

**CITY BRANDING:
EXPLORING CITY BRAND OF
KUALA LUMPUR**

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CITY BRANDING:
EXPLORING CITY BRAND OF
KUALA LUMPUR

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ABSTRACT

The classical definition for branding is all about differentiating the product from its competitors for identification purposes. However, in recent years, brand being a sophisticated tool for countries, cities and destination. They are encouraged to think themselves as a brand. The competition between cities becomes aggressive in establishing its own image in order to attract stakeholders such as tourists, investors, business, student and skilled people. Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia which is yet to mesh up the attributes and elements into a single brand. This research elicits information on attributes and elements to build a strong city brand through qualitative research strategy. The city's unique characteristics are identified through six objectives and its effectiveness is measured based on Anholt's (2006a) city branding model. 32 respondents from various groups of stakeholders who are believed to be the appropriate group of people who are involved in creation of the city's image have been interviewed for the purpose of this study. The collected data were content analyzed by using NVIVO software. The result shows that Kuala Lumpur has been perceived and branded as a modern and fast pace city which diversify in terms of cultural, food, art and lifestyle. The Petronas Twin Tower (KLCC) stands out firmly as the main icon of Kuala Lumpur together with other places of interest and shopping has been identified as main attraction for the city. The research further presents the implication of the study for place marketer and authority. Based on the element, attributes and the favorable image of the city identified in this study, the authorities will be able to better understand the orientation of Kuala Lumpur branding. Besides, they also can use identified attributes to promote the city as some characteristics can be used as selling point of the city.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Q1	:	Question 1
Q2	:	Question 2
Q3	:	Question 3
KL	:	Kuala Lumpur
KLCC	:	Petronas Twin Tower
MATIC	:	Malaysian Tourism Information Centre
<i>f</i>	:	frequency

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter will focus on the introduction and background of city branding. This is followed by purpose of the study, the objectives, its scope and limitations. It is concluded with the organisation of the study.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

“Branding has become a top management priority for a broad cross- section of organizational in recent years. Many firms have realized that the organizations’ brand is one of their most valuable intangible assets. According to Keller (2002), branding principles have been applied in virtually every setting pertaining to physical goods, services, retail stores, people, organizations, places and even ideas”(Keller, 2002).

Branding is a sophisticated process that puts together and sustains as an intangible mixture of attributes, elements, values and personalities. The objective of branding is to produce an unique and attractive offering that satisfies both the rational and emotional needs of customers in a better way as compared to other competitor.

Long standing, brand has been the most central dynamo and the largest sources of income for companies. It is the brand of the company that drives acquisitions, and the revenue generated from the brand far exceeds the value of the company's other properties.

In contrast to consumer product, city branding is considerably more complex and becoming popular in recent years. Just as companies, cities are also developed brands, and they do gain competitive advantages when brand buildings strategically implemented. Constructing a brand for a city can be done when the right tool and identity have been chosen which makes it stand out from its competitors (Moilanen and Rainistro, 2009).

Kuala Lumpur has started to realize the importance to create a strong image and brand to position itself which eventually provides the stakeholders with meaningful and memorable associations with the city. Being labeled as the capital and largest city in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur is still searching for right brand (Musa and Melewar, 2011). In recent years, Kuala Lumpur been said that it is another place where image changes have happened quickly which the city has transformed itself; the image of Kuala Lumpur has changed tremendously. In the 18th century, Kuala Lumpur is known as a mining village and in the recent years, it is well known as a metropolitan city. A decade ago, Kotler (2002) commented that Kuala Lumpur was barely noticed as a destination for international travelers as compared to Thailand. However, today Kuala Lumpur is well known for its

image as a rapidly developing city, a hub for information technology, sports and tourism and its progression towards developed- nation status (Kotler, 2002).

Even though various efforts has been taken to craft the image, values, personality, elements and attributes of Kuala Lumpur, Musa and Melewar (2011) pointed out that the city did not provide the visibility on how such attributes and value can be fitted by the city into single brand which is consistent and unique.

The Chief Secretary at Ministry of the Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing (Malaysia), Datuk Ahmad Phesal, agrees that, Kuala Lumpur needs a strong brand to be successful just like any other organisation. A commanding brand is needed to gain people trust and to get them to visit, live and do business in the city. The brand of a city must be able to create a long lasting impact not only for those who are visiting the city but also to those who live in the city. In addition, Phesal also added that branding is not only restraint to cities; it can be extended to towns. The local and city councils nationwide can play a role in branding the towns whereby each town can be brand based on its unique characteristics. With that, each town will be distinguished based on the brand associate with it. Any efforts of such branding must add value by generating wealth through socio-economic activities in a particular area (The Star, 2010).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

City branding is a new, interesting and diversified topic in world of marketing. Although some potential steps in branding Kuala Lumpur city have been discussed and placed, but the underlying element have not been objectively studied. Kuala Lumpur has yet to fit the city's elements and values into a single unique and consistent brand, even many effort been carried out to create images, elements, attributes and values for the city (Musa and Melewar, 2011). As Kuala Lumpur is yet to brand itself, this research has been carried out in order to explore the elements and attributes of the city and how it can be fitted into single brand. City Brand Hexagon which been invented by Anholt,(2006b), is used as a tool to measure the elements and values of the city. The City Brand Hexagon is one of the tools that currently being used as a measure of city performance which provides a thorough assessment of a city. This research can give invaluable information to assist the stakeholders to actively involve in branding Kuala Lumpur. From the perspective of business and research development, stakeholders such as travel agents, city municipal's, hoteliers, investors and academicians, are identified as key dimensions and elements that could contribute to branding the city of Kuala Lumpur which can increase more attraction, satisfaction , thus gain a competitive advantages. The results of this research could be used by Kuala Lumpur City Hall to develop successful branding strategies to further promote the city.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions that guide the study:

- i. What are the brand personality and values of Kuala Lumpur?
- ii. What are the elements that influence Kuala Lumpur branding?
- iii. What are the dimensions of the city?
- iv. Is there any current brand for Kuala Lumpur and how it is been perceived by the stakeholders?
- v. Which icon should represent Kuala Lumpur?
- vi. What are the possible challenges in branding Kuala Lumpur?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study intended to determine and measure the concept of city branding of Kuala Lumpur by using the city branding model that proposed by Anholt (2006).

This is to achieve by following objectives:

- i. To explore brand equity of Kuala Lumpur.
- ii. To identify the elements of place branding.
- iii. To explore the dimensions of city attractions and identify the best dimension of Kuala Lumpur.
- iv. To explore the current brand of Kuala Lumpur.
- v. To identify the icon(s) of Kuala Lumpur.
- vi. To identify challenges in building a brand for Kuala Lumpur.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on exploring the elements and attribute for city branding through stakeholders perceptions.

Qualitative approach will be employed due to the exploratory nature of this study. The information was elicited through in depth interview and the respondents are the stakeholders who believed to be the key person for city branding. The implications of this study will be useful for Tourism Board, local authorities, citizen and academicians to realize the significance of city branding as it enable the city to gain competitive advantages. Besides, the tourism board and local authority can use the proposed Kuala Lumpur brand to promote the city.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study contains five chapters, which as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

This is an overview chapter of the study. It starts with a brief introduction and background of city branding. This chapter also includes the purpose of the study, specifying the objectives, scope and organization of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The relevant literature pertaining to the study's focus will be presented in this chapter. First the chapter discusses the overview of Kuala Lumpur and further discuss on definition for city and branding, cities as a brand, the importance of city branding and stakeholders.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter will explain and elaborate the research methodology used in the study. It explains on the methodology, selection of respondents, sampling design, and data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

Chapter Four: Research Finding

This chapter presents the overall findings of the study from the content analysis. The results of the analysis have been discussed according to research objectives.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter will discuss and conclude the result, together measure the effectiveness through City Brand Model. It also provides the implications and limitation of the study. The chapter ends with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The chapter will begin with the introduction of the area of research. The definition and explanation about city, branding, cities as brand, stakeholders and followed by elements and dimensions for the city branding is discussed. Further, literature and past research related to the topic will be referred.

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF KUALA LUMPUR

The unique name of Kuala Lumpur is a *malay* term which means “muddy confluence”, and the city found the identity at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak rivers.

The youngest capital city in Southeast Asia, Kuala Lumpur or popularly known as KL is the capital and the largest city in Malaysia. Its history begun as a small sleepy tin mining in the middle of 19th century. It was made as the capital of Malaysia since the Malaysia’s independence in 1957 and later in the year of 1972, it gains the status of city. In terms of population, Kuala Lumpur has been ranked at 157 comparatively to other cities in the world (www.citymayor.com,

2011). According to the Malaysia Statistical Department (2010), the current population in Kuala Lumpur is recorded approximately 1.48 million.

Referring to figure 2.1, Kuala Lumpur under the municipality of City Council of Kuala Lumpur makes up an area of 243km. It is known for its urban design and ranked as one of Asia's most atmospheric city. Even though, attractions such as Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), Sepang circuit, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya, Batu Caves and Genting Highlands is located beyond the city, people still perceived these places as part of the city. The city makes even larger area with perceptual boundary or with geographical imaginations by the people.

Kuala Lumpur is a fusion between past and future. The unique image of KL is reflected with the presence of British colonial buildings such as Dataran Merdeka (Merdeka Square) and Carcosa Seri Negara. In addition, skyscrapers such as Petronas Twin Tower, Menara Maxis, Menara Maybank and etc indicate the classic example of the city image. The Petronas Twin Towers known as KLCC is the world's 3rd iconic skyscrapers which have an ultra modern look with the design which reflecting Malay culture. Indeed Kuala Lumpur is a combination of both urban architecture and multicultural heritage. It is also a city that attracts the best global business as well as tourist from all over the world (Kotler, 2002).

Kuala Lumpur's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is estimated at RM74 billion (2008) with an average annual growth of 5.9%. This clearly indicates that the city remains as country's commercial and business hub even though the government

administration has moved to Putrajaya. The city is also equipped with good infrastructure and facilities.

Kuala Lumpur consist of three major races namely Malay, Chinese and Indians. It has colourful cultural trail together with fascinating places of interest, world class sporting event, hub for shopping and retailing, urban and entertaining lifestyle.

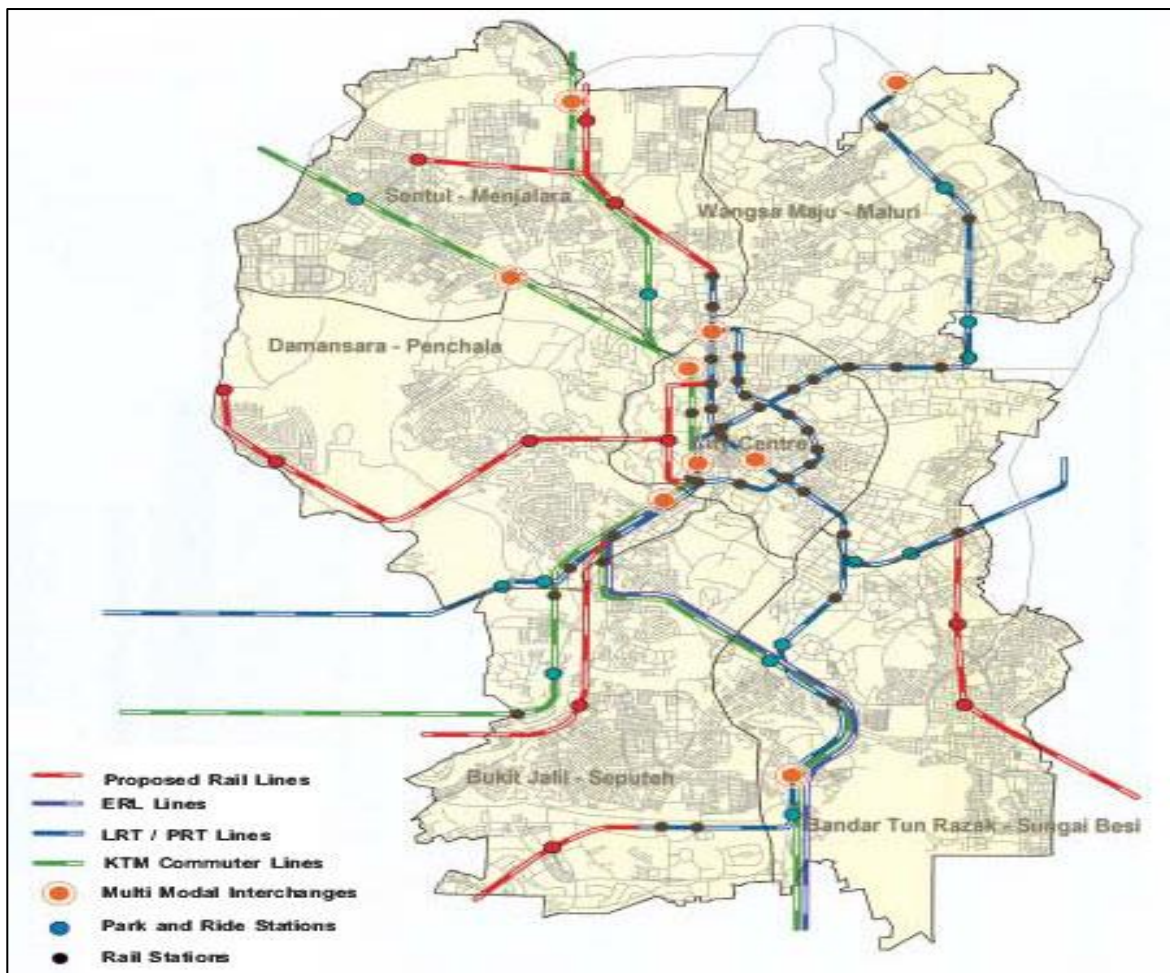


Figure 2.1 Map of Kuala Lumpur

2.2 CITY

'Divine nature gave the fields, human art built the cities'

-Marcus Terentius Varro, De Re Rustica (116bc-27bc)

Historically, in Europe country a city is typical an urban settlement with cathedral and as the years pass by, city eventually formed as central places of trade for the citizens who live in close proximity to the city. City is the place where activity and changes always take place and it's being a hub for those (Anholt, 2010). With the globalization and urbanization, city became boundary less. It's been reported that by the year of 2025, 75 per cent (%) of world population will live in city (www.hiddencities.com, 2011).

According to Oxford Dictionary, city is the major metropolitan centre of a region which has a large urban settlement. Generally cities have been perceived as having an advance system for sanitation, facilities, land usage and transportation.

City is multi-, trans-disciplinary and holistic, drawing on work from academics in geography, social sciences, political economy, philosophy, cultural studies, and the humanities, as well as from policy makers, the multitude of actors including practitioners, activists, organizers, writers, artists, ecologists, planners, and anyone who play key roles in sustaining and constructing cities and urban futures.

In recent years, city has been perceived and viewed from various perspectives. Carrillo (2006) stated that the city is a very complex yet a dynamic issue. Price Waterhouse Coopers (2005), in recent survey added that city is a complex set of characteristics with its own unique identity which could be used to gain competitive advantage through creating a brand for it.

2.3 BRANDING

Brand is and has been defined in many different ways over the years, depending on the perspective from which the brand is perceived. The American Marketing Association defined a brand as 'a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.

Brand can be also perceived from the client point of view as the sum of all tangible and intangible elements of product(s) and service(s). According to Kapferer (1997) despite from the symbol, brand is also reflective of attributes that comes to mind when someone think about a particular brand. Among the associated attributes related to the product(s) tangible, intangible, psychological and sociological.

Branding still fulfills the basic function of differentiation today, but the techniques have progressed tremendously. Branding is now a sophisticated process that puts together and sustains a complex mixture of attributes and values, many of

which are intangible. The objective of branding is to produce a unique and attractive offering that satisfies both the rational and emotional needs of customers in a better way than the rivalries.

According to Jung (2000), branding relies on the understanding of psychology on how do people perceive and behave. Jung further added that there are four distinct functions of the mind namely thought, feeling, sensation and intuition. Marketers found that the ability to create a brand appealing to these four mental functions will be an added value.

A brand is created and shaped in the consumer mind (Kotler, 2008). Brands exist when group of people from the target group think the same way about a particular brand. In other word, brands are not created in the management office but in the consumers mind (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009).

Aforementioned definitions provide the basic understanding of branding; however the meaning of brand has been extended to corporate strategy, the stakeholder's behavior, internal and external communication, ethics and purpose. This advance branding perception is a complete approach of managing an organization. Branding becomes a key to organization strategy and central organizing function which is regarded as company's most valuable assets (Kotler, 2008).

City branding is under the umbrella of branding (Kotler, 2002) whereby the concept of branding has been applied to city (Dinnie, 2011). The practitioner wish to brand the city just like any other product by using words, attractive logo's and

slogans. Anholt (2005) proposed that, it best to apply the advanced branding strategies to cities as it will result in far reaching, fascinating and potentially world changing outcome(s).

2.4 CITIES AS A BRAND

City always carries a brand (Anholt, 2006a). Various cities in the world have its own brand; New York is energy, Paris is Romance, Mumbai is Busy, Bangkok is Culture, Rome is Historical, Rio is fun and Lagos is corruption. City branding is a part or subset of place branding which is still relatively new. However, Anholt (2009, p.1) stressed that " whatever we choose to call it or however we wish to define it, there can no longer be any doubt that it is with us and its happening".

Cities certainly have brands but till what extent branding exercised is still questionable (Anholt, 2008). According to Marshall (2006), locations can be branded as a product and currently it is an ongoing exercise (Dinnie, 2011). City branding is a new concept and approach which can be adopted by cities in their effort to differentiate themselves from other cities (Musa and Melewar, 2011).

Geographical location can be used as a means of branding as some city is branded based on real name of the location (Keller,1998), however it has to be noted that creating an image for a city is far more complex in comparison to products or services (Hankinsson, 2005).

For city branding, there will be three relevant concepts that are related to brands which are identified, image and communication. There are three relevant concepts pertaining to city branding namely identity, image and communication. Identification of brand means how the owner wants the brand to be experienced and experiencing the brand in reality would reflect the brand image. Consequently, message is developed through the identity which later will be communicated to the target audiences (Dinnie, 2011).

According to Dinnie (2011), city branding is an old art but a new science. Only recently the city leaders realize and recognize the need to project a unique and powerful image to craft the name. Kotler (2002), who come up with a concept of strategic place marketing explained that places or cities need to be run in a similar manner like businesses in order to overcome the threat of global competition, technological change and urban decay.

Dechernatony and Mcdonald (1998), also share a similar opinion on city branding. According to them, a successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place where the end user will perceive relevant and unique added values which match their needs. In addition, they also added that the success of city branding relies on its ability to sustain the added values (Dechernatony and Mcdonald, 1998).

According Ashworth (2005), city branding is the effort of discovering the uniqueness that can be differentiated one to another It includes the process of identifying and positioning the city brand. He elaborated that the uniqueness can

be created via personality branding, flagship construction and events branding. This technique is known as 'Gaudi Gambit'. The three attributes is not only meant for attraction and recognition but also to place an association between the place and the attributes, which is believed to be beneficial to economics and social development. Personality branding takes place when the city is recognized through a specific individual. As an example, Anna Frank is strongly associated with Amsterdam, Barcelona with the architect and designer Gaudi (Dinnie, 2011). The second attributes is about, flagship building. In line, Low and Taylor (2006) stated that most of the cities have its own icons, symbol and anchor buildings for which they are famous for. Chicago is known for Sears tower and Kuala Lumpur has its impressive Petronas Twin Tower. Hosting big events is one of strategies of branding and promoting cities (Brown, 2002, Burgan and Mules, 1992). Events could be either one-time event or annual event. Beijing is well known for hosting the 2008 Olympic Games while Cannes is known for the annual event of Film Festival.

Apart from the above mentioned attributes of places, Kotler (2002) identified 10 types of attraction that are associated to. These are natural beauty and features, shopping places, cultural attractions, recreational and entertainment, sports arena, museums and other attractions.

Dinnie (2008) and Clark (2007) have work on few theories that emphasized on the value of building a positive brand for a nation, which can be adapted for the purpose of city branding (Dinnie, 2011). The proposed values are as follows:

- i. Attraction of inbound investment
- ii. Attraction of inbound tourism
- iii. Credibility and confidence by investors
- iv. Increase of political influence internally (national) and externally (multinational)
- v. more productive global partnership with other cities, public or private research and university institution and private sector organizations
- vi. Influence of 'City of origin' on products and services
- vii. Civic Pride: ability to focus local harmony, confidence and resolve.

Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) echoed the similar dimensions in order to build a strong place branding. According to them, a place must be able to attract business and investment, promote the objective of tourism industry, promote public diplomacy, support the interests of exporting industries and also strengthen the place identity and increase the self respect in order to build a strong identity.

Another similar definition with model but only focuses on city, known as similarly, city brand strategy model also highlighted the same element mentioned above, which been presented in "The World Class Sustainable Cities Conference" at Kuala Lumpur on 2009, have emphasize on the similar areas. The model indicates the connectivity of internal and external elements for strategizing city branding.

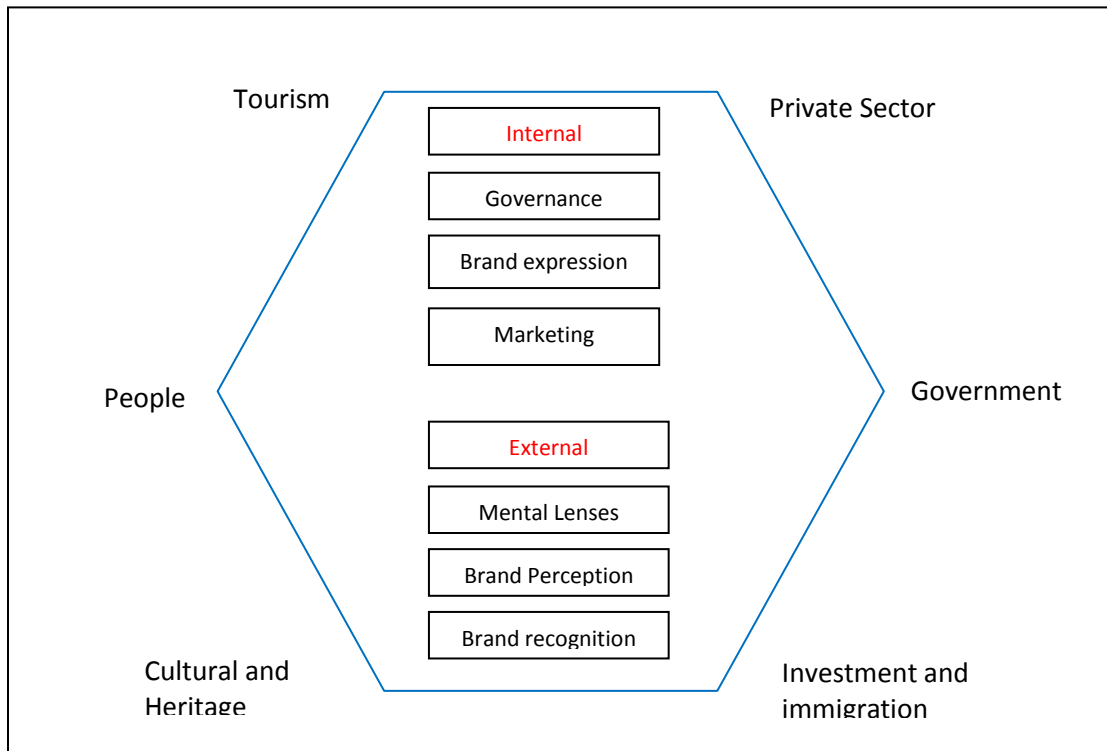


Figure 2.2 The City Brand Model (The World Class Sustainable Cities Conferences, 2009).

The model defines on how place image is perceived by both internal and external stakeholder. The image of place can be created through the following activities:

i. Tourism Promotion

Tourism promotion seems to give a great impact in branding the places together with the tourist's experience of visiting the place especially for the first timer as it will influence on how the place is perceived.

ii. Exports/ brands

Elements of exporting a products, is one of the most influence element only if the place of origin is explicit. Act as an ambassador for respective

place. Exporting the product of services that origin from a particular place which indirectly as an ambassador of a place.

iii. **Government/ Policy**

The affect of domestic policies or decisions which get international attentions.

iv. **Investment and Immigrant**

To what extent a place is able to attract business and investment as well as recruitment of foreign talents.

v. **Cultural and Heritage**

The cultural and heritage value of a place such as famous art, music, author and relevance.

vi. **People**

Influential figures such as high profile leaders, athletes, actors and actresses who that hail from a particular place. Besides, how the locals behave and treat the guest is also vital.

However, Anholt (2006b) has argued that city branding is different from nation branding. Anholt explained that branding city is relatively a small component as compared to branding a nation. Pertaining to city branding every detail including issues such as climate, pollution, transport and traffic, the cost of living, leisure and sort's facilities, law and the cultural life of the city is taken into account.

Careful attention is given on the above mentioned issues instead of looking from the holistic view of a city.

For these reasons and many, Anholt (2006b) developed a framework for evaluating city brands which is termed as 'The City Brand Hexagon'. He has employed the model on 30 cities to develop the city brand index and also used it a tool to identify brand of those cities. The six components of the city brand hexagon are as follows:

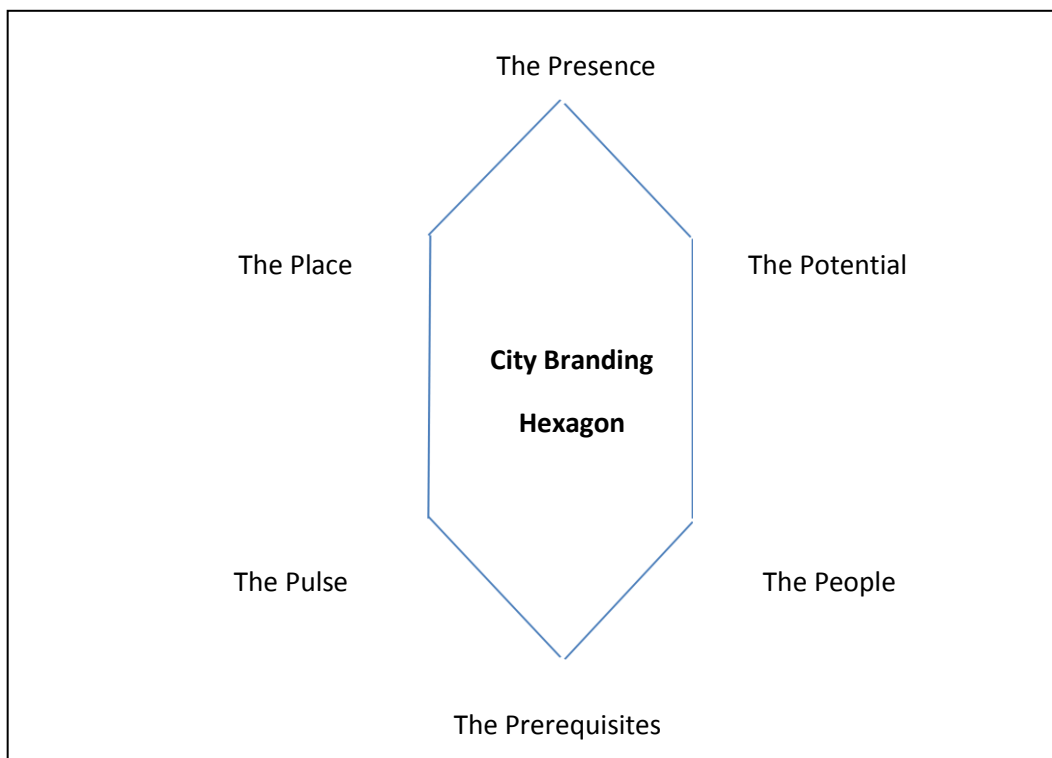


Figure 2.3 The City Brand Hexagon (Anholt, 2006b)

i. The Presence

This dimension focuses on the presence facets of the city. It includes the city's contribution to the culture, science, the way cities are governed and the familiarity of the city to the audiences. It also refers to the city's international status and standing.

ii. The Place

This dimension is being view on people's perception about the physical aspects of the city. It explores the people's perception on details such as climate, cleanliness of the city, attractive buildings and places of interest within the city.

iii. The Potential

This dimension of the city branding hexagon considers the economic and other opportunities that reflect each city's brand image. Anholt (2006b) believed that every city have its own potential which are offered to the visitors, investors and as well as the locals.

iv. The Pulse

The existence of vibrant, modern and urban lifestyle are considered as part of city's image. This dimension explores on how exciting and interesting the city is.

v. The People

The local residents are one of the stakeholders who are responsible in building the city's brand. The people's attitudes in a particular city craft the intangible brand image to the visitors. This dimension also includes the safety factor.

vi. The Prerequisites

This dimension focuses on the basic qualities of the city such as public amenities (hospitals, public transport, school and etc), the living standard and the satisfaction level of people who live in the city.

This framework can be helpful tool for branding effort and also as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of city branding. Thus, for purpose of this study the city brand hexagon is used as a tool to measure the effectiveness of the elements and values of the city through the qualitative research.

2.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF CITY BRANDING

Branding city becomes more important due to globalization, technological innovations, international competition, and convergence. Increasing unification of the global market due to globalization has made the world as a single market (Anholt, 2006a) and this indicate that every country, region and city must compete with each other.

The place branding of cities has become a paradigmatic economic development elements or tool (Anholt, 2005) even though many have shun away from this topic arguing that city is too complex to be included in branding since it has too many stakeholders involved and little management control. However, city branding is one of the 'hottest' topics among place marketers" (Morgan et al, 2002,pg 4).

City branding is defined as an activity that is carried out in order to differentiate itself from other city in order to gain the competitive advantage. Anholt, (2008) have added that success of some nations or place in business, trade, tourism, diplomacy and cultural can make a critical difference on how the nations or place is perceived by others.

Further, Domeisen (2003) have emphasis that place branding helps to develop an image and communication between internal and external audiences or stakeholders, based on positive values of a place and perception that are relevant to export development.

There are many reasons for a place to manage and control its brand. The need to compete for tourists, factories, companies and talented people and to find markets for the country's export has left countries with no choice but to adopt strategic marketing management tools and conscious branding (Kotler, 2002). Competition between places is common and it's becoming global. Places compete for skillful workforce, foreign investment and business, tourism and

public diplomacy .this is essential develop the attractiveness of the place which can be further used to promote and market the place.

Anholt (2005) stressed that branding a city is necessary. He added that places can take advantage on the rise of low cost carrier as it can promote itself as tourist destination. The spending power of people is growing and they are searching for places in order to gain interesting experiences

2.6 STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders play an important role in creating an effective city branding. Stakeholder engagement is found to be the main success of city branding strategy, although it has been pointed out that it is very challenging in city branding (Houghton and Stevens, 2010).

Moilanen and Rainistro (2009) added that selection of stakeholder is vital in city branding and they suggested that all the stakeholders right up from the citizen, businesses organizations, tourism bodies to the economic development agencies must be involved in the branding exercise. Without their enthusiastic support, the city or place is unlikely to gain a positive image in the international arena. It is vital for all the stakeholders to realize the contribution to place branding in order to create competitive advantage.

To shape the future of the city, the stakeholders must be involved in the branding exercise (Sisco van Gelder, 2011). The actions and communication that they

engage in will be the vital elements of how the story of the place will be told. The cities are communicated through stakeholders such as tourism, private sector, investment and immigration, culture and education, foreign and domestic policy and local residents (Dinnie, 2011). These are the stakeholders are believed to be those who shape the future of the city and for its brand development. Thus, the above mentioned stakeholders have been considered for purpose of this research.

2.7 SUMMARY

Theory and opinions of city branding discussed in this chapter has been great guidance for this study. The definitions and the importance of city branding help to understand about the elements and attributes within the ambit of city branding. Further, some of the relevant place and city brand models have been introduced and discussed in this chapter. The city brand hexagon model which has been introduced by Anholt (2006b) is a tool to measure the effectiveness of the found elements and values of the city.

Finally based on the literature reviews, the relevant stakeholders have been indentified for the purpose of this study. It also emphasized on the need to connect the right stakeholders in the process of branding the city branding which eventually will strengthen the brand. Rather than it been achieved by the stakeholders individually.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter discuss on the methodology that have been adopted for this research which includes research proposition, survey instrument, sampling design, data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Qualitative methods

The qualitative method is employed for the purpose of this study due to the exploratory nature of the study. The study aimed to create an in depth understanding on how the stakeholders of Kuala Lumpur identify the elements and perceive the city as a brand. The brand of the city can be formed based on their responses. Even though their opinion may vary due to their background and experiences; a common understanding of how Kuala Lumpur could be branded, can be captured.

Qualitative method has been chosen in order to step beyond the known and enter into the world of respondents and to view the world from their perspective.

By doing so, researcher will be able to make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge (Corbin, Juliet and Strauss, Anselm, 2008).

Barnard and Kirby (2004) emphasized qualitative data will be able to get hold of people's experience and their interpretations of the situations they find themselves in. Marshall and Rossman (1999) have emphasized that this method is useful when exploring a new phenomenon where little information is available. It can represent innovations of different kind and where the researchers have yet to determine relevant variables for the phenomena. In a view of city branding, Rainisto (2000) argued that there is no common ground on how to manage a place in the best way. Every place has its own unique attributes which require a 'tailor made' approach. Similarly, branding Kuala Lumpur is a new phenomenon has it has its own set of values and features which can be used to brand the city.

The research question for this study have been framed in a way that the only manner in which they can be answered is through qualitative since the study analyze the inner experiences and opinion of respondents to determine the elements and attributes of Kuala Lumpur.

3.1.2 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Interview is a form of direct communications in which an interviewer ask respondent questions face to face. This versatile and flexible method is a two way conversation between an interviewer and a respondent. By engaging in in-

depth interview, interviewer will be able probe in order to obtain more information (Janes, 2001). Besides, the respondents will be able to express his/her opinion and they are not confined in selecting the answers provided in survey questionnaire. The interviewer also will be able to explain if the interviewee is not able to understand the questions asked. The most common form of interviewing are structured, semi structured and unstructured.

Standardized questions are asked in structured interview where the interviewer will ask the predetermined questions in order or sequence. Thus, this study can be replicated. It makes easy to repeat the interview and easier to standardize. Structured interview is also able to use for large numbers of people, quick and easy.

Semi structure interview is a combination of structure and unstructured interview method. It is more flexible where the interviewer will be able to add some unstructured questions to a pre determined questions based on the interviewees responses.

Unstructured interview is more like a conversation without any structured question. The questions asked mostly depend on the interviewee's responses. It is also known as non-directive interview. Unstructured interview is employed in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the respondent's perceptions on particular subjects or issues (Barnard, Burgess and Kirby, 2004).

For purpose of this study, the semi structured interview is the preferred over the other two research methods. The interview questions were designed based on

the review of literature and research objectives which ensures that all the relevant issues for this research are covered. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, additional questions have been asked spontaneously during the interview in order to obtain detail information.

3.2 DESIGN OF QUESTIONS

The questions are designed by referring to the review of literature. The design of the questions for this study is as follows:

- i. **Exploring brand personalities / values of Kuala Lumpur:**
 - a) When you think of Kuala Lumpur, what comes to your mind?
 - b) What are the things that make you feel proud of Kuala Lumpur?
 - c) What do you think the main values of Kuala Lumpur?
- ii. **The elements of place branding**
 - a) Please state the personality / celebrity that comes to your mind
 - b) Please state important/ landmark buildings that comes to your mind
 - c) Please state some hallmark events that comes to your mind
 - d) Please state any other element that associate with Kuala Lumpur.
- iii. **Dimension of Kuala Lumpur**
 - a) What do you think the main attractions at Kuala Lumpur?
 - b) How do you think Kuala Lumpur perform in these areas:
 - Public diplomacy
 - Tourism promotion

- Attracting inward investment/ attracting business
- Export promotion
- Halal Hub

iv. Current brand of Kuala Lumpur

- a) If you think of Kuala Lumpur as a brand, what do you think it will be?
- b) How do you think international tourists/ foreigners perceive Kuala Lumpur?

v. Identifying the icon(s) of KUALA LUMPUR

- a) What do you think of the logo of Kuala Lumpur?
- b) Tagline for Kuala Lumpur

vi. Challenges in building a brand for KUALA LUMPUR

- a) What do think the possible challenges we might face in building a brand for Kuala Lumpur?

3.3 SELECTION OF STAKEHOLDERS

According to Dinnie (2011), the effectiveness of city brands depends on the support and commitment of local constituents and those championing the city brand, typically city authorities, tourism agencies and chamber of commerce. They are the major stakeholder in developing and implementing the strategy as part of the co-creative process in city branding.

Based on the literature review, the respondents chosen are the representative of stakeholders from tourism sector (tourist agents and guides, Board of Tourism Malaysia and Malaysian Tourist Information Centre), private sector (hotel managers), culture and education (Museums and academicians) and lastly the public. Besides, stakeholders such as City Council of Kuala Lumpur, shopping complexes and other attraction places are included as well. However, they were unable to cooperate due to confidential issues and time constraint.

The interviewed respondents who are representative of the stakeholders have shared their opinion based on their experiences. Opinion and response from the interviewees varies as they hail from multiple backgrounds. Thus, comparison can be made in analyzing their feedback.

According to Moilanen and Rainistro (2009), the selection of stakeholders plays a major role in branding the city. The brand of a city is the soul of a city. All stakeholders; citizen, businesses and art organizations, tourism bodies and economic development agencies must be involved from the outset of the branding exercise. They added that the city is unlikely to go beyond international recognition without the stakeholders buy-in and enthusiastic support. Everyone must recognize the need to create a unified place brand which enables the country to compete internationally (Moilanen and Rainistro, 2009).

3.4 SAMPLING SIZE

Qualitative studies typically use small sample size because of the intensive nature of such studies (Sekaran, 2000). A total of 45 predetermined respondents from various stakeholders namely academicians, tour agents, municipality and Ministry of Tourism, museums, hotel managers and public have been approached. Due to time constraint and policy regulation from the stakeholder's management, only 32 respondents agreed to participate in the interview.

Prior to the interview, the respondents were contacted by mail and phone, to seek their consent for an appointment. The interviews have been carried out individually. Respondents will be briefed on the objectives of the interview and their enormous contributions to the study. The time and location has been fixed according to the respondents' convenience and each interview lasted between 30 to 40 minutes.

Table 3.1 Stakeholders Who Took Part in the Interview

Stakeholders	No of participation
Public	17
Hotel	3
Tourist Agents and Guides	4
Academician	2
Museums	2
Board of Tourism Malaysia	2
Malaysian Tourism Information Centre	1
Malaysia Philharmonic Orchestra	1

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Data that been obtained via semi structured interviews. The interviewer note down the respondents' name, age and the position held in the organization. All the information was recorded and later transcribed into MS-word which was used as the primary basis of content analysis.

Content analysis was carried out by using NVIVO 8; qualitative research software in order to obtain the patterns in answers and group them within dimensions explored. The software discovers the patterns, identify themes, glean insights and ultimately deliver robust findings. The coding was guided by the literature review. The main themes in the dimension were identified in the form of tree nodes. Within the tree nodes, child notes were created in order to reflect the representation of the parent node. Coding of the nodes representing each themes were carried out using the principles of content analysis. Creation of the nodes was derived from the transcription of the in depth interviews.

3.6 SUMMARY

Qualitative method was utilized in order to explore the brand of Kuala Lumpur. This chapter discusses about the methods and stages involved in this study. Further, the collected data has been content analyzed by using NVivo 8, in order to explore the city's elements and attributes that would contribute to city branding. Figure 3.1, shows the methodology stages involved in this study.

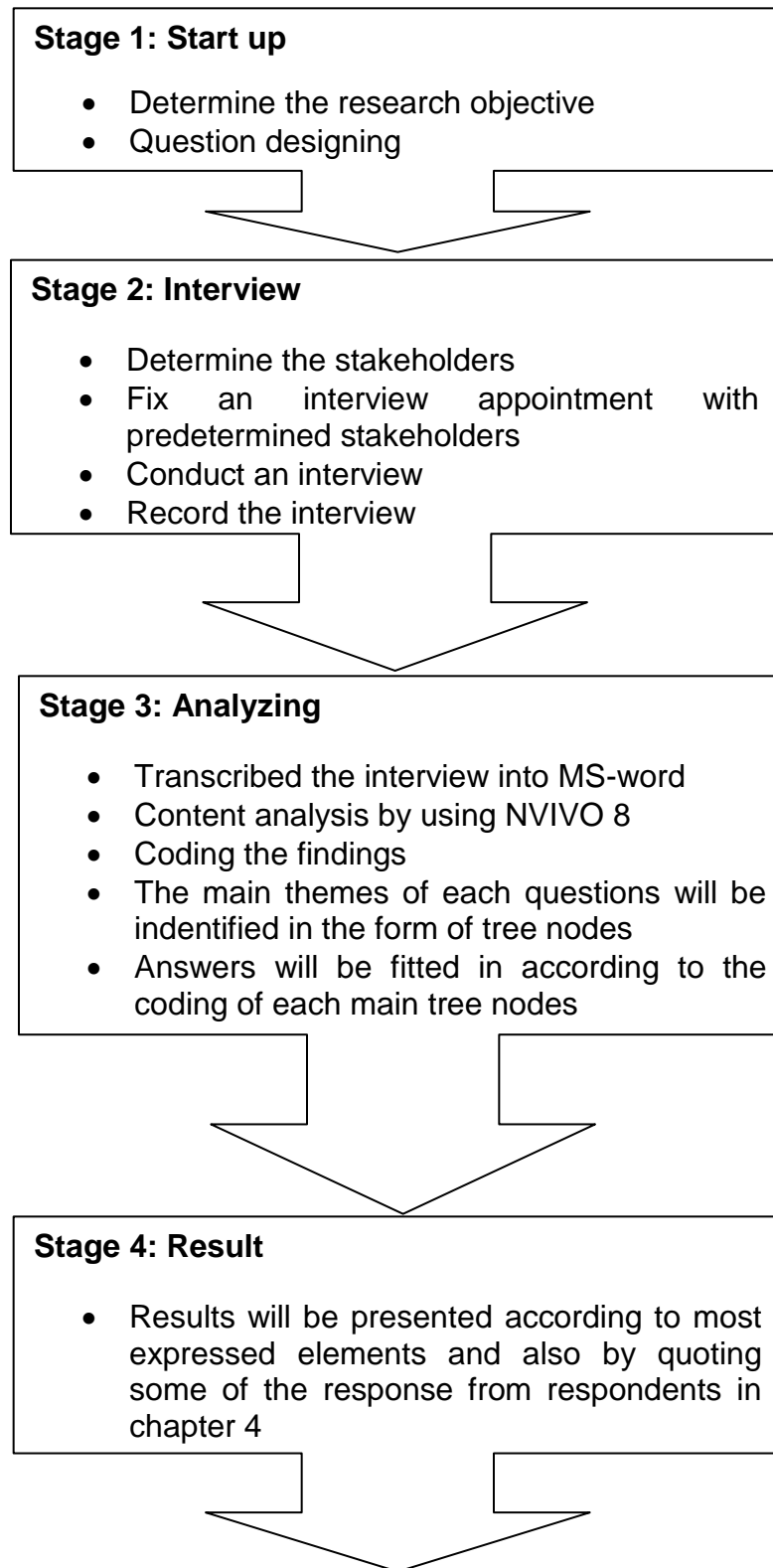


Figure 3.1: Stages of the research methodology

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the detailed findings of the interviews. The chapter begins with a profile of respondents and followed by the findings which are presented according to the research objectives.

4.1 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

In total, there are 32 respondents who have participate in this study and male make up the majority of the respondents (59.4 %) while female constitute of 40.6%. Nearly three quarter of the respondents belong to the 30 to 39 years age group (68.8%), 18.7% and 9.4% respondents are from 40 to 49 and 20-29 years age group respectively. Only 1 (3.1%) respondent is recorded to be above 50 years. The average age is 35.7 years. Respondents who participate are from various stakeholders where 50% of them are public, tourist guide and agents (12.5%), hotel managers (9.4%), tourism Malaysia (9.4%), museums and academicians (6.3%) and one respondent is from Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (3.1%).

Pertaining to academic qualifications, 53.1% of the respondents possessed at least a bachelor's degree, 15.6% are postgraduates and 6.3% has Ph.D. This shows that the respondents are were highly educated.

Table 4.1 In depth interview participants by stakeholders, age and gender

Abbreviation	Stakeholder	Age (years)	Gender
Respondent 1	Academician	37	Female
Respondent 2	Academician	35	Male
Respondent 3	Hotel –Nouevella	52	Male
Respondent 4	Hotel-KL conventional Centre	30	Female
Respondent 5	Hotel –Equatorial Hotel	41	Male
Respondent 6	National Museum	36	Female
Respondent 7	Islamic arts Museum Malaysia	38	Female
Respondent 8	Malaysia Philharmonic Orchestra	42	Female
Respondent 9	Tourism Malaysia	37	Female
Respondent 10	Tourism Malaysia	39	Male
Respondent 11	Malaysian Tourism Information Centre	30	Female
Respondent 12	Tourist Guide	29	Female
Respondent 13	Tourist Guide	30	Male
Respondent 14	Tourist agent	42	Female
Respondent 15	Tourist agent	43	Male
Respondent 16	Public	30	Male
Respondent 17	Public	31	Female
Respondent 18	Public	32	Male
Respondent 19	Public	34	Male
Respondent 20	Public	30	Male

Respondent 21	Public	36	Female
Respondent 22	Public	30	Male
Respondent 23	Public	38	Male
Respondent 24	Public	37	Male
Respondent 25	Public	36	Female
Respondent 26	Public	35	Male
Respondent 27	Public	37	Male
Respondent 28	Public	28	Female
Respondent 29	Public	27	Male
Respondent 30	Public	42	Male
Respondent 31	Public	41	Male
Respondent 32	Public	37	Male

The findings will be presented according to research objective.

4.2 OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXPLORE BRAND EQUITY of KUALA LUMPUR

Brand equity of Kuala Lumpur is representation of respondents' perception and performance of the city. According Winfield (2005), personality and values of the city that trigger a response within the mind of stakeholders is also a part of being a true brand. Referring to classic brand theory, brand is a message that able to tell consistent story and should be related to the management's values, behavior and how it is positioned and identified (Bowler, 2009). These are adapted to explore Kuala Lumpur's brand identity.

In order to obtain the first objective of this study, the respondents were asked three questions based on brand equity theory. The questions are as follows:

Question 1 (Q1): When you think of KL, what comes to your mind?

Question 2 (Q2): What are the things that make you feel proud of KL?

Question 3 (Q3): What do you think the main values of KL?

The table below presents data collected pertaining to brand equity of Kuala Lumpur. Analysis shows that most of the feedbacks are interconnected to each other. The result has been compiled and presented in one common table.

Table 4.2 The Most Frequently (*f*) Expressed Elements of The City

Elements	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total	%
Highly developed, modernization, vibrant city, urban living, diversity	13	4	7	23	14.74
Petronas Twin Tower (KLCC)	11	7		18	11.54
People -multiracial and friendly, tolerance	1	5	8	14	8.97
Food	7	3	3	13	8.33
Truly Asia-culture	3	3	6	12	7.69
Rapid development		10		10	6.41
City of opportunities	4	1	2	7	4.49
Shopping	5		2	7	4.49
Traffic	7			7	4.49
Metropolitan,	3	1	2	6	3.85
Business hub	2		3	5	3.21
Bustling, fast pace life	1		3	4	2.56
Places of attraction	1	4		4	2.56
Night life	3			3	3.21
Architecture	1		1	2	1.28
Unpredictable element of the city		1	1	2	1.28
Accessibility		2		2	1.28
Kuala Lumpur Tower		2		2	1.28
Safe		2		2	1.28
Facilities		2		2	1.28
Harmony			2	2	1.28
Orchestra	1			1	0.64
Availability		1		1	0.64
Formula One Motor Sport (F1)		1		1	0.64
Freedom		1		1	0.64
Education			1	1	0.64
Green			1	1	0.64

The result from in depth interviews shows that, Kuala Lumpur been expressed as modern, fast developing, diversified and a vibrant city ($f=23$). The rapid development of the city ($f=10$), safety ($f=2$), and facilities ($f=2$) of the metropolitan city ($f=6$) are among elements or attributes that respondents are proud of. Petronas Twin Towers ($f=18$), is the second most expressed element in exploring the brand personality for Kuala Lumpur. It remained as main icon and potent symbols of Kuala Lumpur.

The branding manager for Digi Telecommunications describes Kuala Lumpur from branding perspective.

“I’m a branding person, I think in visual and verbal terms. In visual, the most obvious one is twin towers. If you look online right now there is a lot of people crowd sourcing the logos for twitter festival in KL. They said basically anybody can design logos, so obviously from the design you can see what people think about Kuala Lumpur. They were design all twin towers. That would be single logos, most powerful, universe visual, icon about Kuala Lumpur. Verbal, probably I look as diversity and modern Kuala Lumpur but mashed up in small places. It’s diversified in terms of languages, cultures, food, music and others. One good example is, if you go to Petaling Street, you could see Chinese temple, Indian temple and raggy pub. In that single street, you see all the different things mashed up one another and I think that’s Kuala Lumpur”. (Respondent 25)

She goes on explaining interestingly on elements that makes her proud of Kuala Lumpur compared to other cities.

“Hmmm.....i think literally, you see Singapore has all these things but much too planned. In Singapore, you almost have district for all those stuff. So they have same elements but the elements are well planned and its predictable. In KL its much more Ad hoc, impulsive, unplanned. Therefore it’s has more room for surprises as it is unpredictability and adventurous”. (Respondent 25)

Friendly, warm and tolerance among the multiracial people ($f=14$) in Kuala Lumpur are considered as the add value of the city. The people make the city (Anholt, 2006), and they are considered as the valuable asset of any cities in the world.

“The main thing that I would say is people. We Malaysian are one of the friendliest people around the global. Harmonious community; people from different cultures have been living together for hundreds of years.” (Respondent 32)

Respondent 27 added that people in Kuala Lumpur are more welcoming and have positive vibes.

“The main values of Kuala Lumpur, is the people. This is the most positive qualities. The friendliness on the street create a nice atmosphere for Kuala Lumpur” (Respondent 27_jit).

Kuala Lumpur also been perceived as food heaven ($f=13$) and often described as a melting pot ($f=12$). The general manager of a hotel, highlights that food has become part of culture and lifestyle.

“I am proud of the culture. Only now day’s people talk about 1Malaysia, but previously there is no such thing. You can see all races are there; Indian, Chinese and Malay still mix around at mamak stall (food establishments which operates by Tamil Muslims). I been to many cities but it is rare to see of the integration between all races. I’m really proud of that. Only here we can find that people from different races sitting together and enjoying our local food” (Respondent 3).

“I’m proud and believe that’ the true value of KL is the melting pot of different cultures. People from different races and generation are living together peacefully. it is also known as Food heaven” (Respondent 2).

In in-depth interviews, there are also other elements are expressed by the participants. Some see Kuala Lumpur as a city of opportunity ($f=7$), shopping hub ($f=5$), bustling and fast face city ($f=4$). Some even talked about the traffic congestion ($f=7$). Respondent 26 is one of the respondents who see Kuala Lumpur as city of opportunity.

“Kuala Lumpur offer work opportunities in various industries as compare to any other state in Malaysia. It also gives a glimpse of how a metropolitan city looks.” (Respondent 26)

Representative from national museum, respondent 6 also share similar opinion and described Kuala Lumpur as a “bread and butter’ which offers good opportunities for the citizen.

Traffic jam is viewed as a negative aspect of any metropolitan city and Kuala Lumpur is not an exception.

“... It is big city and faces massive traffic jam. That’s the first thing that comes to mind I. Maybe it is one of the worst in Asia and it is due to inefficiency of public transportation and unsystematic infrastructure. KL’s traffic is pretty bad as compared to other cities and this has been the same for many years.” (Respondent 8)

4.2.1 Summary of Kuala Lumpur Brand Equity

Respondent's perception on brand equity of Kuala Lumpur has been discussed and the top five elements that respondents perceived, Kuala Lumpur are as dynamic, developed and modern city that being a model city for the whole nation. The rapid growth and diversification through culture, food, art and even languages, were the proud elements that mentioned by most of the respondents.

Again, modern, developed and dynamic city are among the elements pointed out by the respondents pertaining to the perception on brand equity of Kuala Lumpur. In addition, the participants are proud of the diversification of culture and food.

Secondly, the most iconic landmark of Kuala Lumpur is the Petronas twin tower (KLCC), multicultural society and friendly locals are regarded as valuable assets of Kuala Lumpur which is truly Asian relation to personalities and values of Kuala Lumpur, it is acknowledged as city of opportunities and shopping hub. It is also known for the image of metropolitan and urban lifestyle.

City of opportunities, shopping hub, metropolitan city with bustling and urban lifestyle, places of attraction, amazing architecture, green city, harmony and safe city to be, is some of the positive responds that uplift the image and highlights the personalities and values of Kuala Lumpur.

4.3 OBJECTIVE 2: TO EXPLORE THE ELEMENTS OF PLACE BRANDING

Ashworth (2005) stated that place branding can be developed through identification of personality, landmark buildings and hallmark events associated to the city.

The respondents have been asked the following questions:

- a) Please state the personality / celebrity that come to your mind.
- b) Please state important/ landmark buildings that come to your mind.
- c) Please state some hallmark events that comes to your mind.
- d) Please state any other element that associate with Kuala Lumpur.

Table 4.3 The Most Frequently Expressed Personality or celebrity

Personality/ Celebrity	Frequency	%
Tun Mahathir	16	39.0
Chef Wan	3	7.3
Dato Siti Nurhaliza	2	4.9
Jimmy Choo	2	4.9
Mayor KL	2	4.9
Sudirman	2	4.9
Asha Gill	1	2.4
Aznil	1	2.4
Bernard Chandran	1	2.4
Dato Ng Yen Yen	1	2.4
Elyas Omar	1	2.4
Lee Chong Wei	1	2.4
Michelle Yeoh	1	2.4
Nicole David	1	2.4
Sheila Majid	1	2.4
None	5	12.2

Table 4.3 presents the most frequently expressed personality or celebrities, who are associated with Kuala Lumpur. The most expressed personality was Tun Dr. Mahathir ($f=16$) and Chef Wan appeared to be the second most expressed personality ($f=3$). He is one of the well known chef who host cooking reality show and this followed by Siti Nurhaliza ($f=2$) a local singer, Jimmy Choo ($f=2$) and Sudirman ($f=2$) Jimmy Choo is an international shoemaker and fashion designer and on the other hand, Sudirman is a singer and song writer however he died in 1992. Other celebrities such as Nicol David, Lee Chong Wei, Bernard Chandran and Michelle Yeoh and etc are also mentioned.

There is significant gap between the highest and the second most frequently express personality:

“Tun Dr. Mahathir, yes...no one else that I can think off Even though he is no longer in the position; the current Kuala Lumpur is basically his framework. He is the father of modernization of Kuala Lumpur”. (Respondent 10)

“Of course, Tun Dr. Mahathir. Basically he built modern Kuala Lumpur. He crafts the path for modern Malaysia”. (Respondent 5)

Even some of the interviewees responded that they could not associate any personality or celebrity with the city ($f= 5$), directly. However, it has to be noted that most of the famous icon pointed out are not originally from Kuala Lumpur. They are recognized for their contribution.

“Hmmm...None. Because none of them is from Kuala Lumpur. If you said Tun Mahathir, he is not from Kuala Lumpur. He is from Kedah and maybe he could be associated with Malaysia but not with Kuala Lumpur.” (Respondent 2)

Respondents 8 and 9, stated that in relation to personality or celebrity, they couldn't distinguish Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia.

“Naming a personality only for Kuala Lumpur is difficult. It's more about Malaysia. If Malaysia, people still talk about Tun Dr. Mahathir. No matter where you go, people still talk about him even though he is no longer ruling the country.” (Respondent 8)

Respondent 9, the representative from Tourism Malaysia also shared similar opinion.

“..who is from KL, everyone from somewhere else and they come to Kuala Lumpur. hmm...but I still go for Tun Dr. Mahathir. He is so loud out there. We can't ignore him. He left an impact. for good or bad, people will still remember him. I think, I would associate Malaysia and Kuala Lumpur with him.” (Respondent 9)

Table 4.4 The Most Frequently Expressed Landmark Buildings

Landmark buildings	Frequency	%
Kuala Lumpur Petronas Twin Tower	32	45.07
Kuala Lumpur Tower	8	11.27
Bangunan Sultan Abd Samad	5	7.04
Kuala Lumpur KTM Building	4	5.63
Batu Caves	3	4.23
Central Market	2	2.82
China Town	2	2.82
Independence Square	2	4.23
National Monument	2	2.82
Dayabumi	1	1.41
Istana Budaya	1	1.41
Masjid Jamek	1	1.41
National Mosque	1	1.41
National Palace	1	1.41
National Planatarium	1	1.41
Pude Bus Terminal	1	1.41
Pudu Jail	1	1.41
Putrajaya	1	1.41
Selangor Club	1	1.41

Table 4.4, presents the landmark buildings stated by the respondents. It clearly indicates that majority of the participants mentioned that Petronas Twin Tower is the iconic building of Kuala Lumpur. Some added that there is no other flagship building that is comparative to Petronas Twin Tower.

“for the last 10 years, it’s has been Petronas Twin Tower and before that it was Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad”.(Respondent 25)

“Petronas Twin Tower. It used to be Tugu Negara but it is no longer the landmark. Now with KLCC, people are interested to visit the tallest building in country and the tallest twin towers in the world. So most people definitely would like to see Petronas Twin Tower”. (Respondent 8)

According to Assistant Director of Malaysian Tourism Centre, most of the tourists recognized Kuala Lumpur through Twin Tower as it is the prominent landmark in the city. She also added that tourists frequently request for information in Malaysian Tourism Information Centre (MATIC) about Petronas Twin Tower.

“Of course it is Petronas Twin Tower....wonder if one can think of anything else. Tourists are interested to know about Petronas Twin Tower”. (Respondent 11)

Kuala Lumpur Tower ($f=8$) also has been recognized as an important landmark building by some of the respondents. A tourist agent, stated that:

“Both Twin Tower and KL Tower are icon of Kuala Lumpur. Anywhere we go, we can see Twin Tower and KL Tower. Heritage buildings such as Sultan Abdul Samad are not in our vision even it has its own heritage value but it is not for a landmark for Kuala Lumpur”. (Respondent 15)

Among the historical buildings mentioned are Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad ($f=5$) and Kuala Lumpur KTM Building ($f=4$).

“I think the landmark buildings in Kuala Lumpur are impressive and elegant. KL has both colonial pre war and also the contemporary buildings. KLCC and the heritage buildings such as Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad.” (Respondent 31)

In order to identify hallmark events, respondents are asked to name events which ideally associated with city. The most frequently mentioned events were Independence Day ($f=12$), Colours of Malaysia which also known as Citrawarna ($f=9$), Formula One ($f=5$), Thaipusam day ($f=5$), festivals such as Hari Raya, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, and Christmas ($f=4$), shopping events as mega sale ($f=4$) and followed by other events.

Table 4.5 The Most Frequently Expressed Events

Events	Frequency	%
Independence Day	12	25.0
Colours of Malaysia, Citrawarna	9	18.8
Formula 1 Petronas Malaysia Grand Prix.	5	10.4
Thaipusam Day	5	10.4
Chinese New Year, Christmas, Hari Raya, Deepavali	4	8.3
Mega Sale	4	4.2
Food Fair	1	2.1
Kraftangan Day	1	2.1
Malaysia Philharmonic Orchestra	1	2.1
New Year Celebration	1	2.1
One Malaysia Dance	1	2.1
Youth Festival	1	2.1
None	3	6.3

However, respondent 8, from Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra concluded that Kuala Lumpur yet to have an event which can be associated to the city.

“I have to admit that there is many events is in Kuala Lumpur, especially run by tourism Malaysia, but honestly, don’t think about worldwide or nationwide, people are not aware of the events held in Kuala Lumpur.. Even Citrawarna, if you go to New York or the nearest Singapore, ask them about Malaysian Citrawarna, they won’t know. So forget about overseas, go to Johor Bharu or Kedah and ask them about Citrawarna, they have no idea. Sadly, Kuala Lumpur does not host any event in particular which can be associated with the city.”

She goes on by giving an example of other city, which had a significant event that enhances the city brand.

“I have been to conference in Vancouver, Canada few years back. It hosts the world second largest music festival. You can see the entire city celebrating the festival. Everyone play important role until end of the conference. I could strongly feel the impact of the event. So, comparably, we still don’t have similar kind of festival or events that could pull the entire city together.”

Table 4.6 The Most Frequently Expressed other Elements that could associated with Kuala Lumpur

Elements	Frequency	%
Shopping	8	25.0
Culture	8	25.0
Green	5	15.6
Food	3	9.4
Bustling City	2	6.3
Entertainment	2	6.3
Traffic and Pollution	4	12.5

Table 4.6 presents the element that could be associated with Kuala Lumpur other than personality, landmark buildings and hallmark events. The finding

shows that, 25% of the respondents agreed that shopping and culture element can be linked to the city. Respondent 12, who shared her experienced as tourist guide said that shopping is one of the favourite activity for tourist and Kuala Lumpur known as “*shopping heaven*” among them.

Similarly, respondent from Tourism Malaysia stated that,

“Oh...of course is shopping. I have heard from many. We, in Tourism Malaysia, also promote shopping We have mega sale at least 4 times in a year such as Festival sale and so on. It attracts both international and local tourists to shop in Kuala Lumpur. It caters various market segments including high end and budget conscious customers.” (Respondent 10)

Whilst respondent 25 described Kuala Lumpur as melting pot.

“I think Kuala Lumpur is more vibrant then Singapore in terms of creative cultural. I think we have more interesting creative art collaboration and creative community; Kuala Lumpur has more potential as compared to Hong Kong and Singapore. I think Kuala Lumpur has very vibrant art community.”(Respondent 25)

Other than those elements, respondent 15 recognized Kuala Lumpur as green.

He reviewed as follows.

“No matter how fast we grow, we still concern about the environment. At every corner you can see green scenery, and the city that preserve nature especially the Bukit Nenas, which is about 9 hectares of forest KL is green city.” (Respondent 15)

4.3.1 Summary on Exploring the Elements of Place Branding

Ashworth (2006a) mentioned that personality; flagship buildings and hallmarks events associate with a city can be use for branding purpose.

Finding from in depth interview indicates that the highly recognized personality in Kuala Lumpur is Tun Dr. Mahathir. Some respondents argued that he is the country's personality rather than the city Chef Wan, Jimmy Choo, Nicole David and Michelle Yeoh are among the personalities linked to the city

Petronas Twin Tower which is also known as KLCC is frequently mentioned iconic building. KLCC first comes to the mind of majority of the respondent when they are forwarded with the question pertaining to iconic building. It's clearly indicates that Twin Towers is an impressive icon of the city

Whilst, Independence Day and Colours of Malaysia (Citrawarna) are among the highly recognized events in Kuala Lumpur. However, the events need to refurbished in order to be more impactful and memorable. Events as Formula 1 Petronas Malaysia Grand Prix, Thaipusam celebration are also some remarkable and important event in Kuala Lumpur. These events attract huge number of audiences.

Apart from the above mentioned elements, shopping and multi culture image are also associated with Kuala Lumpur.

4.4 OBJECTIVE 3: TO EXPLORE THE DIMENSIONS OF CITY ATTRACTIONS AND IDENTIFY THE BEST DIMENSION OF KUALA LUMPUR

In branding a city, it is essential to identify the potential of the city which it's reflect the city's economic and interaction of the city with the audiences (Anholt, 2006a).

To identify the possible potential of the city, the respondents were asked about the main attractions of Kuala Lumpur. Each stakeholder perceived it differently and this is presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7 The Most Frequently Expressed City Attractions

Dimension	Frequency	%
Shopping	18	27.3
Places Of Interest	15	22.7
Petronas Twin Tower	10	15.2
Food	8	12.1
Business Tourism	5	6.1
Culture	3	6.1
Night Life	3	4.5
Fusion Between Modern And Past	1	1.5
Modern City	1	1.5
Job Opportunity	1	1.5
Heritage	1	1.5

Respondent from MATIC claims that shopping is the main attraction of the city since it offers variety of choices. The tour agent, respondent 15 echoed the same view and added that Petronas Twin Tower and food are also the main attraction of the city. Few respondents share similar view:

“Kuala Lumpur is all about food, KLCC and shopping.” (Respondent 12)

“I used to organize conferences and the best place to conduct conference is golden triangle. the Middle East tourists will be very much interested as it is a great location for shopping, availability of food and the city’s main attraction is within the reach.” (Respondent 1)

However some respondent sees Kuala Lumpur as city for business opportunity (f=4). Food and Beverage manager, respondent 4, stated that the strategic geographical location, infrastructures, hotels and hospitality of the locals are among the reasons that attract one to invest in Kuala Lumpur. Nevertheless, respondent 25, agrees with respondent 4 and added that Kuala Lumpur is a well connected city however the availability of resources such for skillful workforce is not well recognized. She believes that,

“Kuala Lumpur has great potential for fast growing companies. KL is a strategic location for newly established companies especially in technology related industry such as software application and development. Currently, Singapore is attracting these companies and KL could be an alternative as we have great infrastructure and skilled workforce. Besides, the labour cost is much cheaper in comparison to Singapore.” (Respondent 25)

4.4.1 Identifying Best Dimensions of Kuala Lumpur

The following questions are asked in order to identify the best dimensions of Kuala Lumpur:

- a) How do you think Kuala Lumpur perform in these areas:
 - Public diplomacy

- Tourism promotion
- Attracting inward investment/ attracting business
- Export promotion
- Halal Hub

Most of the cities and places interact with outside world and the image is formed based the above mentioned areas (Anholt, 2009). For this study, a new dimension on Halal Hub has added since the government is focusing on global Halal market (Utusan Online, 2004).

Table 4.8 Dimension of City Branding

Dimension	Frequency			
	Good	Average	Poor	Not sure
Public Diplomacy	21	8	1	2
Tourism Promotion	19	7	6	
Halal Hub	24	2	1	5
Attracting inward investment/ attracting business	19	8	3	2
Export Promotion	16	7	4	5

The dimension are classified as good, average and poor and rated as 4, 3, and 2 respectively in order to measure the findings. It has to be noted that few respondents were not sure on how Kuala Lumpur interacting on these areas (Table 4.8). Table 4.9 presents the overall result based on rating.

Table 4.9 Dimension of City Branding

Dimension	Frequency				Total
	Good (4)	Average (3)	Poor (2)	Not sure (1)	
Public Diplomacy	84	24	2	2	112
Tourism Promotion	76	21	12		109
Halal Hub	96	6	2	5	109
Attracting inward investment/ attracting business	76	24	6	2	108
Export Promotion	64	21	8	5	98

Public Diplomacy appeared to be the best dimension. 21 respondents concluded that Kuala Lumpur doing relatively well in communicating to the outside world. Respondent 1, added that Kuala Lumpur being the centre point of contact to other nation and city but respondent 2, have a different opinion.

“Before Putrajaya, KL is administration town as well to communicate with other country. I would say that public diplomacy shifted to Putrajaya not anymore in Kuala Lumpur.” (Respondent 2)

He further claims that Kuala Lumpur city is left only for business and tourisms. He also stresses that Kuala Lumpur could be branded through these dimension. Nevertheless, almost 60% of respondents agreed that Kuala Lumpur has a lot of potential in tourism and able to attract inward business and investments. Respondent 11 says that Kuala Lumpur performed well in tourism promotion and the percentage of tourist visiting Kuala Lumpur is gradually increasing. She explains that,

“Kuala Lumpur offers wide variety from shopping to iconic landmarks which makes the tourists visit to KL more memorable.” (Respondent 11)

This remark is consistent with Ashworth (2009)'s theory. It states that the city's image can be identified through landmark building, hallmark events and prominent personality. Urry (2002) commented that tourist is someone who is in search of visual experiences that they don't get see in their daily life. Thus, tourist will be consistently looking for new experiences and the authority could take this opportunity to promote the city through effective tourism promotion. Whilst, few other respondents commented that there is a need to enhance tourism promotion in order to make it to be more impactful.

Tourism is promoted at the national level and little is focused on cities.

“In term of Malaysia, we are doing well. Government is doing an excellent job in promoting Malaysia and we won lot of awards. But, the promotion activities do not centered particularly on Kuala Lumpur. Perhaps, more can be done to promote KL. Efforts must be taken to maintain and refurbish the facilities. We have first world infrastructures and facilities but we practice third world mentality when it comes to practice of maintenance.” (Respondent 9)

She also suggested that Tourism Malaysia should aggressively promoting Kuala Lumpur City, so that the tourists must be able to distinguish the image of Kuala Lumpur from Malaysia.

Attracting inward investment and business is another area that has been commented by respondents. Respondent 2, an academicians claims that Kuala Lumpur is the business centre of the country and it is performing well as far as

business is concerned. He added that Kuala Lumpur has already attracted many investors and it is moving towards a positive growth.

Respondent 4 suggested that authority should keep promoting business tourism.

“We are interacting with many traders and investors and there are huge opportunities available in Kuala Lumpur. We will be able to attract corporations and businesses if we promote business tourism. According to recent studies, so far, as we started the business tourism, the amount of money coming in to the city has increase approximately 12 % from what it was last two years.”

Potential of Halal Hub in Kuala Lumpur has been perceived positively by the respondents. Perhaps, it is not a complete surprise as Kuala Lumpur is actively involved in Halal conferences and has been successfully organizing World Halal Forum for six continuous years. The overwhelmed responds from the respondents' shows that Kuala Lumpur has been successful in promoting itself as Halal hub. Almost 75% of the respondents agreed that the city is performing well in this area. Respondent 7 from the Islamic Museum commented on the potential of this area.

“This is actually a booming industry as Malaysia is an Islamic nation and it draws huge number of Middle Eastern businessmen, traders and tourists. Apart from that, the government is promoting Malaysia as an international halal hub. They find that it is easier to obtain halal products as Malaysia has successfully applied a single halal standard throughout the country. There are many Middle East restaurants in Malaysia. Some of the Middle Eastern come to Malaysia as tourists and students and later they decide to settle down here.”

Almost 50% of the respondents say that Kuala Lumpur performing well export promotion. However, some of the respondents commented that Kuala Lumpur

does not have any products to be promoted. According to Anholt (2006), the place of origin should be explicit in order to recognize the city through export promotion dimension. Kuala Lumpur is yet to have products tagged as “made in Kuala Lumpur” or “origin from Kuala Lumpur”.

4.4.2 Summary on Exploring the Dimensions of City Attractions and Identify the Best Dimension of Kuala Lumpur

The city as whole has the ability to attract various market segments of tourists (Keller, 1998). This objective explores the attraction and identifies the best dimension of the city. Finding indicates that, shopping, food and culture are frequently mentioned by the participants. More than 30 places of interest within the city are mentioned as attractions of Kuala Lumpur. Among them are Petronas Twin Tower, heritage and historical buildings, museums, national monument, national palace, bird parks, central market and many more. Kuala Lumpur is as business hub which attracts internal and external traders. Most the respondents widely agreed that the combination of shopping, food culture reflect the uniqueness of Kuala Lumpur. Overall, Kuala Lumpur performed satisfactorily in public diplomacy, tourism promotion, attracting inward investment, export promotion and halal hub areas.

4.5 OBJECTIVE 4: TO IDENTIFY CURRENT BRAND OF KUALA LUMPUR

In order to identify the current brand of Kuala Lumpur, the respondents were asked about their opinion on Kuala Lumpur's current brand and how does tourist perceive Kuala Lumpur from their point of view.

Referring to table 4.10, slightly more than one quarter of them stated that KL is diversified, modern, fast pace, and vibrant city ($f=10$) Kuala Lumpur is also regarded as opportunity city ($f=4$) Petronas Twin Tower ($f=3$) appeared to be the only physical landmark that has been linked as an identity of Kuala Lumpur.

Table 4.10 The Most Frequently Expressed Elements to Identify Brand of Kuala Lumpur

Elements	Frequency	%
Diversification, Modern, Fast Pace City, Vibrant City, City Life	10	30.3
Opportunity City	4	12.1
Petronas Twin Tower	3	9.1
Developing city	2	6.1
Green City	2	6.1
Shopping	2	6.1
Value For Money	2	6.1
Islamic Country	2	6.1
Multicultural	2	6.1
Halal Hub	1	3.0
Heritage	1	3.0
Represent Malaysia Image	1	3.0
Traffic	1	3.0

Respondent 15 perceived Kuala Lumpur as a blend of colonial and modern influence. He added that *“Kuala Lumpur is a humble city and the home of world famous Petronas twin towers”*.

Meanwhile respondent 1, perceived that the city is still in growing and developing.

“In marketing we call it laggard stage. Still in growing phase and have not reached the maturity stage yet. More to offer and more to come. Its an undiscovered city”

On the other hand, Respondent 25 added that Kuala Lumpur’s brand is still under shadow of neighboring city.

“Current brand perception is...hmmm....people perceive that KL is the north of Singapore and south of Bangkok. Still under the shadow of Singapore and Bangkok”

Respondent 4 stated that, *“we have the style, quality and perfection. We just have to improve on few things and I am sure that we can compete with rest”*.

4.5.1 Identify Current Brand of Kuala Lumpur from Tourist Perception

The city has been regarded as diversified, developed and vibrant. Further, the tourists are impressed with the people who are friendly and welcoming ($f=11$), choices of food ($f=7$), weather ($f=5$), shopping ($f=5$) and culture ($f=5$)

“Most of my guest loves our food and they can’t stop eating. They just pampered with food. They love the smile of our people. It is genuine and warm. It’s great a city and the weather are fantastic.” (Respondent 4_vim)

Tourists are concerned about cleanliness ($f=3$), safety ($f=3$) and language ($f=1$). Respondent 12, who is a tourist guide added that generally tourists have very positive perception of Kuala Lumpur.

“Tourists perceive our city as clean, peaceful and safe. They feel safe to go out even at odd hours. The density of the city is low and English is widely spoken in KL

Traffic congestions in KL are one of the negative elements by pointed out by tourists. Respondent 5 suggested that improvement on public transport will improve the traffic movement in the city.

A tourist guide stated that many tourists perceived Kuala Lumpur as a stopover or transit. They proceed to other places and they are not able to engage in any activities within the short time frame (Respondent 12). Respondent 7 suggested that our authority need to rebrand our places of interest in effective and creative ways in to order attract more tourists.

Table 4.11 The Most frequently comment expressed by Tourist about Kuala Lumpur

Comments		
Positive comments	Frequency	%
Friendly And Welcoming People	9	15.8
Food	7	12.3
Weather	5	8.8
Shopping	5	8.8
Diversified, Developed, vibrant and Metropolitan	5	8.8
Culture	5	8.8

Green City	4	7.0
Modern And Heritage City	4	7.0
Value For Money	3	5.3
Safe	3	5.3
Cleanliness	3	5.3
Family Oriented	2	3.5
Hub For Air Asia	1	1.8
No Language Problem	1	1.8
<i>Negative comments</i>	Frequency	%
Traffic	4	40
Lack of attractions and just a stopover place	3	30
Improvement for public transport	1	10
Lack of infrastructure	1	10
Pollution	1	10

4.5.2 Summary on Identifying Current Brand of Kuala Lumpur

The fourth objective of these studies, has identified the current brand of Kuala Lumpur by the respondents and how the city been perceived by tourist. Internal audience perceived Kuala Lumpur as modern, diversified, vibrant city. The city is known as shopping hub, a melting pot and value for money. It is also the home of world's tallest twin buildings.

The tourists perceive the residents as friendly and welcoming. Besides, they also regard KL as safe, clean, food heaven with good. They encounter less communication barrier as English is widely spoken.

4.6 OBJECTIVE 5: TO IDENTIFY ICON OF KUALA LUMPUR

Combining the visual and the verbal provides the means to make brands effective (Clifton, 2009). Icon and slogan is part of branding exercise. The following table presents the most frequently expressed icon for Kuala Lumpur.

Table 4.12 The Most frequently expressed logo for Kuala Lumpur

Icon	Frequency	%
Petronas Twin Tower (KLCC)	25	69.4
Modern, Culture and Sky Skippers	4	11.1
Kuala Lumpur Tower	2	5.6
Masjid Jamek	1	2.8
Gombak River	1	2.8
Istana Budaya	1	2.8
Hibiscus	1	2.8
Rainforest	1	2.8

Survey indicates Petronas Twin Tower is the prominent icon from the respondent's perspective.

"The icon of London is Big Ben Merlion for Singapore, Eifel Tower for Paris. KLCC is the renowned icon of KLKL is widely known after the construction of KLCC and before that it was described as being located between Thailand and Singapore." (Respondent 2)

"Petronas Twin Tower (KLCC). The vibrant design of the building is very impressive. i have noted that international media portray twin tower as an icon of KL Even when I attend an oversea conference, many of them recognize Kuala Lumpur or Malaysia through KLCC." (Respondent 24)

"The main icon is Twin Tower.. People start noticing the city because of the twin tower."(Respondent 3)

In addition, the respondents also suggested Kuala Lumpur tower (f=2), has as an icon of Kuala Lumpur.

The second part of this objective is to explore the slogan or catchphrase that highlights the uniqueness of the city. Table 4.13 present the tag line that been suggested by respondents. The tag line been classified according to theme.

Based on findings, the best theme that reflects Kuala Lumpur is diversified, modern, fast pace and vibrant city. Miscellaneous theme is widely mentioned by the participants; it embraces all the attributes of the city.

One of the slogans that being promoted by Tourism Malaysia, is *Dine, Shop, Chill out*. However, from the respond clearly indicate that the tag line is not effective since none of the respondent could recall it.

Table 4.13 Tagline proposed by respondents

Themes	Respondent	Tag Line
Diversification, Modern, Fast Pace City, Vibrant City and Heritage city	Respondent 1	City of diversity
	Respondent 8	City that never sleep
	Respondent 12	Modern city with heritage edifice
	Respondent 13	Unique Kuala Lumpur
	Respondent 14	City of Vibrant
	Respondent 15	Humble city with modern vision
	Respondent 29	KL keep going
Opportunity City	Respondent 3	Land of Opportunity and Entertainment
	Respondent 4	Where the rest meet the best
	Respondent 6	Where is the opportunity knot
	Respondent 25	Where ideas meet
Cultural and heritage	Respondent 17	KL ,truly Asia
	Respondent 23	City of Colours
	Respondent 24	Cultural melting pot

Nature	Respondent 28	KL the green city
	Respondent 5	City of the Sun
Shopping	Respondent 21	Ultimate shopping destination
Food	Respondent 27	Welcome...You are in Food heaven
Miscellaneous	Respondent 7	The City Of Wonders
	Respondent 9	One city, one nation
	Respondent 10	Something for everybody
	Respondent 11	Smiley Kuala Lumpur
	Respondent 2	City value for money within reach
	Respondent 16	You can do what you want
	Respondent 18	Everything and anything ...KL
	Respondent 19	Amazing KL
	Respondent 20	One World
	Respondent 22	KL, its where u want to be
	Respondent 26	Work smart, play hard
	Respondent 30	All in KL
	Respondent 31	KL...glitz you all the way!
	Respondent 32	We embrace all

4.6.1. Summary on Identifying Icons of Kuala Lumpur

Icons and slogans have to be closely connected to the actual brand and people must able associate the icon/slogan when they hear the name of the city (Larsson, 2006).

The most frequently mentioned icon that will be ideal for Kuala Lumpur is Petronas Twin Tower, KL tower, Masjid Jamek Istana Budaya and hibiscus has been suggested as icons. Respondents have mix reaction in relation to the slogan. Majority has pointed various attributes that represent KL and these have been categorized as miscellaneous. The suggested icon and slogan for this study will be presented in chapter 5.

4.7 OBJECTIVE 6: IDENTIFY CHALLENGES IN BUILDING A BRAND FOR KUALA LUMPUR

Building a brand for a city is challenging; the authority may face many hurdles before it become successful (Dinnie, 2011). One of the objectives for this study is to identify possible challenges that might hinder the branding exercise. Among the constraints that have been pointed out by the respondents are presented the following table.

Table 4.14 The Most frequently expressed Challenges

Challenges	Frequency	%
Public's attitude	7	12.1
Government	7	12.1
Cleanliness	7	12.1
Traffic jam	5	8.6
Maintenance of the building and facilities	4	6.9
Lack of transportation integration	4	6.9
Politic	4	6.9
Safety	4	6.9
Finding the true identity of Kuala Lumpur	3	5.2
Illegal immigrant	2	3.5
Effect the development	2	3.5
Competition with neighboring countries	2	3.5
Inconsistency	2	3.5
Enforcement	3	5.2
Keeping up the promise	1	1.7
Lack of promotion on city	1	1.7

Public's attitude has been regarded as the main challenge of branding effort (f=9). This is followed by the policies and support from governments (f=7) and traffic congestions (f=5).

Respondent 1 commented that managing the public aligning to the branding exercise is the most challenging task. She added the public need to be very cooperative and the benefits of branding must be communicated to them. Public's positive attitude is one of the main pillars of successful branding.

Vandalism and cleanliness are among the challenges of branding and this is interconnected indirectly with the public's attitude.

"The biggest challenge is to increase the awareness of the public pertaining to cleanliness. It is essential to necessary action to make the city clean and the authority such as KL City Hall plays an vital role in improving the sanitation. In addition to that, it is important to prevent the vandalism within the city. I believe that the public are lack of sense of belongingness."(Respondent 3)

While, respondent 25 has aggressively pointed out that, branding is all about the authority and the decision maker has been regarded as main challenges faced in branding a city. She has provided some fascinating ideas.

"The decision maker pertaining to Kuala Lumpur branding are not qualified. They are only looking from the perspective of tourism; all the stakeholders such as city planner, service providers and etc must be involved in the branding effort. Most of the strategies are only for short term purposes and branding cannot be done in a short period of time. It's more of a long term planning where time is need to create a strong brand image and effort must be directed to communicate the brand to the audiences When the city hall appoint a new mayor, changes have been

made and previous branding exercise is ignored. Instead, the new mayor should sustain the previous branding strategy and find ways to enhance the existing brand. It doesn't make sense if every mayor comes up with new brand for the city. Currently, focused has been directed on advertisement and it has to be noted that advertisement and promotion is only part of branding exercise. Branding is an asset, thus it is essential to fully understand the fundamental idea of branding.

Respondent 4 stated that promoting place is also a challenging task for the tourism board. He further explained as such.

"It is important to communicate the precise values of KL to the outside world as people will be disappointed if the city does not portray the image that has been promoted. Besides, we can't spend hundreds of thousands to market Kuala Lumpur to other countries due to cost constraints.

Respondent 9 from Tourism Malaysia said that the most challenging task is to set apart the brand of Malaysia from KL and to identify the appropriate elements of Kuala Lumpur. Similarly, respondent 11 from MATIC has highlighted that,

"hmmmm...the challenge is to come up with a unique brand of KL and distinguish it from Malaysia's brand" (Respondent 11).

4.7.1 Summary on Identifying Challenges in Building a Brand for Kuala Lumpur

Issues such as branding strategies and government's support are among the possible challenges pointed out by the respondents. Respondents also have highlighted the importance of maintaining the infrastructure and facilities. This is

in line with Kotler (2002) who stressed that one of the major challenge to Asian countries is maintenance of the facilities.

Traffic congestion is one of the problems faced by many urban cities in Southeast Asia region. The traffic is getting worse due to the lack of integration among public transportations and inefficient public transport service.

Finding a true identity that reflects Kuala Lumpur is also one of challenges faced in branding the city. These findings indicate the possible barriers in building an effective brand and efforts must be taken to overcome these problems. For instance, the authority should enhance the effectiveness of the public transportation and encourage the public to use them in order to reduce the traffic congestion.

4.8 SUMMARY

The chapter begins with the profiling of the respondents. It also discussed the findings based on the objectives that have been laid out in the first chapter. Table 4.15 presents the summary of the expressed elements and attributes according to the objectives.

Table 4.15 SUMMARY OF THE KUALA LUMPUR CITY ELEMENTS BASED ON OBJECTIVE

Objectives	Theoretical Elements	Attributes/Elements of Kuala Lumpur
To explore brand personalities / values of KL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. When you think of KL, what comes to your mind? b. Personality c. values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Highly developed, modernization, vibrant city, urban living, diversity ii. Petronas Twin Tower iii. People -multiracial and friendly, tolerance iv. Food v. Culture vi. Safe
To identify the elements of place branding	<p>Elements that could be associate with Kuala Lumpur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. personality / celebrity b. important/ landmark c. events d. other elements ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad ii. Nicole David, iii. Jimmy Choo iv. Michelle Yeoh v. Lee Chong Wei i. Petronas Twin Tower ii. KL tower iii. Heritage buildings- Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, KTM Building i. Independence Day ii. Colours Of Malaysia iii. F1 sports iv. Thaipusam celebration i. Shopping ii. Cultural city iii. Green City iv. Food

<p>To identify the best dimension of KL</p>	<p>Main attractions at KL</p> <p>How do you think KL perform in these areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Public diplomacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism promotion • Attracting inward investment/ attracting business • Export promotion • Halal Hub 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Shopping ii. Places of interest iii. Petronas Twin Tower iv. Food v. Business Tourism vi. Culture <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Public diplomacy Very Good. ii. Tourism Promotion Good iii. Attracting inward Investment/ Business Good iv. Export Promotion Moderate v. Halal Hub Very Good
<p>To explore the current brand of KL</p>	<p>Brand of Kuala Lumpur</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Diversified, vibrant, modern and bustling city ii. Opportunity city iii. Petronas Twin Tower iv. City value for money v. Green City vi. Multicultural vii. Traffic jam

	Perception of international tourists/ foreigners about Kuala Lumpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Friendly and Welcoming People ii. Food iii. Pleasant weather iv. Shopping v. Diversified, vibrant, modern and bustling city vi. Cultural city vii. Green City viii. Safe and Clean ix. Traffic jam
To identify the icon(s) of KL	<p>Logo/Icon of Kuala Lumpur</p> <p>The best Tagline for Kuala Lumpur</p>	<p>Petronas Twin Tower</p> <p>Enchanting Kuala Lumpur/ Mesmerizing Kuala Lumpur / Stunning Kuala Lumpur</p>
Identify challenges in building a brand for KL	Challenges in building a brand for KL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Public's Attitude ii. Governments involvement and enforcement iii. Maintenance of the Building and facilities iv. Cleanliness v. Politic vi. Finding the true identify vii. Illegal Immigrant.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter discusses the output of the findings, the summary and conclusion will be presented according to objectives of this study. Finally, recommendations and the implications of the findings are provided for future research

5.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Forming a brand identity is one of the essential stages in action plan for building a place brand. A brand could be formed through concluding the found elements and attributes in research stage, which define the city brand (Moilanen and Rainistro, 2009). Thus, the purpose of this study will be fulfilled by presenting the conclusion and detail out the best elements, which allow forming a strong, clear favorable and unique identity for Kuala Lumpur city. To further prove the validity of the elements and attributes, the brand identity of Kuala Lumpur will be measured by using the city branding model proposed by Anholt (2006b).

5.1.1 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXPLORE BRAND EQUITY OF KUALA LUMPUR

The respondents strongly perceived Kuala Lumpur as a modern, vibrant and diversified city. KL is known for its remarkable cultural diversity and food. The findings of this study are parallel with Phesal (2010). He also added that Kuala Lumpur need to be safe, secure, peaceful and harmonious for the society to live in and to visit (The Star, 2010). These are the elements that should be reflected as the image of KL and the fast pace transformation of KL should be communicated to others as means of image overhaul.

Agreed by the city's tourism consultant, Noraza Yosuf, who in one of the interview, said that "The people, food, history, buildings and culture make up our fascinating city, and it is the best place to go to observe people of all races living and working together in harmony"(Malay Mail,2009).

Each city has its own identity and value which can be used to branding purposes. This study has revealed that Kuala Lumpur is one of the safest city and a home to multi-cultural society who live together peacefully. Launching of 1 Malaysia campaign which is intended to strengthen the unity of difference races in the country is also deemed to be part of promotion to attract tourists (Daily Express, East Malaysia, 2009).

Concerns are raised pertaining to traffic congestion and public transportation despite the positive image of KL. This clearly indicates that there is lack proper planning as stated by Kotler (2002).

“... although Kuala Lumpur has an impressive airport, the Multimedia Super Corridor and an impressive array of skyscrapers, its public transportation system serves the city and the airport poorly. None of the massive projects has yet to demonstrate its financial benefits for the country” Kotler, 2002, p.185)

Kotler (2002) further claimed that the negative image is being overshadowed by promotion and marketing activities and this phenomenon is known as denying visual. Issues on traffic and public transportation has been prolong for many years and the place marketer and relevant authority are aware of these however scant attention has been given to resolve this problem.

Kotler (2002) has warned that denying initial impression can cause frustration among visitors when their expectation are challenged on arrival and will further undermine their visit. It is wise for the authorities to enhance the infrastructures and it should be improvised consistently in order to boost the image of KL.

5.1.2 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 2: TO EXPLORE THE ELEMENTS OF PLACE BRANDING

Aforementioned, the uniqueness of place branding could be explored through personality association, landmarks building and hallmark events (Ashworth, 2004).

Finding show that Tun Dr Mahathir is visualized as the prominent figure who is, known as Father of Modernization. Other personalities such as Datuk Nicole David (World no.1, squash player), Datuk Lee Chong Wei (World no.3,

badminton player), Datuk Michelle Yeoh (famous actress) and Jimmy Choo (famous shoe maker) are found to be among the celebrities that are associated with KL. All of them have been listed as Malaysians's most trusted people in an online survey which conducted by Readers Digest Asia. Datuk Nicole topped of the list and followed by Datuk Lee Chong Wei (ranked no.3), Dato' Jimmy Choo (ranked no.5) and Datuk Michelle Yeoh (ranked no.7).

Petronas twin tower is recorded as the most recognized iconic of Kuala Lumpur. According to Sya (2005), Twin Tower is symbol of vibrancy, progress and potential which boost national confidence and redefines the country's image as a modern, independent, ambitious and forward looking country. The building has been recognized as among the top 20 of the world's best city icons (Boer,2009)

Independence Day, Colours of Malaysia and Thaipusam are the hallmark events that are associated with KL. These events attract the internal audience however efforts must be taken to pull the international crowds. Thaipusam has been listed as one of the world's best festivals by well known online travel guides (www.lonelyplanet.com).

Kuala Lumpur came to limelight when it hosts the Commonwealth Games in 1998 (Musa, 2000). The game has serves as platform for Kuala Lumpur to upgrade the facilities and complete some mega projects such as Kuala Lumpur International Airports. Another prestigious sports event which is considered a part of Kuala Lumpur's branding is Formula 1 Petronas Malaysia Grand Prix. The yearly event has contributed RM 80Million – RM100Millon in tourism revenues for

Malaysia every year, directly from F1 and its related activities. The event has put Malaysia on map as sporting destination and be expected that fringe business from the exposure of the events will also gain a benefits with the race which been watched live by 300million people around the world. (Report on Malaysia, 2008). Recently, the city is taking the effort to uplift the standard of the events. The tourism consultant of KL City Council stated that in conjunction with F1 event the city council together with Tourism Board of Malaysia have lined up several concerts including the Twin Towers and Live 2011 (The Star, 2011). This clearly indicates the potential of KL to organize international events.

Kuala Lumpur also has potential facet of attracting creative people through Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO), Malaysia's first world class classic concert. It's crafted as an elegant event for niche group, has consistently impressed audiences with its excellence performance and has built a loyal audience ([www. malaysiaphilharmonic.com](http://www.malaysiaphilharmonic.com)).

KL is also home of trendy and elegant shopping centers such as the Pavillion, Starhill Gallery, Suria KLCC Suria, Gardens, Megamall, Berjaya Times Square and etc. It has a great potential to establish itself as a shopping destination within the region.

5.1.3 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 3: TO EXPLORE THE DIMENSIONS OF CITY ATTRACTIONS AND IDENTIFY THE BEST DIMENSION OF KUALA LUMPUR

Kuala Lumpur has numerous attractions. The audience must be able to associate these attractions or places of interest with memorable experience (Larsson, 2006). Respondents do agree that KL possess unique features and this can be used for branding purposes. KL is a food heaven; some of the eateries are opened for 24 hours. KL offer incredible gastronomy experience; tourists can enjoy wide variety of food e from hawker stalls to fine dining restaurants. The KL foodie scene reflects the multicultural society.

Shopping, places of interest, food, culture, business opportunity and again Petronas Twin tower are among the attraction that frequently been point out by respondents. Despite Petronas Twin Tower that been mentioned as one of the attraction, the existence of veritable shopping complexes (Suria KLCC, Pavilion, Berjaya Times Square, Bukit Bintang area and others) combined with great promotion such as mega sale carnival, KL GP Sale and the Malaysian Year end sale have definitely create a huge awareness and attraction among public. Again Noraza Yusof, the city tourism consultant has added on the city's potential as shopping hub.

"I am proud to say that Kuala Lumpur offers a unique shopping experience, from the local fares of Chinatown to the branded designer goods at our many shopping complexes. As an example Pavilion KL is on

par with the shopping experiences of New York's 5th Avenue, Tokyo's Ginza, Milan and Paris. Kuala Lumpur can reinforce its attraction as a top Asian retail hub and we are proud to be part of the shopping euphoria" (The Star, 2007).

Places of interest such as Batu Caves, Genting Highland, Putrajaya, the administrative city and Cyberjaya the multimedia super corridor are located beyond the city but they are perceptually accepted as part of Kuala Lumpur by the respondents since it's within easy reach of city centre (The Star, 2010).

Kotler (2002) claimed that a city can add new attraction to increase the competitive advantage since it can't alter its natural terrain, climate or geographical position. Among the new attractions that can be included are shopping places, cultural attractions, and buildings. KL has incredible density of shopping complexes, thus the authority can seek to focus on the cultural attraction which receive scant attention. Heritage buildings need to be conserved. Lately the Pudu prison which is more than 100 years was demolished and this landmark which is part of the country's history should not be torn down instead it should be safeguarded.

Based on the responses, KL is actively involved in public diplomacy, tourism promotion, attracting inward investment and business, export promotion and Halal hub. The involvement in the above mentioned areas are rated as satisfactory by the respondents. Kuala Lumpur emerges as the centre of commerce, financial and culture due to its position as Malaysia' capital. Even

though the government's administrative has shifted to Putrajaya, institutions such as Bank Negara Malaysia, Companies commission of Malaysia, securities commission as well as embassies and diplomats still remained in the heart of city. KL looks to strengthen its position as Halal hub has enhanced the city's image among Islamic countries.

Kuala Lumpur has built and maintains positive reputations by explicitly stating its stands to the outside world. Besides, it also established diplomatic relationships with other cities around the world. This can attract more tourists and investors to KL.

5.1.4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 4: TO IDENTIFY CURRENT BRAND OF KUALA LUMPUR

Sya (2005) has stated that *“if we do not brand our place, others will be branding us”*. Recently, many cities have realized the importance of branding and start searching for their identity. The brand of Kuala Lumpur is very fragmented. Based on findings, most of the respondents agreed that Kuala Lumpur tagged with various brand and it is being interpreted as multidimensional. What is the image of KL? Is it unidimensional or multidimensional?

Currently, Kuala Lumpur is being perceived as modern, diversified, vibrant city which offer various opportunities for the stakeholders. In searching for a positive brand of Malaysia, Dato Seri Najib Tun Razak, the Prime Minister has enhanced that diversity city together with a moderate outlook and progressive Islamic

country. Sya (2005), added that Malaysia should position as modern, moderate and fast developing nation. These attributes could easily be adapted to Kuala Lumpur as the city is the main representative and true microcosm of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan, 2020).

Even though Kuala Lumpur has been recognized as one of the cheapest destinations (STA Travel group, 2010) and world's best travel bargain (Sesser, 2006), the city offer services and infrastructure similar to cities in developed world (Sya, 2005). Kuala Lumpur is also known for the diverse heritage, varied cuisines and unique culture. Kuala Lumpur is perceived as "Asia in a nutshell" by representative of Tourism Malaysia while promoting the city in London (STA Travel group, 2010).

The tourists' perception of KL varies from the locals. Tourists do not only emphasize places of interest but are also concerned about overall experiences including the hospitality of the locals. Apart from the friendly locals; the tourists have positive perception on the weather and food available in KL

Brand of Kuala Lumpur should be build based on elements and attribute that been have discussed. The perceptions of all the stakeholders need to be taken into account before building a brand for KL.

5.1.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 5: TO IDENTIFY ICON OF KUALA LUMPUR

Kotler (2002) says that destination image maker can implement an effective image of a place through visual symbols and slogans as many visual symbols or icon are permanently etched in mind of audience (Kotler, 2002).

The Petronas Twin Towers or KLCC stands out as the prominent icon from the respondents' point of view. From 1998 to 2004, it was the tallest building in the world and ranked as the 14th most iconic building in the world. It is also known as "An Asian Hot spot". The Twin Tower is the reflection of Kuala Lumpur as a modern city (Kotler, 2002) and Sya (2007) agreed and suggested that Kuala Lumpur should be promoted as modern moderate and fast developing city and the Petronas Twin Tower must be portrayed as the main landmark of Kuala Lumpur. Typically a brand needs a tag line or slogan (Kotler 2002) to unify the branding exercise, and if successful, is it carried through the campaign. Slogan and catchphrases is a part of branding strategies; well known cities have its own unique slogan. Based on the overall findings, it could be concluded that the catchphrase for Kuala Lumpur should relate to modernity, diversity and harmonies. Few respondents have pointed out that if Kuala Lumpur would create a slogan it has genuine and it should be closely connected to the city. Based on the findings; this study proposes few slogans that are suitable for branding KL; **"Enchanting Kuala Lumpur", "Stunning Kuala Lumpur" or "Mesmerizing Kuala Lumpur"**.

5.1.6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION FOR OBJECTIVE 6: IDENTIFY CHALLENGES IN BUILDING A BRAND FOR KUALA LUMPUR

Creating brand for a city is a challenging activity (Dinnie, 2011).

Respondents have identified some specific challenges that might hinder the branding exercises to take place. Frequently mentioned barrier is the cooperation among the public towards achieving a common goal. Effective communication is needed to overcome this challenge and the authority should empower the local to participate in the decision making in order to increase their sense of belongingness.

Kotler (2002), stresses that branding is time consuming and it requires a lot of monetary investment therefore the decision maker such as local authority or the government must be consistent and firm in building the appropriate brand for the city. Inconsistent branding strategies by the decision maker or relevant authority have been pointed out by the respondents. Constant changes will affect the current branding effort and it will be waste of resources in terms time and money.

Cleanliness, traffic congestion, maintenance of the building, facilities and infrastructure are among the concerns of the respondents. In fact, Kotler (2002) has commented that Kuala Lumpur offers great number of attractions and it needs to engage in good maintenance practice in order to support the huge numbers of tourists and business visitors.

It is important to be able to distinguish the city branding from the nation branding. The message needs to be clearly communicated in order for the tourist to be able to differentiate KL from Malaysia.

As discussed, those are the major challenges that Kuala Lumpur might face in order to create an identity perfectly.

5.2 EXPLORING ATTRIBUTES AND ELEMENTS OF KUALA LUMPUR IN CITY BRAND HEXAGON

Anholt (2006) argues that city's attributes and the way it's been perceived is different than a nation. The attributes are generalized for nation branding unlike for city branding, detail attention is given in order to reflect the right image of the city. Aforementioned, cities are simpler, smaller and easier to visualize as a single entity in comparison to nation which have wide discrepancies.

As discussed in literature review, Anholt (2006) has introduced a framework known as city brand hexagon, which he further used to create the Anholt- GMI City Brand Index. This framework is utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of branding and also as a tool for guiding the branding effort.

The model of city brand hexagon consists of six components namely Presence, Place, Potential, Pulse, People and Prerequisites. For the purpose of this study, this framework is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Kuala Lumpur's attributes and elements.

i. The Presence

This dimension indicates the city's international status and to what extent is it familiar and well perceived by people. The essence of this dimension revolves around the city's image and its contribution to the world.

Kuala Lumpur is well acknowledged in eyes of the world. The city is widely recognized when it host the Commonwealth Games in 1998. It has to be noted that it is the first Asian country to host such event. KL is also host other international events such as PETRONAS Grand Prix, F1. (KL Lifestyle Magazine, March 2011). KL has been well recognized in international arena after the construction of the Petronas Twin Tower; the magnificent symbol of modernization.

ii. The Place

Place is defined as perceptions of people on the physical aspects of the city such as climate, cleanliness the attraction of the city and flexibility to travel around the city.

KL is strategically located and is connected to other places and attractions such as Batu Caves, Genting Highlands, Cameron Highlands, Unicesco site (Malacca and Georgetown), beaches (Port Dickson, Pulau Pangkor, Pulau Tioman and others), Natures Park (Taman Negara and Gua Tempurung) .these places are within reach even though they are not in KL.

The city offers wide variety of attractions; both modern and culture and heritage. The most valuable asset that reflects the Kuala Lumpur character is the Petronas Twin Tower. This mega structure has placed Kuala Lumpur in world map. the modern city also offers places such as Petaling street which known as one of the best China Town in the world (Lonely Planet, 2010) and Brickfields, the little India, which was recently been refurbished to attract more tourists. The city's cultural identity is merely a subsidiary to the cultural identity of the nation, which also well known for multicultural concept (Sya, 2005).

The city definitely provides the opportunity for the tourist to experience both modern and culture elements. Besides, the tropical climate in KL makes the weather warm and pleasant.

iii. The Potential

This dimension measures the opportunity that the city offers in terms of economic, education and job (Anholt, 2006b).

Kuala Lumpur remains as an economic and business center of Malaysia. This is clearly evident when the respondents stated that Kuala Lumpur has managed to attract inward investment and business. The city is positioning itself as Halal Hub. Kuala Lumpur is ranked as the best city for business after Hong Kong and Singapore in 2009 by online travel magazine. (www.smarttravelasia.com: best in travel poll). The study also indicates that Kuala Lumpur, offer a lots of opportunity in terms of jobs and talent growth. The city has been recognized as one of the

livable city for expatriate executives based on the quality life that the city offers. Kuala Lumpur has pool of foreign cooperation and investor such as Shell, Bloomberg Asia, Reuters Asia, The Boeing Company, Hua Wei Technologies and others.

The city is also a hub for service sector as most of the major banks and insurance companies based in the city. In recent years, Kuala Lumpur is seen as potential city for global Islamic financial hub with an increasing number of Islamic financial institutions within the city (Sy Amadou, 2007). It is seen as subsidiary activity of the government in attracting the investors from Gulf Cooperation Council region (NST Business Times and The Star, 2011).

Kuala Lumpur is also known for education and health services Kuala Lumpur is considered as an education hub for Malaysia as many top private and public universities are located in the city. Prestigious colleges and universities within the city plays a vital role in creating the image of city of knowledge. The city attracts international students; it is reported that about 70,000 students are studying in the city. The government's aggressive promotion on education has increased the growth of international students (Education Malaysia, 2008).

Kuala Lumpur is also offers medical tourism and it has numerous public and private medical centres which offer wide range of health services (www.lonelyplanet.com, 2009).

iv. The Pulse

This dimension explores the excitement element of the city through people's perception.

This study clearly establishes that Kuala Lumpur is modern, vibrant with urban lifestyles. The youngest capital city in Southeast Asia encountered massive development for the past 15 years; it has been transformed to one of the most vibrant and dynamics cities in Asia (Malaysia Tourism Information, 2011). The elegant Petronas Twin Tower together with the heritage building in the city reflects the fusion and image of Kuala Lumpur. The city is seen as a promising tourist destination as it offers variety of places of interests, numerous activities such as shopping and incredible gastronomic experience.

v. The People

This dimension explores the locals' openness and warmth and includes issues such as safety issues, language and culture barriers.

The multicultural society is the unique attributes of KL and almost 90% of the respondents mentioned that the Malaysians are generally friendly and welcoming. Malaysia as a whole is politically stable and KL is safe place where the people live in harmony. The local authority is highly concerned about the safety of the public and recently the city hall launched safety programmes and this further enhanced the image of the city (The Star, 2011). There is no need to

worry about language barriers as English is widely spoken and most Malaysians are multilingual.

vi. The Prerequisites

This dimension examines to what extent the city is affordable, satisfactory and accommodating it also includes the public facilities in the city.

Kuala Lumpur offers world class facilities yet it is still perceived as economical city. KL is fully equipped with well developed infrastructure facilities such as Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), public transport (LRT, Monorail, Komuter and others), telecommunications and etc. KL been perceived as one of the city which provides a good quality life. In recent survey, Kuala Lumpur has been listed as one of the best top ten expat cities in the world after Singapore and Hong Kong (HSBC’s Explorer Survey, 2011).

Table 5.1 Exploring Attributes and Elements Of Kuala Lumpur In City Brand Hexagon

City Branding Dimensions	Attributes and Elements in KL
Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Diversified, vibrant, modern and bustling city ii. Food iii. Shopping iv. Multicultural
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Pleasant weather ii. Petronas Twin Tower iii. Shopping heaven iv. Attractive places of interest v. Fusion of past and future

Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Public diplomacy Very Good. ii. Tourism Promotion Good iii. Attracting inward Investment/ Business Good iv. Export Promotion Moderate v. Halal Hub Very Good
Pulse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Diversified, ii. vibrant, iii. modern iv. bustling city v. Night life vi. Opportunity City vii. Value For Money viii. Green City
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Value for money ii. Good facilities and infrastructures
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Friendly and welcoming people ii. No language barrier iii. Safe city iv. Multicultural v. Tolerance among the races vi. Harmony

Based on the discussion, it is clearly evident that KL has its unique attributes that can be used to brand the city. However, it is essential to select the appropriate the brand that reflect the city's image and it has to be communicated in order for other to recognize KL for its distinctiveness.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has several limitations:

- i. Firstly, this study is based on 32 respondents who participated in depth interview. This samples size does not represent the whole population and stakeholders. Besides, the external audience such as tourists and investors was not considered in the data collection. The researchers have limited the scope of research focusing on internal audiences as this is the first empirical study on branding Kuala Lumpur.
- ii. The selected stakeholders are public, representative from Tourism Malaysia, Malaysian Tourism Information Centre, hotel managers, academicians and tourist agent and guides. The participants are selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the interview. It does not take into account the perspective of KL city hall which is the local authority that is in charge with the administration of Kuala Lumpur.
- iii. The respondents for this study were only selected from Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, even though the study is only concentrate on Kuala Lumpur, the sample does not represent the stakeholders outside the city. The respondents from outside of Kuala Lumpur might have different perception towards Kuala Lumpur.
- iv. For purpose of this study, the boundary of the city is based on municipality area however the perceptual boundaries of the respondents are also included in exploring the brand of Kuala Lumpur.

5.4 RECOMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

City branding is a new diversion of marketing which is receiving positive attention. Future research may consider the following factors:

- i. Mix method can be employed to further enhance the understanding of city branding. The dimensions found in this study can be tested quantitatively
- ii. Use the theory of business organization to explore city branding from the organizational perspective and to explore how to market and positioned the brand of the city to external audience.
- iii. To study the economic perspective on how branding of Kuala Lumpur can promote growth of the nation.

5.5 IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The goal of present study is to extend empirically the current understanding on city branding. This study is the first of its kind in exploring the brand of Kuala Lumpur. The authority and place marketer can use elements identified in this study to brand Kuala Lumpur. It also provides a clear picture on how the city can be brand effectively and efficiently.

This study points out important elements, value and personalities of Kuala Lumpur. This research identified the above mentioned elements based on the city branding model proposed by Anholt (2006b). Place marketers, Local authority, Board of Tourism Malaysia, and other stakeholders should able to understand and realize on those elements that been point out, which are vital for

a city to gain favorable image. Thus, those bodies can use this research paper as a reference to take necessary steps to be gain the competitive advantage.

The study also highlights how the city is perceived by the stakeholders. The stakeholders' perspective must be taken into account in the branding exercise. Besides, it also explored the possible challenges in branding the city.

5.6 SUMMARY

In the fast pace of globalization, every places and city are competing each other to get an attention from world's consumers, tourists, businesses, investors, and relevance. In this context the importance and the needs for branding become more apparent. Branding would be an essential tool to stakes out and communicates to the audiences as it will be the framework to craft the reputation and build the strong brand.

Kuala Lumpur the capital city of Malaysia, have a lot of potential but the creation of a strong brand has not been achieved and yet to define its own unique brand (Musa & Melewar, 2011). Even though efforts has been directed in creating the appropriate image and identifying the elements and values of the city, there is no clear image that reflects the uniqueness of Kuala Lumpur that can be communicated to the outside world. The city yet to get an answer how such values and elements could be fitted and meshed into single brand and create uniqueness. However, in order to build unique and strong brand, the featured and elements that are associated to the brand have to be identified (Aaker,

2004). Thus, this study has taken up the task to identifying and attaches those values and elements of Kuala Lumpur into a single brand.

Through this qualitative research, the city has proved that the city has the features to build a strong brand. From the discussion and conclusion of each objective, it can be concluded that the values and elements of the city been perceived very positively by respondents. Those components show that Kuala Lumpur had its brand values.

The brand of Kuala Lumpur should stand as a modern, vibrant, progressive and a fast pace city which is diversified in term of culture, lifestyle, and arts. The city stands out firmly with the magnificent Petronas Twin Tower which is a world-renowned icon of modern Kuala Lumpur. The world tallest twin structures, is truly an iconic building for the city. The numerous colonial buildings, which stand alongside with towering building make up most dynamic cityscapes. There are also many places of interest in Kuala Lumpur which can be accessed easily as distances between them are nearer.

The colourful cultures and celebrations of the delightful fusion of three of races – Malay, Chinese and India, have give the city distinctive and truly Asia sense. The warm and friendly citizen without much communication barriers, is an add up value for the city.

The other essential component of Kuala Lumpur is the amazing variety of cuisine due to the combination of multiracial cuisines. Undoubtedly, food is a popular topic in this city. The availability of multi choices of food at any time in any part of

the city for affordable prices, has build a strong perception among the internal and external audience.

Shopping is another element which highly perceived as an attraction for the city. From upscale shopping malls, high-end boutique and street bazaars to the wide range of goods, has become a most lively and exciting affair in the city. The annual sale carnivals help to boost the shopping elements even more attractive. Nevertheless, Kuala Lumpur plays a great role as capital city which communicate well through tourism promotion, public diplomacy and being a city that attract global business as well as recognized as halal hub.

Further, Kuala Lumpur should also represent the city's sub brands such as a sport destination (Petronas Malaysian Formula 1 Grand Prix sports), halal hub city of knowledge and information technology hub (cyberjaya).

At the glimpse, Kuala Lumpur should be branded as a modern, vibrant and diversified city which attract the audience through various activity mainly tourism and businesses. This bustling city is a melting pot of races and rich with cultures, festivals and choices of food. The Petronas twin tower (KLCC) is the best icon for Kuala Lumpur for the city as it has modern and vibrant look while distinctly reflecting the Malay culture, while the brand of Kuala Lumpur could be represented by the tagline of "Stunning Kuala Lumpur".

With the identified elements, the scenic features and icon, Kuala Lumpur is ready to impress the audiences through branding.

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