HARNESSING SOFT POWER THROUGH NATION BRANDING: THE BENEFITS, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR GHANA

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LEGON JULY 2016
DECLARATION

I, Lilian Lanquaye - Tetteh do hereby declare that this work is an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Juliana Appiah and that this work has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other University. All references used have been duly acknowledged. I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

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(STUDENT)

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DR. JULIANA APPIAH
(SUPERVISOR)

DATE: .........................................
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to all my loved ones for their relentless and undying support and encouragement. Also to all those who were instrumental in this research by granting me interviews and helping in diverse ways, I extend a warm hand of gratitude. May God richly bless you all.
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My greatest gratitude goes to the Lord Almighty for the grace to follow through this study. Great thanks and appreciation goes to my supervisor Dr. Juliana Appiah who supervised me throughout this work. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Sonne whose guidance was a lifeline just at the nick of time. To all those who granted me interviews, I am sincerely grateful for your time and intellectual support, especially staff of Brand Ghana Office, particularly, Jonathan Gavi, whose assistance through the process was priceless. Finally, I extend my complements to my family entire family, most especially my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lanquaye – Tetteh for all their financial support, prayers and encouragements.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BGO</td>
<td>Brand Ghana Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Country of Origin Effect</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>Cup of Africa Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERP</td>
<td>Economic Recovery Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-EPA</td>
<td>European Union-Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIFA</td>
<td>Federation for International Football Association</td>
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<td>GEPA</td>
<td>Ghana Export Promotion Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIPC</td>
<td>Ghana Investment Promotion Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Syndrome/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>International Marketing Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDAs</td>
<td>Ministries, Departments and Other Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>PANAFEST</td>
<td>Pan-African Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>WAEC</td>
<td>West African Examinations Council</td>
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ABSTRACT

Soft power refers to the ability of a country to attract and entice the international community through other means other than coerce. One of the effective ways of harnessing soft power is through nation branding. Nation branding is the application of branding and marketing communications to promote a nation’s image. Ghana has over the years enjoyed a good image but recent events such as the Brazil 2014 FIFA World Cup saga, the Judicial Corruption Scandal, and the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) exam leakages, amongst others, have threatened this good image. The need to control its image abroad prompted the setting up of the Brand Ghana Office in 2009. Using the Brand Ghana Office as a proxy institution, through primary sources and content analysis of relevant secondary documents, this study examines the benefits, prospects and challenges of applying nation branding in Ghana. The study found that nation branding under the Brand Ghana Office has yielded benefits to the country despite the challenges of political will and finance. The study concludes that nation branding is indeed a very good means of projecting the unique identity of Ghana and does contribute positively to the image of Ghana in the international system.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Study

Diplomacy is the language of communication between states and has been practiced for centuries. States have been employing public diplomacy as a means of advancing their soft power which played a crucial role in the winning of the Cold War.\(^1\) Given its relevance in recent times, nation branding, an aspect of engendering soft power is increasingly becoming commonplace for governments across the world.\(^2\)

Soft power is “the ability to entice and attract rather than coercion or payment”.\(^3\) It is to exert influence and affect others to obtain desired outcomes through the art of persuasion. With the changing nature of the global scene, it has become increasingly important for states to move beyond the terrain of hard politics to explore soft power options. Several countries around the world are migrating to soft power to forward their policies abroad. In this era, where the struggle to win the hearts and minds of foreign publics have become more competitive than ever, it is imperative for states to position themselves more positively in the eyes of the global audience and nation branding presents a fertile ground to begin. Ghana which is popularly tagged the ‘gateway to Africa’ should not be left out of this move.

Nation branding refers to the “[application] of branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation’s image.”\(^4\) A nation’s image is a political and economic capital that reflects its standing in the international arena, which is a form of soft power.\(^5\) Simon Anholt, a famous voice in nation branding, who uses the term ‘Competitive
Identity’ in place of nation branding, quotes Joseph Nye in making assertions that nation branding is the “quintessential modern exemplar of soft power.”

Soft power is borne out of influence “that is communicated, intentionally or unintentionally, through a variety of sources including education systems, media and popular culture, science and technology, brands and products, and business practices.” Examples are varied, ranging from “cultural exports like music and movies to popular consumer goods that become iconic and strongly associated with their country of origin.”

Nation branding as a means of harnessing soft power simply reinforces these channels of influence.

The concept of administering branding techniques to nations, is one growing in frequency by the day, given the ever-increasing global competitive environment nations are now confronted by in both internal and international markets. This competitiveness has prompted “the need for nations to manage and control their branding, including the need to attract tourists, factories, companies and talented people and to find markets for their exports.” In this regard, countries must embrace conscious branding efforts if they are to keep pace with other global competitors on the world stage. It is claimed, and understandably so, that “the unbranded state has a hard time attracting economic and political attention, and that image and reputation are becoming essential parts of the state’s strategic equity”.

1.2 Problem Statement

Ghana has over the years been perceived more or less as the “darling” of the West African sub-region owing to a number of notable factors. Some of these factors include being one
of the trailblazers in democracy, its relatively peaceful and stable political climate as well as the football successes chalked by the nation. Apart from the above-mentioned, Ghana is also known for producing celebrated personalities such as Kwame Nkrumah and Kofi Annan amongst others. In spite of the enviable attributes possessed by the country, current trends appear to threaten the positive image carefully built over the decades.

Recent happenings, such as the “Brazil 2014 FIFA World Cup saga,” its ranking on the corruption index interspersed with the corruption saga that hit the country’s judicial system in 2015, has prompted the need for policy-makers and stakeholders to revisit the concept of repositioning the country’s image in a more favourable light. Other events such as the Independence Day blunder, and most recently, the West African Examination Council (WAEC) exams leakages has made the situation even more pertinent. In this regard, branding becomes essential, by promoting the good things about Ghana which includes its unique, diversified and vibrant culture that is displayed in music, arts, fashion such as the kente, and festivals amongst others. Also, with a country that cannot boast of military might, soft power becomes a powerful tool to advance the national interest.

Although soft power through nation branding has been employed over the years in one way or the other, it has not been fully harnessed to the benefit of the nation. Conscious efforts were made during the tenure of President John Evans Attah Mills, through the establishment of the Brand Ghana Office outfit, with the specific mandate to manage the nation’s branding needs. However, very little has been done in promoting the nation’s brand upon his demise. Some authors reviewed are of the view that branding is not a cause worthy of pursuit, whilst others have a more optimistic outlook owing to the prospective gains that nation branding holds for the country. This research seeks to explore the
benefits, prospects as well as the challenges that exist in harnessing soft power through nation branding using the Brand Ghana Office as a proxy institution.

1.3 Research Questions

- What is the history of soft power and nation branding in Ghana?
- What are the benefits, challenges and prospects of nation branding in Ghana?

1.4 Objectives

This research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To examine the history of soft power and nation branding in Ghana.
- To investigate the benefits, prospects and challenges of nation branding in Ghana.

1.5 Scope

The research focuses on ways Ghana has asserted its soft power through nation branding from 2008 till present.

1.6 Rationale

Nation branding must essentially be a part of the national development agenda. The purpose of this research is to serve as a reference for policy makers as well as to spur further research in the field of soft power and nation branding.

1.7 Hypothesis

Nation branding as a means of soft power can positively promote the image of Ghana in the international arena.
1.8 Conceptual Framework

The concept that undergirds this study is soft power. Soft power is a concept coined by Joseph Nye “to describe co-optive power in contrast to hard power such as military actions”. From his first publication in 1990 on the concept, in his book “Bound to lead: the changing nature of American power,” the author has gone on to publish several writings still on the concept of soft power. Notable among these writings are the articles *Soft Power: the means to success in politics* and *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power*.

The conceptualization of soft power was adduced from the position of the United States (US) and how it could better sell itself beyond its hard power potentials. The US historically augmented its power capabilities from a realist standpoint of securing the state through military might. In his work “Public diplomacy and soft power”, Nye explains soft power as the ability to influence or exert influence through attraction rather than coercion. Soft power according to Joseph Nye is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments”. Soft power emanates “from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals and policies.” Soft power is the opposite of hard power which refers to tangible forms of power. Using the “carrots-and-sticks” analogy in international relations parlance to further explain, soft power may be seen to a certain degree as “carrots” whilst hard power may be represented by “sticks”.

It is the means by which one shapes the preferences of others, or to get others to want the outcome you want because of your cultural or ideological appeal. It is the power to attract, to get others to want what you want, to frame the issues, to set the agenda, to co-opt rather than coerce. Nye attributes this form of power to intangible assets such as attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies.
Although Nye popularized the term in 1990, soft power has its origins in the works of Hans J. Morgenthau, Klaus Knorr and Ray Cline.\textsuperscript{27} Morgenthau, for example, identifies a number of elements of national power, amongst which national character, national morale, the quality of diplomacy and the quality of government are closely associated with intangible sources of power, or soft power.

There are three unique features of soft power and these distinct attributes are that it is relative, intangible, and context based.\textsuperscript{28} Soft power is context specific, in that it is relevant to only one specific country or a specific group in that country. These contextual variables affect the deployment of soft power by one country to another and the resultant effect of such efforts on the latter, including geographic proximity; cultural similarity; historical relations; and economic ties.\textsuperscript{29}

Soft power, in spite of its desirable outcomes, is difficult to evaluate and measure. The effect of soft power is usually indirect and may take years to produce the desired outcome. The impact of hard power, conversely, is normally direct and immediate, straight and visible.\textsuperscript{30} Some are of the view that only the Western countries or countries with democratic institutions have the ability to produce soft power\textsuperscript{31} but literature proves that its potential to be harnessed is open to all.\textsuperscript{32}

Nye identifies three resources of soft power: culture, political values and foreign policy. He asserts that soft power of a country resides on “the attractiveness of its culture, the appeal of its domestic political and social values, and the style and substance of its foreign policies”.\textsuperscript{33} He goes on to mention other examples and refers to these as “proxy measures”
of soft power. These proxy measures include tourists, foreign immigrants, international students, music sales, popular sports, Nobel Prize winners among others.

Nye’s contribution of a plethora of examples renders nebulous the frontiers of the concept. Interestingly, it has come to mean almost everything and therefore almost nothing. Notably, these sources and resources are not power in themselves rather, they serve as conduits for the attainment of power. The owners of these resources have to convert them into power. Four key factors must be in place for power conversion; capital, political structure, social capital and social structure.

Soft power can be derived or harnessed through a number of ways primarily: public diplomacy and nation branding. Public diplomacy involves the traditional means by which representatives of the state represent the interests of the state abroad. Its main tool is the foreign policy objectives of the state as stipulated in the constitution. While public diplomacy targets foreign publics, nation branding aims at both the domestic and foreign terrain.

Joseph Nye signs off by merging the two concepts, soft power and hard power, which he effectively calls smart power. With respect to the US, he mentions how their overreliance on hard power alone was not “the path to success” rather merging it with the deployment of soft power was the sure road to success in the struggle to win hearts and minds. In the same way, states in the present information age must have a greater appreciation for soft power alongside their traditional “hard power approach”.
Criticisms of soft power mainly dwell around three aspects; definition, sources and limitations.\textsuperscript{36} These critics of soft power are not as convinced by the strength and potency of the concept as passionately propounded by its advocates. Soft power skeptics are of the impression that the most effective tool of foreign policy is hard power.\textsuperscript{37} Gray contends that hard power must essentially continue to be the key instrument of policy as soft power is not a suitable alternative, primarily because it rests heavily on perceptions of countries abroad.\textsuperscript{38}

Janice B. Mattern for example is of the view that soft power is not soft at all and holds a rather grim view of the concept. In her article “Why ‘Soft Power’ Isn’t So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics” she questions the extent to which attraction, the means by which soft power is achieved, is a natural or constructed phenomenon. She hints that what might be perceived as a natural process of attraction is actually coercive in nature. According to the author, in order for positive results to be achieved, one engages in a process of “‘verbal fighting’, that is arguments via representational force, for effective persuasion.”\textsuperscript{39} It is through this that the so-called ‘attraction’ can be created. As a result, she reveals in true realist fashion that what is considered “soft power is ironically rooted in hard power.”\textsuperscript{40}

This line of argument is slightly unfounded as Nye never impliedly describes soft power as “weightless persuasion”, or using the “verbal fighting” analogy, about “a slack attempt at launching a punch.” The whole idea being perpetuated is launching that punch anyways but doing so in a less intrusive or persuasive way. Coercive, the core component of hard power, soft power is definitely not, but its ability to influence actions and decisions rests
fully on its persuasive nature. Moreover Nye advocates for “smart power” in the long run, which merges and balances both soft power and hard power for the full benefit of the state.

Other opponents, such as Ferguson, view soft power as an intangible form of power that is nearly ‘powerless’ without the existence of hard military power. He challenges Nye’s assertion of the US gaining influence in global politics through soft power in his article “Think Again: Power” in *Foreign Policy*. He is of the firm conviction that the US is the global force that it is today due to its military might hence its hard power. This critic puts it simply, “soft power is just too soft” to yield any fruitful, tangible results. He suggests that soft power is not a novel concept but is a “rebranded” cognomen for what was known as imperialism.\(^{41}\) Moreover he suggests that the reach of soft power is limited and contrarily, the real thrust to how far cultural imperialism can go is hard power.\(^{42}\) In other words soft power can go so far and is virtually meaningless without the complement of cold hard power currency. In Ferguson’s words, “Soft Power is merely the velvet glove concealing an iron hand.”\(^{43}\) As noted earlier, Joseph Nye’s concept of soft power helping states become influential global actors still holds its salt as the author pushes for an intermarriage between the tangible (hard power) with the intangible (soft power).

Notwithstanding these criticisms, due to the main postulates of soft power such as attraction as opposed to coercion, attractiveness of personality, projection of values, beliefs and policies which is what nation branding seeks to achieve, soft power remains the most suitable framework to explain how states are using alternative approaches to governance through the use of nation branding in the current digital age.
1.9 Literature Review

The scope of this research is soft power through nation branding, the determinants and outcomes of nation branding. It explores the literature as it relates to nation branding and strives to review relevant works to explore the meanings of the concept as it relates to the study.

“The field of soft power —as an element of foreign policy— has piqued the interest of academics, practitioners and policy makers for decades. Governments have relied on a wide range of soft power tools to promote, achieve and maintain national policies, as well as foreign policy or international goals. While propaganda, cultural diplomacy, and public diplomacy were the key instruments of soft power throughout the last century, nation branding has started to play a core role for foreign diplomacy in the last decade.”

1.9.1 Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues and Practice

There are many writers who have touched on the subject of nation branding and one notable figure spearheading the call for nations to consciously brand themselves is Wally Olins. In his article “Making a National Brand”, he deconstructs the concept of nation branding and presents a simplified angle to the complex concept. Using France as an illustration to set the tone, he begins by explaining what is meant by a ‘national brand’ and goes on to describe ways by which the national brand can be projected. His work sheds light on the meaning of nation branding by providing a simple explanation of the concept. It also mentions the means by which nation branding can be achieved citing three major areas to target: brand export, foreign direct investment and tourism. Olin’s work provides an outline to guide this research in exploring the concept of nation branding, the prospects, its applicability as well as practical ways of tackling nation branding.

Although his work disappoints in providing laudable examples of success stories in the field of nation branding beyond the French, it nonetheless gives an overview of the gains that can be derived from branding a state by drawing a comprehensive visual of the concept.
Keith Dinnie in his book *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice* provides a holistic interpretation of the concept, strategies and real world examples and dismantles the idea of nation branding into its core components. He sets the tone by defining what a brand is and distinguishes between a national brand and a nation brand. He further explores the meaning behind other nation branding related concepts such as nation brand identity, nation brand image, nation brand positioning, nation brand equity, management of nation branding, brand analysis, strategy development, positioning, and success measurement or valuation. Dinnie makes connections between soft power and nation branding and proposes that unlike other subfields of soft power that are well-researched, the field of nation branding is one that is only emerging and is lacking in terms of sufficient research.

The author believes globalization has created a situation whereby “countries compete with each other to attract the attention, respect and trust of investors, tourists, consumers, donors, immigrants, media and the governments of other nations”. Dinnie shares the view that nation branding is an exciting, complex and yet controversial phenomenon. It is exciting because in spite of the lacuna that exists in terms of theory and literature on the field there is a wealth of activity in the real world; complex, in terms of its multidisciplinary nature that transcends the limited realm of traditional branding and marketing; and controversial, in that it is an activity that attracts a lot of contending opinions and is highly politicized.45 In the book, he mentions and discusses how governments around the world are taking conscious steps in forming distinct identities and brands to demonstrate their uniqueness and competitive advantage in an increasingly globalizing world.
Dinnie’s work on the subject provides plausible examples of countries that have adopted nation branding strategies. The author’s examples also include failed attempts as well as success stories and why their nation branding effort either failed or succeeded. This integration of relevant case studies is helpful to the discussion on nation branding as it illustriously depicts the scope of possibilities that resides in the field. Hence, it connects to the main thesis of the research which is to explore the benefits, prospects as well as the challenges of nation branding for Ghana.

Apart from South Africa, Egypt and Botswana, the author does not provide other plausible examples of developing nations in Africa engaged in the practice of branding the state. This would have been very useful to the study as this research tries to draw from the experience of other African states as a template to present a more compelling argument in favour of nation branding. Also, although Dinnie spoke briefly on the link between nation branding and soft power, he was barely able to sufficiently establish these interconnectivities. This research thus, seeks to draw these linkages and add Ghana to the expanding list of African nations engages in branding.

In the article “Branding The Nation: What is Being Branded” written by Ying Fan he agrees on the assertion that nation branding is a concept of a relatively new status and at an infant stage even “though studies of the effect of country image on product purchase have been around for several decades.” Fan’s work discusses “what is being branded” in nation branding by distinguishing between ‘nation brand’ and ‘national brand,’ both of which are pivotal elements of nation branding.
Introducing a synonym for nation brand, the writer points out that the “nation brand or country equity refers to the nation as a whole; [and] it describes the country’s intangible assets without any explicit links with a product.” For Fan, the national brand is simply the product brand. The author attempts to draw distinctions between nation branding, that is the practice of branding the nation, and the nation brand, the product which is been branded and successfully compares and contracts the concepts of nation branding apart from traditional product branding. The article goes on further to examine what is known as country-of-origin-effect which denotes the impact the nation brand has on the national brand. Fan’s article is relevant to this research as it explores these nation image and product brand linkages within the context of nation branding.

The writer, however, cautions that in spite of nation branding being a powerful tool in the growth and expansion of economies, particularly, emerging ones, it was no miracle worker in bridging the gap between the North and South. He mentions how other factors such as political, economic and social factors play crucial roles in nation branding and calls for a holistic approach to nation branding rather than limiting the practice to just a “marketing strategy”.

Fan’s work is useful to the research in a lot of respects but the author somehow failed to do a focused study on the major theme of his work which is “what is being branded”. It would have been expedient to look at other aspects of the nation brand such as the country’s people, political systems, landscape, culture and so on beyond the product or national brands. This study, thus, seeks to fill that lacuna in research using Ghana as a case study.
1.9.2 Competitive Advantage

Simon Anholt, a notable figure and experienced practitioner in the field of nation branding has written innumerable on the subject and makes compelling arguments in favour of the concept. He is believed to be behind the very coinage of the term “nation branding”. The author makes a compelling argument about how nation branding can be used to achieve national competitiveness through developing and increasing the nation brand equity.48

In his seminal work Brand New Justice: the Upside of Global Branding he developed the National Brand Pentagon which later evolved into The Brand Hexagon. This geometric map of “natural channels of communication” which previously comprised of tourism promotion, investment attraction, exporting brands, foreign policy and culture with the national brand strategy at its core evolved to include tourism, investment, brands, policy, culture, policy, people and recruitment. This hexagon, according to him, serves as a measure of nation brands.

In his work “Competitive Identity”, he introduces, as the title reads, the concept of Competitive Identity as a replacement of the national brand strategy as the core of the hexagonal model. Anholt defines Competitive Identity as “the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investment; tourism and export promotion.”49 He justifies this change by alluding to the danger that lies in using the word ‘brand’ which generates negative connotations.

Anholt disappointingly falls short of delivering a quantifiable narrative beyond the anecdotal promise of what nation branding could offer. This study, as a result, attempts to show the marked effects of nation branding on countries, Ghana in this case. However, the
author’s writings on the subject provide an enthusiastic optimistic view of the subject, the sectors that nation branding targets and how to plan an effective brand strategy. It also sheds light on other useful related concepts and provides an expansive outlook on the many facets of nation branding which effectively guides the conduct of this research.

Van Ham in “Place Branding: The State of the Art” writes that nation branding can be considered as “an effort to use strategies developed in the commercial sector to manage, if not necessarily wield, the soft power of a geographical location”.50 The concept of nation branding has acquired its proper, although still somewhat awkward, place in the academic discourse on soft power, and is gaining notable attention by the day.51

Van Ham’s article adds to the many voices who believe that although the concept may have been practiced several decades ago, it is of relatively modern status in the field of international relations. He asserts this by stating that “the application of branding techniques to nations is a relatively new phenomenon, but one which is growing in frequency given the increasingly global competition that nations now face in both their domestic and external markets.”52 Putting the evolution of the concept into yet wider historical perspective, the writer claims that nations have always branded themselves – through their symbols, currency, anthems, names and so on – and that it is just the terminology of nation branding that is new, rather than the practice itself.53

According to the author, states are taking conscious steps to brand their countries to attract tourists, investments and boost export rates.54 He goes on to list a number of other suggested benefits that can be obtained through nation branding such as the ability to: increase currency stability; help restore international credibility and investor confidence;
reverse international ratings downgrades; increase international political influence; stimulate stronger international partnerships and enhance nation building - by nourishing confidence, pride, harmony, ambition, national resolve.\(^{55}\)

He comments on the pre-conceived notion held by authors on the subject of branding that “a brand is something that resides in the minds of the consumer”\(^{56}\) and sets the record straight about the branding of the state being “more than just an ad campaign or a publicity stunt.” According to him, a brand can be viewed as the “the totality of the thoughts, feelings, associations and expectations that come to mind when a prospect or consumer is exposed to an entity’s name, logo, products, services, events, or any design or symbol representing them.”\(^{57}\)

He manages to construct a historical map of the concept of nation branding over the years and presents an argument that skews in favour of nation branding and advocates for its practice. Ham’s seminal work on the subject makes known the prospects that lie in the practice of branding what he calls “Place Branding”, an umbrella term that encapsulates nation branding, and in using this generalizing approach he fails to provide a more dedicated discussion to the specific area of nation branding although the author numerous times warns against state branding being more than media promotions. Very little attempt is also made to address the subject beyond media hype and tabloid frenzy. Notwithstanding these deficiencies, it gives real-time examples that are useful in forwarding the argument set forth in this study concerning the prospects as well as the challenges of nation branding. This research, as a build up to Ham’s effort, would explore other aspects of the nation branding strategy employed in the conduct of nation branding.
1.9.3 Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy

Gyorgy Szondi, in “Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences” considers nation branding to be “application of branding techniques and tools to nation states.” The writer defines nation branding as “the strategic self-representation of a country with the aim of creating reputational capital through economic, political and social interest promotion at home and abroad.”

In the article, several definitions of the concept are provided, for instance Gudjonsson defines nation branding as when “a government or private company uses its power to persuade whoever has the ability to change the nation’s image … [where] … the tools of branding [are used] to alter or change the behavior, attitudes, identity or image of a nation in a positive way.” These definitions show forth the multidimensionality of nation branding. He goes on to dismiss the misconception held about nation branding as a process where a nation is “branded” as is done in the business world for products (goods and services) by clarifying that nation branding only employs the techniques of branding and that countries cannot be branded per se.

According to Szondi, nation branding can be successful if the citizenry are completely engaged in the process because as Simon Anholt, a guru in the field puts it, they represent both the mouthpiece and recipient of the message being communicated across in the nation branding process. The actors involved span a wide range of people and institutions including the government, national tourist boards, travel agencies, trade boards, export and investment promotion agencies, chambers of commerce, amongst others. Szondi also mentions that the target groups of nation branding are the international as well as the domestic publics both of which are of comparable importance.
Szondi’s article traces the origins and evolution of nation branding and seeks to discover the link between public diplomacy and the idea of nation branding as a means of unearthing the place of nation branding in international relations. The writer concludes by pushing for integration as well as cooperation between the two concepts so that by establishing a middle ground states can realize the full potential that exist in these soft power tools.

This article manages to explore the relationship between what is traditionally known as public diplomacy and the emerging concept of nation branding by discussing contrasts and comparisons between these two conceptualizations. By so doing it offers a holistic view of the concept and attempts to position it within the context of international relations. This puts forward a better explanation of the concept as well as the features and tools that can be used to fully harness it. Further, it helps in deconstructing the mystique surrounding the concept within this research. It would have, however, been of more profit if other linkages could have been made with the broader concept of soft power and how nation branding, public diplomacy fit into the aggregate “mother concept”, soft power. This study, to an extent, tries to make these linkages.

1.9.4 Critics of Nation Branding

In spite of the many advantages of nation branding proposed by its proponents, there are those who share contrasting opinions about the concept. Amongst its many critics who believe that first and foremost nation branding differs from public diplomacy in so many respects include Naomi Klein and S. C. Jansen. Anne Klein contends that nation branding produces “a new type of reality”, one that communicates a reality that may be contrary to what actually exists. But Dinnie opines that contrary to such negative perceptions held
about the concept nation branding is not so very different from public diplomacy on so many levels.

Others hold the position that the concepts are complementary while some believe the two are nearly identical or better yet different sides of the same coin. For instance, Lewis considers public diplomacy as “branding techniques of politicians”. There are some who even view nation branding and public diplomacy as propaganda tools and even regard nation branding as “the postmodern mutation of public diplomacy, representing a line of evolution which started from propaganda.” But there is substantial evidence to prove that nation branding has nothing to do with being an engine for propaganda. It is about showing forth the attributes that one chooses to show at ones discretion. In an age where information is in boundless supply thanks to powerful conduits such as the internet, it behooves on states to embark on the laudable quest of branding the nation, not for the purposes of projecting lies and false representations but as a means of purposeful communication about the entity known as the state.

1.10 Sources of Data

This was a qualitative study and data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Data from primary sources were obtained through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews is a method of asking questions on any topic or wide range of issues using question guides without necessarily following any strict pattern or style. Semi-structured interviews were preferred over the unstructured form to enable a more structured approach to the interviews conducted. The choice of this interview style was influenced by its suitability for this research in terms of its flexibility in allowing the researcher probe further into the responses provided by respondents. This helped the
researcher obtain clear, concise and comprehensive data required to successfully carry out the research. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on a total of about twenty-three respondents who included key staff at Brand Office Ghana, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, Ghana Tourism Authority, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ghana Export Promotion Authority, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, lecturers and students of Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy as well as relevant experts and other key stakeholders in the field of nation branding. The sample for this study was selected based on their in-depth knowledge and expertise on soft power and nation branding. The choice of sample size was dictated by access and availability to relevant interviewees. The secondary sources were obtained through extensive and in-depth research across a vast plethora of literature including books, articles, periodicals, reports and documents relevant to the subject matter. The research also made use of relevant internet sources. The secondary sources employed in this study provided preliminary knowledge to guide the conduct of the study as well as information used in tandem with the primary sources.

1.11 Methodology

Through face-to-face, email and phone interviews, of fifteen, three and five respondents respectively, primary data was collected. These interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis to allow building of rapport between interviewer and interviewee and free flow of information by the latter.

Non-probability method of convenience sampling was chosen in selecting participants for this study because it is fast, inexpensive in nature and facilitates easy access to respondents. Also, this method helped in reaching relevant informants with the required
knowledge and expertise. Information was recorded mostly by taking notes and complemented by tape recording which was used after receiving the informed consent of the interviewees. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis of primary sources.

1.12 Limitations

A number of challenges were encountered by the researcher during the conduct of the study. First of all, some of the respondents whose contribution was critical to the work, were generally adamant to speak on the topic or unwilling to assist the researcher obtain the relevant information required. For others, several factors such as the nature of their job and time constraints made it challenging for them to be available for interviews. Moreover, a few face-to-face interviews scheduled between the researcher and the interviewees, could not materialize as planned, as a result of certain conditions that were beyond the control of the researcher and the said respondents. Notwithstanding these, the study was not largely affected by these constraints. This was because these challenges were anticipated and as such, the researcher made adequate preparation to manage it should it occur. For the interviewees who could not meet the interviewer in person, phone and email interviews were used which proved to be equally effective.

1.13 Arrangement of Chapters

This research is presented in four main chapters.

Chapter one entails the research design.

Chapter two provides an overview of soft power and nation branding in Ghana.

Chapter three analyzes the benefits, prospects and challenges of harnessing soft power through nation branding.
Chapter four rounds up with a summary of the findings of the study, conclusions deduced premised on the objectives of the study and recommendations.
Endnotes


2 Ibid.

3 Ibid. p. 94-95.


7 Ibid.


10 Ibid.


18 Anonymous, Transcribed Interview with Anonymous, on 14th July, 2016.


22 Dr.Bonnie Yao Gebe, Transcribed Interview with Dr. Bonnie Yao Gebe, Senior Research Fellow and Lecturer, LECIAD on 8th July, 2016 at LECIAD.


27 Fan, op. cit.

28 Fan, "Soft Power: Power of Attraction or Confusion?," op. cit.

29 Ibid. p. 6.


36 Fan, "Soft Power: Power of Attraction or Confusion?," op. cit.


Ibid.


Ibid. p. 24.

Ibid.


Ibid. p. 2.


Ibid.


Ibid.


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Ibid.

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Marsha Lindsay, "The Brand Called Wisconsin™: Can We Make It Relevant and Different for Competitive Advantage?," Economic Summit White Paper (2000).


Ibid. p. 4.

Ibid. p. 5.

Ibid. p. 17.


Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO
THE HISTORY OF SOFT POWER AND NATION BRANDING IN GHANA

1.0 Introduction

In the preceding chapter mention was made of nation branding as a channel of harnessing soft power. This chapter scans through the history of soft power in Ghana in terms of the aggressive or not so aggressive key policies and actions, through mainly three significant eras: independence, military regimes and civilian administrations; that made significant impact in terms of soft power for Ghana. The focus is mainly on some of the significant foreign policy highlights of selected governments, but in certain cases, domestic impacts would also be assessed alongside. The chapter progresses to give a narrative of nation branding in Ghana, explains fundamental nation branding-related concepts, provides real-time nation branding examples and proceeds into a focused look at Ghana’s own nation branding effort under the Brand Ghana Office.

2.1 An Overview of Soft Power in Ghana

Soft power, the ability to influence others through attraction rather than coercion, may appear to be a modern term but traces of its usage, in the political history of Ghana, is as old as time itself. It must be mentioned that in spite of soft power being employed over the decades, it has been in an unconscious almost undeliberate manner.\(^1\) It has been said that soft power has not been a systematic well-thought of initiative taken to advance foreign policy objectives.\(^2\) The art of influencing others through soft power has been mainly driven by the policy objectives that have been fashioned out to guide activities on home soil as well as relations with countries near and beyond.
Foreign policy can be described as the “strategy with which institutionally-designated decision-makers seek to manipulate the international environment in order to achieve certain national objectives.”\textsuperscript{3} It also denotes “the sum [total] of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations.”\textsuperscript{4} At the heart of every foreign policy is the national interest and in Ghana’s case, it has been defined under the provisions in Article 35, Clause 2 of the 1992 Constitution. This provision in the Constitution of Ghana states that “the state shall protect and safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of Ghana, and shall seek the well-being of all her citizens.”\textsuperscript{5} Article 35, Clause 2 sets the tone for all national endeavours in the field of foreign policy as well as all dealings in the domain of international relations.

Article 40 of the 1992 Constitution gives an elaborate picture of Ghana’s relations with other nations and include the following; “promote and protect the interest of Ghana; seek the establishment of a just and equitable international and economic and social order; promote respect for international law, treaty obligations and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means; adhere to the principles enshrined in, or as the case may be, the aims and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations; the Constitutive Act of the African Union; the Commonwealth; the treaty of the Economic Community of West African States; and any other international organization to which Ghana is a member.”\textsuperscript{6}

Evidence of Ghana’s political history attests to the fact that several leaders who have had the honour of being heads of state have pursued foreign policy objectives that have yielded soft power results to the nation.\textsuperscript{7} Ghana is one country that has exerted significant amounts of influence on the continent of Africa and once upon a time was one to be greatly feared
and revered. At independence, the population was less than ten million but yet still, Ghana commanded such attention and respect from her peers. Starting from its first visionary leader, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, to the current crop of leaders, the country has been able to make use of its soft power skills to a considerable extent to gain influence continentally and even internationally. Although the concept was not born in those years, it was effectively utilized. This influence was not primarily because of its enviable military arsenals or its military prowess, it was mainly because of its maneuverings in terms of soft power. The following paragraphs would elaborate further on the trip down history of Ghana’s foreign policy and how it essentially manifested in giving the country soft power.

2.1.1 The Independence Era

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah

Kwame Nkrumah’s reign as president, most probably, tops the most deliberate attempt to sell a certain well-crafted image of Ghana to the rest of the world. His policies set in motion what has become Ghana’s identity as a peace-loving, democratic, culturally unique country. The fateful day of March 6, 1957, landmarked a remarkable milestone, not only in the history of Ghana but for all of Africa. This was because it was then that the torch of democracy was lit in sub-Saharan Africa, which paved the way for other African states to follow suit.

His famed declaration, “the independence of Ghana is meaningless without the total liberation of the African continent” on the parapet during the Independence Day celebrations, set the tone for the early beginnings of what was to become the country’s
foreign policy. Never in the history of Ghana had attempts so profoundly being made towards gaining influence beyond the shores of the country, than in Nkrumah’s era. Soft power might arguably be said to be a fairly new terminology, but it was relatively harnessed by Nkrumah decades before it was even conceptualized in international relations circles.

Nkrumah’s ambitions of conquering the whole of Africa and ensuring unity among the many states that made up the continent informed the foreign policy objectives that were pursued in his day. These policies included; “consolidating the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ghana and promoting its prosperity; ridding the country totally of colonial rule; fostering co-operation among the African people through a union government of Africa; promoting close cooperation and unity of purpose of the non-aligned movement; working through the United Nations (UN), the Commonwealth and other international bodies to bring about a world of peace to facilitate the development of new and smaller countries.”

Ghana’s foreign policy was tailored:

- to the exigencies of the times, to advance the cause of the African liberation struggle, to achieve a union of African states, to pursue the fight against neo-colonialism, and promoting the agenda of anti-racism, while creating the vision of the African personality that could attract the respect for African culture and identity. He also encouraged Ghana’s membership and participation in international organizations and institutions, meant to promote the long-term interests of the country, for instance, membership of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth of Nations, and at the regional level, worked towards the establishment of the Organization of African Unity in 1963.

Unity was certainly a crucial component of Nkrumah’s agenda and as much as he progressed towards the unification of the continent, he also sought to bridge the divisive gaps within his own backyard. As charity began at home, he managed to calm ethno-regional tensions encountered as at the time of independence in 1957 by a series of calculated actions, in view of his major objective of national unity. These steps involved a deliberate attempt to merge all the Ghanaian cultures at the state level, through policy, to even the arts level. Nkrumah strategically “ promoted a Ghanaian identity and culture
which he projected as an amalgam of different ethnic cultures within Ghana”. He depicted how pluralistic the Ghanaian state and its identity was by donning different traditional attires such as the *fugu* (of the north), Smock and the colourful *kente* (of the Ashantis) at official ceremonies. Nkrumah sought, in many purposeful ways to establish what one scholar terms ‘a culturally neutral state’ or a case of ‘cultural status equality’.  

Ghana might have been an “ant” in comparison to “mightier” nations like Nigeria, but the proactive policy steps taken by Nkrumah gave the country the political grounds to stand shoulder to shoulder with the few African greats of the time. Nkrumah took on a host of initiatives to ensure that Ghana registered its well-deserved place as a superpower on the continent. Most significant among these were his economic diplomacy, Africa policy and cultural policy.

Before the bells of independence chimed at the shores of Ghana, intercourse between African states was abysmal and nearly non-existent. The impetus to the coming together of the African peoples was through the mobilization efforts made by Ghana’s first gentleman at the time, through the Conferences of the Independent African States and the All African Peoples’ Conferences. Africa’s union was a noble idea Kwame Nkrumah gave concrete expression to and “is a solid achievement of which any nation can be proud.”

Nkrumah wielded soft power of leadership with his exemplary style of leadership not only in Ghana but beyond the borders of the nation and as such Ghana’s opinion on matters was sought on major issues. Nkrumah’s passion for colonial liberation inspired a long list of nations to commence their journey towards freedom. His ambitious pursuits towards the
liberation of the continent made him an instrumental figure in the fight against apartheid. He contributed both materially and financially towards the emancipation of the “blackman”. 19

Nkrumah was determined to make a United Africa a reality with Ghana as its headquarters and as such used economic diplomacy to push him closer to that goal. Apart from his economic diplomacy yielding immense dividends for Ghana such as the Volta River Project and the Black Star Line20, a national shipping line, it was able to win over a number of African countries to join in his Union of African states dream. He doled out monies to support the democratic processes of other countries in the liberation struggle and instituted several programs to other African countries to facilitate educational exchanges.

Culture was at the very heart of Nkrumah’s vision and because of this he made a conscious effort to institutionalize it. The cultural policy that was formulated during Nkrumah’s time was born out of the need to sell Ghana abroad as well as within its immediate borders. Ghana’s cultural exports was a valuable tool of soft power for the country, notable among which was the kente which is a handwoven silk-spun fabric made up of very colourful designs. Diplomats were required to wear the kente during their missions outside. Highlife was also a core feature of Nkrumah’s cultural policy and went as far as endorsing “several state and para-statal highlife bands and concert parties”21 and providing training and logistical support to vamp the industry. He effectively employed highlife music as a tool to push his Pan-African ideals and the “African Personality” and traveled along with some of these bands on official visits.22 Another valuable cultural asset set up in Nkrumah’s time, which he adequately promoted, was the Ghana Dance
Ensemble. The dance group placed Ghana on the map with their eclectic performances and served as cultural ambassadors, touring around the world, selling Ghana and its unique culture along with their Ghanaian culture-infused traditional dance and music. Beyond Nkrumah’s policies, his very person was a soft power tool that drew people from far and wide to the country much like how King Solomon’s prestige and achievements drew Queen Sheba to Israel. Popular figures such as Malcolm X and acclaimed poet Maya Angelou were all drawn to the country because of the attractive image it had abroad.

Mention must also be made that even though his foreign policy direction was positive, it was at a point pursued too harshly, and this hurt, to a great degree, the soft power prowess Ghana had commanded in earlier years. For instance, his setting up of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) was a laudable initiative, but so zealous was his desire to push his Pan-African agenda that the broadcasting system became a subversive tool of media propaganda and the country got bad vibes because of this. Other foreign policy actions would prove to be unhelpful to Ghana’s soft power such as the Congo Crisis.

All in all, Nkrumah made a strong impact in terms of Ghana’s soft power because during his tenure, it was a conscious, well-calculated move, to advance the motives of the state all levels.

2.1.2 The Era of Military Regimes

Lt. General Kotoka and General Afrifa

The era of coup d’états that began with General Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa and General Emmanuel Kwasi Kotoka, was a scar on the reputation of Ghana. It represented a dark period in the country’s history beginning from 1966 was one coup after the other. After
years of questionable “democratic rule”, Ghana went through its first coup d’etat on 24th February, 1966. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown by some military officers, under the leadership of Lt. Colonel (later Lt. General) Emmanuel Kwasi Kotoka and Major (later Lt. General) Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa, with the Police lending active support to the process. They came to power on the ticket of the National Liberation Council (NLC) which they had formed and ruled the country for about three years beginning from February 24, 1966 to October 1, 1969. This was to become the beginnings of a chain of successive coup d’etats under military regimes.

The main tenets of Ghana’s Foreign Policy remained constant apart from a few deviations that worked against the reputation the country had built under Nkrumah’s administration. Contrary to Nkrumah’s pro-East policy, the coup leaders took certain actions that would jeopardize the friendly relations Ghana had had under Nkrumah. The NLC government began by reducing Soviet Embassy staff, and ordered the deportation of over 600 Soviet nationals who were working in the country at the time. Although the United States and Britain were in favour of the new regime, Ghana had gradually lost its credentials among the Eastern bloc and as such its soft power potential in that part of the world. But conversely soft power could have been successfully employed to revive the country’s demised appeal had it been conceptualized, properly understood and prioritized.

It could be said that the military regime under the NLC, comparatively, had a less aggressive approach to Pan-Africanism as was religiously pursued by the civilian administration under Nkrumah. This “quiet diplomacy” slowly diminished the influential role Ghana had been playing when Nkrumah was in power. Continental unity appeared to be a far-stretch if even within the country’s bounds divisions were being noticed. The
ethnic quiescence that was maintained during the Nkrumah years quickly waned out with ethnic tensions splitting the country, and even its military, into ethnic factions.\textsuperscript{32}

Although the NLC did not stay long, they did very little to add to previous efforts made by the Nkrumah administration to increase Ghana’s soft power. Rather many of their policies and actions would be the early beginnings of a downward spiral in terms of Ghana’s ability to command soft power in Africa. It must be clarified, however, that even though Ghana’s reputation as a democratic country was marred the failure to wield soft power was not so much in the change in political ideology as the lack of ingeniousness in fully exploiting the new system of governance to its maximum soft power potential.

\textbf{Ignatius Kutu Acheampong}

Colonel Ignatius Acheampong, was the “second military take-over government” which took over from Busia’s administration in 1972.\textsuperscript{33} This overthrow would spiral a series of other coup attempts in 1979 and 1981, and these, essentially, marked one of the darkest periods in Ghana’s political history. The policy of “Operation Feed Yourself” and his debt repudiation policy were some notable highlights of Acheampong’s regime.\textsuperscript{34} Possibly owing to his military roots, he portrayed a strong character which translated, in many ways, in the policies he pursued.

One would say, he had guts to have taken such a bold stance on Ghana’s debt situation, by declaring “Yentua,” which means “we would not pay” in the local dialect of Twi, but a closer look paints a much grimmer picture of the resultant effect of his position on the matter. His defiant resolve might have won him admiration from the masses but it had demeriting impacts on Ghana and her trade and development partners. Ghana, the once
revered country, which had developed amicable relations with its Western partners and as such could gain certain favours out of that relationship, was now more or less left in the dark. Acheampong’s debt repudiation policy put a strain on the relations that existed between Ghana and the West.  

Notwithstanding, he was able to embark on an aggressive African foreign policy as a result of Ghana’s enviable economic fortune enabled by increased exports revenue from cocoa, a cash crop he extensively promoted. This assiduous African policy contributed by far and large, to the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This was symbolic in enlarging Ghana’s soft power reach.

**Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings**

Maintaining the spirit of hostile take-overs, another unconstitutional regime change saw the rise of Flt Lt. to the highest seat of government, as commander - in - chief of the country. Although several coups had meted out unimaginable horrors on innocent lives and property, the *coup d’états* of June 4, 1979 and December 31, 1989 may have gone down in history as probably the worst, having “resulted in all kinds of violence and gross-human rights violations”. The coups which also had economic repercussions scarred Ghana’s glowing reputation as a land of democratic ideals. These were indeed very dark times in the history of the republic.

Although Rawlings ascended to power through successful *coup d’état*, he went on to win two consecutive elections generally touted free and fair and ruled the country of Ghana for nearly twenty years (military and civilian administrations combined). The return to constitutional democracy after a long hiatus of political instability was a plus for the
country’s image. Even his record of coups proved to be counter-effective in negotiation proceedings for countries that had gone through similar government transitions. An example was Liberia.

Rawlings’ economic diplomacy also enhanced the good name of the country. His administration’s ability to follow the stringent measures of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) to the letter even earned the country the slogan “Star Pupil” of the Bretton-Woods institutions. Added to this, was his government’s ability to roll out a home grown policy to salvage the harsh effects of the Economic Recovery Programs (ERP) under the SAP which scored high points not only for his administration but also the country as a whole.

In entirety, one author sums it up:

Rawlings’ heroic opposition to corrupt authority and compassionate concern for the poor and disadvantaged and “his dispassionate declarations of revolutionary ‘power to the people’ have been an intoxicating brew, much sought after in the autocratically ruled countries of neighbouring West Africa.”

His autocratic style of leadership might have been castigated but it was enough to win over allies such as Libya along with the material benefits of such alliances.

2.1.3 The Era of Civilian Rule

Dr. Abrefi Busia

Shortly after the military regime under the NLC, Dr. Abrefi Busia succeeded as president of the Republic on the wing of the Progress Party on October 1, 1969. Unlike the former military leaders who came to power through a coup d’etat, Busia’s government was constitutionally-elected. This marked a significant return to democratic processes once again asserting Ghana as a democracy-loving state.

Busia’s administration inherited poor economic situations from the previous regime which was fundamental in the foreign policy direction his government took. High rates of
unemployment and excessive indebtedness meant stringent economic policies had to be pursued to sway the balance of Ghana’s economic condition to a positive balance. This led to what was described as co-opted diplomacy where the economic affairs of the sovereign state of Ghana was handed over to foreigners to handle. The austerity measures issued out under these International Monetary Fund (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) only added more fuel to the fire making life very unbearable for the ordinary Ghanaian.

The difficulties experienced by the Busia administration compelled him to implement one of the most detrimental policies that worked negatively on the image of Ghana abroad. As a result of intra-regional arrangements aimed towards fostering cooperation, as instituted by Nkrumah, many migrants moved from less endowed colonies to more economically sound ones to engage in various economic activities. In what can be described as a desperate attempt at opening economic doors for its people “and securing the transfer of businesses from aliens to native Ghanaians”, he implemented the Aliens Compliance Order in 1969. Much like what his predecessors had done to derail Ghana’s policy of good neighbourliness, Busia’s government followed suit and deported many foreigners from several African countries. This action was also a blow to previous efforts at regional integration.

Another policy that had clearly negative repercussions for the country’s economy as well as its image was the Ghanaian Business Promotion Act which was once again aimed at transferring businesses from aliens into Ghanaian hands. The aftermath of this policy was severe and almost immediate. Countries of the nationals affected by the policy retaliated by expelling Ghanaians from their territories. Ghana’s role as a pro-Pan-African state was
quickly diminishing and in no time what was once considered as the Mecca of democracy, neo-colonial liberation and Pan-Africanism, and the favourite of many Africans became a pariah state.⁴⁵ A pariah state is a country that is shunned or ostracized by other countries. According to Harkarvy, pariah states are “those characterized by precarious diplomatic isolation, the absence of assured, credible security support ... and [are] targets of obsessive and unrelenting opprobrium and censure…”⁴⁶

**John Agyekum Kufuor**

After the country had been under PNDC and NDC rule for close to twenty years, all signaled to a democratic change and change did come alas with John Agyekum Kufuor coming into power on the ticket of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). With the change in government, after many years of being under the NDC, dawned a crisp and hopeful era.

President Kufuor was elected as first gentleman of the land in 2001 and upon assuming office his work was pretty much cut out for him in terms of foreign policy objectives. For starters, the Cold War was no longer in existence, and that style of strategic dribbling of the East against the West for economic gain had become redundant.⁴⁷ Second, the issue of apartheid, which was a prominent feature of the political climate in previous regimes, had been sufficiently dismantled. Last but certainly not the least, was the economic health of the state at the time. These situational realities informed his policy direction.⁴⁸

Kufuor’s frequent travels to different countries, all in pursuit of extending our sphere of influence, was often lambasted and heavily criticized. Many were surprised at his decision to make a trip to Togo as his first state visit abroad but this was a strategic move to re-establish friendlier relations with the immediate neighbor of Ghana that was previously
sour under the former administration. Allegations of sponsored attacks to oust President Eyadema leveled against the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC)-led administration had resulted in bad blood between the two countries. Kufuor, recognizing the seriousness of having peace with its neighbours, managed to restore strained relations with Ghana’s neighbours to more cordial terms while strengthening existing ones all as a means of implementing the good neighbourliness policy of Ghana.49

Added to this, was the effort at maintaining smooth cordial relations with Nigeria, a regional hegemon, and with this renewed friendship came a series of benefits to the country. The funds to facilitate the payment of Ghana’s share of the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) which was provided by the Nigerian government and monetary supports to the Ghana Police Service illustrates some of the benefits accrued as a result.

Under President Kufuor’s Administration, Ghana was favourably perceived as sincere, trustworthy and a haven of peace, genuinely geared towards the continued peace and progress of the region.50 To further impress on his commitment to ensuring the political stability of the sub-region, President Kufuor, following the outbreak of hostilities in Cote d’Ivoire in September 2002, accepted to host a meeting to discuss the way forward in resolving the matter. After this meeting was the Cote d’Ivoire Peace Conference and the Liberian Peace Conference, both of which were held at Accra and Akosombo respectively, all proving Ghana’s contribution to peace processes in resolving conflicts in the two countries.51 To top it all off, he was elected Chairman of ECOWAS on two occasions, that is 2003 and 2004, and was instrumental in peace negotiations in the sub-region. His dedication to peace coupled with his natural meek demeanour earned him the jargon
“Gentle Giant”. These leadership appointments and roles did not occur in a vacuum; it was Ghana commanding soft power at the highest level.

He trekked to other neighbouring countries with the same motives. Failure in diplomacy and bad neighborliness prior to President Kufuor’s tenure as president was mainly responsible for Burkina Faso building two dams upstream of the Volta River which feeds into the Volta Dam located in Ghana. These dams have had dire consequences for those located within the catchment areas along the river, whenever the dams were opened by the Burkinabes, causing damage to life and property. Visits were made by the presidency to Burkina Faso and discussions were opened effectively leading to agreement on a mutual approach to solve the problem.

Kufuor played a key role in the African Union (AU) as part of the country’s policy to support the AU. His administration was part of the adoption processes of the Lusaka Decision on the transitioning of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to AU held in July 2001. Under his leadership Ghana also participated in the launch of the AU and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). President Kufuor was a founding member of the Implementation Committee tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of NEPAD’s many initiatives, policies and programmes on the continent. These initiatives included the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and Ghana “became the first country to accede to NEPAD’S African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).”

The APRM is “an undertaking by African leaders to be assessed by an independent panel of experts on their commitments to democracy and good governance and to the economic
and social development of their countries.” This programme was deliberately pursued to boost Ghana’s democratic credentials. On January 22, 2006, in Khartoum, Sudan, Ghana subjected itself to the review and “acquitted itself well.” Congratulatory messages were showered on her for her exemplary demonstration of commitment to the noble principles of the NEPAD set up. It communicated to the outside world Ghana’s commitment to democracy and good governance and this engendered soft power for Ghana.

**John Evans Atta Mills**

In 2008, which marked the end of President Kufuor’s term, elections were held and John Evans Atta Mills emerged victorious. President Mills who was tagged “Asomdwehene” which is a title in the local dialect of Twi meaning “Peace King”, managed to live up to his name and embodied the peace-loving ideals of the country. He may not have been as aggressive as his fellow compatriot, Rawlings, who also became president on the ticket of the NDC party but Ghana was seen as a peace-loving nation due to his leadership. His admirable leadership reinforced Ghana’s reputation as a democratic, peaceful and stable country committed to peace and security initiatives.

It is worthy to point out that there was a paradigm shift that occurred in Ghana’s foreign policy with regards to Mills’ “Dzi wo fie asem” policy on the Cote D’Ivoire conflict, which was a slur in its good neighbourliness policy. Ghana being overstretched in terms of military personnel at the time could not practically contribute troops to ECOWAS’ proposed move to use military intervention should the need arise. With this Cote d’Ivoire example being an exception, Ghana under President Mills’ leadership maintained support in the form of “human and financial resources in the search for sustainable peace and stability in West Africa.” This manifested in the country’s participation in peace-keeping
missions in Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire. All these actions reinforced the country’s image, ultimately increasing the soft power potential of Ghana.

**John Mahama**

Having succeeded President Mills upon his untimely death, John Mahama has continued as the democratically elected leader of the Republic of Ghana. His policies have not been of much significant difference from previous regimes and have maintained policy goals pursued by preceding governments.

Mahama’s nomination as ECOWAS Chairman increased the prestige of his administration. His tenure as Chair of the ECOWAS has been very instrumental in helping to bring as well as preserve stability within the West African sub-region. His role as mediator in Burkina Faso in 2014 and later in September 2015 and his leadership credentials towards managing the instability that threatened the peace and security was very useful in smooth management of the two situations. He was so effective that he was given a second term where he presided over matters relating to the Nigerian and Togo elections.58

The Ebola pandemic presented yet another opportunity for Ghana to display its leadership credentials and the country served as the headquarters for coordinated efforts for the mitigation and control of the deadly disease. President Mahama played the crucial role of mobilizing relief support for countries badly hit by the Ebola pandemic in West Africa. Mahama’s role during the Ebola crisis enhanced the image of the country.59 Also, his contribution towards “ensuring maritime security along the Gulf of Guinea; and facilitating a decision on the “ECOWAS-EU EPA” when he was ECOWAS Chairman, as
well as Ghana’s peace-keeping missions in Mali in 2013 is worthy of special mention as it further put the name of Ghana on the global map.

His recent policy of visa-on-arrival also reaffirms Ghana’s ideals towards integration within the continent. This policy is to facilitate movement for the purposes of trade, tourism and business. It further confirms the nation’s commitment to a more united and prosperous Africa and is soft power at its best.

Soft power is about appeal and attractiveness of one’s actions, policies and values, and all these administrations, in one way or the other, made Ghana’s image more attractive with their foreign policies, beliefs and personal values. It is also about attractiveness translating into influence on the global scale, and the literature has established the degree to which Ghana’s sphere of influence was widened or decreased through the “attractive” or in some cases unattractive policies of the administrations reviewed above.

2.1.4 Other Actors

Ambassadors and Envoys
An ambassador is someone who represents the interests of a state or organization. Ghana has several embassies around the world with appointed ambassadors steering the affairs of those embassies. These mouthpieces of the state abroad in pursuit of the national interest also play a supportive role in extending the country’s arm of influence across the globe.

As already-mentioned, the fairly recent nature of the concept has limited the practical application by officers in the business of foreign relations. Many traditional diplomats are quite unfamiliar with the concept and as such have not harnessed it as much as they could
and should. Notwithstanding, a noble few have partaken in conscious steps through mostly personal initiatives based upon a certain understanding of the concept of soft power. Even for the officers that are not abreast with the terminology, they have contributed to Ghana’s store of soft power resource in one way or the other.

As one ambassador recounts,

“Soft power is a relatively modern concept but some ambassadors of Ghana have been able to harness it one way or another. For instance, while I was Ghana’s ambassador to France, the embassy made use of soft power through a number of ways. One of these was, the use of a Ghanaian musician in France called Bibi Brew who was greatly loved and adored by the French people and was prominently featured at several programs organized by the embassy. Another useful asset was Abedi Pele, a well-known football figure who was also loved the world over.”

Ghana’s former ambassador to Sierra Leone, Ambassador Kabral, recalls in his memoir, “Between the Lion and the Elephant: Memoirs of an African Diplomat”, how the art of winning the hearts and minds of foreign publics was a core mandate of every diplomat.

“One core assignment of every diplomatic mission is the promotion of cordial relations between countries and their peoples. Success in this task results in a positive image for the motherland… a diplomat in all his activities must do well to win hearts and minds for his country in order to be effective in his mission… [through] subtle ways…”

Through his use of the Milton Margai School for the blind choir and the Dollar-a-Month-for-Ghana project amongst other personal initiatives, Ghana’s image was positively projected. In his own words:

“All these projects got publicity in the local media and thus presented Ghana in a very good light.”

**International Civil Servants**

Soft power usually tends to be the preserve of states and their immediate or official representatives but unofficial representatives can also make remarkable impact in yielding soft power for the countries they originate from. One such notable figure is Kofi Annan, who was Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) for about a decade. His time in the UN was not without adversity but with a calm resolve and skillful tact, he forged on to become the “epitome of creativity and change.” He was so good that the UN had to
break its five-year term limit to renew his mandate for a second term on a unanimous vote. His impeccable global statesmanship accompanied by his meek demeanor, immortalized his legacy as a member of the “most-exclusive club” of former UN General Secretaries, with his seat high up amongst the exceptional impactful few. His accolades unabatingly soured, with his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001, putting him in a class of the few “extra-ordinaries” of similar repute such as South Africa’s Mandela and India’s Ghandi. Kofi Annan’s record and reputation is an illustrious example of soft power for Ghana. This soft power came in the form of untold reverence the country commanded in the international domain, in terms of its views being sought on certain major global issues. Ghana was well-respected because of Kofi Annan’s outstanding credentials as Secretary General of the UN.

Two other exceptional Ghanaian personalities who have made meaningful impact are Ibn Chambas and Quaison-Sackey. The former has been involved assiduously in the maintenance of peace and stability on the continent whilst the latter was the first black person to occupy the position of Secretary General in the UN. Through their works in their respective fields, Ghana is well-known as able to produce “great minds” and competent human resource of world class standard, and as a result, Ghana to an extent is able to influence the global discourse on issues in the international system.

But over the years, the smooth change of government has sent a loud reassuring message of the country’s dedication to ensuring democracy, peace and stability and the enforcement of the rule of law, which in itself is a soft power resource for Ghana.
2.2 An Overview of Nation branding in Ghana

The mere mention of the word brand or the term branding quickly brings to mind the idea of a product, something with an intrinsic value that needs to be highlighted, marketed and essentially sold. The term branding has been predominantly associated with marketing and has been the preserve of the corporate world for decades. Branding has been successfully employed in the business world and has been extended to countries in an attempt “to transform and accelerate their developmental agenda” as well as to change or reposition their image to boost export, investment and tourism. It serves mainly two purposes – to promote the country’s brand internationally to foreign publics and domestically to the very people who are citizens of the country.

Since Ghana gained independence it has sought to maximize positive perception about its image one way or the other. Through outfits such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts; Tourism Authority to mention but a few, it has embarked on several programs all with the aim of selling the country as an ideal destination for tourist visits, investment and export promotion.

As a build up to previous efforts, the then President of the Republic of Ghana, President John Evans Attah Mills, cut the sod of the Brand Ghana Office (BGO), as the outfit specifically mandated to cater to the branding needs of the nation. It was the first conspicuous attempt to brand Ghana in a deliberate, pre-conceived manner and for many it was the first time they had heard of the concept of nation branding. The following paragraphs will attempt to show that branding has been pursued by previous administrations and at different times in Ghana’s history, maybe not as aggressively but in a manner that is worthy of notice.
To begin the journey it is necessary to consider where the trend emanated from. The story of nation branding generally goes as far back as the French revolution, which is demonstrably one of the first examples to make a go at branding and “re-branding a nation.” France, the newly formed republic, sought to assert itself in the community of states and create “homogeneity, consistency and coherence than any nation before” and pursued an aggressive branding plan. Drawing inspiration from France, the country took its first branding step by changing its name at independence. The newly liberated country, which was previously known as the Gold Coast, became Ghana, the name of an ancient powerful and prosperous West African state.

Although this evolution brought some much need changes, Ghana sought to build and maintain a coherent identity as the process of evolving panned out. Upon assuming the name Ghana, the national ideals of “Freedom and Justice” were adopted along with the national anthem, the national flag and the coat of arms. These new ideals were reflected in for instance, the national anthem, which evoked sentiments of “freedom, unity, loyalty and national pride, civic virtue and service to the motherland, and fraternity.”

Nation branding in Ghana, as a means of propagating a positive image about the country can further trace it roots from the era of independence during Nkrumah’s rule. Independence was a pivotal period in the history of Ghana and was one that was full of promise as much as it meant more responsibility. With such a visionary leader as Nkrumah proved to be, certain aggressive steps were taken towards a “national consciousness and coherence” in the expression of the national identity. This was evidenced in the numerous initiatives he embarked on as president of Ghana. Nkrumah’s government was focused on creating that consistency and coherence that branding seeks to achieve in the
nation’s new identity.\textsuperscript{77} These symbols, anthems and slogans together with the new name served as a reinforcement of the new identity it sought to convey as well as its core values.\textsuperscript{78}

Nkrumah’s government was consciously engaged in the management of Ghana’s reputation and “occasionally invented country reputation, borrowing from musicians, linguists, poets, orators, and philosophers.”\textsuperscript{79} Being the first to break the yoke of governance post-colonial era, responsibility fell on his shoulders to craft and design a unique identity that would set Ghana apart from the rest of the world. Although what Nkrumah engaged in was essentially nation branding it was not conceptualized or regarded as such.

Successive governments also made some considerably moderate efforts towards this “national self-consciousness” of branding and image repositioning. Acheampong for instance, with his “Operation Feed Yourself” policy, amongst other initiatives taken, communicated a certain unique identity for the Ghanaian people.

These efforts that were made though commendable were short-lived “because leadership itself then did not model the values demanded of ordinary people.”\textsuperscript{80} However, between 2002 and 2005, a group of people in the private sector, organized a number of media and educational programs and events out of a need to sensitize and educate the Ghanaian populace about nation branding. These industry players with their experience in marketing and branding came together out of the desire of the “common good for Ghana”\textsuperscript{81} and paid a courtesy call on Government to be at the fore of this crucial but bold journey.
The Government later in 2005, rolled out a programme called “Ghana: the Land of Gold” pursuant to the discussions it had had with the branding and marketing experts. Though this bold move was well-intentioned, it failed to take off with the thrust with which it was initiated with. According to Mathias Akotiah, the former Chief Executive Officer of BGO who is now deceased, this was as a result of failure to entrust management of the programme to a dedicated organization. Records also point out that it was mainly handled by politicians another possible cause of its demise. Beyond 2005, no major activity was recorded to have been done in the field of nation branding until 2009 when the BGO outfit was instituted.

In 2009, Brand Ghana was established as the sole edifice dedicated to all nation branding processes. It was officially outdoored during the tenure of President Mills and the outfit was set up under the Office of the President. Brand Ghana office is an outfit specifically mandated to handling all the branding needs of the country, harmonizing efforts of major stakeholders all with the aim of pursuing national goals through coordinating and positioning the agenda.

It must be mentioned, however, that apart from dedicated well-organized efforts towards promoting the image of Ghana within and abroad, several institutions have been engaged in some form of branding at different levels. As established in previous chapters, branding is a two-pronged process aimed at both international and domestic targets. In the domestic terrain, one major way was through cultural festivals such as the Pan-African Festival also known as PANAFEST which attracted people from the world over. Ghana, being well-admired for its colonial heritage, was thus represented with a unique opportunity to engage in conversations and activities all in pursuit of the pan-African ideals which the country
stood by. Also, through the missions and embassies abroad, Ghana has been sold to
countries around the world over the years, through cultural programmes, international
conferences, fairs and exhibitions where Ghana is uniquely represented.

But beyond this, some form of unconscious branding took place with the democratic
credentials of the country, peace and stability, the appeal of its talent exports, top quality
cocoa exports, football triumphs and hospitable citizenry. Another aspect of this
unconscious branding was the extent to which certain actions taken and perceptions
formed as a result, marred the positive brand Ghana represents. One poignant example was
the Brazil 2012 Saga where large amounts of monies were flown out of the country on a
private jet to the Black Stars, Ghana’s national football team. These negative tags continue
to persist, even for Ghana, due to failure to reverse this image consciously and being
unfortunately branded along with the ill-perceived African collective. They include;
“corruption, diseases, filth, polluted cities, civil strife, violent crime, serious fraud, African
time, lack of discipline and service orientation, past uneasy political experimentation” to
mention but a few.

Thus, it can be conclusively stated that the idea or concept of actively marketing a country
to the world, for purposes of economic growth, trade and export, tourism, and propagating
a positive image is not a new one. The only newly introduced element to the equation is
simply the word “brand”.

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2.3. Conceptual linkages and clarifications

2.3.1 Nation Branding and Soft Power

The concept of soft power and nation branding has been delved into in previous paragraphs. It is now necessary to draw the linkages between the concept to further emphasize how the two conceptualizations converge and the relationship that exist between the two.

Nation branding, as a channel to forward the nation’s interest through the attractiveness of the country’s image is “an important tool in the development of a nation’s soft power.”\(^{86}\) A successful nation branding attempt promotes a more positive and favourable image amongst foreign audiences and this enhances a country’s soft power.\(^{87}\) Nation branding is basically a branch on the evergreen tree of soft power and is an effective tool for soft power. Put simply, to brand a nation goes beyond “just finding a catching slogan or window-dressing but requires the study of a nation’s soft power sources in order to exploit them effectively to promote the national image”.\(^{88}\) It should be noted however that although hard power may be employed as a nation branding tool, nation branding is essentially aimed at achieving soft power.

2.3.2 Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy

Diplomacy has always thrived in the traditional way of doing things. The turn of the century saw the evolution of the conventional style of diplomacy into public diplomacy. After Edward Gullion of Tuft’s University coined the term it grew to become widely practiced. Public diplomacy can be defined as “a country’s efforts, through official and private individuals and institutions, to communicate with publics in other countries and
societies.” Meanwhile, nation branding as previously defined is “[application] of branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation’s image.”

There are those who do not associate public diplomacy with any form branding campaign for the nation and meet the concept with a certain level of skepticism and cynicism.

“Many diplomats and government officials reject branding point blank as just plain irrelevant, if not heretic. Others may see some value in it but only for tourism. It is clear that the term "brand” polarizes opinions and discussions can become passionate and draw camps. Memories of recent and unsuccessful experimentations surface quickly as proof; professional and emotional scares of forced initiatives are displayed with resentment.”

Sharing his purists view one experienced diplomat articulates,

“Generally speaking diplomats are uncomfortable with the notion of nation branding. In any marketing strategy there is a certain varnish or foundation cream that is shown forth and not the ‘real skin’. Nation branding attempts to communicate an aspect of the truth. History and experience have shown mechanisms that have not been entirely truthful have not been very effective. The process of engaging foreign audience must be a two-way stream in order for feedback and this is what public diplomacy seeks to do.”

Elaborating further, he dispels nation branding as a tool for public diplomacy. Public diplomacy and nation branding have different aims, the former, to advance foreign policy and the latter targeted at both foreign and domestic domains mainly for economic purposes. Per his view, public diplomacy covers a much wider scope than nation branding. As a soft power tool, he believes it is not feasible in a developing country context because he believed soft power was “using the least expensive form to gain power”. Although he feels nation branding is a fragile concept, he reckons that once the fundamentals are gotten right, by ensuring stable systems and institutions, it could be useful tool.

Others have differing opinions. Some believe that public diplomacy is an aspect of nation branding and is a means to propagate nation branding. Illustrating his view another diplomat posits:

“If you do all the public diplomacy and your country has a bad image, how effective can that be? Nation branding reinforces what public diplomacy seeks to achieve. The two walk hand in hand.”
Even though there is a divide in perception about the two concepts it is undoubted that the two have a relationship to a certain extent. Most of these conflicting views relate to the degree of this relationship and not to the non-existence thereof. Brand building activities encompass both nation branding and public diplomacy and have the potential to “trigger vicious cycles.” In essence, a marriage and merging of the concepts through “the concerted and participatory nature of a branding initiative can successfully demonstrate, often for the first time, the power of integrating the voices of multiple governmental agencies and cross-sector partners.” It can further lead to increased communication as well as creating a sense of unity across the different parties involved. “The decision-making process can create a successful precedent and build a foundation for other, more complex initiatives.”

2.4 Concepts in Nation Branding

2.4.1 Nation Brand vs. National Brand

A nation can be defined as “a social construct and as a unit that has an essence of unique characteristics which are woven intrinsically.” A brand on the other hand refers to a product with a unique set of traits that can be effectively marketed and sold. It can be considered as “a cluster of strategic cultural ideas.” It can also be “… a name, symbol, design, or some combination, which identifies the ‘product’ of a particular organization as having a sustainable differential advantage”.

The notion of a nation brand thus, “generally refers to the common images, perceptions and associations people have about that nation.” Keith Dinnie defines a nation brand as “as the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences.” In effect, a nation
brand is simply a country as a product. The basic assumption is that state names, much like commodity names, amount to brands and consequently, convey certain images that inform purchasing decisions, and as such the more powerful a country’s brand is the more likely it is going to be perceived in a more positive way.  

The main difference between ordinary commercial goods and the state entity is that countries are much bigger, and are a summation of a wide variety of products and services with a far more complex market. For the nation brand, the people represent the brand and not simply diplomats overseas or the ruling government or state institutions. “Nations do not belong to brand managers or corporations; indeed, if they ‘belong’ to anyone, it is to the nation’s entire citizenry.”

A national brand on the other hand is “a brand available nationally as distinct from a regional or test-market brand”. The main difference is that whereas the national brand refers to a brand produced from the state, a nation-brand is “where the brand is the country, state or nation in question.” In reality, “successful brands thrive because the people delivering the brand act in a manner that reflects the promised values.” Much in the same way, in nation branding, there are certain dominant values that ultimately define “the behavioural characteristics of a population.” These set of values are better appreciated by the population by guiding structures such as the form of constitution used in the country’s governance; religious beliefs; and social mores. Awareness of the core values of the nation is further facilitated through social and economic interactions with the population who form the core of the nation brand.
The benefits that can be accrued from nation branding transcends the bounds of politics, to economic spheres, in so far as the nation brand is properly developed and projected in the most favorable way. Florek believes that a strong nation brand can be used to increase the wealth of a nation which is generally a major goal of countries.\textsuperscript{107}

2.4.2 The Country-of-Origin Effect

Every nation is known for one product or more that is manufactured in the country. This phenomenon is what is described as country-of-origin effect. It can be defined as associations made between a country and a product or brand regardless of the actual production sites. It refers to “how national reputation influences perceptions of products…usually applied to measure consumer perceptions and purchase intentions, since companies and products are often associated with their countries of origin.”\textsuperscript{108} A mention of Germany brings to mind “quality cars” just as France is known for its good cosmetics. Products with labels “made in Germany” or “made in the US” are believed to be of a certain high quality compared with similar home country tags such “made in China” or “made in Togo”. This perception is not in a vacuum. It is virtually the product of years of earning reputation as top class manufacturers.

Like it or not products are ascribed to the nations they come from. Consumers continue to make these associations and evaluate the quality of products along those lines. Even more so is the extent to which such views shape perceptions held about the national image of countries. As Anholt reiterates:

“One commercial consequence of such brand-informed images is that they tend to stereotype countries in a two-dimensional way which makes it harder for exporters of non-typical products to gain acceptance in the overseas market. For example, Italy’s brand image as a fashion and style producer made it extremely difficult for Olivetti, a computer manufacturer, to create a successful export business; German fashion brands like Hugo Boss and Jill Sander have tended to downplay their
origins as these products do not match the technical and rational image of Germany as well as brands like BMW, Porche, Siemens or Mercedes.”

This situation where the product becomes synonymous with its home country’s national image in relation to the production of that product, means countries must aspire to create compelling national brands that appeal to the average global consumer.

2.4.3 Brand Identity vs. Brand Image

Identity is one’s sense of perception about oneself. In a way, it is what one sees when one looks in the mirror. It is also what you say you are. The brand identity of a country or country identity is basically what a country perceives itself to be. The brand image, conversely, stands for “all those emotional and aesthetic qualities that people associate with the brand.” It refers to how a particular product is perceived. Image also represents reputation. Country’s much in the same way have carved certain niches in terms of their image and portray images that are peculiar to them.

The brand image of a country or the country image is not a rigidly static “undynamic” phenomenon but is tenable to change although the process is complex, difficult and time-consuming. This explains why it is advised that efforts towards lifting country image perception should be geared towards “[creating] new positive associations than [trying] to refute old ones.” To achieve fruitful results these two concepts need to be harmonized and aligned side by side. The ultimate goal must be to strike a proper balance between the country’s brand image and its brand identity.
2.4.4 Brand Equity

The brand equity simply refers to the value of the brand.\textsuperscript{112} This brand value is “… based on the extent to which it has high loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, strong brand associations [amongst others] …”\textsuperscript{113} Every brand possesses an intrinsic value that suggest the high level of awareness and familiarity consumers have with the brand maintaining a favourable impression of the brand as being of a certain high quality and as such endearing brand loyalty.\textsuperscript{114} This form of brand association can influence a purchaser’s decision to buy a particular product as the consumer goes for the product they perceive to be of a better quality. A Benz for example may be preferred over a Tata.

2.5 Issues in Nation Branding

2.5.1 Why Brand Ghana

States consciously control their images and identities because their “reality changes and [as such there is] the need to project this real change symbolically to all their audiences with whom they relate”.\textsuperscript{115} As Melissen puts it, “they want, as far as they can, to align perception with reality.”\textsuperscript{116} One writer opines that “in today's globalized market it is important that a strong brand strategy should define the most realistic, competitive and compelling strategic vision for the country.”\textsuperscript{117}

Countries are taking calculated steps to craft and communicate their distinctive and compelling national identities, in an epoch marked by globalization, where the integrity of state borders are gradually losing their relevance, and world cultures are homogenizing, with networks of human mobility, migration, media ever widening. “Corporate branding is a demonstrably effective way to assign unique identification by consciously highlighting certain meanings and myths while ignoring others.” (Aronczyk 2008)\textsuperscript{118} Some view
nation branding as a somewhat benign approach of communicating the core national interests without the usual “chauvinistic” and “antagonistic” elements of more reactionary forms of nationalisms. In a contemporary era for diplomacy, it is a useful approach to attaining the goals of diplomacy which is to sell the state abroad to foreign publics.

The move by nations to consciously brand their image, is borne out of necessity to fulfil three primal objectives: tourist attraction, stimulation of inward investment and exports boost. Talent attraction, whereby countries compete to attract higher education students, and skilled human resource, is also another goal of nation branding. Temporal adds to the above-mentioned, “restored international credibility and investor confidence; reversed international ratings downgrades; increased international political influence; stronger international partnerships; and enhanced nation building.”

It has also been put forward that “the unbranded state has a difficult time attracting economic and political attention”, and fundamentally, “image and reputation are becoming essential parts of the state’s strategic equity.” To have a strong and positive nation-brand, can nudge a country’s competitive urge several notches higher, which is crucial in the globalized economy of today’s world.

Nation branding can also help erase misconceptions about a country and allow the country to reposition itself in a more favourable manner with regard to targeted audiences. Unfortunately for most developing countries in Africa, the developed world paints all African countries with the same brush; as corrupt, fraudulent, vicious, violent and filthy. Ghana is not exempt and has to, therefore, take steps to set itself apart from this negative “Africa brand” and assert its position as a glowing continental if not global competitor.
Although these name tags may to a great extent hold salt too much emphasis is unfairly placed on these undesirable traits when, likewise, there are favourable qualities that could equally be highlighted. Branding the nation of Ghana is important to draw less attention to the bad, put more focus on those positive attributes and correct notions which may otherwise be untrue.

In the background to the study in chapter one, effort was made to establish the need for nation branding to be undertaken in policy and in practice. A number of current day events have spawned discussions on why branding is necessary for a star country like Ghana. From the days of Nkrumah, several successive governments have grappled with corruption, with one corruption scandal popping up after the other. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked Ghana as the 7th most corrupt country in Africa, with recent times, witnessing an all-time high in these corruption scandals notable among which was the Woyomi Judgement Debt Saga. Beyond the Woyomi case, which is still being handled in the courts, more of these incidents of corruption have emerged. These include the Judicial Corruption Scandal, the Brazil 2014 World Cup Saga, Smarttys Bus Branding Scandal, and the WAEC Leakages.

The Judiciary Scandal in 2015 was just a large-scale blow-out of a raging volcano waiting to erupt. Corruption, a serious social canker is gradually becoming a term synonymous with Ghana as a result of the high level of rot eating away the integrity of the nation especially in the public office arena. The scandal involved a number of judges caught on tape receiving bribes to compromise their judgement of cases in favour of the bribing parties. This issue was so high-profile that it was broadcast on an international news network like the BBC.
Additionally, the Brazil 2014 World Cup saga that preceded the judges’ scandal added more fuel to the fire tainting the image of Ghana further to onlookers across the globe. Media reports showed gross indiscipline amongst players, allegations of corruption and even the flying of physical cash across the Atlantic to pay bonuses.\textsuperscript{127} Things were so bad that a publication about Ghana was made in a major international publication, humorously illustrating the events that unfolded at the Brazil World Cup with cartoon characters as well and the country being cited in the Transparency International (TI) report on corruption in sports.\textsuperscript{128}

As if matters could not get worse, the Bus Branding issue broke out in the media with swarms of commentaries pouring in as the days went by. It was a serious dent on the image of Ghana particularly to the institution of governance. It was very ironic in a sense that instead of trying to brand the nation holistically, branding was reduced to a few coloured pictures of the country’s leaders on Chinese buses which cost the nation an arm and a leg, and nearly all of its teeth, at a time when its economic situation was dire.

Last but not the least was the WAEC Examination Leakages in 2014.\textsuperscript{129} Examination leakage is not a surprising phenomenon in these parts of the world, sadly, and this has been a major issue that has inspired a national debate for years on the matter. The WAEC examination leakage in 2014, probably crowned all previous occurrences leading to cancellation of as many as five subject papers which had to be later rewritten causing major distress to those who were affected. The technology of the present age only fanned the fire, and in no time Ghana was once again all over the news not because of its honest people or its beautiful landscape but for its corrupt institutions. To crown it all off, was the Independence Day blunder that reduced the reputation of the country to a laughing stock
amongst the global community. The blunder involved grammatical errors and factual inaccuracies printed in the official brochure of the 59th Independence Anniversary of Ghana, to the extent that President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya was misrepresented as the president of Ghana. This was yet again another blotch on Ghana’s name.

Needless to say at this cliff edge, nation branding is probably the last grip of straw to drag the country’s reputation out of the mud and restore civility not only on its image but in the institutions that form the pillars of the countries architecture.

2.5.2 What Can Be Branded In Ghana?

With every branding attempt, there must be a product. In the case of nation branding the obvious product at the core is the country. A country as an abstract entity is representative of the citizenry, the landscape, culture, values, philosophies, principles to mention but a few. As such everything can be branded from the people to the cultural values to its commodities.

As has been previously submitted, nearly everything can be branded but in Ghana’s peculiar case focus must be placed on those areas where the country has competitive advantage. Competitive advantage stands for ranking tops amongst competitors of a similar product and for Ghana these areas include democracy, Pan-Africanism, sports and culture.

The country’s democracy, peace and stability present a useful starting point for things that can be branded. Since Ghana achieved independence it has managed to maintain a relatively stable political climate. Amidst an encircling of warring countries, Ghana has
stood its grounds as a peace-loving, democratic nation. Peace and security is a useful attraction not only for tourism but for investment purposes as well and as such is a useful resource that can be promoted through nation branding.

Pan-Africanism, the pursuit of African neo-colonial liberation is a useful selling point owing to Ghana’s historical linkages with the concept. Nkrumah’s impact together with the burial of W. E. B. Dubois ‘the Father of Pan-Africanism’ on Ghanaian soil further reinforced the Pan-Africanist identity of the country. Already there is a biannual celebration dedicated to Pan-Africanism called PANAFEST, an acronym for Pan-African Festival, which is basically a theatrical festival which features cultural performances from several countries throughout Africa and the diaspora as well as lectures that address issues such as economic integration and continental advancement.\(^\text{131}\)

Schram pungently annotates,

“…all these distinguish Ghana from other West African countries and makes it more attractive to investors… in order to promote its national interests for example economic advancement the Ghanaian state falls back on [its] historical position as the ‘Pan – African Capital of the World’.\(^\text{132}\)

According to Amb. Baah Duodu, a former ambassador of Ghana and current lecturer in Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Ghana has a wealth of resources to market to the world. Ghana is well-recognized worldwide as a sports country owing to the country’s successes in athletics, football and boxing. Names like Azuma Nelson, Ike Quartey, Abedi Pele, Asamoah-Gyan, Prince Kevin Boateng and the Ayew brothers quickly brings to mind the country called Ghana.

He is of the view that Ghana can be branded as a sports country well enough to transmit a certain imagery of the country as being health conscious and fit. Ghana’s hosting of the
Cup of Africa Nations or CAN 2000 put the country once again in the limelight and the benefits accrued to the economy was innumerable. According to him, during his residency in Australia, the Australian government wanted Ghana to arrange a few boxing matches with the country so as to boost their status in boxing before the Commonwealth games at the time. Ghana was known and respected when it came to boxing and thus this sport had worked as a form of soft power for the country.

Sports can be used to brand the country as a sports destination which has a rippling effect of creating a perception that Ghanaians are healthy and live long. For instance “take a country like Jamaica, how many people know the name of their current president? But who does not know Usain Bolt? That is how far-reaching the effects of something as nearly unimportant as a sports personality. That is a valuable asset to be branded.”

Ghanaian music is also a critical component in the nation branding of Ghana. Highlife is a genre of music unique to Ghana. It was such an effective tool of attraction such that Nkrumah during his time vested efforts in prescribing the message that it conveyed stressing on the need for artform to promote nationalism as much as the cultural values of the nation.

Other products that can be branded include kente, chocolate, landscape, tourist attractions, cultural festivals, arts and crafts, music and dance.

2.5.3 Who Are The Stakeholders of Nation Branding In Ghana?

Nation branding is a multi-stakeholder enterprise. From the state to the ordinary citizen, it involves several groups of people and institutions at different levels. The major
stakeholders include the Ministries, Departments and other Agencies (MDAs) - Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration; Ghana Export Promotion Authority; Ministry of Education; the Electoral Commission; National Commission on Culture; National Commission on Civic Education, etcetera; private sector – commerce, telecommunications, media; and the very people of Ghana.

Before the inception of BGO, these above-mentioned institutions worked mostly in an unsynchronized fashion with each working on its specific mandate sometimes collaborating on certain projects. With the setup of the BGO, it was meant to harmonize efforts being made by the various arms of nation branding. The role of the BGO outfit is to coordinate the efforts of all institutions that deal with governance, citizenship development, business and marketing, corporate communications and the media.135

2.5.4 How Nation Branding Be Done In Ghana?

For any effective branding initiative to take off it must essentially begin with what is known as a national brand strategy. It “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.”136

These acts of communication encompass brands exported by the country; the manner in which the country promotes itself toward trade; tourism, foreign investment and recruitment; the manner in which its cultural values are presented and promoted; its domestic and foreign policy moves; the behavior of its citizens when outside their country
as well as how foreigners are handled within the state’s boundary; the way it is represented in the media; its membership of international bodies and organization; countries it aligns itself with; and its competitiveness in sports and entertainment. Such a strategy has a high chance of determining “both the internal confidence and the external performance of a country.”

Many are of the view that development of a nation, its economy, institutions, infrastructure and amenities is more important than trying to push its image but in fact, “image and progress unfailingly go hand in hand. Although it is usually true that image is the consequence of progress, rather than vice versa, it is equally true that when both are carefully managed in tandem, they help each other along and create accelerated change.”

Apart from the national branding strategy are the tools, which are the means by which the telling message of a country’s image is conveyed. These tools are diverse comprising of logos, slogans or taglines, official websites, press and television commercials to mention but a few.

The logo must be a unique graphic presentation which symbolize the essence of the nation brand. It could comprise of national colours or symbols that are representative of what a country embodies in terms of its beliefs, values and culture. There could be variant logos for specific areas but there must be an umbrella logo that is consistently used in all national branding efforts.
The slogan is a string of meaningful words that communicate in brief the unique identity of the country. It must be brief, catchy, capture the whole essence of the country brand in question, inspire positive meaningful sentiments and arouse interests. Many countries have successfully phrased out catchy delightful taglines alongside their bold logos. For instance India goes by the tagline “Incredible India”; Malaysia, “Truly Asia” and Thailand “Amazing Thailand” These different tools all weave into the mesh of images being communicated.

These tools which are being used by the BGO would be properly looked at when the organization is discussed in later chapters.

2.6 Practice of Nation Branding and Nation Branding Examples

Nation branding campaigns have been taken on by several countries such as Malaysia, India even geographically and culturally diverse nations such as Germany, New Zealand, Egypt, Spain, Britain and Scotland have considered it worthwhile to develop their own nation-branding strategies. These campaigns and programmes have been pursued, some successfully others not so much.

Two countries would be reviewed in terms of their branding campaigns, and the resultant impact on their images, one of the developed world, the other a developing nation, one nearly failed, the other appreciably succeeded. These countries are Britain and South Africa.
2.6.1 Britain

Britain rolled out its nation branding campaign with the catchy phrase “Cool Britannia” all in an attempt to rebrand the image of the country. This “branding, or rebranding, of Britain in the late 1990s is perhaps the most controversial nation branding campaign that has been seen to date.”\textsuperscript{143} After a report presented by the think tank, Demos on the topic “Britain: Renewing Our Identity”, the newly elected Labour government under the new leadership of Prime Minister Tony Blair attempted this branding initiative. The report was concerned with Britain’s international brand as well as its national identity and noted that “Britain’s identity was in flux, the image of Britain was stuck in the past.”\textsuperscript{144}

Britain, over the years, had chalked successes in its steady economic growth and its creative industries sector and could be said to have a competitive identity. On that note, one would wonder what could possibly inform such a sudden move to brand the image of the state. But the reality on the ground showed that Britain suffered from being sadly perceived as “backward-looking and aloof” “insular, old-fashioned and resistant to change”\textsuperscript{145} and these image issues necessitated an urgent response which came in the form of the ‘Cool Britannia’ campaign.

The modernization of the image of Britain started and “Rule Britannia” was replaced by “Cool Britannia”. The onset of the initiative was met with a lot of hostile reaction over concerns about “the viability and desirability of rebranding something as hostile as national identity.”\textsuperscript{146} This spelled doom for the campaign and it fizzled out before it could gain any momentum.
The failed attempt at rebranding through Britain’s nation branding campaign could be seen as lesson for those involved in the practice. There were certain key features that are worth noting. First was what appeared to be ineffective communication of the campaign’s core message to inform its target audiences of the potential gains of a deliberate nation branding strategy. Added to this was inability to sufficiently integrate all the different stakeholders in the effort. Countries desiring to embark on similar campaigns should be cautious and take notes from the British experience and nip those crucial buds so as to achieve positive results.

2.6.2 South Africa

In the developing country context, an appreciable number of countries have set out to brand their nations in a purposeful manner including Kenya and Rwanda. South Africa (SA) is also a helpful example of a deliberate move towards nation branding and this section looks at their nation branding campaign.

With a history of racial divisions and growing inequalities as well as crime, violence and the HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) epidemic, perceptions held about the country was in poor taste. Moreover, although it had earned the distinct identity as the “Rainbow Nation” and had inspirational popular figures such as Nelson Mandela, the negative issues that pervaded the country made it obvious it could no longer fall back on that legacy to support its global image. Out of the growing urgency to correct these negative perceptions, the South African government saw a need to address their image problems through a nation branding campaign to redeem the name of the country from stereotypes and negative media depictions.
SA or, as it is affectionately called, begun its Brand South Africa campaign in 2001 with the task of crafting a positive and compelling brand image for South Africa in order to boost trade and tourism. Under the auspices of the International Marketing Council (IMC), the body entrusted with managing SA’s image, it successfully made its global debut at the 2010 FIFA World Cup. But before then the required processes of successful nation branding campaigns were followed, holding several focus groups, workshops and forums to engage domestic and international stakeholders across the private and public sectors, civil society and the media. In 2007, the slogan ‘Alive With Possibility’ was revealed but was quickly replaced by a much richer one ‘South Africa, Inspiring New Ways’ which was launched after the 2010 World Cup.

Significant impact of this nation branding campaign was made in a number of ways. Its ranking on the strong nation brands index carried out by Brand Finance - an organization that ranks nations on the strength of their nation brands - moved from 34th in 2011 out of a total of 100, valued at $150 billion, to the 31st position with an increased estimated value of $222 billion. This improvement was attributed to surge in tourism boosted by the 2010 World Cup. Although this enhanced appeal of Brand South Africa was yet to translate into increased FDI inflows it prompted an urgent look at ways to improve the country’s competitiveness in an increasingly competitive global environment by addressing the concerns that are keeping prospective investors at bay.

2.7 The Brand Ghana Office

Nation branding takes place at all levels by several actors that contribute in diverse ways but in order for coherence and consistence in the message communicated about the
nation’s image, there is need for a separate, autonomous body to be at the centre of the process. President Mills, out of his understanding of as well as his passion for soft power politics set up the Brand Ghana Office (BGO) in September, 2009, as this central body to effectively harmonize nation branding. The BGO would be looked at from its mandate, set up and structure, vision and goals to the initiatives it has pursued.

2.7.1 The Brand Ghana Mandate

The BGO was set up with a clear mandate “to establish a compelling image for Ghana by creating coordinating and harmonizing a persuasive Brand Ghana positioning.” This mandate was to be carried out through: “formulation, implementation and management of Brand Ghana positioning strategy; Brand Ghana promotion; Brand Ghana reputation management; advice government and sub-brands (stakeholders) on Brand Ghana reputation issues; and branding and reputation management consultancy for relevant stakeholders, as well as working together with these critical stakeholders to develop blueprint that will guide alignment of policies and programmes of all stakeholders with the Brand Ghana vision, strategy and shared values.”

2.7.2 Brand Ghana Broad Policy Goals and Framework

The Brand Ghana policy goals fall into two dimensions, namely: domestic or nationhood goals and external or international equity goals. The domestic goal seeks “to build, sustain and mobilize nationhood - national unity, pride, patriotism and social cohesion - whilst the external goals border along the lines of “[positioning] Brand Ghana for enhanced competitiveness and reputation for improved FDI; export of brands of Ghana origin; tourism attraction of skills; etcetera. The Brand Ghana Development Framework
spells out the main philosophy, processes of the BGO as well as the approach to these underscored philosophies for a conscious brand evolution.\textsuperscript{156}

**Figure 1: The Brand Ghana Development Framework\textsuperscript{157}**

### 2.7.3 Brand Ghana Architecture

The Brand Ghana Architecture represents the translation of the Brand Ghana Platform into a proprietary model, as the framework to guide and inspire brand value creation, communication and delivery.\textsuperscript{158} This arch embodies the whole essence of national identity and comes in six main ways: vision, essence, values, personality, insight; and positioning and target or scope.

The Brand Ghana Vision is “to be a truly democratic, stable and prosperous nation with vibrant and healthy people founded on the ideals of freedom and justice” while the Brand Ghana Essence sharply reads “the oasis of hospitality, stability and opportunity.”\textsuperscript{159}
Brand Ghana Positioning and target stands for the aspired reach of Ghana’s brand in terms of how it is positioned in the eyes of the world as well as its target audience. That is to say that Brand Ghana is aimed at everyone in Ghana and abroad looking for sustainable prospects for trade, investment and tourism, event hosting and/or a home as well as superior citizen value.\(^{160}\)

The values of brand Ghana are “free, open and just society; oneness and inclusivity; public virtue and loyalty, integrity and accountability; and achieving society,” whilst the Brand Ghana personality include “uniquely welcoming and caring; civic responsibility, proactively ingenious and resourceful, positive, passionate, open-minded, disciplined and tenacious competitors; and youthful-spirited, dynamic, and colourful.”

2.7.4 Brand Ghana Office Set-Up, Shareholding and Organizational Structure

The Brand Ghana Office was set up with a composition of professional managers spreading across the length and breadth of business, marketing and communications. When the organization was set up, it was under the office of the president and funded entirely by government. However it was envisioned that the organization would become an independent public-private partnership. Its hierarchy begins with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a board of eight council members, a management and communications team and other relevant staff.\(^{161}\)

2.7.5 The Brand Ghana Office Initiatives

Since the Brand Ghana Office was setup, it set out to do so many things. After it was officially launched, the organization hit the ground running, organizing the county’s first
ever Identity Summit in 2010 to engage the relevant stakeholders. This was quickly followed by the Identity Study a year after, with diverse consultations with stakeholders occurring concurrently up to a span of three years.

After these major stakeholder engagements (which continuously run for as long as the nation branding programme exists), the outfit set out to design the national brand strategy, the Brand Ghana Strategy, as well as the development of Brand Ghana logo tagline of which they were successful.

Another meeting with the key stakeholders amounted to the development of a policy framework for key initiatives. These initiatives that were drawn include the True Ghanaian Orientation; the Ghana Cocoa Branding Initiative; Brands Of Ghana Promotion; the Power Of National Events Program; Ghana First At Election 2012 Campaign; and international and domestic campaigns. Although a few have been implemented, many of these initiatives are yet to take shape. Syndicate group meetings were also held in 2013 to develop ways of implementing the initiatives.\textsuperscript{162}

In 2013, formal dialogue took place between Brand Ghana and Brand South Africa to learn from the latter’s experience in nation branding having started years before Ghana. Another dialogue session was organized the following year.\textsuperscript{163} BGO is hoping to roll out another wide-scale research as well as partner with a good communications agency.

\section*{2.7.6 The Ghana Brand}

The Ghana Brand or Brand Ghana comprises of all the citizens of Ghana. The Ghana Brand refers to “the people, their education, abilities and aspirations that ultimately deliver
what our country is and create the potential for tourism, business, and cultural, social and political exchange." Ghana is virtually an empty landscape without the people who make up the country. As Mathias Akotiah, former CEO of Brand Ghana comments “our people are not only the brand; they are the prime vectors of our country’s perceived value and unique proposition to others.” The Ghanaian populace form the centerpiece of the Ghana Brand as well as the conveyors of the brand and what it stands for.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined Ghana’s use of soft power by reviewing the policies of eight administrations as well as the manifold diplomatic antics of the countries ambassadors and international civil servants that translated into soft power for the country. It then went ahead to examine nation branding, its journey in Ghana; conceptual linkages and useful related concepts as well as the issues and practical examples; with a final focus on the BGO.
Endnotes

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CHAPTER THREE

THE BENEFITS, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF NATION BRANDING

FOR GHANA

3.0 Introduction

The preceding chapters have looked at the concept of soft power and nation branding as well as its historical underpinnings. Other relevant concepts such as nation brand, national brand, brand image, brand equity, country of origin effect were also discussed. A focused examination of the BGO was also carried out. However, in spite of steady developments of nation branding as a soft power tool, the concept appears to be at its very infant stages. Even more so is the frustrating reality of how to measure the direct marked effects of nation branding in virtue of its intangible character. Also, there are mounds of skepticism spangled with mixed sentiments from scholars and practitioners alike with a section alleging that it only reeks of cheap propaganda and has no place in diplomatic circles\(^1\); and others alluding to the potent virtues of nation branding.\(^2\) This illustrates how delicate the concept is in the meadow of international relations.

As a result there is the need to explore the various facets of nation branding in Ghana, what is has brought (benefits), what it can bring (prospects) and what stands in its way (challenges). Thus, this chapter is devoted to investigating and exploring the benefits, challenges and prospects that nation branding presents for Ghana.

3.1 Benefits of Nation Branding for Ghana

"Nation branding is a laudable cause of pursuit and every country must endeavor to make it a priority. It presents an endless spring of opportunities and benefits cascading into different facets of the national fabric.”\(^3\)
It is generally believed to be a beneficial pursuit and Ghana has reaped these fruits in diverse ways. Although nation branding is a cross-cutting venture, as has been echoed severally throughout this study, the benefits would be considered along the lines of the BGO which is the organization at the heart of the nation branding effort in Ghana. The analysis of the benefits of nation branding would also be juxtaposed with some of the key ministries with a focus on how nation branding has played a role in the achievement of their goals.

Being intended to be the centerpiece of nation branding coordination, the Brand Ghana Office has made many attempts at engaging all the relevant stakeholders. Although this has been somewhat difficult to achieve, certain strides have been made. These include stakeholder engagements through study tours and summits, collaborations with other branding countries amongst others. With a visionary and passionate leader at the fore, Mathias Akotiah, the outfit hosted Ghana’s first ever Identity Summit in 2010 only after a relatively short amount of time of coming into existence. The summit was well attended by the rank and file of society which surmounted to the Identity Study which was conducted between 2010 and 2011 on “shoe-string budget”. The Identity Summit spawned a series of conversations about nation branding and the need to apply it to Ghana. As a consequence, diverse consultations were done successfully with stakeholders for three years. There were a series of consultations also with the fraternity of marketing gurus as well as the Stakeholders leading to the successful crafting of the Brand Ghana Platform in 2010.

The establishment of this outfit meant the need to assemble able minds to manage the process effectively and as such quality human resource was recruited. Having being
mandated by the presidency, the Brand Ghana Signature as well as its properties was developed as well as organizational improvement through training and development. These training engagements included the Policy-Drafting training which started in 2012 and ended a year later, as well as several in-house training and developing. However, a year before this, a study tour of Brand leadership and Brand South Africa was embarked on.

The crafting of the Brand Ghana Strategy led to the development of the Brand Ghana Logo and the catchy tagline “Uniquely Welcoming” pointing to Ghanaians warm hospitality. This logo was to be the country’s umbrella logo for all image promotion programmes or nation branding campaigns. It was even adjudged the second best logo at an international brand forum.⁶ Although the logo and slogan are yet to catch on, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts (MOTCA) and the Ministry of Trade utilize it by incorporating it into their work.

![Figure 2: The Brand Ghana logo]
In 2013, during the state visit of President Zuma, the Brand Ghana Office was able to collaborate with Brand South Africa through meaningful dialogue to learn from the experience of South Africa. Through this dialogue, the outfit was able to develop brand health indicators. The dialogue which run on the theme ‘Africa’s Improved Competitiveness and Intra-African Trade’ called on members of academia, the corporate community and the public and private sectors to make contributions to the ongoing discourse on what needed to be done to spike the continent’s competitiveness and trade within Africa.8

The following year, there was a second talking engagement this time under the theme ‘Building Competitive African Nation Brands’. This was an even louder call on all citizens not only of Ghana but also for South Africans to explore how both countries could collectively play a part in developing strong nation brands that would inch the continent towards a more competitive global brand.9 As a means of sending the word around and educating the public on the need for nation branding and keeping the public abreast with activities of the outfit, BGO staff have successfully authored several publications and articles on the subject. Many media outreaches on nation branding have also been conducted.

They have managed to collaborate with a number of ministries and institutions in pursuit of their mandate.10 The most significant collaborative effort as well as milestone of the outfit since its inception was the launch of the Buy Ghana Initiative. Through collaborative efforts between BGO and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Buy Ghana initiative was heralded.11 The Buy Ghana is a well-intended attempt to boost the patronage of made-in-Ghana products and services. The initiative which was launched in 2015,
focused on certain “priority” products like poultry products, textile and garments, tomatoes, cement, roofing sheets, furniture, pharmaceuticals, printing, steel products, processed foods, sugar, vegetable oil, fruit juice, rice, biscuits, paint, shoes, electric bulbs, meters and cables, ceiling materials, cosmetic products, flour, tilapia, plywood and lumber.

Through the Buy Ghana Initiative, the made-in-Ghana seal was launched as a distinctive seal of identification to distinguish Ghanaian products from others on the market. This initiative was not meant only for the domestic terrain but also for export purposes on the international level. The slogan “Buy Ghana, Build Ghana” which accompanies the logo also added to the effort to brand Ghanaian products in an attractive, colorful way to make it more enticing and desirable.

![The made-in-Ghana seal](image)

**Figure 3: The made-in-Ghana seal**

Since the BGO’s inception they have managed to roll out a number of programmes which include the Ghana Cocoa Branding Initiative, Brands of Ghana Promotion, the Power of National Event Programmes and the Ghana First at Election 2012 campaign.
Although many of the achievements made by BGO have been more of preparatory initiatives that have prepared the ground for more concrete conspicuous programmes in the future, with only a few of these concrete programmes actually materializing, these preparatory measures have done a lot for Ghana. It has opened up discussions which were previously absent and has had mobilizing effect on the various stakeholders to pay closer attention to the image of “Mother Ghana” and what can be collectively done to promote it.

“Something as basic as the “Ghanaian identity” was not known even by some of the sharpest minds in Ghana and even for those who knew there was no consistency. BGO’s efforts seamed these ideas about the Ghanaian identity into a hem of consistent themes with which the nation branding could be better approached.”

3.2 Prospects of Nation Branding for Ghana

3.2.1 Political

Globalization, the gradual shrinking of the global space into a global village, has brought about new realities that were previously not envisaged. Globalization has led to the continuous economic, political, social and cultural integration between countries. State sovereignty made relevant by national borders is being broken down due to the permeating reach of globalization that is slowly depleting the importance of these national borders. The image and identity of states is “compromised by a number of indigenous and exogenous factors such as the spectre of cultural homogeneity, stronger allegiances at the subnational, supranational or transnational levels and widening networks of mobility, media and migration.” This has led to justification by both state and non-state actors “as a necessary corrective to the waning importance of the nation-state in the context of globalized economic, political and cultural exchange.”

On the international front, nation branding sets the stage for highlighting and even “showing off” Ghana’s political identity.
“Ghana, just like every state in the world is caught in this web of globalization and must adapt. Conforming to the times means serious consideration for branding. Concerted efforts to brand Ghana at every level with BGO at the core, would prove useful, politically, by giving the country the chance to be uniquely identified by its political systems and beliefs, which in Ghana’s case is a progressive democracy and respect for the rule of law. Being encircled by states with unstable political systems, Ghana needs to be seen as essentially an ‘outlier’ to this trend.”17

“Like it or not you would be perceived in a certain light. People would always form images and visualizations about your persona, and that picture that is displayed to the world is simply what you communicate to them. Nations in the same vein are perceived in certain ways. To brand, means to harmonize those communications so that whatever image is communicated would be desirable. It is basically about controlling how you portray yourself.

The Ghanaian state is a given. Its history cannot be rewritten but then what can be done with those historical elements to sell a compelling image is what nation branding (of the country) seeks to do.”18

Ghana has sadly been “branded” along with the corrupt states of the world, not to say that this is not true, but efforts are being made to salvage the situation and as such the world must perceive Ghana in that light as progressive, apt to change for the better. Branding Ghana can help correct misconceptions about the state of its political system.

“Ghana for some years now has been perceived negatively as one of the world’s corrupt countries and our placement on the Corruption Index did not help matters. Presently, Ghana is making some improvements in its ranking and also because of the dismissal of the justices involved in the judicial corruption saga amongst other things, the image of the country in that regard is gradually being redeemed.”19

“Even to this day, many are unsure of the stability of our political terrain. The moment there is an election, in-house investors are wary of maintaining their investments and prospective investors are circumspect about bringing their investments. The world watches with a keen eye. Nation branding is a multi-fanged doorway to restore confidence in the minds of people. It equally confers responsibility on the political party community as well as all of us to ensure that violence is not resorted to but peace is maintained in the country.”20

Also it affords the opportunity for the Ghanaian story to be told the Ghanaian way. The international media paints all of Africa black. One little hiccup and it is blown to exaggerated proportions. With nation branding, Ghana can actively engage in what is communicated about its image.21 The branding or “re-branding of Ghana presents a unique platform for certain erroneous perceptions about the country to be clarified.

According to Amb. Baah Duodu, nation branding is important to correct misconceptions. He reveals that the developed world sadly paints the whole of Africa with one brush. He
believes that once the country has been able to demonstrate uniqueness by delineating itself from the untrue negatives but highlighting the glowing positives. These include how different the country is in terms of democracy, how certain projects have been conducted among others. He further clarifies that “branding in a certain light means living up to whatever brand standard you depict so that you would be taken seriously.”

It must be mentioned however, that branding Ghana does not just mean portraying Ghana as flawless or faultless. Mistakes are bound to happen but even negative press can be used as a place to depict the strength of the country’s institutions, systems, laws and beliefs, because after all “bad press is still press”.

Beyond the rewards is the sense of responsibility. Since Ghanaians, both at the government and citizenry level, become aware of Ghana’s identity and how it impacts how it is perceived internationally, respect for and observance of democracy, peace and stability is deepened.

“…. [Nation branding] equally confers responsibility on the political party community as well as all of us to ensure that violence is not resorted to but peace is maintained in the country.”

Some also perceive nation branding as a more benign and obscure method of communicating national interest goals owing to its unique ability “to assemble diverse motifs of heritage and modernization, domestic and foreign concerns, and economic and moral ideologies in the projection of national identity.” This is a more preferred approach as it is devoid of the usual “chauvinistic” and nearly “antagonistic” elements of more reactionary forms of nationalisms.

“Nation branding can be used as an effective apparatus in diplomacy. It is subtle but impactful nonetheless. National interest can be pursued via this channel. America’s brand, for example, which is associated with the political culture of democracy, good governance, rule of law, respects for human rights, allows it to forward its interests of being a global hegemon. Ghana too can be known for something. With this identity, which can be obtained from its many attributes, we can likewise, push our national interest goals in an almost covert manner.”
Within the domestic sphere, it renews the sense of patriotism and nationalism. When the people of Ghana are made to engage in activities which seek to promote its image and identity, people’s sense of love for country is reinforced, or reinstated for those who have lost it.

“We always sing the national anthem, for most of us we were taught right from Class One. But how many of us really embody the meaning of the words in our everyday lives as Ghanaians? With nation branding such national ideals infused in symbolic things like the national anthem, the national pledge and so on comes alive in the hearts and minds of the Ghanaian people.”

It motivates a sense of agreement on national identity and country goals for development because it engages the citizenry.

“Nation branding does not leave the people out of the picture. As a matter of fact no one is left behind. From head of state, to civil servant, to corporate business, to the ordinary Ghanaian walking on the street, everybody is involved. During the Identity Study that was carried out by BGO, the cohort for the study cut across all levels of society to come out with an identity representative of Ghana, the land of freedom and justice. With the discovery of this common vision and shared values, a more nationalistic spirit was inspired to further pursue the business of branding the state for the benefit of all.”

“The government can achieve so much but without an intimate relationship between the high-ups of government and the citizenry no sufficient progress can be made in ensuring that there is alignment and harmony between state actions and the desires of the people. Nation branding is that middle ground that bridges the gap between these two groups that form the state. With this middle ground proper sustained socio-economic development can effectively be carried out.”

As communicated by one respondent, the battle of state supremacy via militarist channels is slowly waning and even losing its legitimacy. In the current state of the world the politics of guns is fast becoming obsolete as it is widely condemned. Not to dispute how hard power is equally important in the attainment of political interests of nations in a world ruled by realist sovereigns, but the present state of the world is one dominated by ideals, values and principles. Engaging in nation branding can help Ghana push these global political ideals and principles.

A better image of the country can even enhance relations between Ghana and other countries which can have significant impact in areas like immigration. The Chief Executive Officer of BGO rhetorically captures this line of argument:
“Why do you think Ghanaians have to queue for long hours just to get a visa to travel to places like the US and the UK only for most to be “bounced” at the end of the day? That’s how far national image goes. With a branding face-lift the fortunes of the nation in this regard would significantly change.”

Even beyond visa related matters is the stress a Ghanaian has to go through at airports when they travel abroad especially because Ghana has been notoriously named among serious drug-trafficking countries.

“In recent years, it has been one scandal after another in terms of drug-trafficking. Ghana has overnight transformed into a depot for serious drug-trafficking offences. A recent publication ranks Ghana as one of the top consumers of marijuana, an illegal narcotic drug. About a year ago a major drug scandal indicted several government officials as facilitators of the trade even to the point of facilitating the traffic of drugs through diplomatic passages. What does this say of our leaders and our government institutions? This does not auger well for the country’s image abroad.”

There were those who were full of praise for the country taking up this initiative through a dedicated organization and commended this effort as a good starting point for Ghana politics.

“Government’s decision to delve into this conscious branding effort of Ghana’s image is a laudable one. If it would be pursued with utmost aggression it could sufficiently engender so much soft power for Ghana. Our power to influence will be heightened. If back in the 1950s and 1960s we commanded so much ‘power’ even to the point of mobilizing the continent for the purpose of unity, we can do this again. Nation branding can inch us closer to this past glory and even to better glories. Ghana’s reputation can be great again.”

Nation branding is thus a timely intervention to calm the brouhaha caused by many of the current distasteful happenings in the country. Ghana is a country that has a competitive advantage in terms of its peace and security and its democracy. Ghana, which is more or less an island amidst countries with unstable political climates, continues to sour as a promising frontrunner in demonstrating respect for democratic ideals. It can exploit this capital of peace and democracy for political gains. Also, nation branding through its matrix of national flags, logos and national emblems all hint to “our political identity as an independent democratic state” and can inspire nationalistic sentiments across the national and political divide. It affords Ghana with a chance to sell itself politically through the above-stated ways.
3.2.2 Economic

Ghana’s economy has been characterized by mixed growth patterns for two decades over with the annual growth rate averaging 7.0 percent from 2000 till date. With the economy growing steadily at 4.9 percent, the country has comparably one of the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in the West African region. In spite of Ghana’s comparative advantage, its growth has been hallmarked by a receding per capita GDP growth since independence. Sadly, this plunge in growth has been disproportionate to the fast-increasing population. The state of events bellows a desperate cry for immediate proactive steps to mend the fences.

In the budget report of 2016, Ghana was projected to grow at an expected rate of 5.4 percent but the recent budget review reports a steady fall in figures. This decline in GDP growth spells doom for the economy as the situation tends to lower prospects for the creation of jobs which further translates into a host of economic ills. The lowering in growth rates can be attributed to the frequent power rationing, peaking inflation rates and fiscal economic consolidation.

These economic pitfalls do not only threaten the livelihood of the people, it is also detrimental to the reputation of the nation as investors would want to stay clear of carting their monies to Ghana to invest. The state of Ghana’s economy engenders a pressing need for a re-visit of the concept of nation branding.

In previous chapters, nation branding has been examined with a look at the relevance of the concept particularly for emerging economies like Ghana. It is fitting to mention that one major goal of nation branding is towards achieving economic ends. Nation branding
architecture rests on four pillars; public diplomacy, tourism, export and investment.\textsuperscript{41} As much as nation branding is effectuated through these channels they also double as end-results of the process. So nation branding translates into these sectors of the economy boosting growth and development.\textsuperscript{42}

A country’s economy is hinged on a number of areas such as trade and export, mining, fisheries, agriculture, services. In Ghana these areas are classified under three main categories, namely: services, industrial and agricultural. The services sector, the largest sector, entails Transport and Storage; Hotels and Restaurants; Information and Communication; Financial Intermediation; Business Services; Education; Public Administration and Social Security; Health and Social work and other basic services. Following closely is the second largest, industry which accounts for 27.6 percent of the economy.\textsuperscript{43}

According to Keith Dinnie, a well-known author on the subject, any nation branding strategy is geared towards four main areas; export, tourism, foreign direct investment and talent attraction.\textsuperscript{44} The economic prospects of nation branding for Ghana would therefore be examined across these four major nation branding goals.

\textbf{Export}

Export refers to goods that are sent outside of the country to earn foreign exchange. In Ghana goods that are exported to other countries include raw materials like cocoa, gold, timber, rubber and crude oil.\textsuperscript{45} Other export commodities include bauxite, aluminium, diamonds, manganese, rubber and horticultural products. There are a number of other food
and non-food exports such as agricultural produce - pineapples, citrus fruits - wooden artifacts and liquor - Kasapreko, Alomo Bitters and Joy Dadi.

Traditional exports which are those in their raw form encompass minerals, cocoa; crude oil and lumber are mostly handled under their respective institutions. For instance cocoa exports are managed by Cocoa Board while crude is under the National Petroleum Authority (NPA). Non-traditional exports encapsulate all other forms of exports apart from the traditional ones which do not exist in their raw state. Examples include packaged goods, artifacts, plastics, and so on. These kinds of export goods are managed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ghana Export Promotions Authority but mainly by the latter with the former playing more of a supervisory role.

BGO believes the export sector is one that is of crucial importance to an emerging economy like Ghana and is of fundamental value to its growth and development. The Country Branding Model crafted by BGO upon consultation with relevant experts mentions exports as one of the areas likely to benefit from embarking on a meaningful branding campaign. As one staff suggests:

"The export sector is a crucial part of branding the nation. It can be used as a conduit to sell the national brand and can be a channel for revenue simultaneously. As a way of branding national products, Ghanaian made products are being packaged in a certain way. With the introduction of the made-in-Ghana logo, Ghanaian products particularly those for exports are presented with a unique look and this can boost patronage, generating revenue to the country."

The Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) is a statal body which is mandated with promotion of Ghana’s export interests outside the country. Through fairs, exhibitions and conferences many made-in-Ghana products are promoted to outside audiences for the purpose of advertising, sale, and investment. Regina Manu of the Marketing Division of GEPA, opines that nation branding operates under three major tag lines: image,
competitiveness and loyalty. Nation branding creates a certain image about the nation through the conveyance of a controlled message of a product which is the nation in this case. With that image created, it gives it a competitive edge over other countries, which makes it more alluring to foreigners who then form emotional connections and develop product loyalty.

“Nation branding is just as important in the well-being and attractiveness of a nation just as branding is crucial in any product branding campaign. The prospects are innumerable and span a vast field of areas. Particularly for exports, it promises more attractiveness (to made-in-Ghana products), increases competitiveness and international leverage, boost investment in the export sector and enable penetration into emerging markets. In a nutshell, nation branding motivates buyers, customer loyalty, connects people with the product, business credibility and enables the conveyance of a clear message.”

The Ministry of Trade and Industry which is responsible for trade policy formation and overseas all activities bordering on trade and export also shared its view on the matter. According to Kyeremen Yeboah, a Senior Commercial Official, the ministry recognizes the importance of nation branding and has been engaged in some branding initiatives over the years to better position national brands on the international market to enhance trade and export. He admittedly pointed out to the outfit’s inability to effectively coordinate efforts with the BGO since it was set up but due to few collaborative attempts certain remarkable initiatives such as the Buy made-in-Ghana program were instituted.

The program rep at the BGO that is, the one handling the Buy Ghana campaign at BGO revealed how beneficial that program has been in both domestic and foreign circles and how prospective gains could be made for export promotion. He remarks:

“Through this branding initiative which is all part of efforts to brand the country by igniting the country-of-origin effect on Ghanaian products wherever they find themselves, a new sense of appreciation has been realized among patrons from Ghana and outside the country. In just a year of implementing this program, a noticeable decrease in imports has been noticed and if it should continue this way, one can only hope for a bright future for our Ghanaian-made exports.”

According to the Chief Director of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Creative Arts, Nana Odo Kwartey, nation branding is essential to the export industry. Annually, the
export revenue that is accrued runs into the millions. He however noted that in spite of the infancy of the industrial sector Ghana had quite a lot to offer in terms of export. According to him the prospects that exists in nation branding for the export sector is numerous. First of all, because efforts are made to position export products in a certain light to make it more attractive, it tends to have more appeal to consumers and the more consumers desire the product, the more they want to buy. He went on to say that branding was not merely about focusing on the packaging of the product but must be approached holistically through ensuring that other aspects of a positive brand state are pursued. These aspects such as labour and phytosanitary conditions, all inform the choices of the average consumer and hence the countries that export these products. He revealed that the ministry had been proactive in the nation branding effort always seeking to attract foreigners to the country, not only for the purposes of tourism but also for other useful interactions such as trade and investment, through the promotion of Ghana’s vibrant culture.

As a ministry engaged in promoting tourism, he mentioned how nation branding had been useful in pushing certain Ghanaian brands into the international markets citing examples such as Kasapreko and Joy Dadi which are local brands of liquor. He puts forward:

“The ministry is moving away from champagne diplomacy to more hardcore marketing and branding through attending international fairs, traveling alongside with a host of private sector businesses, trade associations and tour guides, where massive stands are secured to ensure that the country’s interests are boldly represented. Through the showing of video clips that give a visual narrative of the unique brand of Ghana, cooking of local dishes and performances by Ghana Dance Ensemble at international fairs and exhibitions positive branding of the nation has been promoted. These videos are also currently being shown aboard flights to create awareness about Ghana. All these and more have allowed made-in-Ghana brands like Kasapreko and Joy Dadi, to significantly penetrate overseas markets such as China and Nigeria where about five to six million and over sixty thousand units respectively, are consumed.”

Tourism

The tourism industry is believed to be a billion dollar industry and has been a major source of income for many states worldwide. Records show that it is the fourth largest industry...
with a growth rate of 9 percent per annum. Tourism goes beyond traditional forms of sun, sand and sea to include emphasis on “art, culture, history, food, architecture, landscape and other unique characteristics through sophisticated imagery” amongst others which are unique to a particular country. Ghana has a vibrant tourism industry owing to its colonial heritage, its exotic landscape and beaches and its magnificent culture. Other elements that attract tourists to the country include the peace and stability, the safety and security of the country; and its hospitable people comparatively to other African nations.

Over the years tourism has ridden off the wave of these attributes and has not made any significant attempt to consciously exploit those attributes. This is where branding comes in. Nation branding involves a process of consciously controlling the imagery of a country in question, and showing forth the good sides of its personality, while making use of certain positive unique features of that country.

As regards tourism, BGO is to work with The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Creative Arts (MOTCA), Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) and Ghana Tourism Development Authority (GTA). Although several discussions have been initiated on collaborating, not much success has been realized, but a closer relation between these tourism facilitators could work wonders for the industry. According to the current CEO of BGO, tourism could essentially act as an octopus-head in helping shape other sectors such as education, health and infrastructure. Drawing examples from other countries she further elaborates this point.

“Malaysia has successfully used tourism as a major platform to correct other aspects of their economy as well as certain issues in their tourism industry itself. Let me map out a mental picture: with increased tourism means raising standards of restaurants and hotels, with increased standards means upgrading human resource, with quality human resource means improvements in education et cetera. This chain reaction is endless and Malaysia has basically benefitted economically from tourism in this manner.
Nation branding presents a hopeful future for the tourism industry. It means making our
country’s tourist centres more attractive and sending word around of what we have in
terms of tourism. As a multiplier effect, it can ultimately result in development. Nation
branding, through tourism, promotes sustained social and economic development.”

MOTCA is the body coordinating matters relating to the tourism sector. It is the policy-
making core of all tourism activities of Ghana. It sometimes collaborates with the Ministry
of Trade and Industry to project the image of Ghana. The Chief Director speaking on
behalf of the ministry, believes that nation branding is a very relevant endeavour worthy of
pursuit. Nation branding has numerous benefits to the tourism industry. Per his view,
branding is necessary to convey a certain image about Ghana, one that speaks of the
positive elements of its culture, its philosophies, and its beliefs. Through the effective
selling point of Ghana as a peaceful, culturally diverse, and also a hub for emancipation,
the tourism industry has noticed a steady rise. Through fairs, and exhibitions Ghana
brands were effectively introduced to prospective buyers outside the country. According to
him, branding should be deliberate so as to control the message being put across about the
country.

Nation branding campaigns would translate into more tourists visiting the country not only
for leisure but possibly for business. Countries such as South Africa, India, Malaysia and
even Bulgaria have embarked on similar campaigns to raise the status of their countries
and it has yielded some dividends for those countries.

**Foreign Direct Investment**

Foreign direct investment (FDI) as the name suggests points to investment that is made in
the country by foreign parties. It involves investors investing in several areas ranging from
mining, telecommunications to industry. A senior manager of BGO opines that the country
engaging consciously in nation branding could give a solid boost to the investment
attractiveness of the country. He suggests that Ghana could be an attractive hub for investors if the image of the country is consciously branded to make it more alluring and enticing.

A senior officer at Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) contributes to the discussion and spells out his thoughts:

“Ghana has competitive advantage in terms of the brand it represents. It is a land known for its human resource (good people, location (centre of the world), natural resource (gold and cocoa), coastal areas, sunshine, culture, food and so on. These symbols of the nation’s identity need to be capitalized on and fully exploited through branding of the state holistically. Here at GIPC, we have been engaged in some form of branding in our own small way and it has been very fruitful. Through our “Think Ghana, Make It Happen” documentary which shows forth the attractive features of Ghana aesthetically using strong, positive and colourful visuals as well as messages by former heads of states and successful foreign investors, the organization has been able to secure several major investments into the economy. More of the nation branding initiatives could boost investor confidence especially in terms of the economy and security.”

“Nation branding enhances the image of the country and this enhanced image attracts FDI. It gives favour, steps up reputation, opens country up to international community and gives the country access to foreign markets. Nation branding enhances the business of investment promotion and in fact, makes it easier to convince people to invest their monies in Ghana.”

Talent Attraction

Talent attraction implies attracting talents to the country. Talent attraction is a two-fold process which involves people travel from one country to another to work and for purposes of higher education. For skilled labour, it involves the movement of skilled persons in various fields of endeavor such as health and construction, to other countries to lend their skill to whichever sector they decide to work in. With respect to education, students seek to pursue higher learning in educational institutions such as high school and university and could take place in the form of short exchange programmes or long term educational programs.

Ghana is greatly respected in the field of education and to some aspect industry. It is a more favoured option when it comes to schooling and work more than its African
counterparts. It has successfully initiated programmes in the health sector that has witnessed a surge of doctors trooping into the country especially from Cuba which has been of tremendous boost to the health system.

Jonathan of BGO, is of the view that nation branding could make Ghana an attractive destination for people looking to further their education within Africa and beyond.\textsuperscript{57} Already prospective students travel from across the continent with Nigerians being the most notable. Foreign exchange students also prefer Ghana for their respective exchange programmes due to factors such as the credibility of its educational programmes, the educational environment and its general reputation as a leader in quality education in the sub-region.

A Senior Commercial Officer of the Ministry of Trade and Industry reveals that the ministry engages the trade in services which included educational services – foreign students coming into the country to study – and health services – people travelling to Ghana for healthcare. Although he pointed out that due to difficulty in capturing data on those service interactions and as a result was not aggressively pursued, he admitted that branding the state was beneficial in improving the rates in these talent movements.\textsuperscript{58}

\begin{quote}
“An aspect of nation branding is advertising what the country has to offer. When the outside world is able to perceive Ghanaian institutions as credible especially with the educational sector, they would troop in confidently to pursue their educational ambitions. Same goes for healthcare. Credible health institutions that have made a name could attract people from elsewhere to come to Ghana for treatment.”\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

3.2.3 Cultural

In an age of cultural homogeneity facilitated by globalization, it has become direr to portray one’s culture uniquely from the vast array of world cultures. Nation branding avails a very unique platform to sell the country’s culture, by creating a vignette of the
aspects of one’s culture that makes it different. Culture is the way of life of a people; what they eat, wear, their songs, dance, fashion and so on. It is a mark of identity that sets peoples and nations apart. Ghana like many other countries is endowed with an authentic culture which is vibrant and attractive. Ghana is well known for its unique cultural traits from its music and dance to its festivals and food.

One notable feature of Ghanaian culture that has huge prospects of selling the name of Ghana is Ghana’s brand of highlife music. This view is shared by a host people across the divide.

“Highlife is a genre of music that is greatly loved by many not only in Ghana but outside the country. Back in the day, big highlife acts such as George Darko, A. B Crentsil, Pat Thomas and so many others travelled round the country and even beyond the immediate borders to Europe sowing seeds of highlife music in the hearts and minds of avid lovers across the world. Not only did it promote Ghana’s image but it also had huge economic prospects for the country.”

Even the musicians themselves have high hopes for highlife. One popular highlife musician remarks,

“Our brand of highlife is exceptionally unique because of three key things: the language, instrumentation in terms of chord progressions, and the message. It has stood the test of time and would live long hereafter. Artists like Agya Koo Nimo, Osibisa amongst others have toured worldwide because of the sense of appreciation for this art form which is unique to Ghana. It is ours, it is a mark of our identity. Highlife is essentially Ghana.”

Film is also a very powerful tool that has prospects of correcting misconceptions and telling the Ghanaian story. Ghanaian films like *Heritage Africa, I Sing of a Well, Deadly Voyage* and recently *Beast of No Nation* put the country on the map.

“Film is not just about meaningless visuals and sounds. It is life itself being played across a scene in pictures. Ghanaian film once upon a time was a powerful channel of selling Ghana as well as driving change. For Ghana, film affords a chance to tell the Ghanaian story, the Ghanaian way.”

Besides music is the *kente* cloth. One diplomat laments,

“*Kente* had the potential to be the brand for Ghana but since Nkrumah’s time not much has been done to push it in such an aggressive manner. Nkrumah’s use of the traditional cloth on a national scale was not accidental. There was a deliberate attempt to sell that aspect of Ghana’s culture to its own people and to the world.”
Apart from *kente*, another fashion staple of Ghana’s culture that has huge prospects for the country is the African print which is a type of material mostly locally-produced with different emblems and designs of staple motifs of the different cultures of the various ethnic groups. To buttress the extent to which branding could push the Ghanaian African print and promote the growth of the country’s nascent industry, one respondent comments:

“Through some interactions with BGO as well as other industry stakeholders, the Friday Wear campaign was started. This took the country by storm, with nearly everybody partaking in it, donning African print attires every Friday even to the point that it became the dress code. This policy boosted the textile and local cloth-making industry. All these feed into nation branding and points to the possible merits of the laudable practice.”

Sports which has grown to become part of the Ghanaian culture more or less, also has prospects of promoting Ghana’s image around the world. Ghana is noted especially for sports, boxing and athletics. Particularly for football, due to the fantastic reputation made by football royalty such as Abedi Pele, Asamoah Gyan, Andrew Dede Ayew amongst others, Ghana has enough resource to capitalize on. Sports could essentially enhance the country’s prestige globally.

Although one skeptic was of the view that culture was not very relevant in today’s world because it had been harnessed over the years and had become a stale attempt at distinguishing countries stating that it “is not fresh in the current era,” many agreed that culture was strategic and effective starting point to brand the nation.

### 3.3 Challenges of Nation Branding in Ghana

Although the endless benefits and prospects that abound in branding the state has been established, it is confronted, yet still, with many obstacles stemming mostly from an ideological misconception of the real meaning of the concept. The challenges that nation branding faces is conceptual difficulties, funding, long time span to achieve measurable
results, lack of state and national support, delays due to multi-stakeholder nature of the process and unwillingness of private sector partnerships.

**Concept**

As mentioned earlier the concept is fairly new with many people having their first encounter with the term only recently. As a result there is a lot of contestation and confusion around nation branding. There is the school of thought that ascribes to its absolute irrelevance as a tool or an aspect of diplomacy and another that believes recognition of the term should be little to negligible. There is the school of thought that misperceives nation branding as a bag of tricks designed to send out an untruthful picture of what a country truly is. Wally Olins, the branding guru mentioned in earlier chapters, confirms this finding by pointing out that the very idea of putting branding and a country’s image in the same bracket tends to upset many people. It appears that the thought of applying savvy marketing techniques to “something as sacred” as a state turns people’s stomachs. Nation branding appears to be an emotive subject that stirs mixed emotions and cynicism even to outright rejection.

“People have formed a certain mentality in their minds which they are unwilling to let go because they have not had the opportunity of being adequately briefed on what it truly means. On the part of the BGO outfit, educational outreaches and awareness creation have been embarked on to sensitize people of what nation branding is and what the BGO seeks to do in that regard. Although some headway has been made particularly for the major MDA stakeholders, and some members of the society, it has not been sufficient. This could be said to be a contributing factor.”

Also, there have been negative perceptions which have translated into negative content on the media landscape about the Brand Ghana program.

“Getting people to understand and appreciate the relevance of the concept is very challenging. People have all kinds of ideas about nation branding and the BGO. They are either unfamiliar with the term or do not have in-depth understanding of it and what it seeks to do and as such are quick to disregard it.”

Worse of all is how negatively they perceive the BGO:

“Some people feel it is was set up to pursue the political agenda of a particular political party and are adamant to support the effort. Others feel the outfit is here to take peoples
jobs from them and is simply duplicating what some institutions have already been doing.”

These misconceptions have been one of the main reasons why nation branding is not pursued with the aggression it requires.

**Funding**

To embark on nation branding is nearly a life-time pursuit which demands a lot of commitment of resources such as time and money. Nation branding is very cost-intensive and requires years of continual monetary support to roll out its programs. Added to this, is the long span of time it takes to reap the measurable benefits of nation branding campaigns and programs. Nation branding is a laborious endeavor that takes time to manifest in real hard-felt results. As a result of the above-mentioned impediment, the state has been reluctant to roll out funds to support the cause. The BGO which stands centermost to the nation branding effort of the country highlights budgetary constraints as one of the major challenges confronting the implementation of the nation branding strategies designed by the office.

As remarked by the CEO, nation branding is expensive and takes time. It requires a lot of financial support as much as it requires an equal exercise of patience. For the countries that have enrolled on these programs, budgetary allocations are made from specific accounts to support their branding institutions for instance in Malaysia it is a percentage of their oil and gas, for South Africa it is their Top Tax, and for Kenya, their Tourism Levy. In Ghana’s case there is no such dedicated fund. The CEO suggests that Ghana’s funding of the nation branding effort under BGO could come from The Heritage Fund – a fund dedicated to proceeds from Ghana’s oil and gas industry. Without this dedicated monetary source it is hard to secure consistent funding for programmes.
But at the end of the day it is not all about government funding. As a matter of fact for the institution to thrive it calls for public-private partnership. Partnering with the private sector could have filled up the financial gaps the organization was facing but that has been equally difficult to achieve.\textsuperscript{74}

“The private sector is unwilling to touch our projects because they do not see enough of government’s “signature” on the programmes so they are not sufficiently convinced to invest. Without their much needed support it has become arduous to implement the initiatives, painstakingly crafted to better brand Ghana.”\textsuperscript{75}

\textit{Integration and Alignment of Stakeholders}

Nation branding requires collective participation by everyone. The stakeholders which includes the people, the MDAs, the private sector, the media are all needed to work together to achieve the intended positive results. But unfortunately this is not the case.

The people represent the brand of Ghana first and foremost. “Ghanaians are the brand and the brand is the Ghanaian”, remarked one respondent. One cannot be in isolation of the other. Yet there is a situation where the very core of the nation brand is even oblivious of what the Ghana brand stands for. Ghanaians today are lazy, corrupt, show apathy, and conduct themselves in a manner that opposes the country’s very ideals. The attitude of the Ghanaian today is not encouraging.

All state institutions, agencies and even the private sector must speak with one voice with the BGO at the heart of it harmonizing their respective mandates. Although this depicts the ideal situation, reality is far from what should be. Most of the institutions at the fore of pushing and promoting Ghana work in isolation only collaborating when deemed necessary. This creates a situation of conflicting messages being sent across. The saddest
part is that most of these institutions are yet to even recognize the importance of the Brand Ghana Office after nearly seven years of its existence.

Regarding the various sectors, there are serious challenges being faced in tourism, investment and export that threaten the success of branding Ghana. For tourism, a lot of impounding issues almost seem to work against the nation branding effort. Ghana is lacking in terms of world standard hotels and restaurants, clean toilets, smooth access roads to tourist centres and innovativeness. These amongst other things makes it difficult to brand the nation effectively because at the end of the day if you market the country as having clean beaches and the tourists come in and see something opposite it defeats the purpose. For export, the country continues to export major commodities such as gold and cocoa in their unfinished form. Some chocolate product manufacturers outside the country go as far as indicating on the label of their products the Ghanaian origins of the cocoa used. This is a positive outlook for the brand of Ghana yet very little is done to exploit the potential it holds. For the few made-in-Ghana goods that are manufactured in the country they do not sell as much as a result of the lack of prestige of Ghanaian brands. In terms of FDI, issues such as high inflation, unstable energy, and slow institutional processes fail to create an enabling environment to support and promote investments. In a country where it takes months to even officially register your business, it becomes difficult to attract investors.

Consistence and Coherence of Message

The cause of this incoherence and inconsistence in the message being sent across about Ghana’s image stems majorly from the lack of integration of all the MDAs and other institutions. Most of these institutions were set up with different mandates which appear to
be conflicting. With the inception of BGO, one would have thought that there would alas be a harmonization of the various mandates towards the promotion of the national image but the truth was realer than fiction. Since BGO came into being, it has tried to engage all the relevant factions and groups, creating awareness through dialogue, summits amongst other things. Although these engagements have aroused interest in the stakeholder community not much collaboration has been achieved and as such everyone goes about their business sending mixed signals about the true image of the country.

“There is too much noise in the system. Conflicting communications is really working against the overall goal of promoting the good name of Ghana. The harmonizing role of BGO is impeded by failure of all the various arms to work collectively with the outfit and this has been another major challenge.”

Leadership

Nation branding much like governance thrives on abled leadership, that is a leader who is not only competent and well-versed in knowledge and experience across several fields, but one who is also passionate, driven and a visionary. When the BGO was set up it was under the abled leadership of Mr. Mathias Akotiah, an exceptional man with years of experience in marketing, branding and communications. In view of his background, he had all the intellectual resources to lead the nation branding efforts of Ghana through the BGO and wasted no time in pursuing the mandate of the institution.

Driven by passion not only for his job but for Ghana his beloved country, he initiated various dialogue sessions to engage all the relevant people, create awareness and solicit their contributions in order to develop a brand image for Ghana that was representative of the populace. He continued to work tirelessly to create and promote a competitive and compelling image for Ghana and made much headway until he unfortunately passed in 2014.
One BGO staffer recalls,

“Mathias had a strong vision for the organization and pursued it with such passion and determination. With his experience in corporate branding, he understood the power of branding even for a complex entity as a state, and with this understanding he was able to achieve so much in so little time.”

His demise was a big blow to the institution and the nation branding effort because it was the first time something of that nature had been embarked on in Ghana. Upon his death many projects and programmes he had started came to a halt and it would take nearly two years before he was replaced. This sad event slowed down the pace of the work that was being done and was a huge impediment to their achievement of their nation branding goals laid out by the outfit.

**Political Interest**

In a country where everything is about winning elections, nation branding is relegated to the background. It is either considered unimportant or even if it is, it is not prioritized. The average Ghanaian as well as average politician is more concerned about “the bread and butter issues” and show little to no political interest in the pursuit of nation branding. This lack of political interest has created difficulties in garnering the needed support for the work of the BGO.

**Legal Instrument**

The BGO was formed without a legal instrument or LI and this proved to be a cause of many of its problems. Rather it was set up directly under the Office of the President. This has effectively made it difficult to merge its mandate with its critical stakeholders particularly the MDAs and also creating difficulties in terms of pushing its needs to parliament.
3.4 Conclusion

This chapter took a look at the benefits that have been gained from nation branding with a narrowed focus on the role the BGO has played in terms of nation branding. Then a discussion of the prospects was also examined followed by the challenges faced by the BGO. Views of relevant stakeholders were also solicited and analyzed alongside. The benefits accrued included the Identity Summit, Brand Framework and Logo Development, Dialogue with Brand South Africa, and Buy Ghana campaign. The prospects were wide and varied but focus was placed tourism, FDI and export. The many challenges encompassed conceptual difficulties, funding, integration and alignment of brand stakeholders, inconsistence and incoherence of image and identity, absence of able leadership, lack of political interest and the absence of an LI.
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

In chapter one, the hypothesis was nation branding as a means of soft power can contribute positively to the image of Ghana in the international sphere. Chapter two mapped out an overview of Ghana and its use of soft power in correspondence to the different administrations that have held the reins of power over the years as well an overview of nation branding in the country. Certain important concepts that relate to nation branding and real life country examples were also looked at in the same chapter. The chapter was ended with a narrowed focus on the BGO, its mandate, architecture, goals, set-up, initiatives as well as the Ghana Brand itself. The third chapter established the benefits, prospects as well as the challenges of nation branding in Ghana with respect to BGO by analyzing the views of the key stakeholders engaged in the business of branding the nation whilst correlating these discussions with the main aims of nation branding. This chapter provides a summary of the research findings, draws conclusions and offers some recommendations.

4.1 Summary of Findings

From the research it was ascertained that soft power was of primal importance to the well-being of a state. Drawing examples from other states, Ghana was able to set up the Brand Ghana Office with the sole mandate of harmonizing branding efforts towards the promotion of Ghana’s image abroad.
Through the research, it was discovered that the practice of nation branding in Ghana, despite its infancy, had yielded a number of benefits for the country. Mention was made of initiatives and programmes such as the Identity Summit, Identity Study, Brand Logo and Slogan, Buy Ghana Initiative that promoted local as well as international patronage of Ghana-made goods and services notably the textile industry through the Friday wear campaign and international collaborations with other countries which were amongst commendable gains of undertaking nation branding.

The prospects of nation branding, as discovered through the study, were wide and varied. Through image boost, nation branding had prospects for the political, economic, and cultural terrain of Ghana. Politically, it meant a promotion and deepening of the country’s democratic credentials. Economically, nation branding could work towards tourism, export growth and promotion, and stimulating investment, and as well as talent attraction. In terms of cultural prospects, it presented an opportunity to promote Ghana’s music (highlife), film, fashion (kente), food (cocoa and chocolate) and recreation (sports).

The major challenges that were expressed by respondents were related to concept, funding, integration and alignment, coherence and consistence, leadership, political interest and the absence of a legal instrument.

4.2 Conclusions

A number of issues have been established through this research. To begin with, nation branding can contribute positively to Ghana’s image in the international arena. It has contributed positively in the past and continues to do so in the present. It is a relevant concept worthy of pursuit. Nation branding under the BGO has yielded a number of
commendable benefits for Ghana. In spite of these impressive gains accrued through the implementation of certain nation branding initiatives of the organization, a number of challenges threatened and continue to threaten its optimum success. These challenges if overcome, could unleash a wealth of potential politically, economically and culturally. To put it succinctly, although much has been realised in terms of benefits to the nation, it could get a lot better. These potential prospects are what nation branding promises if it is effectively harnessed and properly managed. Nation branding is most certainly that crucial piece to complete the gigantic jigsaw of the economic development of Ghana. In a nutshell, nation branding under the concerted efforts of BGO is the sure way to go.

4.3 Recommendations

After the conduct of this research, the following suggestions were made on how to better approach nation branding to obtain its maximum benefit:

1. Funding

Nation branding must be prioritized and given the adequate financial attention as it is cost-intensive. A dedicated fund must be set up by government or as suggested by the current CEO of the BGO, a percentage of the Heritage Fund could be set aside to cater to the branding needs of the nation, particularly, for the BGO outfit. Alternatively, a percentage of the annual national budget could be allocated to BGO and nation branding efforts. It is usually a worry to government and relevant stakeholders that nation branding activities take time to produce expected results, hence accounting largely for their non-commitment. However, patience should be exercised to ensure that it is not conducted in an ad hoc manner but is given adequate room to be properly planned and executed as the outcomes, thereof, are long-term and greatly rewarding.
2. Stakeholder Involvement

Nation branding is an all-inclusive process and calls for mass participation across the different levels of the national fabric. Every individual, agency, institution and business is representative of the brand of Ghana and must take up the responsibility of getting involved in the nation branding process. The major stakeholders at the fore of the branding business with Brand Ghana Office at the fulcrum of activities must coordinate branding efforts. These stakeholders comprise of the government and its institutions such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Creative Arts, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ghana Export Promotion Authority, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, Free Zones, etcetera, the private sector, civic society and entire citizenry. Other statal agencies and institutions such as Electoral Commission, National Commission on Civic Education, Ministry of Education, National Commission on Culture, Ministry of Gender, to mention but a few, also have a crucial role to play and hence, must get involved. There must be dialogue, cooperation and collaboration amongst these relevant parties on nation branding issues to achieve the highest results. It is, thus, reasonable to suggest that their various constitutional mandates be synchronized to ensure a sense of obligation and foster such partnerships in the pursuit of the common goal of achieving a well-branded Ghana. In totality, nation branding must be approached in a concerted, holistic manner.

3. Autonomy of Brand Ghana Office

The Brand Ghana Office was set up under The Office of the President and this was one of the major obstacles that impeded its success. As a result, there is the need for it to be presented as an independent body which represents the national interest and not simply the political ideologies of political parties. Although BGO was set up under The Office of the President to reduce problems with bureaucratic hindrances, to speed up activities of the
outfit, it would be expedient to make it an entirely autonomous body by separating it from the president’s office to win over public trust. Perhaps the outfit could undergo some rebranding itself.

4. Public-Private Partnership

There must be collaborations on the state and corporate levels between the public sector and the business world. It has been well established that nation branding benefits not only the state but also business and industry through the boost to foreign direct investment; and trade and export. The Buy Ghana Initiative rolled out by the government, is an example of programmes that should be supported by the private sector (for instance those in media, banking and industry) through sponsorship to ensure maximum impact and longevity as they would be direct beneficiaries of such policies. The government must also implement favourable policies and tax wavers to boost purchase of local raw materials by industries and reduce production costs to promote local patronage as prices of goods would become much cheaper. There should be, likewise, a synchronized effort between public and private sector to communicate a common image of Ghana in their products and services. If these two heads come together it could start an endless chain reaction of economic possibilities only imaginable.

5. A backing legal instrument

Although nation branding requires partnership between the public and private sector, there is the need for a legal framework to guide its activities as the state is the initiator as well as the beneficiary of the process. The BGO must be supported by a legal instrument or LI. The presence of an LI disassociates the organization from any political affiliations and makes it more credible, believable and nationalistic. This LI that has fortunately been drafted and currently put before parliament must be ratified and put into full working force.
6. **Purposeful, Targeted, Contextual And Development-Oriented**

The pursuit of nation branding in Ghana should not be pursued in a vacuum. It must and should be targeted towards a specific goal. For an economy like Ghana, there is more to be aspired in terms of growth and development. As such, nation branding must be aimed at accruing gains that would work into the development matrix of the country. Ghana currently has a forty-year development plan and nation branding must fit into this agenda. It must also be tailored to the Ghanaian condition that is, it must be context-specific by rolling out campaigns that are congruent with Ghana’s culture, beliefs and values.

7. **Diplomatic Digital Diplomacy**

The age of swift information movement aided by the internet, has witnessed rapid changes in communication tools and the birth of social media. There is the need to make use of these digital platforms such as websites, social media amongst others as an adaptation to the changing times to forward the goals and objectives of nation branding. The BGO and most of the other relevant governmental institutions run websites but are not utilizing these platforms to their maximum potential. The website of the BGO, for instance, is rarely revised and some of the contact details displayed on the site are obsolete. The websites of these relevant state institutions must be constantly revised and updated with current content. Attempt must also be made to link their individual official sites with each other as well as BGO website. For example the trade ministry official website should have links to websites of the tourism, culture and creative arts ministry. Ghana-made goods, services, locations and tourist sites amongst other branding resources should be advertised on these sites to promote nation branding and as a by-product raise internally-generated funds to support nation branding activities.
8. Coherence And Consistence In Message

Any attempt at branding demands a certain level of consistency and coherence in the image and the message sent across. There must, first of all, be alignment between the country’s image and its identity so that both the internal (domestic) and external (international) audience perceive the same picture of the nation and what it represents. This can be achieved through uniting the various constitutional mandates of the stakeholders of nation branding from the government level to the individual level. The Ghana Education Service and the numerous educational institutions especially, must work together to instil patriotism and love for country through educational reforms and programmes. The Commission on Civic Education must play a complementary role for the entire Ghanaian populace. This would ensure that they all speak with one voice and convey one message. Finally, the reality on the ground must to an appreciable level, match the image being portrayed. This means that economic ills such as corruption, energy crises, filth, apathy, unpatriotic behaviours amongst others must be checked by the respective bodies and institutions. These checks and balances are needed at all levels of government and people must be held accountable for their actions. No one must be above the law. Regular auditing by independent audit firms is also necessary to monitor malfeasance of public monies in public institutions. Poorly performing state institutions such as the Electricity Commission of Ghana must be given the needed attention and competent people put at the helm of affairs. Privatization should also be considered to vamp up the energy sector to make “dumsor” a thing of the past. Sanitation issues must also be tackled rigorously by the relevant state bodies through public education, proper waste management systems, enforcement of by-laws and strict punishment for those who flout these rules. These steps would support branding efforts and build a stronger better Ghana brand.
9. Passionate And Visionary Leadership

When all the necessary foundations are laid, an able, passionate and visionary leader is needed as the ultimate cherry on the top. Leadership is a major determinant of success or failure in any endeavor but in the particular case of nation branding it is of crucial necessity for the right “head” to be fixed on the “body”. This requires choosing a competent Ghanaian who has been successful in branding and relevant related field of endeavor, politically neutral, hardworking, insightful and creative. To support the effort of the leader must be a board of members who have excelled in various disciplines and possess a wealth of valuable experience. People like Kofi Annan, past presidents such as President Kufuor amongst other high achieving Ghanaians across the rank and file of society must form the eldership of the board. With the right leader steering affairs of the nation branding effort and a supportive team behind, success is guaranteed.

10. Future Research

Further research is needed to know the long-term measured effects of nation branding in economic sectors such as trade and export.
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