

Competitive Branding & Development Model: A Qualitative Case Study of UAE approach to Human Capital

Dr. Nadir Ali Kolachi *

Abstract

The paper reports on the branding and development factors. Countries are in need to brand their activities to attract the coordination and business from other countries. The main focus of this paper is related to competitive branding at individual & country level in order to develop required human capital in next five to seven years. The paper investigates the parameters of branding and competency through the proposed model named competitive branding and development (CBD) model. The model reports on the important factors for branding and competency. The paper is spread on two levels of branding based on the micro level (individual) and macro level (country). The paper aims to investigate the competitive branding of individuals and countries. This paper will report on UAE perspective. The branding is discussed through the proposed model named Competitive Branding & Development (CBD) in this paper. The study reports as a practical Case study limited to UAE only. The choice of case study approach in this research was convenient and suitable in such types of studies. The practical implication of this study is to identify the parameters to brand & develop individual and countries at various domains. The parameters are organized into a model form named as Competitive Branding & Development (CBD) Model. The countries can utilize such model to evaluate their competency levels in comparison to other countries. This paper is academic, research and practical type and may benefit students, teachers, researchers, managers, policy makers from International Business, Individual development, Country development and Comparative management domains.

Key Words: Competitive branding, Individual branding, Country branding and Human Capital

* Associate Professor, Skyline University, University City of Sharjah, UAE
email: nadir.kolachi@gmail.com, nadir.kolachi@skylineuniversity.com

Introduction

Today's age has no choice but a greater investment in human capital. To ensure this, countries are in search of logical plans where such investment can be initiated. The huge flow of training trends, economic forums, university campuses, collaborative symposiums, international conferences, exchange of talent and attracting the talent is the main practice of UAE these days. Such cordial situations will equip UAE nationals with high exposure, flourish business at rapid pace and will become a central hub in this part of world. The model comprises on two levels. First is individual level which will explain the parameters required for individual branding. This will justify the importance of branding at individual level and also put some reasons of UAE national's approach to adopt such sub parameters at individual level. Second is the model is about country level which means UAE approach to coordinate with other countries. This research part will also touch some points which are required for international associations. The purpose of this part is to inform the readers about UAE approach towards country branding. The main factors like education, business, entertainment and sports are listed in the second part of the research. The first part of the model is comprised on the main factors as competency branding, professional branding and career management branding which are further followed by four subheadings each. The subheadings have also some further subheadings.

In order to have some concepts of different categories of branding, this research provides following references of branding concepts and also proposed definitions of different branding in this research.

Branding in marketing is the concept of promoting the organizational products. Branding in Human Resources is the concept of promoting one's capabilities in the Organization. Few definitions proposed by different authors lead to the similar concepts as Corporate branding represents the idea that the organization and everything it stands for is mobilized to interact with the stakeholders the organization wants to reach and engage them in dialogue" (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 27). Employee branding is defined as "the process by which employees internalize the desired brand image and are motivated to project the image to customers and other organizational constituents" (Miles & Mangold, 2004, p. 68). The concept of Competency branding is to show and market one's capabilities in any specialized field where as Professional branding is similar but adds the marketing of one's professional and demanded behavior in the different organizational context.

Competency Branding

Competency branding is the most important and little technical to achieve. It requires time and depends on many other factors as well. To achieve the factors, UAE government has initiated to equip its nationals to have more experience and exposure which comes through efforts. Facilitating them with high standards of education at all levels are the initiatives to build competency level. Good exposure comes through travelling, participation, reading, education, technical education, interest and active learning. The branding of one's exposure and intellectual level is to enter into more challenging environment and accepting more responsibilities to show talent in various fields. Visionary people are always given frequent opportunities as they showed results through the visionary approach. The technique to brand one's talent is to show the results of practical projects, practical implementations and high achieved targets. This will help company to understand the sense of ownership of an employee. People must enhance the exposure through understanding the company and country level affairs. See the talented people's style and adopt it. Build knowledge and read knowledgeable models to understand the trends. People must show sense of ownership with the company

Professional Branding

The second part is related to professional branding which is based on professional grooming and development. This can be achieved through training & development. Professional branding is second most important factor as it helps to interact, good impression and high learning opportunities. To brand this way, employees need to be very fair-feeling, supportive, collaborative and cooperative. Such activities of employees always get noticed by the high ups and can get an opportunity for any other challenge task. This is good in branding because people start trusting your dealing way which can be utilized at other occasions. The last part of this part is much noticed and branding factor. This means people behave professionally by solving all company's problems without any anger or displeasure. They are professional with high emotional stability which is good sign and can have a salutary effect on others. Such things can make an individual branded and turn to be good leader, good coach and work for the status of the company. Good observation of good things, being neutral in few things and showing emotional stability will earn good response in the company. Individual must practice unbiased behavior, show responsibility and work with patience. This will help people grow and achieve good things in life.

Career Management Branding

The third part of individual level branding is career oriented. To grow in the career and to cross all exponential ladders, one must have mature and motivated behavior. People can know people more when they enter into interactive sessions, show the commitment in work and respond in most disciplined manner. People like it and want to implement and spread in the company. To brand individual level, one must show dignity and help everyone, show prudence, give extra care to company affairs and play self respect every time. This part shows that people who are ambitious driven always noticed and people who are always socially accepted by other people always get good promotions as it helps to improve peer relations and contacts. In the branding, individual must learn how to be socially accepted. This can be achieved through interaction and participation. Individual must do such participation all the time.

Competitive Branding & Development Model	
Individual Branding	
1. Competency Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Good Exposure b. Talented & Visionary c. Intellectual & Knowledgeable d. Sense of ownership with self & Company
2. Professional Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart, Coach & Leader • Neutral, Trained & Observer • Unbiased, Responsible & Coordinator • Professionally Developed with Emotional Stability
3. Career Management Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold, Mature & Motivated • Interactive, Committed & Disciplined • Self respect & Dignity and Professionally groomed • Opportunistic, Ambitious Driven & Socially Accepted
Country Branding	
4. Collaborations	Associations & Collaboration among Countries
5. Strategic HRD & Usefulness	Intellectual Capital development OD, T&D and Career Management

6. Resources & Resourcefulness
7. Competency & Competitiveness Talented workforce, Educational reforms and R&D (Technology and Management)
8. International Relation & Belongingness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security (Safe, cordial and easy access) and FDI (Investment and Business Dealings) • Sports (Football, Tennis and Cricket) and Tourism (Tourism education)

The purpose of such branding is to evaluate the branding and competency of UAE dimensions. The branding at career level, organizational level or country level has become an important for the self development, organizational development and country development. The study examines the proposed CBD model and suggests the required parameters for branding at individual and country level. To be competitive in this rapid paced business & technological era, the branding and development in human capital has become prime importance. Education and training is focused on intellectual capital development in UAE. This paper will examine all required factors of branding at individual and country level.

Collaboration

The fourth & fifth point of second part is very much required in this competitive era. The collaboration is the dire need for the countries in order to grow, build, intellectual change, enhance competitive level and help each other. Future time will definitely depend on regional collaboration. This is possible through various kinds of associations in different domains as health, education, security and military compatibility. When countries are not good to one another especially in regional cases, then the third party takes advantage which might be expensive and will flourish dependency situation. The countries must collaborate & innovate association in various fields to brand and develop the effectiveness. The fight, win loose or only us concepts are finished but competency, branding and development in different domains are hundred percent required for success and prosperity.

Strategic HRD & Usefulness

After collaboration, the countries' development is highly dependent on the strategic HRD factors and their usefulness at the right time. This is the time where all the countries are making heavy investment in intellectual capital development and it is only possible through strategic HRD implementation. The developed societies are not developed because they are in the west but because of the right strategic HRD

models. Organizational development is the push from change management or something new initiative with better compatibility. This compatibility and concern can be supported by right training & development activities. Today the workforce from Germany, China, India and many other countries are inclined to make huge investment in HRD activities because this is one area which develops the countries at larger scale. Right HRD initiatives can brand an individual and country and ensures the development more and more. So countries' branding will actually happen when they cooperate with each other and exchange their HRD initiatives, exchange & innovate on various fields.

Resources & Resourcefulness

The sixth point of the model is important parameters for long term development. The concept of resources means natural resources, environment, infrastructure, climate, energy and many others but resourcefulness means the talent to manage the resources. Some countries might have resources but lack resourcefulness, the ability to manage them while others might not have resources but have talent to manage the resources. Such things can easily be exchanged and beneficial for each other. Coordination is greater required at that level.

Competency & Competitiveness

The seventh one is Competency & Competitiveness. These are very obvious parameters to enter world. Competency means the competency, talent of doing something while competitiveness means how to market the competency as American, Chinese, Indian and German workforce have done so far. The countries can learn from other countries and adopt them at full length. BRICS is one of the biggest example of exchange talented workforce, technology, energy, money, research ideas and cooperation with each other. Countries should make the combination of resources with competency which means if country is blessed with resources, they need to build competency to take advantage of it. This can be done through collaboration with other countries or sending country men to other countries to learn techniques to utilize the resources in best possible manner. Resourcefulness should be accumulated with competitiveness. If some countries are capable enough to manage the resources or have some techniques to do, then they market it, show willingness, competencies to other countries to attract the business collaboration and enhance good long term relationship.

International Relations

The eighth point is International relations. The millennium age is the age of collaboration, cooperation, international relations, and belongingness in various domains like health, education, security, sports, trade, travel, regional cooperation, investment and entertainment. Some countries feel proud to have good relations with developed and rapidly emerging markets. Competency branding becomes very easy when some initiatives are taken in the above areas positively. The areas will also attract the attention of other countries to join, cooperate and take cooperative favors from each other. Best possible projects are always good and flourish the relationship with different countries. These days many top corporations are investing in China, Russia and India for good returns and maintaining good relationships at the same level. Countries must initiate different investment forums, trade shows and exhibitions to figure out the areas of contribution and decide to cooperate with other countries in various areas. European Countries, Asian Tigers, Gulf Countries have initiated such activities and have achieved tremendous responses from each other. Just to conclude this part of the paper, the EU countries, Gulf Countries, BRICS have been utilizing the parameters very positively. Much focus of such countries is regional cooperation and huge investment in HRD projects to equip people and build it at world level.

Literature Survey

Countries' branding is based on countries' competency. This competency is a set of knowledge, abilities, technologies, political systems, managerial & value that generate competitive differential to the organizations which are perceived by clients and which are difficult to imitate. (Prahalad and Hamel (1990)). The competency of India and China in Asia, the competency of France & Germany in Europe and competency of UAE through recent developments are the evidences of the competitive world. Today's age is the age of competition not just based on the corporate level of corporations but on competency level of countries. This research has proposed a Competitive Branding & Development Model. The purpose of innovating such model is to evaluate the branding & competency plans of different countries. The countries' initiatives in different associations and unions like BRICS, EU, ASEAN, MERCOSURE, NAFTA and many others are the signs of collaboration and help each other. Most of the countries are busy in evaluating intellectual capital models to equip the people in different demanded fields. UAE has planned all of them and more in 2020.

The developed countries have branded them on the basis of knowledge management which means data mining the right information in today's age. There is much research work available on knowledge management and suggest that organizational level and country level development depends on what strategy, information and technology is required? Such things are always answered in knowledge management framework which explains organizational learning. This integration of information system, technological solutions, resources, abilities and organizational memory (Gramine 2007), Berends et al (2006), Smith et al (2005), Rolan et al (2004). But country branding & competency is not just on knowledge management but other active parts are also important to focus on as mentioned in the model of this research. This paper reports on the parameters required for individual, country branding, competency level to present the focus of UAE at individual and country level especially in 2020.

Individual or Country Competency is based on the development of intellectual capital. This is the step which makes any country very much branded not the workforce within the country but around the world. This emphasis has been mentioned by many philosophers over the years. In the 90s many conceptualizations of intellectual capital have been proposed (Bontis 2002, Bontis 2001, Bontis 1998, Edvisson & Malon 1997, Klien & Prusak 1994, Seemann et al 2000). Also mentioned in world developments report that Knowledge, not capital, would be the key to sustained economic growth and improvements in human well being. (World Development Report. 1998. 1999). UAE's effective initiatives in education to build intellectual capital are the signs of success in coming years. UAE is doing a lot to invest in knowledge, learning and implementation in business, engineering and technological fields. Individual branding helps in organizational learning. This will ultimately help the organizations and productivity will be enhanced. The individual can be noticed by the top management because of his proper organizational behavior, interest and knowledge. Organizational learning refers to the process of improving organizational behaviors by acquiring and developing new knowledge & capabilities (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Knowledge is also continuous (March & Olsen), 1976.

Discipline is one of the important factor to get people noticed. If a person shows his disciplined behavior in most of the affairs, he is known as professional person and a serious employee in his work. This helps individual to build his good relationship with other employees. Discipline and disciplinary rules have long been recognized to be a key dimensions of the employment relationship (Edwards, 2005)

Research Methodology

This particular research is a case study research which based on practical viewpoints of expert people involved in Branding. Most of the data is this research is primary, however, few reference are consulted from secondary sources and internet. The research has consulted literature survey and interviewed few policy makers at executive & intellectual level in order to understand the theme of branding. Most of the interviews were in favor of using Competency Branding & Development (CBD) Model in UAE organizations. The interviews were unstructured based on the availability of those policy makers. The model is developed on the basis of primary sources in this research.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to evaluate and develop competitive branding model for Individual and country. The objective was also to develop a real model which can portray the theme of individual branding when measuring the competency at individual & country levels. In order to achieve such objective. This research proposed a model named as Competitive Branding & Development Model (CBD).

Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is focused on two levels (Individual and Country) with special focus on UAE. The purpose of limiting study to UAE was the growth, huge investment and huge flow of technological trends in recent past.

Exploratory & Case study method

This approach was convenient for such study as mentioned in this research. It has explored and informed deep analysis of CBD model.

Proof of Data collection

Primary, Author's interest, Secondary and interviews (personal, telephone, emails, facebook) based on structured & unstructured formats.

Data analysis: the data instrumentation was qualitative & case based methodology.

Analysis

UAE government has taken very effective initiatives to brand at individual, organizational and country level. Investments in international programs in Dubai, enticing huge business building tower buildings, opening huge universities, attracting talented people to work in engineering, technology, business and education industry are the main concerns in 2020. The major investment at individual level is to mix their people with international people to have required exposure, experience, knowledge, technical stability, solution provider techniques, professionally and socially accepted behaviors are at the main streams these days. The initiatives and investment in transport system, information setup, and technological approach at work, intellectual understanding and implementation at schools, colleges and university levels. Recent Google practices, global villages, high tech immigration setup, airport security, emirates destinations and many other things will definitely a great pool for individual branding.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that UAE has to focus on the individual & country level development by following all the parameters identified through CBD model in this research. The CBD model has been part in this research to evaluate the factors of individual branding and country branding which have been identified as the main concerns for UAE's human capital development agenda in 2020. Individual branding as mentioned in the introduction part has always been a great concern for developed countries because it ultimately gives good room for country level branding. Most of the countries have set an agenda to develop intellectual capital for the next 10 to 20 years. The paper identifies that the start of developing human capital is the initiative of branding at individual & country levels. The CBD model can also be used to evaluate the standing of other countries as in future research.

Recommendations

- UAE needs to be more aggressive in building business relationships with USA and leading EU countries.
- UAE has to build more universities at international levels in which UAE nationals should be the policy makers.
- Need to ease the immigration process for the people from western world as to have their exposure and mixed it up with the local UAE in order to promote understanding and learning at national & international levels.

- Individual needs to work on the first part of CBD model and try to incorporate all parameters. This will enhance the competency level in the country.
- Individuals must be well versed with professional branding as it gives much confidence in business dealings.
- UAE should take any initiative to come up with the idea similar to BRICS with the coordination of Gulf and some emerging markets of Asia.
- The exchange of resources and their management is becoming crucial in today's faster paced technology and UAE can take advantage and to offer and get offer from neighboring countries.

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