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## Public Sector Branding in Africa: Some Reflections

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### Introduction

The application of branding has been extended beyond its private organisational context to public sector institutions (Leijerholt et al., 2018, 2019). Public sector branding aims to differentiate public sector organisations and nations by ensuring sustainable and unique competitive advantages. It is possible to identify certain differences between the private sector and public sector branding; a major difference is the dominance of economic objectives in private sector branding and marketing in contrast with public sector branding, which encompasses socio-economic and political objectives (Whelan et al., 2010).

Public sector branding is also concerned with securing legitimacy and improving reputation (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013). Governments may require organisations in the public sector to be more attentive to

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customers and their needs, that is, to become more customer-oriented or welfare-oriented instead of increasing the number of customers. Other elements of branding, such as building awareness and loyalty, could co-exist in both public sector and private sector branding. Government and other regulatory agencies aim at expressing their identities through marketing and branding strategies.

The issue of public sector branding has recently become an interesting topic of growing contention as various academics, and public sector personnel have argued about the nature, existence, and value of branding a public sector. Simon Anholt, a British brand consultant who coined the term “nation-building” in 1996, explains that just as corporate organisations have learned to “live the brand”, nations should also take their reputations into consideration because that is what statecraft is all about in a globalised world (Kaneva, 2011). This sort of branding characterises the different forms of persuasion used by the public sector to advance its political, economic, and cultural agendas.

Studying public sector branding can be a demanding task as the field is still in its infancy and comprises mostly descriptive and prescriptive studies (Papadopoulos & Hamzaoui-Essoussi, 2015). Besides, studying public sector branding in Africa is more challenging, as the continent is severely under-researched and ill-understood (Matiza & Oni, 2013; Papadopoulos & Hamzaoui-Essoussi, 2015). Notwithstanding, the current study is essential, as the current brand of the African public sector is viewed as a significant threat to the future progress of its countries and sectors. The threat pertains to the prevailing view that African countries are “underdeveloped”, which creates a continental brand effect with negative ramifications for all African public sectors. The African continent has gone through significant challenges, especially since the 1950s, attributable to political instability, military coups, and social unrest, which have “nonstop” tarnished the continent’s image in various ways. In 2021 alone, there were six coups or attempted coups. The continent’s tarnished brand has motivated the current researchers to explore the prospects of improving the competitiveness and appeal of the public sector brand in Africa.

Conversely, there is an emerging view that Africa is possibly at the cusp of increased growth, considering the progress in various sectors in terms

of political and economic liberalisation, tourism surge (Owusu-Frimpong et al., 2013), rise in FDI and key sports events (Fullerton & Holtzhausen, 2012). In that regard, public sector branding is expected to significantly contribute to solidifying, projecting, and driving the optimistic outlook (Papadopoulos & Hamzaoui-Essoussi, 2015). Perhaps in recognition of the threat and the opportunity of the African public sector brand, several African countries are engaged in systematic public sector branding to differentiate themselves, promote their strengths, and amend the negative elements of the continental and national brand effects. In that regard, this chapter aims to examine the challenges and prospects of public sector branding in Africa grounded on previous research.

A study of this nature is important for many reasons. First, despite the growing need for branding in public organisations, its application is still nascent in many African countries. Second, there is a need for the relevant bodies to have a greater understanding of contextual factors affecting the applicability and effects of branding efforts in the public sector. Third, a greater understanding of these factors will help public practitioners successfully implement brand communication in public corporations. The long-term survival of the government and its organisations in African countries and beyond still depends on the re-evaluation of their governance systems, organisations, and brand identities.

## **Benefits of Brand Communications in the Public Sector**

In recent times, the literature has recognised the efforts of government authorities utilising marketing procedures to boost the quality and reach of public services (Marland et al., 2017; Reghunathan, 2021). For example, Leijerholt et al. (2018) suggest that brand communication in the public sector develops central organisational assets, strengthens relationships with internal stakeholders (such as public servants), and establishes relationships with external stakeholders (such as citizens and voters). These organisational assets comprise trust, credibility, and legitimacy. A typical example is the public health sector. Factors including reliability,

referent influence, and corporate social responsibility are vital for a robust relationship of the masses with the public health sector brand (Leijerholt et al., 2018).

According to Reghunathan (2021), brand communication facilitates trust in the provision of services. Considering the large number of public sector divisions interacting directly with the general public, the capability to create a sense of trust can bring about improved public participation in the promotion of the facilities and skills offered. Arya et al. (2019) argue that trust brings about emotive attachment to a brand. When a particular government employs a properly designed brand communication policy, it is easy for the public to understand its aims and identify themselves with it, thus removing any misunderstanding that the public may have. Since a good brand basically communicates a unique value, the branding of a government programme or service enables the citizens of a country to be more aware of governmental service delivery.

Brand communication indicates the origin of a product or service and what makes it distinct; this necessitates a closer link between the brand message and its source (Karens et al., 2016). For instance, encouraging the citizens to design mascots is a common action in Olympics host countries. In the Olympic Games, mascots are symbols of entertainment and marketing; it personifies the Olympic values and spirit with a colourful and playful character of the history and culture of the host countries. Thus, generating ideologies from the citizens has the objective of developing a sense of participation in the Olympic Games.

The transition to digital governance has also enabled government authorities to advance the efficacy of public sector administration (Bryson et al., 2014; De Vries et al., 2016). The integration of digital media, governance, and brand communication has provided easier and quicker access to information, thus improving public service delivery (Marland et al., 2017). As information technology avenues continue to be tapped for governance purposes, the mechanisms of consuming information have gone beyond recognising and communicating public policy issues through the unidirectional broadcast spectrum. Instead of public communication conducted by a limited set of actors (e.g., policymakers and other groups such as journalists), the spread and adoption of digital technology has transformed the diffusion of information, thus reducing

information asymmetry (Mahama, 2020). Therefore, digital technology provides an opportunity for interactive communication of public policy.

Aside from its significance and implications for public sector organisations, brand communication has myriad advantages for the nation. A key idea of nation branding is to create a simple, unambiguous, and distinguishing concept centred on emotional qualities denoted verbally and visually, which can be comprehended by diverse audiences in various circumstances. In order to function efficiently, nation branding has to embrace political, cultural, economic, and sports activities. For example, a study by Ahn and Wu (2013) shows that the arts, cultural sector, and the government have positive effects on a nation's brand image.

When viewed as a synonym of a product-country image, nation branding has the clear aim of using the country's image to promote revenue generation and exports. The name of the country or logo can be utilised either by a single firm or by an organisation to emphasise the country of origin. For example, The New Zealand Way takes advantage of the country-of-origin effect as a mark of quality to promote exports. Also, the Cool Britannia era in the UK, which took place in the second half of the 1990s, was an era of increased pride in the culture of the UK and was inspired by Swinging London from 1960s popular culture (Fan, 2006). In the years since this period, the creative industries have been viewed as a favourite of the British government and media (Campbell & Khaleeli, 2017). Another case in which arts and culture have transformed the image of a country is the rising interest in Korean popular culture (music and the arts). Also, manipulating images of a particular country against those of enemy countries can be used as a powerful tool in propaganda. This spans from the Soviet Empire in the Cold War to the labelling of countries as the "axis of evil". Furthermore, a term could also be generated to brand a region. For example, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea are collectively regarded as the four Asian Tigers due to their high levels of economic prosperity since the 1960s decade.

In general, a positive public sector brand image increases investor confidence, promotes tourism, increases access to global markets, improves international ratings, and reverses the brain drain. Often, capital movements are guided not only by rational economic reasoning but also by perception and image (Pantzalis & Rodrigues, 1999). An example is the

flight of investors from some African countries due to economic mismanagement and political risks. The country's brand image can also be used to explain investor perceptions in the economies of "the Asian Tigers" (Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea). According to Pantzalis and Rodrigues (1999), these four countries share a similar brand image despite their considerable differences in socio-economic systems. Hence, investors' perceptions of countries as brands influence the movement of international capital and are, therefore, considered crucial in attracting global capital.

## **Brand Communications in the African Public Sector**

Inspired by the notion of corporate branding, many public sector organisations aim to define their identities in a direct and consistent manner. The belief that government-owned firms and organisations are more likely to succeed in the long-term with a well-defined brand identity is one of the arguments that support public sector branding (Serrat, 2017). In an era where there is a lot of emphases attached to global rankings, a country or region's position, for example, in the Ease of Doing Business Index, Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and Global Competitiveness Index, could be used for branding purposes if it is positive (and ignored if it is negative). This is often done to separate nations from others. Branding through association or alignment with prominent international organisations and groupings, including the G20 and the BRICS, can also provide a sense of prestige in the global context.

The tourism sector represents the starting point for branding in many nations (Osei & Gbadamosi, 2011). The development of the tourism sector is strategic, able to lead to significant positioning across various countries in particular regions (e.g., safaris in sub-Saharan Africa) and hence to competition across countries and their sectors (Dos Santos & Campo, 2014). Public sector branding is particularly crucial in the tourism sector in Africa, as the sector is the fastest growing in the continent, only second to the extractive industries. In many African countries, the

potentials of the tourism sector are rich and diversified. Pitt et al. (2007), in a study of the tourism websites of ten nations in Africa, showed that they communicate an amazing *mélange* of different tinges: for example, “competence” for South Africa, “ruggedness” for Kenya, and “sincerity” for Botswana. In many cases, however, there are confusing similarities in slogans: for example, “Warm Heart of Africa” for Malawi versus “Heart of Africa” for Nigeria. According to a study by Tsaour et al. (2020), such tourism slogans and logos help potential tourists comprehend individual nation’s tourism resources.

Another significant sector engaged in branding is the sports sector. The first time the World Cup took place in Africa was the 2010 World Cup which was hosted in South Africa. Mega-events such as this get an entire nation’s attention and thus serve as a unique opportunity for branding. This is evidenced by the media exposure gained through the event. For instance, more than 700 million people watching the finals alone gathered over 200 television crews from all over the world (Knott et al., 2015). Furthermore, the event created opportunities for tourists to visit the country, leading to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the country.

Certain sectors of a country may be less conspicuous than investment, tourism, and sports but nevertheless count as brand assets. An important example is education sector. Improvements in the public education sector and higher education per se make for effective sector branding. Several African countries view higher education as essential to international competitiveness, and their massive efforts to improve educational offerings, have overturned the trend of students travelling overseas for learning (Buchanan, 2013) and transformed the host nations into places of attraction to inbound international students. South Africa, for instance, has been an attraction to a growing number of students across the continent, making education an important element of its brand among other African countries.

Indeed, the public education sector in Africa is poised to provide high-quality education, improve competitive positioning, and maintain financial strength (Fomunyam, 2020). Administrators at different universities across the continent have recognised the need to function as a business, utilising various branding strategies to market their offerings. For

example, the University of Cape Town in South Africa, one of the leading universities on the continent with a tradition of research excellence, boasts a robust social media presence with thousands of followers on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. The same social media presence can be said of the University of Namibia, Kenyatta University, University of Dar es Salaam, University of Ibadan, and the University of Ghana. The social media presence helps the universities not only to create brand awareness but also to foster engagement with both current and prospective students. According to Fomunyam (2020, p. 15985), these universities use branding as a public relations technique to differentiate themselves and stay ahead of the pack: “These universities emphasise on their achievements, affordability, unique courses, duration to complete courses and their facilities. All this is done with the aim of attracting a prospective student who is looking to enrol at a university”.

## A Glimpse at the African Brand

Currently, Africa is the second most populous continent after Asia (Abessolo et al., 2022). Sub-Saharan Africa, which is home to over one billion people (50% of whom is predicted to be below 25 years old by 2050 [Odufuye & Ajuwon, 2020]), is a diverse region that offers both human and natural resources with the potential to eradicate poverty in the region. With the largest free trade area in the world and an over 1.2 billion population, the continent is gradually establishing a new development path and harnessing its vast potential (The World Bank, 2020). Although the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are severe, the sub-Saharan African economy is gradually recovering from the 2020 recession as it is set to grow at 3.7% in 2021 and 3.8% in 2022 (IMF African Department, 2021). Even though the growth rates are still very modest compared with developed nations, the economic potentials of Africa, brought about by human and natural resource potentials, can make a difference in how “brand Africa” is understood globally.

Cities, regions, and countries have promoted themselves, especially to boost important sectors such as tourism, since the period of antiquity. However, since the early 1990s, different international developments,



including the decline of communism, the rise of emerging markets, health challenges, and globalisation, brought about an increase in global competition and intensified the importance of how countries are viewed by their target markets (Nguyen, 2011). This is especially vital in the African context, where different inter-country and inter-tribal rivalries, its colonial past, and other factors have created a relatively “bleak” image of the continent. However, with the evolving focus on nation branding, emphasis is placed on the potential of the current “African Renaissance” for marketing various sectors, including tourism, natural resource, manufactured exports, foreign investment, and higher education (Papadopoulos & Hamzaoui-Essoussi, 2015).

There are three motivations for nation and public sector branding in Africa: (i) almost every nation has adopted branding today; (ii) branding is more imperative for developing countries, as obtainable in Africa, who intend to emerge from their poor past; and (ii) the nations are motivated to distinguish themselves from other African countries to avoid the continental brand effect (Papadopoulos & Hamzaoui-Essoussi, 2015). As studies such as Kotler and Gertner (2002) have clearly suggested, everything has a brand—and, considering the applied interest in nation branding in the past decade, the enthusiasm for nation branding is mirrored in Africa, where it is fast penetrating the continent’s mindset (Marandu et al., 2012).

Among African nation brands (Brand Botswana, Brand Kenya, Brand Ghana, etc.) included in most international indices (Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Afrobarometer, etc.), Brand South Africa is the most researched (e.g., Amalu, 2013; Pentz et al., 2014). Not surprisingly, one of the countries in Africa that is striving towards achieving a positive national brand image is South Africa. This is carried out through “Brand South Africa”: an entity tasked with delivering integrated and coordinated marketing, communication, and reputation management solutions as it markets the country’s brand both locally and internationally. Brand South Africa is aligned with the country’s development plans to improve South Africa’s brand image and reputation. Through Brand South Africa (formerly known as the International Marketing Council), the South African government is meeting the need for the nation to be positioned as an investment hub, a stakeholder in global governance, and to enable

the achievement of important national objectives. The 2021/2022 positioning strategy deals with the brand proposition: Inspiring New Ways. The initiatives included in this strategy are reputation management, nation brand advocacy, and securing of local and international stakeholder partnerships (Brand South Africa, 2021).

While South Africa is actively engaging in the brand positioning strategies, minimal effort is observed in the “Brand Africa” continental brand. The lack of enthusiasm for the continental brand initiative can be attributed to the development of individual nation branding programmes (such as Angola, Ghana). Also, there could be the issue of comprehension of national branding as a competitive discourse of zero-sum gains. In other words, the countries view themselves as competing with other African countries instead of competing with other continents (Browning & Ferraz de Oliveira, 2017). Small countries may also worry that their distinctiveness will be lost within a wider continental brand. Countries such as Rwanda are engaging in national branding activities to be a technological hub through urban planning visions (especially its capital city, Kigali). Nevertheless, these motives in the individual countries can have an impact on the overall image of Africa if the right strategies are put in place.

## **Challenges of Brand Communications by the African Public Sector**

The case to brand African countries and public sector organisations is necessary to dispel Afro-pessimism. Rebranding the public sector can assist in promoting the existing opportunities. However, several African governments are finding it challenging to adopt branding strategies due to certain challenges. Public sector branding, though advantageous, have certain challenges which must be adequately addressed before the brand communication process can be successful. These challenges are barriers to the African government in achieving a positive and sustainable brand image.

One of the key challenges includes the identification of a brand communication strategy that embraces the various industries, ministries, cultures, and the population as a whole simultaneously. The inconsistent values and multiple identities challenge African public sector organisations in brand communication. Often, public sector organisations are characterised by multiple identities and are less likely to be attributed to a single identity definition. These organisations are expected to serve the interests of the public and other broad political and socio-economic interests. These functions most times turn the organisations into complex units with inconsistent values.

Moreover, public sector organisations exist to handle problems that the market has little capacity for solving. These include the provision of public goods, issues of monopoly, crime, environmental crises, and income redistribution (Wæraas, 2008). This challenge led Brunsson (1989) to assert that these organisations are “depressive” units largely characterised by dilemmas and conflicting difficulties. Serving public interest and accommodation of individual interests simultaneously brings about dilemmas and inconsistencies. Tax organisations, social welfare offices, regulatory agencies, and other public institutions whose tasks comprise mostly casework face this issue. For example, they must respond to elected government officials by being efficient and rule-oriented, but they must also be able to emphasise equality, justice, fairness, and the protection of individual rights. All forms of public organisations are exposed to such challenges, especially those working closely with elected officials and making direct choices on their behalf. Thus, there is an inherent difficulty in establishing a unique brand identity in these organisations and communicating this to the relevant stakeholders.

Another challenge of brand communication in Africa is that of leadership and conduct. If the political leadership is viewed negatively, the public sector as a brand suffers, and ultimately, brand communication suffers (Qobo, 2017). It is more difficult to build productive international relations or attract foreign investment if leadership in a region, country, or continent is perceived corrupt. Consequently, one of the key questions in measuring how reliable a region, country, or continent is as a brand is how efficient the leadership is at any point in time.

In many cases, African governments, parastatals, and local authorities are responsible for the provision of utility services and public infrastructures with heavy financing requirements. Most, however, lacks the fiscal capacity to effectively finance the needed infrastructure to improve their brands. A vibrant infrastructure uplifts a nation's brand (Dinnie, 2008), leading to increased visibility and identity. Infrastructural provisions are, moreover, problematic for the various public sectors in the continent. A noticeable example is Zimbabwe. Air Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, and the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), amongst others, are monumentally failing (Chigora et al., 2021). The meagre infrastructure poorly reflects on Africa as a brand.

Most sectors of the African economy have waning international tourism, foreign investments, international trade, and social welfare (see Masango & Naidoo, 2018), and infrastructural gaps cannot be overlooked. Particularly, foreign direct investment (FDI) into the continent is adversely affected by the negative image (Sikwila, 2015). Studies such as Lu et al. (2014) have stressed the importance of the quality of host country institutions to FDI. The small proportion of FDI in Africa's public sector is explained by weak institutional arrangements and political risk considerations (Makoni, 2018; Shan et al., 2018; Ado, 2020; Kamal et al., 2020). Since a country's reputation affects its appeal as an investment location (Búrcio, 2013), public sector branding can be a veritable piece of the solution to the challenges of investment promotion in the public sector for many countries in Africa perceived to be institutionally weak (Matiza & Oni, 2013).

Another problem in the implementation of public sector branding is the direction and control of a nation's brand. Hankinson (2010) asserts that a nation's brand is not owned or monitored by only one establishment but by a system of public sector establishments. Consequently, a major component of nation branding is that there are many stakeholders and very little management control. Typical stakeholders involved in nation branding include tourist boards, chambers of commerce, cultural institutes, ministries, NGOs, agencies, ministries, and companies. Although various stakeholders participate in nation branding, Anholt (2007) asserts that the government bears most of the responsibility for this. The major pillars of public sector branding, tourism, exports,

foreign direct investment, and culture, require various stakeholders and participants, but the major burden of nation-building is often placed on the government. Thus, African countries and public sector organisations should be able to implement strategies to attract investment and improve tourism and trade to achieve the overall aim of improving brand image and solving different socio-economic challenges that the continent is currently facing.

Other issues include poor understanding of what public sector branding entails, unrealistic expectations, limited flexibility, negative images (including corruption), inadequate resources, absence of coordination as well as poor transparency and evaluation, and competition among countries in Africa that leads to territorialism (Wanjiru, 2006; Purushottam & Rwelamila, 2010). In fact, in an empirical study based on ten African countries, Pitt et al. (2007) showed that poor government participation, absence of coordination among the different levels of government, art, business, media, and education agencies, and low originality are some of the problems associated with public sector branding.

## **The Critical Success Factors for Public Sector Branding in Africa**

Many African public sector organisations are experiencing waves of reforms which has the capacity to lead to rebranding. However, these efforts remain hidden either because they are viewed as incapable of achieving effective outcomes or because the African public sector has not employed the correct strategies to make known these potentials. It must, however, be stated that the success of public sector branding within the public sector requires different success factors.

The branding of individual public sector organisations in many African countries is very weak. Branding of public corporations or organisations owned by the government is still a relatively new concept as branding is usually associated with private sector organisations. However, strategies for creating a unique brand identity for public sector organisations exist. Gromark and Melin (2013) highlight important factors that drive the

success of public sector branding. Firstly, brand orientation should have a very strong stakeholder focus, since the corporate brand plays a vital role in brand-oriented organisations. It is important for a public sector organisation to balance all the interests of the various stakeholders against the mission, vision, and core values of the organisation. Unlike market orientation, which primarily has a customer focus, brand orientation deals with all stakeholders and is an important factor in achieving a favourable public sector brand image.

In addition, public sector organisations need to function with a holistic perspective, that is, focusing on collective welfare or benefits rather than individual welfare or benefits to create better efficiency. Effective brand orientation is also characterised by an interactive process based on the interplay between internal and external stakeholders. The process is also based on mutual influence and interdependence. However, this process must be grounded in the mission, vision, and values of the organisation. Lastly, apart from contributing to revenue generation, brand orientation should generate viewpoints that align with the democratic ideals that form the foundation of public sector organisations. This is important for maintaining the legitimacy of the organisation in the long run.

In addition to the aforementioned, there has to be trust between the state and the society. According to Adeola (2022), trust makes it easier for citizens and the public to adapt to policy programmes. However, a low level of trust reduces the support for public policies and weakens their validity, resulting in lower compliance. Accountability, transparency, and integrity of public sector officials are necessary to develop a trustworthy and reliable public sector brand in Africa.

The transition of the African brand from that characterised by wars, corruption, and poverty requires adequate long-term planning and cooperation of relevant stakeholders as well as transparency on the part of public sector officials. Another way to tackle public sector brand communication challenges in Africa is to appreciate the internal diversity in corporate branding. The idea is not to put aside the general essence of branding but to achieve consistency in the complex nature of the public sector.

Consequently, there is a need for a more adapted version of branding that accounts for the features of public sector organisations better. Firstly, multiple identities can bring about inconsistency, but they can also make a brand unique. Instead of searching for an ultimate brand communication statement, public sector organisations should recognise their existing attributes as a unique accumulation of features that can be utilised in the branding procedure. Also, public sector brands should take advantage of the diversity of their identities and match with the diversity of their constituencies.

According to Osei and Gbadamosi (2011), different factors can help improve Africa's branding strategy. One crucial factor is the celebration and emphasis on Africa's success stories. In other words, one of the unique selling propositions of achieving a positive brand image is to emphasise the unique selling point (USP) of each nation in the media space. Every country has its unique selling points. For example, Mauritius is known for its ease of business operations, and South Africa is regarded as one of the top nations globally for protecting investor interest. Ghana is known for peace, security, and democracy. This is reportedly the major reason why former US President Barack Obama chose Ghana as the first African country to visit during his tenure as President (Rundell, 2010; *Financial Times*, 2009). Africans thus need to raise awareness regarding the vast opportunities in the continent and achievements not just in Africa but also by Africans in the diaspora. This is called a generation of brand awareness (Aaker & Moorman, 2017).

It is also important for African countries to acknowledge the critical role of marketing communications in affecting the behaviour and attitudes of the potential audience. Several empirical studies have shown that marketing communication and advertising assist greatly in attaining brand equity (Pappu & Quester, 2010; Dahlén et al., 2009). Therefore, it is not surprising that countries such as Malaysia and Scotland carried out advertisements on UK television advertising their "Malaysia, Truly Asia" and "Visit Scotland" slogans, respectively. Countries such as Switzerland decide what aspects of "Swissness" to communicate to their audience. It could be to promote Switzerland as a country, tourist destination, Swiss goods, and services, or integration of these themes (Osei & Gbadamosi, 2011). Both African governments and the public sector

should therefore endeavour to identify their target audience for the particular brand they want to promote as well as the features of their target audience.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The branding of the public sector is not a mere synonym for propaganda and is not restricted to influencing public opinion by advertising or public relations. It should be viewed as a means of reconstituting not only the public sector but also nationhood through marketing and branding models. Considering the growing rise in global competitiveness among countries, strong brands in the public sector are vital in promoting foreign investment and exerting political impact. This is especially important in the African context as the continent brand is often associated with its negative problems.

Therefore, the drive for a proactive rebranding and repositioning of the African public sector must go beyond mere communication to a comprehensive reconfiguration of the continent's brand. Hence, public sector branding requires the countries to take charge of their brand identities to overcome social, economic, cultural, and political struggles (Tecmen, 2018). It is imperative for public sector branding strategists to transcend visual identity to incorporate wide-ranging facets of sectoral development. To do this, the contemporary public sector in African nations must become more entrepreneurial and business-oriented in socio-economic programming to conquer the global competition.

It is recommended that the African public sector engages in all-inclusive branding. First, it needs a brand proposition that is competitive in the global market. Investment, technology, and well-utilised resources are required in order to carry this out as the image of a sector, country, region, or continent reflects serious political and socio-economic factors. Without a good product, branding will not yield good results. Branding serves as the final touch in the transition to vibrant sectoral development. If sectoral development is like finishing a huge jigsaw puzzle, branding is most likely the final piece.



## Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This chapter has added to the literature by offering a broad discussion of branding in the public sector, presenting the prospects in Africa. Although the study is limited to simply discussing the issues, it brings pertinent information that can be tested in different country settings. With respect to the challenges of branding in the public sector, it is imperative to implement more rigorous studies, seeking to empirically understand these factors and others different from the ones discussed in this study. In addition, future research can delve into a deeper examination of the literature and existing debates involving emerging prospects of branding in the public sector. In this regard, there is a compelling need to proffer new questions about branding in the public sector not only in Africa but in other regions. Also, it is evidently crucial to continue to study branding in the public sector, and to carry out a broader and deeper theoretical analysis of the viewpoints presented here.

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