Determination of the Role of Elements Affecting the Formation of the City Image of Turkestan

Symbat Nakhipbekova[1]*	**Zhassulan Sadykov[2]**	**Nurlykhan Abdiqadyr[1]**	**Almas Dzhaksilikov[1]**	**Turdibuvi Kazakbayeva[3]**

[1] International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkistan, Kazakhstan

[2] Esil University, Astana, Kazakhstan

[3] University of International Business named after K. Sagadiyev, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Corresponding author:
*Symbat Nakhipbekova – PhD, International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkistan, Kazakhstan. Email: nahypbekova.symbat@iuth.edu.kz

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of various factors on the branding process of Turkistan city and its impact on tourism development. Through a systematic analysis of relevant literature, the study aims to provide a foundation for urban branding by exploring perspectives, approaches, variables, methods, and related concepts. The analysis focuses on the impact of city branding on foreign tourists' perception of Turkistan and their decision to visit. Additionally, it investigates the tourism values associated with Turkistan and the perceptions of its residents. Statistical and empirical methods were employed in this research, utilizing the SPSS 22 program to analyze survey responses. Correlation, regression, and dispersion methods were used to derive the results. Descriptive statistics indicate that historical places play a significant role in strengthening the brand value perception of Turkistan. The study also highlights existing shortcomings in the city's tourism infrastructure and provides recommendations for improvement. Furthermore, the relationship between city image and city branding is considered, and future research could explore the connection between sustainability and urban branding, thereby contributing to the existing literature.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Especially the phenomenon of globalization, which marked the 20th century, led to changes not only in the competition of firms, but also in the competition of cities. Cities that are in the process of competition try to stand out from their competitors. From the point of view of cities, many elements (natural and humanitarian structure, historical and cultural, various activities, etc.) can provide differentiation. In this regard, the concept of image (image of the city) is found, formed by many similar elements. The image of a city is described as a concept that depends on how the city in question is perceived. It was important how cities were perceived in the eyes of people, and the image was positioned as an influential factor in the development of the city.

The main goal of work in this direction is to assess the role of elements that affect the image of the city in the branding process of the city. The study used the survey method. The implementation was carried out in Turkestan and the hypotheses were tested by analyzing the results through the SPSS 22.0 program. Positive and significant connections were found between the variables of conformity of the elements of the image of the city of Turkestan, the infrastructure and activities of the city, urban services and public vision, historical and cultural heritage and the sub-criteria of perception of the brand value of the city of Turkestan. An important connection was not reached between the size of tourist orientation and promotion and the brand value of the city of Turkestan. Based on the conclusions, some recommendations were developed.

The field of urban branding has garnered significant attention from researchers due to the growing popularity and market share of branding. Both international and national studies on branding have explored topics such as economic development, urban management, and urban marketing (Kavaratzis et al., 2005; Pike, 2009). The phenomenon of globalization, fueled by the proliferation of information technologies, has gained momentum in recent times, permeating every aspect of society. Consequently, businesses, countries, and cities find themselves competing with formidable rivals in an increasingly competitive global landscape. In order to thrive in this environment, cities must position themselves not only as commodities but also as brands. The creation of a brand with a distinct image and identity has emerged as a primary objective for modern cities, and city administrators are inclined to develop visions from this branding perspective. However, while numerous studies have recently been published on spatial marketing, there remains a relative scarcity of research that specifically focuses on branding and branding-related issues.

Therefore, there is a pressing need for further research on city branding and successful city branding cases, as highlighted by (Kavaratzis, 2007). It has been underscored that although research in the field of urban marketing abounds, there is room for further theoretical and practical development (Dastgerdi & De Luca, 2018). Consequently, the branding process is regarded as a means to address the deficiencies in urban marketing and the lack of literature specifically dedicated to urban branding. Piquet contends that academic interest in spatial branding, encompassing destinations and cities, gained traction after the 1990s, further pointing to the dearth of urban branding literature (Simeon, 2006). However, it is worth noting that the roots of branding literature can be traced back to the 1940s. Although branding itself has a long history, the branding of places has been practiced for a considerable period. The urban aesthetic encompassed elements such as a uniform style for urban objects, including trash cans, lamps, benches, irrigation ditches, bus stops, and even the exteriors of urban stores. One approach to enhancing the visual-aesthetic appeal of cities is the implementation of a city design code, which provides guidelines and recommendations for signage, outdoor advertisements, building exteriors, and the surrounding environment (Zhakenova & Kairova, 2013).

This study is of particular importance as it focuses on the branding experience of Turkestan city and contributes to the existing literature by addressing gaps in the field of urban branding.

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Furthermore, the study offers valuable insights to the leaders of Turkestan city. The concept of globalization, initially defined by the British, entails the perception of the world as a space where spatial boundaries are eroded through the dissemination of material and cultural values across national borders (Sarioglu, 2005). The process of globalization has accelerated the transition from an industrial society to an information society, facilitated by advancements in communication technologies. Consequently, the 20th-century globalization process has revolutionized communication and information technologies, resulting in profound changes in national economies and their transition to transnational entities (Florek & Janiszewska, 2013). Cities have assumed a crucial role in the globalization process due to their concentration of non-agricultural production, centralization of control functions, and attainment of a certain level of volume, heterogeneity, and integration (Kall, 2001). In tandem with this process, the emergence of transboundary networks of relationships has significantly improved the condition of cities. As a consequence, the flow of capital, goods, services, and information, which previously occurred primarily between nation-states, has now shifted to flow through cities. Globalization has blurred physical and economic borders between countries, reshaping the economic sovereignty of nations and positioning cities as the main units of the global economic system (Kapferer, 2012).

Therefore, the main goal of this research is to identify the elements that influence the formation of the city image in the branding process of Turkistan city and evaluate strategies for its development. It is important to highlight the novelty of this study, as the authors analyze the process of urban branding in Turkestan, conduct a survey of tourists visiting the city, identify the factors that impact the city's image, and propose potential solutions.

By investigating the branding experience of Turkestan, this study contributes to the existing literature on urban branding. It aims to fill gaps in the field and address deficiencies in theoretical and practical knowledge. Additionally, the findings of this research will provide valuable information to the leaders of Turkestan city, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding the branding and development of the city.

To conclude, the growing significance of branding and its market influence has spurred scientific research in the field of urban branding. Globalization, driven by information technologies, has brought about intense competition among businesses, countries, and cities. As a result, cities are compelled to establish themselves as brands with unique identities and images. While there is a considerable body of research on urban marketing, the focus on branding and related issues remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the literature by exploring the elements that shape the city image in the branding process of Turkestan city and proposing strategies for its development. The research findings will offer valuable insights to city leaders and contribute to bridging the gaps in urban branding knowledge.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A brand encompasses a collection of images, characteristics, or emotions that consumers associate with a specific symbol, product, service, organization, or place (Kavaratzis et al., 2005; Simeon, 2006). Establishing a brand requires identifying the core essence and starting point of the brand, as it is essential to understand who the brand is before considering how it will be perceived (Kapferer, 2012; Kotler & Gertner, 2007). This highlights the significance of defining brand identity prior to shaping the brand image.

The branding process is closely tied to place management, where authorities aim to enhance the perception of the branded area by consumers. Urban planners and location managers employ various marketing methods and techniques to create a distinct brand identity for a place (Oguztimur & Akturan, 2016). Anholt (2007) suggests that building a country's brand is a strategic positioning to develop a competitive advantage and gain insight into the country's

trajectory (Pike, 2009). Cities, in particular, are seeking new ways to promote themselves as attractive tourist destinations, cultural hubs, and thriving workplaces, leading to intensified competition among cities (Pustu, 2006).

The relationship between the central government and local government has undergone significant changes since the 1980s, resulting in the transfer of powers, tasks, and resources from the center to local governments. As a result, cities must demonstrate awareness and develop branding strategies to remain competitive. Transforming cities into branded cities is a primary objective for city administrations, addressing economic, social, and cultural challenges at the local level (Riza et al., 2012). Brand image represents the consumer's perspective of the brand and the connection between the brand and its trademark (Sabirova et al., 2019).

Iconic buildings play a crucial role in city promotion and image development, as they serve as communication tools and symbols of a city's status. Although the literature on urban tourism in Turkestan is limited, several studies have addressed methods and strategies contributing to its development. For instance, (Kuralbayev et al., 2017) explored the perception of tourism among local residents in Turkestan and identified areas for improvement, such as enhancing existing facilities and service quality. Other studies focused on translation errors in public signs, the architectural and cultural values of Turkestan, and conducting SWOT analyses to identify its tourist potential. To foster tourism growth in Turkestan, it is crucial to enhance service quality, address translation errors in public signs, develop infrastructure and facilities that showcase the city's strong image, and preserve and promote its cultural and historical values. These factors are key to attracting more tourists and advancing tourism development in Turkestan (Sadullaeva & Baizhaksynova, 2021; Abdrassilova et al., 2021).

Betul Garda and Sartaeva (2022) conducted a SWOT analysis in order to identify the tourist potential of Turkestan and determine its recognition in the international arena. In this context, the historical and cultural resource values of the city were studied and their administrative work was evaluated. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that in order to increase the demand of the city of Turkestan for visitors, it is necessary to develop infrastructure facilities that provide a strong image of the city, its values for domestic and foreign tourists of all levels.

These studies have significantly contributed to the theory, methodology, and practice of urban branding and development. However, the current work distinguishes itself by focusing on the development of tourism in Turkestan specifically, considering its cultural and historical tourist values. This paper aims to identify the elements influencing the city's image in the branding process and provide proposals to stakeholders in the tourism industry that can contribute to the city's development. By analyzing the role of these elements, this study aims to offer valuable insights for the stakeholders involved in the tourism sector, ultimately contributing to the overall growth and development of Turkestan.

In summary, the literature review demonstrates the importance of brand identity in the branding process and its direct connection to place management. It highlights the competition between cities and the need for cities to establish a distinct brand image to attract tourists and gain a competitive edge. The review also emphasizes the limited research on urban tourism in Turkestan and the significance of addressing factors such as service quality, translation errors in public signs, infrastructure development, and the preservation and promotion of cultural and historical values to enhance tourism in the region.

By filling the research gap and focusing on the specific case of Turkestan, this study aims to identify the elements influencing the formation of the city's image in the branding process. It will provide recommendations and proposals to stakeholders in the tourism industry, offering practical strategies for the development and promotion of Turkestan as a vibrant tourist destination.

Overall, this research contributes to the existing literature on urban branding and tourism development, particularly in the context of Turkestan. The findings of this study will not only

advance theoretical and methodological understanding but also have practical implications for city administrators, tourism authorities, and other relevant stakeholders involved in shaping the brand image of Turkestan and fostering its tourism sector.

Thus, from the literary review, we can conclude that for the development of tourism in Turkestan, it is necessary to improve the quality of Service, eliminate errors in the translation of public signs, develop superstructure and infrastructure facilities with a strong image of the city, as well as preserve and promote the tourist values of the city. These factors can contribute to an increase in the flow of tourists and the development of tourism in Turkestan as a whole.

These works made a significant contribution to the theory, methodology and practice of the formation and development of urban branding. This work differs from similar works on this topic in that the research conducted in Turkestan is limited on the basis of the development of tourism in terms of the presence of cultural and historical tourist values. In this paper, the role of elements that influence the formation of the image of the city in the branding process will be identified, and in this context, various proposals will be presented to stakeholders in the field of tourism that can contribute to the development of the city.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the current era, cities are engaged in a perpetual competition to attract tourists, investors, and businesses. Marketers specializing in urban spaces strive to create appealing destinations that serve as distinctive brands targeted at various demographic groups. However, urban spaces, from the standpoint of urban planning and design, emphasize the socio-economic dynamics governed by specific societal and political objectives. Marketing and branding literature dedicated to cities has been relatively limited, highlighting the need for further exploration in this field. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to assess the role of factors influencing the image of a city within the city branding process. To achieve this overarching objective, the study encompasses the following sub-objectives:

1. To determine the impact of urban infrastructure and activities on the city's brand value.
2. To investigate the relationship between city services and the perceived brand value.
3. To evaluate the contribution of the city's historical and cultural heritage to its brand value.
4. To assess the influence of tourist orientation and advertising activities on the city's brand.
5. To gain insights into the city's visual aesthetics and ascertain tourists' perceptions of its image.

Furthermore, this study aims to provide valuable insights for city management and offer development recommendations based on the findings obtained from evaluating the city's branding process. The research not only fills gaps in the field of urban branding but also contributes to the existing literature in this domain.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform the Turkestan city administration by providing relevant information pertaining to its branding practices. By examining the hypotheses formulated below, the study seeks to establish relationships between different dimensions of Turkestan's brand image and its brand value:

H1: The elements of Turkestan city's brand image, such as competence dimensions and city infrastructure and service dimension, positively influence the brand value of Turkestan city.

H2: City services and people's attitude, which are integral components of Turkestan city's brand image, have a positive impact on the perception of competence and the brand value of Turkestan city.

H3: The dimension of historical and cultural heritage, which represents one of the elements of Turkestan city's brand image, positively affects the brand value of Turkestan city.

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H4: The dimension of tourism orientation and promotional activities, which is part of the brand image perception in Turkestan city, has a positive influence on the brand value of Turkestan city.

These hypotheses form the basis for investigating the relationships between various dimensions of Turkestan's brand image and its overall brand value. By examining these relationships, the study aims to shed light on the factors that contribute to the successful branding of Turkestan city.

Despite the valuable insights generated from this study, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the accuracy and generalizability of the conclusions. These limitations include: limited existing literature on urban branding. The number of studies specifically focused on urban branding is relatively small. This scarcity of literature may pose challenges in terms of establishing a comprehensive theoretical framework.

Dominance of daily trips to Turkestan: the majority of trips to Turkestan are characterized as short-term, daily visits. This prevalence of short stays may influence the perceptions and behaviors of tourists, potentially affecting the results and their applicability to longer-term visits.

Time availability for reaching the target audience: The study's ability to reach the target audience (tourists) was not time-restricted, meaning that the data collection process may not fully capture the entire spectrum of tourists visiting Turkestan.

Limited time frame for data collection: due to time constraints, the tourist surveys were conducted within a specific period (November 2022). This temporal restriction may limit the representation of seasonal variations and other time-dependent factors that could influence the findings.

Economic constraints and sample size: the research was conducted within defined economic limitations, which necessitated using a specific sample size. This constrained approach may impact the representativeness and generalizability of the results to the broader population of tourists visiting Turkestan.

Research conducted solely within Turkestan: the study focused exclusively on the city of Turkestan, which may limit the transferability of the findings to other cities or tourist destinations. Reliance on self-reported responses: the reliability of the study's results is contingent upon the accuracy and honesty of the participants' responses. Potential biases or subjectivity in participants' self-reporting could introduce limitations to the data.

Lack of an established scale: the study identified that a comprehensive scale specifically measuring the impact of city image elements on city branding was unavailable. This absence of a validated scale may introduce uncertainties in the measurement and assessment of the variables under investigation.

By acknowledging these limitations, future research endeavors can build upon these findings to address the identified gaps and further enhance our understanding of urban branding and its implications for cities like Turkestan.

The research methodology employed in this study played a crucial role in achieving the research objectives. The methodology encompassed various aspects, including the definition of the data collection method, research setting, sample selection, questionnaire design, data coding, organization and analysis, reliability assessment of the data collection tool, and statistical analysis.

A summary of the methodology is outlined below.

Data Collection Method: the study utilized a questionnaire-based approach to collect data from participants. The questionnaire consisted of three distinct sections, each serving a specific purpose.

Questionnaire Structure: the first section of the questionnaire comprised 14 questions aimed at capturing demographic information and participants' perceptions of Turkestan. The second section consisted of 19 items that assessed the importance and relevance of key elements representing the city image and their impact on city branding. Participants rated the importance

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of these elements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "1. Not absolute" to "5. Very important." The third section employed a 12-item Likert scale to measure participants' agreement or disagreement with statements pertaining to city brand elements. Response options ranged from "1. I completely disagree" to "5. I completely agree."

Sample Definition: the research model targeted a sample of 150 foreign citizens who visited Turkestan during the month of November 2022. The participants were selected through a "face-to-face" approach, ensuring direct interaction and data collection from individuals within the designated research setting.

Data Analysis: during the analysis phase, two questionnaires were identified as incomplete or incorrect, leading to their exclusion from further analysis. Consequently, the analysis was conducted with a total of 148 questionnaires.

Reliability Assessment: to ensure the reliability of the data collection tool (i.e., the questionnaire), appropriate measures were implemented. This may have involved conducting reliability tests, such as internal consistency analysis, to assess the reliability and consistency of the questionnaire items and their ability to measure the intended constructs accurately.

Statistical Analysis: the collected data underwent statistical analysis to explore the relationships between variables and test the formulated hypotheses. This analysis might have involved techniques such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, or other appropriate statistical methods based on the research objectives and the nature of the collected data.

By employing this methodology, the study successfully gathered data from a sample of foreign citizens visiting Turkestan, allowing for the analysis and evaluation of the research objectives and hypotheses.

Demographic characteristics of the participants

Based on the results of the survey, the demographic characteristics of the 50 participants in the study are presented below with the help of tables and graphs. Within the framework of demographic information, the distribution of answers by gender and age was discussed (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Demographic Information

Section	Number of respondents	Share weight, %
According to age characteristics		
17 and under	-	-
18-25	25	16,9
26 – 35	48	32,4
36 – 45	43	29,1
46-55	18	12,2
56 and above	14	9,4
By gender		
Male	83	56,0
Female	65	44,0
Note: based on the results of the conducted survey		

The analysis shows that 16,9% in the 18-25 age group, 32,4% in the 26-35 age group, 29,1% in the 36-45 age group, 12,2% in the 46-55 age group, and 9,4% in the 56 and older age group. 56.0% of the participants are men, and 44.0% are women.

The values of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient were used to calculate the internal consistency of factors. This coefficient represents the value of reliability due to the correlation between questions. It also indicates confidence levels in a set of questions with Cronbach's alpha-value coefficient. Table 2 below presents the results of the analysis of the reliability of the variables of

the competence elements of the city image and the variables of the value elements of the city brand.

TABLE 2. Reliability Analysis in Relation to the Competence of the Elements of the City Image and the Value Elements of the City Brand

Scale	Dimensions	Number of elements	Alpha of Cronbach
Taking the adequacy of urban image elements (α=0.911)	City infrastructure and services	6	0,874
	City services and public vision	6	0,851
	Historical and cultural heritage	4	0,812
	Tourist orientation and promotion	3	0,741
Adopting urban brand value (α=0,921)	General infrastructure and centralization	7	0,891
	City attraction	5	0,858
Note: based on the results of the conducted survey			

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the competency scale measurements of the urban image elements indicate satisfactory internal consistency. Specifically, the coefficients were approximately 87.4% for urban infrastructure and activities, 85.1% for urban services and public relations, 81.2% for historical and cultural heritage, and 74.1% for tourist guidance and advertising. Moreover, the overall reliability of the scale was determined to be 91.1%.

These coefficients, exceeding the recommended threshold of 70%, suggest that the measurement items exhibit sufficient reliability when assessing the respective dimensions. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scale items are reliable and suitable for interpreting the factor (Altunışık et al., 2012).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study investigating the role of image elements in the perception of the Turkestan brand, the collected questionnaire data were coded and analyzed using the SPSS 22.0 software. Statistical tests, specifically correlation and regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationship between the participants' sense of identity and their perception of the city brand value. These tests were chosen to analyze the data and uncover the interactions between the variables under investigation.

Table 3 shows the normative test results for the variable elements.

TABLE 3. The normative test results for the variable elements of the city brand

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Static	n	p	Static	n	p
Turkestan – as a tourist brand	,193	148	,000	,905	148	,000
Turkestan has enough high structure urban infrastructure	,230	148	,000	,899	148	,000
The tourist infrastructure of Turkestan is sufficient	,226	148	,000	,904	148	,000

Turkestan is an attractive city with cultural values	,212	148	,000	,878	148	,000
There are interesting historical places in Turkestan	,204	148	,000	,871	148	,000
Holidays in Turkestan is very interesting	,201	148	,000	,896	148	,000
The logo for Turkestan (mausoleum) is the best option	,209	148	,000	,877	148	,000
Living in Turkestan is very comfortable	,208	148	,000	,878	148	,000
Local people in Turkestan are friendly and kind	,237	148	,000	,878	148	,000
Turkestan is an important center of the university	,220	148	,000	,872	148	,000
Turkestan is an important trade center	,228	148	,000	,879	148	,000
Turkestan is an important fair and meeting center	,222	148	,000	,888	148	,000
Note: based on the results of the conducted survey						

Analyzing Table 3 above, it can be seen that all the questions related to the variable elements of the city brand are not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$). Based on these findings, it was considered necessary to use non-parametric tests in the data analysis, as all study variables did not show a normal distribution.

TABLE 4. Repetition of the Quality of Attendance of Respondents

Question	First time	1	2	3 and higher
How many times have you been to Turkestan before?	56 %	15%	21%	8%
Note: based on the results of the survey conducted				

When the above diagram-4 was studied, the respondents who participated in the study asked, "how many times have you been to Turkestan before?" the distribution of the answers to the question is shown in percentage (%). Accordingly, 56% of participants reported their first visit, 15%- 1 time, 21%- 2 times, and 8%- 3 or more times.

Factor analysis

In this section of the study, the results of a factor analysis are presented, focusing on the qualification levels of urban image elements and the perception of the city brand value in Turkestan's urban brand.

To determine the number of sub-dimensions related to the competence of city image elements in Turkestan's city branding, a factor analysis was conducted. The validity of the data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) goodness-of-fit test and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value exceeded 0.84 and 0.50, and Bartlett's test was statistically significant at a 0.05 probability level, indicating that the dataset was suitable for factor analysis. The analysis was performed using the principal components method with Varimax rotation.

Upon analyzing Table 5, the factor analysis revealed that the participants in the survey perceived the competencies of city image elements in four sub-dimensions within the Turkestan city brand.

TABLE 5. Factor Analysis

Factors	Questions	Factor loadings			
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Urban infrastructure and activities	Shopping and entertainment places	0,81			
	Alternative tourism service	0,75			
	Sports events	0,72			
	Accommodation and physical facilities	0,68			
	Urban infrastructure and superstructure	0,64			
	Quality of service provided at facilities	0,49			
City services and public relations	Savings on reward rates		0,77		
	Security		0,73		
	Ease of city transportation		0,67		
	Behavior of entrepreneurs and people		0,65		
	A clean city		0,53		
	Landscape and architecture of the city		0,47		
Historical and cultural inheritance	Religious places			0,88	
	Historical and cultural heritage of the city			0,68	
	Local cuisine			0,61	
	museums			0,45	
Tourist guide and promotion	Tourist information / information centers				0,92
	Tourist guidance service				0,85
	International advertising service				0,62
Values		4,045	3,625	2,526	2,121
Dispersion		21,288	19,077	13,296	11,163
Total explained variance		64,824			
Note: (i) Principal components analysis of Varimax rotation (ii) KMO = 0.884, Bartlett Test = 1677.532; p = 0.00 (P < 0.001)					

These sub-dimensions consist of 19 statements and are named Urban Infrastructure and Services (6), Urban Services and Public Attitudes (6), Historical and Cultural Heritage (4), and Tourist Destinations and Publicity (3). The total explained variance accounted for 64.824% of the variation. The separate contributions to the explained variance were 21.288% for urban infrastructure and services, 19.077% for urban services and public relations, 13.296% for historical and cultural heritage, and 11.163% for tourist orientation and promotion.

Furthermore, in Table 5, it was observed that the factor loadings for urban infrastructure and service objects (0.49), urban services and public relations measurement items, city landscape and architecture (0.47), and quality of services provided by museums and historical and cultural heritage objects (0.49) were relatively small. However, it is worth noting that in the literature, factor loadings above 0.45 are considered suitable selection criteria. Therefore, the factor loadings for the elements presented in Table 5 are accepted in this analysis.

TABLE 6. Factor Analysis Related to the Elements of Perception of the Meaning of the Brand in the City of Turkestan

Factor	Question	Factor loadings	
		1	2
General infrastructure and centralization	The tourist infrastructure of Turkestan is sufficient	0,77	
	I find it very interesting to rest in Turkestan	0,77	
	Turkestan is a tourist brand	0,76	
	Turkestan is an important fair and meeting center	0,73	
	Turkestan is an important trade center	0,70	
	Turkestan has enough urban infrastructure and high structure	0,65	
	People living in Turkestan are friendly and kind		
City attractiveness	Turkestan has interesting historical places		0,83
	The logo for Turkestan is the best option		0,79
	Turkestan is an important center of the university		0,72
	Turkestan is an attractive city with cultural values		0,68
	Places of accommodation in Turkestan are convenient		0,59
Values		4,276	3,280
Dispersion		35,636	27,330
Total explained variance		62,966	
Note: (i) Varimax rotation principal components analysis (ii) KMO = 0.910, Bartlett's test = 1080.227; p = 0.00 (P < 0.001)			

When examining Table 6, the factor analysis revealed that the survey included a scale of brand perception elements for Turkestan city, comprising 12 statements. The respondents categorized these elements into two sub-dimensions. These sub-dimensions are referred to as general infrastructure and centrality (consisting of 7 elements) and city prominence (consisting of 5 elements). The overall explained variance was determined to be 62.966%. Specifically, when considering the variance explained by each sub-dimension separately, general infrastructure and centrality accounted for 35.636%, while urban beauty accounted for 27.330%.

This section of the study conducted a factor analysis to determine the number of small-scale measurements related to the competence of city image elements in the branding of Turkestan city. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were utilized to assess the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Table 4 presents the results of the factor analysis, identifying four factors: urban infrastructure and services, urban services, historical and cultural heritage, and tourist management and promotion. The total explained variance of the analysis was 64.824%.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the factors influencing the image of Turkestan in the city branding process and provided valuable insights for city leaders and future research. The findings shed light on various aspects that contribute to the brand value of Turkestan and offer recommendations for enhancing its attractiveness to tourists, investors, and other target groups.

The evaluation of visitor experiences revealed that the majority of tourists have short stays in Turkestan. This emphasizes the need for the city to offer a wider range of alternative activities to

extend the duration of visitors' trips. Furthermore, investments should be made in attractions and facilities that cater to young people, allowing them to enjoy their time in Turkestan with friends.

In terms of information and communication technology, it is crucial for Turkestan to prioritize the use of digital tools, particularly social media platforms, to reach a broader audience and increase awareness of the city's offerings. Internet advertising should be given greater attention, considering its significant role in the information age. Additionally, participation in tourist fairs can serve as an effective avenue for promoting Turkestan and attracting more visitors.

Religious and cultural heritage emerged as key elements that enhance the brand value of Turkestan, especially in the context of religious tourism. Organizing international festivals and events can further contribute to increasing visitor numbers and should be actively pursued by the city. The mausoleum of Khoja Ahmet Yasawi stands out as one of the most famous assets of Turkestan and should be extensively promoted. Furthermore, Turkestan's positive image as a city of tolerance should be leveraged through strategic branding initiatives, as it indicates the warmth of the city's residents towards foreigners and contributes to visitor satisfaction.

However, the study also identified areas for improvement. Turkestan's tourism infrastructure was perceived as lacking, suggesting the need for further research and investment in this aspect. By addressing the identified shortcomings and enhancing the tourism infrastructure, Turkestan can provide better experiences for visitors.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing Turkestan's brand image and offers recommendations for city leaders to strengthen the city's attractiveness. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing visitor experiences, leveraging technology for effective branding, showcasing religious and cultural heritage, and investing in tourism infrastructure. Future research should explore the relationship between sustainability and urban branding, assess the effectiveness of international advertising activities, and conduct comparative studies among domestic and foreign tourists. By implementing the suggested strategies and conducting further research, Turkestan can position itself as a prominent destination and enhance its brand value in the global tourism market.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

*Symbat Nakhipbekova – PhD, Acting Associate Professor, International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkistan, Kazakhstan. Email: nahypbekova.symbat@iuth.edu.kz, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7461-0384

Zhassulan Sadykov – PhD, Acting Associate Professor, Esil University, Astana, Kazakhstan. Email: zhass83@mail.ru, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7133-9162

Nurlykhan Abdiqadyr – Lecturer, International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkistan, Kazakhstan. Email: abdiqadyr.nurlykhan@iuth.edu.kz, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5088-1335

Almas Dzhaksilikov – Lecturer, International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkistan, Kazakhstan. Email: a.dzhaksilikov@iuth.edu.kz

Turdibuvi Kazakbayeva – Senior Lecturer, University of International Business named after K. Sagadiyev, Almaty, Kazakhstan. Email: t.kazakhbaeva@mail.ru, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7372-7479