

## How Cultural Branding Attract Students: A Meta-Analysis

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### Abstract

**Background** In the paper, How to build an iconic brand (B. D. Holt, n.d.) asserted that marketers wanting to build icons must think in terms of ‘culture share’. Such an association also exists between cultural heritage and student’s perception about the institution.

**Objective** This paper seeks to systematically assess the strength and variability of the association found in various published articles on cultural branding, as well as to identify moderators influencing this relationship.

**Methodology** A comprehensive literature review identified 13 studies that satisfied the eligibility criteria for inclusion. The effect sizes ( $r$ ) reported in these studies were then subjected to meta-analysis.

**Results** Overall, the brand equity constructed based on rich traditions and cultural heritage attract candidates for applying into such kind of institutions.

**Conclusion** Creating, demonstrating, and delivering a rich cultural value increases the popularity and brand image of the institution. The transmission of customs and beliefs instils a sense of oneness, collaboration, and long-term alliance.

**Keywords** Cultural Branding, Heritage, Student’s perception, B-schools, Institution, Brand value

### Introduction

Meta-analysis is the statistical method used to merge findings from numerous studies with comparable research queries or hypotheses (Ang & Eisend, 2018). Expanding the sample scope enhances the capacity to analyze effects under examination by assimilating key studies and considering the sizes of those involved. Compared to methods such as narrative reviews, meta-analysis offers greater objectivity as it relies on statistical and mathematical principles, minimizing the influence of the reviewer's personal perspectives.

In narrative reviews, analyzing the effects of studies that employ disparate metrics to calculate similar results can pose challenges. Reviewers subjectively address questions by summarizing the findings of various studies, leading to potential biases and errors, as different reviewers may draw contrasting conclusions from the same evidence. In contrast, meta-analysis applies a methodological procedure to minimize biases, resulting in evidence with a high level of precision. Effect size estimates, such as the correlation coefficient, clearly elucidate these findings by quantitatively measuring the extent of the connection between two variables (Ang & Eisend, 2018). Effect size quantifies the strength of the relationship between advertising inputs (e.g., source) and result processes (e.g., approach) in advertising. It serves as an indicator of the explanatory potential within advertising research. A stronger relationship corresponds to a greater illustrative potential (Eisend, 2018).

The precision of outcomes in each study relies on the overall number of participants involved. By statistically combining data from individual studies, a more concise estimate of the fundamental effects can be achieved. Consequently, meta-analysis not only elucidates the effect of concern but also mitigates the risk of false-negative aftermaths and circumvents the limitation of lesser sample sizes in each study. Additionally, meta-analysis can reconcile discrepancies arising from studies with conflicting results.

Hornik et al. (2016) investigated a range of methodological factors frequently applied in meta-analyses of experimental research, including sample size, how the phenomenon is measured, and effect size estimations. Other important elements such as participant-reported outcomes versus observer-recorded data, the timing and sequence of measurements, the study's setting (whether conducted in the lab or the field), participant type (student versus non-student), as well as the study's publication status, year, and source, are typically considered when reporting meta-analytic findings. Previous research has also indicated that single-item scales may produce different outcomes compared to multi-item scales (Szymanski & Henard, 2001).

Given the limited research on meta-analyses exploring how cultural branding appeals to students, this study seeks to bridge that gap. The findings could offer institutional advisors and program managers deeper insights into students' perceptions and preferences.

### **Cultural Branding**

Holt defined cultural branding as bringing into line the brand with the cultural epitome in a reliable and likeable way in marketing communication. It deals with amalgamating the culture of corporate and family. This exquisite mixture gives birth to a sense of togetherness and connectedness amongst the students and the institution authorities. This transforms the way business is dealt with. From the socio-cultural standpoint, this first appeared much earlier in the marketing literature where Sherry (1988) grounded several theories and concepts and enabled a research paradigm.

The studies that became the cornerstone for the development of the cultural branding approach includes Arnould (2008) and Neve & Oswald (2012). Cultural branding gives an opportunity to students to learn business with a different outlook. This also inculcates and ensures that even rational business decisions are taken emphatically and compassionately.

### **Review of Literature**

Few of the various aspects of cultural branding relates to ethical thinking, compassionate decision-making, eco-friendly business, CSR activities, and working for a higher cause. This evolving technocivilization context that fosters a view of diversity, inclusion and empathy are the pillars of cultural branding. It gives the feeling that one belongs to the brand and in turn creates long-lasting brand loyalty and increases brand equity. Many researchers have considered education as a social institution such as in the study by Areepattamannil, Freeman, & Klinger (2011).

Cultural branding is also seen as a discipline that leads to a methodical brand innovation by building those brand strategies that leverages cultural opportunities. It takes a leap further from marketing to implementing the brand strategy to realize more value and repair it if needed. This is achieved through uniting it with the cultural values.

Cultural branding is about building and characterising the brand through the cultural values it inherits and inculcates in its stakeholders, be it faculties, students or administrative staff. While some believe in the culture of transparency as one of their core values, others may have diversity and likewise. Mostly, the educational institutions have a culture with more than one core value. This is sometimes defined as philosophy, sometimes as pillars while sometimes it's propelled as just the core values. The core values that all the stakeholders have strong belief on, the values that they abide to under any circumstances, the values that gradually become inveterate, the values that become their language of communication, the values that they advocate, the values that they preach and the values that they live by become the very culture of the institution.

Few predominant commonalities are ethical code of conduct, respect for fellow students and colleagues, passion for excellence, integrity and mutual trust. However, some values differ from institution to the other. For e.g. diversity can be a core value for one, while inclusiveness and tolerance can be for the other, similarly, global mind-set could be for another and likewise. (D. Holt, n.d.) talked about building brands with innovative ideologies. Innovation and creativity is another very common core value, contributing to the culture, and hence to the brand value. Taha (2016) talks about a communicative medium where qualitative diversity emerges, fuses and sustains. It deemed diversity as qualitative and where it is fused cross-culturally and an art of creation happens. In fact, Schroeder (2009) suggested that the whole process of constructing and bringing the brand value is vehemently influenced by ethnic codes, which in turn also contributes toward building the brand equity. Schroeder (2009) also argued that strong brand continuously develop prescriptive models about the way their target market segment thinks, talks, behaves and pre-empt their goals, objectives, and desires. This is their one way of understanding and imitating their market and customer needs. Hajdas (2019) suggested that conservative brand narration more appropriately negatively impacts the brand image whereas popular and progressive band narration precisely creates a constructive impression on the brand equity and hence build the overall brand equity.

This paper aims to examine the brand equity constructed from the roots of rich traditions and cultural heritage goes a long way and positively impacts the society and humanity. Such kind of institutions give back to society their values, cultures and traditions which is built over a period of time; and works for a higher cause.

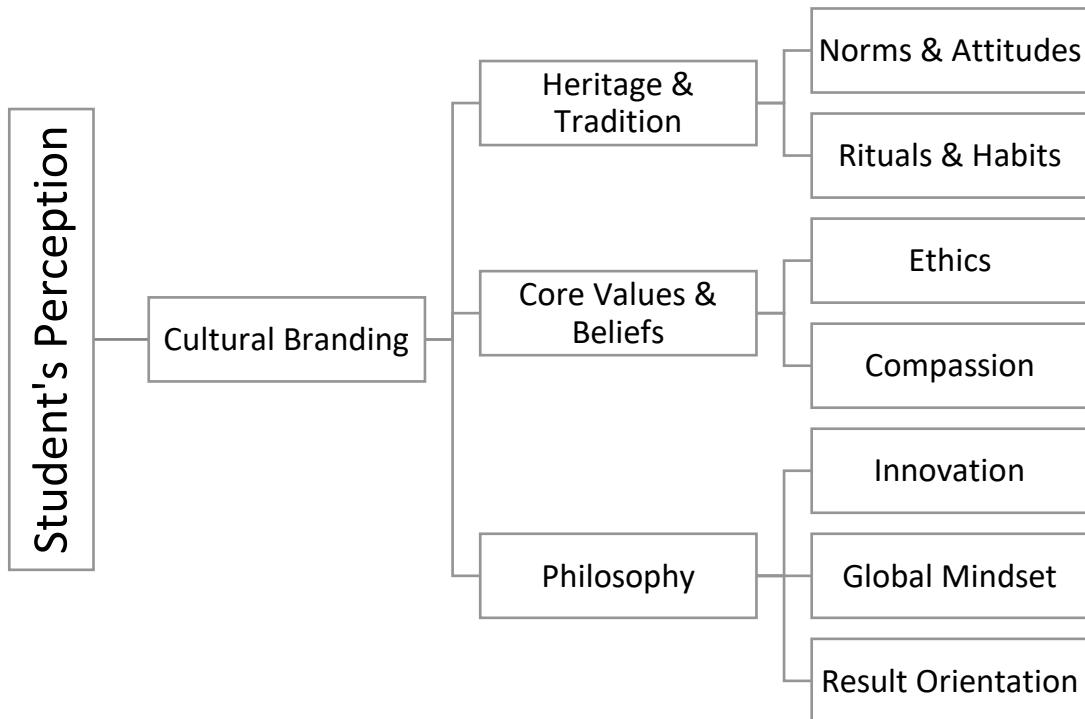
O'Reilly (2005) supports a perspective on branding practices that situates them within the cultural framework of the circuit of culture. Viewing brands as cultural phenomena, it suggests that they serve as symbolic mediators between production and consumption. Grenni, Horlings, & Soini (2020) says that Place branding involves enhancing and representing the value of a location by highlighting and consolidating its resources in a unified manner, presenting a narrative image that embodies the essence of the place.

### **Cultural branding as a key in building a positive student's perception**

Cultural branding is one of the best effective ways to build a positive scholar's perception, even when the prospective candidate has not become a student of the institution. It helps to build the brand value and drastically enhances the brand equity for its students and stakeholders. Just like internal branding where Clark, Chapleo, & Suomi (2020) the most successful internal branding practices were internal engagement, consultation, awareness among managers, and launch events. Hajdas (2019) discussed that brands are creates certain visual and verbal indications to resultantly create a certain image. These cues or indications when driven through cultural codes and conducts, corresponds to cultural branding for the organization. It helps to build the desired image. Taylor (2010) stated Brand is culture, culture is brand. Hajdas (2019) adds that there aren't many creditable studies that indicates the ways to build cultural narratives on the basis of the changing socio-cultural models and the respective outcomes that result in building the brand equity.

Cultural branding has some related factors Hidayatun (2017) such as brand love, emotional attachment, and its impact on brand loyalty.

Cultural branding consists of three brand primary components where the first and foremost includes 'Heritage and Tradition', secondly core values and beliefs and thirdly the underlying philosophy. All these components play an important role in positioning the brand effectively.



Whilst prospective candidates look around for an institution that's rich in legacy and tradition. Hajdas (2019) proposed that cultural brand narration relates to brand equity where conservative brand narration negatively impacts the brand equity while popular and progressive brand narration positively impacts it. The study further asserted and concluded that conservative brand narration has a residual cultural code, popular brand narration has a dominant cultural code, and progressive brand narration has an emergent cultural code. The emergent and the dominant cultural code has the ability to eliminate negative stereotypes and evoke cultural transformation.

Heritage and Tradition predominantly consists of the kind of norms i.e. the code of conduct the institute follows, and the attitude it possess towards key managerial aspects such as leadership, trust, sales, communication, management, productivity, hiring and retention. Coming to rituals, Göhlich & Wagner-Willi (2001) studied process characters of rituals and examined their forms of action and interaction and have found that even without being subjected to a standardized construction, those involved in the interaction does not even sometimes are aware of the ritual content. Still they contribute to the cultural branding of the institution.

Many institutions base their brand culture on core values that predominantly includes compassion, ethics and moral principles. It is a statement and positioning that institution takes to build a society with a higher cause. These are classic example of businesses should necessarily amalgamate with the ethical code of conduct, compassion, empathy and with a defined goal of giving back to society and nurturing it. Egan-wyer, Muhr, Pfeiffer, & Svensson (2014) asserted that ethical brands have built a prominent space in the market for a varied range of socio-political and ethical problems. In turn, this helps the firm to connect with the consumers in a way that if you believe in the value system of the brand then go for it. Some critical researches also indicate an essential discordancy between beliefs and capitalism. Furthermore, it is also discussed that beliefs tend to be used quite superficially as a legitimate marker. This is intended to conceal the structural lack of ethical practices. This means that such brands use ethical branding to legitimize the unethical elements of capitalist practices.

Beyond academic learning, there has been an uprising trend of humanizing and imbibing the indispensable social, emotional and ethical skills. Göhlich & Wagner-Willi (2001) referred it as social-emotional learning (SEL). It tend to cover five core competencies out of which few essentially

touches upon compassion as an underlying value. The components identified were self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making. Compassion was described through four essential elements: first, recognizing the presence of suffering (cognitive), second, experiencing empathy or emotional concern (affective), third, having the desire to alleviate that suffering (intentional), and fourth, being motivated and prepared to take action to reduce the suffering (motivational). Goldin & Jazaieri (2017) referred that compassion eventually gives rise to cooperative and altruistic behaviour.

Few ethical institutions today such as SOIL Institute of Management believe and also propel Compassion as one of their leadership pillars. It insists on the action required about doing something to help those in need. This completely value-based institute goes beyond academic learning to instil the right leadership traits which are character, competence and enthusiasm. This is where prospective as well as enrolled students, lecturers, administrative staff and all other stakeholders relate themselves in a greater context and understand about living for a higher cause and being full with compassion and ethics.

Beyond academic pursuits and values such as compassion and ethics, there are a few other important values include integrity, dignity, being constructive among others.

Coming to aspects that deals with the institute's philosophy, these can be specific to the institution and diverse with respect to demographics, ethnicities and core beliefs. Still, its positioning is its expression of identity and differs from one to another. This is the particular space where every institute expresses or tries to express its distinctiveness or exclusivity. Still, there are some commonalities at a crude level, and these are innovation, global mindset, inclusion, result orientation, gratitude, vision and adaptation.

For instance Agassi & Jarvie (2019) said that through innovation, a firm can create new words to reflect the variation. Economics (2014) where the author suggested that the universal mindset is an cohesive occurrence where intellectual, psychosomatic, behavioural, and interactional dimensions play a critical role in defining the complete picture of the quintessential global leadership competencies. Nind (2014) asserted in the paper that sociological perspectives have pushed academics towards inclusive research. The hierarchical relationship that exists between researchers and participants where the participants are given a superior voice as holders of lawful viewpoints and discernments into their practises and communal realms. Further on the similar lines, Ainscow & Messiou (2018) asserted that engaging with the student's voices is quintessential although it can be promising and challenging at the same time. However, it can be effectively tackled if we are prepared to listen and act on what we hear. Jazaieri (2018) through his research concluded that while the seeds of compassion are already present in the students, it's to the teachers to nurture them and bring out the best in them and hence contribute in the growth of compassion within each student.

All of these factors correspond to building of a trusted brand. As Philip Kotler, a leading marketing guru, quoted that "*The art of marketing is largely brand building. If not a brand, it will be viewed as a commodity*". Vinacke (1946) commented that product differentiation is quintessential for upholding and sustaining persistence and long-term attainment. Cultural branding helps a lot to build a foundation of this product differentiation. Kolar & Zabkar (2010) established that the key issue from the managerial perspective is how various notions, meanings and perceptions can be constructively applied.

As Vinacke (1946) highlights in the paper, Matt Haig quoted 'Branding is everything' to which he further added 'Companies LIVE OR DIE on the strength of their brands.' Branding your institution the cultural way is one of the most powerful ways to accomplish a successful and long-running brand. Another aspect which reinforces cultural branding in an effective and rewarding manner is through its education to the internal stakeholders such as administrative staff, lecturers etc. through internal branding. Clark et al. (2020) studies revealed that internal communications supporting institutional rebranding activities have a way powerful role.

Street (2013) Evan Plotkin compared it to a business hanging out a sign that reads "under new management." While he acknowledged that the analogy isn't entirely accurate—since the city's leadership hasn't actually changed and won't for a few more years—he used it nonetheless. He believes it effectively illustrates the potential impact of creating a cultural district in Springfield on the community.

Khojastehpour & Johns (2015) highlights that due to the diverse cultural climate in a multinational context, a significant challenge for management is the absence of a widely accepted framework to define a corporate brand for multinational corporations (MNCs). This is crucial because MNC branding carries numerous implications. Consequently, newly established multinational corporate brands (MCBs) must navigate various dichotomies and challenges.

Klein, Völckner, Bruno, Sattler, & Bruno (2019) propose that managers can tap into local consumer culture (LCC) or the cultural identity of their domestic market to enhance brand-building efforts. This is achieved by aligning the brand's positioning with the perceived image of the target country. They introduce the concept of brand image-country image (BICI) fit, which evaluates how well a brand's image aligns with the national identity of consumers in a given country. By analyzing over 350,000 brand-consumer interactions across three countries, the study establishes a multi-attribute model for measuring BICI fit, demonstrating a strong link between BICI fit and positive consumer brand perceptions.

Ertimur & Coskuner-Balli (2021) investigate how brands expressed empathy and care in their advertising during the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on organizational theory, the authors introduce the concept of "compassion organizing," a coordinated process of recognizing, empathizing with, and addressing human suffering. Using a Gioia methodology inspired by grounded theory, they analyze over 200 pandemic-related advertisements released in the U.S. over six months. Their findings emphasize three key themes in compassion organizing: solidarity, trust, and resilience, illustrating how brands used advertising to address societal care deficits during the crisis. This study sheds light on the role of advertising as a social institution and contributes to the understanding of corporate advertising and cultural branding.

Aula, Tienari, & Wæraas (2015) argue that university branding can be seen as a political process shaped by the diverse interests of various stakeholders. By examining a newly merged university, they show how branding is influenced by these different groups, each with the power to shape the brand in distinct ways. They argue that university branding is deeply tied to the institution's purpose and identity within a broader social, cultural, and societal framework, moving beyond traditional marketing and communication practices.

Gao, Ji, Liu, & Sun (2020) emphasize the growing significance of cultural products in the global economy, particularly in U.S. exports. The authors develop a theoretical framework for brand name strategies when marketing cultural products internationally, focusing on two key concepts: similarity (the connection between the original and translated brand name) and informativeness (how well the translated name conveys the product's essence). This framework is applied to analyze the effects of brand name translations on consumer perceptions.

Hu, Chen, Alden, & Chen (2023) highlight two contrasting perspectives on consumer engagement with local versus foreign brands in international markets. One view favors foreign brands due to country-of-origin effects, while the other emphasizes a preference for local brands driven by consumer ethnocentrism.

Chapleo (2015) explores the unique challenges of university branding, distinguishing it from commercial branding by focusing on cultural factors, branding frameworks, and brand architecture. Roth (1995) contends that building a needs-based brand image strategy is crucial for creating effective marketing programs, helping a brand establish a clear, distinctive position in its category.

Taylor (2015) evaluates the success of global consumer culture positioning (GCCP) by comparing consumer responses to soft-sell (image-based) versus hard-sell (information-based) advertising appeals in different markets. Based on previous research and the theory of global consumer culture, the authors suggest that if an appeal is consistently well-received across markets, it is a strong candidate for inclusion in a GCCP strategy. They predict that soft-sell approaches will have more consistent appeal across markets than hard-sell ones.

Lloyd & Woodside (2013) provide a theoretical perspective drawn from social anthropology and psychoanalysis on the use of animal symbolism in marketing. They explore how brands use animal symbols in their communications, categorizing these symbols as either implicitly anthropomorphic (totemic) or explicitly anthropomorphic (fetishistic).

Ertimur & Coskuner-Balli (2015) propose that individuals and organizations operate within institutional environments governed by established social, cultural, and symbolic systems. These environments impose "logics"—sets of symbolic and material principles—that shape the decisions and behaviors of individuals and organizations through historically constructed social patterns.

Pompe (2017) asserts that cities have continuously sought to cultivate attractions that converge various forms of capital, including financial, human resources, investment, economic, leisure, educational, energy, cultural, social, and others. Urban expansion often results in cities outgrowing their historically recognized scales.

Eisingerich & Rubera (2010) highlights that businesses are increasingly utilizing global brand management strategies to efficiently coordinate their global operations. Achieving effective coordination necessitates adapting these strategies to cultural nuances. This study investigates how culture influences the influence of four crucial brand administration essentials—brand innovation, client positioning, self-importance, and social accountability—on customer commitment to a brand.

Batra, Zhang, Aydinoglu, & Feinberg (2017) identifies particular image attributes that multinational brands should consistently emphasize across different markets. Building on prior studies, they highlight three life values—benevolence, universalism, and self-direction—that exhibit high cross-national significance, and two—power and hedonism—that show lower cross-national prominence. The authors link particular brand image traits (like friendliness, sociability, exclusivity, and arrogance) to corresponding life values by employing empirical data and conducting a semantic analysis.

Culturalista (2023) affirms the cultural perspective has been beneficial for broadening brand managers' strategies, particularly in segments like sports marketing that cater to mass-media products. Among prominent sports products, the "National Basketball Association (NBA)" has expanded into evolving customer marketplaces globally. Brazil provides a notable example, with a significant rise in social media interactions discussing the league, where fans actively contribute to the understanding and promotion of the brand they support.

Sharon (2010) investigates variations in brand attenuation effects across cultures and the moderating influence of motivation and extension typicality. Based on recent research highlighting cultural differences in how individuals handle contradictory information, the study anticipates differing responses from Easterners and Westerners to brand extension failures.

Pătrașcu (2013) examines the growing significance of cultural tourism as a dynamic sector within global tourism, focusing on the impact of branding strategies on regional tourism development. The research aims to demonstrate that cultural tourism can be a pivotal aspect in provincial expansion, leveraging Romania's substantial tourist potential, especially within the specific region under analysis.

Kessous (2015) examines the cultural consumer environment surrounding brands perceived as nostalgic. It pursues to address the ensuing research queries: What is the influence of culture on consumer relationships with nostalgic brands? Under what circumstances are these relationships positive or undesirable? To address these questions, data was collected over time by interviewing the same group of respondents on three occasions, spaced roughly one year apart. The analysis took into account three cultural dimensions: time, space, and social context. In the time dimension, brands were associated with traditional festivals and significant life events.

Beresford & Hirst (2020) situates itself within the changing market dynamics of UK grocery retail and provides insights into the consumer-led co-creative processes that drive middle-class consumers' switching behavior to discount food retailers.

Smith & Speed (2011) explores a phenomenon in UK politics: the persistence of parties in power despite conditions in the political market that would typically suggest higher turnover. It examines political parties as cultural brands, proposing that sustained competitive advantage accrues to the party perceived as most aligned with the prevailing popular culture in society.

Freund & Jacobi (2013) utilizes cultural branding theory, brand psychoanalysis, and literary genealogy in an interdisciplinary approach to examine how critics of Goldman Sachs have created an anthropomorphic, monstrous doppelgänger brand image.

Baibokonov, Yang, Tang, & Hosain (2021) investigate the main influences and factors that contribute to the innovative evolution of a traditional sector, specifically the mares' milk industry (MMI). Utilizing an exploratory single case study, this research uncovers the key driving forces and obstacles associated with the creative transformation of the MMI in Kazakhstan.

Haynes (2015) asserts that many well-known brands effectively use ethical and environmental narratives to differentiate themselves from similar products; however, narratives that conflict with existing cultural values are unlikely to influence consumers. Drawing from cultural branding insights, this paper challenges the notion that promoting sustainable goods requires changing consumers' values.

Testa, Cova, et al. (2017) describes brand iconization as how a brand comes to embody the values, needs, and aspirations of a specific cultural group. Over more than a decade of research, the numerous benefits iconic brands offer to companies have been highlighted, as well as the process through which brands achieve iconic status by aligning with emerging cultural opportunities in society.

Clifton (2011) highlights that in today's consumer economy, the intangible or symbolic attributes of a product are crucial to its market success. This principle extends not only to physical products but also to places. Vredeveld & Coulter (2014) points out that undoubtedly, consumers and brands remain a crucial focus for consumer researchers, especially in a globalized world where consumers travel across countries and encounter diverse, contextually dependent meanings of products and brands.

Suomi, Hakala, et al. (2016) asserted that the rising rivalry for students, funding, and support has led universities, MBA programs, and other educational institutions to recognize the growing necessity of marketing themselves to their key stakeholders and distinguishing themselves from their competitors—in other words, to brand themselves. Paper (2011) said due to the highly competitive nature of the higher education sector, institutions are increasingly focusing on branding and dedicating more resources to branding activities.

Wilkins, Butt, & Heffernan (2018) findings reveal that the brand credibility of a foreign institution has a greater impact on student identification with that institution than with the local partner. Furthermore, the inverse connection between organizational identification and cognitive dissonance is more significant for the foreign institution involved in the partnership.

Sizoo, Serrie et al. (2007) states that in response to recent Court verdicts, many U.S. colleges and universities are actively striving to proliferate the diversity of their student bodies. While these efforts often focus on including more native-born, naturalized, or resident minorities, one could equally argue that, considering the United States' role in the universal administrative economy, student bodies must also have substantial representation from international students.

Giedt, Gokcek et al. (2015) contends that U.S. institutions of higher education are facing growing pressure to "internationalize," which involves broadening curricula to include global contexts, welcoming international students, and sending substantial numbers of American students to study abroad. Despite these initiatives and the presumed value of international experience in undergraduate education, fewer than 10% of U.S. students presently study overseas, with STEM students conventionally participating at lower rates compared to those in social sciences and humanities.

Messer & Wolter (2007) asserts that for a long time, student mobility—studying at universities other than the one where a student initially enrolled—was a key aspect of a well-rounded academic learning. However, in the latter spans of the 20th century, access to universities expanded to young people from more diverse socio-economic backgrounds, student populations grew, the average duration of studies increased, and academic education began to resemble a more "school-like" environment.

## **Methodology**

This study focuses on articles discussing cultural branding published between 1946 and 2019. Only those studies that presented a correlation value regarding the relationship between cultural branding and brand attitude were included.

## **Type of Research**

This research employs statistical methods to integrate studies examining the relationship between cultural branding and brand attitude. Conclusions were drawn based on statistical inferences derived from this analysis.

### Research Design of Meta-Analysis

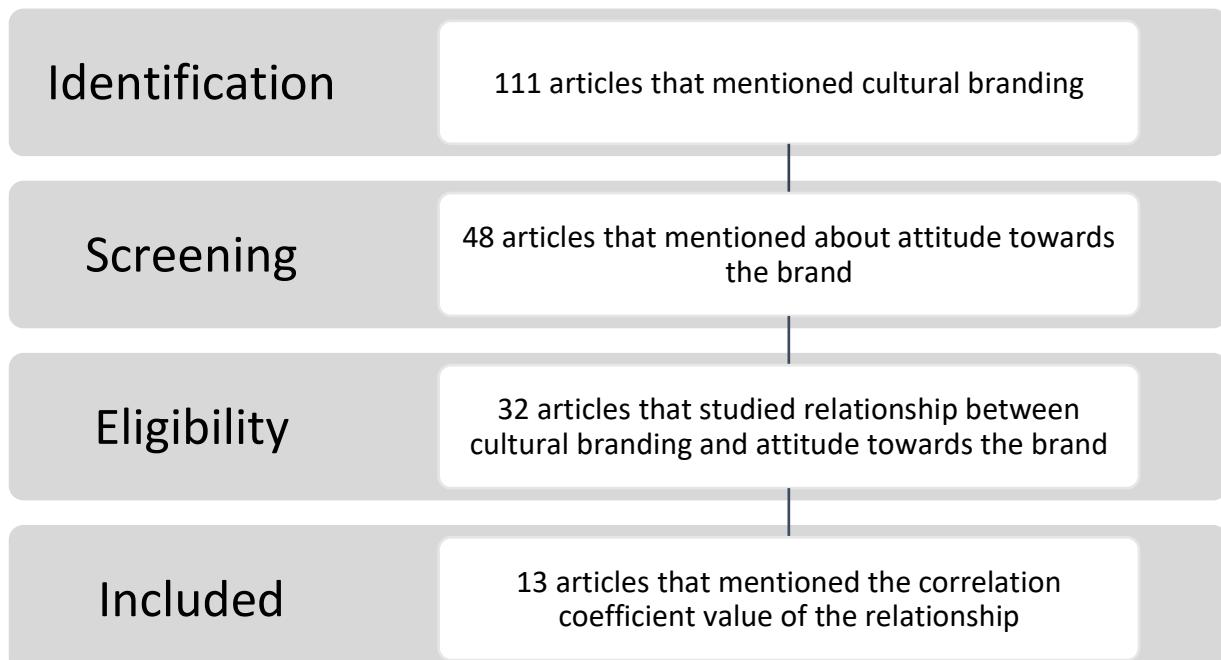
Meta-analysis utilizes a systematic methodology to combine the results of various individual studies focused on the same topic, producing a measurable outcome. We adhered to fundamental research design steps for meta-analysis, encompassing the formulation of research questions, compilation of studies, selection of pertinent studies, data collection, coding of selected researches, and data investigation.

### Literature Search

Various methods were utilized to procure data pertinent to our focal topic. We conducted searches on scholarly databases such as Google Scholar, PsycINFO, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, etc., for dissertations and articles related to "cultural branding." Additionally, we scrutinized the reference lists of articles concerning cultural branding to identify studies encompassing attitudes toward the brand. Furthermore, we conducted separate searches for articles addressing attitudes toward the brand. Lastly, we sought articles that encompassed both cultural branding and attitudes toward the brand.

### Inclusion Criteria

This meta-analysis centres around research apprenticeships examining the relationship between cultural branding and attitude toward the brand. Articles were subject to four criteria. Initially, articles discussing cultural branding were included, resulting in the identification of 171 relevant articles. Subsequently, within these articles, studies addressing attitude toward the brand were sought. Following rigorous scrutiny, only articles investigating the relationship between cultural branding and attitude toward the brand were retained, totalling 71 articles. Lastly, only articles providing correlation values between cultural branding and brand attitude were considered for the meta-analysis. Despite numerous articles discussing the relationship between cultural branding and attitude, only 13 studies included the correlation coefficient necessary for the meta-analysis. Thus, the analysis was conducted solely on these studies.



## Results and Discussion

The study of the acquired data utilizes R software, specially employing the "robumeta" and "metaphor" packages. R is a highly effective tool for arithmetical data investigation, renowned for its open-source nature and its versatility, accommodating a wide array of analyses. The systematic review yielded data from only 13 studies, which are detailed in Table 1. This dataset includes information such as authors' names, publication years, correlation coefficients between cultural branding and attitude towards the brand.

At the outset, the data was uploaded into the software in the form of a CSV file. Given that the data included correlation coefficient values that did not adhere to a normal distribution, these values were transformed into their respective z-scores. To evaluate the effect size, a random effect model was employed due to the studies originating from different populations.

Paper_ID	Title of Paper	Authors	Year	n	r	Study Design
1	“Who am I? How compelling self-storytelling builds digital personal reputation”	Rebecca et al.	2022	400	0.424	Experimental
2	“A Cultural Comparison of Consumers' Knowledge, Perceptions, and Behaviors of Produce Handling”	Barela	2011	400	0.53	Experimental
3	“Review of Innovation and Competitiveness”	Škare and Pavlović	2017	185	0.598	Experimental
4	“The Influence of Branding Strategy on Financial Performance of Commercial Banks in Kenya”	Muiruri	2015	43	0.461	Experimental
5	“Nation Branding Strategy: A Case Study of Brand Zimbabwe”	Masango	2019	384	0.516	Experimental
6	“Market Profiling and Positioning of Park Brands in Kenya (Case of Premium and Under-Utilized Parks)”	Maingi et al.	2015	385	0.783	Experimental
7	“‘LIKE ME’ – Consumers Use Brands on Facebook to Cultivate Identity”	Mensel and Petersen	2012	248	0.44	Experimental
8	“The Impact of the Video Clip "Amazing Thailand" on Transportation, Place Image and Place Familiarity in Tourism: A Study on International University Students in Bangkok”	Arnuparb	2013	436	0.663	Experimental
9	“Ethnic Identity Impact on Consumers' Ethnocentric Tendencies: The Moderating Role of Acculturation and Materialism”	Das and Mukherjee	2019	385	0.43	Experimental
10	“The Effect of Brand Image on Customer Loyalty”	Esayas	2018	240	0.643	Experimental
11	“Branding as a Strategic Tool to Reposition a Destination: A Survey of Key Tourism Stakeholders in Zimbabwe”	Ndlovu	2009	152	0.49	Experimental
12	“Effects of Branding Strategies on Recognition of Corporate Brand at European Union Missions in Kenya”	Kalya et al.	2017	133	0.556	Experimental
13	“Brand, Identity and Reputation: Exploring, Creating New Realities and Fresh Perspectives on Multi-Sensory Experiences”	Rajiani	2011	220	0.52	Experimental

All studies were assumed to be conducted under the same conditions regarding fixed effects. The only difference between the studies is their ability to observe the main outcome. Numerous

researchers believe that the random-effects approach is more suitable than fixed effects. In the random-effects model, larger studies with less variability have less impact than in the fixed-effect model, leading to the calculation of a broader confidence interval (CI).

### Study Heterogeneity

In meta-analysis, heterogeneity refers to the variability in effect sizes that need to be assessed. To accurately measure true heterogeneity, Q-statistics are used, representing the ratio of observed heterogeneity to the variance within studies. These statistics are employed to test the null hypothesis, which posits that the effect sizes are uniform across all studies. A significant Q-statistics value indicates heterogeneity in effect size. However, a non-significant Q-statistics value should not be misconstrued as evidence of homogeneity in effect size (Quintana, 2015).

### Test for Heterogeneity

We've used a random-effects model, with 13 studies (i.e., "k") and that the degree of heterogeneity ( $\tau^2$ ) was calculated using a restricted maximum-likelihood estimator.

Random-Effects Model (k = 13;  $\tau^2$  estimator: REML)

$\tau^2$  (estimated amount of total heterogeneity): 0.0271 (SE = 0.0130)

$\tau$  (square root of estimated  $\tau^2$  value): 0.1645

The above line indicates that  $\tau$ -squared was 0.0271

$I^2$  (total heterogeneity / total variability): 87.97%

The above line indicates that  $I^2$  was 87.97%. In other words 87.97% of variation reflected actual differences in the population mean.

Test for Heterogeneity:

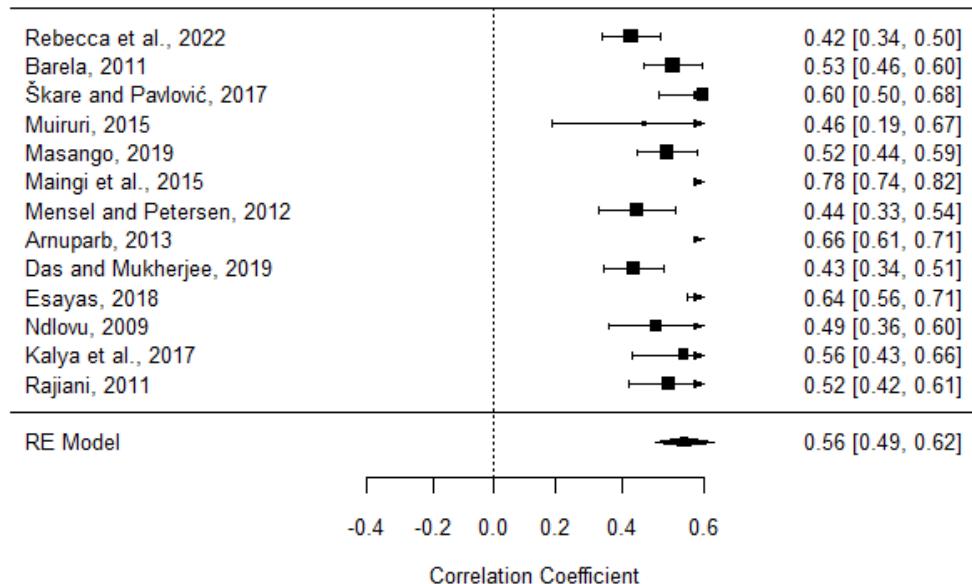
$Q(df = 12) = 119.4203, p-val < .0001$

The following two lines display the Q-statistic along with the degrees of freedom and the associated p-value for the test. In this analysis, the p-value is less than 0.0001, indicating that the studies included do not have a shared effect size.

### Forest Plot

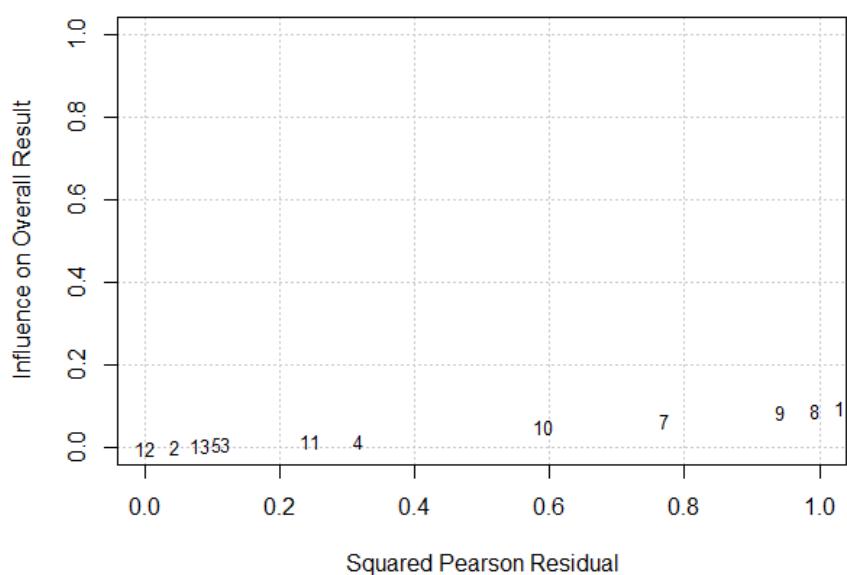
The forest plot illustrates the effect size and confidence intervals (CIs) derived from the studies included in the meta-analysis. The small horizontal lines extending from the solid boxes represent the magnitude of the confidence intervals. A longer line indicates a wider confidence interval, signifying less reliable data. Conversely, a shorter line suggests a narrower confidence interval, indicating more reliable data. Moreover, if the box or line intersects the no-effect y-axis, the corresponding research data is deemed statistically insignificant. In Figure 3's forest plot, Schwarz et al. (2015), Zhang (1996), and Zhang and Zinkhan (2006) exhibit narrower confidence intervals, indicating their data's higher reliability compared to others. Each study is represented by a point estimate, while a polygon represents the summary effect size.

The forest plot depicts the contribution of each study in summary effect size. The larger the size of the squares, the more is the contribution of the study to the variance.



### Baujat Plot

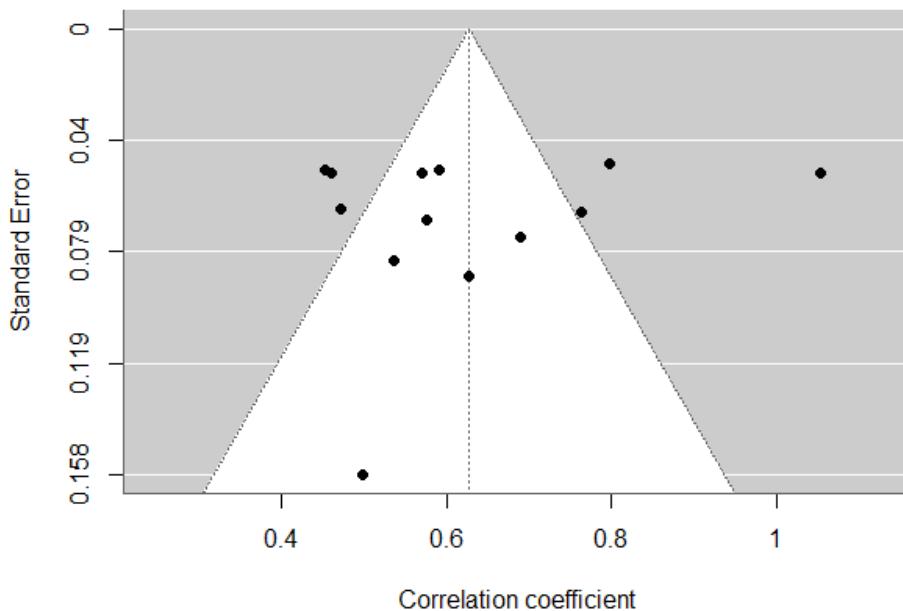
Research located in the upper right quadrant of the Baujat plot significantly contributes to both factors. Analyzing the Molloy et al. (2014) dataset shows that three studies enhance both of these factors. Examining the characteristics of these studies may uncover moderating variables that contribute to heterogeneity.



### Publication Bias

Publication bias occurs when studies with larger effect sizes are more likely to be published. To assess this bias, a funnel plot is utilized, as shown in Figure 4. The horizontal axis of the funnel plot represents the effect size, while the vertical axis indicates the standard error. The central vertical line illustrates the summary effect size. Based on the effect size and standard error of individual studies, it is anticipated that studies will disperse away from this central line.

## Funnel Plot



Since the data points are distributed fairly evenly on either side of the vertical line, there is no evidence of publication bias. Additionally, the rank correlation ( $p = 0.5403$ ) and Egger's regression test ( $p = 0.9410$ ) were also computed, and both results were deemed insignificant. The lack of significance in both the rank correlation and Egger's regression test further supports the conclusion that publication bias is not present.

## Conclusion

The objective of this paper is to perform a systematic review and meta-analysis of research investigating the connection between cultural branding and brand attitude. Following a thorough examination, only 13 studies were deemed suitable for the final analysis, highlighting significant variability among them. The study by Chung and Zhao (2011) notably influences this variability due to the moderating role of brand familiarity. Additionally, the findings suggest that there is no publication bias present among the studies chosen for the meta-analysis.

## Managerial Implications

This study offers insights into the relationship between cultural branding and attitude toward the brand, potentially aiding advertisers in crafting ads that positively influence this connection. A favorable attitude toward an ad tends to enhance purchase intentions, highlighting the significance of cultivating a positive relationship between cultural branding and brand perception. Such findings can also guide marketers in tailoring their strategies to prioritize customer attitudes, recognizing that emotional resonance with product advertisements often correlates with increased likelihood of purchase.

In essence, this article unveils pivotal findings that hold potential for further research exploration. Despite the abundance of literature on advertising impact, including comprehensive examinations of executional components, only a few meta-analyses have quantitatively assessed these advertising effects. Therefore, bridging past studies with future endeavors and offering empirically-grounded generalizations may prove instrumental in informing practical market decisions.

### Theoretical Implications

As a general rule, it's important to recognize that meta-analysis isn't a substitute for fresh, original research endeavors. Instead, it serves as a guiding tool for shaping the trajectory of future original studies toward optimal outcomes. This article can serve as a blueprint for upcoming researchers, aiding them in conducting meta-analyses involving cultural branding and other variables in advertising.

### Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

This article highlights common drawbacks associated with the meta-analysis approach. One limitation is the restriction of the article sample to those published in English. While this language bias is often accepted in meta-analyses due to practical reasons (such as the availability of a diverse pool of coders to review articles) and the widespread use of English as an international language, it may lead to the oversight of cultural branding effects influenced by cultural differences. Given that most of the considered papers are from the USA, there's a risk of neglecting the diverse ways in which cultural branding is perceived and utilized across cultures.

Among the 111 studies examined on cultural branding, only 13 provided the correlation between cultural branding and attitude toward the brand. Researchers are encouraged to explore additional studies that may be published in the future, focusing on this relationship to enhance the precision of future meta-analyses. The findings of this study offer guidance and insights to researchers, suggesting avenues for future research on similar topics. These insights can assist practitioners in making informed decisions when formulating advertising strategies.

The article incorporates studies that investigated the correlation between cultural branding and attitude toward the brand, specifically focusing on instances where the correlation coefficient was provided. Future studies could explore the relationship between cultural branding and other variables relevant to brand, such as attitude toward the brand, purchase intention, brand consciousness, and more. Additionally, examining moderator variables, such as gender, brand familiarity, prior brand evaluation, etc., could offer deeper insights into heterogeneity within these relationships.

### Authors' Contribution

Hanci Arora conceived the idea for this statistical study. Hanci Arora collected papers/articles from several reputable journals, screened them for relevance, determined the studies suitable for meta-analysis, and extracted necessary data from the chosen studies. Hanci Arora performed the analysis and interpreted the results. Hanci Arora collaborated on writing the final manuscript.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity that has a financial or non-financial interest in the topics or materials presented in this manuscript.

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