group (irrespective of one's actual citizenship), is an integral part of nation branding and developing a nation brand. The heart of any nation-brand message should reflect the dimension of national identity. In this respect, the previous discussion highlights the following query (research question): Is national identity considered to be an essential element that should be incorporated into the proposed framework of this study? What impact could national identity have on nation branding and developing a nation brand?

National identity is closely linked to national image because *“who we are cannot be completely separated from the perceptions others have of us and we have of others”* (Hatch & Schultz, 2002, p. 27). The next part will explore another relevant key concept: nation-brand identity and nation-brand image.

2.4 Nation-Brand Identity and Nation-Brand Image

When applying the concept of a brand to nations, there is a need to acknowledge the limits of how appropriate it is to treat nations as brands. Nations do not belong to brand managers or corporations (Dinnie,2015). Who has the right to deal with the nation brand? Dinnie (2015) not only supports this argument but also extends his views to a more relevant concept that concerns the core brand values.

Evidently, the individual who can claim the legitimacy of a democratic mandate to fulfil the role of nation-brand manager is the head of the state. The political dimension cannot be excluded. Aronczyk (2013) notes that the concept of brand has escaped its cooperate origins and now stands for an intermediate range of political and cultural meanings. Meanwhile, its expansion as a metaphor and metric can be taken as a clue to current patterns of thinking about identity.

Nation-brand identity and image notions do not have the choice of being branded or not. On the contrary, nations can either accept others branding their nation through, for example, negative stereotyping born of ignorance, or, alternatively, can embrace the challenge of projecting a more accurate and a more uplifting image of the nation to the rest of the world (Dinnie, 2008).

It is argued that ongoing globalisation and the resulting competition among countries within a mass-mediated marketplace have caused nations to be sensitive about how they are portrayed (Van Ham, 2001; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002; Skinner & Kubacki, 2007; Avraham & Ketter, 2008).

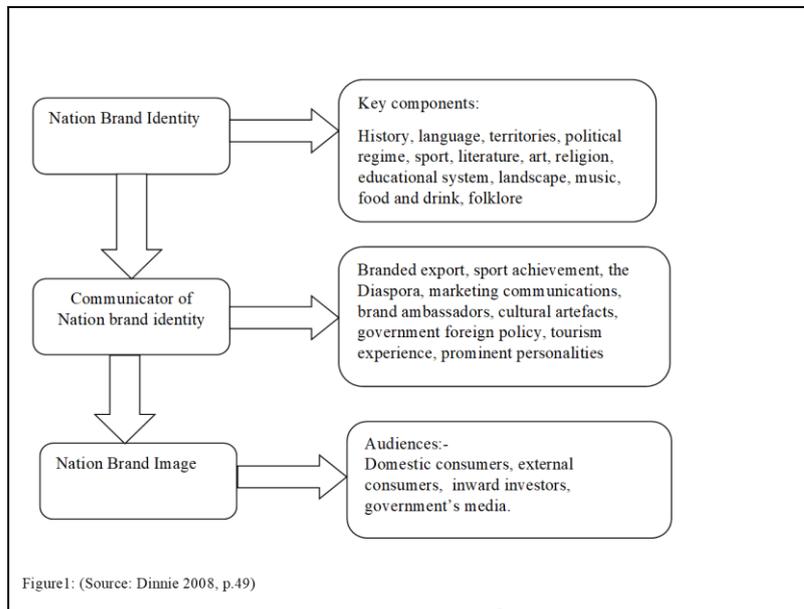
Nation-brand imaging relates to how nations are seen by other nations and how their achievements, failures, assets and liabilities, people and products are reflected in other nations' mindsets. On the other side of the equation, nation-brand identity needs to concentrate on how the brand is intended to be perceived.

How are nation-brand identity and nation image related to nation building? Dinnie (2008) defines nation branding, in this regard, as the ways in which a whole country differentiates, symbolises and communicates itself to all of its audiences, through building, managing and improving its nation's brand identity and image. Rainisto (2003) argues that, in order to build a national image or nation-brand image, a nation's brand identity must be created and developed simultaneously. The development of a nation's identity is the result of planned activities, and its image is a passive process outcome. Ultimately, nation branding aims to positively improve a nation's brand identity, image and reputation.

Although the image constitutes the reputation and external perception of the nation, it is the identity which can be defined as the *“collective understanding by a nation's people of the features presumed to be central and relatively permanent, that distinguishes the nation from other nations”* (Fan, 2008, p. 6), which functions as self-perception (Saunders, 2007). National identity is closely linked to national image because *“who we are cannot be completely separated from the perceptions others have of us and we have of others”* (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

An analysis of the components of nation-brand identity and image was introduced by Dinnie (2008) in a comprehensive conceptual model, presented below as Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of nation-brand identity and image



Source: Dinnie, 2008, p. 49

The conceptual model of the nation-brand identity and image presented in Figure 1 demonstrates and acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the nation-brand construct. One of the most important dimensions of the nation-brand construct is that the nation brand may in itself inspire a certain image, but the unpredictability of external agents may, in turn, limit the precision with which the nation-brand image can be managed. This model lacks a wider vision of the whole concept of nation branding. It is limited to a conceptual identification, ignoring any strategic approach. In this regard, Szondi (2007) argues that the reality of a country is changeable, and this transformation is both internally and externally driven. Therefore, nation-brand identity and image should always correspond in a systematic way to maintain continuity of the brand reality, which, to be effective, needs to take a strategic approach.

This model specifically considers the concepts of nation-brand identity and image along with their coexistence.

The limited approach of such a model, however, restricts the development of the nation-branding theory as it neglects other important factors. Therefore, this has prompted the researcher to develop an integrated model or framework that considers other vital factors such as leadership's vision and stakeholders, as explored earlier. Dinnie (2008) stresses that one of the roles stakeholders should play while constructing nation-brand identity is being selective in identifying the elements of national identity. This will usefully serve the objective of nation branding and will also serve in developing the message of the nation brand to target audiences.

Nation-brand identity and nation-brand image are two key elements that are essential and that must be considered while developing a nation brand. The obvious question that emerges in this regard is: what impact would nation-brand identity and image have on nation branding and developing nation brand? For maximum effectiveness, how could both concepts be considered while developing the nation brand?

The concepts of nation-brand identity and nation-brand image, and their underpinnings, are considered below:

Answering the questions "who are we?" (Konecnik & Go, 2008) and "how do we want others to perceive us?" is the key way to build a nation-brand identity. "How others perceive us" is the nation-brand image that must be measured in order to facilitate relevant feedback.

Another important factor that emerges from the previous discussion and the conceptual model of nation-brand identity and image is feedback. The research questions that must be answered in this respect are: How could "feedback" reflect the pros and cons of the nation-brand image, and therefore help the decision maker to make a sensible assessment of how other nations perceive their nation brand, and thus make the necessary adjustment? What are the best ways to activate

feedback and guarantee sustainable assessment that results in empowering the nation brand? What other integral factors could be essential for developing the nation brand? What recommendations could impact feedback, thereby strengthening reassessment of the nation brand?

In the previous discussion, the researcher reviewed different concepts related to nation branding. Lee (2009) argues that the concept of nation branding has evolved within the three domains of country of origin, place/destination development and public diplomacy, and Bond et al. (2003) previously added national identity – all of these combines to create nation-brand effects, both internally and externally.

Based on this discussion on the existing literature on nation branding and related concepts, nation branding is a multifaceted concept that needs a “holistic branding approach”, not only to develop a nation brand but also to manage all endorsed and related dimensions. In the same context, Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006) argue that a nation brand refers to an “umbrella brand” that encompasses all dimensions of national brands, from different functional sectors (i.e. tourism, investment, export, public diplomacy) to place sectors (e.g. regions, cities) (Dooley & Bowie, 2005). In this respect, Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006) suggest three requirements for umbrella branding.

Figure 1A: Requirements for umbrella branding

1. Defining the common functional requirements of diversified stakeholders;
2. Finding a common core of values from the functional requirements;
3. Building a brand that will communicate the core values to all target audiences.

Source: Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 2006, p. 144

The next section will review other related concepts and discuss existing related theories and models of nation branding and developing a nation brand in order to highlight the key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand and propose a comprehensive and integrated framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives.

It is essential before proceeding that the researcher review certain related concepts in order to determine the parameters and finalise the essential key factors and elements that will lead to forming the preliminary framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives.

2.5 Nation Branding and the Role of Stakeholders

Nation branding necessitates the involvement of many national agencies, or stakeholders, operating within the country. Their contribution to developing the nation brand has so far been discussed using a variety of approaches and ideologies, such as their identification and salience, their communication and coordination, and the actual engagement of relevant stakeholders in the nation-branding process, with them as key players throughout. Stakeholders are virtually all members of the public. Freeman (1984, p. 46) identifies them as *“any group or individual who affects or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives”*.

Branding a nation requires coordination of numerous stakeholders that are, in reality, almost impossible to manage or control in a free-floating environment. This imposes several restrictions when trying to build a powerful nation brand (Giannopoulos et al., 2011).

The largest challenge in nation branding is how to communicate a single message to different audiences in different countries, or even within the nation itself (Fan, 2005).

The size and the extent of the participation level of different stakeholders presents another key challenge (De Chernatony, 2010) in nation branding. Many theories target the challenges posed

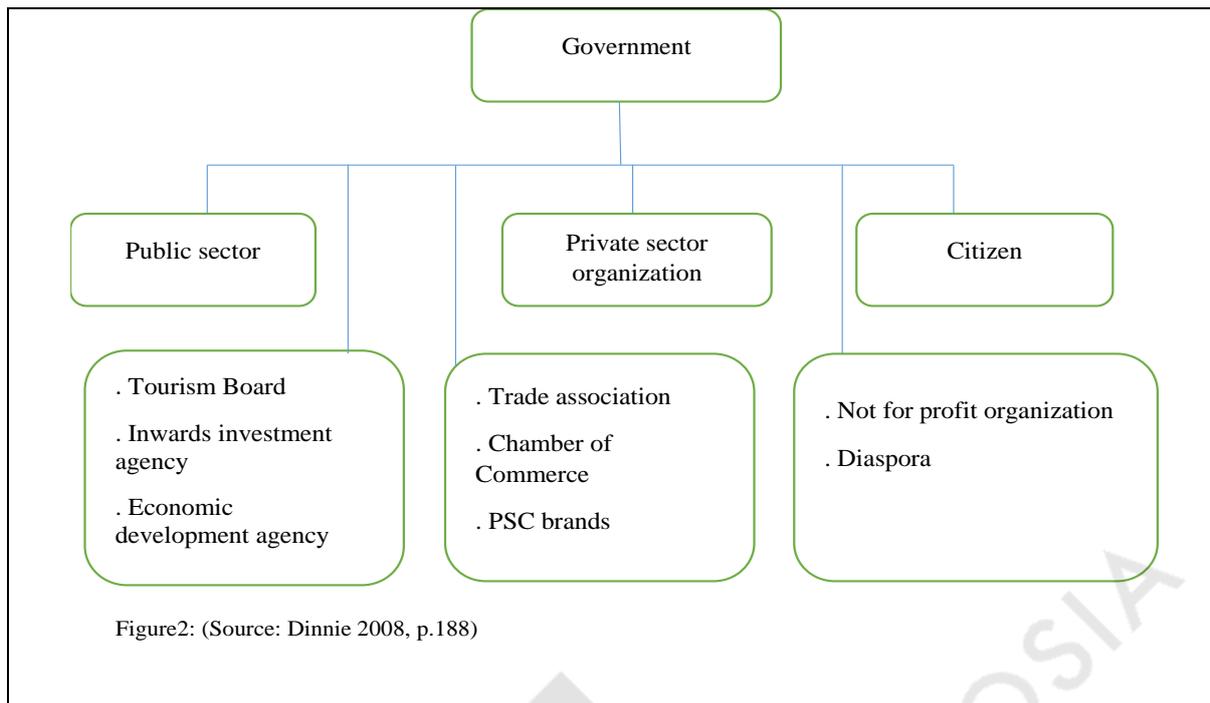
by this problem. Researchers and practitioners propose different views to overcome these challenges. Anholt (2007), Hankinson (2007) and Dinnie (2008) discuss this particular issue in their theories. They all recognise the significant role the government should play in regulating and coordinating this relationship.

An additional challenge, which must be addressed, is the scope of stakeholders within the process of nation branding. The wide range of stakeholders in any country necessitates the principle of inclusiveness, which indicates that relevant stakeholders need to be involved in the development of the nation brand. There are two kinds of inclusiveness: first, the ideal state or fully inclusive approach, and, second, the actual state, or programme-specific inclusiveness (Dinnie, 2008).

Whereas the ideal state may be attained by nations facing economic threat or in the process of emerging onto the international stage for the first time, the specific inclusiveness may be the realistic aspiration of nations wanting to achieve good levels in their branding activities (Dinnie, 2015).

This implicit application of the fully inclusive stakeholder (FIST) approach (Dinnie, 2008, p. 188) provides the framework indicative of the range of stakeholders (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The FIST (fully inclusive stakeholder) approach



This framework is not exhaustive as every individual nation will have its own specific range of stakeholders; however, the framework offers a basis for analysing the diversity of stakeholders that need to be consulted in the development of the nation brand (Dinnie, 2008).

For the purposes of this study, the fully inclusive stakeholder approach will be adopted as the nation of Palestine is in the process of emerging onto the modern-day international stage and aspires, for the first time, to present a fresh global image. The research will upgrade this model according to the stakeholders' views in order to become applicable to the specific nation under study. The previous discussion highlighted several queries. The following research question reflects the great impact that the stakeholders have on developing a nation brand:

Who should be involved and who should be excluded in the case of Palestine's stakeholders? The views and attitudes of different stakeholders are crucial for developing the nation brand – what are the stakeholders' views and attitudes regarding the factors and elements that are essential for

developing a nation brand? Thus, what could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine?

2.5.1 Stakeholders' Communication

In the context of the role of communication in nation branding, Fan (2005, p. 6) adopted the following working definition of nation branding: *“Nation branding concerns applying branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation’s image.”* Whereas, and within the same context, Anholt (2007, p. xi) defines nation branding as: *“The systematic process of aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country around a clear strategy for achieving a strengthened competitive identity.”* These two definitions of nation branding within the context of communication emphasise the role of communication in nation branding. In this section, and throughout the study, the researcher attempts to highlight the prospective relations between nation branding and communication within different contexts in order to explore essential influences for developing a nation brand.

De Chernatony (2008) postulates that making explicit the values and expected outcomes of the nation brand should entail the collective involvement of all key stakeholders. Consistent communication across a wide range of stakeholders necessitates a comprehensive effort from the government (Dinnie, 2008). This supports Urde’s (2016) argument about the importance of communication in creating a better understanding of the role of government in coordinating the work among stakeholders.

Communication is an essential factor within the context of nation branding and developing a nation brand. The following sections clarify in greater detail the essential role played by communication within the context of nation branding. The previous discussion enables the researcher to identify the following two research questions:

Firstly, what could be the best way to communicate the nation brand, both internally and externally, and what elements could strengthen communicating the nation brand?

Secondly, what would be the best ways to communicate and coordinate the work among the stakeholders, and between the leadership and the stakeholders?

2.5.2 Stakeholders' Coordination

In theory, nation branding calls for consistent communication and coordination among the wide range of stakeholders (Dinnie, 2008). In reality, it is impossible to develop such a simple core message about a country that can be used by different industry sectors in different countries (Fan, 2007). One slogan, one campaign, no matter how clever or creative, cannot sell everything to everyone. Hence, the segmentation of the marketplace is a necessity – countries have to decide their target market to penetrate their strategies (De Vicente, 2004).

Skinner (2005) sheds light on the importance of coordination in nation branding and the related challenges, whereas Pike (2004) and Florek (2005) elaborate on the difficulty of achieving coordination among stakeholders. Anholt (2007) argues that most countries do not work in a coordinated manner; individual stakeholders in most countries pursue their own business interests and communicate their own image of the country quite independently, and, as a result, the country does not present a clear and coherent image of itself to the outside world. To challenge this argument, this study intends to expand on the notion of brand management that is directed and driven by an underlying brand strategy. The entire process will be explored through a holistic framework and will consider Skinner's analysis. Skinner (2005) builds his theories on eliciting the opinions of key decision makers from a range of nation-branding functions and related stakeholders regarding what they perceive to be a desirable degree of coordination for the country's nation-branding strategy as well as their views on developing a nation brand.

South Africa is a good example of a nation where uncoordinated and inconsistent communication across a wide range of stakeholders has broken down. The country failed to deliver its message as many conflicting messages entered the international arena, all of which were as varied as their sources. However, this was not the case after South Africa managed to launch its campaign to rebrand itself in 2000 (Dinnie, 2015). Again, to establish a clear identity and to interpret their nation branding in terms of one goal, in 2010 South Africa re-examined and reflected upon the collaboration of the South African government with the various stakeholders involved. The country subsequently worked in a very well-coordinated manner, with consistent high quality, and harmonised their nation branding as an overall national strategy.

The previous discussion emphasised the importance of coordination among stakeholders. This is another essential factor to consider when developing the brand. This also raises another relevant research question:

What could be the best ways to coordinate the work among the stakeholders, and between the leadership and the stakeholders?

2.6 Nation Branding and Government Policy

Nation branding can be defined as the phenomenon by which governments engage in self-conscious activities aimed at producing a certain image of the nation state (Bolin & Stahlberg, 2010). In the same context, Porter (1998) claims that the main goal of governments is prosperity, which in terms of branding would be to add value to the brand with its actions.

The process of developing a nation brand requires determination from all those involved until a common value basis is achieved. Lee (2009) argues that, since nation branding is a highly politicised activity, the vision of the leadership is a key determinant.

Who leads the effort? Hankinson (2007) refers in this context to the need for a charismatic person who can encourage all partners/stakeholders to collaborate and to highlight the mutual benefits

that this joint work would mean for all concerned. These considerations imply that the concept of leadership needs to be applied to location branding. Antonakis (2006) defines leadership as “*the outcomes between a leader and follower relationship based on an influencing process*”. Additionally, the term focuses on the explanation of how this process is influenced. He provides a comprehensive overview of leadership theories and differentiates between transformational, transactional, instrumental and *laissez-faire* leadership. In line with this, Hankinson (2007) refers to the necessity of visionary leadership when developing and managing a place brand. He argues that the key role of leadership as a brand champion is to establish a clear vision of the nation brand and to develop a set of core brand values which link positive aspects of the nation to the realistic vision of what can be achieved in the future.

The key ethical question that must be answered is: who has the right to be the nation-brand manager? Evidently, the only one who can claim the legitimacy to fulfil this position is the elected head of state (Dinnie et al., 2015). The argument in this regard may clarify methods of addressing this dilemma. Dinnie et al. (2015) discuss some of the solutions that may work in this case. These refer specifically to the collective public–private sector structures and programmes. This is where citizens’ interests are represented by elected politicians, and commercial interests are represented by industry associations and individual companies. This model reflects the reality that no single individual can realistically be considered the nation-brand manager. Instead, the activities of nation branding can be conducted only through an inclusive stakeholder approach and under the supervision of the head of state who is elected by the nation. Depending on the political system and the share of responsibilities in any country’s constitution, the leadership may be represented by the president or the head of the government. In any case, the leader may delegate authority to the government to deal with the issue of nation branding or it becomes, *de facto*, the government’s

responsibility. This researcher concedes that the political system of the country should be implicitly considered as yet another critical element of the nation-branding process.

Once the collective vision is set out in a clear manner and the government takes the decision to launch the nation-branding strategy, the next step is to highlight the nation-brand element and natural channels that the government and the stakeholders must develop in a collaborative way in order to achieve success.

The above review of the prospective role of leadership or government in nation branding emphasised the impact of leadership/government as a key factor in developing a nation brand. The research question that focuses on this essential factor is: What emphasis should be placed on leadership during the whole process of developing a nation brand, and what role could the leadership play to guarantee a smooth process for developing a nation brand?

2.7 Nation Branding and Nation-Brand Channels: The Theory of Anholt (2003)

The clichés and stereotypes with which some people judge other people or nations, whether in positive or negative ways, true or untrue, fundamentally affect their behaviour towards those particular people and their country. It is also often very difficult to persuade people to look beyond these often-inaccurate portrayals and to understand the complexities behind them (Anholt, 2007).

To steer their reputation, and to promote their products and services, many countries approach the rest of the world through different strategies around their tourism, foreign direct investment, culture, exports, citizens and public diplomacy. This is the basic vision behind the theory of competitive identity espoused by Anholt (2007).

Anholt (2007) argues that most countries communicate with the rest of the world through six natural channels: tourism, culture and heritage, public diplomacy, inward investment, citizens and export. Anholt (2007) highlights that these six natural channels are paramount to a nation's brand being built around a nation's competence. This argument emphasises the role that nation-brand channels could play in developing a competitive nation brand. The query here relates to how essential the current channels of the hexagon, or other channels or subchannels, might be in forming the final image of a nation brand.

To determine this, we can turn to a definition of nation branding by Anholt (1998), whereby it is a consistent and all-embracing national brand strategy which determines the most realistic, most competitive and most compelling strategic vision for the country, and ensures that this vision is supported, reinforced and enriched by every act of communication between the country and the rest of the world. This definition emphasises the nation brand and its natural channels as essential factors in nation branding. Communication is also another essential factor in nation branding.

More importantly, evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of those key drivers of the nation brand helps the nation to gain insight into and develop the right strategy for penetrating the target market. Chang and Lin (2005) discuss the idea of using the SWOT analysis not only with businesses but also with any other kind of project, even with governments.

SWOT analysis was first described by Learned et al. (1969) and has grown as a key tool for addressing complex strategic situations by reducing the quantity of information to improve decision-making. Carrying out a SWOT analysis will allow for in-depth focus on areas that need attention (Chiritescu et al., 2013). Many countries around the world used the SWOT analysis to develop different national strategies, for example Liechtenstein (Kauffman, 2008), Romania (Chiritescu et al., 2013), Malta (Zarb, 2015), the UK (Higginbottom & Hurst, 2001) and some

African countries (Wanjiru, 2006). Rojas-Méndez (2013), Kaufman (2008) and Anholt (2007) argue that a comprehensive SWOT table can be developed and can include the key determinants of a nation brand, which may include tourism, investment, export, culture and heritage, people and public diplomacy.

Having determined that a SWOT analysis should be considered while developing a nation brand, different natural channels of Anholt's (2007) hexagon will be presented next in order to specify how essential their role might be as a nation-brand channel.

2.7.1 Tourism

Tourism is considered to be the most influential way of branding a nation. It is widely known to be one of the fastest growing and most important industries in the world. In 2014, the sector both directly and indirectly generated 1.5 trillion USD of global domestic gross (GDP) products and accounted for one out of every 11 jobs (UNWTO, 2015).

Tourism, in general, has more common ground with nation branding than any other aspect of a country's international publicity. It also benefits greatly from a strong country; it is the key pillar of any economy if targeted and developed properly by governments (Kerr, 2006).

Tourism is also the biggest spender and the most competent marketing force. Therefore, this particular aspect of the nation's Intellectual Property (IP) needs to be seen as more than just a simple sales channel (Anholt, 2007). It has an important role in developing the nation brand. Tourism branding and promotion cannot be conducted successfully without being considered in the context of a successful nation-branding and promotion strategy (Gertner, 2011). In some cases, tourism brands have been successfully extended to serve a nation as a whole. Spain's famous sun,

for example, was essentially adopted to promote tourism, but it has also served to make Spain seem a modern, warm and inviting country, for business and investment as well as tourism.

Anholt (2007) emphasises the role of tourism as a strong booster in developing the nation brand. The broad picture of tourism hides several subsectors that differentiate one nation from another. Throughout this study, the researcher will explore within a specific context what other subsectors or elements of tourism may impact on developing a nation brand.

2.7.2 Culture and Heritage

Culture and heritage can play a vital role in branding a nation (Fan, 2008). Places which treat growth as a purely economic issue run the risk of developing a two-dimensional brand image, of interest only to investors, tax exiles and currency speculators, whereas culture and heritage provide the third dimension, giving places richness, dignity, trust and respect abroad, and quality of life at home (Anholt, 2007). Celebrities such as musicians, poets and athletes play an important role in presenting their nation to the whole world, for better or for worse. Tyler (1870, p. 1), cited by Avruch (1998, p. 6), identifies culture as follows: *“Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”* Culture is a key ingredient of both nation branding and public diplomacy, which helps to explain the substantial investments that governments have made in institutions such as the British Council, Alliance Française, Guetta of Germany and China’s Confucius Institutes.

Grincheva (2010) argues that culture has a strong effect on the image of the country. This natural channel of Anholt’s (2007) hexagon has a great impact on developing the nation brand and enriching the country’s reputation. Some researchers see culture as problematic; the government acknowledges that this channel is a “non-profit” activity, and, thus, it does not sell when compared

with tourism and investment (Anholt, 2007). However, others counter that culture maintains its power to communicate a country's true spirit and essence. In the same context, Chong (2010) stresses that culture plays an essential role in boosting and enriching a country's reputation. It drives public perceptions towards a fuller and more durable understanding of the country and its values.

The challenge for all countries is to find a persistent and continuous presentation and representation of their past cultural achievements consistent with their modern equivalents in attractive and promising ways.

Ahn and Wu (2015) argue that current research lacks any systematic understanding of the interwoven roles the arts and culture sectors play in a nation's image and branding value. Neither does it fully address the role that a nation's government might play in this relationship. Anholt (2007) argues that many countries now need to reassess the way they identify themselves and communicate that identity to the world. Culture is a more eloquent communicator of the national image than it is for a commercial brand. What elements of the culture would be more effective than others in a specific context? This is the question that the researcher is trying to explore in this study. This study intends to focus on the role that culture, and heritage may play in developing a nation brand as well as its essential role in driving public perceptions towards a durable understanding of the nation and its values. Also, the researcher will explore within a specific context what other subsectors or elements of culture and heritage may have an impact on developing a nation brand.

2.7.3 Public Diplomacy

Anholt (2007) argues that countries are judged by the part their leaders play in foreign and domestic affairs, and their IP activity. Just like every other aspect of nation branding, this needs to be performed with sensitivity regarding the strategic constraints of the nation brand. Public diplomacy covers a wide range of activities and interactions conducted by a government with its foreign counterparts, nongovernmental organisations and the public at large. The stated goal of public diplomacy is to enhance a country's image and reputation through mutual understanding. It goes beyond traditional diplomacy (government to government) and extends to the public (Simonen, 2017).

Public diplomacy (government to people), which has recently become a core pillar of any country's policy (Kaneva, 2011), is viewed by De Vicente (2004) as a key dimension of nation branding and he avers that it should be regarded as a multi-stakeholder initiative, involving associations, private individuals and businesses, as well as other agencies in the process. Public diplomacy is strongly related to nation branding; both are used in the same context. Their inter-relation was discussed in previous studies, which, to a certain degree, combined both concepts (Melissen, 2006).

Szondi (2008) argues that public diplomacy draws from a variety of disciplines, but, until now, it has relied mostly on communication theories and marketing. Marketing and branding approaches have been applied in the public sectors of many countries, where the principles of branding are used as instruments to better communicate and engage with citizens. To expand this theory would be to apply the same principles when communicating with foreign policies, given that public diplomacy can be considered international governmental communication.

The previous discussion raised the question of the role that public diplomacy may play in developing a nation brand – what are the tools and bodies that could help to communicate the message of the nation brand through public diplomacy?

Also, the researcher will explore within a specific context what other subsectors or elements of public diplomacy may impact on developing a nation brand.

2.7.4 Foreign Direct Investment (Inward Investment)

Applying the theory of international economics, flows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) are typically explained by fundamentals such as trade openness and geographic positioning. FDI may, however, be driven by intangible factors that are often disregarded in economic analysis. Intangible assets such as perceptions or stereotypes about countries may, however, either directly or indirectly influence investors' behaviour (Daude & Stein, 2007).

Nonetheless, each of the six dimensions of nation branding – export, tourism, culture and heritage, people and governance – may have a significant impact on FDI. This can be illustrated as follows (Anholt, 2007):

- (1) If a country is perceived as attractive from a tourism point of view, it may entice investors to build hotels or holiday resorts in order to exploit local public goods and services which generate this tourist attraction.
- (2) If the label of origin “Made in Country X” is associated with high-quality, reliable and particularly stylish products, or is loaded with high status or other appealing attributes, then foreign companies may want to invest in production facilities in this country.
- (3) Stereotypes about the labour market in the host country, including employees' qualifications, abilities, motivation and skills, are all determining factors for FDI decisions, because, typically, locally trained indigenous people already cover the employment needs of the foreign investor.

Accordingly, inward investment has a large impact, both directly and indirectly, on the nation brand.

In the same context, and adding to the previous discussion, Raftowicz-Filipkiewicz (2012) argues that nation branding aims to create a strong national brand for improving the brands of national products, as well as the image of the country, which influences the attraction of foreign direct investments and increases exports. Many of the best examples of rapid growth during the last century have happened because certain places became magnets for talent, investment and business ventures. A reputation for plentiful intellectual capital invariably attracts more of it, creating a virtuous circle of accelerating quality and innovation (Anholt, 2005). A powerful and consistent place brand can help create positive preference and get places on the right shortlists. This natural channel has a significant impact on developing a nation brand (Anholt, 2007). In this respect, the researcher will explore within a specific context what could be the most effective elements in inward investment in a specific context and how it could enrich the development of the nation brand.

2.7.5 Citizens

The people of a country are one of its main channels of communication. When each ordinary citizen – not just diplomats,

Media personalities and politicians – becomes a passionate ambassador for their home country or city, either by how they behave abroad or how they treat visitors in their countries, positive change can occur (Anholt, 2007). Famous sporting or cultural figures may even unintentionally play the role of a nation-brand ambassador, without any official endorsement from their nation, or any agreement by the individual to perform this role. Examples of famous intellectual citizens who have created an image that is associated with their countries include Mao Zedong, the founding

father of China; Nelson Mandela, the South African revolutionary politician; Edward Said, the Palestinian intellectual and musician; Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader; and Gandhi of India.

To be a successful brand, Gertner and Kotler (2004) and Morgan (2012) argue that countries should be competitive in retaining and enhancing resources and should be viewed by their citizens as a place full of opportunities to exercise their skills and interests. It is crucial for a country to have supportive and proud citizens as they reflect the goodness of the country brand (Blichfeldt, 2005; Kemp et al., 2012). The human capital of the nation is, in a very real sense, the country's main source of intangible value; the skills, abilities, values and behaviour of the people are its primary resource. This natural channel, among others, would be effective while developing the nation brand (Anholt, 2007). This is a critical factor; yet, governments have to reconsider a country's main source of intangible values. As well as this, the question of citizens' engagement in public matters was often a topic of debate. However, this is no longer an issue as governments are now taking advantage of their intellectual citizens.

Szondi (2007) argues that, instead of relying on natural and physical characteristics, countries emphasise human capital dimensions when branding a country as human capital is regarded as the most competitive asset for a country (Shurchuluu, 2002). Moreover, Idris and Arai (2006) and Wanjiru (2006) argue that quality and well-trained human capital influences visitors by making a lasting impression and contributing to a country brand's performance in global markets. In the same context and without any contradiction, Wanjiru (2006) argues that, if the human capital is not well developed and managed, a country often lags behind.

Promoting the prominent figures of any nation in a global market is of great interest for nations. "Live the brand" is the expression or the rule that involves all citizens of the nation and leads them collectively onto one road towards developing the nation brand. The diverging opinions regarding

the role of citizens in nation branding and developing a nation brand needs to be defined and cannot be treated marginally (Widler, 2007).

Although many believe that we have finally entered the post-national, global and cosmopolitan era (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002; Beck, 2002), nations and national identification continue to matter, not only for groups struggling for a piece of soil to be internationally recognised as nation states but also among members of well-established democratic societies. Palestinians and Palestine are the most obvious example.

As this LR chapter aims to explore the factors that are essential for developing a nation brand, the researcher in this section (as result of the previous discussions), highlighted the importance of citizens/people/human capital in nation branding, and this agrees with Gudjonsson's (2005) argument that the people are the most important factor and, if properly utilised, the most powerful communication tool in the nation-branding toolbox.

The above discussion raised numerous questions about not only the role that citizens or human capital may play as a natural channel of the nation brand but also what influence human capital could have on developing a nation brand as well as how their involvement could impact on developing a nation brand.

2.7.6 Exports

Exporting goods is one of the fastest growing economic activities. The importance of exportation lies in the considerable benefits accruing from this activity for governments and private organisations alike (Spyropoulou, Skarmas & Katsikeas, 2011). In developing countries, products and services are all too often exported as unbranded commodities. This represents a failure in terms of a nation-branding process. Governments which succeed in creating an environment which favours and stimulates innovation, creativity and the constant development of new intellectual

property are likely to achieve a highly profitable export sector. In turn, it adds value to the national brand (Anholt, 2007). A powerful, distinctive, broad-based and appealing national brand is the most valuable gift a government can give to its exporters. For example, in terms of generating GDP, what “Made in Japan” does for electronics, “Made in Italy” does for fashion, or what “Made in Germany” does for the automobile industry is incalculable in terms of generating GDP. Today, branded exports form one of the most potent ways of building and sustaining a national image.

Anholt’s (2003) theory of natural channels of nation brand emphasises the role played by export in developing the nation brand. In this study, the researcher needs to answer the question concerning what export elements could influence the development of nation brand in specific contexts. What “national produce” makes people think about the country/nation that produces it. This research envisages exploring within a specific context what other subsectors or elements of export may impact on developing a nation brand.

The above discussion focused on the natural channels of Anholt’s (2003) model of the Nation Brand Hexagon. The following research question focuses on this aspect and includes all of the previous sub-questions: What would be other natural channels and communicators could be essential and could both add value to and strengthen the nation brand?

2.8 Nation Branding and Communications

This section will explore the communication of the brand in its early developmental stages, both with and among the stakeholders, and, at a later stage, by the stakeholders to the target audience.

As noted by Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2002), *“branding is a mode of communication and communication is always a two-way process; it is something done ‘with’ and not ‘to’”*.

Communication plays a hugely significant role in nation branding. Hankinson (2007) presents in

his model the absolute necessity of consistent brand communication, whereby he insists that communication should occur not only during the development stage of the brand but also when the brand values are developed between the leadership and the stakeholders' network, as well as among the stakeholders themselves. Therefore, the communication process, he argues, continues on different operational levels.

Özkan (2015) also stresses that “communication” is the most important strategic tool for countries to build their own nation brand. He stresses that strategic communication management paves the way for proper planning, creating effective messages and conveying these messages to the target audiences smoothly, all of which determines a road map for gaining success with the brand. Özkan's argument, therefore, indicates that effective communication is the absolute key element in nation branding and reaching the target market, both internally and externally, which is the ultimate aim of this research paper.

The traditional way of communicating the brand has recently decreased in effectiveness (Whelan & Wohlfeil, 2006). The new breed of communication strategy that has recently emerged involves target audiences as active participants on a behavioural level. This process facilitates practical feedback to senior management (Brown et al., 2003).

Anholt (2007), Urde (2013) and Özkan (2015) conclude that communication must be considered the critical element that facilitates developing the brand. Adherence to an agreed common goal, as well as good coordination amongst stakeholders, should result in communicating the message of the brand more effectively to the target audience, whether internally or externally.

The following research questions arise from the above discussion: What could be the best ways to facilitate communication among the stakeholders, and between the leadership and the

stakeholders? To what extent should effective communication be considered an essential factor in the nation branding? Furthermore, in what ways could different stakeholders communicate amongst themselves in order to develop and deliver the nation brand effectively to target markets (externally and internally), and, finally, to obtain the desired feedback?

2.9 Nation Branding and Developing and Managing a Nation Brand

Nation branding is a concept that needs a “holistic branding approach” for developing and managing the nation brand (Lee, 2009). Existing theories – in the context of nation branding – distinguish how a nation brand is developed and managed. Lee (2009) elaborates on the idea behind developing and managing the nation brand and argues that it stems from the key concept of nation branding which is based on the triumvirate of country of origin, place development and public diplomacy. It is noted that this combined triumvirate must play a key role in the process in order to achieve the beneficial effects of nation branding.

Other researchers believe that COO, place branding, public diplomacy and national identity are key elements of nation branding (Hankinson, 2009). In the same context, Dinnie (2008) argues that the origin of nation branding study can be traced to four different sources: country of origin (Heslop & Papadoplous, 2002), place or destination branding (Gertner & Kotler, 2002; Hankinson 2004, 2005), public diplomacy (Szondi, 2007; Fan, 2008; Melissen, 2005) and national identity (Bond et al. 2003).

Kotler and Keller (2006) argue that a nation that manages its reputation organically and applies a seamless long-term strategy in the way it is positioned, portrayed or represented can enjoy an enhanced international image and achieve its objectives in the global marketplace.

Nation branding and developing a nation brand is thus an area of growing importance for politicians, academics and strategic communications professionals alike. However, the process of integrating a marketing and communications approach with the objectives and ambitions of policymakers may present serious challenges, as Dinnie (2008) argues. Many countries embrace nation branding and develop a nation brand to attain not only a market share but also to gain high status among other nations and reserve their place in the international community, which affects and influences international relations. It is therefore incumbent upon the political leaders of the country to try to establish a national consensus and a long-term strategy that can be embraced (Dinnie, 2008).

The previous discussion revealed that developing a nation brand is a prerequisite for any nation that wants to prove it is a “reliable partner” and to make itself known on the world stage. Nation branding is undertaken in order to make this happen (Dinnie, 2008). Accordingly, the following research question arises: What could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand?

Although the above discussion of the literature revealed several factors that are essential in nation branding and developing a nation brand, the research in the following sections will focus on different models of nation branding and nation brand to highlight other factors and elements, thereby emphasising the most essential ones for determining the preliminary framework for developing a nation branding from stakeholders’ perspectives.

2.9.1 Different Models Focusing on Developing and Managing a Nation Brand

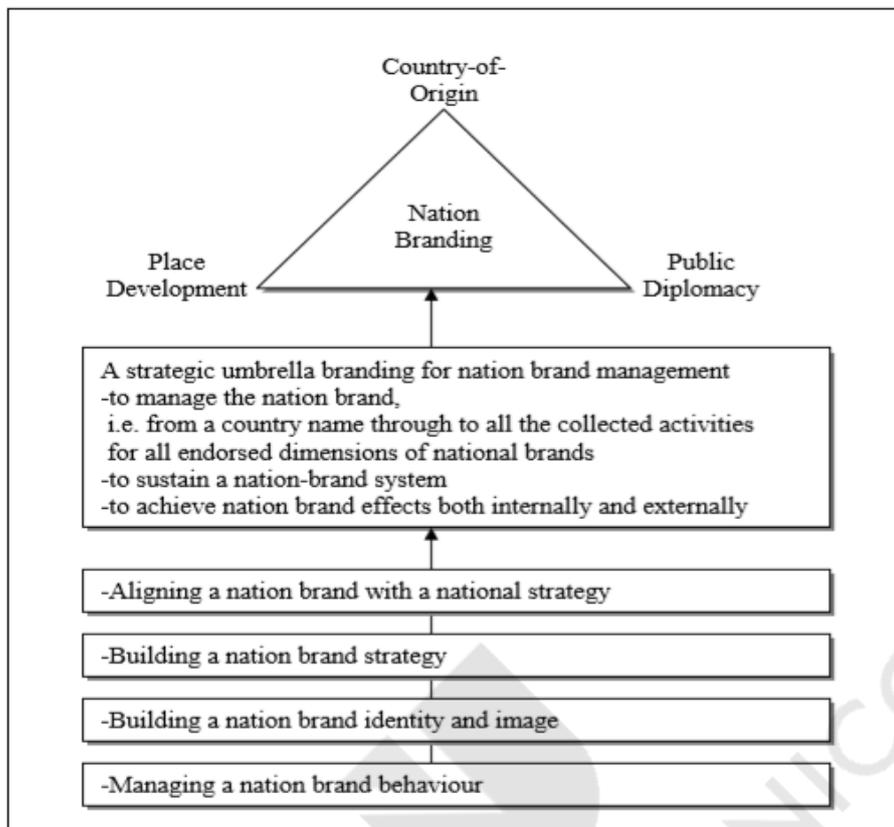
Reflecting on the key concept of nation branding proposed by Lee (2009) and the reviewed literature of nation branding and nation brand throughout the chapter, the researcher rationalises

their decision to review specific relevant models (see Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) in order to explore different factors that impact on and influence developing a nation brand.

Lee (2009) highlights that the key nation-branding concept has been based on a tripod of country of origin, public diplomacy and place/destination development (see Figure 3) and notes that nation branding combines these aspects in order to create a nation brand. This process needs umbrella branding, as Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006, p. 144) argue. These existing models of nation branding that articulate the four aspects of Lee (2009) distinguish how a nation brand is developed and managed. The researcher will critically analyse those various multivariable models concerning these key aspects in order to highlight the key factors and elements essential for building a nation brand. Therefore, the researcher proposes a preliminary framework that links all possible revealed factors according to Hankinson's (2007) model and considers the argument of Simion, Bucoveţchi and Dumitrescu (2017) that branding principles apply equally to the nation as to a corporation.

Lee (2009) highlights the following four aspects of nation branding: (1) aligning a nation brand with a national strategy, (2) building a nation-brand strategy, (3) building a nation-brand identity and image, and (4) managing nation-brand behaviour.

Figure 3: Key nation-branding concept



Source: Lee, 2009, p. 36

Below, the researcher uses the four aspects of branding as identified by Lee (2009) in order to review and discuss various existing models relating to nation branding and developing a nation brand.

1- The First Group of Models

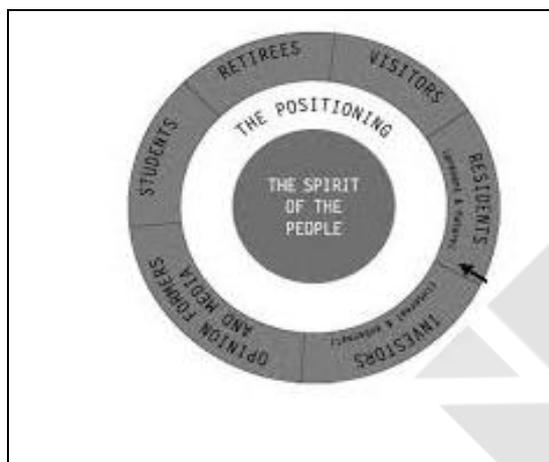
The first group of models focuses on developing the nation brand on the principle of aligning it with a national strategy. These models include:

1.1 Gilmore (2002) Model (see Figure 4)

This model emphasises the brand that acts as a guide for the strategic decision-making process of managing the nation-branding process. Gilmore (2002) argues that the core of a nation brand must capture the spirit of the people and their shared purpose; the positioning must retain its integrity to

that particular country's core values and spirit. This particular model lacks vision concerning developing a nation brand, and it ignores the role of both government and stakeholders. However, this model emphasises different factors that should be considered when developing a nation brand. The spirit of people and the positioning are two important factors that should be considered when developing the brand.

Figure 4: Gilmore (2002) Model (the brand at the heart of the organisation)



Source: Gilmore, 2002, p. 285

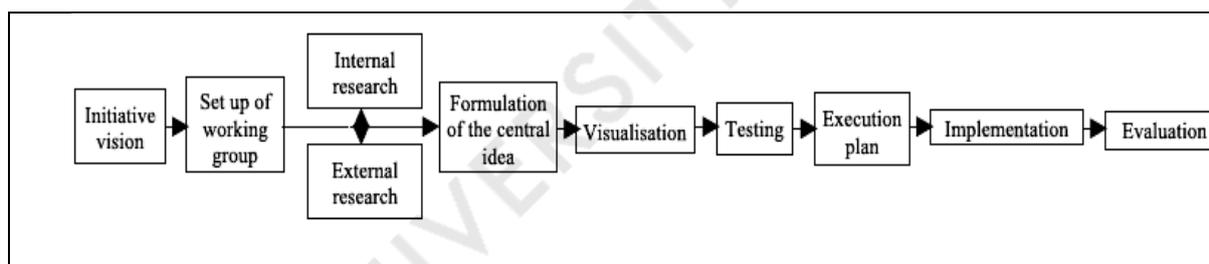
1.2 Endzina and Luneva (2004) Model (see Figure 5)

By contrast, this model identifies the actions that should be carried out in order to develop and implement the nation brand. In particular, the starting point is a vision for a nation brand and the goals to be achieved by the branding. Then, a working group is set up, and both internal and external research follows. The working group, together with agencies with specific expertise, has to formulate the central idea of the brand. The visualisation includes the creation of a logo and slogan, and the message should be tested, and the execution plan must be prepared, including activities to communicate the message to intended targets. Implementation of the created brand is

the next step, adjusting, updating and coordinating the brand over time. Continuous evaluation is vital to assess the process itself and the success or otherwise of nation branding.

This model emphasises on the role of stakeholders. It also ignores what could be the natural channels of the nation brand. Endzina and Luneva (2004) have developed this model specifically for Latvia to launch its national brand. Endzina and Luneva (2004) acknowledge that there has not been any coordinated external communication or a definite strategy thus far. The lack of one united brand, or at least a central message, has made it difficult to present the country abroad and to increase external awareness of it. They also point out the political factor and the role of the government. Their conclusions illustrate the importance of considering essential and intrinsic elements in any developing framework for nation branding. They also reiterate the vital importance of developing a united message in order to promote a successful nation-brand image.

Figure 5: Endzina and Luneva (2004) Model (combination of the NBDM and Olin’s model)



Source: Endzina & Luneva, 2004, p. 96

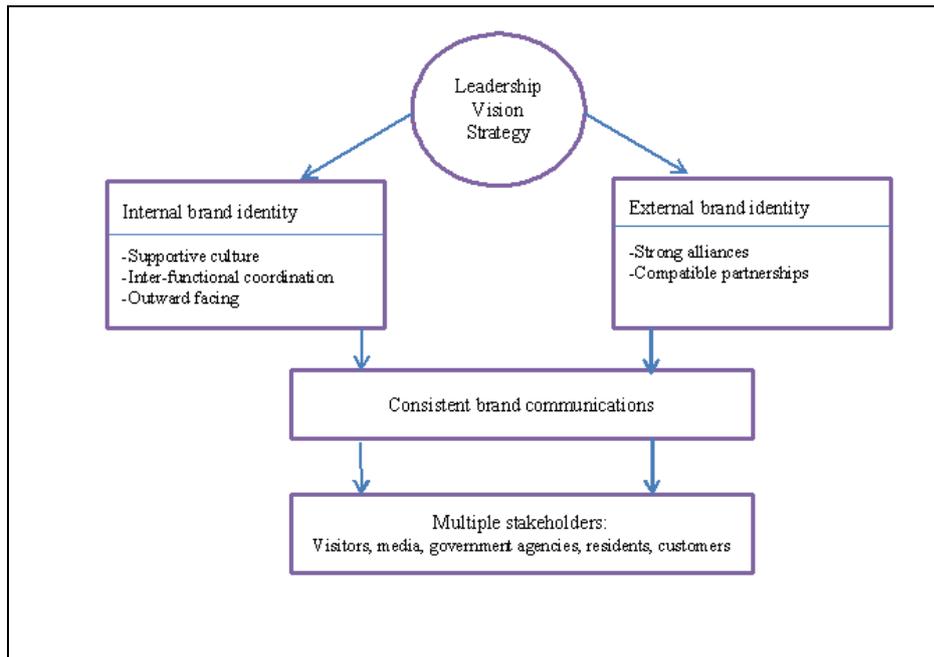
1.3 Hankinson (2007) Model (see Figure 6)

This model adopts the traditional organisational model of brand management. However, the researcher prefers a more holistic model for the destination-management process. In particular, the

above model emphasises that destination-brand management requires strong, visionary leadership and organisation-wide commitment, using the theory of hierarchy to achieve a set of brand values which summarise the place's brand promise.

This model fails to consider some of the most basic factors in the nation-branding process. For example, clear communication must be at the centre of all interaction between stakeholders and the target market, both internally and externally. This model also ignores nation-brand channels. Finally, the above model ignores any feedback process, which is essential for the ongoing assessment and repositioning of the brand. Hankinson (2007) argues that, although the framework is intended to represent a holistic model of the destination-brand management process, there are no universal approaches to destination branding; each destination will differ in terms of both its potential and its institutional infrastructure. It is also acknowledged that the political realities of destination branding can cause potentially threatening gaps in the branding process that may impede the brand's development. This argument identifies another gap in the literature reviewed for this research and specifically in the presented framework. National and political factors must be considered in any proposed framework for nation branding. The above model ignores any theoretical explanation regarding advanced nation-brand management.

Figure 6: Hankinson (2007) Model (a framework for the management of place brands)



Source: Hankinson, 2007, p. 247

2- The Second Group of Models

The second group of models focuses on building the nation-brand identity and image. These models include:

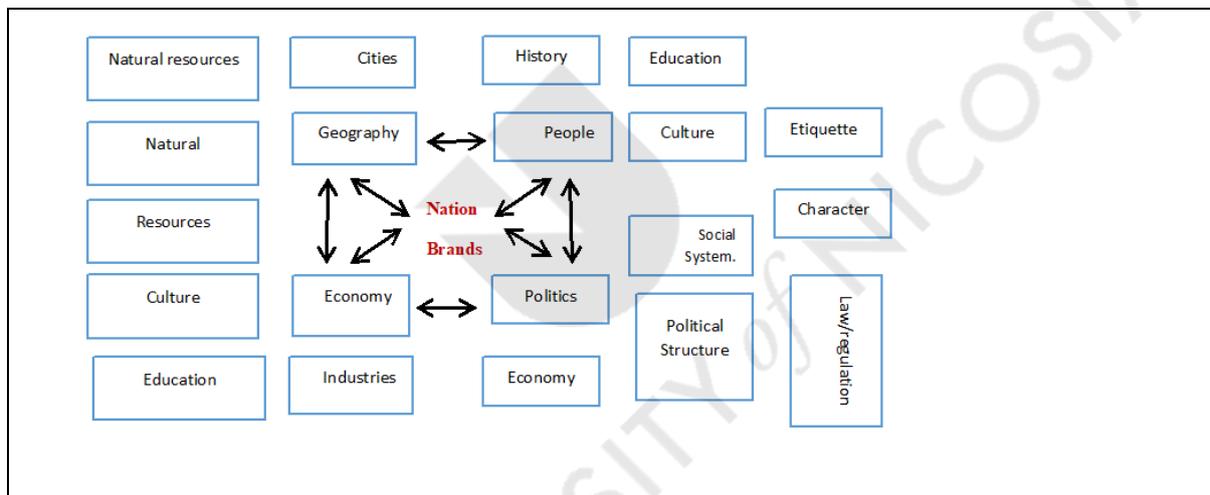
2.1 Gudjonsson (2005) Model (see Figure 7)

This model suggests an understanding of a nation's significant dynamics and communication channels through which to build an efficient and successful communication strategy for a nation-branding process. Gudjonsson (2005) divides the nation-branding portfolio into four main categories, each of which is relevant to his country (Iceland) and which synthesise economic, political, social and cultural factors. This model lacks any kind of coordination or communication within the portfolio. It also ignores the essential role of government. The model contains no vision to inspire or lead stakeholders, who are not even considered in the whole process. However, this model does introduce an influential "road map" for nation branding that can be used strategically to identify weaknesses and communication channels in Gudjonsson's image of the nation of

Iceland. The argument here is whether or not this model would work with other nations. In other words, do the natural idiosyncrasies of a nation require it to adopt its own tailored portfolio and specific model of nation branding?

Gudjonsson (2005) acknowledges that political and cultural factors are part of studying economic development. He also acknowledges that his own nation-branding model does not focus on communication practices.

Figure 7: Gudjonsson (2005) Model (Nation Branding Influential Map)



Source: Gudjonsson, 2005, p. 289

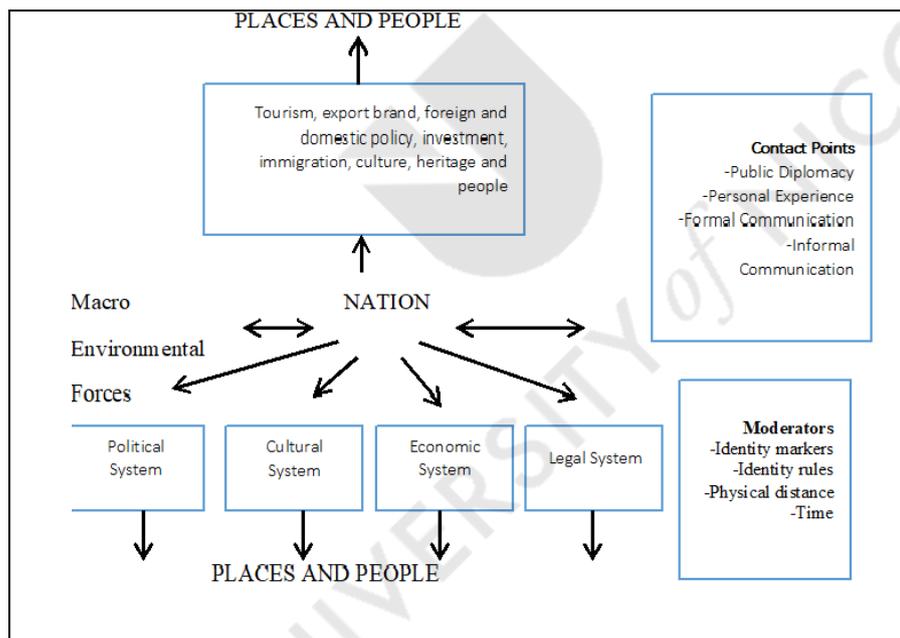
2.3 Skinner and Kubacki (2007) Model (see Figure 8)

Skinner and Kubacki (2007) aim in their model to unravel the complex relationship between nationhood and a place's brand identity. The model conceptualises how the nation-brand identity is created and communicated, both nationally and internationally, taking into account all the factors of a nation and relying on a wide range of moderators and contact points. The model therefore shows the impact of a nation's own political, cultural, economic and legal systems on the sub-

national places within the nation. These places may also be branded, reflecting the view identified in the available research of the nation as a corporate brand.

Although this model takes into consideration a wide range of factors that affect nation-brand identity, it still lacks any sense of vision within a nation-branding initiative. Neither does it consider the essential input to the process of the stakeholders' coordination and the effective communication of the message of the brand. The above model gives no regard to the feedback process, which is essential for assessing how others perceive the image of the nation brand.

Figure 8: Skinner and Kubacki (2007) Model (the nation's brand-identity model)



Source: Skinner & Kubacki, 2007, p. 313

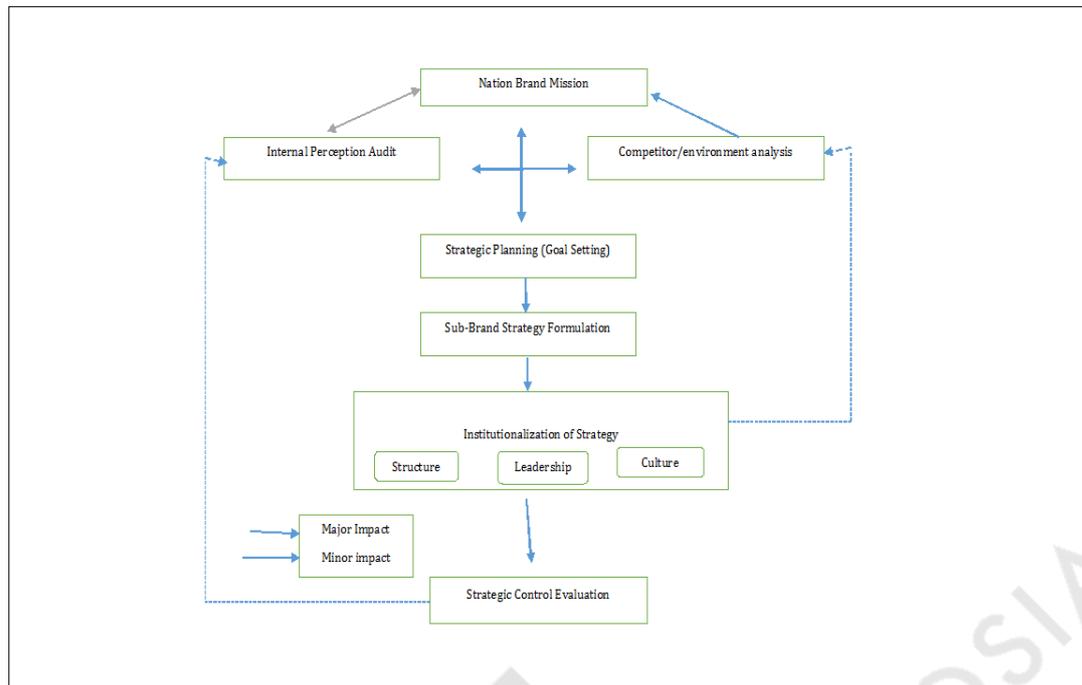
3- The Third Group of Models

The third group of models emphasises the role of brand strategy in achieving nation (or place) brand equity or value. These models include:

3.1 Odia and Isibor (2014) Model (see Figure 9)

Odia and Isibor (2014) developed this model to be applied in Nigeria with a view to building its nation's image. The model emphasises the role of brand strategy in achieving nation-brand value by considering nation-branding models designed by other branding experts. This proposed strategic management model demonstrates its application in relation to management of the Nigerian brand. Odia and Isibor (2014) argue that the image of the Nigerian brand is more on the negative side, particularly in areas of energy supply, security, corruption and education. Their model focuses on those fields and ignores others that might affect the positive development of the brand and the brand image. The model also ignores the role of stakeholders. Although this appears to offer a more realistically transferable model, it ignores certain parts that both researchers pointed out in their definition of nation branding; for them, nation branding is the process of building and managing a country's identity and image specifically to attract and satisfy the needs of internal and external stakeholders, visitors and investors. This model focuses on several factors that show how essential they are for developing the nation brand. Those factors are leadership, culture and evaluation. Although there are other models that emphasise the role of brand strategy (see Appendix 1), that of Odia and Isibor (2014) was the most relevant to the context of this study.

Figure 9: Odia and Isibor (2014) Model (nation brand strategic management model)



Source: Odia & Isibor, 2014, p. 210

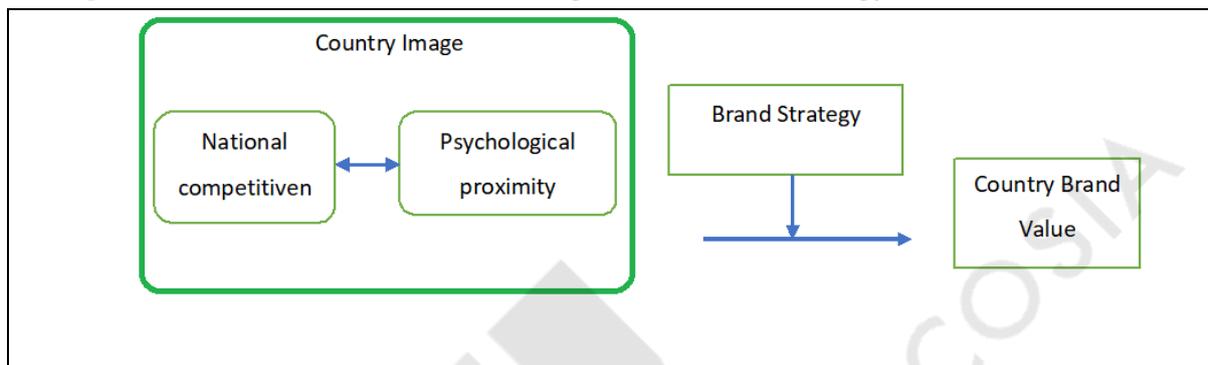
3.2 Cho (2004) Model (see Figure 9A)

In this model, Cho (2004) emphasises a nation-brand strategy based on actors and activities creating and communicating identities and defines nation-brand value as the outcome. In particular, this model suggests that country-brand value is a long-term outcome that is influenced by country image and nation-brand strategy. Country image is established through the interaction between national competitiveness factors and consumers' psychological proximity. Nation-brand strategy is considered to be a moderating factor that comprises branding activities.

In this regard, Lee (2009) argues that nation-brand strategy is applied to the economic, social, political and cultural development of a country. To provide a criterion for selecting country behaviour and to achieve a nation's development goals, it needs to integrate a nation-brand strategy with those disciplines. This model limits the process of building a nation to country image and country-brand value, thereby ignoring the fact that this process should be led by visionary

leadership. In the literature of nation branding, country or nation image is always linked to national identity. This model, however, ignores the role of national identity. Some elements that are essential for developing a nation brand have been considered, but the model is not comprehensive, and it ignores other elements and factors such as stakeholders, nation-brand communicators and natural channels.

Figure 9A: Cho (2004) Model (building a nation-brand strategy)



Source: Cho, 2004; cited by Lee, 2009

4- The Fourth Group of Models

The fourth group of models focuses on managing nation-brand behaviour. These models include:

4.1 Anholt (2003) Model (see Figure 10)

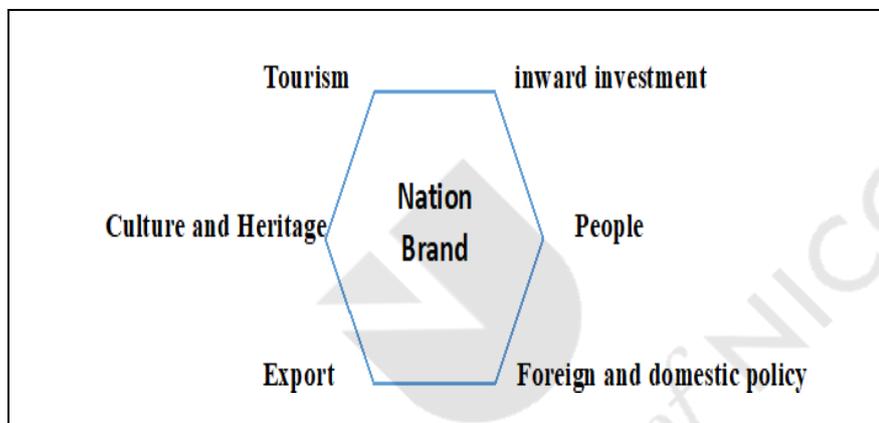
This model suggests that most countries send out messages about themselves via a “hexagon” of communication channels and behaviours. The hexagon comprises the following actions: the nation’s tourism promotion; the country’s exports; the policy decisions of the country’s government; the way the nation attracts inward investment, foreign talent and companies; the nation’s cultural activities; and the people of the country.

This model restricts communication and the perception of the nation to just six natural channels.

Some nations might see other channels as more important (talented, sports, cultural and political

figures), while others might approach the rest of the world according to their political, economic or cultural impact. It can be said that there is no standard formula and each nation has its own aims, circumstances, resources and competence. This model emphasises only the natural channels of the nation brand and does not propose an integrated model or a road map for developing the nation brand. The role of stakeholders (their communication and/or coordination) is also not clear in Anholt's model.

Figure 10: Anholt (2003) Model (the natural channels hexagon)



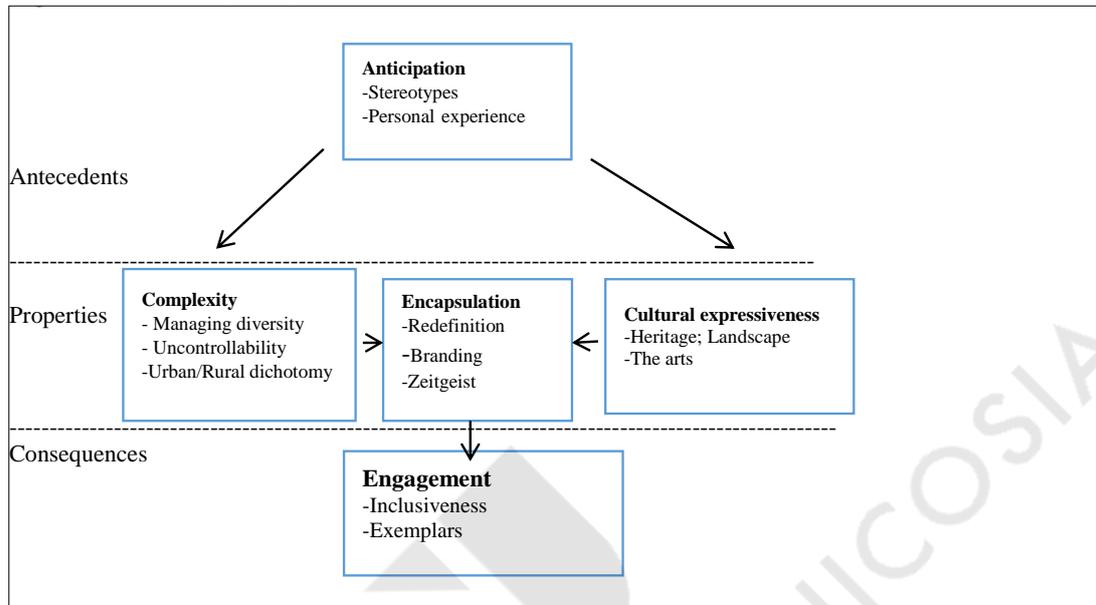
Source: Anholt,2003

4.2 Dinnie (2008) Model (see Figure 11)

This model refers to the category flow model as a process connecting nation-branding antecedents, properties and consequences. Dinnie (2008) proposes a network of relationships amongst nation-branding antecedents, properties and consequences. As illustrated in Figure 11, this model suggests a sequential flow from an initial category of anticipation to two further categories: complexity and cultural expressiveness. Complexity and cultural expressiveness comprise those elements of the nation-brand construct that require encapsulation through the development of a nation-brand strategy in order to achieve engagement, the ultimate stage in this conceptual framework for nation branding. This model heavily emphasises the role of stakeholders and ignores the other elements

that may affect the development of nation brand. Dinnie (2008) also acknowledges the complexity of the processes involved in the nation-brand construct. This model demands a managerial skill set and a level of cultural awareness, which have also been ignored.

Figure 11: Dinnie (2008) Model



Source: Dinnie, 2008, p.142

In conclusion, the above different models that have been reviewed and analysed according to the guidelines of Lee (2009) highlight the key cause-and-effect variables as well as factors and elements that could be essential in nation branding and developing a nation brand.

The factors and elements that emerged from the LR are presented in the next section.

The factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand, as revealed by the LR analysis are:

Stakeholders, visionary leadership and strategy, nation-brand identity, nation-brand core values, brand communications, coordination, tourism, exports, policy decisions and public diplomacy, inward investment, culture and heritage, and, always and ultimately, the spirit of and willingness to engage the people themselves.

The above analytical review of different models that are used for nation branding reveals that none of them encompass all of the core factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand. Therefore, the researcher proposes a “new” model, one that, in essence, integrates all the factors and elements that each of these authors proposed separately and combines them in a holistic and integrated framework. The most crucial question that arises here is: What could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for any country, including Palestine? In the following sections, the researcher will assemble all the relevant factors and elements that emerged from the LR to compose and introduce the preliminary framework.

The researcher will highlight the gaps in the literature, before introducing the preliminary framework that will integrate all relevant factors revealed during the literature review.

2.10 Gaps in the Literature

Kaneva (2017) and Nebenzahl (2004) argue that modelling is a great future challenge for the study of nation branding. However, while many researchers have presented models in the context of nation branding (Dinnie, 2015; Florek & Conejo, 2007; Zerrillo & Thomas, 2007; Anholt, 2007), they do not provide a satisfactory explanation of how a nation brand’s elements and factors may be integrated and managed in a complete system, as clarified earlier.

Qobo (2017) argues that branding is not just a marketing activity. It is a long-term strategy for a country and its position in the world. It can be perceived as a holistic development which influences the entire nation (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). It encompasses activities ranging from country naming to managing the nation brand (Lee, 2009). A critical step in the design of a nation brand is to identify the underlying principles and essential factors whilst acknowledging the fact that certain basic principles and factors may be perceived differently in different countries (Dinnie, 2015).

Dogan and Petkovic (2016) argue that nation branding is a relatively recent phenomenon and emerging area of interest which lacks clear conceptualisation. Nation branding emerged shortly after the Second World War (Aronczyk, 2013), and the past few decades have been characterised by increased efforts by several nations with respect to branding, primarily emphasising public diplomacy, trade and investment, tourism and export promotion (Varga, 2013; Valaskivi, 2016). As an emerging area of interest, nation branding is driven largely by practitioners, and there is, paradoxically, not only a lack of progress in conceptual development but there also seems to be a relatively small amount of research available which covers this topic adequately (Fan, 2010; Kaneva, 2017). Most recent study in the area of nation branding, however, indicates that it is required to perform empirical research. Bhatia and Panda (2018) argue that, for countries, the application of the principles of branding is relatively new and is still in the developmental stage. The concept of nation branding is challenging and needs a lot of thought as it is very different from branding a product or an organisation.

Further to the discussion above, nation branding assumes importance as a subject of study and exploration in order to further extend research and advance this concept.

Dinnie (2008, p. 170) argues that the infinitely wide scope of nation-branding activity can be adequately conducted only through an inclusive stakeholder approach in pursuit of goals that will

benefit the whole nation. In the same context, Kerr and Johnson (2005) and Hankinson (2004) argue that the ultimate success of a place-brand strategy relies on how effectively the brand mirrors the reality through effective commitment of and relationships with stakeholders. The role of genuine citizens in developing a nation brand has also been appraised, and Kaneva (2017) stresses that nation-branding programmes cannot succeed without genuine citizen engagement and support.

Dinnie (2015) stipulates that countries are embracing nation branding in order to differentiate themselves on the world stage and to strengthen their economic performance in order to attract investors, tourists, entrepreneurs and cultural and international sporting events (Anholt, 2007).

Anholt (2007, pp. xi) defines nation branding as:

“the systematic process of aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country around a clear strategy for achieving a strengthened competitive identity. It can be as modest as linking the promotions ..., or it can be a decades-long policy of coordinating all internal and external national strategies ... into a coherent, planned process.”

Kaniva (2017) argues that nation branding is a political project that reflects national anxieties and aspirations. It is therefore essential for the political leadership of the country when engaging in nation-branding activities to try to establish a national consensus and a long-term strategy that can be embraced by all key stakeholders, thus justifying the commitment of financial and human resources to designing and implementing nation-branding strategies (Dinnie & Fola, 2009).

In nation branding, stakeholders play a vital role in developing the brand, in terms not only of its conception but also of communication (Dinnie, 2015). The existent literature has not really focused on exploring the stakeholders' role and importance in the nation-branding process (Dinnie, 2015; Pike, 2004; Florek, 2005). In same context, Dinnie and Fola (2009) claim that, for the most part,

existing literature focuses on merely identifying these stakeholder groups in various organisational contexts and settings rather than on their roles or participation in developing the nation brand.

Also, Gregory (2007) argues that stakeholders are usually regarded as targets rather than partners in the development of brands and that the literature seldom provides guidance on how their involvement and role can be either identified or facilitated. According to Merrilees et al. (2012), fragmented literature provides scope for investigating the relationship between branding and multiple stakeholders involved in this process. Dinnie and Fola (2009) argue that stakeholder identification may be context-specific phenomena rather than universally applicable concepts, and future research is needed in this domain in order to investigate the nature of stakeholder identification across different international settings. Hankinson (2004) also argues that, while considerable work has recently been undertaken on the perceptual aspects of destination brands, there is a general paucity of research relating to the role of stakeholders' relationships and networking in the development of those destination brands.

Most recent research by Kotsi et al. (2018) emphasises the need for further research on stakeholders' role in nation branding. Kotsi et al. (2018) argue that, while there is general agreement that a multiple-stakeholder perspective is required in nation branding, very few studies look beyond tourists. However, their research investigates the role of stakeholders, and it contributes to the development of brand theory by highlighting the role of multiple-stakeholder perspectives and storytelling in the formation of place attachment, which is still far from the aim of this current study.

This gap in the literature has motivated the researcher to focus on exploring and critically evaluating the role of the stakeholders in developing a nation brand for Palestine. This study aims to explore the role of stakeholders in developing a nation brand. Furthermore, it will evaluate and

assess the perceptions and views of several key stakeholders in relation to the essential factors for developing this brand.

Therefore, the study aims to contribute to filling this gap in the existent literature and shedding light on the influential role of stakeholders and their respective views and attitudes towards developing a nation brand. There is also another gap in the literature in terms of the availability of models that can be implemented to develop a nation brand. Hankinson (2007) argues that, currently, there are no universal approaches to destination branding since each destination differs in terms of both its potential and its institutional infrastructure. Also, Akutsu (2008) argues that there is no universal template for nation branding as nations have only relatively recently engaged in nation branding and are exploring different strategies for achieving their nation-brand goals. Most recent studies, however, still argue that there is no up-to-date framework for destination branding. Hemmonsbey et al. (2018) argue that the destination-branding discourse remains widely contested among academics and practitioners, as there is, as yet, no commonly accepted framework for destination-branding theory.

Based on the previous discussion *vis-à-vis* the existing gaps in the literature, the researcher intends, next, to develop and propose a preliminary framework that integrates all the essential factors that have emerged from the reviewed literature of nation branding and nation brand as well as the basic theories of nation brand to fill in the gaps in the literature, as listed previously.

2.11 The Preliminary Framework Proposed in this Current Study

In Section 2.9.1, the researcher reviewed several models for developing and managing a nation brand in order to explore what factors are essential for developing a nation brand. The factors that emerged from an extensive analysis of those models will form the main body/skeleton of the proposed framework. While considering these factors, the preliminary framework will be based

on the main concepts of the five guiding principles for the management of place brand of Hankinson (2007), and two other related theories of Anholt (2003) and Dinnie (2008).

A review of the literature suggests and also calls into question the relevance of a marketing theory based on organisations with marketing places. This was raised by Hankinson (2007), who set five guiding principles and argued that it might form the basis of a framework for the creation, development and management of destination brands. Along the way, Hankinson's (2007) adaptations to corporate-branding theory have been made to facilitate the practical implementation of the framework to develop a destination brand.

Hankinson's (2007) acknowledgment that there are evident differences in both the character and the management of these two categories of brand also resulted in recognising that there are sufficient similarities between the two types of brand to allow useful lessons to be drawn.

Likewise, Dinnie (2008) claims that there are several similarities between corporate branding and nation branding. One such similarity is that the branding process should be guided by the corporate vision, which is usually the responsibility of the CEO of a firm. In the case of a country, Dinnie (2008) concludes that the vision regarding the nation brand could be the responsibility of higher-level officials such as the country's leadership/government. Hankinson (2007) argues that the organisational culture and brand image should stem from the company's strategic vision, which should be developed and communicated by senior-level management throughout the organisation. Furthermore, Urde (2003) stipulates that building the brand must begin with the top management before being extended across partner organisations. This view is also supported by Anholt (2007), who indicates that, in the case of building a nation brand, an integral part of the government's job is to build a reputation that is fair, true, powerful, attractive and genuinely useful for the country's economic, political and social aims. To conclude, the government should set a clear strategy – one

that is founded on cooperation with different stakeholders (Anholt, 2007) – and lead a national plan for branding the nation.

Dinnie's (2008) FIST model demonstrates that, in creating the nation brand, all stakeholders should be included in the branding process and an effort should be made to identify what is their perceived "ideal" state. Ideally, the nation brand should reflect the stakeholders' views.

According to Anholt (2007), the nation-brand "natural channels" are tourism, export, people, governance, culture and heritage, and inward investment. Hankinson (2007) argues that communication with these target audiences is particularly important not only during the early stages of creating the brand but also during the developmental stage of the brand. Stakeholders are an integral part of the nation-branding process (Urde, 2003). Hankinson (2007) also posits that the core brand values that reflect the brand's identity are, in essence, a subset of the corporate values which reflect the corporation's identity. The framework suggests that the nation-brand values are reflected through senior-level governmental officials' (top management's) vision of what the nation brand represents and reflects, and this vision is subsequently refined through a process of interaction with key stakeholders (Hankinson, 2004b). Hankinson (2007) also states that communication of the nation brand through various channels entails a wider audience. Anholt (2007), on the other hand, suggests that the nation's reputation powerfully affects the way people both inside and outside the country think about it and the way they respond to events occurring within the country. The nation's reputation can be measured by collecting and analysing a continuous flow of feedback shared among all the stakeholders and the government (leadership) of a nation. Therefore, coordination and communication among all key stakeholders is paramount to the branding process.

In the next part, the researcher will rationalise composing the preliminary framework.

2.11.1 The Rationale for the Current Study's Preliminary Framework

The current study's preliminary framework for developing a nation brand based on stakeholders' perspectives is grounded in three concepts. **Firstly**, the working definition of nation branding by Fan (2005), whereby nation branding encompasses the implementation of branding and marketing communication techniques to promote a nation's image. **Secondly**, the fact that the application of branding techniques to places has become increasingly prevalent over recent years, and place branding applies to cities as well as to regions and nations as a whole (Dinnie & Fola, 2009). Dinnie et al. (2010) agree with this wider application, stating that, even though branding techniques are well established in the business sphere, it is only in recent years that there has been an increased interest in the potential benefits of applying such techniques to nations rather than just to products, services and companies. They draw examples from several countries that have adopted and implemented nation branding in order to develop a distinct nation brand. Also, Kavaratzis (2009) argues that both nation branding and place branding are heavily inspired by the concept of corporate branding. This knowledge transfer from the corporate world to other domains has been labelled "the business analogy" (Collini, 2012) and has also been critically approached within the literature on nation branding (Rasmussen & Merckelsen, 2014).

Thirdly, there are clear similarities between managing brands at a corporate level and managing destination brands (Hankinson, 2007; Simon et al., 2017). Hankinson (2007) argues that a destination brand could be a single town, city, resort or other relatively limited entity, but it could also be a nation as a whole, and many destination-branding campaigns are run at a national level. While acknowledging that there are strong differences in both the nature and the management of these two approaches to branding (destination and corporate), Hankinson argues that not only are there strong similarities between these two branding approaches, but the existent literature is also quite rich in terms of best practice in both types (Hankinson, 2007). Simon et al. (2017), Balmer and Grey (2003), and Riel and Balmer (1997) also accept that nation brands can be treated in a

similar manner to corporate brands. Finally, the researcher agrees with the argument of Cvijanović, Simić and Vukotić (2018) that the literature also exhibits that nations are frequently addressed as destinations.

According to the aforementioned discussion, the researcher draws on the existent literature of nation branding, particularly on (a) Hankinson's five guiding principles and his framework for destination-brand management (Hankinson, 2007), (b) the main theory of nation brand proposed by Anholt (2003), and (c) the stakeholders' theory proposed by Dinnie (2008), in order to develop a "new" expanded framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspective.

The researcher also considers the different factors and elements that emerged from analysing the literature of nation branding and different related models in order to present the framework as an integrated model to develop a nation brand based on the stakeholders' perspectives.

The proposed framework of this study comprises seven stages. The stages reflect the different factors and elements that emerged from the literature review as well as the research questions that were raised throughout, taking into consideration the discussion in the first paragraph of this section (2.11.1). The stages are as follows:

- 1- Leadership/government decide on the vision.
- 2- The decision to kick off a national plan to develop a nation brand should be agreed upon internally through cooperation, communication and coordination between leadership/government and the stakeholders.
- 3- The range of potential stakeholders in this framework is initially adopted according to Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach.
 - 3a- There is coordination and communication among the stakeholders and with the leadership/government to identify the brand values that are based on relevant nation-brand identity.

Thus:

- 3b- The consistent message (motto) that reflects the core brand values and national identity should be agreed upon.
- 3c- A nation brand is built on the foundations of the core value (linking the core brand values to the national identity).
- 4- The stakeholders develop the message/motto that should reflect and be based on the core values of the nation and national identity.
 - 5- The natural channels of the nation brand are initially determined/identified according to the theory of Anholt (2003).
 - 6- The nation brand is delivered and communicated both internally and externally.
 - 7- Feedback must be reviewed.

These stages are referenced throughout to indicate where the various theories, concepts and research questions discussed in the literature are applied and/or are relevant.

2.11.2 A Discussion of Stages of the Preliminary Framework

Eisenhardt (1989) argues that conceptual frameworks and theory development are based primarily on combining previous literature, common thinking and experience. In this respect, Yadav (2010) suggests that integrating bodies of knowledge from one or more substantive areas can initiate theory development in marketing. In this research study, the researcher will be directed by Yadav's (2010) suggestion of using interrelations to advocate developing a nation brand. The initial framework derived from integrating the three theories (Anholt, 2003; Hankinson, 2007; Dinnie, 2008), as explained earlier, across a variety of disciplines with examples from practice to better understand the mechanisms that shape the concept of nation branding and developing a nation brand.

The study's proposed framework encompasses seven stages based on the reviewed literature. This framework comprehends all the factors revealed from the literature review in a logical sequence

according to the five guiding principles of Hankinson (2007). The researcher extended emphasis on stakeholder's range according to Dinnie (2008) as well as the natural channels' range according to Anholt (2003). This is all in accordance with what was mentioned in Section 10.1.

Stage 1: The Vision (1st Key Factor)

Dinnie (2008) argues that nation branding is a highly politicised activity and that governments are assumed to represent the people of a nation; as such, governments must play a key role in developing the nation brand. The key role of the leadership/government, as brand champion, is to establish a clear vision for the nation brand and to develop a set of core brand values which link positive aspects of the nation's heritage to a realistic vision of what can be achieved in the future (Hankinson, 2007). Leitch and Richardson (2003) argue that leadership is required to develop, communicate and embed the strategic vision and brand values.

Stage 1 reflects on the first key factor essential for developing a nation brand: visionary leadership.

The first research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What impact should leadership vision have on the whole process of developing a nation brand, and what role could the leadership play to guarantee a smooth process for developing a nation brand?

Stage 2: Coordination and Communication Between the Leadership and the Stakeholders (2nd Key Factor)

Hankinson (2007) suggests that the vision, together with a set of core brand values, is an essential precursor to a wider debate about the brand strategy with potential partners, who will eventually help to take the strategy forward. Leadership in close collaboration with all key stakeholders (groups and individuals) will refine and reinforce the core brand values through consistent communication and delivery of related services.

At this stage, the effort can be regarded as “internal” since the aim is to determine the underlying values and, hence, the nation brand’s identity. It is essential that the effort is strategic, taking into consideration that brand building is a long-term process and does not happen overnight, and that it is holistic, engaging all individuals and groups that have an interest in branding the nation. According to Hankinson’s destination-brand management (2007) model, building and managing the brand requires strong, visionary leadership and organisation-wide commitment, from the highest level downwards, to a set of brand values which summarise the destination brand’s promise. Urde (2003) also suggests that the brand value should be built internally.

Urde (2015) argues that the DMO in particular must build the brand internally from the top of the organisation and must do so with the help of the stakeholders involved. Dinnie (2008) argues that the identification of nation-brand values needs to be based on extensive research, both qualitative and quantitative, which will take an inclusive approach to all of the nation’s stakeholder groups (Stage 3c). Similarly, De Chernatony (2008) postulates that making explicit the values and expected outcomes of the nation brand should entail the collective involvement of all key stakeholders. Consistent communication across a wide range of stakeholders necessitates a comprehensive effort from the government (Dinnie, 2008). This supports Urde’s (2015) argument about the importance of communication in creating a better understanding of the role of government in coordinating the work among stakeholders (Stage 2). Both Dinnie (2008) and Hankinson (2007) agree on the important role that stakeholders play in developing the nation brand.

Stage 2 reflects on another key factor in developing a nation brand: coordination and communication. The second research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What could be the best ways to communicate and coordinate the work among the stakeholders, and between the leadership and the stakeholders?

This view is embedded clearly in **Stages 3a, 3b and 3c** of the preliminary framework proposed.

Stage 3: The Preliminary Structure of the Stakeholder (3rd Key Factor)

This stage identifies key stakeholders interested in shaping the nation brand. The preliminary structure of the stakeholders in this study is based on Dinnie's (2008) fully inclusive stakeholder approach (FIST). (FIST) includes representatives from the public sector, private sector, not-for-profit organisations and diaspora, tourism, trade and citizens. Stage 3 reflects another key factor in developing the nation brand: stakeholders. Communication and coordination are also regarded among the stakeholders (Hankinson, 2007). Therefore:

3a reflects on what Kohli and Jaworski (1990) refer to as interdepartmental coordination as a key pillar of the concept of market orientation, as well as on Hankinson's (2007) five guiding principles, which count departmental coordination as a key factor in the management of place brand (also having potential application at a nation-branding level). Therefore, it could be argued that coordination plays a key role and could be considered a key factor in developing a nation brand.

3b highlights the need for mutual effort and agreement between all the stakeholders involved in a nation-brand building effort to determine the key message (the motto) to be communicated both internally and to the international community. The motto is all about what the nation brand stands for; in other words, its core values. The success of this stage depends greatly on the quality and effectiveness of the internal communication effort (Dinnie, 2008). Coordination is an essential factor among stakeholders, and between stakeholders and the leadership, in determining the core brand values and the nation-brand identity (Dinnie, 2008).

3c aims to achieve congruency between the nation brand's identity and the core values that need to be embedded in the nation brand and will be based on the perceptions of the stakeholders involved in the brand building. At this stage, there is a need to identify the communication channels that will be used to communicate the core values of the nation brand.

The messages that reflect the nation brand's identity are transmitted through different channels to reach both internal and external audiences. Feedback mechanisms need to be established and incorporated into the brand management from both internal and external stakeholders.

Hankinson (2007) suggests that there is a need for mutual agreement on the nation brand's values, which can be achieved through established committees and working parties in which individual partners are represented. The identification and selection of nation-brand values may be facilitated through inviting key stakeholders to present their vision for the nation brand and by attempting to arrive at a consensus on a single vision (Dinnie, 2008). Dinnie (2008) argues that the motto or the message encapsulates certain values embodied in the nation. Likewise, Vallaster and De Chernatony (2006) suggest that building the internal brand requires the country's leadership to establish corporate structures which convey coherent and consistent brand messages. Based on the above argument, the stakeholders will work in a coordinated manner to develop the nation-brand channels and factors. The "nation brand" should reflect the core values and the brand identity of the nation as well as what the nation stands for in terms of values and long-term strategies. Dinnie (2008) proposes that the motto of the brand building should be clear and should reflect the nation brand's core values since it should encapsulate the values that are embodied in the nation.

Anwar (2018) argues that a nation brand is founded on core values, whilst Dinnie (2015) stipulates that nation-brand identity is built upon a limited range of, rather than on all, the elements of national identity. Key components of national identity, such as history, territory, sport, icons and folklore, represent the enduring essence of the nation. These enduring core characteristics can be

blended to form the nation's brand identity. Madhavaram et al. (2005) argue that the notion of identity is central to stakeholder management, in that a sense of identity and the core values that underpin it provide an anchor around which all activities and communications can be structured and carried out. With regard to this, Hankinson (2007) argues that the set of core brand values links positive aspects of the place's heritage to a realistic vision of what can be achieved in the future.

It is also essential to acknowledge the link between Anwar (2018), who argues that a nation brand is built on the foundations of the core value, and Dinnie (2008), who argues that the identification and selection of nation-brand values may be facilitated through inviting key stakeholders to present their vision for the nation brand. This leads to Stage 3c, which reflects the role of stakeholders in establishing the core brand value, which is considered to be the foundation for creating the nation brand's identity without missing the link (brand core values and nation brand). In this respect, Anholt (2008) noted that the notion of brand value is still an important part of the approach of competitive identity (nation brand) because it has more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness. This reflects the strong relationship between the nation brand, the core brand values and the national identity.

The identification of the key stakeholders is a critical stage in nation branding, especially as they play a key role not only in attempting to arrive at a consensus vision about the most appropriate core brand value and the motto but also in making sure that this selection is based on and is relevant to the national identity.

Stages 1 and 2 of the preliminary framework deal with the leadership's vision and the range of stakeholders. Communication and coordination are the key factors that are essential for managing the cooperation between the two main drivers of developing the nation brand. Stages 2, 3, 3a, 3b and 3c of the preliminary framework highlight the link between the leadership, the stakeholders,

the core brand values, the motto and the nation-brand channels. This will raise serious issues regarding the best structure of the stakeholders.

The third research question, which focuses on these aspects and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Who should be involved, and who should be excluded? The views and attitudes of different stakeholders are essential for developing the nation brand – what are the stakeholders' views and attitudes regarding the factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand? Thus, what could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for any country, including Palestine?

Stage 4: The Motto and its Relationship with Core Values and Brand Identity (4th Key Factor)

Dinnie (2008) argues that the identification of nation-brand values needs to be based on extensive research, both qualitative and quantitative in nature, that takes an inclusive approach to all of the nation's stakeholder groups.

This stage highlights the need for a mutual effort and agreement among all stakeholders involved in the brand-building effort to determine the key message (the motto). The success of this stage depends greatly on the quality and effectiveness of the internal communication effort.

The fourth research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 4 (RQ4): What elements could be essential for strengthening the message and could have a positive effect? How could a relationship between the message, brand value and national identity draw a strong message that best reflects the nation brand? What could be the elements and characteristics of the message?

The Motto – Nation Brand (link and reflection)

Dinnie (2008) argues that motto encapsulates certain values embodied in the nation. This can provide a useful starting point for nations embarking on an exercise in identifying and selecting

nation-brand values. This link entails consistency between the core values incorporated in the identity of the nation brand and those communicated and perceived by the world. In other words, there is a need for congruency between the identity and the image of the nation brand. At this stage, emphasis needs to be given to the overall communication effort which has to be designed and implemented in an integrated way, the different levels of the communication, especially the encoding and decoding stages, and managing feedback mechanisms.

Stage 5: The Natural Channels of Nation Brand (5th Key Factor)/ Rationale

In terms of values, Dinnie (2008) also argues that nations do not begin with a blank slate. Branding consultants cannot be given free rein to conjure up a set of values that do not adhere to the cultural norms and expectations that prevail in the nation. This is highlighted in Stage 5, where nation-brand “Competitive Identity” does not solely extract its principles from the core values but also represents and encompasses a wide variety of channels and associations such as tourist attractions, local products, social history, culture, language, political and economic systems, famous persons (the face) and pictures or images (Fan, 2005). These channels play a critical role in developing the nation brand (Stages 3c and 5). The Nation Brand Hexagon of this study is based on Anholt’s (2000) theory of nation brand, wherein tourism, export, culture and heritage, people and governance are the six natural channels that countries undertake to build their nation brand.

The key components of nation-brand identity, such as history, territory, sport, icons and folklore, represent the enduring values of the nation (Dinnie, 2008). This is highlighted in Stage 5, which also encompasses Anholt’s (2000) hexagon theory of nation brand, which is based on six natural channels, positioned as the “building blocks” of a nation brand. Anholt (2007) argues that the driving force behind the creation of a nation-brand “CI” (Competitive Identity) is that governments have a good, clear and believable notion of what their country really is, what it stands for and where it is going.

Anwar (2018) argues that, although nation-brand building involves a combination of various partners and strategic actions, the most fundamental task is to establish a clear idea of what the country's population believes is the core value of the nation brand. These internal audiences will become the country's "ambassadors" and advocates. Their identification and involvement in the nation-branding process is, in essence, a prerequisite for effectively engaging the various other external stakeholder groups which are critical in the development of the nation brand.

The fifth research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 5 (RQ5): What other natural channels could be essential for adding value to and strengthening the nation brand?

Stage 6: Communicating the Nation Brand/Rationale

Stage 6 emphasises the role of communicating the brand both internally and to the entire world. Hankinson (2007) argues that the brand "rolls out" to partner organisations in an attempt to build strong alliances and partnerships based on compatibility. The communication effort with various targeted external audiences is equally important in the design of the brand-building process and in the implementation process. The communication effort should be continuous and incorporate feedback mechanisms, as highlighted in Stage 7. Similarly, Anhalt (2007) stipulates that, in the creation of the brand, the government needs to establish different communication channels for communicating with both internal and external audiences in order to build and maintain a competitive identity (Stage 6).

Hatch and Schulz (2003) further suggest that successful brands are those which establish a positive link between the desired values (as embodied in the brand vision), corporate culture and brand image. The job of management is then to bring corporate culture into line with the values embedded in the brand vision so that they become part of the customer's image and experience of the brand. But, the ultimate success of a place-branding strategy relies on the effective extension

of the core brand through building and nourishing effective relationships with stakeholders, each of which extends and reinforces the reality of the core brand through consistent communication and the delivery of the brand's promise (Hankinson, 2004). Communicating the message that reflects the core value of the nation brand to the various target audiences with clarity and consistency requires a strong integrated marketing communications strategy. Anwar (2018) argues that brand propagation is necessary for successful brand building. Brand propagation is an inclusive strategy that ensures that the core value is not distorted and is delivered to the target audience both internally and externally (Stage 6).

The sixth research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 6 (RQ6): What could be the best way to communicate the nation brand internally and externally, and what elements could strengthen communicating the nation brand?

Stage 7: Feedback and Other Relevant Factors (6th Key Factor)/ Rationale

Anholt (2007) argues that the nation's reputation powerfully affects the way people both inside and outside the country think about it and the way they respond to everything made or done therein. Measuring the nation's reputation would give the government/leadership the feedback necessary to evaluate its strategy for developing the nation brand (Stage 7). In this regard, Gudjonsson (2005) argues that it is necessary to conduct both internal and external assessments to identify any problems affecting the nation's compatibility and prosperity. Internal and external assessments of needs and how these needs can be met through the tools of branding are also necessary.

The seventh research question, which focuses on this aspect and will be tested, is the following:

Research Question 7 (RQ7): What could be the best way to activate feedback and guarantee sustainable assessment that could result in empowering the nation brand? What other integral factors could be essential for developing the nation brand? What recommendations could impact feedback, therefore strengthening reassessment of the nation brand.

The proposed framework presented in Figure 12 has been designed and based on the above review of the literature. The researcher builds on integrating the numerous factors and elements that emerged from the literature review as well as relevant models to formulate the preliminary framework.

Throughout the review and the examination of the existing literature of nation branding and relevant models, several **research questions** have been raised. Also, more **research questions** have been derived from the proposed (preliminary) framework. The **research questions** are summarised as follows:

RQ1-What impact could leadership vision have on the whole process of developing a nation brand, and what role could the leadership play to guarantee a smooth process for developing a nation brand?

RQ2-What could be the best ways to communicate and coordinate the work among the stakeholders, and between the leadership and the stakeholders?

RQ3- Who should be involved, and who should be excluded? What are the stakeholders' views and attitudes regarding the factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand? Thus, what could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine?

RQ4-What elements could be essential for strengthening the message and producing a positive effect? How could the relationship between the message, brand value and national identity draw a strong message that best reflects the nation brand? What could be the elements and characteristics of the message?

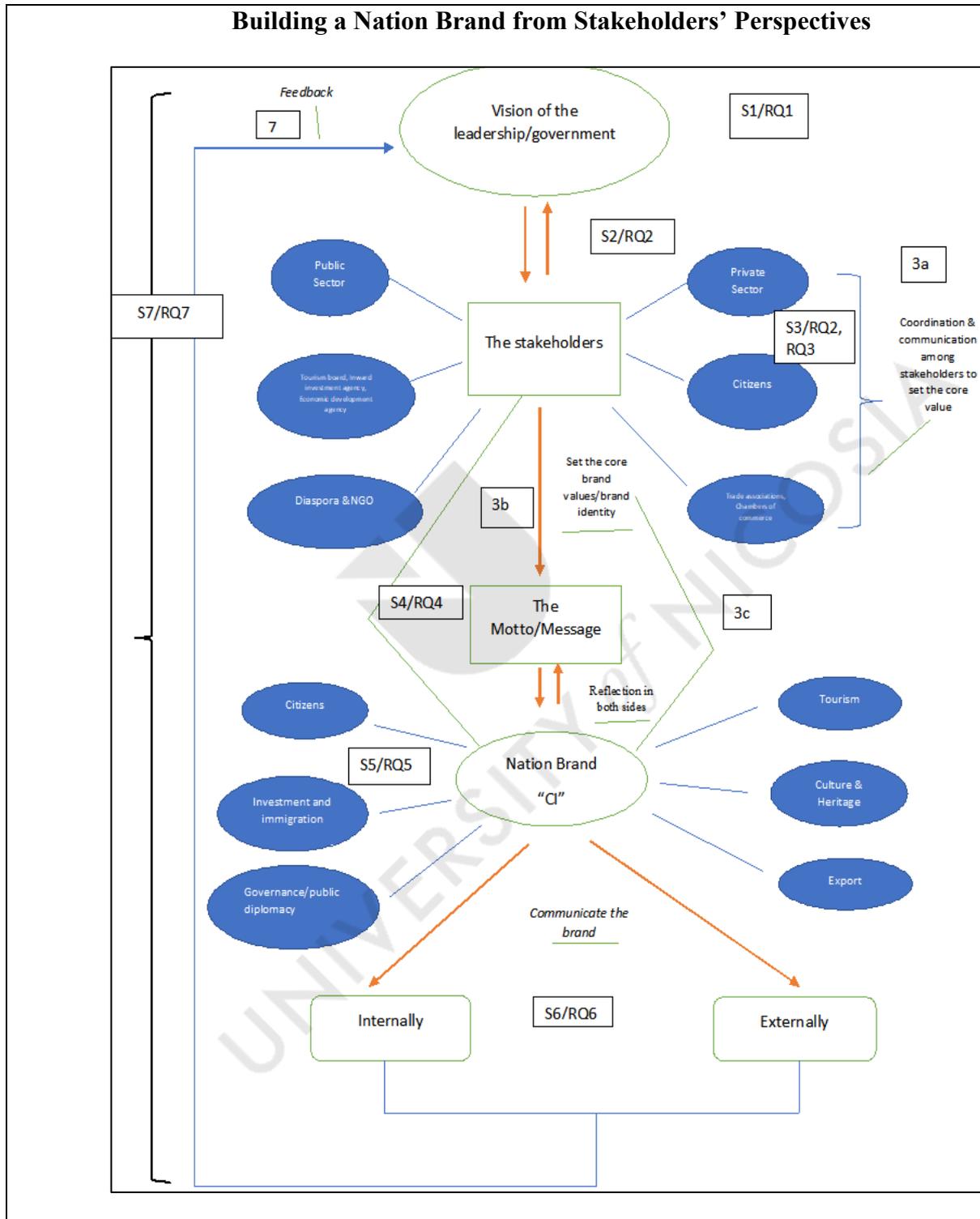
RQ5-What other natural channels (nation-brand communicators) could be essential for adding value to and strengthening the nation brand? What impact could public diplomacy, export, tourism, inward investment, citizens, culture and heritage, and/or other brand communicators have on strengthening the nation brand?

RQ6-What would be the best way to communicate the nation brand internally and externally, and what elements could strengthen communicating the nation brand?

RQ7- What could be the best way to activate feedback and guarantee sustainable assessment that results in empowering the nation brand? What other integral factors could be essential for developing the nation brand? What recommendations could impact feedback, thereby strengthening reassessment of the nation brand?

The research questions will guide the researcher in determining the interview questions that will form the primary research of this current study (see Chapter 3 for clarification and rationale).

Figure 12: The preliminary integrated framework for building a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives



RQ#: Research Question

S#: Stage #

2.12 Conclusion to the Chapter

This chapter explored the available research and relevant literature on the subject of nation branding and nation brand. It also presented a considerable discussion on “nation branding” as an emerging concept in the twenty-first century. Considering that nation branding has mainly evolved within the marketing discipline, the researcher focused the discussion on and explicated the relevance of country of origin and place/destination-branding domains. In addition, as nation branding has become combined with the discipline of international relations (Szondi, 2009), the researcher briefly examined the domain of public diplomacy. The researcher also traced the concept of national identity and examined its relevance to the concept of nation branding.

The researcher also emphasised defining related concepts, such as brand identity, brand image, national identity, leadership and brand communications, in order to broaden the knowledge of concepts linked to nation branding. The discussion also examined several published studies and models related to nation branding and developing a nation brand. The purpose of this discussion was to explore different factors that are essential for developing a nation brand, and, therefore, to set the foundation for proposing a framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders’ perspectives. The literature review indicates that nation branding encompasses many diverse and multifaceted activities that are based on marketing theories, and the process of adapting the implementation of these theories has a great impact on developing nation brand. Based on the revealed factors and the analysis of different models, the researcher proposed an integrated framework for the development of nation brand based on various different models. The next chapter will set out the methodology for clarifying several questions that emerge from the initial framework proposed in Figure 12.

Chapter 3

Research Philosophy, Methodology, Design and Rationale

3.1 Introduction to the Chapter

Using the literature review chapter for guidance, this chapter will give a clear rationale for the proposed methodology for gathering the data required to fulfil the research objectives. This will include a discussion about theoretical principles regarding the philosophy of the researcher, and the methodology and methods used to conduct the research of the current thesis. The researcher's intention is to formulate a theoretical framework, supported by conceptualisation in the area of nation branding, specifically to develop a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives. Qualitative data is the primary source for this research, and this is supported by written documentary data as a secondary source.

In the literature review chapter, the researcher identified a number of knowledge gaps in the area of nation branding. The research raised some questions after forming the initial framework because of insufficient information about nation branding and nation brand in existing literature. To answer these questions, fill in the gaps in the literature and achieve the aim of this study, the researcher must gather more information. The research techniques and methods used to gather information as well as the rationale behind these choices are discussed in this chapter. This chapter offers insight into the in-depth semi-structured interviews and discusses the methods and sampling techniques that were used to collect the data. Finally, the researcher explains the methodology of the data analysis used and the rationale behind using the NVivo software.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Philosophy, or *philosophía* in ancient Greek, means the love of wisdom. It is the study of knowledge, or “thinking about thinking” (Melanithiou, 2009). In modern history, this comprehensive term relates to the development and the nature of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009). When asked about our own philosophy regarding something, we tend to reflect on how we think about that particular topic. Philosophy is developed primarily through personal reflection as well as general perceptions; it does not tend to rely merely on experiment.

Research philosophy plays an important role in producing end results from the collected data (Saunders, 2003). Developing a philosophical perspective requires making several core assumptions concerning the way in which to view the world; there are one of two dimensions – the nature of society and the nature of science (Burrell & Morgan, 2017). These assumptions will underpin the research strategy used in this paper as well as the chosen research methods as part of that strategy. In this way, it is essential for the researcher to already have a clear and well-formed philosophy of their own in order to respond appropriately when reflecting on another’s interpretation and perception of reality.

Different researchers’ study and attempt to explain the way the world and its people work or behave, and to describe what goes on in our daily reality. Perceptions of reality tend to differ substantially from one person to another. Johnson and Clarke (2006) note that business and management researchers need to be aware of the philosophical commitments they make through their choice of research strategy since this has a significant impact not only on what they do but also on what are they investigating. Saunders et al. (2009) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) indicate a perspective that views philosophies such as positivism, realism, interpretation and pragmatism from an ontological, epistemological and axiological stance. Dobson (2002), like many other scholars, emphasises the significance and the necessity of identifying and describing the researchers’ philosophical position when writing up research as this allows the development and

accomplishment of a more precise research process. The following subsection clarifies the ontology and epistemology characteristics and provides a detailed analysis of and justification for selecting the researcher's own philosophical position for this study.

3.2.1 Ontology and Epistemology

The research philosophy adopted by the researcher contains important assumptions about the way in which they themselves view the world. These assumptions will underpin the research strategy and the methods they choose as part of that strategy. In general, the philosophy adopted will influence all subsequent practical considerations. Clark (2006) argues that the important issue is not so much whether the research should be philosophically informed, but rather how well the researchers are able to reflect upon their philosophical choices and how they defend them in relation to the alternatives they could have adopted.

There are three major ways of approaching research philosophy: ontology (reality), epistemology (knowledge) and axiology (overall value or worth). Each contains important differences which will influence ways of thinking about the research process (Saunders et al., 2009).

Ontology concerns describing things and their relationships in order to answer the question "What is it?" It is what we believe about the nature of reality (Patton, 2002). Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge. It considers views about the most appropriate ways of enquiring into the nature of the world (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). If ontology is the study of the world, then epistemology is the link between a researcher and the study of the world; it is the approach adopted by researchers to explain the world.

Different people perceive reality in different ways. "Reality" is defined by some researchers as perceived and understood by each person individually. When a researcher tries to explain what is

going on, or tries to explain how the world works, they explain “reality” ontologically, either objectively or subjectively, from their own point of view. Reality is a perspective, and each individual perceives it differently.

An objective approach portrays the position that social entities exist external to social actors concerned with their existence. When a researcher wants to explain what is going on with a particular phenomenon, objectively they disconnect themselves from the surroundings and explain what they see; otherwise, the researcher can become subjective by getting involved and becoming part of this phenomenon in order to be able to understand, interpret and give meaning to what is happening (Saunders et al., 2009).

Blaikie (2003) argues that it is not possible to discuss the ontological and epistemological philosophies without mentioning the various research paradigms which are defined as the views and philosophies that set the procedures and the guiding principles for conducting research (Hussey & Hussey, 1997; MacDonald, 2010). Scholars (e.g. Sarantakos, 1998; Babbie, 2012) argue that there are three main research paradigms: positivism, constructivism/ interpretivism and critical realism. Which philosophy is the best, or is better than the others? There is no straight or standard answer to such a query (Saunders et al., 2012). Vrontis (2000) argues that the answer must be provided solely by the researcher, who also should rationalise the reason behind their choice. Babbie (2004, 2012), like many other scholars, such as Blaikie (2000) and Bryman and Bell (2007), defines various research philosophies and paradigms, and guides researchers in how to implement, analyse and present the results according to their own philosophy.

Below, the researcher will review the three paradigms, and, then, will rationalise the applied paradigm of constructivism/interpretivism for the purpose of this research study. In this respect, Maggetti et al. (2013) and Terman (2011) argue that rationalising the applied paradigm helps not

only researchers but also the readers and future researchers of the topic to understand the rationale behind the decision that has been taken for the research.

According to Bryman (2004), the aim of the research, the research questions and the research objectives are among the factors that contribute towards making a decision about which research paradigm to follow as well as the related research methods that will be used. It is very well known that the debate is often framed in terms of a choice between being either a positivist, a critical realist or an interpretivist in research philosophy (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.2.1.1 Paradigms and Rationale

The principles that govern this study stem from the fact that it is concerned with human nature, which reflects on different perspectives and assumptions. Studies of society from different theories have a tendency to reflect different perspectives. Guba (1990) postulates that the researcher's ontological, epistemological and methodological stances can be termed a paradigm that encompasses the basic set of beliefs that guide the research action. Paradigm is a term frequently used in the social sciences. It is a way of examining social phenomena from which particular understandings of these phenomena can be gained and explanations attempted (Saunders et al., 2009).

Positivism is an approach which explains the world objectively. When adopting this approach, the researcher keeps a distance from the object of their research and records only facts of their behaviour and relationship (Carson et al., 2001). Positivism also suggests that various phenomena can be researched and observed in a logical and rational way (Gergen, 1992; Sobh & Perry, 2006). The theoretical models that derive from a positivist perspective are usually characterised as generalisable. They mainly explain and evaluate cause-and-effect relationships (Camillery, 2012;

Colton et al., 2010). The appropriate methodologies used to support this approach are mainly quantitative in nature, relying on numerical data and statistics to offer reasoning. A strong criticism of this approach is that human behaviour is not controllable and does not happen in isolation from a person's surroundings. Behaviour is usually influenced by or derived from other considerations and cannot be relied upon for numerical data and statistics to offer reasoning (Saunders et al., 2009). In the current research study, the main element that produces the data is humans (the stakeholders); their behaviours and their views cannot be interpreted numerically.

The second philosophical position or school of thought is realism. This relates to scientific enquiry. Saunders et al. (2012) describe it as being based on the belief that a reality exists and is independent of human thoughts and beliefs, and that the interpretations of this reality could be shared among people, and it is either *direct realism*, which means what you see is what you get, in that what we experience through our senses portrays the world accurately, or *critical realism*, whereby we experience sensations, that is images of the things in the real world, but not the things themselves. Critical realists point out, however, how often our senses deceive us. Critical realism suggests that the world exists independent of our personal knowledge of the world (Archer, 2000; Easton, 2010; Fleetwood, 2005; Mingers, 2000).

By contrast, interpretivism is an approach that integrates human interest into a study and attempts to explain the world subjectively. Subjectivism holds that a social phenomenon is created from the perceptions and subsequent actions of the social actors who are concerned with their existence. In this respect, Myers (2008) argues that access to reality can happen only through social constructs such as language, consciousness, shared meanings and instruments. More broadly, this approach is the philosophical position that refers to the way humans attempt to make sense of the world around them.

An interpretive paradigm seeks to understand unknown stories in multiple realities, how those realities are constructed, and what is regarded as meaningful. It claims that reality is constructed by a human being's knowledge and experiences and that no one truth represents multiple realities (Song, 2010). The research participants' feelings and personal thoughts are resources that allow the researcher to both learn and develop realities to understand others as well as themselves as human beings. It is crucial to firstly understand the mutual relationship between the researcher and the subject or person being researched, so as to reflect one's personal experience.

The interpretivist/constructivist paradigm argues that social reality is subjective (Camilleri, 2012). Bryman (2001) describes constructivism/interpretivism as a strategy which takes into account the differences between individuals. According to constructivism, social reality is based upon memories, experience and expectations. Thus, the knowledge is constructed through time, resulting in constant redevelopments through experience and many different interpretations (Peters et al., 2013).

According to Stahl (2014), constructivists support that the only way to understand and evaluate reality is by actually being part of the research process. Accordingly, the researcher uses their own experiences in life and evaluates the results of research. Peters et al. (2013) argue that this is based on phenomenology. Phenomenology supports that the researcher should be part of the whole process and allow participants to express their views and beliefs in an open way (Nicholson et al., 2009). This will later explain the rationale for the adopted methodology.

Interpretivism believes that separation between the researcher who observes the phenomena and the actual reality they are observing is not possible (Mingers, 2004). Therefore, the researcher is truly part of the process and makes assumptions and interpretations according to various factors that lie within their personality, beliefs, values and attitudes (Plunkett & Sundel, 2013; Kim, 2003).

According to Stahl (2014), constructivists support that the only way to understand and evaluate reality is by actually being part of the research process. In this research study, and according to the previous discussion, the researcher used their own experiences in life and work and even the subject under study and evaluates the results of research. The researcher, while interviewing different stakeholders from different backgrounds, was truly part of the process and made assumptions about and interpreted the views and attitudes of the participants about the topic under study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003), and Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) argue that the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm believes and supports that discussion between the researcher and the reality under study is associated with induction building theory, and also that researchers explore the social reality by thoroughly examining their participants' points of view. For the purpose of this research study, the researcher will interpret the participants' perceptions and experiences, in the context of their academic background and research (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Camilleri, 2012), about the reality under study in order to Determine the conclusions of this research study.

The interpretivism/constructivism approach accepts that the world and the behaviour of people cannot be portrayed numerically (Saunders et al., 2009). It is based on a naturalistic approach to data collection such as interviews and observations. Primary data generated through studies using interpretivism might be associated with a high level of validity because data gathered in such studies tends to be trustworthy and honest as it is heavily influenced by personal viewpoints and values.

In the same context, Remenyi et al. (1998) suggest that interpretivism explores the details of the situation to further understand the reality of a given situation or mindset, or perhaps a reality working behind it. In this research study, the researcher's interpretation of the attitudes and views

of the stakeholders with regard to developing a nation brand is based on communicating with them, talking to them and trying to understand their views and attitudes towards and motivations for the development of a nation brand.

A strong criticism of this approach is that it may attract bias since the same “reality” could be interpreted or perceived differently by different researchers (Saunders et al., 2012). Another criticism related to this approach is that primary data which is generated in interpretivist studies cannot be generalised since data is heavily influenced by personal viewpoints and values. Therefore, reliability and representation of data is undermined to a certain extent as well.

The researcher, however, decided that the interpretivism/constructivism paradigm is the most suitable paradigm to adopt in order to achieve the main aim of this research study and close the gap in the literature. According to the previous discussion, the researcher is convinced that this paradigm is the most appropriate one to follow. Through this paradigm, the researcher will be able to formulate a comprehensive view of the area under investigation without relying on the existing theory and by allowing an in-depth discussion between the researcher and the respondents. The idea of stakeholders participating in developing a nation brand was one of the gaps in the literature of nation branding that this research study is trying to close.

As explained earlier, this research considers the views and attitudes of stakeholders. If the researcher had chosen to use the positivist approach, they would have had to form hypotheses and then use a quantitative technique to work on them. In this case, views and attitudes are very difficult to quantify, and researchers dealing with this should carefully design their methodology to get the most appropriate results from the research (Allan, 2005; Harris & Reynolds, 2006). Also, to position themselves as a critical realist, the researcher has to believe that the world exists independent of our personal knowledge of it (Archer, 2000; Easton, 2010; Fleetwood, 2005; Mingers, 2000), and this means that *“it can exist independently of its identification, implies that it*

can exist without someone observing, knowing and constructing it”. This cannot apply here as the views and attitudes of the stakeholders will form the main body of the nation brand.

As the paradigm is considered interpretivist/constructivist, it aims to obtain in-depth information on the topic that does not have to apply to all cultures, places or industries (Stahl, 2014), meaning that this research study does not aim to provide generalisations. This research study, therefore, will provide future researchers with a non-existing mechanism, i.e. the conceptual framework, that will have venues for further research.

3.3 The Research Methodology

The researcher addresses the problem that controls the thinking process through using logical means enhanced by research methodology. Methodology relates to the more detailed strategies and practical ways of gaining knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009) – it is the analysis and the rationale behind the particular methods used in the study (Varey, 1996).

3.3.1 The Research Aim, Research Questions and Objectives of the Current Study

The aim of this study is to formulate an integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on stakeholders’ perspectives.

This research study is guided by the following main research questions:

Broad Research Questions that Guided the Current Study

- 1- What are the key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand?
- 2- What are the different views and attitudes of the stakeholders towards developing a nation brand for Palestine?
- 3- What could be a suitable framework for developing a nation brand for any country, including Palestine?

Based on the proposed framework presented in the literature review chapter, the primary and overall objectives of this research are as follows:

The Current Study's Research Objectives

- 1- To carry out an extensive literature review in the field of nation branding in order to identify the key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand;
- 2- To propose a preliminary framework for developing a nation brand using secondary data;
- 3- To explore and assess the views of various stakeholders towards the development of a nation brand for Palestine, thereby redeveloping the proposed framework to be holistic, integrated with and based on the assessment of the stakeholders' views;
- 4- To contribute to knowledge and to provide practical and theoretical recommendations to marketing researchers and practitioners in the field of nation branding, and, ultimately, to assist the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine.

Table 1 associates the present study's objectives with the broad research questions that guided the study and relevant methodology.

Table 1: Research correlation between research questions and research objectives

Objectives of the study	Methodology (The data-collection techniques used)	The research questions to be answered
1-To carry out an extensive literature review in the field of nation branding in order to identify the key factors that are critical for developing a nation brand.	Secondary data – reviewing the literature	Partially RQ1, RQ2, RQ3,RQ4, RQ5, RQ6, RQ7

2-To propose a preliminary framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on secondary data.	Literature review	All
3-To explore and assess the views of various stakeholders towards the development of a nation brand for Palestine, thereby redeveloping the proposed framework to be holistic, integrated with and based on the assessment of the stakeholders' views.	Qualitative research – primary data collection (interviews)	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4, RQ5, RQ6, RQ7
4- To contribute to knowledge and to provide practical and theoretical recommendations to marketing researchers and practitioners in the field of nation branding, and, ultimately, to assist the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine.	Data analysis, research findings	RQ3, RQ4, RQ7

Source: Compiled by the author

3.4 The Research Approach Adopted in the Current Study

Research studies may adopt deductive or inductive approaches (Saunders et al., 2009). The inductive approach is a theory-building process, beginning with observations of specific instances and seeking to establish generalisations about the phenomenon under investigation. On the contrary, the deductive approach is a theory-testing process which commences with an established theory or generalisation and seeks to see if the theory applies to specific instances (Saunders et al., 2009).

Bryman (2004) stipulates that, if the researcher adopts a deductive approach on the basis of what is known about a particular domain and theoretical consideration in relation to that domain, they will deduce questions or hypotheses which must then be subjected to empirical study. On the other hand, Carson et al. (2001) stipulate that, if the researcher adopts an inductive approach, theory will be the outcome of the research and it involves using the observations of the empirical world to allow for the construction of explanations and theories about what has been observed.

The deductive approach has been criticised because of its tendency to construct a rigid methodology that does not permit alternative explanations of what is going on (Saunders et al., 2009), and the inductive approach has been criticised because it requires considerable experience on the part of the researcher.

Patton (1991, p. 194) argues that the qualitative researcher can adopt both inductive and deductive processes:

“As evaluation fieldwork begins, the evaluator may be open to whatever emerges from the data, a discovery or inductive approach. Then, as the enquiry reveals patterns and major dimensions of interest, the evaluator will begin to focus on verifying and elucidating what appears to be emerging, a more deductive approach to data collection and analysis.”

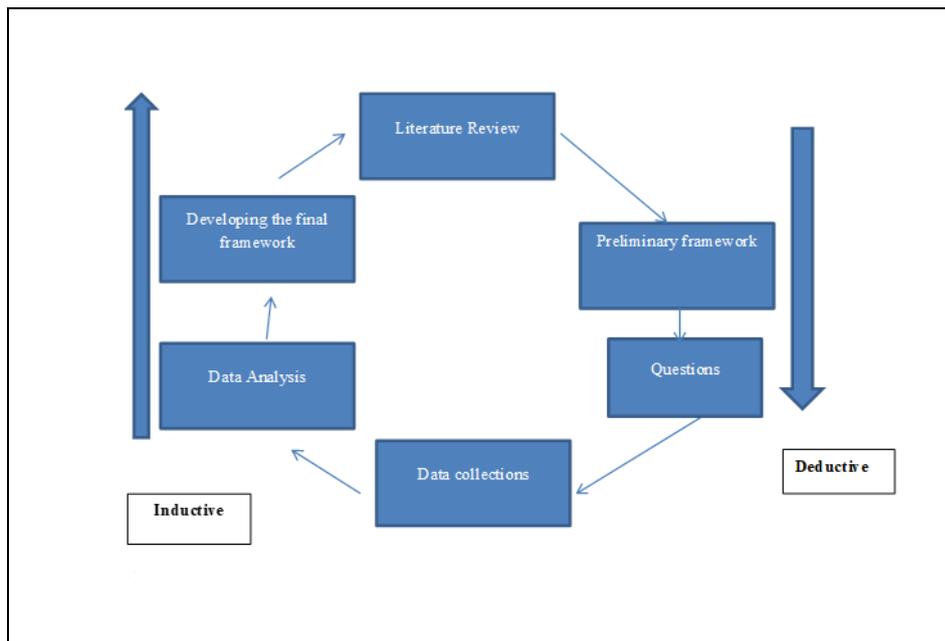
This study’s research combines inductive and deductive approaches in order to gain a deeper understanding of the research context and counter the limitations in each approach. The rationale behind adopting this approach is that this current study’s aim to formulate a framework for developing a nation brand based on stakeholders’ perspectives has two phases. The researcher will use existing literature on different theories in nation branding to formulate questions that may be

subjected to empirical study and then work inductively by generating data and analysing and reflecting upon what theoretical themes the data suggests.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will inductively allow for add on and will have the potential to generate new theories that may emerge from the gathered data, which, in this case, is the objective of establishing an integrated framework for developing a nation brand based on the stakeholders' perspectives.

The researcher in this study has developed specific questions formulated by carefully reviewing the existing literature on the topic under study with which to develop the initial framework. To answer these questions, the researcher used qualitative interview questions to seek explanations and gain new insight into stakeholders' views which allowed the researcher to develop the final framework. Figure 13 below illustrates the two methods, based on Wallace's research wheel. Wallace's research wheel has been derived from Deshpande (1983) (in Vignali & Zundel, 2003, p. 208) and illustrated in Saunders et al. (2009).

Figure 13: The research wheel concept (Wallace's research wheel)



Source: Saunders et al., 2009

The wheel concept in Figure 13 illustrates how the researcher has followed the deductive approach for collecting information (the secondary data) about the study topic through reviewing available and relevant literature. The selected secondary data was collected from journals, articles, books and online databases. As a result, several questions emerged which required answers. The researcher proposed a preliminary framework by connecting the information gathered according to relevant theories in a certain sequence that gave meaning to the topic under study. The proposed framework raised some additional topics that need to be discussed and analysed in order to develop the final stage of the framework. Collecting primary data from sources would give credibility to the study. The collected data will then be classified, processed and analysed to give meaning to developing the final framework. At a later stage, the validity of the framework may need to be tested.

3.5 The Purpose of the Current Research Study and its Impact on Research Design

The classification of the research purpose is either exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. Robson (2002) points out that the purpose of the research may change over time.

An exploratory study is a valuable means of finding out what is happening, of seeking new insights, of asking questions and assessing phenomena in a new light. It is a particularly useful method for clarifying the understanding of a problem. The three principal ways of conducting exploratory research are synthesising available literature, interviewing “experts” in the subject, and conducting focus-group interviews (Saunders et al., 2009), whereas explanatory study is characterised by establishing causal relationships between variables. On the other hand, there is descriptive research, which mainly seeks to provide a description and an in-depth explanation of the perceptions, ideas, opinions and general views of the respondents with respect to the phenomenon that is under investigation (Adams, 2007).

Yin (1994) argues that the “what” research questions have a justifiable rationale for conducting an exploratory study, whereas “how” and “why” are most likely to favour explanatory research. The main questions of this study concern “what” key factors are essential for developing a nation brand, “what” the stakeholders’ views are, and “what” a framework for developing a nation brand might be. However, this research study is also concerned with the ideas, opinions and general views of the respondents to the phenomenon under investigation.

According to Adams (2007), some researchers use only an exploratory approach, some use only a descriptive approach, and some use both.

Owing to this research study’s specific research aims and objectives as well as the research questions, this research is both exploratory and descriptive.

The researcher conducted a detailed literature review, interviewed experts and conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews. The triangulation of data collection used enabled the researcher to dig deep into the topic and explore the phenomenon under study, which also validates the results (this will be clarified and explained in the following section).

This study aims to formulate an integrated framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives specifically for Palestine. The theoretical interpretation of data regarding the factors that are essential for developing a nation brand is grounded in the perceptions, experiences, actions and interpretations of various stakeholders who participate in the study.

The study centres on the verbal expressions of these stakeholders. The expressions are filtered through the lenses of status and position. Different interpretive methods are deployed in order to fully understand the different perceptions and experiences put forward by the stakeholders (research participants) in relation to nation branding and developing a nation brand.

In Chapter 2, the researcher identified scientific gaps in the literature of nation branding. The subject and the phenomenon under investigation is still in its infancy (Fan, 2010), and it is still an under-researched topic, as a number of authors have noted. Therefore, the researcher will follow the exploratory approach to determine, seek insight into, analyse and evaluate the phenomenon of nation branding. Therefore, this qualifies the research as exploratory.

Furthermore, this research will investigate the phenomenon and review the opinions and views of different informants (stakeholders) to gain deep insight into the phenomenon in order to indicate the elements and factors that are essential for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives. This is a new concept that previous researchers have not explored adequately as they appear to have focused primarily on merely identifying the various stakeholder groups rather than on the role that they play in developing nation brand (see Chapter 2 – literature gap section). The present study does just that: it aims to identify and explore the key stakeholders' views and

attitudes towards nation branding, and it then focuses on assessing and evaluating their perceptions in relation to the elements and stages included in the study's preliminary framework.

3.6 The Research Methodology and Design

The methods or techniques used for conducting research are known as research methods or research methodology. Research methodology concerns the method used for collecting the necessary data to achieve the aim and the objectives of the research (Saunders et al., 2009). Vrontis (2000) argues that the way that knowledge has been developed depends on the methodologies or the research philosophies used. Different researchers tend to apply different research methods to achieve the aim of their research (Bilton et al., 1987).

The related methodology that will be adopted in this research is qualitative (Qu & Dumay, 2011; Harris & Daunt, 2013). The researcher has chosen this methodology because of the nature of this research study, which concerns experiences that are often difficult to quantify. Furthermore, the researcher needs to be part of the whole process, observing and enabling the participants to express their beliefs and experiences in the field of nation branding as openly and honestly as possible. It is anticipated that this choice of methodology will yield rich and authentic data which will be valuable to the overall research study. This also helps in understanding how people make sense of their world as well as the experiences they have in it (Merriam, 2009).

The process of collecting qualitative data provides an additional advantage when it comes to face validity (Merriam, 2009), whereby the researcher will not artificially limit the responses and try to fit them into predetermined niches.

According to the previous parameters and based on the philosophical position of the researcher (interpretivist/constructivist), as well as being a descriptive and exploratory study, the researcher

used the available literature as secondary data and interviews as primary data in order to achieve the main aim of this research study and answer the research questions.

3.6.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data is the data that already exists and was gathered by others prior to and for purposes other than the current study (Saunders et al., 2009). Cross (2000) emphasises completing an exhaustive search of existing secondary data before undertaking any primary research study. Rabianski (2003) also confirms that consulting secondary sources may be particularly useful in the early stages of research for generating sensible questions for other aspects of research development. It should be highlighted that secondary data must be used with care since it inherently contains both advantages and disadvantages.

One of the advantages of secondary data is that it might be available in other areas of study at no cost, and the researcher can also save time by using available and accessible data. However, there are also disadvantages associated with the use of secondary data; for example, it must be checked for errors to verify its accuracy and there is no real control over the data quality (Saunders et al., 2009). Secondary data also does not usually allow access to the deeper factors which should form an important element of business ethics research (Brigley, 1995). Accordingly, this researcher felt the need to conduct considerable primary research.

Secondary data includes both raw data and published summaries. Different researchers, such as Bryman (2008), Dale et al. (1988), Hakim (1982, 2000) and Robson (2002), have made a variety of classifications for secondary data, but have not captured the full variety of data. There are three main sub-groups of secondary data: documentary data, survey-based data and those compiled from multiple sources (Saunders et al., 2009).

The methods used to gather some secondary data can be questionable. Apart from governmental sources, which, at least for most countries, are considered to be highly reliable with regard to the data-gathering methods used, almost all other sources of secondary data simply state the methods used for data gathering, but there is often no concrete evidence that correct procedures were followed. Therefore, the researcher evaluated the secondary data throughout the collection process and was very alert to determining its validity prior to using it as a reference.

One significant advantage of using secondary data is that it can assist in a triangulation of findings. Triangulation refers to the use of different data-collection methods within one study in order to verify that the data is telling you what you think it is telling you (Saunders et al., 2003). Secondary data can be collected to be used together with primary data to serve the purpose of triangulation.

One of the reasons for conducting this study is that most of the literature on developing a nation brand (Anholt 1996, 2007; Dinnie, 2008, 2015; Melissen, 2013; Olins et al., 2010; Fan, 2010; Szondi, 2008; Kaufman, 2008; Lee, 2009; Kaneva, 2011) relates only to certain areas and certain topics, and does not propose any holistic or integrated framework for developing a nation brand with the aim of becoming a general framework. Many researchers have developed frameworks and strategies for specific nations in specific areas; for example: branding Cyprus, by Dinnie and Fola (2009), proposed stakeholders' identification and salience; nation branding in Korea, by Jung Eun Song (2010), discussed considering nation branding as a way of building international cultural relations between Korea and the USA; branding Serbia, by Novčić, Damnjanović and Popesku (2012), researched the effect of national identity; branding Israel, by Hannah Griffin (2013), researched the effect of media; branding Pakistan as a Sofi country, by Salman Yousaf and Li Huaibin (2014), discussed the matter of religion in branding a country; and, last but not least, branding Spain, by Gilmore (2002), dramatically changed Spain's image on many different levels.

Shiu et al. (2009) recommend using secondary data as the starting point to define the actual research. For this current study, secondary data was collected from various sources to assist the researcher in understanding the different aspects of the concept of nation brand and nation branding in order to identify the gaps in existing literature, particularly with regard to developing a nation brand. This led to the proposal of a preliminary framework.

The researcher sought information from external sources since there was no specific organisation whose internal secondary data could be of any use for the particular topic chosen. The external sources used were primarily books, articles and official publications. Although books generally take longer to be published, the vast majority of the literature reviewed for this study were niche publications which are not widely available, mostly on the topics of marketing theory, branding and nation branding. The researcher also used academic articles which contain more recent and up-to-date information. These are also considered to be highly reliable since they have been peer reviewed, revised and evaluated by a number of experts.

The researcher conducted an extensive review of available governmental resources in order to answer some of the questions that were raised while reviewing currently available literature.

The researcher in this study conducted an extensive literature review using secondary data to provide a descriptive analysis, followed by a general assessment of the existing body of literature on the topic of nation branding and developing a nation brand. Furthermore, the researcher identified key factors that are essential for developing a nation brand.

Some questions arose regarding lack of information, all of which relate not only to nation branding in general, but specifically to elements not considered and/or discussed in the reviewed literature.

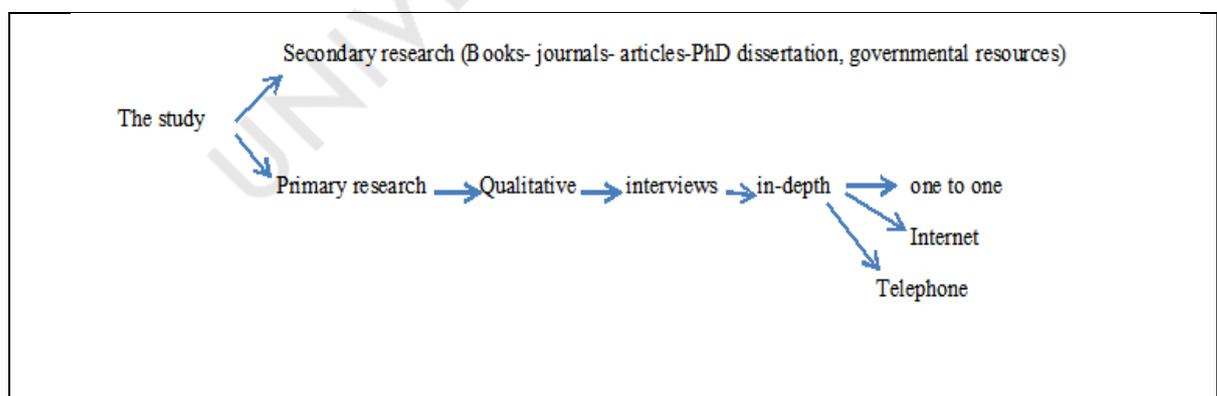
These include the core brand values, communicating the brand, coordination among stakeholders, other natural channels of the nation brand, the stakeholders' role in developing the nation brand, and, finally, what an appropriate integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine might actually look like.

3.6.2 Primary Data

To achieve the aims of this study, and to address additional unanswered questions raised by the literature reviewed, the researcher decided to conduct primary research of their own. Saunders et al. (2009) argue that, in cases where secondary data could not answer some of the research questions or achieve some of its objectives, the researcher should conduct primary research. Primary data is information that is collected specifically for the purpose of the research project. The advantage of this primary data is that it is specifically tailored to the unique needs of the research being undertaken (Saunders et al., 2009).

For the purposes of this study, the researcher enriched the potential data analysis by using a triangulation of data collection (see below in Figure 14). Secondary and primary data were combined in order to ensure that the data accurately reflected the subject under study.

Figure 14: Data Collection Strategy



Source: Compiled by the author based on Saunders et al., 2009

Saunders et al. (2009) argue that a researcher may use quantitative techniques, qualitative techniques or a combination of the two in order to collect primary data. For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted qualitative techniques. In the following section, the researcher will clarify the rationale behind choosing this technique.

3.6.2.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Saunders et al. (2012) argue that quantitative and qualitative research methods are data-collection techniques and data-analysis procedures widely used in business and management research. Both research methods are commonly used by researchers and are suitable for almost every study that aims to obtain data (Long et al., 2000; Garrow, 2005). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), Johnson et al. (2007), and Frels and Onwuegbuzie (2013) argue that the researcher is the one who decides which method to use according to certain criteria and based on the nature of the research they are conducting.

The quantitative approach is a structured way of gathering information involving large numbers of participants (Chang, 2009). It also involves observations and questionnaire surveys (Inuiguchi & Mizoshita, 2012). Quantitative research emphasises data quantification (Bryman, 2004). It analyses and evaluates relationships between variables and discusses whether these relationships exist and to what extent. Saunders et al. (2009) argue that, for the most part, quantitative techniques are used by positivists. Its techniques support the formation of hypotheses and the evaluation of various relationships.

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity. This contradicts the main aim of this current research study, which concerns exploring a phenomenon based mainly on views and attitudes of human beings and which cannot be quantified. In this current research study, the researcher introduces a new, dynamic and complex phenomenon of interest which existing theories

cannot fully explain. Creswell (1998) suggests that the research method which must be followed, if such a situation exists, is a qualitative one. The qualitative method is very often the ideal starting point, enabling the researcher to describe in detail and gain a deeper and detailed understanding of the phenomenon (Golicic et al., 2012). Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 18) define qualitative research as:

“any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons’ lives, stories, behaviour, but also about organizational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships.”

They also describe it as:

“[A] non-mathematical analytic procedure that results in findings derived from data gathered by a variety of means ... interviews ... documents ... and even data that has been quantified.”

In the second edition of the *Qualitative Research Handbook*, Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 3) offer the following definition of qualitative research:

“Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into a series of representations including field-notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.”

The qualitative method is mostly used for theory generation and when researching a new topic, or one that is under-researched and has no well-established theory (Creswell, 2009). In the current

research study, the researcher aims to identify, interpret, describe, explore and explain a specific phenomenon (nation branding), which involves quality and is still in its infancy (Zeinaldeen, 2018). According to Marshall and Rossman (2010), Creswell (2009) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), the qualitative method is the ideal one to follow in such cases.

This study adopts a qualitative approach to explore new insights, based on the opinions, attitudes and beliefs of different stakeholders, into the under-researched topic of nation branding, which still has no well-established theory and lacks research, as Zeinaldeen (2018) argues.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) claim that the purpose of a study project offers a means of justifying the rationale behind using qualitative research. They stress that qualitative strategy is greatly influenced by the nature of the research questions, as well as the skills of and the resources available to the researcher. In this current research study, nation branding is the phenomenon under investigation and the research aim is to explore factors that are essential for developing a nation brand. Therefore, the purpose of this particular research study requires the researcher to explore the views, opinions and attitudes of certain informants through the use of wide-ranging and in-depth open questions in order to elicit the participants' true thinking and opinions on the subject. Adopting the qualitative method would strengthen deep insight into this topic and would help to explore and to make sense of, or to interpret, the phenomenon of interest (nation branding) in terms of the meanings people bring to it.

Lewis and Littler (1999) also argue that qualitative research examines, amongst other matters, feelings, opinions, needs, motives, attitudes, beliefs and past behaviours. Since the underlying motive (or value) of stakeholders' views on developing a nation brand was one of the primary objectives of this study, the researcher chose to adopt qualitative data collection accordingly.

The participants will have more freedom both to express their concerns about these issues and to share their views openly. According to Qu and Dumay (2011), the qualitative approach is the one that offers this freedom to the participants, since the quantitative approach allows them to give their opinions only on the variables that the researcher has determined.

In conclusion, as this is an exploratory study that seeks to identify key issues and variables, it is undertaken in two phases, moving from deductive to inductive reasoning, thus following the qualitative approach to collecting data. This enables the researcher (after analysis) to meet the research aim and objectives and answer the research questions, thereby enabling theory development in several phases and from different perspectives.

Interpretation

The current research study is mainly concerned with the interviewees' interpretation and understandings of nation branding and nation brand. The researcher's own interpretation should also be considered. Manson (1996) emphasises the interpretive role of the researcher in reading the sorted data. He argues that, as soon as the data is sorted, the researcher will be able to make interpretive sense of it in order to start building some arguments. Regarding sorting and organising, Manson (1996) suggests three levels of reading data qualitatively: literal, interpretive and reflexive. As Manson (1996, p. 109) stipulates: "*An interpretive reading involves the researcher in constructing or documenting a version of what she/he thinks the data means or represents, or what she/he can infer from it.*"

In the present study, data was gathered interpretively and reflexively. A reflexive reading of data is clarified by Manson (1996, p. 109), who stipulates:

“It will locate you as part of the data you have generated and will seek to explore your role in the process of generation and interpretation of data.”

Strauss and Corbin (1990) identify and define three major components of qualitative research, which the researcher has carefully fulfilled throughout the study. The researcher gathered data from different sources, mainly through interviews, and then used analytical and interpretive procedures to arrive at findings through various techniques for conceptualising data, and, finally, the written reports relied on aspects of the findings.

After conducting qualitative in-depth interviews, the researcher used NVivo software to transcribe and analyse the collected data. The final report is designed, therefore, to be presented in a readable format.

Saunders et al. (2009) identify two approaches or methods under the qualitative primary data-collection model:

- 1- Observation: where data is collected by the researcher through observing responses or activities of the targets and personally working in the field (Church, 2002).
- 2- Interviews: where data is collected through a purposeful discussion between two or more people. This type of interview can greatly assist the gathering of valid and reliable data that is relevant to the research question(s) and objectives.

Healey (1991) and Healey and Rawlinson (1993, 1994) argue that there are two different types of interview:

- Standardised (questionnaire)
- Non-standardised (semi-structured and in-depth)

Lewis and Ritchie (2003) also identify the key types of generated data in qualitative research: in-depth interviews and focus groups, which both play different roles. To select any or both depends

on the following different factors: the type of data required, the subject and the nature of the study group.

Although the exploratory nature of this study inclines the researcher towards adopting qualitative interviews in the design, Chisnall (2005) argues that the results of such a method are not usually as conclusive as they could be in quantitative data collection. However, the researcher agrees with Cooper and Schindler (2008), who suggest that qualitative data collection is the most appropriate method for an exploratory-based study.

In relation to the level of formality and structure, interviews may be categorised as one of the following:

- Structured interviews
- Semi-structured interviews
- Unstructured or in-depth interviews

As this study emphasises an in-depth understanding of how and in what context certain phenomena occur and what impacts or influences these may have (Carson et al., 2001), and since the purpose of the study requires an in-depth understanding of the attitudes and views of the various stakeholders, this called for qualitative research and, specifically, in-depth interviews. One of the most important limitations that should be considered in this context, however, is that qualitative research, using either semi-structured or in-depth interviews, cannot be used to make generalisations about the entire population; rather, it may provide insight into only a sample of the population. The results of qualitative research are a function of contexts, and the theoretical sensitivity and skills of the researcher and generalisation beyond the data in each study will have to wait for other research studies or for a statistical survey (Carson et al., 2001).

3.7 Qualitative Data-Collection Techniques

Ritchie (2003) clarifies that data collection is likely to be less structured in a very exploratory study, perhaps in an area about which little is so far known, or if a key objective is to understand how participants' conceptions or values emerge through their speech and their narrative.

The development of research questions for this dissertation resulted in exploratory and descriptive answers, consistent with a situation where interviewing "experts" in the subject is one of three principal ways of conducting exploratory as well as descriptive study, as stated by Saunders et al. (2009).

As this is fundamentally an exploratory study, the researcher thoroughly examined available literature and conducted in-depth interviews. The researcher chose in-depth interviews in order to find out what is happening and to seek new insights (Robson, 2002). Conducting in-depth interviews offers an opportunity to the interviewer to uncover underlying motivations, beliefs and feelings on a topic (Hakim, 2000; Chisnall, 2005). It also enables the interviewer to add questions for further elaboration and discussion on various issues (Garcia & Gluesing, 2013).

Saunders et al. (2009) argue that, although there is no predetermined list of questions to work through in an in-depth interview, there is a need to have a clear idea about the aspect that needs to be explored, and an interview guide is usually required.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher was guided by an "interview guide" that includes a list of questions covering the main issues of the study (see Appendix 7). This gives the interviewer an opportunity not only to be guided by the prepared question but also to bring the interviewee back to the core issue if they are inclined to deviate from the main subject.

The researcher also used the techniques of the semi-structured interview and prepared a list of themes to guide them while interviewing. In this technique, the researcher may omit some questions in particular interviews and may give a specific organisational context that is encountered in relation to the research topic. The order of questions may also be varied depending on the flow of the conversation. On the other hand, additional questions may need to be added.

The constructivist/interpretivist position of the researcher supports this study's attempts to understand the knowledge and behaviour of different stakeholders in Palestine in experiencing the development of a nation brand using the one-to-one interview technique.

As this research pursues the ontological and epistemological goal of interpretive research, data was collected through one-to-one interviews.

3.7.1 Interviews

Reviewing available literature was a data-collection technique that partially answered some of the research questions. However, it failed to give any deep insight into or to answer the main research questions; therefore, the researcher was obliged to collect additional relevant information directly from source in order to adequately answer the remaining research questions.

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, programme or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006; Boyce, 2006)

The first key feature of an in-depth interview is the researcher's intention to combine structure with flexibility. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that, in most unstructured interviews, the researchers will have some sense of the themes they wish to explore, and interviews will generally

be based on some form of topic guide (or interview schedule or guide), setting out the key topics and issues to be covered during the interview.

The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they provide much more detailed information than that which is available through other data-collection methods, such as surveys, for example. They also may provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information. People may feel more comfortable having a conversation about a given topic than filling out a survey.

According to the ontological position of the researcher, the knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, reflections and experiences of the various groups of stakeholders are meaningful and are a necessary “means” for exploring nation branding and developing a nation brand for Palestine. The researcher’s epistemological position suggests that the most appropriate way to generate such data, based on these ontological stances, is through personally interacting with these stakeholders, by talking and listening to them (Mason, 1996).

Mason (1996) argues that most qualitative researchers use qualitative interviewing as it is the main method for generating valuable data. For the purposes of this study, the researcher used qualitative one-to-one interviews as the key method for generating data, all of which is supported by available documents and a thorough literature review on the subject of nation branding.

Interviews are usually structured, unstructured or something in between (semi-structured). Structured interviews are easier to analyse, but the data they produce is not necessarily as “rich” as that produced by unstructured interviews. Semi-structured and in-depth (unstructured) interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to “probe” answers, whereby interviewees have to explain or elaborate on their responses. This was convenient because the researcher adopts an interpretivist epistemology, in which understanding the meanings that participants ascribe to various aspects is the main concern (Saunders et al., 2009).

The qualitative interviews conducted for this research were one-to-one and face-to-face in-depth interviews with predetermined questions, and they followed the research guidelines suggested by Saunders et al. (2009). The researcher mainly used the one-to-one interviews with most of the interviewees. In some cases, the researcher conducted the one-to-one interviews electronically via the Internet as a face-to-face interview was not feasible owing to freedom of movement constraints. The advantage of electronic data collection via the Internet is that it is both fast and inexpensive.

Although the interview is an intense experience, for both parties involved, and a physical encounter is essential for an interview to be flexible, interactive and generative, and for meaning and language to be explored in depth (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003), the researcher in some cases, especially where freedom of movement was an issue, conducted interviews by other means, as outlined below.

1- Internet and Intranet-Mediated (Electronic) Interviews

An email interview consists of a series of emails, each containing a small number of questions, rather than one email containing a series of questions (Morgan & Symon, 2004). The researcher used this technique in one case where it was impossible to conduct the interviews one-to-one because of freedom of movement constraints in Palestine. This study considers these kinds of interviews valid as the facial expressions of the interviewee do not matter or are not necessarily considered important factors in the overall process of assessment or analysis (Saunders et al., 2009).

2- Telephone Interviews

The researcher used this method with a small number of stakeholders when it was difficult to get in touch with them one-to-one because of the participants' mobility issues due to national border constraints of movement within Palestine. Even using Skype facilities was impossible in some cases because of the intermittent availability, and sometimes non-existence, of electricity in some areas of Palestine. In addition, one of the interviewees did not know how to manage video calls.

3.8 Time Horizon

During the research, managing time horizons is important. There are two types of time horizons: the cross-sectional and the longitudinal. The cross-sectional has been called a "snapshot" which is taken at a particular time, and the longitudinal is similar to a diary and represents events over a given period of time (Saunders et al., 2012). A cross-sectional study is a study of a particular phenomenon or phenomena at a particular time and often employs the survey strategy (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015; Robson, 2002). Cross-sectional studies are popular in marketing and business research (Rindfleisch et al., 2008; Bajpai, 2011) and gather data information from a sample of participants at only one point in time (Bailey, 1994; Gray, 2004; Bajpai, 2011; Hair et al., 2011). In contrast, longitudinal studies involve data gathering over an extended period of time (Bailey, 1994; Goodwin, 2010; Bajpai, 2011; Hair et al., 2011). Therefore, such studies are more appropriate when research questions and hypotheses deal with how phenomena vary over time (Hair et al., 2011). The basic question in a longitudinal study should be: "*Has there been any change over a period of time?*" (Bouma & Atkinson, 1995, p. 114). Gray (2004) argues that the majority of research studies are classified as cross-sectional, mainly because of the pressures of resources and time.

The researcher chose to conduct a cross-sectional study because of the nature of the research as well as the fact that the aim of this research study, which mainly concerns and examines the

attitudes and views of the informants, does not need to track changes over a period of time. The aim of this research study is to formulate a framework for developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspective. The research needed a "snapshot" that will not vary over time. As such, longitudinal studies are not appropriate for this research study.

3.9 Preparation for the Interviews

A great deal of planning was invested in the interviewing process in order to demonstrate credibility and transparency, and to establish confidence between the potential interviewees and the researcher so that unrestricted qualitative research data could be gathered.

To be as fully informed as possible before conducting any interviews, the researcher familiarised themselves as much as possible with not only the research topic but also the backgrounds of potential interviewees. In this way, the interviewee would be given an optimum level of information beforehand, thus increasing the credibility, validity and overall trustworthiness of the researcher. In keeping with this ethos, all potential interviewees were given a list of themes prior to any actual interviews taking place.

The researcher also took into consideration the suitability of each interview location in order to help both the interviewer and the interviewee to feel at ease. The venue for each interview was chosen carefully, bearing in mind at all times details such as the need to reduce background noise in order to obtain the best quality audio recording possible of each interview.

The initial commencement of an interview is a crucial moment for both parties involved. Its success or otherwise can have a huge impact on the overall interview. To that end, the researcher

in this study prepared rigorously in order to gain each interviewee's confidence and thus enrich the interview process in terms of data gathering.

It was fundamentally important to the researcher in this study to avoid any bias through possible misinterpretation of interviewees' responses, or through any potential cultural differences. Therefore, the researcher remained neutral by using active listening skills and paraphrasing techniques which elicited more elaborate responses from interviewees and aided a deeper understanding of their meanings by the researcher.

3.10 The Use of Pre-Planned Questions/Themes in the In-Depth Interviews

Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) and Robson (2002) argue that, even though it is an in-depth interview, the researcher needs to consider their own approach to asking questions. They also add that, once the researcher allows the interviewee to talk freely while answering the questions throughout the interview, it is unlikely to lead to a clearly focused discussion on issues relevant to the research topic. Saunders et al. (2009) suggest that formulating appropriate and open questions to explore areas in which the researcher is interested will be crucial for achieving success in this type of interview.

Prior to any interviews taking place, the researcher provided all participants with a list of the themes that would be discussed during the proposed interview (see Appendix 9). In doing this, the researcher promoted validity, transparency and trustworthiness at the initial stages of establishing contact, enabling the potential interviewee to be prepared to the best of their ability for the interview. It also gave the interviewee the time and the opportunity to assemble any supporting organisational material they felt might enrich their answers.

3.11 Types of Questions Used During the In-Depth Interviews

Grummitt (1980) argues that the use of open questions allows participants to define and describe a situation or event. This type of interview is designed to encourage the interviewee to provide extensive and comprehensive answers and may be used to reveal attitudes or obtain additional facts pertaining to the study. It encourages the interviewee to reply as they wish. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the researcher chose to ask open questions in order to establish the potential for maximum feedback in terms of fuller answers from participants.

The researcher also used probing questions. These types of questions can be used to explore responses that are of significance to the research topic. They may be worded like open questions, but are geared towards a particular focus or direction.

Throughout the interview process, the researcher continually interpreted the interviewees' responses, and reverted to the interviewee for clarity, in order to get a deeper understanding from the participant.

The interview themes and related questions that guided the discussion were prepared in advance by the researcher. Table 3 in Appendix 7 presents the interview themes and related questions.

3.12 Sampling

As Saunders et al. (2009) suggest, collecting data for research purposes sometimes faces restrictions of time, money and often access to every possible case or group member (census). The researcher, therefore, used sampling techniques to reduce the amount of data needed by considering data only from a sub-group rather than all possible cases or elements.

The full set of cases from which a sample is taken is called the population. In other words, a sample is a set of elements (or individuals) found within a population (Chisnall, 2005).

Saunders et al. (2009) argue that it is possible for some researchers to collect data from the entire population (if it is a manageable size); however, that does not mean that the census would necessarily provide more useful results than collecting data from a sample which represents the entire population. They also argue that, when the sample is properly identified, according to certain criteria, the results could potentially represent the entire population. In this regard, they stress as well that it would be practicable to collect data from selected samples and not from the entire population. Henry (1990) adds that collecting data from fewer cases means that the collected information is more detailed.

For many research studies, Marshall (1996) argues that the choice between quantitative and qualitative approach methods should be determined by the research questions and not by the researcher's preference. Accordingly, the sampling techniques are determined. The selection of the interviewees for the interviews has been carefully designed according to certain criteria that guarantee the best possible results being presented. This section explains and analyses the sampling selection and the rationale behind choosing a specific sample.

3.12.1 Sampling Techniques

Sampling techniques can be divided into probability sampling and nonprobability sampling. With probability sampling, the probability of each element being selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases (Saunders et al., 2009). Probability sampling is mainly used for quantitative studies, and sampling is often associated with survey and experimental research strategies. However, nonprobability sampling relies on the personal judgment of the researcher

rather than chance to select sample elements, as the probability of each element being selected from the population is not known (Saunders et al., 2009).

Within business research, such as market surveys, probability sampling may not be possible as the sampling frame may not exist or may not be appropriate for answering the research question. This means that the sample must be selected in some other way. Nonprobability sampling (or non-random sampling) provides a range of alternative techniques for selecting samples based on subjective judgements. Nonprobability sampling techniques take into account not only the individual characteristics but also temporal, spatial and situational influences (Marshall, 1996).

Nonprobability sampling was this researcher's primary choice for conducting this study. This was because the researcher chose to conduct qualitative interviews and, as broadly defined, qualitative research is any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by any means of statistical procedures or other than by means of quantification (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Moreover, since this research is exploratory, the findings are treated as preliminary, and, therefore, nonprobability is advised (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). Furthermore, since one of the main purposes of this study is to acquire an in-depth understanding of the population and not to offer any statistically proven evidence, nonprobability sampling was deemed both appropriate and necessary.

There are different ranges of nonprobability sampling techniques that enable the researcher to answer research questions. At one end of this range is quota sampling, which attempts to represent the total population. At the other end of this range are convenience and self-selection sampling techniques. Purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques lie between these extremes. A convenience sample is the selection of the more appropriate object (Marshall, 1996); for example,

a person being interviewed at random in a shopping centre for a television programme. Judgement sampling (purposive) is the most common sampling technique, whereby the researcher uses their judgement to select the most productive sample that will best enable them to answer the research question(s) and to meet the overall research objectives (Marshall, 1996). Self-selection sampling occurs when the researcher allows each case, usually individuals, to identify their desire to take part in the research. For example, posting announcements on bulletin boards or asking for interested volunteers to take part in the study, either by contacting the researcher or by being directed to a questionnaire through, for example, an electronic hyperlink. Snowball sampling is commonly used when it is difficult to identify members of the desired population, for example people who are working while claiming unemployment benefit, and, finally, quota sampling is entirely non-random and is normally used for interview surveys. Quota sampling is normally used for large populations. It is based on the premise that the sample will represent the population. Quota sampling is, therefore, a type of stratified sample in which the elements within the group are chosen non-randomly (Saunders et al., 2012).

In quota sampling, there is an attempt to mirror in the sample the characteristics of interest in the same proportion as they occur in the population (Webb, 2002). In order for this study to ensure that particular outcome, the researcher divided the population into specific groups according to the theory of stakeholders' identification of interest (Dinnie, 2008). Each group of stakeholders comprised a proportion that was represented in the quota sampling.

Marshall (1996) argues that the researcher's decision regarding data gathering depends upon the research question and the chosen style of data analysis and interpretation.

As the researcher in this study considered the broader picture and recognised that the essence of the qualitative approach is a naturalistic study of real people in natural settings, rather than in

artificial isolation, the researcher decided to include quota sampling to choose from the population (different ranges of stakeholders), and then to purposely choose the most productive interviewee from within each quota.

3.12.1.1 Purposive and Quota Sampling (Rationale)

Given the multiplicity and almost-infinite range of potential stakeholders, as well as the context inherent in the development of a nation brand, stakeholder identification poses a more complicated task than merely exploring a single-company corporate environment.

Taking into consideration the importance of a stakeholder orientation which is well established in general management literature (Greenley & Foxall, 1997; Fombrun et al., 2000; Christensen, 2002; Van Woerkum & Aarts, 2008), as well as that every citizen and organisation operating within any given country can be regarded as a stakeholder, this perspective implies a fully inclusive stakeholder (FIST) approach, as described by Dinnie (2008).

Manson (1996) argues that most qualitative researchers, at some stage in their research, use qualitative interviewing, while for some this is their key method for generating data. For the present study, qualitative interviewing is the key method used for generating data. To be able to answer the research questions, the researcher used the quota and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling focuses on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest to the research topic.

Palys (2008) argues that stakeholder sampling is a kind of purposive sampling when it relates to evaluation research where major stakeholders are involved in designing, receiving, giving or administering the programme or services being evaluated. This is absolutely relevant to this study, and, as a result, the researcher purposively chose 33 interviewees from a variety of stakeholder groups that were selected using the quota, as illustrated in Appendix 6.

The 33 (see Section 7.3 for justification) interviews were conducted on the basis of the ontological position of the researcher which suggests that all the stakeholders' knowledge, views, attitudes, understandings, interpretations and experiences in relation to nation branding are meaningful and are necessary means for exploring and developing a nation brand for Palestine. The epistemological position suggests that a related way of generating data is to interact with these stakeholders, to talk to them and to engage in dialogue with them.

For the purposes of this study, and although the researcher followed the in-depth interview format, predetermined themes and questions were scheduled to minimise distraction and to elicit more detailed information from the interviewees (see Appendix 7).

3.12.2 Rationale for Sampling Techniques and Sampling Size

Saunders et al. (2009) argue that nonprobability techniques have no rules for estimating the sample size; consequently, the sample size is dependent on the research question(s) and objectives – in particular, what the researcher needs to find out, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done within the available resources (Patton, 2002).

However, Sandelowski (1995) suggests that determining an adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgment and experience in evaluating the quality of the information collected against the uses to which it will be put, the particular research method and sampling strategy employed, and the research product intended.

The quota sampling method used was heavily influenced by the work and opinions of Saunders et al. (2009), Sandelowski (1995) and Creswell (2007), all of whom suggest that, if the sample is drawn from a heterogeneous population, 30 interviews are likely to be sufficient. The researcher conducted 33 interviews with a range of stakeholders, who, by quota, were represented in a sample of the study. Each of the six groups that were selected have homogeneous characteristics. The

researcher was more specific when it came to the different sectors (quotas) of the various stakeholders. The researcher purposely chose five interviewees within each quota of the six groups of the stakeholders. Three out of the 33 interviewees were chosen purposively from the top governing body of the current leadership in Palestine. Purposive sampling refers to the selection of research participants according to the research purpose and the extent to which they can serve to answer the research questions of the current study (Tuckett, 2004).

Dubois and Araujo (2007) argue that selecting cases according to the purposeful sampling criteria means selecting cases from which in-depth insights and understandings can be captured, rather than empirical generalisations. According to various scholars, the purposive sampling is recognised as having the same meaning as thematic sampling (Tuckett, 2004). This is how it is used for the purposes of this research as well. Selecting participants using this approach facilitates choosing people who would be able to give guidance as to the right direction for the phenomenon under study. Using purposeful sampling has also helped in the applicability of findings as it is also supported by various researchers (e.g. Jean DeFeo, 2013; Khan, 2014; Suri, 2011).

As this research concerns a highly politicised topic, as Dinnie (2015) argues, the researcher chose to interview another three high-ranking officials, including the *most* high-ranking official of the state, the president.

Altogether, 33 informants were chosen for the purpose of this research study. According to Patton (2002), having fewer than 50 interviews is the usual approach in qualitative researches.

The reason behind this choice was largely based on the nature of the research questions, especially where it was vital to get answers from specific productive samples.

Sandelowski (1995) supports that there is no mandate to have equivalent numbers of women or men, or numbers of each sex, in the proportions in which they appear in a certain population. Since the views and attitudes of the various stakeholders on developing a nation brand for Palestine would not differ from males to females, the researcher did not consider this classification an important factor for sampling.

For this study, the population of interest was chosen by quota sampling according to Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach. The designated sectors for the purpose of this study in Palestine are as follows: (1) public sector, (2) private sector, (3) not-for-profit organisations and diaspora, (4) trade associations and chambers of commerce, (5) tourism boards, inward investment agency and economic development agencies, and (6) Palestinian citizens.

The decision behind this was based on both Dinnie's (2008) FIST theory and the fact that these stakeholder groups are not only the real people who could decide the nation brand of Palestine but also the potential key players in developing and communicating the brand through their own expertise/specialities, both locally and internationally. Therefore, the researcher sought to understand their views and behaviours that might lead to the development of a nation brand for Palestine. In addition, the researcher was able to explore their views on what factors could be significant for developing a nation brand for Palestine, as well as their recommendations for groups of the community that it might be worthwhile including as additional key players in this process.

Having decided on the likely suitable sample size, the researcher selected the most appropriate sampling technique that would enable an appropriate answering process for the research questions.

The researcher chose to use judgmental (purposive) sampling. This kind of nonprobability sampling enables the researcher to select the participants on the basis of purposive sampling techniques. Sampling rather than collecting data from the whole census means collecting more

detailed information which will best enable getting useful results and a higher overall accuracy and being able to afford higher-quality staff (Henry, 1990).

To ensure maximum variation within the heterogeneous sample, Patton (2002) suggests identifying diverse characteristics (sample selection criteria) prior to the selection process.

The following attributes were carefully considered by the researcher in this study in order to ensure that the participants were knowledgeable at least in some way about nation branding and nation brands:

- Being Palestinian;
- Maturity (30+ years of age) – to be able to have responsibility for national issues;
- Have a minimum of 5+ years of experience in some or all of the following: marketing, branding, tourism, trade, investment, diplomacy, economy, art, culture and politics;
- An academic background (tertiary education/professional qualification).

The fieldwork was carried out in Palestine, Jordan and Ireland, and the interviews were conducted in both English and Arabic (see Appendix 10).

Greenfield (1997) argues that individual communicative behaviours are reflective of one's language and culture, and culture helps to define the rules and patterns of each language; thus, language eases communication and eliminates barriers. Therefore, the researcher used the Arabic language when conducting some of the interviews with stakeholders who are not fluent in English and used the English language with fluent English speakers. The researcher asked each interviewee their language preference for the interview. In fact, language preference was one of the questions posed at the initial stages of contact with each interviewee, when the researcher sought permission to interview potential interviewees for this study (see Appendix 9). The researcher used English as the *lingua franca* when transcribing the interviews, as well as throughout this study. In order to avoid potential errors occurring with translation, such as the misinterpretation of meaning, the

translated interviews were then translated back into the original language. The original transcriptions and the translated versions were compared in order to verify identical meanings and that nothing had been lost or misinterpreted during the translation process.

To ensure accuracy, all the interviews were audio recorded, and written notes were also taken. Once the audio recordings were completed, the content was then transcribed in written form. Ideas about the meaning of the text and how it related to other issues were noted. This method of reviewing the gathered data and interpreting it was used continuously throughout the study.

For accuracy in analysing the data, the researcher used NVivo software. This software helped to classify the data so as to make sense of it. It also sorted and arranged information, examined relationships and combined analysis with linking so as to highlight important and key content and relevant features or other findings, which led to shaping and forming the final framework.

3.13 Primary Data Collection/Conducting the Interviews

3.13.1 Pilot Study

To improve the data-gathering process in a research study, Baum and Wally (2003), Yin (2009) and Tsanis (2013) suggest conducting a pilot study. A pilot study is defined as a test run of the actual data-gathering stage of an empirical research study (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002; Tsanis, 2013). The pilot study is conducted for various reasons.

Before commencing the interviews, three pilot interviews were carried out to refine the data-collection plans and decide on the nature and content of the themes and questions to be asked during the data-collection phase. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that initial interviews are usually considered to be an important test of the scope of the topic guide, and the subsequent carrying out of initial test fieldwork. This is known as “piloting” a topic guide and is considered to be a critical part of any research project.

The “pilot” interviews do not need to be excluded from the data set unless a very radical change of direction or coverage occurs. The data collected will still contribute to the research findings even if the emphasis changes slightly (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Pilot tests should be done under conditions that reflect in miniature the main survey (Chisnall, 2005). The pilot test quota should be drawn from the same population as for the main study as it should represent the same characteristics as the main sample.

Chisnall (2005) suggests that the size of a pilot test be about 10 per cent of the main survey. For the purpose of this study, the suggested size of the pilot study was based on the proposed sample size of in-depth interviews (33 interviews), which was a total of three people.

Due to the constraints of time and money, the researcher deliberately selected a pilot study sample which included a Palestinian intellectual citizen in the field of teaching, another Palestinian from the diaspora, and an academic professor. Once the interviewees were selected, the researcher arranged with each interviewee to conduct the interview at their own home/office, through agreed mutual convenience. This had the added advantage of offering a quiet and convenient space in which to record the interviews.

Before commencing the interview, the researcher had sent the information leaflet to the interviewee to enable them to become familiar with the topic of concern (see Appendix leaflet information 9). The researcher also intended to brief the interviewee about the topic in less than 10 minutes. This served not only as an introduction but also as a means of putting the interviewee at ease with the researcher. The next step was to reassure the interviewee that the audio recording was for the purposes of this study only, and to guarantee that all recorded content would remain confidential and be used solely for the purposes of this study.

The pilot interviews began with an initial briefing of the overall aims of the current study; the nature of the study and relevant themes were also specified (the researcher dedicated themselves not to exceed 10 minutes). The researcher then commenced the interview and asked the interviewee the first question: “From your point of view, what are the strengths that Palestinians have as citizens and as a nation that may support developing a nation brand for Palestine?” The researcher listened carefully to the interviewee while the tape was on, and without any interruption. The researcher continued asking questions that covered the main themes. Before concluding, the interviewer probed for more information by asking if there was any further information that the interviewee would like to add.

Once the interview was finished, the interviewer switched off the tape recorder and engaged in an informal conversation with the respondent in an effort to elicit further comments or guidance about the nature of the questions that had been asked and to ascertain whether or not they had any other comments they would like to add regarding the techniques used.

In-depth interviews do not necessarily require an interview guide. Nonetheless, in an effort to carefully manage the interviews, in terms of not allowing any deviation from the main themes of the research questions, the researcher’s previously prepared themes and questions acted as a valuable guide in themselves.

3.13.1.1 Reflections on the Pilot Study Outcomes

The researcher gained valuable feedback from the pilot study interviews. They demonstrated above all that the interviews were carried out successfully. Furthermore, it transpired that the idea of nation branding was promising and that this was a very opportune time for such research. There were, however, a few recommendations regarding adjustments to the interviews, which were taken into consideration:

- 1- The researcher should be more precise when asking probing questions.
 - 2- The wording was very academic. The interviews, especially with certain stakeholders, would have benefited from the use of more simplified language.
 - 3- The interviewer should listen without interrupting the interviewee. (When the interviewer listened to the recorder after the interview, they realised that they had interrupted the interviewee and distracted them. The interviewer managed to avoid interrupting during the remaining interviews.)
- The pilot interviews also offered a valuable opportunity for the researcher to become acquainted with this interviewing technique, so that the main interviews would be carried out in a thorough and professional manner. The interviews were timed, and they ranged in duration from 30 to 45 minutes.

3.13.2 Developing the Interview Agenda (Themes and Questions)

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher developed an interview guide (protocol), as suggested by Eisenhardt (1989), in which specific themes and related questions for data collection were set out in order to guide the researcher and to maintain a level of consistency for each interview. The protocol also includes suggested probes that could help to elaborate the discussion and, finally, elicit more relevant information (Weerawardena & Mort, 2012).

Before commencing the intended interview, the researcher presented a brief introduction to the interviewee about the study, specifically the concept of nation branding, nation-brand factors, the aim of developing a nation brand for Palestine and identifying who the main potential stakeholders are in Palestine. The followings were the themes that were covered in the researcher's protocol.

- 1- The role of leadership (government, presidency, monarchy) in the nation-branding process. Where and when could their involvement be best incorporated? What role could they play, if any?

- 2- The stakeholders. Who should participate in developing the Palestine brand, apart from the current ones (public sector, private sector, NGOs, trade unions and chambers of commerce, tourism board and economy)?
- 3- The message of the brand/the motto/the brand core value.
- 4- The natural channels that might be essential for developing a nation brand for Palestine, apart from the six factors of the main theory of nation brand. In your opinion, are there any that should be excluded, or any others that should be included? (The natural channels of the hexagon of Anholt (2003) are export, culture and heritage, tourism, investment, public diplomacy and citizens.)
- 5- Communication of the brand: what are the best ways to communicate the brand internally (locally) and externally (abroad)?
- 6- Integral components such as:
 - a. Coordination
 - b. Obstacles
 - c. National identity
 - d. Feedback and recommendations to the Palestinian government

The initial template that was created according to the researcher's review of the literature and the pilot interviews is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Research objectives, research questions and the themes and subthemes

RQ	RO	Themes and Subthemes
1, 2, 6, 7	1, 2	1. The vision of the leadership towards developing a nation brand, and thus to control and manage this national plan

2	3	2. The coordination and communication among stakeholders and between the leadership and the stakeholders	
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	3	3. The views of the stakeholders towards developing a nation brand regarding: <p>3.1 - The factors that are essential for developing a nation brand</p> <p>3.2 - The natural channels of the Nation Brand Hexagon</p> <p>Tourism</p> <p>Public diplomacy</p> <p>Citizens/people</p> <p>Foreign investment</p> <p>Export</p> <p>Culture and heritage</p> <p>3.3 - Other prospective natural channels that could be essential for developing a nation brand</p> <p>3.4 - Potential stakeholders apart from those included in the main theory sector, private sector, NGOs and diaspora, trade associations and chambers of commerce, tourism board and investment agencies, economic development agencies and citizens)</p> <p>3.5 - The stakeholders' views on and attitudes towards developing a nation brand</p> <p>3.6 - The message that reflects the core brand values and the national identity</p> <p>3.7 - The role of communication and coordination in linking all factors</p> <p>3.8 - Other factors or elements that might be essential for developing a nation brand and would, therefore, help to build an integrated and framework for developing a nation brand</p>	
6, 7	3	4.	Communicate the nation brand (internally and externally) <p>4.1 - Reflection and feedback</p>

1, 2,	4	5.	Contribution to knowledge and recommendations
6, 7		5.1	- To the Palestinian government
		5.2	- To marketing researchers and practitioners

3.13.3 Main Study/Conducting the Interviews

Following the selection of face-to-face informants and setting the interview guide and the pilot study, the data-collection process commenced.

Thirty-three interviews were conducted with different stakeholders in Palestine; each interview lasted for approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Five out of the 33 interviews were conducted through FaceTime/Skype, and another five were conducted by telephone. The rest were conducted one-to-one (face-to-face). All the interviews were taped, with the verbal and written permissions of each interviewee having been obtained beforehand. Using a tape recorder enabled the researcher to concentrate more fully on the interview and to listen carefully to what the respondents had to say. In this way, the researcher was able to ask probing questions in order to get elaboration on certain areas, or to bring back the interviewee when they deviated from the main themes.

Transcribing the interviews posed a particular difficulty for this researcher, as each interview took three times as long to transcribe as it did to record.

The researcher was satisfied with their own skills and capabilities in being able to draw out information from interviewees in a way that added depth to and gave further valuable insights into specific or multiple topics without deviating from the related main themes of this study.

The potential stakeholders who were chosen for the purpose of this study, and in accordance with the sample criteria, were interviewed after they gave their consent for the interview to take place.

As already mentioned, the interviewees were selected using purposive means within the quota method that had already been used to determine the stakeholder groups. Once the list of potential

purposive interviewees was collected, the researcher contacted each interviewee individually to initially make sure that each potential respondent fitted the sample criteria as a quota had to be met. Appendix 6 presents the final breakdown of the sample used to carry out the interviews.

The researcher scheduled a mutually suitable meeting time and place with each interviewee. As mentioned earlier, some of the interviews were conducted through an audio-visual Internet connection. The remaining interviews were conducted face-to-face in either Ireland or Jordan.

Identical interview methods were used to conduct both the pilot and the main interviews.

3.14 Data Analysis

The data collected from interviews needs to be analysed, and the meaning should be clearly understood. Saunders et al. (2009) argue that a qualitative data analysis procedure assists with this and allows the researcher to develop theory from data.

Kvale (1996) postulates that the process of analysing qualitative data is likely to begin at the same time as the researcher collects the data and that it continues throughout the process.

In advance of any interviews taking place, the researcher must pay careful attention to the content of all research questions, whereby they should cover a variety of themes, they should be well prepared, and there should be no overlap. At a later stage, the researcher may find common ground between themes, but at the outset there must be no ambiguity whatsoever.

Transcribing the recorded interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to more fully comprehend the material gathered and to fully absorb the content of the data. The researcher followed what Bauer and Gaskell (2000) strongly recommend, namely to do the transcription personally rather than through a commercial service, which could be perceived as a breach of confidentiality. The

researcher conducted the transcribing process personally, using NVivo software for the data analysis.

According to Zamawe (2015), NVivo has become the most popular software package for analysing qualitative data. It has been developed over a number of years to support coding, editing and retrieval of textual data, automated coding, searching for words/phrases and also to explore relationships between codes to facilitate theory building. Lewis (2004) also agrees that, of all the qualitative analysis software packages, NVivo alone (to date) has a particular set of tools that is ideal for analysing literature.

Although the task of transcribing audio-recorded interviews is undoubtedly time-consuming, it is nonetheless considered to be the first stage of analysing data (Saunders et al., 2009). Using NVivo software resolves the issue of time-consuming manual transcription by allowing the researcher to transcribe the interviews electronically.

Some of the interviews were conducted in the native language of both the researcher and the interviewees. As the researcher is fluent in both Arabic and English, all the Arabic interviews were easily and automatically translated by the researcher into English for the purposes of continuity.

The next section will discuss the data analysis method that was used throughout the duration of the study.

3.14.1 Coding

Qualitative data, which holds the key to richer insights, rather than quantitative data, is more difficult to process manually for the sake of producing valuable meanings or results than quantitative data. Accordingly, the researcher used computerised software for the content analysis.

The researcher used NVivo, a qualitative analysis software package, to conduct the analysis process of the interviews.

The first stage of qualitative data analysis is to code the responses of each interviewee in order to facilitate the data analysis and then to focus on the main themes of the research. Coding the data is the key phase in the whole process of qualitative data analysis (Byran, 2016). Taylor and Bogdan (1998) identify coding as the process of organising and sorting the data. Codes serve as a way to label, compile and organise data. It also allows the researcher to summarise and synthesise what is happening within the data. In linking data collection and interpreting it, coding becomes the basis for developing the analysis.

Coding can be done in a number of ways, but it usually involves assigning a word, phrase, number or symbol to each coding category. For the purpose of this study, coding was prepared through NVivo software. The researcher went through all of the transcribed interviews to code the main themes of the study. The process of identifying the themes began earlier and was performed manually during the initial stages of the fieldwork. Each sentence or paragraph was identified as falling into a respective theme (see Appendix 1).

3.14.2 NVivo 11 Software

NVivo is software that supports qualitative and mixed-method research. It is designed to help researchers organise, analyse and make insight-driven decisions in unstructured or qualitative data such as interviews, open-ended survey responses and articles (Bryman, 2016). In NVivo, coding is accomplished through nodes. A node is a collection of references about a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest; when a document is coded, the node will incorporate references to those sections of the documents in which the code appears (NVivo, 2016).

The researcher created a series of codes that related to the main themes of this study.

Nodes can be created either before coding begins or as coding takes place. As the researcher had coded the themes in advance (by marking sentences with the initial of the theme), it was easier to

create the nodes or themes prior to coding and then drag the relevant sentences/paragraphs to their respective nodes/themes. In some cases, when the researcher was going through the interviews, important information such as words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs were coded as free nodes. These free nodes helped the researcher to visualise basic relations to the proposed framework, which at a later stage gave wider meanings when they were organised together.

3.14.3 Data Analysis Method

Ritchie et al. (2013) argue that analysis is a challenging and exciting stage of the qualitative research process. Unlike quantitative analysis, there are no clearly agreed rules or procedures for analysing qualitative data. Approaches to analysis vary in terms of basic epistemological assumptions about the nature of qualitative enquiry and the status of researchers' accounts.

Also, there are some discussions among researchers about the best approaches to analysing qualitative data and whether using software to help the process is beneficial or not. Most of the researchers in this area support that, with the aid of software, the analysis of qualitative data can become more detailed and biases are avoided to a large extent (Catterall & Maclaran, 1998; Kikooma, 2010).

Fielding and Lee (1998), Kelle (1997), Tesch (1990) and Weitzman (2000) argue that there is much existing literature on computer-assisted methods for qualitative data analysis which charts the development of computer approaches, and Barry (1998), Burgess (1995), Kelle (1997) Seale (1999) and Weitzman and Miles (1995) assert that it also appraises the processes and outputs they generate.

As explained earlier in this chapter, the researcher used computer software NVivo 11. The software helped the researcher to enter data in a systematic way, to structure the data in a very effective way

and to provide analysis that would not have been feasible without the help of the software. The use of the software is discussed further throughout this chapter.

In line with the epistemological stance of the researcher, the findings of this research are presented as the outcome of the IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) approach for data analysis. The rationale for choosing this approach will be described in the next section.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, as described by Smith (2008), who drew on the work of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in 1993 (Macann, 2005), who had originally developed the IPA framework (Smith et al., 2009), is an approach to qualitative analysis with a particularly psychological interest in how people make sense of their experience. IPA requires the researcher to collect detailed, reflective, first-person accounts from research participants.

IPA is concerned with meaning and processes, rather than with events and their causes. In the case of IPA, meaning-making is conceptualised at the level of the person-in-context. This means that the researcher focuses first on the meaning of an experience (e.g. an event, process or relationship) for a given participant, and recognises its significance for that participant. In this way, IPA has a commitment to an idiographic level of analysis – which implies a focus on the particular, rather than the general.

IPA has an interpretative (aka hermeneutic) phenomenological epistemology. This focuses on understanding a person's relatedness to the world (and to the things in it which matter to them) through the meanings that they make.

There is no one definitive method of data analysis in IPA; rather, it adopts flexible strategies towards analytic development. Common processes in IPA move from the particular (idiographic) to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative (hermeneutic). Key IPA principles are a commitment to understanding the participant's lived, conscious experience, and adopting a

psychological focus on personal meaning-making in specific contexts (the double hermeneutic – the researcher aims to make sense of the participant who is trying to make sense of their own experiences using memory and language) (Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA is phenomenological in its task to understand and elucidate the human lived conscious experience of phenomena, but psychological in its analysis of meaning-making and hermeneutic interpretation. The analytical strategy adopted in this study is informed by these principles and derived from Smith's (2008) practical guidelines for the process of data analysis and interpretation.

1. Overview of the Analytical Approach

Qualitative research is a holistic approach which takes account of contexts within which human experiences occur and is thus concerned with learning from particular instances or cases (Sandures et al., 2009). It seeks to access the inner world of perception and meaning-making in order to understand, describe and explain social processes from the perspective of study participants.

As Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p. 18) point out: *“words are the way that most people come to understand their situations; we create our world with words; we explain ourselves with words; we defend and hide ourselves with words.”* Therefore, in qualitative data analysis and presentation, *“the task of the researcher is to find patterns within those words and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world as the participants originally experienced it”*. This approach does not commence with a prior hypothesis to be tested and proved but rather with a focus of enquiry that takes the researcher on a voyage of discovery as it assumes an inductive approach to data analysis, and the research outcomes are not broad generalisations but rather contextual findings – qualitative researchers tend to speak of “transferability” (from context to context) rather than generalisability.

While qualitative research is not given to mathematical abstractions, it is nonetheless systematic in its approach to data collection and analysis (Ritchie et al., 2012). Framed by a focus of enquiry,

whether data is collected through interviews or questionnaires, open-ended questioning allows study participants to articulate their perceptions and experiences freely and spontaneously. In analysing data generated within this format, responses are not grouped according to pre-defined categories; rather, salient categories of meaning and relationships between categories are derived from the data itself through a process of inductive reasoning known as coding. This IPA approach offers the means through which the researcher may access and analyse these articulated perspectives so that they may be integrated into a model that seeks to explain the social processes under study.

This approach involves breaking down the data into discrete segments or “units of meaning” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and coding them to categories. Categories arising from this method generally take two forms: those that are derived from the participants’ customs and language, and those that the researcher identifies as significant to the project’s focus of enquiry. The goal of the former “*is to reconstruct the categories used by subjects to conceptualise their own experiences and world view*”, while the goal of the latter is to assist the researcher in developing theoretical insights through developing themes that illuminate the social processes operative in the site under study. Thus, the analytical process stimulates thinking that leads to both descriptive and explanatory categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 334–341).

2. Using Data Analysis Software for the Data Analysis

It must be stressed that, in using qualitative data analysis software, the researcher does not capitulate the hermeneutic task to the logic of the computer; rather, the computer is used as a tool for efficiency and not as a tool which in and of itself conducts analysis and draws conclusions. As Fielding and Lee (1998, p. 167) explain, qualitative researchers “*want tools which support analysis, but leave the analyst firmly in charge*”. Importantly, such software also serves as a tool for transparency. Arguably, the production of an audit trail is the most important criteria on which

the trustworthiness and plausibility of a study can be established. Qualitative analysis software's logging of data movements and coding patterns, and mapping of conceptual categories and thought progression, render all stages of the analytical process traceable and transparent, facilitating the researcher in producing a more detailed and comprehensive audit trail than manual mapping of this complicated process can allow.

3. Phases and Steps Taken in the Analytical Process

Eight discrete cycles of analysis were conducted across the iterative process of data analysis. These cycles involved three separate cycles of coding, two cycles of managing codes, one cycle for initial categorisation of open codes, one cycle for data reduction through consolidating codes into a more abstract theoretical framework (themes), and one cycle which uses writing itself as a tool to prompt deeper thinking of the data (Bazeley, 2009), leading to findings from which conclusions may be drawn. These eight cycles are now described and explained:

Phase 1: *Reading and initial noting* involved transcribing, reading and re-reading the interview data and noting down initial ideas. It further involved importing the transcripts and related notes and observations into a data-management tool known as NVivo (QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 10, 2014).

Phase 2: *Open coding* involved broad participant-driven initial coding of the interviews so as to deconstruct the data from its original chronology into initial non-hierarchical general codes. These codes, containing “units of meaning” coded from the interview scripts, were assigned clear names and definitions that would serve as “rules for inclusion” as the coding process progressed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, pp. 126–149; see Appendix 1).

Phase 3: *Categorisation of codes* involved reordering codes identified in Phase 2 into categories of codes by grouping related codes under these categories and organising them into a framework

that made sense to further the analysis of the data set and address the research questions. This phase also included distilling, renaming and merging categories to ensure that names and definitions accurately reflected the coded content. Categories could be described as a halfway-house between organising initial codes into logical groups and generating themes (see Appendix 2).

Phase 4: *Coding on* involved breaking down the now restructured categories into subordinate categories to offer a more in-depth understanding of the highly qualitative aspects under scrutiny and to consider divergent views, negative cases, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours coded to these categories so as to glean clearer insights into the meanings embedded therein.

Phase 5: *Data reduction* involved consolidating codes from preceding cycles into more abstract, philosophical and literature-based superordinate themes, thereby creating a final framework to form the basis of the write-up (Appendix 3). These final themes were placed in a matrix comparison to facilitate both “in-case” and “cross-case” analysis. Reading down the matrix revealed the extent to which themes and subthemes impacted on a given individual, while reading across the matrix allowed for comparing the extent to which themes were shared across the 33 people participating in the research. An example of an application of this analytical tool is given in Appendix 4.

Phase 6: This involved *writing analytical memos* against the higher-level themes to accurately summarise the content of each category and its codes and propose empirical findings against such categories. These memos considered five key areas:

1. The content of the cluster of codes on which it is reporting (what was said);
2. The coding patterns, where relevant (levels of coding, for example; although this could be used to identify exceptional cases as well as shared experiences);

3. Considering background information recorded against participants and considering any patterns that may exist in relation to participants' profiles (who said it);
4. Situating the code(s) in the storyboard – meaning considering the relatedness of themes to one another, and their importance in terms of the research questions, and sequencing disparate codes and clusters of codes into a story or narrative which is structured and can be expressed in the form of a coherent and cohesive findings chapter;
5. Considering primary sources in the context of relationships with the literature as well as identifying gaps in the literature.

Phase 7: Validation involved testing, validating and revising analytical memos so as to self-audit proposed findings by seeking evidence in the data beyond textual quotes to support the stated findings and seeking to expand on deeper meanings embedded in the data. This process involves interrogation of data and forces the researcher to consider elements beyond the theme itself, drawing on relationships across and between themes and cross tabulation with demographics, observations and literature. This phase resulted in evidence-based findings as each finding had to be validated by being rooted in the data itself and relied on the creation of reports from the data to substantiate findings.

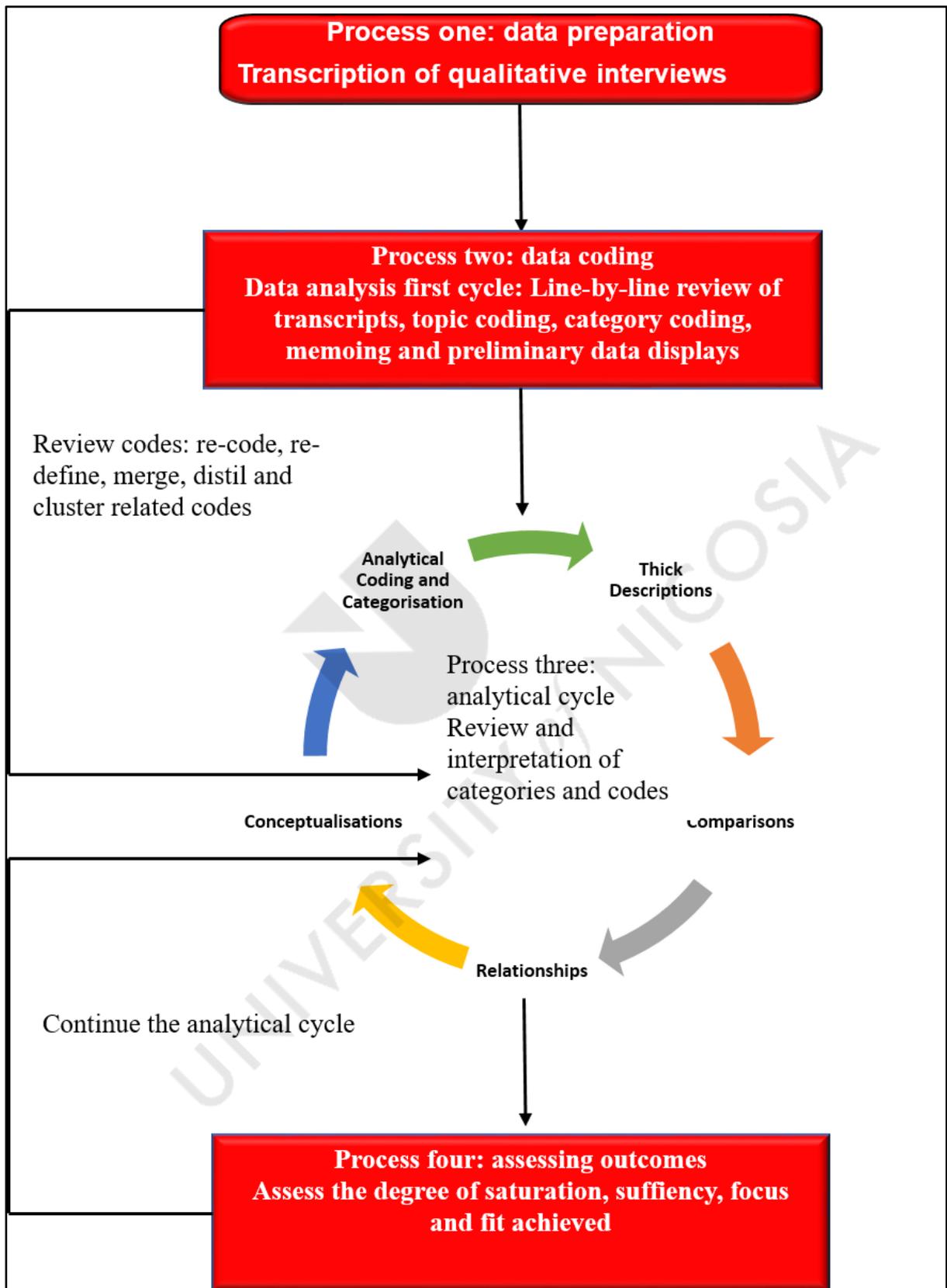
Phase 8: This involved *synthesising analytical memos* into a coherent, cohesive and well-supported outcome statement or findings chapter offering a descriptive account of the study participants' views and perceptions of drivers and inhibitors of sales-force effectiveness in their respective countries.

Table 5 (see Appendix 12) links these stages and processes conducted in NVivo to the practical guidelines for data analysis and interpretation, as set out by Smith (2008).

In the design of the data analysis steps, as outlined in Table 5 (Appendix 12), consideration was given to the aim of the study and its underlying philosophical foundation. King (2004, p. 267) states that tensions exist “*between the need to be open to the data and the need to impose some shape and structure on the analytical process*”. The objective was to design and undertake a systematic and disciplined data analysis process that encouraged completeness and impartiality (Lillis, 1999), while also recognising the complexity of the data under review and the interpretative nature of the study. As Figure 15 illustrates, the data analysis process involved four interlinked and iterative processes: (1) data preparation, (2) data coding, (3) analytical cycle, and (4) assessing conceptualisations and outcomes.



Figure 15: Overview of the analytical process



Source: The analytical cycle is adapted from Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, 2011

4. Rationale for the Researcher's Choice of Data Analysis Methodology

Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) argue that qualitative researchers are mainly concerned with meaning (e.g. how individuals make sense of the world, how they experience events and what meaning they attribute to phenomena). In other words, they are more preoccupied with the quality of experience than causal relationships.

Unlike quantitative analysis, there are no clearly agreed rules or procedures for analysing qualitative data (Ritchie et al., 2003). Approaches to analysis vary in terms of basic epistemological assumptions about the nature of qualitative enquiry and the status of researchers' accounts (see Chapter 3). They also differ between different traditions in terms of the main focus and aims of the analytical process. Ritchie et al. (2003) propose the following analytical methods:

- Narrative analysis, which identifies the basic story that is being told, focusing on the way an account or narrative is constructed, the intention of the teller, and the nature of the audience as well as the meaning of the story or “plot” (Riessman, 1993).
- Content analysis, in which both the content and context of documents are analysed: themes are identified, with the researcher focusing on the way the theme is treated or presented and the frequency of its occurrence. The analysis is then linked to “outside variables” such as the gender and role of the contributor (Robson, 2002).
- Discourse analysis, which is concerned with the way knowledge is produced within a particular discourse through the use of distinctive language or through the adoption of implicit theories in order to make sense of social action.

Discourse analysis may also focus on what is going on in an interaction in terms of performances, linguistic styles, rhetorical devices and ways in which talk and text set out to convince and to compete with alternative accounts (Silverman, 2001; Tonkiss, 2004).

- Grounded theory, which involves the generation of analytical categories and their dimensions, and the identification of relationships between them.

The process of data collection and conceptualisation continues until categories and relationships are “saturated”; that is, new data do not add to the developing theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Other methods were introduced in the literature, for example:

- Case studies, which have their origins as far back as 1879 (Healy, 1947);
- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis – IPA, proposed by Smith (2008);
- Content analysis by Lasswell and Casey (1946);
- Thematic analysis by Thomas and Harden (2008); Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2011).

Table 4 (see Appendix 11) compares the different methods of data analysis and provides the rationale for using the most convenient to the nature of this study, namely IPA.

The IPA methodology (Smith, 2008) for data analysis was perceived by the researcher as being the most suitable for this specific research study. The rationale is that the approach adopts an idiographic focus on complex phenomena within a specific time and context (Keen & Packwood, 1995), thus capturing the holistic and meaningful characteristics of events and possibilities (Yin, 1994). This agrees fully with what this research study is trying to achieve, namely the development of a nation brand for Palestine.

3.15 Concluding Data Analysis and Discussions

Flanagan (1954, p. 19) suggests that the aim of the data analysis phase is “*to summarize and describe the data in an efficient manner so that it can be effectively used for many practical purposes*”. The researcher aims to propose a holistic framework for developing a nation brand

from stakeholders' perspectives for Palestine, and, for this purpose, they used in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect the data. In order to make sense of these data, they must be analysed, and their meanings understood, then, based on this, a theory can be developed (Saunders et al., 2009).

The researcher integrated within the analysis wide discussions on the theoretical background that was examined and analysed in the literature review chapter. The researcher throughout the analysis phase continuously compared the findings with the literature review findings and identified whether the findings support, add to or differ from the current literature. The researcher also pointed out the new emerging aspects that impact on and contribute to the theory building. The next chapter will present the findings from the data analysis phase.

3.16 Conclusion to the Chapter

This chapter discussed the philosophical position of the researcher, the methodologies used throughout this study, the rationale and the related methods of data collection according to the exploratory nature of this study and the interpretive paradigm that guided it.

Using the solid platform of their own philosophical position, knowledge and understanding of the reality surrounding nation branding, the researcher in this study set out to explore the development of a nation brand by consulting a variety of stakeholders in Palestine about their own subjective views on the matter.

The researcher adopted a triangulation of inductive and deductive approaches not only to gain a richer understanding of nation branding but also to formulate inductively a framework for the development of a nation brand for Palestine.

Based on the nature of the specific enquiry and the main aim of this study, the researcher used qualitative data-collection methods by conducting 33 in-depth one-to-one interviews in order to formulate an integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine.

This chapter also discussed the IPA data analysis technique, as well as the rationale for using this technique. NVivo 11 was the supporting qualitative data analysis software used to analyse the data collected from 33 interviews representing a range of stakeholders in Palestine in order to explore their views and attitudes towards developing a nation brand.



Chapter 4

Analysis of Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction to the Chapter

In the previous chapter, the researcher explained and discussed the researcher philosophy, methodology and methods adopted for the study's empirical investigation. Reflecting on this, the researcher explained the terminology and principles of the (IPA) data analysis method applied, specifically the techniques used for analysing and developing the data, the ways they were used and their effectiveness.

Six main themes and many other subthemes emerged from analysing the transcripts of the interviews using NVivo software and the IPA data analysis method. In this chapter, the researcher presents and interprets the findings, discussing and analysing them comprehensively with reference to the results arising from the current literature (i.e. the outcome of the IPA analysis). This interpretation is applied throughout the chapter.

4.2 Data Analysis and Discussion

In this section, the researcher includes an analysis of the interviews and also integrates discussion with the theoretical background, as was reviewed and analysed in the literature review chapter. Throughout the analysis process, the researcher compared the finding from the interviews and the literature review in order to clarify whether they were similar or differed, thereby extracting the main contributions of this current research study. These contributions will be highlighted in Chapter 5.

As discussed earlier, in Chapter 3, and as visually illustrated in Appendix 3, the findings from the interview transcripts are organised into six main themes. In order to conduct a proper analysis, the

researcher was guided by those themes that reflected the seven research questions which emerged from reviewing the literature in Chapter 2.

The findings from the interview transcripts are organised into six main themes and many other subthemes (see Appendix 3). The themes reflect the main factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand. Some of these factors emerged from the extensive review of the literature, and others were either supported by or newly revealed from analysing the interviews (see Appendix 3). **The first theme** relates to vision and reflects on visionary leadership, specifically the respondents' views on and attitudes towards the leadership's vision and what impact this could have on the development of nation brand (RQ1). **The second theme** relates to stakeholders, specifically the respondents' views on and attitudes towards identifying other stakeholders who could play a role in the national plan for developing a nation brand (RQ3). **The third theme** deals with the message that reflects the core essence of the nation brand (RQ4). **The fourth theme** deals with nation brand and the respondents' views on and attitudes towards prospective natural channels that could have an impact on developing a nation brand (RQ5). **The fifth theme** deals with communicating the nation brand (RQ6), and **the sixth theme** relates to several integral components that may be essential for and influence developing a nation brand and have a vital impact on setting the framework. This includes subthemes: coordination between the leadership and stakeholders and among the stakeholders (RQ2), recommendation and feedback, obstacles and national identity (RQ7). All of the themes together form the foundation for redeveloping the preliminary framework. The next chapter explains the theoretical foundation that links all the revealed themes together in order to present the final framework.

In the following sections, the researcher presents an in-depth discussion of the findings relating to each theme that emerged from the analysis (see Appendix 3), examining them in relation to current literature and underlining new insights.

4.2.1 Theme 1 (RQ1): The Vision (Visionary Leadership)

Hankinson (2007) proposes five guiding principles for managing destination brands, based on an adaptation of corporate-branding theory. Whilst a destination brand can be a single town, city, resort or other relatively limited entity, it can also be an entire nation. Therefore, it has potential application at a nation level, as Dinnie (2008) also argues. Hankinson (2007) points out that the main pillar of his model is strong, visionary leadership. Hankinson reflects on the key role of the brand champion in establishing a clear vision for the destination brand and developing a set of core brand values which link positive aspects of the place's heritage to a realistic vision of what can be achieved in the future. Reflecting on and applying this principle on a national level, Dinnie (2008) argues that the government plays the key role in developing, communicating and embedding the strategic vision and brand values. In this respect, the vision and the brand value constitute the key mission of the government, which possesses the legitimacy to influence the direction of the nation-brand strategy (Dinnie, 2015). Anholt (2007) also stresses the role of responsible governments in determining the world's perception of their country and developing a strategy for building and maintaining a reputation that is fair and commensurate with their economic, political and social aims, and that reflects the spirit and will of the people.

Many respondents referred to the role of the government and its vision in developing a nation brand. For example, Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, said:

“Government should be responsible for this national plan [developing the nation brand].”

Elaborating on the misuse of power, Respondent #4 said:

“States play a sensitive role. Responsible governments should have a vision ... States’ and governments’ roles are crucial in any development process, but over-control will lead to a dictatorship and conflict of interest.”

Many marketing scholars agree that applying techniques of marketing/branding to nations is acceptable and that similarities exist between corporate branding and nation branding (Fan, 2005; Gudjonsson, 2005; Anholt, 2007; Hankinson, 2007; Dinnie, 2008, 2015). The following section will be based upon this argument.

Dinnie (2015) argues that the scope of branding has increased incrementally from its original application to simple products to services, companies and organisations, and now nations. Gudjonsson (2005) also believes that nation branding uses the tools of branding to alter, confirm or change the behaviour, attitudes, identity or image of a nation in a positive way, a theory which, building on the previous discussion, lies at the heart of the analysis chapter. As mentioned earlier, in Hankinson’s (2007) framework for managing place brand, the first of the five principles is strong and visionary leadership, which is central to the current study. The key research question of this thesis relates to the stakeholders’ views on and attitudes towards developing a nation brand for Palestine, identifying who should lead the process of nation branding and determining how visionary leadership could enrich and impact the nation brand. The respondents, depending on their areas of expertise/backgrounds, responded in different ways. They not only stressed the importance of visionary leadership but, more specifically, expressed where this should be directed. Respondent #25, an artist from the private sector, said:

“Visionary leadership is an essential parameter of the process of developing the nation brand.”

Respondent #31, an expert in tourism and branding, and Respondent #9, an intellectual diplomat, both emphasised the role of visionary leadership, Respondent #31:

“The public sector will not be able to cope with this project [developing the nation brand] without visionary leadership; without a clear vision, nation branding will lose its path.”

According to Dinnie (2015), who argues that nation branding, by definition, must be governmentally sponsored, most of the respondents agree not only on the role of government but also that the nation branding process is a national project and should be a national plan. Respondent #12, an artist and activist from the private sector, said:

“I would like to see this project [developing a nation brand] worked on at a national level – this won’t succeed without visionary leadership.”

Hankinson (2007) suggests that vision, together with a set of core brand values, is an essential precursor to a wider debate about the brand strategy with potential partners who will eventually help to take the strategy forward. Rubenstein (1996) defines the core brand values which summarise the brand identity as a subset of the corporate values which summarise the organisational identity. But, before this can happen, as Hankinson (2007) stresses, building the brand must begin with the DMO (leadership vision strategy) before being extended across partners. In agreement with this, many respondents pointed out this dimension and were specific about not only the importance of visionary leadership but also where this vision should be directed. Each stakeholder group reflected, from their own point of view, on how vision can impact on developing the brand, and, in some cases, the respondents expressed a strategic vision. Some respondents went even further and suggested comprehensive participation in creating the vision. For example, Respondent #7 said:

“A national conference is a necessity for drawing our vision; visionary leadership should reflect people’s ambitions.”

With regard to more specific ideas, many informants expressed their views based on their area of expertise. Respondent #14, a sports academic from the private sector, said:

“Since 2008, the Palestinian vision of the role of sport has changed. They started to work on sport as a mean of resistance, development and managing the Palestinian cause. Palestinians work with advanced countries to learn from their experience in order to improve the abilities and skills of the Palestinian athletes in certain sports.”

Respondent #19, a member of the trade sector, was more specific and, reflecting on his area of expertise, said:

“The spiritual side of Palestine attracts even non-religious people.”

Respondent #17, who is a human-rights expert and clearly shares his views, openly said:

“The diversity of religions, the rich history, [Palestine] as the cradle of civilisation – this visionary leadership would enhance the competitive advantage of Palestine.”

Morgan et al. (2003) argue that stakeholders must agree that the final vision statement provides both a meaningful and an operational “dream” for the future of their destination – one that reflects the values of destination stakeholders while not ignoring the realities and constraints of the marketplace. Respondent #7, a high-ranking official, reflecting on this, said:

“The stakeholders who should be involved in nation-brand development should include all the sectors of state. They should agree on a message that reflects not only the general vision but also a vision that is more specific and related to their area of expertise.”

Respondent #23, a member of the trade sector, was more specific about the vision for the future, stating:

“Palestinian women should be part of our image and should be reflected in our nation brand.”

Discussion of Theme 1 (RQ1) (Visionary Leadership)

In the previous section, the researcher summarised and reflected on the primary findings, and addressed the outcomes in relation to current literature. The findings and the literature are in agreement. In Chapter 2, the researcher discussed the literature on developing a nation brand and the importance of visionary leadership. Mathieu (2005, p. 13) conceptualises vision as *“the ability to set a clear direction that people can understand, embrace and follow passionately”*. Many nation-branding scholars emphasise that the key role of the brand leader is to establish a clear vision and to develop a set of core brand values (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2015; Hankinson, 2007; Aronczyk, 2013; Gudjonsson, 2005). Most of the informants agreed that visionary leadership is essential, and there was no doubt as to who the brand leader should be – many of them pointed out the role of government and were clear about the comprehensive participation of citizens in developing the nation brand. Dinnie (2015) argues that nations do not belong to brand managers or corporations; rather, they belong to the nation’s entire citizenry. This emerged as the common perception of all participants, which reflects their awareness of visionary leadership, thus matching the literature.

This also reflects the impact that leadership vision has on the whole process of developing a nation brand. Many respondents view the leadership as the master who should steer the whole process.

The vision of the leadership has to ensure alignment among all the stakeholders and must establish a clear vision for the nation brand and communicate with key players to ensure the development of a set of core brand values that are linked to positive aspects of the national identity.

The next section discusses the theme that is key to this study, namely the stakeholders' views on and attitudes towards developing a nation brand for Palestine and who should participate in this process.

4.2.2 Theme 2 (RQ3): Stakeholders

The importance of stakeholder orientation is well established in the general management literature (Greenley & Foxall, 1997; Fombrun et al., 2000; Christensen, 2002; Van Woerkum & Aarts, 2008). However, Kotsi et al. (2018) argue that there is a need for more theory building in this field. Dinnie (2015) argues that the wide-ranging nature of nation branding requires the involvement of many parties in the formulation and implementation of a nation-brand strategy. Dinnie and Folla (2009) also argue that organisations need to identify their various stakeholders in order to establish appropriate relationships and communication between each stakeholder group.

Nation branding is becoming an area of growing importance for politicians, academics and strategic communications professionals alike (Dinnie, 2015). However, the process of integrating a marketing and communications approach with the ambitions of policymakers may present serious challenges, one of which is governmental changes, which often result in changes in the public and political agendas of a country, thereby impacting upon such a politicised activity as nation-branding strategy development (Dinnie, 2015). In this respect, Dinnie (2015) argues that the legitimacy of those engaged in managing a country's reputation is a key prerequisite for justifying – let alone embracing – practices of nation branding in the eyes of the country's citizens. It is therefore necessary to establish a national consensus and a long-term strategy that all key stakeholders can embrace, thus justifying the commitment of financial and human resources to designing and implementing nation-branding strategies.

As the above argument indicates and considering that identifying stakeholders is more complicated in the context of a nation than in a single company owing to the almost-infinite range of potential

stakeholders – every citizen and every organisation operating within a given country (Dinnie, 2008) – it is necessary to adopt an inclusive stakeholder approach.

The researcher chose a wide range of stakeholders according to the purposive sampling in order to garner views and opinions from those knowledgeable about or experienced in the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Adopting the qualitative approach, the researcher interviewed a range of different stakeholders according to Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach, with the intention of expanding the extent of participation and identifying more stakeholders to contribute to developing a nation brand for Palestine. The first, and main, question asked of the interviewees was who they think should participate in this process. The second question was what factors they think are essential for developing a nation brand. The third was what message Palestine should send to the whole world, and what related brand values should be attached to this message. The fourth question concerned the best ways of communicating the nation brand, both internally and externally, and the fifth dealt with the manner in which stakeholders could be best coordinated to work as a national team in order to achieve a national mission, namely developing a nation brand for Palestine. Finally, the interviewees were asked for their views on what mechanism and channels are best for gathering the feedback and reflections of the external audience on the image of Palestine.

In the following subsections, the researcher analyses the views and attitudes of the interviewees in response to the six questions.

Who should participate in the process of developing a nation brand for Palestine?

As mentioned earlier, this study – with respect to stakeholders – adopted Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach as the basis for identifying, based on knowledge and area of expertise, initial stakeholders to participate in recommending other potential stakeholders. Key amongst the stakeholders is the country's government. Only the government has the authority and the legitimacy to establish the

parameters of the nation-branding strategy. However, there is a need for a strong degree of public–private sector collaboration in order to maximise the chances of formulating and implementing a successful strategy. The researcher conducted 33 interviews, representing six groups of stakeholders. Their perceptions varied regarding who should participate in this process. The following subsections will review the stakeholders’ recommendations and suggestions regarding who should be involved in nation branding and developing a nation brand, and this will be followed by a general discussion and enfolding of the findings with the literature.

4.2.2.1 Public Sector (Subtheme)

Most of the respondents agree on the role of the **public sector** as a stakeholder.

Respondent #22, a member of the public sector, said:

“[The] public sector is the main sector that establishes policies and should be the key player in developing the brand for Palestine.”

Thinking more broadly, Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, said:

“It is a comprehensive effort, and [there] should be a governmental plan to develop our nation brand – all sectors should be included ... Investment, culture, agriculture, medicine [health sector], banks, tourism, economy, also private and public sector ... Government should be responsible for this national plan [developing a nation brand].”

4.2.2.2 Private Sector (Subtheme)

Also, most of the respondents agree on the role of the **private sector** as a stakeholder. Respondent #22, a member of the public sector, said:

“The private sector is a key participant in developing the nation brand of Palestine.”

Respondent #9, an intellectual citizen (writer and media), and Respondent #10 both agree on the role of the private sector, Respondent #9 said:

“Any initiative to brand Palestine would be best coming from the private sector, which is more credible.”

Discussion of public and private sectors (subthemes)

The public and private sectors are key players in nation branding. Dinnie (2015) argues that public-sector organisations frequently work closely with private-sector organisations in the process of nation branding. This is clear in certain countries that run nation-branding campaigns. Dinnie (2008) illustrates the point with three different case countries which run three different campaigns. In all three campaigns, government involvement and commitment to achieving the campaign objectives is essential in sustaining the participation of all the necessary stakeholders. He adds that the degree of government involvement may be contingent upon the nature and stage of each individual campaign. Government involvement could be most active in the initial stages in order to kick-start the campaign and galvanise stakeholder participation, but it may become more hands-off as private-sector companies engage more actively in the campaign’s development.

The participants of this study were more precise when it came to the role of the public sector, which represents the government.

Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, said:

“It is a comprehensive effort and should be a governmental plan to develop our nation brand – all sectors should be included.”

The respondents' views quoted above were some of those that helped the researcher reach the conclusion that the public and private sectors are among the key stakeholders that should participate in developing a nation brand. The ensuing discussion, which was guided by the respondents' quotes, clearly indicates this conclusion. This finding is in line with the literature which suggests that the public and private sectors should be considered key players in the development of a nation brand (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2015).

4.2.2.3 Tourism (Subtheme)

The tourism sector, whether public or private, plays a key role in nation branding, and the main objective of brand building is to create many prospects for the tourism sector (Anholt, 2007). Although tourism as a stakeholder includes many sub-stakeholders, such as hoteliers, tour operators and restaurants, this study investigates only the importance of stakeholders' participation and their role (perceptions, views and attitudes) in developing the nation brand. Many respondents agreed on the importance of stakeholders' participation from the tourism sector. Although the tourism sector represents 14 per cent of the GDP (Isaac et al., 2016) in Palestine, and this sector is considered to be vital, the findings of this study did not reflect this level of importance and the necessity of this sector taking part in the development process of the nation brand of Palestine. Nevertheless, respondents reacted positively. Both Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, and Respondent #12, a member of the trade/private sector, believe of the role of tourism, Respondent #12 said:

“The tourism sector should participate in developing the nation brand for Palestine. Its role is vital.”

Respondent #6 proposed an inclusive list of stakeholders that includes the tourism sector:

“All different clusters/segments of the society should participate – the economic sectors, tourism sectors, trade sectors, academics.”

The respondents' views on the participation of the tourism sector as a stakeholder was minimal in this study, but this does not reflect the actual impact of this sector on the Palestinian economy. Isaac et al. (2016) state that approximately 50 per cent of tourism revenue in Palestine comes from domestic tourism. This reflects the impact of local stakeholders and their contribution to promoting this sector locally. However, the political unrest in the Middle East impacts on tourism, and people focus on other sectors that might be less impacted by political instability.

Abu Rabah (1998) reports that:

“The tourism industry is a major base for future economic development in Palestine. It requires, therefore, perceptive and clear policies with vision and prospects. To execute such policies, all Palestinian governmental offices should be involved. Assessments of the tourism infrastructure and tourist characteristics are needed.”

He also adds that, at present, tourism in Palestine lacks policies for the public and private sectors. In addition, marketing and information studies, which are responsible for upgrading the image of Palestine as an important tourist country, are missing.

Hussein (2003) argues that, at the beginning of its independence, Palestine will have a weak market share when compared to the Israeli market. However, Palestinians are trying to establish their own strategies and tactics which encourage international travel to their country. It is conceivable that Palestinian independence could result in an influx of tourists from the Arab Islamic countries and the rest of the world. In addition, political policies and processes would be a major influence on tourism activities within the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Reflecting on the views of Hussein et al. (2003), Abu Rabah (1998) and the respondents, the tourism sector (private and public) should play a key role as a stakeholder in developing a nation brand for Palestine. However, the tourism-related outcomes of the empirical study do not

demonstrate the real impact of this sector as a key stakeholder, unlike in the literature, and this should be taken into account when formulating future plans for Palestine's nation brand.

Research findings confirmed all of the aforementioned views of most of the participants who stress the role of the tourism sector as a key player stakeholder. These outcomes are in line with the literature, which suggests the tourism sector is a key player in nation branding (Tecmen, 2017; Cheregi, 2018).

4.2.2.4 Not-for-Profit Organisations (Subtheme)

Although Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach identifies NGOs as key stakeholders in the nation brand, and Cho (2004) highlights the role of NGOs' activities in nation branding, very few respondents gave weight to the importance of NGOs' participation. Respondent #10, who is from an NGO, said:

"NGOs are crucial stakeholders in developing a nation brand for Palestine."

Also, Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, believed in the role of NGOs, specifically cultural NGOs:

"Private sector and cultural NGOs should take part in the development of a nation brand for Palestine."

This finding is in line with the existing literature. Although not many respondents mentioned the role of NGOs, the researcher could not deny the views of the minority of the respondents who believe in the role of NGOs as a stakeholder in developing a nation brand.

The research agrees with Kyriacou & Cromwell (2004), who state that nation branding should consider both domestic internal development and successful integration into the world community, and that NGOs could be among the bodies that link the nation to the world community to achieve

the necessary integration. Zatepilina (2009) also argues that the role of NGOs is essential, and they may impact positively on a country's reputation.

4.2.2.5 The Media (Subtheme)

In the context of media, Bolin and Ståhlberg (2015) identify nation branding as a rapidly developing practice for promoting images of a nation state to tourists or investors. Szondi (2010) also argues that nation branding is being used in a plethora of contexts. Not only branding and marketing practitioners, but politicians, civil servants, journalists and scholars can attach meanings to "nation branding" which best suit their interests or the actual situation. Bolin and Ståhlberg (2015), however, argue that the practice of nation branding presupposes the orchestration of media-based campaigns, although surprisingly few studies have specifically focused on the role of the media in nation-branding processes. Kaneva (2012) calls for a critical review of approaches to the media in nation-branding analysis and argues for a more systematic analysis of the media's role. She also argues that little research has analysed the role of the media as communication technologies, or the agency of national and international media organisations in nation-branding campaigns.

In this study, the role of the media as a key player in nation branding in the sense of what should be covered, how images should be constructed and in which contexts they should be interpreted were among the respondents' concerns when they were asked who should participate in developing the brand for Palestine. The informants also responded to the question about which factors would be essential for developing the nation brand, which will be discussed later. Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, said:

“The media sector should play a role as a key stakeholder in developing the nation brand for Palestine.”

Respondent #18, a Palestinian citizen from the diaspora, reacted to the role of the media, and, similarly, Respondent #28, an experienced public-sector official, also believed in the role of the media and suggested that it should take part:

“The media, in its comprehensive meaning, should be among the stakeholders for developing the nation brand of Palestine – their role in image ushering is crucial.”

The above-mentioned narrations illustrate that the media sector plays an important role as a stakeholder in developing a nation brand. This finding is somewhat in line with the literature, which suggests that few analyses investigate the specific role of the media in nation branding. There are analyses of media material (texts) and the production of campaigns, but, largely, “the media” has been described as a passive tool in the orchestration of nation branding campaigns, lacking agency of its own (Bolin & Ståhlberg, 2015).

4.2.2.6 Inward Investment Agencies (Subtheme)

Inward investment agencies in the context of nation branding play a key role in promoting the country as an attractive investment destination through communicating the nation’s positive attributes (Khadzhynov, 2010). National governments view the attraction of investors as an important element in economic development. Similarly, Anholt (2003) argues that the objective of nation branding is to promote a positive nation image for the country and its people, to establish its brand identity, to enhance the export of its products and to attract tourists and foreign direct investment. Ecorys (2013) argues that investment agencies have become a critical institution in national efforts to attract investment, which would enhance its role as a key stakeholder in developing the nation brand. This was reflected in the views of the interviewees, who strongly

recommended that these agencies take part as key stakeholders in developing a nation brand for Palestine.

Respondent #22, an economist from the public sector, pointed out the role of these agencies in promoting investment in Palestine and strongly supported their role as a stakeholder:

“The Palestine Promotion Investment Agency should participate in developing the nation brand of Palestine, and thus be a key stakeholder.”

Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, also saw the role of investment agencies in developing a nation brand for Palestine:

“It is a comprehensive effort and a governmental plan to develop our nation brand – all the sectors, whether private or public, should be included. Investment agencies should be among them.”

Countries, regardless of their economic standing, always seek inward investment. Foreign investment creates a multitude of advantages by bringing technology, employment, increased quality standards, flows of skilled and knowledgeable employees, increased interaction between countries and other advances and innovations. Consequently, countries compete for an investment-friendly image by developing various investment attractions, such as low- or non-tariff barriers, large and rapidly growing markets, low labour costs, secure access to mineral or raw materials, peace and safety, adequate infrastructure facilities, a sound legal framework and cost-effective logistics (Mihalache & Vukman, 2005; Phan, 2005; Wanjiru, 2006).

The overall attitudes and views of different respondents pointed to the vital role of inward investment agencies in developing a nation brand as a key stakeholder, which is in line with what emerged from the literature review.

4.2.2.7 Intellectual Citizens (Subtheme)

The people of the country, whether locals or members of the diaspora, reflect the image of the country. How they behave and what image they project to others is considered a means of communicating their nation brand. High-profile leaders, media and sports stars, scientists and celebrities always hold the reputation of the country. Anholt (2007) argues that the general population is one of the natural channels of his hexagon through which the country communicates with the rest of world. As stakeholders, Dinnie (2008) recommends the participation of the general population as a key player in the branding process, although the nature of citizen involvement remains vague. The impact of the citizens' views is discussed in the literature from different approaches. Che-Ha et al. (2016) explore a new dimension about the citizens, constructing the citizens' preferences and views on their country as emotion (affect) and perceptions of competitive advantage. Emotion is the positive or negative perception of the country's image, whereas perception of competitive advantage is the country's ability to compete with others. Studies demonstrate that brands need to evoke an emotional connection in order to gain customer loyalty (Daye, 2007). Che-Ha et al. (2016) determine that countries need to be attractive to their citizens with regard to their emotional attachment and create notions of competitive advantage (or superiority) as a way of retaining the citizens and their affinity. This is also the case for country branding, whereby nurturing an emotional value (Gilmore, 2002) can create a strong emotional bond with the country's citizens (Wanjiru, 2005).

Other researchers discuss the importance of the citizens' role. Kotler (2004) and Morgan et al. (2012) argue that, to be a successful brand, countries should be both competitive in retaining and enhancing resources and viewed by their citizens as a place full of opportunities for exercising their skills and interests. It is crucial for a country to have supportive and proud citizens as they are a reflection of the country's brand (Blichfeldt, 2005; Kemp et al., 2012). That citizens' involvement in developing the nation brand is crucial was clear in many respondents' views as they strongly believed in their role as a key stakeholder.

Respondent #10, a member of both an NGO and the diaspora, and Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, strongly recommended the participation of the citizens, Respondent #18 said:

“It is important for intellectual citizens, writers, women to participate, and they should take a role in developing the brand.”

Respondent #29, a member of the public sector, and Respondent #9, an intellectual media expert and writer, saw as necessary the participation of a certain category of citizens. The human capital, either male or female, should be part of nation branding – their role is key in developing the nation brand, Respondent #29 said:

“Writers, artists, poets, social scientists, economists and academics are the first group to be included; politicians as well as religious clerics should be involved in nation branding and be active participants in developing the nation brand of Palestine.”

The respondents were quick to spot the importance of the citizens’ role but differed when determining which citizens should take part. Most of the participants, as mentioned earlier, agreed that intellectual citizens should play a role and be active in nation branding.

Che-Ha et al. (2016) reveal in their study that successful country branding assists countries in gaining popularity with external audiences. The scholars suggest that the process of country branding needs to begin with its citizens. If the public believe in and support factors that contribute to the country’s branding, it will assist the country in embedding a sense of loyalty and retention among its citizens. Consequently, it is essential for a country to ensure that country branding is strongly nurtured in the minds and hearts of its citizens. Anholt (2007, p. 75) states that *“the people are the brand – the brand reflects the genuine of the people”*, and he adds that:

“This is because it is the people and their education, abilities and aspirations that ultimately make the place what it is and create the potential tourism, business, cultural and social and political exchange.”

4.2.2.8 Heritage and Cultural Institutions (Subtheme)

Culture can play a critical role in transforming the current image of a country into a more useful one (Anholt, 2006). Anderson (1991) and Gellner (1983) argue that culture is the national identity of a country, which makes the participation of this sector key. Aronczyk (2013) claims to be one of the first to work on nation brands from a cultural-critical perspective. She argues that nation branding maintains and perpetuates the nation as a container of distinct identities and loyalties, and a project of sovereignty and self-determination (Aronczyk, 2013, p. 4). This relationship between culture and national identity rationalises the connection between culture and its role in building the nation brand and also the impact of this sector participating as a stakeholder in developing the nation brand. However, only one respondent pointed to the importance of this sector as a stakeholder, believing that the strong connection between culture and national identity adds to the necessity of this sector as a key stakeholder. Respondent #13, an artist and academic from the private sector, said:

“Heritage and cultural institutions should play a role and participate in developing the brand for Palestine.”

Respondent #13 specified:

“The Ashtar Theatre and Edward Said Conservatory are among those institutions that should take part as stakeholders. Those two pillars reflect the modern but authentic culture of Palestine.”

4.2.2.9 Embassies (Subtheme)

Embassies are the external body of a government and, according to the Vienna Convention (1961), represent the sending state in the receiving state. According to Gudjonsson (2005), nation branding can be used for political purposes or diplomacy, and sometimes these two approaches – business and politics – are intertwined and need to be streamlined or integrated to attain the goal of nation branding, which involves creating positive platforms and an effective environment for a nation's brand to compete in markets. Anholt (2007) argues that modern diplomats see promoting trade, tourism, culture and investment as an important part of their job. To achieve the largest improvement in a country's reputation, the country must ensure that all the main sectors are aligned in a common strategy. The role that embassies play in nation branding entails their participation in developing the nation brand. The purpose of public diplomacy is to promote government policies through its body, including its embassies. The embassies also reflect the perception of external audiences and the weight of the countries' reputations (Szondi, 2008).

Embassy officials may not be well prepared by their professional training to communicate with the domestic population of the country to which they are posted (Dinnie, 2010). In this respect, Melissen (2007, p. xvii) states that *“the practice of foreign ministries and embassies in engaging with civil society groups and individuals abroad demonstrates that the evolution of diplomatic representation has reached a new stage”*. This represents a further challenge for nation-branding policymakers, a further challenge that they must address to ensure the participation of embassies as a stakeholder in developing the nation brand. Many respondents see the importance of embassies' role as a stakeholder in developing a nation brand for Palestine. Respondent #13, an academic artist from the private sector, and Respondent #28, a member of the public sector, said:

“Diplomatic representation or embassies abroad should play a key role and take part in developing the nation brand of Palestine.”

Respondent # 31, a member of the private sector, said:

“We need to work on strengthening the network among embassies. Embassies should recharge their image and work to develop a positive image – embassies should take part in the process.”

The above discussion of the revealed primary data agrees with the literature – both suggest that embassies should play a role and be stakeholders.

4.2.2.10 Education (Subtheme)

Historically, education and educational institutions have played a key role in building the nation brand through exchange programmes, cultural cooperation and the dissemination of knowledge abroad about the home country (Hogne Lerøy Sataøen, 2015). One of the objectives of nations in their country branding is attracting higher-education students (Dinnie, 2008). Gudjonsson (2005) identifies the “nation brands’ influential map” as an attempt to form a model that can help a nation understand its significant dynamics and communication channels in order to build an efficient and successful communication strategy to support and protect its brand. Education was one of those different factors that plays an influential role not only in supporting and protecting the nation brand but also as a motivated stakeholder in the process of developing the nation brand (Anholt, 2007).

Hogne Lerøy Sataøen (2015) states that one can argue for education playing a role in the so-called “competition state”, and, within this perspective of the state, it is crucial to present a distinct and clearly communicated image of the nation in order to “stand out” in the competition among nations on the international stage. Relatively autonomous higher-education organisations become part of such nation-branding practices as they are used to promote the country to foreign students, employees and other stakeholders. Many respondents in this study emphasised the role that education should play as a key stakeholder in developing a nation brand for Palestine. Respondent #14, an academic from the private sector, and Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, both

emphasise the participation of the education sector:

“Education should be part not only as a channel [for] developing the nation brand, but also as a key stakeholder. Education [is] considered to be the backbone of the Palestinians survival.”

Respondent #15, an academic from the private sector, saw the important role that education should play as a stakeholder and also emphasised the vocational institutions:

“Vocational education institutions should take part in the development process.”

It is believed that education increases the efficiency of workers. People with little education can carry out only simple, manual work and find it difficult to adapt to more advanced production processes and techniques (Schwab, 2009). The advancement and competitiveness of this world entails countries differentiating themselves in order to attract talent (Anholt, 2002). Porter (1990) also argues that education is crucial for economies that want to move up the value chain beyond simple production processes and products. The primary research findings agree with the existing literature results on education. This sector should take part as a stakeholder in developing a nation brand for Palestine.

4.2.2.11 Diaspora (Subtheme)

There has been massive growth in interest worldwide in diaspora engagement in recent years. Many countries, such as Ireland and Cyprus, are creating programmes to engage their diaspora in developing their countries (DFA, 2018). Dinnie (2015) argues that nations that do not have a strategy for activating their diaspora network are squandering a unique and precious resource. Kuznetsov and Sabel (2006) discuss the huge variation in the impact of different nations' diasporas – the diasporas of China and India, for instance, have had a considerable positive impact on their

home countries, whereas Armenia has failed to benefit from its wealthy diaspora. This highlights the necessity of integrating diaspora networks into the overall nation-brand strategy, as Dinnie (2015) concludes. Chand (2010) discusses the vital role that diasporas can play in enhancing a country's international competitiveness and their impact on the nation brand.

The fully inclusive stakeholder approach (FIST) developed by Dinnie (2008) includes the diaspora as a key participant; however, the inclusiveness concept is moderated by the unique set of circumstances prevailing within individual nations. Applying the principle of inclusiveness to the context of nation branding provides a framework indicative of the range of potential stakeholders in the nation brand. The framework is not exhaustive as every individual nation will have its own specific range of stakeholders; however, the framework offers a basis for analysing the diversity of stakeholders that need to be consulted when developing the nation brand. For this thesis, the researcher asked a range of different stakeholders to identify who should participate. Many respondents presented various views on the impact of the diaspora and their involvement in developing a nation brand for Palestine. Respondent #10, a member of the private sector, and Respondent # 13, an artist from the private sector, both agreed on the role of diaspora, Respondent # 13 said:

“The diaspora and the Palestinian communities abroad should be one of the main stakeholders. Their role is vital in reflecting the essence of a genuine nation image of Palestine and in protecting its culture and its history.”

Respondent #15, an academic, Respondent #17, a human-rights activist from the public sector, and Respondent #18, an intellectual citizen from the diaspora, all stressed the role that the diaspora should play, Respondent #17 said:

“The diaspora is the most influential sector that should be involved in developing the nation brand – they should be given the key role in developing the nation brand.”

In the same context, Respondent #21, a member of the public sector, and Respondent #22, an economist from the public sector, precisely stress the role of the diaspora, Respondent #21 said:

“The Palestinian communities abroad [diaspora], who make up half of the Palestinian population and control equity capital always have great influence in our struggle, and they should play a key role in any national plan of developing a nation brand.”

Respondent #25, an artist from the public sector, Respondent #28, a member of the public sector, and Respondent #5, an intellectual citizen, emphasised the role of the diaspora in developing the nation brand of Palestine, Respondent #25 said:

“Palestinian communities abroad [diaspora] are important stakeholders that should play a role in developing the nation brand of Palestine ... The role of the Palestinian diaspora is essential in developing the brand, and they will also present and reflect the real message of [the] brand to the world ... The diaspora should be represented in the national congress and in any national plan to develop the brand of Palestine.”

Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, and Respondent #31, a media expert from the private sector, recommend an action plan for involving the diaspora, Respondent #12 said:

“We need to work on a national congress that includes all the Palestinians abroad. The Palestinian communities abroad [diaspora] should be involved in nation branding Palestine, and it is important to organise events to open dialogue with our communities abroad.”

4.2.2.12 Civil Society Organisations and Political Parties (Subtheme)

Many scholars (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008; Gusjonssons, 2005; Hankinson, 2007) define nation branding as an integrated effort by the participants of many different disciplines within the nation to develop and communicate strong brand identities and nation-brand values, thus achieving competitive identity. Dinnie and Folla (2009) argue that, in addition to the public and private sectors, the third key pillar in terms of stakeholder groups is civil society, in the form of organisations such as diaspora networks and various NGOs. In the context of who should participate in developing the brand, Gudjonsson (2005) argues that it is important to understand the functions of the political culture, government, social system and political system when discussing nation branding. Politics is a very important communication channel, with its diplomacy and influence over every single aspect of a nation's existence and image. Many respondents expressed their views regarding this and emphasised the role of civil society and political parties as key participants and stakeholders in nation branding. Respondent #15, an academic and politician from the private sector, and Respondent #17, a human-rights activist from the public sector, both agree on the same views, Respondent #17 said:

“Social society, such as religious representatives [Muslims, Christians and Jews], and the civil society organisations should participate in developing the nation brand for Palestine.”

Respondent #20, a member of the trade sector and chambers, said:

“The whole community should be involved [private and public sectors]: academia, economy, finance, agriculture, industry, unions, tourism [ministry, hotels], IT sectors should participate and take part in nation branding and developing a nation brand.”

Respondent #6, a high-ranking official from the investment sector, and Respondent #7, a high-

ranking official from the diaspora, both reflect the same views, Respondent #6 said:

“The role of civil society organisations and political parties is key to building our human capital and reviving our national concepts. Public sector, ministries of planning and departments for statistics should play a key role in developing the nation brand, as well as civil society organisations, where ideas and trends could be monitored, which is also essential in this process ... Educate the people, not solely regarding the school curriculum, but educate them how to be proud of their national identity. This kind of education comes not from schools but from the national movement and political parties. Activating the role of the political parties and diminishing their authority is necessary for strengthening our national identity and thus our state – political parties should also be involved in developing the nation brand.”

Yan (2011) has stressed that governments are voted in for very short terms, even much shorter than what a branding campaign necessitates. It is very important to involve political parties and civil society organisations to ensure some sustainable commitments in case of any political change.

4.2.2.13 Academics (Subtheme)

As mentioned earlier, Dinnie and Folla (2009) argue that, in the context of nation branding, identifying stakeholders is a more complicated task than in a single-company corporate environment considering the multiplicity and almost-infinite range of potential stakeholders in the nation brand. Every citizen can be regarded as a stakeholder, as well as every organisation operating within any given country.

Anholt (2007) argues that education plays an important role in establishing the image of the country for future generations and building advocates and supporters. It is also important in the reverse sense, whereby education helps the new generation (children, young adults, etc.) to be better advocates of their own nation. Academics are one of the means and tools through which

education can be delivered. Many respondents suggested academics should participate as stakeholders in developing a nation brand for Palestine. Respondent #13, an artist and academic from the private sector, and Respondent #29, a member of the public sector (culture), both have the same views, Respondent #29 said :

“Education and academics should play a key role in developing the nation brand and be part of the stakeholders who will be developing the nation brand. Education played a key role in strengthening the Palestinians to face displacement and enhance their image as the most educated and literate nation in the world.”

Respondent #9, an intellectual media citizen, said:

“Artists or groups of activists including academics [and] scientists may work together to brand Palestine ... They should call for economists, artists, writers, historians and academics to work together on developing a nation brand for Palestine.”

Overall, the attitudes of many informants express a high degree of attention to the importance of this sector. They pay attention to the role that academics should play in developing the nation brand, and this reflects the importance of this sector’s participation in developing a nation brand.

4.2.2.14 Trade and Economy (Subtheme)

Dinnie (2008) argues that the wide-ranging nature of nation branding necessitates the involvement of many parties in the formulation and implementation of nation-brand strategy. The principle of inclusiveness holds that all relevant stakeholders need to be involved in campaign development. Trade and economy represent a key component of the FIST approach. Many respondents agree that the trade and economy sectors, whether public or private, should be among the stakeholders.

Some of the respondents named specific sectors, for example banks, the insurance sector, industrial cities, and chambers and business associations.

Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, and Respondent #14, an academic from the private sector shared the same views, Respondent #13 stated:

“Banks and economic institutions should participate in developing the nation brand of Palestine.”

Respondent #16, a member of the private sector, said:

“Banks, communication sectors, economy sectors should be among the stakeholders involved in developing the nation brand of Palestine.”

Respondent #20, a member of the trade/private sector, stated:

“The whole community should be involved [private and public sectors]: academia, economy, finance, agriculture, industry, unions, tourism [ministry, hotels], IT sectors ... Chambers, businessmen and businesswomen, insurance, banking, industrial zones and cities, statistics, foreign affairs, Palestine Standards Institution, all should be involved in this national plan of developing the nation brand.”

Respondent #21, a member of the public tourism sector, said:

“Municipalities, export sector, Palestinian communities abroad [diaspora] should be involved and be among the stakeholders.”

Respondent #22, an economist from the private sector, said:

“The Palestinian Industrial Estates & Free Zone Authority should participate in developing a nation brand for Palestine. ... The Palestine Standards Institution should also be part and take a role as a stakeholder.”

Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, said:

“As a comprehensive effort of a national plan to develop our nation brand, all sectors should be included: investment, culture, agriculture, medicine [health sector], banks, tourism, economy, whether private or public sector ... Government should be responsible for this national plan of developing the nation brand.”

More than one participant proposed a much more inclusive list of stakeholders. Respondent #20, a member of the private sector, and Respondent #28, who is a member of the public sector, formulated an inclusive list of potential stakeholders that should participate in developing a nation brand for Palestine, Respondent #20 said:

“The whole community should be involved [private and public sectors]: academia, economy, finance, agriculture, industry, unions, tourism [ministry, hotels], IT sectors, academics, diplomatic and political channels, media, private sector and public sector, tourism, diaspora, embassies.”

As a concluding remark, the participants' attitudes indicate a high degree of positivity towards the importance of this sector. Their attention reflects the impact that trade and economy sectors have and should have as key stakeholders in developing the nation brand of Palestine.

Next, the researcher will present the concluding remarks on the findings from the primary data

collected from the 33 participants, discussing the outcomes with reference to the literature.

Discussion of Stakeholders (Theme 2) and its Subthemes

The above-mentioned findings and how they are being compared with the existing literature will be summarised in the discussion that follows.

Dinnie (2008) discusses the idea of applying the principle of inclusiveness to the context of nation branding with respect to stakeholders who should participate in the nation brand. The original FIST approach provides a framework indicative of the range of potential stakeholders in the nation brand. As stated above, the framework is not exhaustive as every individual nation will have its own specific range of stakeholders; however, the framework offers a basis for analysing the diversity of stakeholders that will need to be consulted when developing a nation brand. This research, which investigates the case of Palestine, asked questions of a range of different related people who, according to certain criteria, are the most suitable sample of the Palestinian population. The common response of most of the interviews was that the process of developing a nation brand for Palestine requires the effort of every citizen and should be developed at a national level. In some cases, the respondents were specific and named the sectors they believe are important and should play a role as stakeholders. Dinnie's (2008) FIST approach was expanded to include many national sectors not included in his framework. As Dinnie (2008) emphasises, the FIST framework is not comprehensive, and every individual nation will have its own specific range of stakeholders. He offers as illustration many examples of nations which adopt a different range of stakeholders according to the priorities of and the goals set by the nation, for example those set by France, Iceland, Bolivia, Russia, Sri Lanka and Brazil (in this case, in relation to Information Technology). In the case of Palestine, the participants were asked, among other questions: Who do you think should participate in the national plan for developing a nation brand for Palestine?

The information gleaned from the stakeholders illustrates the diversity that would enrich nation branding in Palestine as it includes not only private and public sectors but also marginalised groups such as disabled citizens, who were mentioned by Respondent #10, a member of the public sector:

“The disabled are very competitive and constitute an essential sector to be included among the stakeholders. Palestine has had specialised laws for the disabled since 1994 and regulates their obligatory presence in all public departments.”

Some participants also mentioned religious figures, children, municipalities and unions. To conclude, the empirical part of this research emerged as compatible with Dinnie’s (2015) theory that the stakeholder framework of FIST is not exhaustive as every individual nation will have its own specific range of stakeholders. In the case of Palestine, the stakeholders themselves participate in forming, shaping and identifying the stakeholders’ map (see Appendix 8).

Agle et al. (2008), Freeman et al. (2010) and Kotsi et al. (2018) claim that, despite more than 30 years of research, stakeholder theory remains underdeveloped and requires substantial further advancement from a theory-building point of view. The role of stakeholders is discussed in the literature from different approaches. Value creation and trade are the main concerns of the stakeholder theories of Freeman et al. (2010), Garriga (2014) and Harrison et al. (2010), while others discuss it from the perspective of social responsibility (CSR), for example Carroll (1979) and Papasolomou et al. (2005). Another aspect of concern when discussing the theory of stakeholders is the psychological theory of human judgment and decision-making, which was first proposed by Kahneman and Tversky (1979). Prospect theory argues that the contribution of an outcome to judgment may differ markedly from the objective outcome (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). This is because people tend to judge value in terms of losses and gains against a reference state, and not as absolute states. The stakeholders in Palestine were concerned with a national cause that has a great impact on their judgment. Their views regarding the nation brand were not

expressed in terms of losses and gains, and the researcher may thus say, based on the evaluation and final analysis of the stakeholders' views, that they matched the objective outcome and added value to the entire approach.

Using a different approach, applying the ethical decision-making model of Jones (1991), the process can be seen to consist of recognising the issue, making a judgment, establishing intent and engaging in behaviour. Following this approach, the researcher focuses only on engaging in behaviour to explore the views of the stakeholders. The assessment/judgment stage of exploring the cognitive processes by which stakeholders form their evaluations was not part of this study as the researcher relied on the stakeholders' national concern as well as Jones' (1991) belief that an improved understanding of the stakeholders' judgments should allow for better predictions of stakeholder reactions. In the same context, Lankoski, Smith and Van Wassenhove (2016), argue that stakeholder judgments will be determined by the perceived level of the reference state at the moment of judgment. In case of this current study, the researcher builds on the previous argument and suggests relevant interpretation based on a national issue.

The stakeholder judgments of value are central to stakeholder theory and stakeholder management, but are still insufficiently understood (Lankoski, Smith & Van Wassenhove, 2016). Accordingly, and as explained earlier, the researcher was concerned only with the stakeholders' behaviour and their final judgment and did not dig into the details of how the stakeholders make their judgments. The involvement of stakeholders in developing a nation brand and nation branding is essential. Dinnie et al. (2015) reiterate that the wide-ranging nature of nation branding necessitates the involvement of many parties in the formulation and implementation of a nation-brand strategy. Kaneva (2017) also stresses that nation-branding programmes cannot succeed without genuine citizen engagement and support.

To conclude, this current research study focuses on the queries that emerged from the initial framework regarding the stakeholders' views and attitudes towards the factors and elements that are essential for developing a nation brand and who should be involved in this national process. It has been identified that various findings discussed in the primary research analysis above support and agree with the current literature findings, but there are also some additions. Many sectors were forwarded and emphasised by different informants.

Finally, Dinnie et al. (2015) argue that many challenges face the stakeholders in the nation-branding process other than their composition; for example, the coordination of nation-brand touchpoints, the need to develop a coherent nation-brand architecture and the highly politicised nature of nation branding. In the following sections, the researcher will highlight other relevant findings for this theme including coordination. Also, the researcher will shed light on many other key factors and elements of nation branding and developing a nation brand such as nation-brand natural channels, communication of the nation brand, and other very related concepts such as national identity, brand core value and message/motto. A general discussion of the outcomes in relation to current literature will also be included.

4.2.3 Theme 3 (RQ4): The Message (Motto)

Zeybek and Ünlü (2016) argue that nation branding harmonises strategic communication and marketing communication messages about the nation. Its most important aspects include the building of the country's image and a uniform visual and verbal identity. Fan (2006) argues that the largest challenge in nation branding is how to communicate a single image or message to different audiences in different countries. In this research, the stakeholders were asked to share their views and reflect on their experiences with reference to not only the message that they wish to deliver to the whole world but also how this message could reflect the national identity and brand core values. According to Dinnie (2015), stakeholders must agree that the final vision

statement provides both a meaningful and an operational “dream” for the future of their destination – one that reflects the values of destination stakeholders while not ignoring the realities and constraints of the marketplace. Dinnie (2015) also argues that any nation-branding campaign needs to be guided by the identification and selection of a set of appropriate brand values. The identification of these nation-brand values needs to be based on extensive research that takes an inclusive approach to all the nation’s stakeholder groups, and the selection of nation-brand values may be facilitated through inviting key stakeholders to present their vision for the nation brand and then, through using the Delphic brand-visioning technique, attempting to arrive at a consensus vision (Dinnie, 2015).

What nation-brand value means and how it was reflected in the views of stakeholders and shaped into the message/motto that represents Palestine

Urde (2003) defines the brand core values as all-embracing terms that sum up the identity of the brand as well as being the guiding principles for all internal and external brand-building processes. Dinnie (2015) argues that many countries have a motto (slogan/message) that encapsulates certain values embodied in the nation. This can provide a useful starting point for nations embarking on an exercise in identifying and selecting nation-brand values (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Selecting nation-brand values

Nation	Motto
Columbia	'Liberty and Order'
France	'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'
Argentina	'In Union and Freedom'
Botswana	'Rain'
Scotland	'No one provokes me with impunity'
Pakistan	'Unity, Discipline, and Faith'
Tunisia	'Order, Liberty, Justice'
Australia	'Advance Australia Fair'
Cuba	'Homeland or Death'
Greece	'Freedom or Death'
Norway	'All for Norway'
Armenia	'One Nation, One Culture'
Senegal	'One People, One Goal, One Faith'

Source: Dinnie, 2008, p. 173

Fan (2005) argues that the message/image needs to be relevant and credible. An image that appeals to one culture or in one situation may not do the same in another culture or situation. Trying to be one thing to all audiences or all things to all audiences renders the message meaningless.

Anholt (2005, p. 297) identifies the brand value as a significant factor in terms of providing advantage and disadvantage in the global competitive environment. In accordance with the arguments of Urde (2003), Fan (2005, 2006) and Dinnie (2008, 2015) regarding the core brand values, the researcher investigated the views of a range of different Palestinian stakeholders who participated in this qualitative research. The participants encapsulated their views and attitudes in verbal messages and logos. These messages hold the essence of the core values (brand identity) of the Palestinians.

In terms of **verbal message**, Respondent #10, a member of the diaspora, said “*Solidarity through development*”, “*Export Palestine*” or “*Samed*”. These messages have great meaning for the Palestinians. Below are the suggestions from many of the interviewees.

Respondent #11, a member of the private sector (trade): “*Buy time in Jerusalem*” or “*Buy in Palestine*”

Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector believes that sharing the suffering Palestinians would reflect a strong message: “*Oppressed Palestinians*”

Coming from an academic standpoint, Respondent #15, like many others, reflects on his “*The cradle of religions*”

Respondent #17: “*The cradle of civilisation*”

Respondent #18, a member of the Palestinian diaspora: “*Peace is awaiting*”, and,

optimistically: *“Friendly people”*

Respondent #16, a member of the private sector: *“Diversity in Palestine”*

Respondent #19, a member of the private sector (trade): *“Palestine is the holy land for all religions”*

Respondent #20, a member of the private sector (trade): *“Forward-thinking nation”*, and *“We are the most secure place in the region”*

Some respondents reflect from their own experience.

Respondent #21, a member of the public sector (tourism): *“Come and see Palestine”*

Respondents #22, like Respondent #32 and #33, said: *“Palestine is the land of peace”*

Respondent #22, an economist from the public sector: *“Invest in Palestine”*

Respondent #23, a member of the private sector (trade): *“Ancient Palestine”*

Respondent #24, a member of the private sector (trade): *“Trade, not aid”*

Respondent #26, a member of the public sector (investment): *“Palestine is the state of law”*

Respondent #27, an intellectual from the diaspora: *“The distinguished Palestinian is our pride”*, and *“Outstanding nation”*

Respondent #28, a member of the public sector (education): *“Hope”*

Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora: *“Palestine, civilised culture”*

In terms of **the logo of the message**, many respondents visualised the logo that Palestine could use to promote its nation brand in any future campaign. Respondent #11, a member of the private sector (trade), Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, and Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, suggested the same slogan, Respondent #18 said:

*“The slogan could be an **Anemone Coronaria**.”*



Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, said:

*“The message behind promoting our music is that the Palestinian nation is pro-peace. Terrorists would never be creative in music. Music is a civilised activity; an ancient Palestinian **instrument** would be the logo.”*

Respondent #15, an academic from the private sector, Respondent #12, an artist, and Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, reflect similarly within the same context, Respondent #12 said:

*“Our message or our slogan should reflect a mixture of religions, climate and history. The **olive tree** is the symbol of Palestine, the symbol of peace. Palestine is the holy land for the three religions.”*

Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, reflects strong images that remain in their memory:

*“**Hebron grapes**”, “**Jaffa oranges**”, “**Dead Sea**”, “**Jericho**”, “**Bethlehem**”, “**Dates**”*

Respondent #19, a member of the private sector (trade), said:

*“Palestine’s **sunbird** is the national bird that could be chosen to represent the image of Palestine.”*

On September 2018, the Palestinian government announced plans to adopt the Palestine sunbird as its logo for the promotion of exported products.



Respondent #21, a member of the private sector (tourism), said:

*“The Palestinian antiques (**olive wood, mother-of-pearl, Hebron glass, embroideries**) reflect our message to the world. These antiques are artistic pieces that represent Palestine. There are no competitors to the Palestinians in respect to this kind of art.”*

Respondent #23, a member of the private sector (trade), said:

*“We used the stones as a resistance tool and now we export **beautiful designs using stones.**”*

Respondent #29, a member of the public sector (education), reflects on their history of resistance and steadfastness:

*“**Al kofia** is a symbol of Palestine, of defending the right of freedom.”*

Respondent #29 quoted the poet Mahmoud Darwish:

“Without hope we are lost, we are captive of hope – we suffer from an incurable malady: hope.”

Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora, said:

“Palestinians are very educated people. We should reflect the importance of education message and logo to the world and work to be an education hub.”

Respondent #12, an artist from the private sector, recommended:

“‘Ceklab’ was the image of Jerusalem in the past ... Indigo [originating in Canaanite] was used by one of our artists to create different figures.”

Respondent #31, a member of the media and tourism sector, recommended:

“‘Bethlehem’ is the window to Palestine.”

The aforementioned responses reflect the impact of the message of the nation brand. The informants were extremely enthusiastic about suggesting both verbal and even visual message. However, although these messages vary in their content, they indicate the great impact of the message as a factor that should be considered when developing a nation brand.

Discussion of the Message (Theme 3)

Throughout this stage of the empirical research, the respondents were very keen to suggest a message that reflected their hope, core values and national identity. This variety reflects not only their different backgrounds and experiences but also their aspirations and hopes for a better future. One of the respondents said *“Hope”* or *“The land of peace”*. If this message were adopted for the nation brand, it would reflect the stakeholders’ past experience and their wish to make it real in the future. These messages would help determine the natural channels through which to make the messages real and genuinely reflect the core of the nation brand. In this respect, Dinnie (2008) argues that a motto/logo that encapsulates certain values embodied in the nation provides a useful

starting point for nations embarking on an exercise in identifying and selecting nation-brand values. The kind of brand value can be used to underpin nation-branding campaigns.

In this research, the stakeholders were requested to express their views about the message or the slogan that would be the most appropriate to represent their nation brand. Although their views varied, most of their responses contained traces of a common message that reflects not only their identity but also their hope for a better future.

These messages could be expressed in different images and could change according to the target audience or the aim of the nation-branding campaign (Dinnie, 2015). The aim of presenting different slogans (see Figure 17) and verbal messages/mottos (see Figure 16) is to demonstrate how these messages reflect the core values of the brand and how respondents reflect, based on their belonging and identity, on either the suggested slogans or verbal messages.

These slogans or verbal messages hold different meanings. In reality, the stakeholders would be in a position to reflect on their perspectives and beliefs in order to shape one or more messages and even slogans. Kotler-Keller (2012, p. 93) argues that the role of the slogan is to provide a reference point or clue to customers in order to make them understand what is behind the brand, and what makes it



special. Dinnie (2015) argues that the identification and selection of nation-brand values may be facilitated through inviting key stakeholders to surface their vision for the nation brand and then, through the use of the Delphic brand-visioning technique, attempting to arrive at a consensus vision. The empirical findings of this current research study reveal indirectly how the stakeholders

could surface their vision regarding the messages and mottos that reflect the core brand values that will later underpin the nation brand.

“The olive tree” reflects the history of Palestine. This was the slogan that was recommended by one of the stakeholders. It not only reflects the identity of belonging but is also a symbol of life and a message of survival and freedom. These meanings were not born from a void – identity shapes every aspect of this slogan or visual identity. In this respect, Zeybek and Ünlü (2016) argue that one of the most important actions that countries must undertake to promote their cultural elements and values is creating a visual identity. They also emphasise that nation identity and image are achieved primarily through designing a good logo, which is also the basis of visual-identity studies as well as reflecting the nation-brand values.

In theory, nation branding calls for communicating in a coordinated and consistent fashion with multiple stakeholders. In reality, it is impossible to develop such a simple core message about a country that can be used by different industry sectors in different countries (Fan, 2006, 2007). One slogan, one campaign, no matter how clever or creative, cannot sell everything to everyone. Fan (2007) suggested that it would be more meaningful and practical to have nation branding conceptualised, measured and executed at a number of sublevels (as a place brand, event brand or export brand). The empirical findings of this research study revealed that the message reflects core values, identity and hope (aim). Therefore, the message will impact on the selection of the nation-brand channels as well as shaping the strategy for communicating the nation brand to the target audience.

In conclusion, the stakeholders managed to elaborate on different related questions that covered the issue of message/motto. The views of different stakeholders reflected on the relationship between the national identity and the image or the slogan, the message behind the slogan, and finally who is responsible for branding the nation, and who should be involved. In this respect,

Bureau (1998) defines nation brand, where the brand is a country, state or nation, as the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provides the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences. This definition acknowledges the need to integrate national-identity dimensions within the nation brand. Dinnie (2015) argues that nations do not belong to brand managers or corporations; rather, if they “belong” to anyone, it is to the nation’s entire citizenry. Governments are assumed to represent the people of a nation, and, therefore, governments must play a key role in nation-branding strategy. The government and the entire citizenry are the key pillars of developing the nation brand.

4.2.4 Theme 4 (RQ5): Nation Brand

Anholt (2003) calls for poor Third World countries to use nation branding in developing their economies, but they must first find or make something to sell: a product or service which is competitive in the market place. To achieve this, they need investment, technology and knowhow far more than they need nation branding. Without a good product, branding would work to no avail. The model of competitive identity that Anholt (2007) developed describes the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy, trade, investment, tourism and export promotion. Anholt (2007) emphasises that his intention was not to give a detailed “recipe” for developing a nation brand, because there is no universal standard formula; rather, he argues that the process must always be collaborative, and every place has its own aims, circumstances, resources, challenges and opportunities. This gives opportunities to researchers and practitioners to adopt different models according to different places and circumstances, and to develop an updated version of the original model to match each case. In this study, the researcher builds on the original model of nation brand with a collaborative effort by different stakeholders in Palestine presenting their views on the elements and factors that would be essential in developing a nation brand for Palestine.

What factors do you think would be essential for developing a nation brand for Palestine?

This was the question put to all 33 informants, who represented a range of different stakeholders in Palestine, in order to surface their views on this matter. Their responses varied according to their background, knowledge and experiences. The respondents in general agreed with the main theory, whereby export, culture and heritage, citizens, policies/government investment and tourism are the main natural channels of a nation brand, but they also extended beyond these channels by including specific ones that are more relevant to the case of Palestine. The empirical research revealed eight core natural channels that are essential for developing a nation brand for Palestine: culture and heritage, education, export, human capital, inward investment, politics, technology and tourism.

Respondent #10, a member of the diaspora, mentioned many natural channels:

“We are branding Palestine unconsciously. We are branding Palestine through public diplomacy without involving politics ... Our competitive advantage is education. We have talented people who are competitive ... Palestinians have the human capital, and the expertise to share it with the world ... Palestine has a competitive advantage in its human heritage – recently, UNESCO added different historical places in Palestine to an international protected heritage list, like Bethlehem, Sabastia, Battir, al Haram al Ibrahimi in the city of Hebron ... Religious tourism and alternative tourism where human factors are involved to show our culture to the world ... Artisan crafts is a thriving sector that could be a competitive advantage that helps to develop a brand for Palestine ... Mother-of-pearl, glass industry and ceramics are some of the leading traditional manufacturers in Palestine ... Food industries are competitive (olive oil, wood, dates, etc.), and we export it to many countries as they are high-quality products ... Culture and heritage, economy, tourism and museums are natural channels that should play an essential role in developing Palestine’s brand.”

Respondent #11, a member of the private sector (trade), said:

“Palestine has good-quality products that compete in the international market ... Palestinian fresh herbs are of a high-level grading.”

A knowledge-based economy is essential for Palestine to become dominant and to generate tangible and intangible values. Technology, particularly knowledge-based technology, helps us use human knowledge to create machines. This knowledge will drive us to compete internationally.

Respondent #11 also said:

“Palestine is a great niche for investment – we have rules to incentivise investments.”

Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, said:

“Music plays an essential role in human civilisation, and thus would have a great effect on developing a nation brand.”

Respondent #11 also added:

“When we present our music, we promote our identity. Music expresses our suffering without losing the message of the music as an expressive art. Music could be a great message for promoting our image in a positive way. Music should play a key role in developing the nation brand.”

Respondent #13, a member of the private sector (education), viewed sport as a natural channel of the nation brand:

“Sport Festival was used by people to practise their resistance to the Zionist immigration to Palestine. Palestinians used festivals to shed light on their culture and identity.”

Respondent #13 expressed views on the effect of human capital and education:

“Palestine has educated and talented human resources. Human capital is our competitive advantage.”

Respondent #13 also added:

“Arts, culture and sports could be essential channels of the nation brand for Palestine ... Tourism and religious tourism also could be core elements or natural channels.”

Respondent #15, an intellectual academic, pointed out different natural channels that are essential elements of the nation brand:

“The economic impact from the Haj is great. Palestine will attract people as a religious market ... The climate diversity would attract tourists, so climate diversity would be a natural channel of the nation brand. Palestine is small in area, but the variety in its landscape could also constitute an attractive factor to tourists. There are the mountains, the sea and areas below sea level. Tourists can easily reach all different kinds of landscapes in 2–3 hours. Also, Palestine could attract tourists throughout the year because of the climate diversity... Education is also an essential factor that Palestine could work on to develop its brand. Education also has a great impact on the workforce. Palestine has a competitive advantage in its very well-educated workforce ... The diaspora can play an essential role and could be a key channel [of] the nation brand.”

Respondent #15 pointed out other channels:

“Industry could be an element or a channel of the nation brand. Building industrial cities and

parks would create a different image for Palestine ... Hi-Tec industries could also be a channel of the nation brand, and the furniture industry is flourishing and could be an essential factor for developing the brand ... Human capital could be an essential channel of the nation brand.”

Respondent #16, a member of the investment sector, emphasised some other channels:

“The human talent, geography, as well as the different landscape could be considered a competitive advantages and part of the nation-brand natural channels.”

Respondent #16 forwarded language as another channel:

“Neutral Arabic dialect in Palestine and the English language, as well as many other languages in Palestine [all are linked to historical and religious status of Palestine as a pilgrimage destination], could be to our competitive advantage.”

Respondent #16 also emphasised technology:

“Technology also could be a channel and communicator of Palestine’s nation brand.”

Adding that:

“Foreign direct investment is an important factor for developing our nation brand.”

Respondent #17, a member of the public sector, pointed out different channels:

“The political system endorsed, embraced the culture of diversity ... Culture and arts, heritage, customs, cuisine and food are essential elements of the nation brand ... Skilled and educated workforce, as well as human capital, could be as well essential elements or natural channels of the nation brand.”

Respondent #17 stressed:

“Export could be an essential element of the nation brand, specifically stones and marble as an export brand ... Pharmaceuticals is one of the competitive-advantage sectors that could be a key channel of Palestine’s nation brand.”

Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, stressed different channels:

“Food and gastronomy, human capital, education, especially an educated and skilled workforce, is our competitive advantage that could be [an] essential element of the nation brand.”

Respondent #19, a member of the private sector (trade), pointed out different export brands:

“Hebron glass, mother-of-pearl, Palestinian ceramic ... The Khalili stone are very well known as a good-quality product for export. All could be elements of the nation brand.”

Respondent #19 also added:

“We have two of the oldest cities – Hebron and Jericho –and other religious ones Jerusalem and Bethlehem. All these cities bring in more than \$20 billion income for Israel, why Israel would

leave it? These are Palestinian tourist cities, and we should work to develop a strategy to promote those Palestinian cities. Tourism should be [a] core element of Palestine's nation brand."

Respondent #19 repeated and stressed the importance of human capital and Palestinian herbs:

"The Palestinian humans are the most precious value we have. Human capital should be considered as [an] essential channel of the nation brand ... Palestinian herbs should be considered as an export brand channel."

Respondent #20, a member of the private sector (trade), mentioned some different factors and reiterated others previously mentioned:

"Our competitive advantage is the products (stones) which we export to 70 countries – we also export pharmaceuticals, agriculture products and herbs ... Human capital and human experts are our competitive advantage."

Respondent #20 stressed other factors:

"Services sectors like tourism [in general either historical, religious, business or alternative], trade and industry are the natural channels that should be empowered to develop the nation brand for Palestine. [Tourism is a cluster that is linked to food, IT, handcrafts, festivals] all together could be natural channels of the nation brand."

Respondent #20 reiterated:

"Tourist places: Church of nativity, al Aqsa mosques, al Ebrahimi mosques are part of the tourism channel that should be a key natural channel of the nation brand ... Consultancy services which reflect human capital are an important element that is essential for developing the brand of

Palestine ... Investment, also, is a sector that should be an essential channel of the nation brand ... Through music, we can promote Palestine.”

Respondent #21, a member of the public sector (tourism), said:

“Tourism is [a] natural channel that is essential for developing a brand for Palestine ... Tourism could be religious, alternative or historical.”

Respondent #21 reiterated the role of climate, culture and heritage:

“We have the nature, we have the moderate climate, we have the cultural heritage and customs, we have the oldest city in the world ... Culture and heritage is also a natural channel that is essential for developing a nation brand for Palestine.”

Respondent #21 also added:

“Sports tourism is part of tourism, which is also essential channel of the nation brand ... Mother-of-pearl, olive-tree wood, Oriental antiques and Hebron glass are the artistic tools that boost tourism.”

Discussion of Nation Brand (Theme 4) and its Subthemes

In his model of a nation brand, Anholt (2006) argues that the nation brand is the sum of people’s perceptions of a country across six areas of national competence. Together, these areas make what is called the Nation Brand Hexagon. The main natural channels of this hexagon are: tourism, export, culture and heritage, people, investment, policy/governance/public diplomacy. Anholt

(2007) argues that those channels are not the only “booster rockets” of the nation brand; rather, culture, education, sport, poetry, ceremony and ritual also play an important role in establishing the image of the nation brand. Also, Kim, Shim and Dinnie (2013) argue that the important elements of a nation brand include political, economic, social, cultural and natural environment attributes related to the country’s sovereignty, territory and citizens.

Gudjonsson (2005) asserts that, even though the economy is often seen as the driving force behind measuring a country’s competitiveness, other factors, such as people, culture, politics and geography, are fundamental to a country’s competitive advantage (nation brand). Furthermore, Fan (2010) identifies nation brand as the sum of all perceptions of a nation in the minds of international stakeholders, which may contain some of the following elements: people, place, culture/language, history, food, fashion, famous faces (celebrities) and global brands.

The empirical data of this research study revealed other natural channels in addition to those identified in the literature. The informants of this study expressed their views based on their knowledge and practical experiences in different fields, clusters and sectors (see Appendix 6). The added-value channels that have been revealed form part of a wider range of natural channels that could impact other nations. This demonstrates that no two nations are alike, and the uniqueness of nations makes their people perceive different boosters for enhancing their nation brand. The stakeholders’ views on Palestine indicate that those elements and channels most related to their national identity would be the ones best suited to building their nation brand.

The previous discussion agrees with what emerged from the literature of nation branding. Anholt (2007) defines nation brand as the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences. This

definition acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the nation brand, together with the need to integrate national identity dimensions.

In the same context, Fan (2006) argues that nations do not offer tangible products and services; rather, they consist of many factors and associations, such as a place (i.e. in geographical terms: states, cities, areas), natural resources and beauties, local products, people, history (i.e. myths, stories, landmarks, monuments), culture, language, political and economic systems, social institutions, infrastructure, celebrities, design (i.e. architecture, fashion) and images. Therefore, nation branding is “*concerned with a country’s whole image on the international stage, covering political, economic and cultural dimensions*” (Fan, 2010, p. 98).

In conclusion, this agrees with what emerged from the empirical data. Almost all stakeholders suggested as many natural channels, elements and associations as the literature revealed. This reflects the impact of this factor (the nation-brand channels) on developing the nation brand. The emphasis the participants place on the various channels indicate that they should be considered when developing the nation brand.

4.5 Theme 5 (RQ6): Communication

4.5.1 Communicating Nation Brand

Anholt (2003, p. 139) contextualises nation branding as a “*dominant channel of communication for national identity*”. He emphasises communication as the central concept in nation branding and that it plays a key role in delivering the nation brand to the target audience and the world. Goodman (2006) argues that the overall aim of brand communication across the broad array of targeted stakeholders is to build trust through consistency of execution, whereas Hankinson (2004) suggests

that the vision, together with a set of core brand values, is an essential precursor to a wider debate about the brand strategy with potential partners who will eventually help to advance the strategy. This is an incremental process in which the core brand is extended by means of effective relationships with stakeholder partners, each of whom will refine and reinforce the core brand values through consistent communication and delivery of related services. In his five guiding principles, Hankinson (2007) argues that consistent communication across a wide range of stakeholders is a key principle in his model for the brand management of a destination brand.

In this research study, the respondents express their views regarding communication, and their responses reflect their perspectives on the role of communication and what communication means would best achieve the aim of delivering the nation brand both externally and internally.

Respondent #25, an artist from the public sector, said:

“Coordination, communication and collective effort are key factors in nation branding and essential for developing the nation brand as a national project.”

Respondent #4, an academic from the diaspora, said:

“Stakeholders should communicate on a clear basis, and it is important to identify the key tasks – communication plays an important role and [is] considered a key factor in nation branding and developing a nation brand.”

The added complexity of corporate and nation brands lies in the wider range of the brand’s stakeholders and the multiplicity of communication channels that need to be used in order to reach those audiences. In this respect, the study also explores the stakeholders’ views regarding how best

to communicate the nation brand, both internally and externally, to reach different audiences. Anholt (2007) argues in his CI (nation brand) theory that, if governments coordinate their efforts around the six natural channels of the nation brand, they stand a good chance of building and maintaining their competitive national identity, both internally and externally.

Hankinson (2007) argues that the organic-influencer segment consists of organisations and groups of people who can have a profound influence on the destination's brand image through their communication role; these include the media, education and the arts in particular. Many respondents suggested ways to communicate the nation brand both internally and externally, for example embassies, media and social media, technology and audio-visual media.

Respondent #10, a member of the public sector, said:

“It is important to have our nation brand on our embassies’ agenda, to promote the other [non-political] side of the story to the world. Communicate the nation brand through consistent effort of public diplomacy.”

Respondent #11, a member of the private sector (trade), said:

“Digital media (documentaries, promotions, digital promo, our embassies, diaspora, social media) are the best ways to communicate the brand worldwide ... Communicate the nation brand internally – the message [motto] or logo must be added to all our prints and documents, emails, etc.”

Respondent #13, an artist and academic from the private sector, said:

“We can communicate our message through social media.”

Respondent #15, an academic from the private sector, said:

“Communicate the nation brand through religious people and businessmen.”

Respondent #22, an economist from the public sector, said:

“Education and media [newspaper, TV, radio, etc.] should have a role in developing and communicating the nation brand ... Technology, social media and the audio-visual media are the strongest communication means that reach huge audiences.”

Respondent #26, a member of the public sector (investment), said:

“We could communicate and convey our message by doing [practising/walk the walk] also through public diplomacy, and our embassies abroad could be a strong channel to communicate the nation brand ... Media campaigns, mailing campaigns, social media could also be a communication means to deliver the nation brand.”

Respondent #30, an artist from the private sector, said:

“We could communicate our brand through the media ... We have to enhance communicating the nation brand locally to be able to communicate our message abroad.”

Respondent #5, a member of the diaspora, said:

“Communicating the nation brand internally and externally through social media is a great way ... Social media has a great effect on the new generation to the extent that it will lead Palestinians

and all Arabs to be united sooner or later – social media is a strong communication channel and it could be considered a key factor in nation branding and developing a nation brand.”

Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora, said:

“Public diplomacy plays a great role in communicating the message of the nation brand.”

Communication with the target audience is particularly important during the developmental stage of the brand, when the brand values developed by the DMO are refined through a process of interaction with and between the stakeholder network (Hankinson, 2007). This will lead to the next stage of nation branding, where coordination between external and internal audiences and the stakeholders (and also coordination among stakeholders) is vital for achieving the main aim of this research study.

Gunn (1997) argues that organic communication processes, developed through the arts, education and the media, frequently have the strongest and most pervasive influence on the image of a destination. Comparing this to what have been revealed from the literature review, many of the participants agreed with this; however, their experiences and educational backgrounds gave them the opportunity to suggest other essential factors. In this research study, the informants suggested different communication means (see appendix, T5) that would be crucial for delivering the nation brand, and the general message from the respondents was that communication is a key factor in nation branding and developing a nation brand.

4.6 Theme 6 (RQ2 and RQ7): Integral Components

The following subthemes are essential hidden components of the framework proposed by the researcher. During the empirical research, the researcher asked several questions and many respondents pointed out these factors. Through a review of the main concepts in the literature of nation branding, the empirical results were supported by the literature as follows.

4.6.1 Coordination (1st Integral Component)

While the need for different state-level organisations to integrate their nation-branding activities in a coordinated manner is widely accepted, very little research examines actors' perceptions of the optimal degree of coordination (Dinnie et al., 2010). In this study, the researcher engaged with a wide range of stakeholders in Palestine who expressed their views with respect to this. The results were as follows:

Respondent #10, a member of an NGO and the diaspora, said:

“Coordination is vital among stakeholders ... The secretariat should be responsible for coordinating the work among all stakeholders.”

Respondent #27, a member of an NGO and the diaspora, said:

“There should be a secretariat that coordinates the work among the committees [stakeholders], and each committee should have a contact person. Coordination is an essential factor in nation branding.”

Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, said:

“The success needs cooperation and coordination among stakeholders, and that requires vision. The aim of any project requires concept note and participants [stakeholders] – coordination is [a] key element while developing a nation brand.”

Hankinson (2007) argues that developing agreement about the place brand values can be achieved through established committees and working parties in which individual partners are represented. Each partner organisation should, through a process of internal branding, and coordinating the effort, ensure that the shared brand values are understood and engaged with by all departments (Free, 1999). Taking into consideration that this could be applied to nations, as Hankinson (2007) suggests, many informants express their views within the same context regarding coordination. In this respect, Respondent #4 added:

“Experience is an important factor in coordination as well as the management of tasks and details. Team building [is an important element] when each task needs a team – the teams should have different skills. It is important to be part of an expert and strong team – this can ease cooperation with other experienced teams. Evaluation of each process and monitoring during the process are key to success. It is also important to anticipate future challenges. The previous points would create an effective and strong project [one vision, identification of the stakeholders, task management, communication and team building, monitoring].”

The multiplicity of nation-branding objectives, and the concomitant diversity of stakeholders whose input is required for the formulation of a nation brand, highlight the importance of a coordinated approach that draws on the principles of integrated marketing communications (IMC) (Dinnie et al., 2010). Hall (2006, p. 95) provides a working definition of the IMC concept, stating that:

“The basic premise of the IMC approach is that, through the coordination of marketing communications efforts, the firm can reach diverse audiences with a consistent message, thus resulting in optimal market coverage and greater impact on the target market for the least amount of investment.”

The above reflection, guided by the respondents’ quotes, clearly indicates the conclusion that coordination is very well perceived as an important factor that should be considered while developing the brand. The participants emphasise and elaborate on the best way to coordinate the work among the stakeholder groups which take part in the process.

The participants tended to be more precise when they were asked to suggest the best ways to coordinate the work. They shared their experiences and were open to the important role that coordination plays in developing a nation brand.

Discussion of Coordination

Coordination among stakeholders throughout the process of developing a nation brand has been identified as important by many researchers (Stewart, 1996; Skinner, 2005; Hankinson, 2009; Dinnie et al., 2010). Hankinson (2001) identifies the absence of departmental coordination as a significant weakness, particularly amongst government organisations. Pike (2004) and Florek (2005) note the difficulty of achieving stakeholder coordination. Hankinson (2009) argues that departmental coordination that is firmly rooted in marketing theory is relatively limited in the context of branding; however, he points out that DMOs recognise the need for departmental coordination in support of the brand.

In this research study, some of the participants merely pointed out the importance of coordination in nation branding, whereas others added value through their participation and recommendations on the best ways to coordinate the effort. The overall perception of the informants agrees with what the literature review revealed on the importance of departmental coordination as an essential factor in nation branding and developing a nation brand; however, the coverage of this area in the literature still needs validation and further research (Dinnie et al., 2010), and the nature and structure of the relationships among the stakeholders involved will continue to require contextualisation (Hankinson, 2009).

4.6.2 National Identity (2nd Integral Component)

Nas (2017, p. 56) argues that one of the most challenging aspects highlighted by the literature is that nation branding not only aims to facilitate an image of the nation for international audiences but also to define the nation in a certain way and to send a message to the citizens regarding their self-identity. In this sense, nation branding presents the nation as a brand both externally and internally. National identity plays a key role in nation branding (Dinnie, 2015). An awareness and understanding of the core features of national identity is a prerequisite for developing a nation brand as the essence of any nation brand derives not only from the country's companies and brands but also from its culture in the widest sense – language, literature, music, sport, architecture, food and drink, and so on all embody the soul of a nation (Dinnie, 2008).

Dinnie (2008) defines the nation brand as the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provides the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences. This definition acknowledges the multifaceted nature of the nation brand, together with the need to integrate national-identity dimensions. Anholt (2010, p. 90) explains the relationship between national identity and nation brand using the cultural elements of a nation:

“A nation’s brand image is its most valuable asset: it is national identity made robust, tangible, communicable, and – at its best – made useful.”

All over the world, the idea of national identity is constructed based upon two approaches: on the one hand, the real practices of a nation, such as territory, shared history, language, religion and culture, play a significant role (Smith, 1991), as do national flags, anthems, symbols, heroes and certain heads of nations, which determine a nation’s identity (Radcliffe & Westwood, 1996, p. 58). On the other hand, there are the assumptions of an imagined, constructed and invented nation (Anderson, 1991). This research considers the first approach, which is more consistent with the nature of this study and provides an overview of the key features of national identity that are relevant to the nation-brand development and considers the main formula of Fan (2010), which draws a relationship between national identity, nation branding and nation’s image that can be summarised as follows:

National identity (self-perception) → Nation branding (nation brand identity) ↔ Nation’s image (perception by others)

Source: Fan, 2010

Built on the previous theory, the discussion of national identity in this research stems from the importance of this concept and the need to integrate its dimensions into the development of a nation brand. The researcher did not investigate directly how the stakeholders perceive their national identity; however, the stakeholders sensed national identity through every aspect in their reflection on the factors that are essential for building their nation brand. The overall perceptions of most of the informants reveal there is a clear link between national identity and the nation brand. This is consistent with what Dinnie (2008), Fan (2010) and others argue about this relationship. According to Dinnie (2008), a deep and authentic nation brand must include the many elements and

expressions of a nation's culture, and according to Fan (2010) a nation brand is the sum of all perceptions of a nation in the minds of international stakeholders, which may contain some of the following elements: people, place, culture/language, history, food, fashion, famous faces (celebrities), global brands, etc. Many respondents reflected on this concept in different ways. Respondent #13, an artist from the private sector, said:

“Our culture is part of our identity, and being a refugee is part of our struggle that became part of our identity.”

Respondent #13 added:

“When we present our music, we promote our identity through music which expresses our suffering without losing the message of the music as an expressive art.”

Respondent #13 also stressed that culture indicates identity.

Respondent #14, an academic from the private sector, pointed out another factor that is attached to national identity:

“Sport Festival was used by people to practise their resistance to the Zionist immigration to Palestine. Palestinians used festival to shed light on their culture and identity.”

Respondent # 14 also added:

“We have very talented athletes. When the Palestinians, either individual or team athletes, represent Palestine in international sport forums, they raise the Palestinian flag and sing the Palestinian national anthem – this is a sense of their identity.”

Respondent #17, a member of the public sector, clearly points out the relationship between national identity and a nation brand:

“The national identity is the base for developing the nation brand.”

Respondent #23, a member of the private sector, stresses different aspects of the national identity:

“I am proud of our friendly, kind, smiley faces and beautiful people – this is part of our identity ... The hospitality of our people is our competitive advantage and part of our culture and national identity ... We have a rich heritage and a rich culture that reflect our identity – our national identity should have a strong reflection on our nation brand.”

Respondent #5, a member of the diaspora, described part of the Palestinian culture which reflects a key aspect of their identity that has evolved over the years since the 1948 Nakba:

“Palestine is a resilient nation ... Palestinians are optimistic by instinct and do have strong faith in their rights ... Palestine is a live nation; this should be reflected in our nation brand.”

Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora, elaborates on the seeds of national identity:

“Educate the people, not solely regarding the school curriculum, but educate them how to be proud of their national identity. This kind of education comes not from schools but from the national movement and parties. If we managed to do so, we will have a strong nation brand.”

Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, talked about the evolution of Palestinian national identity:

“The Palestinian cause created Palestinian identity, which evolved in three stages: Ottoman, British and Israeli occupation. It is essential to reflect that in our nation brand.”

Respondent #7 added, concerning the role of education in enhancing national identity:

“Education should be exploited to generate from history a context in which to build the state and Palestinian sovereignty ... Education is an important tool, and political sciences consider education to be part of identifying identity. To develop the national identity and the economy, the state should play its role in this regard. This should be reflected in our nation brand.”

Discussion of National Identity

National identity is a very complicated and controversial concept (Gleason, 1983), although this research study will not discuss or define this concept but rather explore how important this concept could be in developing a nation brand and what effect this concept could have on nation branding, and in what sense. Although national identity scales can provide a certain degree of useful insight with regard to nation-brand development and communication, it should be noted that national identity is only one form of identity on which overall personal identity may be constructed.

Dinnie (2015) argues that the essence of any nation brand derives from its culture in the widest sense of language, literature, music, sport, architecture and so on – all embody the soul of a nation. The perceptions of informants regarding national identity varied. Some highlighted what could be the components of national identity (culture, music, national anthem, flag, etc.), while others stressed its role in enhancing the natural development of Palestine's brand. The literature review of this study revealed the strong relationship between nation brand and national identity. The perceptions and views of most of the informants in this study were almost identical to those identified in the literature. Although national identity is considered to be central in developing the nation brand, as Dinnie (2015) argues, it did not emerge as a major factor in the framework of this study. On the other hand, national identity components were reflected in the respondents' views while shaping/suggesting the nation brand's channels. Many of the natural channels for developing a nation brand for Palestine are based on the component of national identity (see Appendix 8, T4). The strong relationship between the core value, national identity and nation brand may need further validation; however, this connection does ultimately emerge from the study.

The fundamental features of national identity, as evident in both the literature and the empirical findings of this study, are relevant. The cultural elements of national identity are wide-ranging, encompassing language, literature, food and drink, sport, architecture and many other dimensions that nation-branding strategists need to be aware of so that nation-brand development is firmly rooted in the reality and essence of the nation (Dinnie, 2015). This was in agreement with how different informants perceived and viewed this concept, especially stressing that national identity plays an essential role and should be considered while developing Palestine's nation brand.

4.6.3 Obstacles/Challenges (3rd Integral Component)

Fan (2006) argues that nation branding faces a number of unique challenges: firstly, national identity, which is notoriously difficult to define; secondly, how to communicate a single message

to different audiences in different countries; and, thirdly, the time dimension of the nation brand. Other scholars have discussed many other challenges. For example, Dinnie (2008) tackles the extent of stakeholders, the highly politicised nature of nation branding and the coordination of nation-brand touchpoints as key challenges to nation branding.

The empirical data of this study revealed several challenges and obstacles. The stakeholders' perspectives regarding the obstacles and challenges that may deter the process of developing a nation brand for Palestine were outlined in this section. The recommendations the stakeholders suggested for overcoming these challenges are outlined in the next section. The obstacles and challenges that emerged centred around five different concerns: occupation, corruption, lack of strategic planning, negative image and small-scale production. Many respondents were alert to these obstacles and challenges that could impact the development of a nation brand.

The challenges/obstacles have two different impacts, either leading the nation to a more deteriorated situation or, if tackled well, leading to progress.

Regarding corruption, Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora, said:

“The talented and very well-educated young miss out on great opportunities because of corruption.”

Respondent #9, an intellectual media expert, said:

“Palestine needs this kind of studies. Although the ministry of foreign affairs has a department that is concerned with public diplomacy issues, it does not work as it should. The lack of vision with respect to this matter is considered to be an obstacle to moving the nation brand forward.”

Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, said:

“Our abilities are distinguished, but we have deficiency.”

Other respondents talked about the lack of strategic planning. For example, Respondent #11, a member of the trade sector, said:

“Although the Palestinian authorities have held responsibility as the main governing body of Palestine for 25 years, we still lack strategic planning to establish water, electricity, cement and other big national projects.”

Respondent #17, an academic, said:

“There is no strategic planning in education, for example the failed students usually study religion, and those students will control the next generation.”

Respondent #21, a member of the tourism sector, said:

“As a limited number of Arabs visit Palestine as a result of occupation, this has a negative impact on the economy and tourism revenues. The 300 million Arabs who cannot visit the holy places in Palestine would change positively the whole economic situation.”

The Ministry of tourism in Palestine faces many challenges in convincing those Arabs to visit Palestine – we lack strategic planning to target these issues (Issac, 2016).

Respondent #24, a member of the trade sector, said:

“The commercial agreements should pay attention to the circumstances that enrich commercial deals and export – the lack of strategic planning in that area makes the situation worse ... Empower semi-governmental organisations to promote Palestine, instead of commercial attachés of the public sector. Strategic planning is missing in this sector ... We need a national plan, legitimate governors, freedom of speech and democracy.”

Respondent #26, a member of the investment sector, said:

“Many obstacles impede investors from investing in Palestine. Among them are the absence of laws to protect them and the absence of experience and vision, especially with an emergent government. The lack of strategic planning has a negative impact on any development process.”

Respondent #7, a member of the diaspora, said:

“We also lack vision, which is important for building the state and branding Palestine.”

Respondent #9, an intellectual citizen, said:

“Paying attention and dedicating money to security and materialistic issues other than culture, for example, is considered a big challenge for the government. We lack vision and are deficient in introducing our richness to the world ... Recently, the Palestinians have lacked strategic planning in promoting their culture. The NGO background of some of our leadership destroyed our potential. Unfortunately, our politicians lack cultural vision.”

Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, said:

“Palestine could be a destination for religious tourism, and we have to develop and promote this approach. The absence of strategic planning as a key element for a successful brand would jeopardise any national plan in this regard.”

Some respondents pointed out the negative image and linked it to the occupation; however, the image distortion considered to be a key challenge to the development of the nation brand, namely occupation, is unique to the case of Palestine.

Respondent #16, a member of the investment sector, said:

“Our image problem is linked to the occupation.”

Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, said:

“It is very difficult to brand Palestine or change the stereotype. Changing the image is a very difficult process. The media usually play a key role, but the occupation negatively impacts any process to brand Palestine, and it will degrade any effort.”

Respondent #20, a member of the trade sector, and Respondent #21, a member of the tourism sector, both pointed out the negative image, Respondent #20 said:

“Our stereotype image is so negative. This would affect our effort to develop a nation brand.”

Respondent #25, an artist, said:

“The image of Palestine is very well perceived by nations rather than by governments, especially in the US and Europe.”

One respondents pointed out small-scale production as an obstacle to developing the nation brand. Respondent #11, a member of the trade sector, said:

“We have small-scale producers. Small-scale production and small numbers of producers would affect developing the nation brand.”

Occupation as an obstacle to developing the nation brand of Palestine was dominant. Many respondents pointed out the great challenge that the government would always face in developing the nation brand. It is the existing reality, and it will hinder any effort to develop the brand. Some respondents considered occupation as an obstacle negatively impacting on developing the nation brand, while others saw it as a challenge that should be faced and overcome.

Respondent #11, a member of the trade sector, said:

“Our exports in 2016 exceeded \$950 million. Israel re-exported our products under the name ‘made in Israel’. Our producers used this to overcome any delays in exporting agriculture products.”

Respondent #11 added:

“The so-called ‘security examination’ destroys our crops.”

Respondent #14, an academic, said:

“Occupation presents so many obstacles, like preventing experts arriving to Palestine [and] and hindering Palestinian teams and individuals from travelling to international competitions.”

Respondent #15, an academic, said:

“As long as occupation persists, there will be no way to develop the brand.”

Respondent #18, a member of the diaspora, said:

“It is very difficult to brand Palestine or to change its stereotype – it is a very difficult process. The media may play a key role in developing the brand; however, the occupation will degrade any effort and would always negatively impact on any initiative. For example, investment requires security, and occupation means no security.”

The trade sector is badly affected by the occupation; borders and access restrictions are the main obstacles to developing a trade sector. Many respondents highlighted these factors. Respondent #20, a member of the trade sector, said:

“However, the occupation not only imposes restrictions on any development but also destroys what has been built – Palestine is a resilient nation.”

Respondent #24, a member of the trade sector, said:

“We do not have our own borders. It will be difficult to develop [a] trade sector. Occupation is the main obstacle to developing our brand.”

The tourism sector is affected badly by occupation. This sector usually flourishes in stable countries, which is not the case in Palestine. However, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) statistics on the world's fastest growing tourist destinations for 2017, Palestine witnessed a 57.8 per cent rise in international arrivals in 2017 (*The Telegraph*, 2017), but this does not reflect the real impact of the tourism sector. With a 4-per cent direct contribution to GDP in 2012 (Al Falah, 2012), and a 2.5-per cent contribution in 2016 (Pipa, 2017), the tourism sector in the OPT still lags behind the immediate region economies (6% in Israel, 20% in Jordan, 13% in Egypt and 37% in Lebanon). Many respondents highlighted how the occupation negatively affects tourism, trade sectors and other aspects.

Respondent #21, a member of the tourism sector, said:

"The occupation puts restriction on the tourist guides in certain areas. All tourist sites in Area C, which constitutes 58 per cent of the West Bank of Palestine's territories very rich in natural resources and historic and religious places, is not accessible ... We are still under occupation, which affects the tourism sector and raises obstacles to developing this sector. The occupation restricts direct access to Palestine and prevents Palestinians building or rebuilding airports or ports."

Respondent #31, a member of the tourism sector, said:

"Palestine is a magnet for tourism. If there was no occupation the whole region would cooperate with Palestine."

Respondent #4, an intellectual academic, said:

"Israeli occupation hinders developing the tourism sector. Israel tried to obliterate the Palestinian identity."

Respondent #22, an economist from the public sector, said:

“We control only one-third of the area of the '67 borders. Ninety-one per cent of our natural resources are controlled by the Israeli occupation.”

Respondent #22 added:

“The Paris protocol [Protocol on Economic Relations between Israel and the PLO, representing the Palestinian people], which was signed 1994 for a five-year interim period, is considered the main obstacle to developing the Palestinian economy.”

Respondents made general statements regarding occupation as the main obstacle to developing the brand. Respondent #6, a high-ranking official from the investment sector, said:

“Settlements, colonisation, the wall and the house-demolition policies [the occupation policies in general] hinder the state building.”

Discussion of Obstacles/Challenges

The respondents' perspectives regarding the obstacles that may challenge the development of a nation brand in Palestine varied, but great emphasis was placed on occupation and the lack of strategic planning. The research concludes that there is a rationale behind all dissimilarities between the literature and the conclusions of this empirical study. The empirical data of this research study revealed that the obstacles or challenges in the case of Palestine centred around five different categories. Appendix 8, T6.2 illustrate the impact of each category, as reflected by different stakeholders. Occupation, the lack of strategic planning, negative image, corruption and

small-scale production are the obstacles challenging any Palestinian government. Many scholars, as mentioned earlier (Morgan et al., 2003; Dinnie, 2008; Fan, 2010), highlight different challenges to building the brands, ranging from war or political instability to the lack of management control and consequent negative media coverage (Morgan et al., 2003), the difficulties of communicating a single image or message to different audiences in different countries (Fan, 2010) and the coordination of nation-brand touchpoints as well the highly politicised nature of nation branding (Dinnie, 2008). However, the researcher concludes that the revealed data were slightly different in nature to what the literature review of this study highlighted in Chapter 2. This agrees with Jaworski and Fosher (2003), who argue that no two nations are alike – nations have individual DNA and are unique unto themselves. Accordingly, differences are explicable as long as they occur within the same context.

In conclusion, many respondents suggested that overcoming these challenges and tackling these obstacles will result in a stronger position from which to build a nation brand as well as to contribute to the professionalism of branding. The fact that the interviewees elaborated on this element (challenges and obstacles) reflects its impact on developing a nation branding in a way that is completely different from the previous factors. This factor should be considered while developing the nation with respect to its impact on the overall process.

4.6.4 Recommendations and Feedback (4th Integral Component)

As part of the integral components that emerged from the empirical data, recommendations form the fourth key subtheme. The recommendations suggested by some of the respondents reflect their views on overcoming the challenges and the obstacles that were mainly outlined in the previous section. Many of the respondents focus on issues that reflect a wide vision towards the future regardless of the obstacles that were mentioned previously.

Respondent #10, a member of the public sector, said:

“It is important to work on framework agreements with different countries.”

Respondent #11, a member of the trade sector, said:

“The standardisation and metrology department should be empowered to meet the international standards in order to be respected worldwide.”

Respondent #11 added, more specifically:

“Barcode is essential for promoting our export – we should guarantee a recognised one.”

Respondent #11 also recommended:

“Changing our policies to promote our products internationally is the mission that our embassies abroad should be committed to.”

Respondent #11 elaborated on planning:

“SWOT analysis should be the main planning process to evaluate our strength and identify our opportunities to develop our nation brand.”

“This plan [to develop a nation brand] should be considered nationally on any government’s programme.”

“It is important to focus on IT and technology in our curriculum.”

Respondent #11 also added:

“Both the land registrar and tourism ministry need to be revived as they constitute our wealth.”

Respondent #13, an artist, said:

“If there is great production with great performance to impress the audience, this will build a very strong, civilised and positive image about the project and the music. This will also be reflected in people’s perspective toward the music and its related nation.”

And stressed:

“If you want to know about the civilisation of any nation, listen to its music. We have to separate art from politics. Our music should present [a] message that relates to our culture, thus our civilisation.”

And, finally, recommend:

“Much of the Palestinian participation in international musical events usually comes as individual initiatives. We need to work on a national level and force official participation with government or semi-governmental subsidisation. This will impact positively [on] the image of Palestine.”

Many other recommendations can be found in Appendix 14.

Discussion of Recommendations and Feedback

Kotsi et al. (2018) argue that the importance of considering multiple stakeholder perspectives in nation branding, as they may have different interpretations and opinions. In this dissertation, stakeholders’ perspectives on developing a nation brand was the challenge that the researcher attempted to explore.

Stakeholders’ recommendations pave the way not only for facilitating the feedback of the nation brand but also for enhancing planning to overcome any obstacles. Recommendations in the literature always link to feedback processes. However, Kotsi et al. (2018) argue that diverse stakeholder needs, and their ability to influence national priorities, is a factor in nation-branding

complexity. Citizens' involvement can be used to enhance the quality of the brand, and citizens' emotions should be included in governance processes (Eshuis, Klijn & Braun, 2014). The stakeholders' recommendations are part of their involvement in developing the nation brand.

4.3 Conclusion to the Chapter

This chapter presented the six themes that emerged from the analysis process. The researcher interpreted the findings of the analysed empirical data, examined the findings in relation to, and enfolded them within, the existing literature, and comprehensively discussed the findings. As a result of the in-depth analysis and discussion of the findings, the researcher laid the foundation for re-proposing the integrated framework that aims to develop a nation brand for Palestine based on the stakeholders' perspectives.

The next chapter provides a summary of the main findings, recommendations and the final conceptual framework that reflects this thesis' contributions to the theory of nation branding as well as to practice.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction to the Chapter

The previous chapter presented an in-depth analysis of the findings that emerged from the primary research. This chapter will provide the general conclusions based on the findings. Firstly, it presents a summary of the main findings from the empirical data analysis that emerged from the previous chapter; these will be presented in terms of the research objectives. Secondly, it elaborates on the theoretical and practical implications that may ultimately assist researchers and practitioners of nation branding. This will be presented in conjunction with the research questions and objectives as well as the themes that emerged through the research findings. Finally, the researcher concludes this chapter with the general outline of the final framework that was redesigned after the analysis of the primary and secondary data. The researcher presents and discusses the study's limitations, possible areas for further research, the strengths of the current study and the closing conclusions.

5.2 Summary of the Main Findings and the Final Framework Development

The main aim of this dissertation is to develop a framework for building a nation brand for Palestine based on the stakeholders' perspectives. The literature review revealed many factors that are essential for developing a nation brand, which enabled the researcher to draw the preliminary framework. Based on their philosophical position and the related data analysis methodology and methods, the researcher analysed the primary data collected from the interviews and provided answers to the research questions raised in the literature review. The final framework was refined and finalised according to both the primary and secondary data analyses.

This section includes a summary of the findings in relation to the research objectives. It also includes the refined framework; contributions to literature, theory and practice; recommendations to the Palestinian government; and the study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

Below is the summary of the findings for each research objective.

5.2.1 Research Objective 1 (RO1): Carry out an Extensive Literature Review in order to Identify the Key Essential Factors for Developing a Nation Brand

The current research study attempts to develop a nation brand from key stakeholders' perspectives. In order to identify elements and factors that are essential in the nation-branding process and that impact developing nation brands from stakeholders' perspectives, the researcher undertook an extensive literature review to determine the multidimensional blend of elements and factors that impact the development of a nation brand. In this section, the researcher will present the findings that emerged from the literature review. The literature review revealed that the natural channels identified by different researchers (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008; Fan, 2010) include export, tourism, culture and heritage, inward investment, people/citizens, public diplomacy/governance, education and sport.

The literature review also revealed that developing a nation brand requires a national effort and that the government is the only legitimate channel responsible for deciding and managing the development of the brand (Dinnie, 2008). In addition, it revealed that developing a nation brand entails strong visionary leadership and commitment from a wide range of stakeholders. Coordination and communication among the stakeholders and with the leadership are essential factors when developing the brand (Hankinson, 2007).

The literature review revealed that at the heart of a nation brand is the nation's culture, which, in essence, shapes the brand's core values.

The literature revealed that communicating the nation brand both internally and externally entails strong coordination among the stakeholders, and between them and the leadership/government (Hankinson, 2007). Another essential and critical factor to nation branding is the existence of feedback mechanisms as a form of continuous assessment to reveal the perceptions of both the external and internal audience towards the nation brand, and, as such, to enable better decisions to be made when determining any necessary adjustments to building the brand (Abdalmajid & Papaslomou, 2018).

The qualitative data correlates with the literature review findings as it revealed and enhanced the existing knowledge regarding the key factors for building a nation brand. Figure 18 presents the main themes that emerged from the empirical research. It represents the key factors which are essential for building a nation brand. The emerging findings not only indicate a strong correlation with what was revealed in the literature review but also present broader views and suggest other sub-factors that are essential for developing a nation brand (these will be illustrated in the following sections).

Figure 18: The key factors that are essential for building a nation brand, as revealed during the data analysis

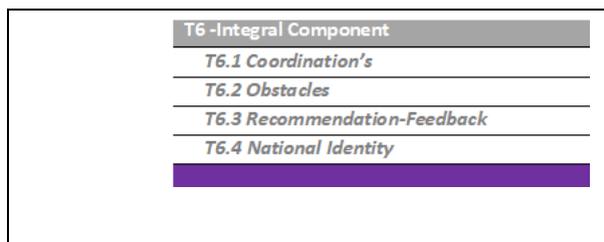
T1. Vision
<i>Vision</i>
T2. Stakeholders
<i>Stakeholders</i>
T3. The Message
<i>The Message and Slogan</i>
T4. Nation Brand
<i>Culture and Heritage</i>
<i>Education</i>
<i>Export</i>
<i>Human Capital</i>
<i>Inward Investment</i>
<i>Politics</i>
<i>Technology</i>
<i>Tourism</i>
T5. Communicate the brand
<i>Communication</i>
T6 -Integral Component
<i>T6.1 Coordination's</i>
<i>T6.2 Obstacles</i>
<i>T6.3 Recommendation-Feedback</i>
<i>T6.4 National Identity</i>

Figure 18 presents the suggestions of different stakeholder groups interviewed regarding those factors they perceived as essential for developing a nation brand. The integral components (T6: Theme 6) represent the “secondary” factors that contribute towards building the nation brand, but their impact is indirect rather than direct. Figure 19 presents the integral components that emerged from the empirical research.

The integral components, as explained earlier in Chapter 4, emerged from analysing the interviews. However, although coordination and national identity emerged from analysing the literature review as essential factors in developing a nation brand, obstacles/challenges and recommendations/feedback emerged only from an analysis of the interviews. For the purpose of this current research study, the researcher presents these factors as one main theme. Despite the fact that these factors are essential for building a nation brand, they will not explicitly impact the

framework. Coordination, national identity, obstacles/challenges and recommendations/feedback implicitly influence developing a nation brand, and, therefore, their impact will not appear in the framework as key themes.

Figure 19: The integral components



There is correlation between the findings that emerged from the empirical investigation and the literature review regarding the integral components. Furthermore, the research findings provide useful insights and suggest relevant recommendations in this respect. More precisely, the findings have implications for practitioners contributing towards developing a nation brand. One of the most useful recommendations is that developing a nation brand should be treated as a national plan and should be managed by the government, which should lead this national project/plan and control coordination amongst all participants/stakeholders according to the developed framework. Strategic planning is an important tool for kicking off the national plan of developing a nation brand. (For more relevant recommendations and suggestions, see Appendix 14.)

In the following sections, the researcher will comprehensively illustrate these findings as part of the stakeholders' perspectives; therefore, all seven research questions that emerged from the literature review will be discussed.

5.2.2 Research Objective 2 (RO2): Propose a Preliminary Integrated Framework for Developing a Nation Brand Using Secondary Data

The researcher designed and proposed a preliminary conceptual framework developed for Palestine based on secondary data that suggests the process of building a nation brand should be a

holistic, enhanced and all-encompassing process founded on the identification and inclusion of all multiple key stakeholder groups, as suggested by Dinnie (2008), and the natural channels of Anholt (2003). The framework also incorporates the leadership vision about the nation brand, thereby following Hankinson (2007).

The three models used to form the backbone of the preliminary framework of the current study were selected according to certain criteria which reflect the key principles for developing a nation brand (see Section 9.1 in Chapter 2). The researcher reviewed many other theories for building a nation brand in Chapter 2 and concluded that the most relevant were those of Anholt (2003), Hankinson (2007) and Dinnie (2008). However, no individual theory could achieve the main aim of this research study. Therefore, the researcher proposes an integrated version that includes the three theories. Based on the argument of Hankinson's (2007) five guiding principles, as well as the researcher's own views based on the literature review, the researcher formed the preliminary framework, as illustrated in Figure 4 in Chapter 2.

5.2.3 Research Objective 3 (RO3): Explore and Assess the Views and Attitudes of Various Stakeholders Concerning the Development of a Nation Brand for Palestine, and Redevelop the Preliminary Framework According to an Analysis and Assessment of their Views

The empirical study revealed additional factors other than those revealed through the literature review. The new emerging factors reflect a broader vision of all the key factors that either directly or indirectly help different nations to build their own nation brand. In this section, the researcher will highlight the findings revealed from the previous chapter in order to illustrate how Research Objective 3 has been achieved.

The in-depth interviews revealed several factors and elements essential for building a nation brand. Drawing on their own experiences and backgrounds, the informants expressed their views and

attitudes towards the core questions of this study and pointed out different factors and elements that might be essential for building Palestine's nation brand. The researcher analysed the data from the empirical study and found that the outcomes of the 33 interviews were in line with the literature review. Based on the analysis of the findings regarding the emerging factors in the previous chapter, the researcher managed to refine the preliminary framework.

The findings suggested that the key factors that are essential for building a nation brand are the vision of the top management/leadership/government, the natural channels that are essential for developing a nation brand for Palestine, the prospective stakeholders that should be involved in building the brand, the message/motto that reflects core values and national identity (the essence of the nation brand), the best communication methods for delivering the brand both internally and externally, and the best ways to coordinate the work among the stakeholders. Feedback is also a vital factor, as revealed by the empirical data in Chapter 4.

Next, the researcher highlights each of these findings individually. Different figural representations of the aforementioned findings are presented thereafter.

5.2.3.1 The Study's Findings Regarding the Factors that are Perceived to be Essential in Developing a Nation Brand for Palestine by Key Stakeholder Groups

Vision (visionary leadership)

The findings that reflect the informants' perspectives suggest that the vision of the leadership/government plays a key role and is considered to be a key factor in developing a nation brand. Also, with regard to how vision can impact developing the nation brand, the findings reveal that many respondents greatly emphasised strategic vision and how it could impact a sustainable and strong nation brand. Some respondents went even further and suggested comprehensive participation in creating the vision.

The findings in this respect illustrate the views held by different stakeholder groups regarding the important role that vision plays in the branding process. The impact of “visionary leadership” on developing a nation brand in Palestine compared to other factors is presented clearly in Appendix 15.

An analysis of the interviews unearthed the negative impacts that can arise in relation to vision; however, sensible reflection on who emphasises and is responsible for this vision can counteract these negative impacts. The private sector and the citizens took a more sensible view of the importance of vision as an essential factor.

In general, the prevailing opinion emphasised the importance of having a clear vision. Many of the informants highlighted the impact of having a clear vision on the different aspects regarding developing the nation brand. Some informants were more specific and emphasised certain issues, such as strengthening our belief in the nation’s abilities (for example in politics, economy, tourism and sports) to make a difference. (This covers RQ1.)

The findings regarding this factor also show that the views of different stakeholders regarding the role of “visionary leadership” were persistent in emphasising its essential role in building the nation brand. The findings also reflect the impact of “visionary leadership” on the whole process of nation branding.

In the same context, the informants (stakeholders) gave important recommendations regarding the leadership’s vision. The most significant one suggests emphasising the role played by the leader of the nation as the maestro of this national plan. Great emphasis was also placed on the continuous effort to democratise civil communities, unions and associations. Many other recommendations were suggested by the informants regarding this factor (see Appendix 14).

Stakeholders

The findings regarding part one of the third research objective (stakeholders' views) were also in line with the literature; however, the informants suggested a broader perspective in relation to the various stakeholders who could play a part and hence influence brand-building processes for a nation brand for Palestine.

An analysis of the findings from the previous chapter indicates that the prospective stakeholders suggested by the informants outlined in the data set below had a great impact on certain clusters. Emphasis on certain clusters reflects relevant connections with De Chernatony's (2008) belief that the nation brand should entail the collective involvement of the key stakeholders in forwarding their vision for the nation brand. This process necessitates identifying key stakeholders interested in shaping this brand. The research findings suggested prospective stakeholders (other than the stakeholder categories of Dinnie (2008)) and emphasised their essential participation in building the nation brand. Academics, civil communities and political parties, education sectors, culture and heritage sectors, media and banking sectors, and industrial cities are the new stakeholders that emerged from the empirical research.

The key stakeholders in the nation-brand building process suggested by the informants

1. Academics
2. Civil communities and political parties
3. Diaspora
4. Education
5. Embassies
6. Heritage and culture institutions

7. Intellectual citizens
8. Inward investment and economic development agencies and tourism boards
9. Media
10. NGOs
11. Private sector
12. Public sector
13. Tourism
14. Trade and economy
 - Banking and insurance
 - Chambers and business association
 - Industrial zones and cities

Identification of the suggested stakeholders are provided in Appendix 2. (This covers RQ3.)

The informants proposed several great ideas to help the stakeholders improve their development of the nation brand. The most important recommendation by the informants was the creation of a “national committee” whose role would be to manage the nation brand.

The informants suggested that “*educating the nations should be the main target of this national committee of the nation brand*”. Many other recommendations can be found in Appendix 14.

The Message

An integrated part of the brand-building effort is to create the message that should be delivered to both local and international audiences (Dinnie, 2015). The findings revealed two different

perspectives in respect to the message: the logo and the verbal message. The message plays an important role in presenting the nation brand. It represents the core nation brand and the national identity in one sentence and one logo. The findings regarding the message were in line with the literature. Being a key factor, the data set below illustrates what emerged from the interviews.

The Suggested Messages and Motto: Visual (Logo and Verbal Messages)

The message/motto:

- **The logo:**

* Anemone Coronaria/Anemone flower

* Olive tree

* Hebron grapes

* Jaffa orange

* Dead Sea

* Palestine sunbird

* Mother-of-pearl

* Palestinian embroidery

* Al Kofia/Al Hatta

* Ceklab flower

* Indigo (Kanaani origin)

* Bethlehem

- **The verbal messages/motto:**

- * *“Samed”*
- * *“Buy a time in Jerusalem”*
- * *“Palestine is the cradle of the three religions”*
- * *“Palestine is the cradle of civilisation”*
- * *“Diversity in Palestine”*
- * *“Friendly people”*
- * *“The holy land”*
- * *“Peace awaiting”*
- * *“Come and see Palestine”*
- * *“The land of peace”*
- * *“Ancient Palestine”*
- * *“State of Law”*
- * *“Despite the suffering, there is hope”*
- * *“Educated nation”*
- * *“Civilised culture”*
- * *“Purchase Palestine”*

The messages suggested in the previous data set are strongly embedded in the local Palestinian culture, but the interpretation and meaning may not be the same if these are used outside Palestine.

It should be said that different nations use different slogans and verbal messages in communicating nation brands (see Figure 16).

The stakeholders' different views regarding either the logo or the verbal message that Palestine may promote show strong connections with national identity. For example, the "Koffia" represents a strong link to Palestinian identity. Whenever people around the world aim to show solidarity with the Palestinians, they put on the "Koffia". It is the implicit brand of Palestine. The impact of the logo or the sign should reflect a deep connection to the nation. The same goes for the verbal message; "*the cradle of the three religions*" should reflect Palestine's image in the minds of the people around the world. This verbal message must link the audience with the essence of the brand. Although the findings regarding the messages' content vary, the outcome emphasises the importance of the messages as an essential factor in building and communicating the nation brand.

The agreed message that should represent the nation brand could be expanded further using the Delphi strategy (Dinnie, 2015). (This covers RQ4.)

The informants suggested many essential recommendations regarding the brand's messages, such as promoting a "*unified message*" that reflects the essence of the nation brand. The informant also recommended that the "*message should be just and human*", and that the message should reflect the nation's reality, which is why the nation must live the brand that it promotes. See Appendix 14 for more suggestions.

Nation Brand

The natural channels that were suggested by different informants are illustrated in the data set below.

The natural channels of a nation brand are the main theory suggested by Anholt (2000, 2007), and this originally comprised six natural channels (export, culture and heritage, investment, tourism,

citizens and policy/public diplomacy) that most countries use to manage their reputation and communicate with the rest of the world. However, although the interview findings were in line with the existing literature, many stakeholders took a wider view of other natural channels. The natural channels that emerged reflect Palestinian stakeholders' factual views towards building their own nation brands (see the data set below).

The suggested nation-brand natural channels

1- Culture and heritage

- Arts
- Cinema and theatre
- Cuisine
- Folk dance – Dabkeh
- Handcrafts/artisan
 - Ceramics
 - Embroidery
 - Hebron glass industry
 - Mother-of-pearl
 - Olive wood carving
- Museums
- Music
- Narratives

2- Education

- Educated females
- Educated labour

3- Export

- Ceramics, glass and mother-of- pearl
- Dates (fruits)
- Flowers and strawberries
- Medical herbs
- Olive oil
- Pharmaceuticals
- Shoe industry
- Stone industry

4- Human Capital

- Achievers
- Sport
- Diaspora

5- Inward investment

- Industries
- Real estate
- Renewable energy
- Technology

6- Politics

- Democracy and human rights
- Foreign policy

- Public diplomacy

- 7- Technology**
- Scientific research

- 8- Tourism**
- Alternative tourism
- Environmental tourism
- Historical tourism
- Medical tourism
- Religious tourism
- Sport tourism

Identification of the natural channels is provided in Appendix 1.

As discussed in Chapter 4, during the analysis of these findings, the interviewees identified these natural channels as key pillars enhancing the building of a strong nation brand. Their views reflect a deep attachment to their national identity as well as their aspiration to promote their nation brand to the world. (This covers RQ5.)

Part of this research objective was to extract recommendations regarding developing a nation brand. Many suggestions reflect how the informants value the national plan for developing a nation brand and express their views regarding certain issues that could help the decision maker to strengthen their nation brand. *“A nation brand should have many natural channels as they are a*

reflection of the nation.” “*Strengthening the nation brand locally allows for a stronger kick off internationally.*” The informants suggested many valuable recommendations regarding the nation-brand channels (see Appendix 14).

Communication

Communicating the nation brand is a fundamental factor in nation branding (Gudjonsson, 2005). The findings from the empirical research revealed that communication is essential not only among the wide range of stakeholders but also between the stakeholders and the government. The stakeholders’ views regarding communicating the nation brand both externally and internally are revealed below (see data set below).

Channels for communicating the nation brand

Communicate the nation brand externally and internally through the following channels:

- Embassies (the external body that represents the country abroad)
- Media outlets and social media
- Technology and audio-visual channels

Identification of the previously suggested communication channels are provided in Appendices 2 and 3. (This covers RQ6.)

Many informants, while expressing their views, recommended several important ideas that would help to better communicate the nation brand. The informants suggested that “*having a strategic communication plan will strengthen the whole process of nation branding*”, and that, if “*people prioritised good communication, this would open new doors for communicating the nation brand*”.

For more recommendations, see Appendix 14.

Integral Components

This complex research objective (3) resulted in extensive and comprehensive feedback that covered many aspects and essential factors in nation branding. This section discusses “integral components”. This complex theme reflects a number of themes that indirectly have an impact on building a nation brand. As was discussed in Chapter 4, the interviewees identified these factors as a way of enhancing building the nation brand.

Coordination among the stakeholders, **obstacles/challenges**, **national identity**, **recommendations** and **feedback** are the themes that emerged from the empirical research. The researcher sought to present these factors in one batch because of their similar influence on developing a nation brand. However, although these factors are considered vital in nation branding, some of them (obstacles and recommendations) will not appear clearly in the final framework. Both the literature review and the findings suggest that these integral components are essential factors that impact on developing a nation brand (Dinnie, 2008; Hankinson, 2009; Bhatia & Panda, 2018; Simion, Bucovețchi & Dumitrescu, 2017). Next, the researcher will conclude the main findings regarding **coordination**, **obstacles/challenges**, **national identity** and, finally, **recommendations** and **feedback**

Coordination: The findings revealed that networking and a secretariat are the best ways to coordinate stakeholders. Selected samples of informants’ recommendations regarding coordination were presented in Chapter 4 and are included in Appendix 14.

The collected data also revealed stakeholders’ views regarding the **challenges and obstacles** that may impede developing the nation brand for Palestine. Corruption, lack of strategic planning, negative image, occupation and small-scale production were the main obstacles highlighted by different stakeholders. The findings regarding “obstacles” also suggest that the government should

tackle these obstacles in order to proceed with the national plan for developing a nation brand. This is in line with what the literature review revealed. Szondi (2007), in the same context, argues that overcoming the challenges and obstacles that countries face while developing their comprehensive nation brand will result in stronger country brands, and it will also contribute to the professionalism of branding.

The third research objective was comprehensive and captured different aspects of nation branding, especially the essential factors for developing a nation brand. Although the literature review did not reveal “obstacles” as an essential factor, the empirical data emphasised that tackling obstacles is one of the integral components that affect developing a nation brand. Tackling obstacles as well as considering recommendations suggested by the stakeholders will add value to any future applications of the framework. In this research study, the findings revealed that obstacles and recommendations, in the context of Palestine, are essential factors. The data set below will not be part of the final framework; however, it is considered a vital feedback channel.

The obstacles that might deter the development of a nation brand

The obstacles that might hinder the development of a nation brand:

- Corruption
- Lack of strategic planning
- Negative image
- Occupation
- Small-scale production

National Identity, which was covered in the literature review chapter as an integral part of nation branding, was one of the aspects on which the stakeholders elaborated. An awareness and

understanding of the core features of national identity are prerequisites for any nation-branding initiative (Dinnie, 2015). The data collected revealed different views on prospective components of national identity, and the data also matched well with the reviewed literature. However, the identified components of national identity were more specific to the Palestinian case than being widely and generally applicable.

Higson (1998) believes that identity is not static but rather fluid, and the identity of a nation is not a blank slate. Cultural elements such as art, music, sport festivals, national anthem and education play a significant role in the formation of national identity (Dinnie, 2015). The stakeholders in this study determined the key factors of the nation brand and acknowledged the necessity of incorporating cultural elements. This not only enriches the nation brand but also strengthens the data gleaned from the literature review. These elements are summarised in the data set below.

The elements of national identity

The elements of national identity as revealed in the findings:

- Culture
- Music
- Sport festivals
- National anthem
- Education

However, although national identity is a vital and essential factor in building the nation brand, its components will not clearly be part of the final framework. Although national identity is a vital and essential factor in building the nation brand, its components will not be presented as a clear part of the final framework; however, it will have implications for the core brand values and the

motto in the framework. The research findings of the current study indicate that the stakeholders emphasise issues and factors that matter for developing the nation brand; however, these issues and factors will not be presented as a clear part in the final framework. In the previous section, the researcher underlined the integral components that were detected. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the findings agree with those revealed in the existing literature, excluding obstacles and recommendations.

Both the literature review and the research findings suggest that the integral components that were detected in this research study were acknowledged as essential factors that should be considered when developing the nation brand. Research Question 2, which emerged from the literature review, has been countered thoroughly through the analysis and the findings chapters.

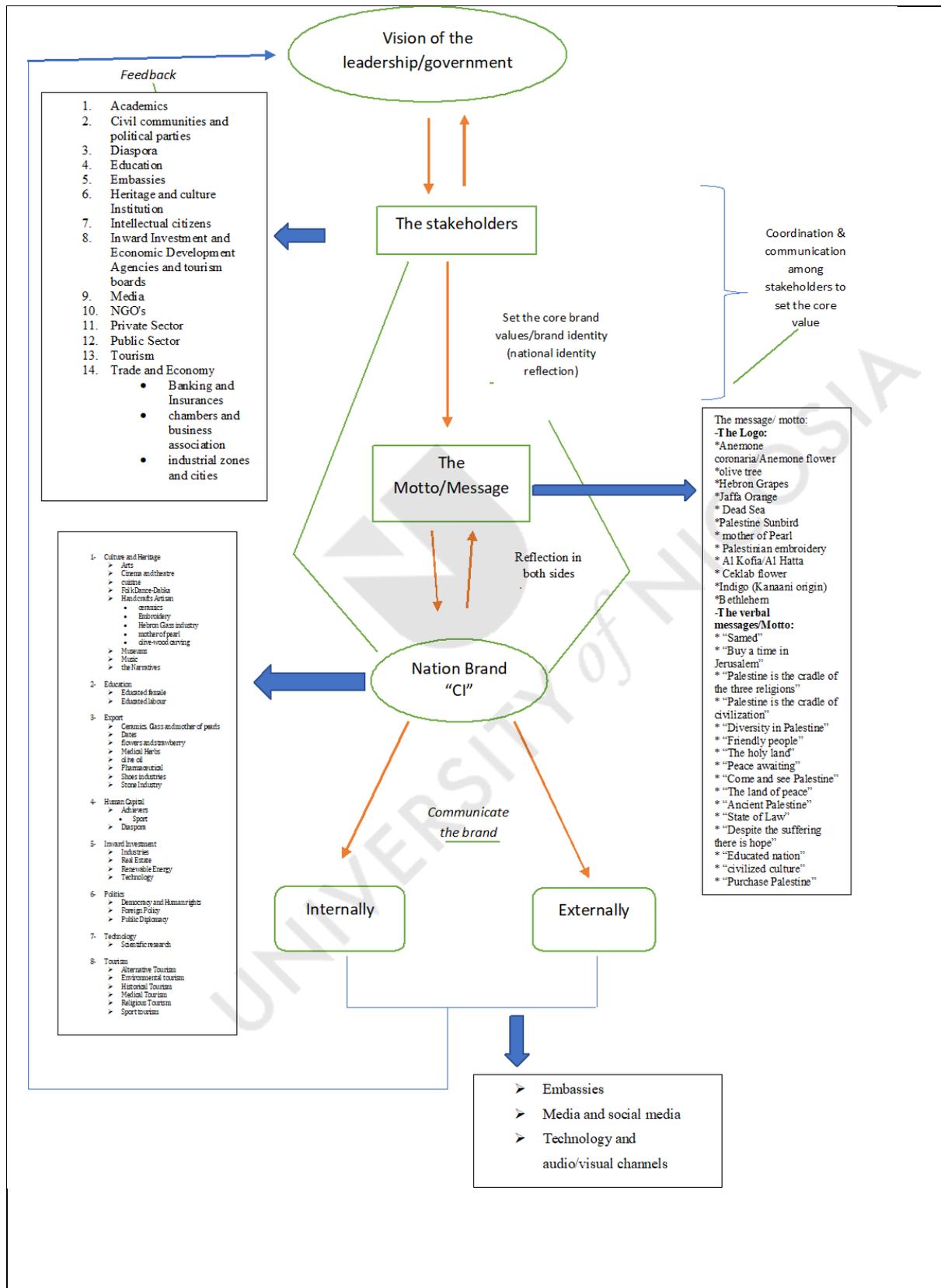
Therefore, the preliminary framework that was proposed based on the data gleaned from the literature review of nation branding and the researcher's own views can be re-formed according to the findings that emerged from the empirical research (see Figure 21). (This covers RQ2 and RQ7.)

Recommendations and feedback form another part of this integral component. The informants proposed their recommendations and suggested a variety of ideas and propositions that could help advance the development of a nation brand. Many ideas and recommendations are based on communication, national identity, feedback and challenges such as emphasis on education, specifically political education. Culture and art are two important factors that should be embraced. Peaceful and diplomatic struggle is more effective. *“The state of law and human rights”* should always be protected while developing the brand. Relevant recommendations that are highlighted in Appendix 14 present great guidance for the Palestinian government to consider while developing a nation brand for Palestine.

5.2.3.2 Redevelop the Proposed Framework Based on an Analysis and Assessment of the Stakeholders' Views

Szondi (2007) argues that, as far as the evolution of place branding is concerned, destination branding precedes country branding, and requires a more holistic and creative approach. As per the second part of Research Objective 3 and based on the aforementioned research findings, the researcher has empirically validated the conceptual framework that illustrates the stakeholders' perspectives towards developing a nation brand for Palestine. This conceptual holistic framework can be used to guide the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine. By achieving this objective, the third research question has been encountered, and the key aim of this dissertation has been achieved.

Figure 20: Final Framework



The in-depth detailed data analysis contributes to the final framework demonstrated above. The nation-brand building process begins with the strategic vision of the nation's top management (leadership/government), which forms the basis for a brand-oriented culture. Then, through a process of dialogue and discussion, the leadership and the selected stakeholders (according to the framework) attempt to arrive at a mutual consensus vision, core brand values and message/motto. This message/motto should reflect the essence of the national identity. Therefore, a key task for those engaged in constructing a nation-brand identity is to be selective in identifying which natural channels of the nation brand can usefully serve the stated objectives of the nation branding. By getting each of the stakeholders to forward their assumption about the values and promised experience they are striving to support, each group can begin to appreciate how they can better work together to build a more coherent nation brand. Many sectors should be involved in strengthening the message. Through the relevant natural channels that were revealed in the empirical study, Palestine should steer its reputation and strongly promote and communicate its nation brand. The agreed nation brand should then be communicated both externally and internally through different channels, as suggested by the stakeholders.

Feedback is highly recommended in order to assess the whole process and, thus, make the necessary adjustments. This continuous assessment and feedback should be extended as long as the country runs this national project.

Coordination among the stakeholders is important and highly recommended by the stakeholders.

5.2.4 Research Objective 4 (RO4): Contribute to Knowledge and Provide Practical and Theoretical Recommendations to Marketing Researchers and Practitioners in the Field of Nation Branding, and, Ultimately, Assist the Palestinian Government in Developing a Nation Brand for Palestine

In this section, the researcher elaborates on the study's contribution to knowledge, theory and practice, as well as how it can assist the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand.

5.2.4.1 Contribution to Knowledge

a. Contribution to Theory

According to the research findings, this research study makes important contributions to the existing theories of nation branding, stakeholders and communication. In this chapter, the researcher elaborates on how research findings have filled in the gaps identified in the literature review chapter and throughout the thesis. The literature review suggested that there is little research in the area of nation branding and developing a nation brand. In this respect, Fan (2010) and Dogan and Petkovic (2016) argue that this field is a relatively new and emerging area of interest which lacks clear conceptualisation, and both scholars greatly stress that this field is still in its infancy. Hankinson (2009) previously argued that there are no universal approaches to destination branding; each destination will differ in terms of both its potential and its institutional infrastructure. Thus, this doctoral investigation extends research in the field of nation branding by focusing on developing a nation brand from stakeholders' perspectives in an attempt to fill those gaps in the literature and contribute to knowledge and practice by proposing a holistic framework for developing a nation brand.

The study also contributes to practice and offers new insight into engaging stakeholders in developing a nation brand and practising communication and coordination throughout the process. Engaging the stakeholders throughout the framework, not only in setting up the core values of the brand but also in continuously communicating and coordinating with the leadership and among themselves, facilitates integration among all elements and factors of the proposed framework. The stakeholders' contribution, which is based on knowledge and expertise, succeeded in determining

the prospective nation-brand channels, as well as the prospective stakeholders that should be involved in developing a nation brand.

1. Conceptual holistic framework

This chapter presented the empirically tested conceptual framework that has worked towards encountering the questions raised by, and filling the gaps in, the literature on the phenomenon under investigation. This research and the refined framework add to the existing literature in a number of ways. They provide knowledge in an area that is still under-researched. As it has been empirically tested, the proposed holistic framework adds to theory a new integrated and comprehensive framework that had not previously existed, as acknowledged by Hankinson (2007, 2009) and Zeineldein (2018), specifically in terms of involving the stakeholders in developing a nation brand rather than merely identifying the stakeholders and their salience (Dinnie & Fola, 2009).

Even though the literature of nation branding has dealt with the concept for the past few decades, this is the only study (to the best of the researcher's knowledge) proposing an integrated framework that is based primarily on the shareholders' perspectives for developing a nation brand while integrating key issues such as national identity, core brand values and feedback within this framework. The refined framework has revealed ways that could support the Palestinian government in creating its own strategy, in accordance with this framework, to develop its own nation brand. The integrated framework entails wide participation from the top level down to the normal citizens of the nation in a national effort to practise different levels of management, communication and coordination in order to achieve the development of a nation brand.

2. Adding value through the involvement of the stakeholders

The current study contributes to the theories of communication and stakeholders. Stakeholders, in the context of nation branding, are generally considered with regard to their identification and salience. In this regard, Dinnie and Fola (2009) argue that stakeholder identification and salience may be context-specific phenomena rather than universally applicable concepts, and future research is needed in this domain. Responding to the call from previous literature for further research and investigation into the nature of stakeholder identification across different international settings, this current study involved the stakeholders in developing a nation brand. Their role extended beyond merely identifying other stakeholders. Their participation went deep into every single aspect of developing the brand as well as communicating it both externally and internally. More precisely, this study is the first to provide insights into the stakeholders' direct participation in developing a nation brand through a comprehensive plan.

Fan (2006, p. 6) states that "*nation branding concerns applying branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation's image*", and Hankinson (2004) argues that brands are conceptualised as communicators. This study also added to the theory of communication through the involvement of the stakeholders who steer the development of the nation brand all the way. The application of communication techniques is illustrated in Figure 21 of the final framework: communication between the leadership/government/DMO and the stakeholders when deciding on a national plan to develop a nation brand, and communication amongst stakeholders when identifying the core brand values and suggesting prospective stakeholders. Stakeholders also practised communication when determining which natural channels of the nation brand would be most conveniently included, and in relation to communicating the nation brand both externally and internally to audiences through different channels. Stakeholders also recommended the best communication means for delivering the nation brand.

One of the most important steps in any communication model is feedback. It is obvious that the proposed framework builds on the feedback that could help the top management/government/leadership to assess the image of nation brand, tackle possible problems and adopt solutions to strengthen the national strategy for developing a nation brand. This study acknowledged the Shannon and Weaver model of communication (1948), whereby without feedback we do not know if the receiver has received or understood our message.

Finally, this study extends nation branding literature by revealing different essential factors in developing a nation brand as well as proposing for the first time a holistic framework for developing a nation brand based on those key factors combined.

3. ***Expanding the brand-building model suggested by Dinnie (2008), and suggesting other essential stakeholders to be included in his FIST model***

The findings revealed a new range of different relevant stakeholders that could assist in developing a nation brand. However, certain stakeholders could be essential in one context, while others could be essential to all nations.

4. ***Expanding the brand-building model – the hexagon model proposed by Anholt (2003) – and suggesting other essential natural channels to be included***

The current study has added to the existing nation-brand theory regarding different natural channels by suggesting additional natural channels other than the original six in Anholt's theory. Although this framework was tested in a specific context, the suggestions allow for a wider range of natural channels to be used in alternative contexts.

5. ***Expanding the model proposed by Hankinson (2007) by adding new dimensions to his original framework for the management of place brand (see the final framework; Figure 21)***

This current study contributes to the theory of nation branding and provides insight into and new dimensions to the model of Hankinson (2007). The findings revealed new factors and elements that helped to expand the model to be more comprehensive; they demonstrated that the natural channels and the messages that were missing in Hankinson's (2007) model added value to the whole process. This was suggested by Hankinson (2009), who emphasised the need for more exploratory work before an integrated model of destination-brand management can be posited. By proposing and testing the final framework as the main findings of this current study, and because it is holistic and comprehensive, this study managed to lay the foundations for the further development of a theory of nation branding.

b. Contribution to Practice

As discussed in the previous section, this current research study not only contributes to the existent literature on nation branding but also has some practical/managerial implications. The challenges associated with nation branding and the nation-brand building process are essentially the main focus of this PhD dissertation. The main aim was to develop an integrated framework encompassing the tools, factors and variables that key stakeholders perceive as critical in the brand-building process. The section that follows sheds light on the practical implications of the present study for both the marketing practitioners and the Palestinian government.

1. The Marketing Practitioners

The final framework developed in this current research study provides marketing practitioners with an integrated framework that, even though it has been developed for the State of Palestine, can be applicable to other nations. Although the initial proposed framework was developed by integrating several existing brand-building models, the in-depth analysis of qualitative data revealed that there are several additional factors, variables and stakeholders who need to be integrated into the brand-building process in order to ensure its effectiveness. The experts that will take up the responsibility

for developing a nation brand, such as the brand strategists and marketing consultants, need to have an in-depth understanding of all the different types of key stakeholders whose views and attitudes, knowledge and expertise will play a critical role in the effectiveness of the process. The study also expands Anholt's (2003) model by revealing additional channels and vehicles that will have to be utilised during the brand-building process. The study also demonstrated that the message, whether visual or verbal, holds sensitive links to the core brand values and national identity. In turn, this will make marketing practitioners focus on relations and connections between the message of the brand and the national identity of the country. Finally, the findings highlighted the importance of using different feedback channels to enable brand strategists and marketing practitioners to collect, analyse, monitor and assess feedback from different members of the public and audiences to help in the continuous monitoring of the brand building

2. The Palestinian Government

The application of the final holistic framework will assist the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine. The finalised framework provides comprehensive guidance for building a nation brand for Palestine. The wide range of suggested stakeholders gives the opportunity to the leadership to form a national committee consisting of the most suitable stakeholders to take responsibility for developing the nation brand. The framework also suggested a wide range of natural channels that could help to support the overall strategy for developing the nation brand. The verbal and visual message also suggested a wide range of choices that could enhance selection. The framework also suggested certain criteria and streams to be followed. Embassies have a great impact on communicating and promoting the brand internationally. Consequently, the findings recommend living the brand, as it paves the way for strengthening the brand on a domestic level, thus reflecting the feeling of belonging to a strong nation internationally. Finally, the research findings suggest several recommendations (see Appendix 14 for all the suggested ones) for the Palestinian government. One of the most applicable recommendations is:

“We should promote Palestine in new areas and destinations such as India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc.”, which came as a direct recommendation regarding developing tourism sectors, which therefore advances the promotion of the nation brand.

The overall research findings could also be used as an agenda for drawing up a list of guidelines and a set of recommendations for best practice (see Appendix 14).

5.3 Research Limitations

Despite the useful contribution to both theory and practice on nation branding, this doctoral dissertation inherent several limitations. In this section, the researcher will review these limitations and, builds on recommendations for future studies that could further enhance research in this field.

First, this study was undertaken in and focused solely on Palestine, which is not only a relatively small country but is also suffering from the effects of a prolonged conflict. This may partially hinder any initiative to develop a nation brand. One of the findings highlighted “Occupation” as one of the main obstacles to developing a nation brand for Palestine. Borders control and other policies of the occupying power would negatively affect export, tourism, direct foreign investment and other key natural channels that boost the nation brand. Second, Palestine’s unique location at the intersection of three continents – Europe, Asia and Africa – adds another limitation, in that the findings may not be applicable to nations in different geographical and political settings. This strategic location attracted invaders throughout history. The mixed cultural and ethnic background defined much of its population’s tolerance. This positively affected and enhanced the nation brand’s natural channels like tourism and human capital.

Third, the researcher adopted a qualitative methodology. This choice caused issues regarding the sample size as its smallness limits the generalisability of the findings. Being a qualitative researcher may also raise suggestions of bias when it comes to interpreting the data. Furthermore, the researcher used only the interview technique to collect the data, which could weaken the

findings reliability. Many researchers consider a triangulation of data collection to ensure reliability. Further research can follow up using a quantitative approach to give a deeper insight to certain issues like national identity and external stakeholders' views.

And, finally, one of the possible limitations is the curtailed attention given to national identity, which is considered to be an essential component of any nation-brand development (Dinnie, 2015). However, the findings of this study highlighted the key role of national identity in developing a nation brand, further research can follow-up using a quantitative research to know more about this multifaceted concept.

In another context, this current study contains weaknesses that are consequent to its exploratory nature. The fact that it incorporates an unusually large number of factors could be seen as controversial amongst researchers and practitioners. In normal studies, researchers tend to work on one or two factors that affect the topic under investigation and eliminate or control others in order to achieve validity. The nature of this study may question an issue of bias and unreliability as it investigated and tested several factors and elements at the same time. Another weakness of this study could be noticed in its subjectivity. The interrelation of data gathered from a different range of stakeholders caused an issue of omitting some relevant data and economic clusters. In addition, stakeholders' identification in this study was limited to context-specific phenomena rather than universally applicable concepts. This could be another weak element in this study. Future research should investigate external stakeholders' views.

To conclude, the aforementioned limitations and weaknesses provided an initial platform that enabled the researcher to consider and recommend areas for further research. The next section provides some additional suggestions for future research.

5.4. Avenues for Further Research

The limitations outlined above indicate avenues for further research, which are outlined below.

Firstly, the literature review on nation branding revealed that research in this field is still in its infancy. The researcher presented several adopted theories around nation branding and developing a nation brand and provided a roadmap for future theoretical and empirical investigation. Future research should envisage common ground between research and practice to provide a theoretically grounded and practically relevant enhancement of the nation-branding literature.

Secondly, further research with larger sample sizes is required not only for the specific setting of Palestine but also for the different settings and contexts. Addressing this limitation would open doors to more comprehensive research studies across nationalities.

Thirdly, future research is needed to identify stakeholders in different contexts and across different international settings to identify common factors.

Fourthly, future research is needed on the perceptions of external audiences regarding the nation-brand image. This would incorporate the feedback mechanism that is proposed, but not clearly contextualised, in this study's framework. Further research is needed to address this limitation.

Further research is needed on the impact of national identity when determining the core values of the nation brand. Its inclusion is highly recommended in any national effort to brand or rebrand the nation. While this study did not concentrate on national identity, many of the stakeholders pointed out and acknowledged its crucial role as a factor to be considered when developing the nation brand.

Finally, even though a number of limitations do exist, the current study has revealed important information in the area of nation branding and developing a nation brand. Future researchers could utilise the current framework and the information provided for other nations and check whether this framework could be applied to these nations and identify and assess the differences.

This study filled a major gap in the literature and developed a holistic framework for developing a nation brand and, for the first time, applied such an integrated framework to Palestine. Many

theories on nation-brand development support the emphasis on corporate-brand management. The proposed framework of this study is based mainly on previous theories that relate to developing either a nation brand or the management of place brand.

5.5 Conclusion to the Chapter

To conclude, this doctoral study presented an integrated framework that can guide practitioners and scholars in their research on developing a nation brand and, in general, on nation branding. In particular, the framework provides an in-depth exploration of stakeholders' participation in developing a nation brand and their involvement at every stage of the process. This is particularly important as it could assist the Palestinian government in developing a nation brand for Palestine. If utilised, this would be a unique initiative and the first of its kind in Palestine, and, furthermore, it would add value to the theory in having practical application.

The researcher hopes that this doctoral investigation provides impetus for further research on nation branding and, especially, on developing a nation brand from different approaches. The contributions of this doctoral investigation are also significant for practitioners. The researcher also hopes that this thesis will motivate marketing and communication scholars and practitioners to enrich this theory, which is considered not only a new phenomenon but also a controversial one.

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¹ <https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B>

Appendix 1

Codebook

Phase 1 - Initial Coding and Noting

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Academics	a person who is academic in background, attitudes, methods, He is by temperament an academic, concerned with books and the arts.	6	7
Achievers	People who deliver true success in certain fields	3	9
Sport	an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment.	2	8
Alternative Tourism	like sport, discovery or medicine tourism	3	3
Arts	Art is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory or performing artefacts (artworks), expressing the author's imaginative or technical skill, ...	10	13

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Ceramics, Glass and mother of pearls		2	2
Cinema and theatre	Cinema is a visual language that tells stories in moving images. Pictures put in motion have a completely different effect ..theatre is s a collaborative form of fine art that uses live performers, typically actors or actresses, to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place, often a stage.	5	8
Civil communities and political parties	all the organizations that offer services to the community including different political parties which usually relates to different thoughts and philosophical views.	6	8
components		0	0
corruption		3	3
cuisine	is a style of cooking characterized by distinctive ingredients, techniques and dishes, and usually associated with a specific culture or geographic region	5	5

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Dates	Dates are one of the world’s oldest cultivated fruits and thrive in Palestine on the fertile soils around the ancient city of Jericho.	2	3
Definitions		1	4
Democracy and Human rights	the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves. Human rights are moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of human behaviour and are regularly protected as legal rights in municipal and international law.	4	5
Diaspora	the Palestinians who reside outside Palestine	5	7
Diaspora (2)	the Palestinians who lived and worked outside Palestine, specially the families who forcibly left Palestine in 1948 and 1967	12	15
educated female		2	3
educated labour		4	4
Education	the sector of education which is represented by the ministry of Education.	4	4

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Embassies	A diplomatic mission or foreign mission is a group of people from one state or an organisation present in another state to represent the sending state/organisation officially in the receiving state.	3	3
Environmental tourism	Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low-impact and often small-scale alternative to standard commercial mass tourism	2	4
Externally, embassies	outside the country	2	2
Exhibitions	organizing local exhibition and participate in international ones	4	5
Festivals		3	3
flowers and strawberry	agricultural products that compete on the international market according to its quality especially carnation and Beth Lahia strawberry	1	1
Folk Dance-Dabke	is an Arab folk-dance native to the Levant? Dabke combines circle dance and line dancing and is widely performed at weddings and other joyous occasions in Palestine.	4	5

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Foreign Policy	references to foreign policy and influence on brand building abroad	1	1
Hand crafts Artisan	A handicraft, sometimes more precisely expressed as artisanal handicraft or handmade, is any of a wide variety of types of work where useful and decorative objects are made completely by hand or by using only simple tools	6	17
ceramics	Ceramics are generally made by taking mixtures of clay, earthen elements, powders, and water and shaping them into desired forms. Once the ceramic has been shaped, it is fired in a high temperature oven known as a kiln. Often, ceramics are covered in decorative, waterproof, paint-like substances known as glazes. Hebron ceramics are beautiful hand painted ceramics. All the motifs are traditional designs - birds, peacocks, gazelles, fish and various floral patterns. Each piece is hand painted with a hand mad	2	2
Embroidery	Embroidery is the handicraft of decorating fabric or other materials using a needle to apply thread or yarn. Embroidery may also	3	4

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
	incorporate other materials such as pearls, beads, quills, and sequins.		
Hebron Glass industry	refers to glass produced in Hebron as part of a flourishing art industry established in the city during Roman rule in Palestine. Hebron's Old City still contains a quarter named the "Glass-Blower Quarter" and Hebron glass continues to serve as a tourist attraction for the city.	2	2
mother of pearl	Nacre, also known as mother of pearl, is an organic-inorganic composite material produced by some molluscs as an inner shell layer; it also makes up the outer coating of pearls. It is strong, resilient, and iridescent.	2	2
olive-wood carving	It involves the skilful chiselling of olive wood and is most common in the Bethlehem region. olive-wood carving is thought to have begun in Bethlehem in the 4th century CE, following the construction of the Church of the Nativity. At the time, Christian monks taught how to make craft to the city's residents.	1	1
Heritage and culture Institution	institutions that concern in all aspects of culture and heritage	1	2

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Historical Tourism	when visitors (tourists) of Palestine are interested to visit historical places	6	8
Industries	is the production of goods or related services within an economy? The major source of revenue of a group or company is the indicator of its relevant industry	3	5
Intellectuals	persons possessing a highly developed intellect.	5	7
Internally	inside the country	2	2
Inward Investment and Economic development Agencies and tourism boards	private sectors that involve in investment, economy and tourism	3	3
lack of strategic planning		10	19
Logo		13	21
Media	all media means (video, audio, written media and social media	4	4
media and social media	is the collective communication outlets or tools that are used to store and deliver information or data as print media and the	10	14

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
	press, photography, advertising, cinema, broadcasting (radio and television), and others. Social media are computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information		
Medical Herbs	natural herbs that used in pharmaceutical industry. it grown naturally in Palestine	7	7
Medical Tourism	Medical Tourism is where people who live in one country travel to another country to receive medical, dental and surgical care while at the same time receiving equal to or greater care than they would have in their own country, and are traveling for medical care because of affordability, better access to care or a higher level of quality of care.	1	1
Museums	A museum is an institution that cares for a collection of artefacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance	2	2
Music	Music is an art form and cultural activity whose medium is sound organized in time.	9	18

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Negative Image		5	5
Networking		2	2
NGO's	Non for Governmental Organization	2	2
Occupation		14	21
olive oil	Olive trees are a major agricultural crop in the Palestinian territories, where they are mostly grown for olive oil production. The olive tree is seen by many Palestinians as being a symbol of nationality and connection to the land,	3	3
Pharmaceutical	The pharmaceutical industry discovers, develops, produces, and markets drugs or pharmaceutical drugs for use as medications.	4	4
Private Sector	the institutions that represents the civil society and work independently from the government	9	10
Public Diplomacy		6	8
Public Sector	the government's ministries and institutions	12	12

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Real Estate	is "property consisting of land and the buildings on it, along with its natural resources such as crops, minerals or water;	1	1
Religious Tourism	when visitors aiming to visit holy places in Palestine either Muslims, Christian or Jewish	14	17
Renewable Energy	is energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale, such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal heat.	1	2
scientific research		1	1
Secretariat		1	1
shoes industries		1	1
small production		1	1
Sport tourism	Sports tourism refers to travel which involves either observing or participating in a sporting event staying apart from their usual environment. Sport tourism is a fast-growing sector of the global travel industry	2	2
Stone Industry	Stone and Marble industry is considered as one of the main sources of the Palestinian	7	8

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
	economy. This sector contributes to about 50% of the local production, 30% of the exports and 14% of the employment capacity.		
Technology	new methods or techniques or processes used in producing goods and services resulted in ease the human life and advance the way of living.	8	13
Technology and audio, video	is the collection of techniques, skills, methods, and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the accomplishment of objectives or projects an audio or video is a work for radio or television broadcasters, recording or filming events.	1	1
the Narrative	story or a description of a series of events relates to the history of Palestine	2	2
Tourism	all institutions that are linked to or with tourism whether private sector or public sector	7	7
Trade and Economy	organizations or institutions that are linked to or with trade and economy whether public sector or private sector	11	17

Phase 1 – 75 initial codes developed	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews	Units of Meaning Coded
Banking and Insurances	<p>A bank is a financial institution that accepts deposits from the public and creates credit.</p> <p>Lending activities can be performed either directly or indirectly through capital markets.</p> <p>Insurance is a means of protection from financial loss. It is a form of risk management primarily used to hedge against the risk of a contingent, uncertain loss</p>	1	1
chambers and business association	<p>chamber of commerce is a form of business network, for example, a local organization of businesses whose goal is to further the interests of businesses.</p>	2	2
industrial zones and cities	<p>An industrial zone is an area zoned and planned for the purpose of industrial development. ... Industrial parks are usually located on the edges of, or outside the main residential area of a city, and normally provided with good transportation ...</p>	2	2
verbal message		26	55
views		5	10

Appendix 2- Codebook\\Phase 2 – Developing Subordinate Themes

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Communication	is the act of conveying intended meanings from one entity or group to another through communication channels	15	31
Externally, embassies	outside the country	2	2
Internally	inside the country	2	2
media and social media	is the collective communication outlets or tools that are used to store and deliver information or data as print media and the press, photography, advertising, cinema, broadcasting (radio and television), and others. Social media are computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information	10	14
Technology and audio, video	is the collection of techniques, skills, methods, and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the accomplishment of objectives or projects an audio or video is a work for radio or television broadcasters, recording or filming events.	1	1

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Conferences, Exhibitions and festivals	<p>where people and experts meet to exchange knowledge and discuss different issues of interest considering international dimensions.</p> <p>festival is an event ordinarily celebrated by a community and centering on some characteristic aspect of that community and its religion or traditions. exhibitions, in the most general sense, is an organized presentation and display of a selection of items. In practice, exhibitions usually occur within museums, galleries and exhibition halls, and World's fairs.</p>	9	18
Exhibitions	organizing local exhibitions and participate in international ones	4	5
Festivals		3	3
Coordination	<p>the process of organizing the stakeholders so that they work together properly and well and for effective results.</p>	6	11
Networking		2	2
Secretariat		1	1
Culture and Heritage		23	116

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Arts	Art is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory or performing artefacts (artworks), expressing the author's imaginative or technical skill, ...	10	13
Cinema and theatre	Cinema is a visual language that tells stories in moving images. Pictures put in motion have a completely different effect ..theatre is s a collaborative form of fine art that uses live performers, typically actors or actresses, to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place, often a stage.	5	8
cuisine	is a style of cooking characterized by distinctive ingredients, techniques and dishes, and usually associated with a specific culture or geographic region	5	5
Folk Dance-Dabke	is an Arab folk-dance native to the Levant? Dabke combines circle dance and line dancing and is widely performed at weddings and other joyous occasions in Palestine.	4	5
Hand crafts Artisan	A handicraft, sometimes more precisely expressed as artisanal handicraft or handmade, is any of a	6	17

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
	wide variety of types of work where useful and decorative objects are made completely by hand or by using only simple tools		
ceramics	Ceramics are generally made by taking mixtures of clay, earthen elements, powders, and water and shaping them into desired forms. Once the ceramic has been shaped, it is fired in a high temperature oven known as a kiln. Often, ceramics are covered in decorative, waterproof, paint-like substances known as glazes. Hebron ceramics are beautiful hand painted ceramics. All the motifs are traditional designs - birds, peacocks, gazelles, fish and various floral patterns. Each piece is hand painted with a hand mad	2	2
Embroidery	Embroidery is the handicraft of decorating fabric or other materials using a needle to apply thread or yarn. Embroidery may also incorporate other materials such as pearls, beads, quills, and sequins.	3	4
Hebron Glass industry	refers to glass produced in Hebron as part of a flourishing art industry established in the city during Roman rule in Palestine. Hebron's Old City still contains a quarter named the "Glass-Blower	2	2

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
	Quarter" and Hebron glass continues to serve as a tourist attraction for the city.		
mother of pearl	Nacre, also known as mother of pearl, is an organic-inorganic composite material produced by some molluscs as an inner shell layer; it also makes up the outer coating of pearls. It is strong, resilient, and iridescent.	2	2
olive-wood carving	It involves the skilful chiselling of olive wood and is most common in the Bethlehem region. olive-wood carving is thought to have begun in Bethlehem in the 4th century CE, following the construction of the Church of the Nativity. At the time, Christian monks taught how to make craft to the city's residents.	1	1
Museums	A museum is an institution that cares for a collection of artefacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance	2	2
Music	Music is an art form and cultural activity whose medium is sound organized in time.	9	18
the Narrative	story or a description of a series of events relates to the history of Palestine	2	2

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Education		18	39
educated female		2	3
educated labour		4	4
Export		17	49
Ceramics, Glass and mother of pearls		2	2
Dates	Dates are one of the world's oldest cultivated fruits and thrive in Palestine on the fertile soils around the ancient city of Jericho.	2	3
flowers and strawberry	agricultural products that compete on the international market according to its quality especially carnation and Beth Lahia strawberry	1	1
Medical Herbs	natural herbs that used in pharmaceutical industry. it grown naturally in Palestine	7	7
olive oil	Olive trees are a major agricultural crop in the Palestinian territories, where they are mostly grown for olive oil production. The olive tree is seen by many Palestinians as being a symbol of nationality and connection to the land,	3	3

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Pharmaceutical	The pharmaceutical industry discovers, develops, produces, and markets drugs or pharmaceutical drugs for use as medications.	4	4
shoes industries		1	1
Stone Industry	Stone and Marble industry is considered as one of the main sources of the Palestinian economy. This sector contributes to about 50% of the local production, 30% of the exports and 14% of the employment capacity.	7	8
Human Capital		25	73
Achievers		3	9
Sport		2	8
Diaspora	the Palestinians who reside outside Palestine	5	7
Inward Investment		12	36
Industries	is the production of goods or related services within an economy. The major source of revenue of a group or company is the indicator of its relevant industry	3	5

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Real Estate	is "property consisting of land and the buildings on it, along with its natural resources such as crops, minerals or water;	1	1
Renewable Energy	is energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale, such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal heat.	1	2
Technology	new methods or techniques or processes used in producing goods and services resulted in ease the human life and advance the way of living.	8	13
Nation Branding	identify what the process of nation branding means from different perspectives	5	26
Definitions		1	4
views		5	10
National Identity	A sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, NI represented by distinctive traditions, culture, and language.	7	19
components		0	0
views		0	0

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Obstacles	barriers imposed by Israel and cause negative impact on daily life of Palestinians and prevents or hinders progress.	19	89
corruption		3	3
lack of strategic planning		10	19
Negative Image		5	5
Occupation		14	21
small production		1	1
Politics		10	25
Democracy and Human rights	the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves. Human rights are moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of human behaviour and are regularly protected as legal rights in municipal and international law.	4	5

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Foreign Policy	references to foreign policy and influence on brand building abroad	1	1
Public Diplomacy		6	8
Recommendations	the suggestions that were proposed from different stakeholders to the government	26	113
Stakeholders	group of people affects or affected by the rules of the governors and involve in the system that is run by the country	24	114
Academics	a person who is academic in background, attitudes, methods, He is by temperament an academic, concerned with books and the arts.	6	7
Civil communities and political parties	all the organizations that offer services to the community including different political parties which usually relates to different thoughts and philosophical views.	6	8
Diaspora	the Palestinians who lived and worked outside Palestine, specially the families who forcibly left Palestine in 1948 and 1967	12	15
Education	the sector of education which is represented by the ministry of Education.	4	4

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Embassies	A diplomatic mission or foreign mission is a group of people from one state or an organisation present in another state to represent the sending state/organisation officially in the receiving state.	3	3
Heritage and culture Institution	institutions that concern in all aspects of culture and heritage	1	2
Intellectuals	persons possessing a highly developed intellect.	5	7
Inward Investment and Economic development Agencies and tourism boards	private sectors that involve in investment, economy and tourism	3	3
Media	all media means (video, audio, written media and social media	4	4
NGO's	Non for Governmental Organization	2	2
Private Sector	the institutions that represents the civil society and work independently from the government	9	10
Public Sector	the government's ministries and institutions	12	12
Tourism	all institutions that are linked to or with tourism whether private sector or public sector	7	7

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Trade and Economy	organizations or institutions that are linked to or with trade and economy whether public sector or private sector	11	17
Banking and Insurances	A bank is a financial institution that accepts deposits from the public and creates credit. Lending activities can be performed either directly or indirectly through capital markets. Insurance is a means of protection from financial loss. It is a form of risk management primarily used to hedge against the risk of a contingent, uncertain loss	1	1
chambers and business association	chamber of commerce is a form of business network, for example, a local organization of businesses whose goal is to further the interests of businesses.	2	2
industrial zones and cities	An industrial zone is an area zoned and planned for the purpose of industrial development. ... Industrial parks are usually located on the edges of, or outside the main residential area of a city, and normally provided with good transportation ...	2	2
Technology	is the collection of techniques, skills, methods, and processes used in the production of goods or	2	4

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
	services or in the accomplishment of objectives, such as scientific investigation?		
scientific research		1	1
The Message and Slogan	is the image that the people want to deliver to the world	27	135
Logo		13	21
verbal message		26	55
Tourism		27	74
Alternative Tourism	like sport, discovery or medicine tourism	3	3
Environmental tourism	Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low-impact and often small scale alternative to standard commercial mass tourism	2	4
Historical Tourism	when visitors (tourists) of Palestine are interested to visit historical places	6	8
Medical Tourism	Medical Tourism is where people who live in one country travel to another country to receive medical, dental and surgical care while at the	1	1

Phase 2 – 75 initial codes mapped to 18 subordinate themes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
	same time receiving equal to or greater care than they would have in their own country, and are traveling for medical care because of affordability, better access to care or a higher level of quality of care.		
Religious Tourism	when visitors aiming to visit holy places in Palestine either Muslims, Christian or Jewish	14	17
Sport tourism	Sports tourism refers to travel which involves either observing or participating in a sporting event staying apart from their usual environment. Sport tourism is a fast-growing sector of the global travel industry	2	2
Vision	A vision is an idea that we may have in our mind about ourselves, our business, or anything this is going to happen. A clear vision helps pursue dreams and achieve goals; an idea of the future, a strong wish.	14	27

Appendix3 - Codebook\\Phase 3 – Developing Superordinate Themes

Phase 3 – 18 subordinate themes conceptually mapped and collapsed to 6 superordinate themes	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
T1. Vision	14	27
<i>Vision</i>	14	27
T2. Stakeholders	24	114
<i>Stakeholders</i>	24	114
T3. The Message	27	135
<i>The Message and Slogan</i>	27	135
T4. Nation Brand	33	429
<i>Culture and Heritage</i>	23	116
<i>Education</i>	18	39
<i>Export</i>	17	49
<i>Human Capital</i>	25	73
<i>Inward Investment</i>	12	36
<i>Politics</i>	10	25
<i>Technology</i>	11	17
<i>Tourism</i>	27	74
T5. Communicate the brand	15	31
<i>Communication</i>	15	31
T6 -Integral Component	28	232
<i>T6.1 Coordination's</i>	6	11
<i>T6.2 Obstacles</i>	19	89

Phase 3 – 18 subordinate themes conceptually mapped and collapsed to 6 superordinate themes	Interviews coded	Units of Meaning Coded
T1. Vision	14	27
<i>T6.3 Recommendation-Feedback</i>	26	113
<i>T6.4 National Identity</i>	7	19



Appendix 4- Example of Annotations

Phase 1 - Initial Noting and Coding

Name	Files	Referen
Academics	6	7
Achievers	3	9
Alternative Tourism	3	3
Arts	10	13
Ceramics, Glass and mother of pearls	2	2
Cinema and theatre	5	8
Civil communities and political parties	6	8
components	0	0
corruption	3	3
cuisine	5	5
Dates	2	3
Definitions	1	4
Democracy and Human rights	4	5
Diaspora	16	22
educated female	2	3
educated labour	4	4
Education	4	4
Embassies	3	3
Environmental tourism	2	4
Externally, embassies	2	2
Exhibitions	4	5
Festivals	3	3
flowers and stawbery	1	1
Folk Dance-Dabka	4	5
Foreign Policy	1	1
Hand crafts Artisan	6	17
Heritage and culture Institution	1	2
Historical Tourism	6	8
Industries	3	5
Intellectuals	5	7
Internally	2	2
Inward Investment and Economic developme	3	3

Transcribe4-
 Age 35-45
 Education: PHD
 Employment: Professor
 From : Gaza
 Economist says the Nation branding is a kind of capitalism that based on market
 Nation branding is a political dominance from academics point of view
 Nation branding is a cultural dominance from the culture perspective
 As the communities are consuming , so it neds branding
 Capitalism look at the world as a consumption markets
 Political approach considered nation branding as the soft power in the international arena, it helps to strengthen the state status on the international level
 So Palestine is a good example in the international recognition.
 Palestine is seeking through nation branding as apolitical mean to develop it existence on the international level
 On the cultural level, competition is a cultural dominance, this philosophy, believes that each country has its own interest and use culture to strengthen its dominance on the cultural level and cultural competence.
 Nation branding indirectly could increase cultural and civilizational clashes
 Positive sides of nation branding process:
 - Nation branding could help nation to contribute in human civilization, and cultural either

Annotations

Item	Content
1	I am interpreting this statement as a reference to public diplomacy, but I will check the translation is correct

Smith, 2008 (IPA) places significant value on “initial coding and noting” to integrate researchers coding assumptions, field notes and observations and interpretations as the data is initially deconstructed.

Participant response linked to researchers observations

Appendix 5- Example of Analytical Memo

Phase 3 - Developing Superordinate Themes

Name	Files	References
T1. Vision	14	27
Vision	14	27
T2. Stakeholders	24	114
Stakeholders	24	114
T3. The Message	27	135
The Message and Slogan	27	135
T4. Nation Brand	33	429
Culture and Heritage	23	116
Education	18	39
Export	17	49
Human Capital	25	73
Inward Investment	12	36
Politics	10	25
Technology	11	17
Tourism	27	74
T5. Communicate the brand	15	31
Communication	15	31
T6 -Integral componenet	28	232
T6.1 Coordinations	6	11
T6.2 Obstacles	19	89
T6.3 Recommendation-Feedback	26	113
T6.4 National Identity	7	19

Theme 1: The Vision

Hankinson (2007) has proposed five guiding principles for the management of destination brands based on an adaptation of corporate-branding theory. Whilst a destination brand could be a single town, city, resort or other relatively limited entity, it could also be a whole nation. Therefore, it may be considered as having potential application at a nation level as Dinnie (2008) also argues.

Hankinson (2007) pointed out to the main pillar of his model. It is the strong, visionary leadership. Hankinson reflects on the key role of the brand champion as to establish a clear vision for the destination brand and to develop a set of core brand values which link positive aspects of the place's heritage to a realistic vision of what can be achieved in the future. Reflecting and applying this principal on a nation as Dinnie (2008) argues, the government has the key role to develop, communicate and embed the strategic vision and brand values.

In this respect, the vision and the brand value represent the key mission of the government who possess the legitimacy to lead the direction of nation-brand strategy (Dinnie, 2015).

Aholt's (2007) also stresses on the role of responsible governments that need to discover the world's perception of their country and to develop a strategy to build and maintain its reputation that is fair and guanine to their economy, political and social aims that reflects the spirit and the will of the people.

Analytical memos were used to conduct a systematic review of superordinate themes to retrieve, question, analyse and report to reduce data from themes to documents containing initial findings

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Appendix 6: Stakeholder groups that were selected using the quota

The stakeholder's quota	No. of the interviewee and position
Public sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2. Ministry of Culture 3. Ministry of Education 4. High Council of Youth and Sports 5. Ministry of Tourism
Private sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music- Ramallah. 2. Ashtar Theatre- Jerusalem 3. Higher education institution 4. Hi Tec., Educational Institution 5. Techno Park (Research and development)
Inward investment agency, Economic development agency and Tourism board	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Palestine Investment Fund 2. Palestine National Fund 3. Palestinian investment promotion agency 4. Palestine tourism board 5. Palestine Economic council for 6. development and Reconstruction

<p>Trade association and chambers of commerce</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Federation of Palestinian chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture 2. Trade Union 3. Al Ard (trade organization) 4. PAITrade (promotional organization) 5. Palestinian International Cooperation Agency
<p>Citizens</p>	<p>Five Intellectual citizens who have awarded in different fields of science, art, music, education, etc.</p>
<p>Not-for-profit organizations and Diaspora</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Higher Council for Innovation and Excellence (M.S). 2. UNESCO 3. Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute-MAS 4. PASSIA 5. Palestinian Communities Abroad

	(diaspora)
The president	President of the State of Palestine

Source: *Compiled by the author*



Appendix 7: Interview Guide

Title of the research:

Nation Branding: An integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine from stakeholders' perspectives.

The Aim of the Research: To formulate a framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine, taking into consideration the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders.

The researcher will conduct thirty-three interviews on the basis of an ontological position which suggests that all stakeholders' knowledge, views, attitudes, understandings, interpretations and experiences in relation to nation branding and a nation brand are meaningful and necessary to develop a successful and effective nation brand for Palestine. The researcher's epistemological stance suggests that best way to generate this data is to consult with these stakeholders, to talk, to listen and to engage with them.

For the purpose of this study, pre-determined themes and questions have been scheduled to maintain focus, in order to elicit more to get more detailed information from the interviewees as well as to guide the researcher while interviewing.

Predetermined Themes to be Covered: -

The main themes of this study are:

- 1- The factors that are essential to develop a nation brand for Palestine.
- 2- The views and perspectives of different stakeholders regarding the development of a nation brand for Palestine and which other stakeholders may take part in the process.

- 3- What core brand values that genuinely reflect the Palestinians, thus resulted in a strong message of their nation brand? And how Palestine national identity elements impact Palestine nation brand?
- 4- Communicating the nation brand internally and externally.
- 5- The views of the stakeholders regarding the best ways to achieve the creation of a positive image of Palestine both at home and abroad, with the intention of improving Palestine's overall global reputation.
- 6- The recommendations to marketing researchers and to the Palestinian government regarding the development of Nation brand.

Predetermined Questions to be covered:

Prior to each individual interview, the researcher will present the interviewee with key relevant information about the study, specifically the idea of nation branding, nation brand factors, the aim of developing a nation brand for Palestine and who the main stakeholders in Palestine are.

- 7- In your opinion, what are the current strengths that Palestine has, in terms of economy, culture, politics that might impact their national identity?
- 8- Apart from the six main natural channels of the theory of a nation brand Hexagon of Anholt (2003)- Export, Culture and Heritage, Tourism, Investment, Public Diplomacy and Citizens – what other channels do you think might be useful in the development of a nation brand for Palestine? Please elaborate?
- 9- Please give your opinion regarding the following, and you are invited to elaborate with each point
 - a. The stakeholders who should participate in developing the Palestine brand, apart from the current ones (Public sector, Private sector, NGOs and Diaspora, Trade Unions and Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Board and Economy, citizens).
 - b. Effective coordination and collaboration between various stakeholders in relation to developing a nation brand for Palestine.
 - c. How best to communicate the nation brand internally (locally) as well as externally (abroad).

- 10- What is your opinion about the role of leadership, for example, in terms of government, a presidency, a monarchy? How and where do you think such leadership involvement could be best exploited and used to the advantage of an effective nation brand for Palestine? How would that work, in your opinion?
- 11- In your opinion how can Palestine develop a nation brand that reflects the Palestinians' achievements, its assets, people, core value, national identity and products in their brand image? What are your views and perceptions towards developing the brand? And how effective do you think it might be?
- 12- What, in your opinion, is the best Palestinian image or message to display, at home and abroad? Do you have any suggestions on how to get feedback from people about the image? What could be your recommendation to the Palestinian government regarding the development of a nation brand for Palestine?
- 13- Is there anything you would like to add to this discussion?

The researcher will briefly introduce the study to the interviewee in less than 10 minutes

The interviewee received a short briefing about the study, the themes and suggested questions, as outlined in the Research Information Sheet from the researcher and, before commencing the intended interview, the researcher will make a short introduction about the study. This will include an introduction to the concepts of nation branding and developing a nation brand, what a nation brand means, what nation brand factors or channels are, what the aim of developing a nation brand for Palestine is, who the participants or the stakeholders are currently, how coordination and communication among stakeholders might be helpful for a sustainable nation brand, both internally and externally and, finally, what the role of the leadership or the government in this process could be.

Key Points, to be explained prior to the interview

- My study is in the area of nation branding. The aim of my research work is to formulate a framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine from the stakeholders' perspectives.
- In this study, I am trying to answer the following main research questions:
 - 4- *What are the key factors that are considered essential for developing a nation brand specifically for Palestine?*
 - 5- *What are the different views and attitudes of the stakeholders towards developing a nation brand for Palestine?*
 - 6- *What holistic and integrated framework structure could influence developing a nation brand for Palestine?*

- What does nation branding mean?

Nation branding means applying branding and marketing techniques to nations for the purpose of promoting their image. This is done by using the tools of branding to change the behaviour, attitudes, identity and/or image of the nation in a positive way in order to be able to compete in the international market.

Many countries have embraced nation branding to acquire market share. These include Spain after Franco, Egypt, South Africa during the World Cup, Nigeria, South Korea, Germany, France, Serbia, Australia along with many other countries achieved great results from running comprehensive nation branding campaigns.

- What does a nation brand mean?

Nation-brand is defined as the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with a culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences.

This definition acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of a nation-brand, together with the need to integrate national identity dimensions. Moreover, the proposed definition of a nation-brand also recognizes the contention that brands exist in consumers' minds rather than being a totally controllable creation of the marketing function. The definition therefore incorporates reference to perceptual attributes and target markets.

- Why should Palestine develop a nation brand?

In this competitive world, where the image of any country matters profoundly in its positioning, the rest of the world is hugely influenced by a national image and reacts towards the country accordingly. In that regard, Palestine having successfully achieved State Status in 2012 at the United Nations General Assembly, should now, most certainly, consider its image dilemma. Would Palestinians consider developing a nation brand as a State or would they just keep this status in theory only? In this study, the researcher is not aiming to discuss what being a state means. The researcher is willing to take advantage of the newly gained state status of Palestine to manage the image of Palestine and Palestinians. With the participation of different stakeholders in Palestine, the researcher is aiming as well to develop a nation brand for Palestine like any other nation in the world, taking into consideration the uniqueness of Palestine being an internationally newly recognised state.

Formulating a framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine is, therefore, the main aim of this study.

Gilmore (2002) states that the core of a country's brand must capture the spirit of its people and how it can be developed into a brand positioning after the consideration of four essential factors – macro trends, target groups, competitors and core competencies. The positioning that derives from such considerations should be rich enough to be translated into sub-positioning to target diverse groups, and it should also be substantiated in terms of what the country can actually offer. In that

regard, Palestine should consider nation branding to target different audiences (US, Europe) and to position the State of Palestine as a country, notwithstanding the fact that it remains an occupied country.

- The impact of national identity on developing the nation brand

In the concept of nation-brand identity, it is necessary to acknowledge that nation-brand identity is built upon a limited range of all the constituent parts of national identity. It would be impossible to effectively develop a nation-brand identity that drew upon every strand of a country's national identity. External audiences – potential tourists, investors, students, workers, and so on– are not expected to absorb gargantuan amounts of information about a country's history, culture and people. Therefore, a key task of those engaged in constructing a nation-brand identity is to be selective in identifying which elements of national identity can usefully serve the stated objectives of the nation branding campaign.

Your role as a stakeholder stems from your experiences which will be vital/ crucial to explore and identify the strengths of Palestine's identity, economy, foreign policies and culture and how to integrate these into the mixture of the nation brand. In other words, what could be the factors or channels that would help to develop Palestine nation brand? (I should remind them of the six channels of the basic theory of nation brand).

Gilmore, F. (2002) A country – Can it be repositioned? Spain – the success story of country branding. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9, 4–5, 281–93.

The following table will help me to achieve my objectives by formulating the questions I intend to pose to the stakeholders.

Table 3: the interview themes and related questions.

The research objectives (RO)	Research Question (RQ)	The related questions that should be asked to achieve the research objectives
<p>1.To carry out an extensive literature review in the field of nation branding in order to identify the key factors that are critical for developing a nation brand in general and for Palestine specifically</p>	<p>RQ4, RQ5</p>	<p>Reviewing the literature led me to explore more general factors. In the case of Palestine the stakeholders should be encouraged to suggest other factors or channels that could be included or if any of the current factors should be excluded.</p> <p>The questions that should be posed to interviewees in order to explore the factors that are more related to Palestine include:</p> <p>1- In your opinion, what are the strengths of Palestine as a nation in terms of its identity, its economy, its foreign policy, its tourism, its culture and heritage, to name but a few?’</p> <p>Reflecting on that;</p>

		<p>2- What do you think about natural characteristics that might be essential to develop a nation brand for Palestine</p> <p>NB the researcher will attempt at all times to elicit elaborations from the interviewees to enhance the quality of the overall research process.'</p>
<p>2.To propose a preliminary framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on secondary data.</p>		<p>Based on the literature review, the researcher has formulated the proposed framework which will be developed according to results of analysing the primary data.</p>
<p>3.To explore and assess the views of various stakeholders towards the development of a nation brand for Palestine, therefore,</p>	<p>RQ2, RQ3 RQ4, RQ6</p>	<p>I would like to know your views about:</p> <p>a) Who should be involved in the process of developing Palestine's brand</p> <p>b) In your opinion, what might be the best ways you could coordinate the work with other stakeholders?</p> <p>c) Once there is an agreement on the nation brand message, what, in your opinion, are the best ways that you as a stakeholder can communicate the brand internally (locally) and externally (abroad)?</p>

		<p>‘Again, the researcher will attempt to elicit further elaborations on the research participants’ responses.’</p>
<p>4. Redeveloping the proposed framework based on the assessment of the stakeholders views.</p>	<p>RQ1, RQ3, RQ7</p>	<p>1. What essential elements do you think that could be incorporated in the brand development process, none of which were mentioned or discussed earlier, that would facilitate communicating the message of the nation brand?</p> <p>2. In your opinion, can you suggest a feedback mechanism to establish the effectiveness, or otherwise, of a nation brand for Palestine?</p> <p>3. How do you see Palestinians developing a nation brand for Palestine that accurately reflects the Palestinian achievements, assets, people and products in their brand image? What would you think the message of Palestine brand should be?</p> <p>4. What is your opinion about the role of leadership and its vision towards developing a nation brand? How and where do you think such involvement</p>

		could be best exploited and used to the advantage of an effective nation brand for Palestine?
5. To contribute to the knowledge and to provide practical and theoretical recommendations to marketing researchers and practitioners in the field of nation branding, therefore assisting the Palestinian government to develop a nation brand for Palestine.	RQ7	<p>1. How do you think Palestine could exploit to turn its strengths (that were mentioned in the beginning of this interview) into a strong nation brand? Elaborate in terms of recommendations to the Palestinian government?</p> <p>2. What do you think the best way is to measure the image and reputation of Palestine abroad?</p> <p>3. How do you think Palestine can work to develop this image and maintain a reputation?</p>
		What would you like to add?

Demographic of Potential Interviewee: -

1- Their position in society

- a. Public Sector
- b. Private sector
- c. NGO's and Diaspora
- d. Tourism, investment agencies
- e. Trade Association and Chambers of Commerce

- f. Economic Development Agencies
- g. Others, specify_____

2- Educational Qualifications

- a. BA/BSc
- b. Masters
- c. PhD

3- location

- a. West Bank-Jerusalem
- b. Gaza Strip
- c. Abroad

4- Age

- a. 30-40
- b. 41-50
- c. 51-61
- d. other

5- The Study's aim would be achieved if these Research Questions have been countered:

The Broad Research Questions:

RQ1- What are the key factors that are considered essential for developing a nation brand?

RQ2- What are the different views and attitudes of the stakeholders towards developing a nation brand for Palestine?

RQ3- What would be the integrated and holistic framework structure could influence developing a nation brand for Palestine?

6- Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to develop an integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on the views of the stakeholders. This will be achieved through an extensive review of the literature of nation branding and related models in order to identify essential factors and a relevant gap. This will therefore set the foundation for developing a new framework that can be used to develop a nation brand for Palestine respectively in line with the primary research results. (chapter 2 presents existing models of nation branding and their key variables).

For this aim, the following objectives were set: -

- 1- To carry out an extensive literature review in the field of nation branding in order to identify the key factors that are critical for developing a nation brand.
- 2- To propose a preliminary framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine based on secondary data.
- 3- To explore and assess the views of various stakeholders towards the development of a nation brand for Palestine, therefore, redeveloping the proposed framework based on the assessment of the stakeholders' views.
- 4- To contribute to the knowledge and to provide practical and theoretical recommendations to the marketing researchers and practitioners in the field of nation branding, therefore assisting the Palestinian government to develop a nation brand for Palestine.

Appendix 8: Visual Findings

T2. Stakeholders

T3 – The Message

T4. The Nation Brand

T5. Communicate the Brand

T6 -Integral Components

T6.1 Coordination

T6.2 Obstacles

T6.3 Recommendations Feedback

T6.4 National Identity

Revised Model

 UNIVERSITY of NICOSIA

T2. Stakeholders

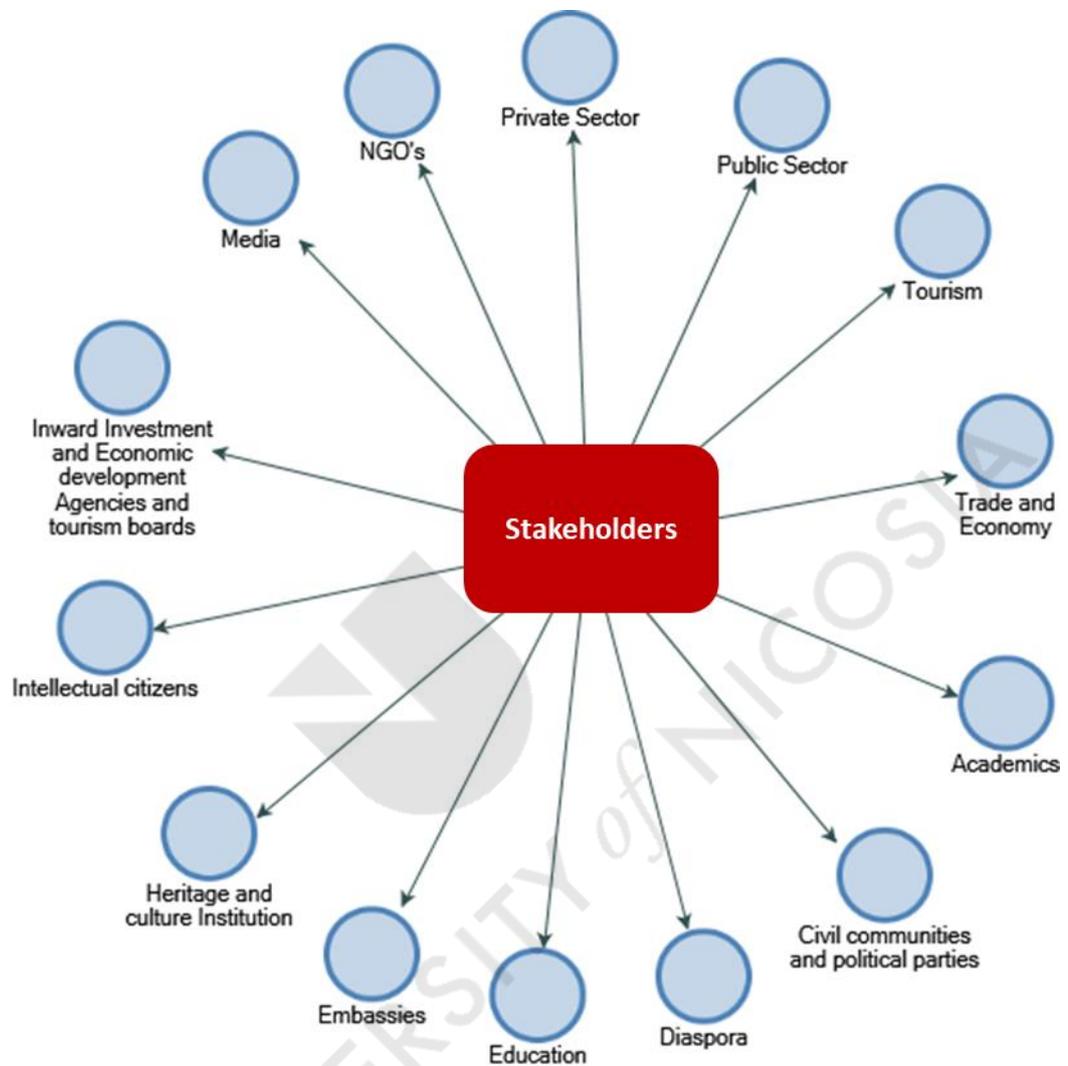


Figure 1 – Stakeholders

T3 – The Message

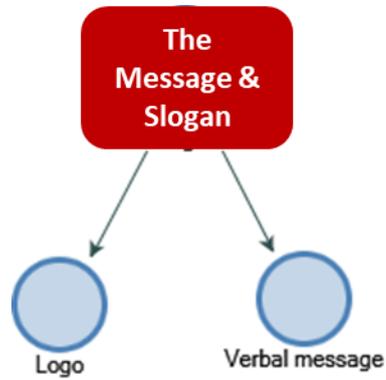
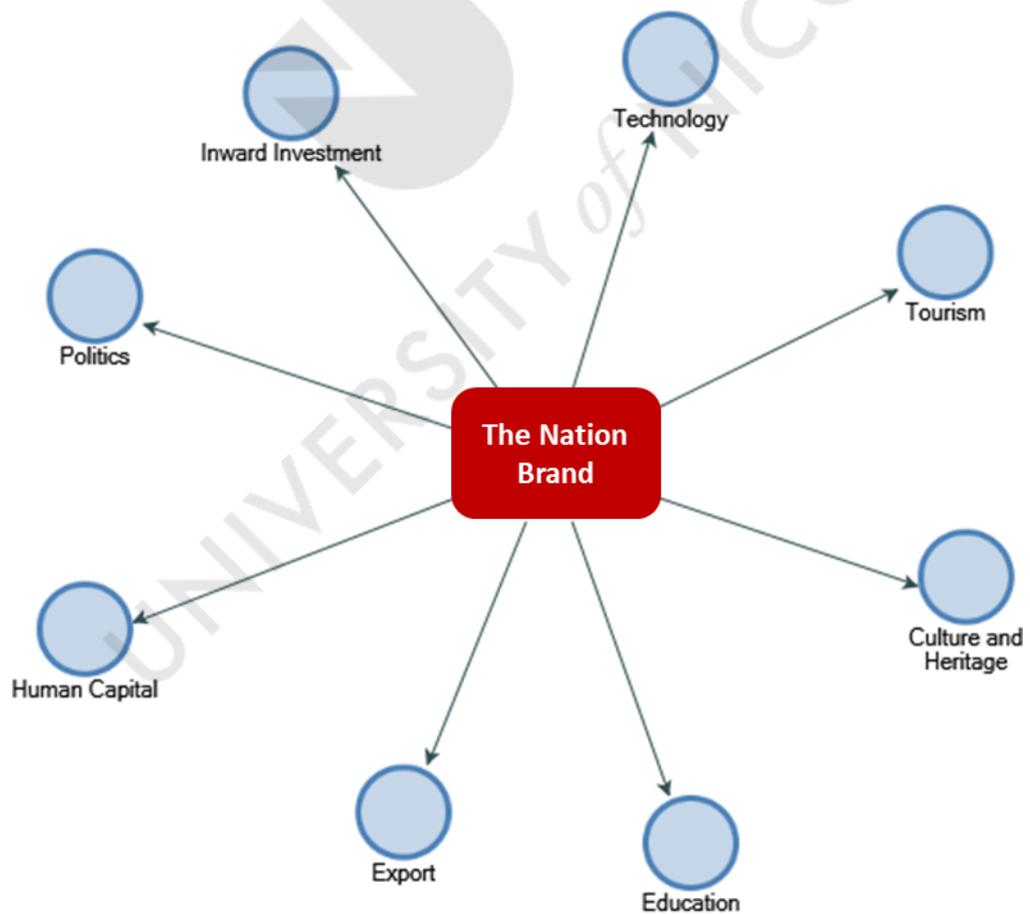


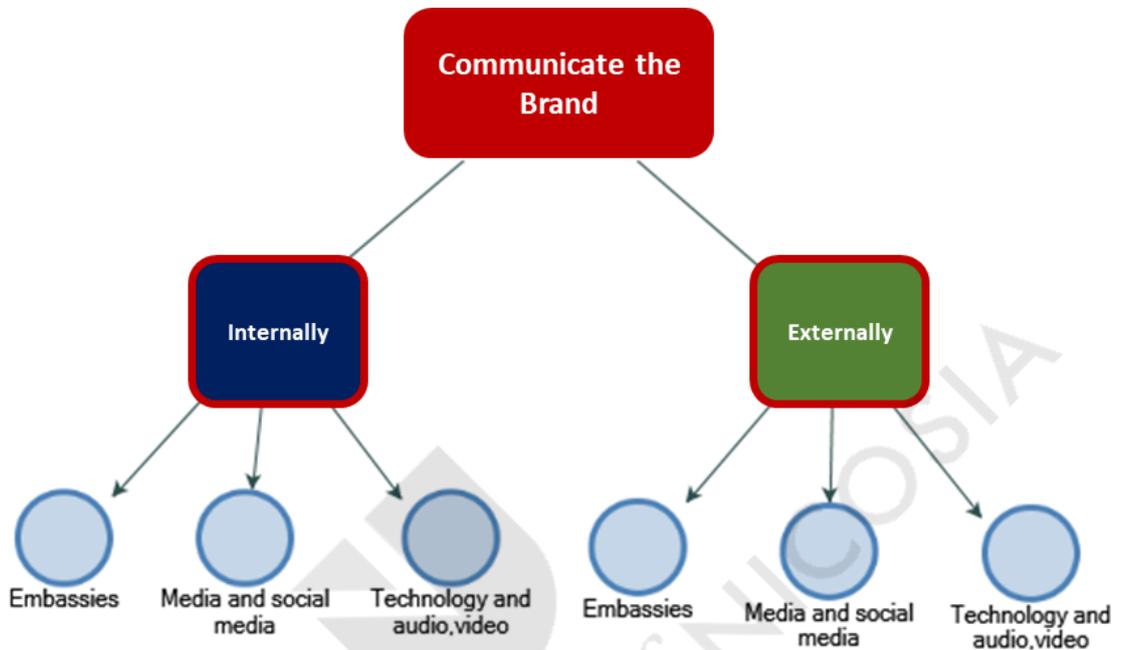
Figure 2 – The Message and the Slogan

T4. The Nation Brand



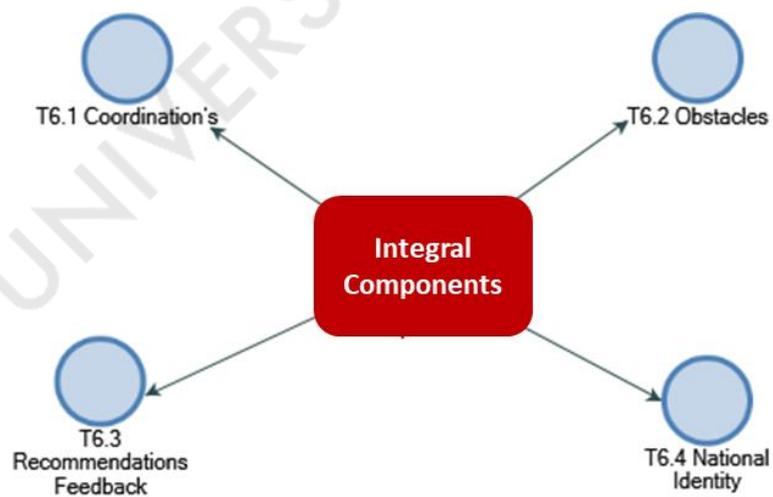
The Nation Brand

T5. Communicate the Brand



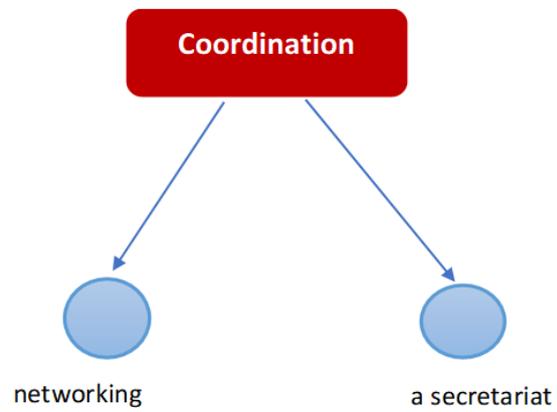
Communicate the Brand

T6 -Integral Components



Integral Components

T6.1 Coordination

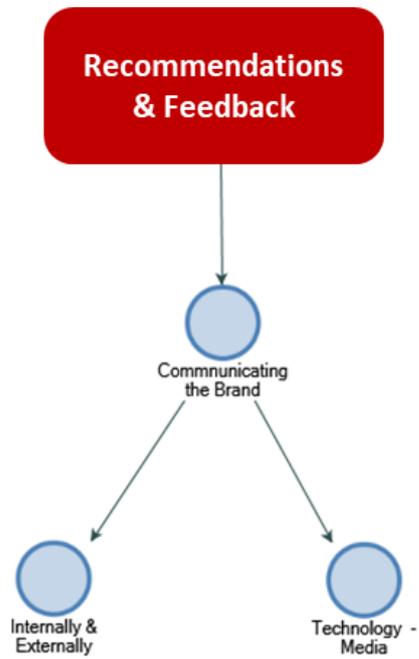


T6.2 Obstacles



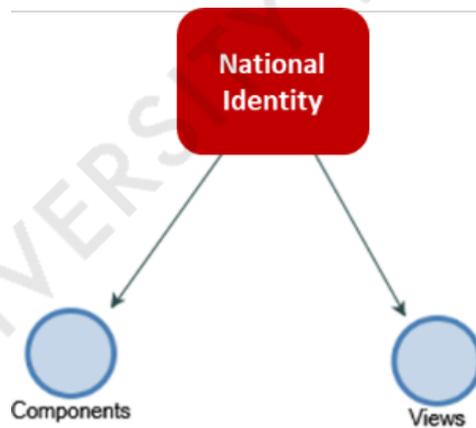
Obstacles

T6.3 Recommendations Feedback



T6.3 Recommendations and Feedback

T6.4 National Identity



National Identity

Revised Model

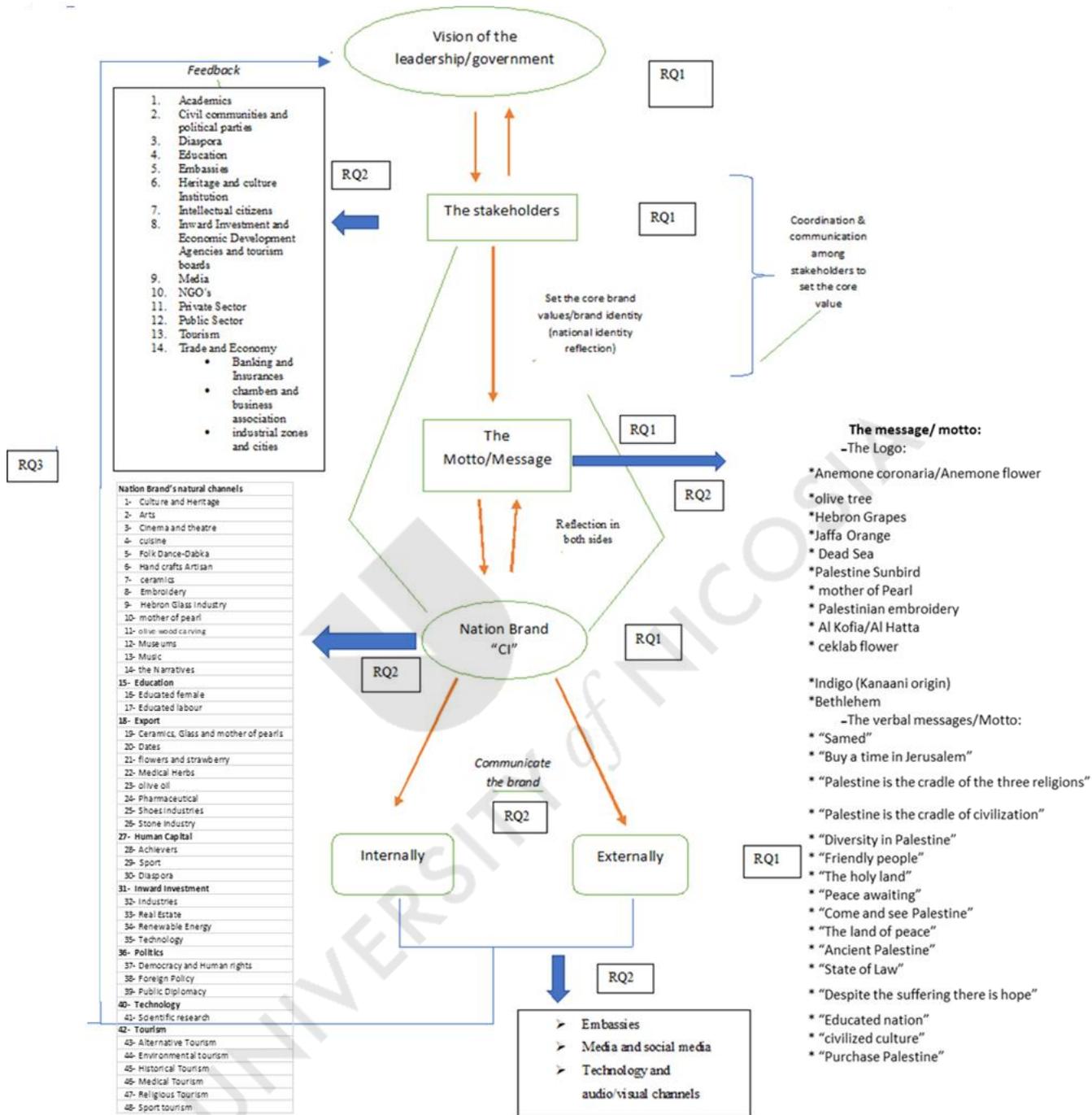


Figure 3 – Revised model

Appendix 9:

Research Topic Information & Consent Form for Potential Palestinian Stakeholder

Interviewees

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Jilan Abdalmajid and I am a PhD candidate at the University of Nicosia. My PhD research is on the subject of Nation Branding.

As part of my research, I have developed an interview schedule in an attempt to obtain primary data, which is required in order to achieve the objectives of my research.

In order to complete my thesis, I must fully explore the views and attitudes of the diverse range of stakeholders in Palestine.

I would greatly appreciate your time and expertise to responding to a series of questions on the topic of developing a nation brand for Palestine.

I look forward to receiving an answer as to whether a meeting can be arranged as well as the place and time it will be held, at your earliest convenience. The interview will last for approximately forty-five minutes, and it could be conducted either in Arabic or English, according to your convenience.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and after providing a written consent, you can still withdraw from the study at any time before the thesis is published.

Kindly find hereinafter some related information on the research topic. I am looking forward to your reply.

I am contactable at the phone number or email address provided below. If you do decide to participate in this research and if you have any queries, please feel free to ask for more details or discuss any other questions at any time.

1. What is this research about?

This research intends to explore the views and attitudes of the different stakeholders in Palestine towards developing a nation brand for Palestine.

Every country has a unique name and image in the minds of people both inside and outside the country, and therefore a nation has a brand.

A nation brand is the total sum of all perceptions of a nation in the minds of international stakeholders, which may contain some of the following elements: people, place, culture / heritage, history, food, fashion, famous faces (celebrities), global brands and so on. That all provides the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences (Fan2010, p.89)

Many countries embrace nation branding in order to acquire market share. Examples of some nations that reflect national effort to gain or maintain good reputation, thus developing or redeveloping a nation brand include: Spain after Franco (one of the most successful experiences in developing a nation brand), Egypt, South Africa during the world cup, Nigeria, South Korea, Germany, France, Serbia, X Soviet Union countries and Australia as well as many others which achieved great results from running strategic nation branding campaigns or developing a nation brand.

Nation Branding requires collaboration between many sectors of society ensuring that the messages that the country promotes in the public domain represent what they view as the common purposes of that country. Most countries usually communicate with the rest of the world through

six natural channels, in order to create their reputation and develop their nation brand. These natural channels are tourism, exports, governance, people, culture and heritage, investment and immigration/migration.

- Why should Palestine develop a nation brand?

In this competitive world, the image of a country affects its global positioning. Having successfully gained state status through the General Assembly at the United Nations in 2012, it is therefore, a matter of urgency that Palestine needs to seriously consider its image abroad. The question now is, rather than maintaining this UN status as purely a theoretical gain, is Palestine prepared to take advantage of this internationally recognised elevation in status and take proactive steps towards developing a nation brand?’

In this study, the researcher is aiming to explore the possibilities of taking advantage of the newly gained state status of Palestine in order to inform and alter stereotypical image of Palestine and Palestinians in the minds of other nations in the world. With the participation and feedback from different stakeholders in Palestine, the researcher intends to explore valid and practical options to formulating and proposing an integrated framework to develop a nation brand for Palestine, with which to develop a nation brand for Palestine like any other nation in the world.

2. How will participants’ privacy be protected by the researcher?

In order to safeguard you from any potential threat to your safety or your reputation, your anonymity will be protected throughout the study and thereafter, and your name will not appear in the final published study. As the interviews will be recorded, there is no way to guarantee 100% anonymity, there can only be a partial guarantee. However, your privacy will be protected to the best of the ability of the researcher. In certain cases and with the permission of the interviewee, the researcher may identify the position or status, but only if that is relevant to the overall research.

All primary research data and recordings will be kept confidential by using password protected electronic tools. Prior to the publication of the study, the only people with access to the raw data will be the researcher and the researcher's supervisors. Both the digital audio files and transcripts will be encrypted and stored in a secure location. In keeping with the best practices policies of my university, data will be archived after my thesis is examined.

3. Can you change your mind at any stage and withdraw from the study?

There is no obligation to participate in the project right through until the end. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw, without prejudice, at any time during the study. If you do decide to withdraw after the commencement of the study, all the information that has been provided by you or recorded from interviews will be destroyed and will not appear in the final thesis.

4. How will you find out what happens with this project?

On completion of the study (December 2018), all of the interviewed research participants will receive a report containing the final results of this research.

15. Contact details for further information

Name: Jilan Abdalmajid

Phone: 00353879835504

Email: jilan.wahba@gmail.com

Address: 8 Upper Leeson, Dublin 4, Ireland

My project supervisors' contact details are as follows

Name: Professor Ioanna Papasolomou

Email: papasolomou.i@unic.ac.cy

Name: Professor Demetris Vrontis

Email: vrontis.d@unic.ac.cy

Name: Yioula Melanthiou

Email: melanthiou.y@unic.ac.cy

Address: University of Nicosia 46 Makedonitissas Avenue, 2414 Engomi, Nicosia, Cyprus

Participant consent

I have read this information sheet and have had time to consider whether or not to take part in this study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time without prejudice. I have been provided with a copy of this information sheet and consent form for my own future reference and to enable me to contact the researcher in the future should I choose to do so. I hereby agree to take part in a research interview in line with the terms outlined in this information sheet and consent form.

Name of Participant (in block letters): _____

Date & Signature: _____

Participant consent to audio-recording of the interviews

I fully understand that the researcher will record the interviews using a standard audio-recording device. No video/film recordings will be carried out.

I hereby agree for my participation at the interviews to be audio-recorded by the researcher, in line with the terms outlined in this information sheet and consent form.

Name of Participant (in block letters): _____

Date & Signature: _____

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research project, please contact me at the following email address: jilan.wahba@gmail.com

Appendix 10: Interview questions

Nation Branding: An integrated framework for developing a nation brand for Palestine from stakeholders' perspectives.

Transcript # ___/33

Stakeholders' Group _____

1. What do you think about factors/elements that might be essential to develop a nation brand for Palestine?
2. Apart from the six natural channels of the main theory of nation brand? Are there any to be excluded or any others that you think are important to be included as essential natural channel?

(The natural channels are export, culture and Heritage, tourism, investment, public diplomacy, and citizens).
3. I would like to know your views about:
 - a. Other stakeholders that might be included in and would be appropriate to participate in developing the Palestine's brand, apart from the general ones (Public sector, Private sector, NGOs and diaspora, Trade association and chambers, Tourism association, inward investment agencies and economic development agencies and citizens).
 - b. What do you think about the best ways that you can coordinate the work regarding developing a nation brand with other stakeholders and other participants?
 - c. How do you perceive national core values and national identity in any future nation brand for Palestine? And what do you think of essential values that would help build a nation brand for Palestine?
 - d. What do you think of a verbal message that would be most suitable to present Palestine?

- e. What do you think of a visual message that would be most appropriate to represent Palestine?
- f. Once there is an agreement on the nation brand message, what are the best ways that you as a stakeholder can communicate the brand internally (locally) and externally (abroad)? Who might be the related channels that may communicate the brand through it?
4. What essential elements do you think that could be incorporated in the brand development process, none of which were mentioned or discussed earlier, that would facilitate communicating the message of the nation brand?
5. What would be the ways that can facilitate feedback purposes from your point of view?
6. How do you see Palestinians developing a nation brand for Palestine that reflects the Palestinians' achievements, assets, people and products in their brand image?
7. What do you think about establishing a national committee for developing and promoting the nation brand for Palestine? Do you think it is essential? Whom do you think should be included? And on what level?
8. What do you think the best way to measuring the image and reputation of Palestine? abroad? Who may be the key players?
9. How do you think Palestine can work to develop this image and maintain a good reputation?
10. What would you like to add?

Appendix 11:

Table 4: Rationale for choice of data analysis methodology

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
<p>Grounded Theory (GT)</p>	<p>Grounded Theory (GT) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) is a systematic methodology involving the discovery of theory through the analysis of data (Martin and Turner, 1986). GT requires the analysis to be directed towards theory development (Holloway and Todres, 2003) in a 'bottom up' approach. It was later broadened by other contributors to three paradigms, Classic, Straussian (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) and Constructivist GT (Thornberg, 2012)</p>	<p>GT is often misunderstood. There is significant disagreement between grounded theorists as to what constitutes GT. Critics argue that "it is impossible to free oneself of preconceptions in the collection and analysis of data in the way Glaser and Strauss say it is necessary" (Thomas and James, 2006)</p>	<p>Classic GT requires the researcher to re-enter the field, having analysed the first round of data collected and conduct further interviews to address questions arising from previous analysis; a process known as "data saturation". As this study has recruited high level and very experienced participants, it would be unlikely to gain access again for second interviews if necessary and the researcher's closeness to the world under scrutiny may also constitute a barrier to a</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
			<p>classic GT approach. GT was therefore ruled out as the most appropriate data analysis methodology for this study.</p>
<p>Content Analysis</p>	<p>Content Analysis was first introduced by Lasswell and Casey (1946) and is the analysis of texts of various types including writing, images, recordings and cultural artefacts. It tends to focus at a more micro level, often provides (frequency) counts (Wilkinson, 2000) and allows for quantitative analyses of initially qualitative data (Ryan and Bernard, 2000)</p>	<p>Is commonly used for analysis of communication such as documents and analysts should draw distinctions between "prescriptive analysis", text or subject for example, and "open analysis" meaning dominant messages (McKeone, 1995)</p>	<p>The themes are often quantified and the unit of analysis tends to be a word or phrase. However, in this study, the themes are not quantified and the unit of analysis and observation are people not published content. Therefore, content analysis was not considered to be the best option for this study.</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
<p>Discourse Analysis (DA)</p>	<p>DA first came to prominence after a publication by Harris (1952) and it covers a number of approaches to analyse written, vocal, or sign language use or any significant semiotic event</p>	<p>DA takes many forms and includes semiotics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics to name but not all. Choices must be directed by research aims which may lead to difficult decisions early in the research process (Brown and Yule, 1983)</p>	<p>For DA (e.g., Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Burman and Parker, 1993; Willig, 2003) different manifestations of the method exist, from within a broad theoretical framework, making choice difficult. It also requires a detailed theoretical and technological knowledge of the approach. In addition, this study is not examining language per se as a means of constructing meaning. Thus, discourse analysis was not considered to be the optimum choice of methodology for this study.</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
<p>Narrative Analysis (NA)</p>	<p>NA emerged as a discipline from within the broader field of qualitative research in the early 20th century (Riessman, 1993). NA uses field texts, such as stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photographs (and other artefacts), and life experience, as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000)</p>	<p>Critics argue that whereas NA challenges the idea of quantitative objectivity, it is nonetheless lacking in theoretical insights of its own (Boje, 2001)</p>	<p>For NA different manifestations of the method exist, from within a board theoretical framework, making choice difficult (Murray, 2003). In addition, the study is exploring participants' attitudes and beliefs on building a brand for the country of Palestine and is therefore not concerned with the individual stories of participants' experiences but their opinions on future possibilities.</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
Case Study	<p>Case studies have their origins as far back as 1879 (Healy, 1947), but is more often associated today with Classic GT. It is a method which focuses on complex situations while taking the context into account (Keen and Packwood, 1995), thus capturing the holistic and meaningful characteristics of events (Yin, 1994)</p>	<p>Critics argue that the small size inevitably associated with studies limits transferability (context to context) Yin (198</p>	<p>This study will focus on single case that is context and time bound and therefore a case study approach was not possible for this research project</p>
Thematic Analysis	<p>Thematic analysis is the most commonly used method of analysis in qualitative research analysis (Thomas and Harden, 2008; Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2011) and is used for identifying, analysing, and reporting (themes) within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The method of analysis should be driven by both theoretical assumptions and the research questions.</p>	<p>Critics argue that reliability with this method is a concern because of the wide variety of interpretations that arise from the themes, as well as applying themes to large amounts of text. Increasing reliability may occur if multiple researchers are coding simultaneously, which is possible with this form of analysis (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2011)</p>	<p>Thematic Analytical is sometimes over reliant on the presentation of themes supported by participant quotes as the primary form of analysis rather than as an outcome of rigorous data analysis processes (Bazeley, 2009). It was therefore ruled out as the optimum data analysis methodology for this study.</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
	<p>Thematic analysis provides a flexible method of data analysis and allows for researchers with various methodological backgrounds to engage in this type of analysis</p>		
<p>Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)</p>	<p>Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a relatively recent qualitative approach developed specifically within psychology. It has an idiographic focus, which means that it aims to offer insights into how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of given phenomena at a point in time. Underpinned by a phenomenological epistemology (Smith, Jarman and Osborn, 1999; Smith and Osborn, 2003), it is about understanding people's everyday</p>	<p>Critics of IPA argue that "it is kept somewhat mysterious. Guidelines are offered to the researcher who is then informed that they cannot do good qualitative research simply by following guidelines. Thus, the judgement about what is a good qualitative analysis remains rather subjective and ineffable" (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). Critics argue that whereas IPA allows for deeper and richer in-depth analysis, small sample sizes can inhibit a broader or more transferable set of findings (Pringle, Drummond, McCafferty and Hendry, 2011)</p>	<p>Despite relatively limited variability in how the method is applied within its framework with one recipe guiding the analyses recommended (Smith, 2008), the method is suitable for studying people phenomenon (McLeod, 2001). As the unit of analysis and observation in this study were people, and the study seeks to understand brand building for Palestine through their eyes, IPA was considered to be a</p>

Method	Description	Critique	Rationale for Discounting Method
	experience of reality, in great detail, so as to gain an understanding of the phenomena in question		good fit between the research aims and objectives and a recognised data analysis methodology

In summary, the IPA methodology for data analysis (Smith, 2008), which adopts an idiographic focus on complex phenomena, within a time and context bound set of circumstances (Keen and Packwood, 1995), thus capturing the holistic and meaningful characteristics of events and possibilities (Yin, 1994) for creating a country brand for Palestine, was considered the most appropriate methodology to be applied for data analysis in this study.

Appendix 12: Table 5

Links the stages and processes conducted in NVivo to the practical guidelines for data analysis and interpretation as set out by Smith (2008):

IPA analytical focus (Smith et al. 2009)	NVivo Process
<p>Steps 1 & 2: Reading and Initial Noting</p> <p>Complete immersion in the original data (interview transcripts) and initial noting. To attend to the participant and focus on the sense and meanings they make about their experiences – hopefully moving from the broad and general to specific details about events.</p> <p>Initial noting examines language use and semantic content ‘on a very exploratory level’ (p.83) and the ways the participant uses language to address issues relevant to the research questions. The aim is to produce detailed, comprehensive descriptive notes and exploratory comments on the data rather than seek out meaning units at this stage.</p> <p>Three main processes are involved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Descriptive comments on the content of the transcript 	<p style="text-align: center;">Open coding</p> <p>As far as possible the participant’s own words are used to summarise the sense or meaning that he is trying to convey about a specific experience from the transcript. Open codes (‘nodes’ in NVivo) are created for the participant’s transcript. Codes aim to make a first pass at reducing the original data to descriptive phrases and notes. This is an iterative process – going through each transcript several times to code and re-code and to add comments, both interrogative and reflexive as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Code Names capture the summary overall description of the content 2. Rich descriptive comments to provide coding transparency are included in the Code Description.

IPA analytical focus (Smith et al. 2009)	NVivo Process
<p>2. Linguistic comments on how the participant has used language</p> <p>3. Conceptual (interrogative and reflexive) comments to start interpreting the text.</p>	<p>3. A journal captures reflexive and conceptual comments arising from the interview.</p>
<p>Step 3: Developing emerging themes.</p> <p>The researcher attempts to reduce the volume of data (by summarising) while retaining its complexity by looking for patterns and connections. The hermeneutic circle (Gadamer 2013; Grondin 2003; Heidegger 2012) concerns interpreting the part of the transcript in relation to the whole and the whole in relation to the part. Themes should be ‘a synergistic process of description and interpretation’ (p.92), reflecting both the participant’s original words and thoughts and the researcher’s interpretation – ‘capturing an understanding’.</p>	<p>Category creation</p> <p>As the first step in data reduction, a new ‘Category’ folder for the participant’s transcript in NVivo holds a copy of the set of open codes, so leaving the original open codes folder for the participant intact. Then reviewing each code in the category folder, reordering codes into broad categories (codes are added to other codes either as parent or, more usually as child codes), merged, and re-named, ensuring that new names accurately reflect coded content to allow a more in-depth understanding of the participant’s lifeworld.</p>
<p>Step 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes. This step maps how the themes fit together. Several strategies may be helpful:</p>	<p>Category Development</p> <p>Employing IPA strategies to create superordinate themes for clusters of codes.</p> <p>The first step is to consider how categories may be linked or reduced further into emergent</p>

IPA analytical focus (Smith et al. 2009)	NVivo Process
<p><u>Abstraction</u>: Development of a ‘super-ordinate’ theme for theme clusters.</p> <p><u>Subsumption</u>: An emergent theme may naturally become a superordinate theme.</p> <p><u>Polarization</u>: Looking for differences and similarities – oppositional relationship.</p> <p><u>Contextualization</u>: Identifying narrative contextual elements: organising into explicit temporal, cultural and narrative themes can highlight patterns.</p> <p><u>Numeration</u>: An indication of frequency themes appear.</p> <p><u>Function</u>: E.g. positive and negative meanings (language / discourse analysis).</p> <p><u>Bringing it together</u>: Summarising the development of the emergent themes from the raw data in a table or graphic.</p>	<p>themes. New names are created for category themes that reflect both the descriptive and the interpretative to create ‘superordinate’ themes. For example, reducing risk, avoiding risk, and taking a risk may all be clustered under one theme, e.g. ‘attitudes to risk’. The aim is to reduce the original data down to between three and six themes that are relevant to the research question: consolidating codes into a more abstract and conceptual map of a final framework of nodes.</p>
<p>Step 5: Moving to the next case</p> <p>Repeating all the previous steps for each participant without, as far as possible, reference to the other transcripts (i.e. bracketing ideas emerging from one case to the next). IPA’s project is a commitment to idiographic analysis.</p>	<p>Next Transcript</p> <p>A new open codes folder is created in NVivo in which to store the new codes created for each participant’s transcript separate from other transcripts. Each transcript is therefore treated as a new analysis (i.e. corresponding to Steps 1-</p>

IPA analytical focus (Smith et al. 2009)	NVivo Process
<p>This is a different type of bracketing from epochē, which Husserl (Hopkins 2011) meant to refer to bracketing out the ‘natural attitude’ or taken-for-grantedness of everyday life, and which Merleau-Ponty (2012) argues is never possible to attain anyway: human perception is always fully embodied and cannot be separated from the world. Bracketing as used by Smith et al. simply means to allow new structures to emerge with each case, yet being aware that the ‘fore-structures’ (hermeneutics) have inevitably changed and been influenced by what was previously found.</p>	<p>4) as far as possible bracketing out references to codes in other transcripts.</p>
<p>Step 6: Looking for patterns across cases</p> <p>Looking at themes across participants to detect patterns. Looking for connections, do themes from one case illuminate another? Which themes are the most potent? This process can result in moving towards a more theoretical level of analysis as individual themes or superordinate themes may also reflect higher order concepts shared by all cases. The analysis so far has gone from the part to the whole. This</p>	<p>Consolidation and Matrix coding</p> <p>Emergent themes from the participant’s transcript are copied into a common ‘Themes’ folder where they are all merged together for the first time (leaving the category folders for each participant intact).</p> <p>A process of merging and further consolidation of superordinate themes may be conducted within the Themes folder.</p>

IPA analytical focus (Smith et al. 2009)	NVivo Process
<p>is now reversed and the whole looked at in terms of each part. Also recurrence of themes across cases is considered. For a superordinate theme to be classed as recurrent it has to be present in at least half of cases and best case across all participant interviews.</p>	<p>A specific type of query in NVivo (Matrix Coding) produces a table which shows participants in columns and themes in rows. This can be used to look at themes both between and within participants' transcripts (Appendix⁵).</p>

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Appendix 13:

1- The voice distribution percent for each element of the nation brand by stakeholder type

Nation Brand x Stakeholder	Public Sector	Private Sector	Investment - / economic & Tourism Board	Trade Association and Chambers of Commerce	Citizens	NGO & Diaspora	
Culture and Heritage	18.74%	39.48%	2.68%	9.09%	21.38%	8.66%	100%
Education	3.95%	22.46%	17.75%	1.09%	34.78%	9.96%	100%
Export	22.39%	12.42%	18.40%	28.16%	9.98%	8.65%	100%
Human Capital	12.24%	23.71%	7.76%	9.40%	22.07%	24.83%	100%
Inward Investment	9.03%	7.47%	45.14%	8.06%	13.54%	6.77%	100%
Politics	7.14%	7.98%	11.55%	0%	68.07%	5.25%	100%
Technology	66.67%	0%	33.33%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Tourism	25.27%	14.21%	18.29%	12.22%	23.19%	6.82%	100%

2- The voice distribution of each stakeholder type across all nation brand elements.

Nation Brand x Stakeholder	Public Sector	Private Sector	Investment - / economic & Tourism Board	Trade Association and Chambers of Commerce	Citizens	NGO & Diaspora
Culture and Heritage	29.14%	47.28%	5%	22.85%	22.61%	20.84%
Education	7.45%	9.25%	11.40%	0.94%	12.66%	8.25%
Export	9.78%	4.18%	9.65%	19.87%	2.97%	5.85%
Human Capital	13.75%	20.51%	10.47%	17.06%	16.88%	43.18%
Inward Investment	5.03%	3.21%	30.23%	16.28%	5.14%	5.85%
Politics	3.29%	2.83%	6.40%	0%	21.36%	3.75%
Technology	2.13%	0%	1.28%	0%	0%	0%
Tourism	29.43%	12.75%	25.58%	23%	18.39%	12.29%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3- Nation brand channels and emphasis perception from the informants

Nation Brand x Cases	Participants	Total Participants	% of Total
Culture and Heritage	23	33	70%
Education	18	33	55%
Export	17	33	52%
Human Capital	25	33	76%
Inward Investment	12	33	36%
Politics	10	33	30%
Technology	2	33	6%
Tourism	27	33	82%



Appendix 14: Recommendation Samples

[Transcribe 10](#)

- “The stakeholders should be selected according to their needs. The best way to coordinate the work is by using either thematic or geographic working groups.”
- “In order to participate in the South, southern mechanisms and cooperation should be used.”
- “There should be participation in Nation Expos and forums.”
- “It is important to work on framework agreements with different countries.”
- “Tafahom“(reach an understanding between parties)
- “It is a national agenda.”
- “In order to develop the nation brand for Palestine, a role must be taken by PICA and other parties from a decision made by the prime minister’s cabinet.”
- “There must be a leader who will work this project.”
- “The cabinet should lead the decision on the issue of the branding of Palestine.”
- “The president always promotes PICA to take the lead and develop a brand for Palestine.”

(PICA: Palestine International Cooperation Agency)

[Transcribe 11-](#)

- “Our image is different to the others” – ours is negative.”
- “We need to change the stereotypical image of Palestine.”

- “I follow the idea that, by subsidizing our products, it will lead people to stop buying other products and commit to buying national products.”
- “The standardization and metrology departments should be authorised to be recognized worldwide and to meet international standards.”
- “Our embassies abroad should change their policies in order to allow for our products to be promoted internationally.”
- “SWOT analysis should be the main planning process used to evaluate our strength and identify our opportunities to develop our nation brand.”
- “When the slogan is agreed upon and the message becomes clear, it is important to put forward a strategy to communicate this both internally and externally.”
- “This plan should be considered on the national agenda.”
- “Barcodes are essential to promote our exports.”
- “It is important to focus on IT and technology in our course of action.”
- “Governmental agenda and national committees should work on developing a nation brand.”
- “The land registrar and tourism ministry both need to be revived, as they constitute our wealth.”
- “We have thousands of unregistered land, and we also have many historical heritage sites that need to be identified and revived.”
- “We require strategic planning in order to allow for land registration, improving our tourism factors and our wealth.”

[Transcribe 13](#)

- “We must adjust the negative image associated with us.”

- “We should not promote ourselves as victims, both generally and through our music.”
- “If a great performance is produced, it will impress our audience, which will build a strong, civilised and positive image about our music. This will also be reflected in people’s perspective towards the music and its related nation.”
- “If one would like to know about the civilization of a nation, they should listen to their music.”
- “We have to separate art from politics. Our music should present a message that relates to our culture, thus relating to our civilization.”
- Much of Palestine’s participation in international music events usually occurs as an individual initiative. We must work on a national level and urge official participation through governmental or semi-governmental subsidization. This will positively impact the image of Palestine.”
- “Encourage the role of Social responsibilities in companies and institutions, this will have great impact on “Arts”” .
- “The key factor in achieving success is to segment the target market.”
- “Small projects should not be underestimated; success can derive from small projects or through a small audience. These smaller communities or groups may have a great impact on changing the image or stereotype.”

[Transcribe 15-](#)

- “If all religions had the freedom to practice their rituals equally, it will generate the image of Palestine as the holy land for peace.”
- “Having easy access to the whole of Palestine for all religions will greatly impact our economy. At the moment, millions of Muslims have limited access to the religious places in Palestine; one

can only imagine the impact on the Palestinian economy if full peace between religions was achieved.”

- “A recommendation to the Palestinian government: there should be continuous democratization within the civil communities, unions and associations. By reviving the Palestinian Culture, as well as the state of law and democracy, it will encourage investment and will build education, health etc.”

[Transcribe 16-](#)

- “We have to apply the current Irish experience; as a nation, they encourage education and technology, and we should do the same.”

[Transcribe 17-](#)

- “Palestinian narratives are essential factors to develop our nation brand.”
- “To slowdown the institution building”
- “We have to live the brand”
- “Educate the nation”
- “Political orientation and national education should be revived”.
- “Applying and respecting human rights should be of importance to the state of Palestine.”
- “We have to learn how to unify our efforts and enhance a positive experience.”
- “We must harmonize our laws within the international standard.”

Transcribe 18-

- “Without peace, there will be no chance for any kind of development. If the Jews and the Palestinians manage to achieve peace in Palestine between each other, it will be a strong state.”
- “We must apply laws and regulations to regulate tourism and investment.”
- “We must learn from other nations’ experiences.”
- “We must work on our ideologies and improve institutions’ management “
- “We have to know how others perceive the Palestinian image.”
- “We should work on achieving comprehensive peace.”

Transcribe 19-

- “The laws and regulations in Palestine are very weak. The legislature should work to improve these, and should develop a qualified legal system that meets international standards.”

Transcribe 20-

- “We must have export strategies to build an image for Palestine. We should supply value added quality products and services.”
- “We must promote Palestine as a business community.”
- “We must differentiate between local products and imported products.”
- “The private sector should be greatly involved in branding Palestine.”

- “There should be teams with clear missions that will discuss issues on a technical level, then raise these issues to the top management level.”
- “The Palestine Export council is an advisory team consisting of 26 institutions, organizations and academia.”
- “A nation brand should be a national plan.”
- “We must maintain the originality and the quality of our craft industries and make sure not to promote the fake ones.”
- “What is the message we want to promote within tourism in Palestine? Tourism is a massive sector that needs a large budget, but its impact on Palestine’s brand is huge.”
- “The national committee for branding Palestine should include all the mentioned stakeholders and should be headed by the ministry of economy who should report directly to the cabinet to get their approval for any national plan.”
- “The role of embassies is to promote the brand.”
- “This national plan will be extremely costly.”
- “We should create marketing courses in the universities and encourage research in branding and national branding.”
- “We should encourage research and development and assign a budget to promote it.”
- “We must involve universities.”
- “We have to have a clear vision for the nation brand and it should be a national plan.”
- “The Palestine export council, which includes 16 different export companies, has already started the project to brand Palestine’s exports.”

- “Unified messages are important and should be promoted.”
- “Employed young graduates and call centres should promote Palestine.”
- “It is important to promote our products through considering their quality.”

Transcribe 21-

- “Fan trips, media visits and tourist agencies should come to Palestine and write about their experiences. This will all help to enhance the image of Palestine positively.”
- “There must be cooperation with the private sector.”
- “We must develop alternative and non-traditional programs and packages for tourism and Haj.”
- “We must work on developing the historical, cultural and heritage sites.”
- “We should promote Palestine in new areas and destinations such as India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia etc.”
- “We must participate more in tourism exhibitions.”
- “We must strengthen the relations between our churches and the churches in other countries.’
- “We should encourage investment in hotel sector.”
- “We must develop the infrastructure of tourism.”
- “We should use visual and practical promotion.”
- “We must encourage the Palestinian diaspora to invest in Palestine.”
- “We must encourage the organisation of national and local festivals.”

- “We should sponsor Gala dinners within international competition to promote Palestinian culture.”

Transcribe 23-

- “Palestinian women should be part of our image and nation brand.”
- “Women empowerment should be extended to include the female labour in the agriculture sector.”

Transcribe 24-

- “Quality of products and human resources are the two main issues to develop a brand.”
- “The agriculture dimension is essential to develop our brand.”

Transcribe 25-

- “Our survival as Palestinians should be shown to the world.”
- “We should change our old approaches and political discourse.”
- “Good work reaches the world.”
- “For years the government put much effort to achieve political and diplomatic gains. Now, the Palestinian government should work parallel to this to develop the touristic, economic and cultural sectors.”

- “The national entities, whether private or public sectors, should cooperate together in this national plan, and should also involve the Palestinian diaspora in this discourse.”
- “There will be no progress in a nation that does not respect women.”
- “There must be individual projects added to the joint projects as joint projects strengthen the individual projects.”
- “What weakens us today may possibly strengthen us in the future.”
- “We hope to teach the world what freedom means, even though we are occupied. Freedom means freedom of thoughts.”
- “Political effort abroad should be done parallel to cultural, economic, and touristic development.”
- “Our political message would be more effective if we could deliver it through different channels, such as arts.”

[Transcribe 26-](#)

- “We are seeking to meet the customer’s expectations by improving our export products to be high quality and meet the highest standard.”
- “We are seeking to make Palestine an export hub. Our market is small and we signed many trade agreements that encourage investors to take this advantage and use Palestine as a reexport hub. This will help to create labour market.”
- “We must encourage investors to use the industrial cities to complete the manufacturing of some products and then reexport them.”

- “We should renew the legal system of trademarks, patent and protection of intellectual properties.”
- “We must reduce CO2 emissions. Israel includes the emissions of Palestine to get aid on its behalf.”
- Palestine should hold responsible to the climate changes and take serious action to reduce the CO2 emissions.
- “Changing the political and economic discourse will also influence foreign investment in Palestine.”
- “We should work to renew our presentation of education, cultural heritage, research and development.”
- “Palestine should become a destination to learn the Arabic language. As well as this, different languages have become attractive to our people and many linguistic centres opened recently in Palestine.”
- “Customer care should become a core concern.”
- “We must activate the legal system.”
- “We should activate the commercial and cultural attachés in Palestinian embassies abroad.”
- “Developing a nation brand should be a national project and should have a nation plan and strategy.”
- “Encourage funding and invest in research and development.”

[Transcribe 27-](#)

- “Excellence and innovation are the core factors in developing the Palestinian economy.”

[Transcribe 28-](#)

- “Self-evaluation is necessary to enhance our success.”
- “We should invest in our human resources, our tourism and our knowledge.”
- “We have limited natural resources, but we have the will and the ability to work.”
- “It is important to have a comprehensive and national effort to develop the nation brand for Palestine.”

[Transcribe 30-](#)

- “We should not deviate from our reality. Our real world should be represented and reflected in our art. Art should be able to reflect reality.”
- “It is important to upkeep the good quality of our culture, art, and exports.”

[Transcribe 5-](#)

- “Unification of the Arabs will strengthen the economy of Palestine.”
- “Occupation should end.”
- “We are an occupied nation that requires a different programme that differs from any other nation.”

- “People who are supposed to participate in developing the nation brand for Palestine require specific qualifications. The participant should feel/be patriotic and should not just be an employee doing their job.”
- “Political education is necessary, and people must work as a team.”
- “The talker is stronger than weapons. The peaceful struggle is stronger and more effective than militant resistance.”

[Transcribe 6-](#)

- “The key pillars of building a state are institutions. The most important issue while building a state is to build transparent institutions that are capable of development and they must be built according to a proper scientific approach.”
- “One of the most critical issues in state building is not personalizing issues. Institution building should be linked to the interests of the nation, not to the interests of individuals.”
- “It is important to build a system within the institutions.”
- “We must raise awareness, education, parenting, and cultural awareness not only to build the nation morale but the nation brand as well.”
- “Scarifying and eliminating personalization are key factors to build a strong nation.”
- “It is essential to encourage our people to stay in Palestine and to be strongly attached to their homeland, create job opportunities and to strengthen our human capital”

[Transcribe 7-](#)

- “The idea that I always keep insisting on to build our image is the strategic planning on political and economic levels.”
- “In respect of the public sector, ministries for planning and statistics departments should play a key role in planning, this includes the role of the civil society organizations where ideas and trends could can be monitored.”
- “I do not agree with the role of NGOs in planning or branding; only official organizations are necessary with regards to this.”
- “It is important to know our abilities and to be aware of our talented human capital.”
- “The public sector should have an impact on selecting top intellectual human resources”.
- “Applying laws is important in order to allow for transparency.”
- “We should learn from other countries’ experiences in building their state. In this regard, it is important to direct the efforts of the governments to build institutions, civil societies and parties. It is important not to personalize issues, to act civilized and act in accordance with the laws.”
- “We must enhance democracy and the devolution of authorities in Palestine.”
- “We have to educate the children of our society.”
- “A national conference is necessary to indicate and draw our our visions.”

[Transcribe 9-](#)

- “It is important for Palestine to acknowledge the issue of nation branding in the way other larger countries do, it is important to have it as part of our policies and strategies.”

- “The leadership along with political and political and cultural awareness must be revived.”
- “Our message should be just and human.”
- “Artists are the best people to be approached to portray the human message.”
- “Also, individual initiatives might be best in order work on developing the nation brand.”
- “A politician cannot work if we do not have a vision.”
- “This decision should be taken on by high level leaders. It is a sovereign, political decision.”

[Transcribe12-](#)

- “We have limited natural resources.”
- “It is important to have policies on a national level.”
- “The government should work for a long-term strategy that has a vision for the long run as a state.”
- “We must develop education and empower civil societies.”

[Transcribe31-](#)

- “We should present our uniqueness to the world.”
- “We have very strong visual traditions; we have to reinvent ourselves. We have to invest in developing our heritage, such as things like embroidery.”
- “We have to create a scene and we have to invest in it. For example, we can bring famous designers to present our heritage with things like embroideries.”
- “We have to promote a real message; we cannot lie to the world.”

- “We need to think strategically in order to decide what our strengths are.”
- “Arts and culture should be subsidised and supported by the government.”
- “The government should create a national plan for developing a nation brand for Palestine.”
- “The leadership should evaluate and understand what a nation brand means and how public diplomacy could work strategically; they have to think of how to invest in public diplomacy.”
- “We require the creation of a variety of content that we can promote to the world.”

[Transcribe32-](#)

- “It is also important to work and develop the academic school of diversity, and the higher council for innovation/ingenuity and excellence.”

[Transcribe33-](#)

- “Palestine should develop an image and legitimize it.”

[Transcribe4-](#)

- “We have to strengthen the brand locally first, then bring it out to be international.”
- ‘Developing the Palestinian heritage will help other nations to search for it and then they will recognise the identity behind it.’
- “It is important to have a common vision and the participant/stakeholder should share this common vision.”

- “Even though stakeholders have different interests, we must find a common vision.”
- “Stakeholders should communicate on a clear basis and it is important to identify the tasks.”
- “The stakeholders should share a common vision.”
- “The state is a political entity and it has a political administration.”
- “In order to develop the national identity and the economy, the state should play its role.”
- “States have a sensitive role. Responsible governments should have a vision; intellectuals should also participate in this vision. The academics and education sectors should also participate in this vision.”
- “States and governments’ role are crucial in any developmental process, but overcontrol will lead to a dictatorship and a conflict of interests.”

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Appendix 15:

The perceptions of the participants towards the themes and subthemes. It is a reflection of the importance and how to prioritise and rank sectors and factors that are essential while developing a nation brand for Palestine

Themes & Subthemes	Participants %
T1. Vision	42.42%
Vision	42.42%
T2. Stakeholders	72.73%
Stakeholders	72.73%
Academics	18.18%
Civil communities and political parties	18.18%
Diaspora	36.36%
Education	12.12%
Embassies	9.09%
Heritage and culture Institution	3.03%
Intellectuals	15.15%
Inward Investment and Economic development Agencies and tourism boards	9.09%
Media	12.12%
NGO's	6.06%
Private Sector	27.27%
Public Sector	36.36%
Tourism	21.21%
Trade and Economy	33.33%

Banking and Insurances	3.03%
chambers and business association	6.06%
industrial zones and cities	6.06%
T4. The Message	81.82%
The Message and Slogan	81.82%
Logo	39.39%
verbal message	78.79%
T5. Nation Brand	100.00%
Culture and Heritage	69.70%
Arts	30.30%
Cinema and theatre	15.15%
cuisine	15.15%
Folk Dance-Dabka	12.12%
Hand crafts Artisan	18.18%
ceramics	6.06%
Embroidery	9.09%
Hebron Glass industry	6.06%
mother of pearl	6.06%
olive-wood carving	3.03%
Museums	6.06%
Music	27.27%
the Narrative	6.06%
Education	54.55%
educated female	6.06%
educated labour	12.12%

Export	51.52%
Ceramics, Glass and mother of pearls	6.06%
Dates	6.06%
flowers and strawberry	3.03%
Medical Herbs	21.21%
olive oil	9.09%
Pharmaceutical	12.12%
shoes industries	3.03%
Stone Industry	21.21%
Human Capital	75.76%
Achievers	9.09%
Sport	6.06%
Diaspora	15.15%
Inward Investment	36.36%
Industries	9.09%
Real Estate	3.03%
Renewable Energy	3.03%
Technology	24.24%
Politics	30.30%
Democracy and Human rights	12.12%
Foreign Policy	3.03%
Public Diplomacy	18.18%
Technology	6.06%
scientific research	3.03%
Tourism	81.82%

Alternative Tourism	9.09%
Environmental tourism	6.06%
Historical Tourism	18.18%
Medical Tourism	3.03%
Religious Tourism	42.42%
Sport tourism	6.06%
T6. Communicate the brand	45.45%
Communication	45.45%
Externally, embassies	6.06%
Internally	6.06%
media and social media	30.30%
Technology and audio, video	3.03%



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