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11 Analysis of African universities' corporate visual identities

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Visual identities are arguably the most prominent manifestation of a brand, and with universities around the world are behaving increasingly as corporations, their creative efforts towards rebranding and changes in their logo are recognised. Using the African higher education sector as an example, this chapter draws on the theories of corporate visual identities to provide a theoretical framework for African universities' corporate visual identities. In so doing, this chapter advances theory in brand identity, design, and development. While there are many forms of visual brand identities, this chapter focuses especially on logos. The logos of the top 200 universities in Africa were analysed to understand the creative elements adopted in creating the visual brand identities for these universities. The study found that overall there appears to be a lack of understanding with regards to the creative design of brand identities by African universities, though with some exceptions as illustrated in the top 20 logos selected in the chapter. The chapter concludes with some suggestions to extend the current body of knowledge in the literature on the corporate logo and corporate visual identity, especially with a focus on HEI brands in the African context. This study presented a theoretical framework of universities' brand identities which focuses on the shape, colour, and typeface of the logo.

Introduction

Universities are making an effort to present themselves as a unique brand as they reach out to their stakeholders. Branding in universities has become an increasingly topical issue amongst practitioners, as universities invest a vast amount of money in repositioning themselves (Chapleo, 2010). In many countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where universities operate in a market place in which students are consumers of an educational service, there is this increasing marketisation as universities are improving their marketing strategy geared to target prospective students (Roy & Naidoo, 2016). Universities are increasingly recognising the value of marketing (Foroudi et al., 2017), and as they become more marketised, brand building is becoming an essential managerial issue. (Jevons, 2006; Williams Jr & Omar, 2014).

A prominent and public-facing effort towards building a university's brand is the design and development of their logo. Universities around the world are changing their logo to reflect changes and prepare for new challenges. As a brand element, a logo is considered as a graphic representation (Walsh et al., 2010), which can be seen as a source of competitive advantage (Melewar et al., 2006). Logos are used in universities websites, prospectuses, certificates, and souvenirs, where different stakeholders may encounter university logos, and an impression may be made. Given the significance of the logo and building upon the evidence discussed, it is useful to investigate further the concept in order to complement existing studies.

The rationale for the work is that while higher education institutions (HEIs) around the world are behaving increasingly as corporations (Veloutsou et al., 2004) and there is lack of

understanding about the brand strategies of African universities, irrespective of the location of the university, the dual identity present in the university – the conflict between the university as a place of learning and a commercial revenue-generating – poses a branding challenge (Alessandri, 2007). There is, therefore, a need to understand better the factors that help to create and build university brands (Khanna et al., 2014), and identify what strategic decisions should be made when designing new or redesigning existing new logos (Kim & Lim, 2019).

Despite the potentially significant role of the favourable university logo, there is no evidence of increasing pressure on universities in Africa to create an appealing corporate logo and strategically communicate it. Likewise, and also, unfortunately, to date, there is a paucity of empirical research within the literature on the visual identities of African universities. Consequently, there is no theoretical underpinning and insight to explain how African universities are defining and visually illustrating their brand identities. Therefore, the development of visual identities – arguably the most prominent manifestation of brand (Marsden, 2019) – remains theoretically underdeveloped.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: firstly, to develop an understanding of African HEI's brand identity by identifying the types of expressions embedded within the design of the identities, and secondly to develop a conceptual framework which can be used to improve African HEI's brand identity. Using the African higher education sector as an example, this chapter draws on the theories of corporate visual identities to provide a theoretical framework for African universities' corporate visual identities. In so doing, this chapter advances theory in brand identity, design, and development. It also has implications for managers in guiding how HEIs can develop and enhance their corporate visual identities.

This chapter is an initial step to address the call by researchers to study the branding strategies of universities, especially in those in Africa (Mogaji, 2019c). It examines the design of universities' corporate visual identities in Africa, providing guidelines and recommendation for selecting design elements for brand strategies. This chapter studies university logos because they are one of the primary elements of a universities' visual branding strategy within the competitive higher education market. The ultimate goal is to develop managerial guidelines for designing logos for higher education institutions in Africa. The structure of this chapter is as follows: firstly, a review of literature on corporate visual identities, specifically in HEIs context. Secondly, a discussion of the methodology for the research. Thirdly, the presentation of results and discussions. Finally, a conclusion depicting theoretical and managerial implications and suggested directions for further research.

University as a brand

As higher education is becoming more marketised, various corporate marketing strategies are being employed by universities to make them stand out and effective while competing in the market (Bunzel, 2007). Universities are making effort towards improving the brands and making them more appealing. They are no longer just institutions of higher learning but also businesses striving to survive in the competitive marketplace and aware of critical business metrics (Bunzel, 2007). A university brand is defined as 'a manifestation of the institution's features that distinguish it from others, reflect its capacity to satisfy students' needs, engender trust in its ability to deliver a certain type and level of higher education, and help potential recruits to make wise enrolment decisions' (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009, p. 14).

A strong brand is the most valuable asset for a university (Robson, Roy, Chapleo, & Yang, 2019) around the world and especially in the UK. Interest in university branding has increased substantially in recent years (Mogaji, 2019a) as it is recognised that HEIs, as with any other organisations, have much to gain from developing a strong brand identity (Robson, Roy, Chapleo, & Yang, 2019). Since, universities are under intense pressure to set themselves apart from others, they are rebranding and creating new corporate visual identities, even though not all of them have been all that successful (Mogaji, 2018). Considering that HEIs are making an effort to stand out as a unique brand amongst various competitors and they are increasingly being considered as corporations, branding and reputation management has become a critical part of their business (Chapleo, 2010). No doubt they have been adopting various private-sector ideas such as branding, in order to visibly rebrand; and hence reposition themselves as many universities have been known to alter their visual identity (Mogaji, 2018)

Mogaji (2018) identified two critical motivations for university rebranding. Firstly, universities are rebranding to refresh their brand to become more appealing; universities wants to present themselves as active players in the sector. They want to remain dynamic, contemporary, and relevant. Secondly, some institutions had to rebrand when they were awarded university status. In South Africa, in July 2017, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University repositioned itself as a global institution by rebranding to become Nelson Mandela University (Gumede, 2017). As one of the newest institutions in the UK, Suffolk (formerly University Campus Suffolk) acknowledge that consistency in how they position and present themselves to the outside world is of utmost importance; hence, they had to rebrand – changing their name and logo (Mogaji, 2018). Likewise, in July 2001, upon attaining

university status, Beaver College in the USA officially changed its name to Arcadia University (Williams Jr & Omar, 2014).

While acknowledging that there are many countries in Africa with different higher education markets, branding remains vital within the higher education marketing sector (Lomer, Papatsiba, & Naidoo, 2018), and considerable potential for the application of branding (Furey, Springer, & Parsons, 2014).

There is little evidence of African universities becoming more marketing-orientated in order to attract prospective students, particularly in response to increased global competition. Besides, African universities have their unique challenges, which affects the marketing of higher education. African public universities are often oversubscribed because of accessibility and affordable fees making universities less motivated to engage in marketing activities. However, the influx of private higher education has been changing the market dynamics (Olaleye, Ukpabi, & Mogaji, forthcoming), with international partnerships with universities in developed countries (German University in Cairo, Lancaster University in Ghana, and Reading's Henley Business School Africa in South Africa) and student desires for quality education. These factors are shaping the higher education landscape in Africa (Ndofirepi, Farinloye, & Mogaji, forthcoming).

With the consensus amongst academics and practitioners that brands are the most valuable assets for organisations (Madden, Fehle and Fournier, 2006), making efforts to build the African universities' brand is essential, even as the diversity of the sector and the many stakeholders that exist still poses a challenge (Robson, Roy, Chapleo, & Yang, 2019). Developing a strong brand is an essential component of marketing strategy for universities in the competitive market (Watkins & Gonzenbach, 2013). Even as current literature indicates that branding of higher education is in its infancy (Casidy, 2014), there is a shortage of theoretical insight about branding within the African context. African universities, in particular, have not essentially joined the conversation (Mogaji, 2019c). As a result, many gaps remain in our understanding of African HEI marketing in general and explicitly branding.

Corporate visual identity

Brands make effort to distinguish themselves within their market. They create identifiable elements which can be visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory. Though logo is considered the most prominent form of visual identity, other elements can also present visual identification for a brand, such as a store design (Apple Stores) or even staff uniform (flight

attendants). Likewise, with the significant increase in social media and TV advertisements, there are possibilities for an auditory version of a visual logo to be considered a corporate identity. This is described as sonic logo (aka 'sogo') (Krishnan, Kellaris, & Aurand, 2012). An example is McDonald's – 'I'm Lovin' It'. Despite the various opportunities and possibilities with brand identity, this study focuses on visual identity.

Corporate Visual Identity (CVI) is defined as the 'way in which an organisation uses logos, type styles, nomenclature, architecture, and interior design in order to communicate its corporate philosophy and personality' (Balmer, 1995, p. 26). The visual identity of a brand is strategically essential in differentiating companies (Hynes, 2009). It 'plays a significant role in the way an organisation presents itself to both internal and external stakeholders' (Van den Bosch et al., 2006, p. 871).

The corporate logo is central at the root of corporate identity as well as the main element of corporate visual identity (Balmer, 2001; Hynes, 2009). It is a significant tangible asset of the organisation (Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2017). It enhances visibility as well as recognisability of the brand (Balmer & Gray, 2000; Kohli et al., 2002). Despite the importance of logos, the literature on logos remains fragmented (Kim & Lim, 2019). Foroudi et al. (2017) tried to address this issue through their review of literature on logos which revealed that corporate logo is the official graphical design for a company, and the uniqueness of the design requires significant creativity. The notion of a corporate logo is grounded in various subject domains such as marketing and design. The design literature refers to the corporate logo as a set of creative elements that gives prominence to a company's products and services (Mollerup, 1999). While marketers often consider a logo as visual cue help brands communicate their unique identities and capture consumers' attention. (Kim & Lim, 2019).

Logos are also referred to as *aesthetic designations* which are seen by the public and from which they form an opinion (Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997). Marsden (2019) also referred to logo as the corporate brand mark, which a combined unit of a brand name and its visual representation (i.e., logotype and symbol). The corporate logo has various essential elements of design. These include the shape, image, style, and size, as well as the colour(s) used (Hynes, 2009).

Elements of logo

The logo, a form of brand identity, has several components, amongst which are typeface, shape, and colour (Kim & Lim, 2019). Another study has considered brand name and design

as logo elements (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019; Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2017), Mogaji (2019) however argued that design is not an element nor is design a component of a logo (like colour and typeface), but it is the overarching process of the brand identity development. The design of a logo involves the creative decision of choosing the shape (overlapping circles of Mastercard), the colours (overlapping red and yellow circles) and the typeface (FF-Mark typeface in all lowercase) to make the logo. Likewise, a brand name is not a logo element because the brand name existed before having a logo. Based on this argument, logo as a corporate identity can be expressed through shape, typeface, and colour.

Design is not an element but, instead brings all the elements together to become highly natural and harmonious to achieve specific communication objectives (Van Grinsven & Das, 2016). Perhaps those who considered design as an element (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019), should consider the shape as an element instead. This can be in form of a circle, square, or an oval. Jiang et al. (2016) suggested that circular shapes are associated with a perception of 'being soft', whereas angular shapes with a perception of 'being hard'. Also, Lieven et al. (2015) found that a heavier and more angular shaped logo increased brand masculinity, whereas a slender and more rounded shaped logo increased brand femininity. Round logos are also viewed as being harmonious and natural, and as a logo element which is an emergent trend that is likely to endure (Walsh et al., 2010). While Luffarelli et al. (2019) found that asymmetrical logos are likely to be more arousing than symmetrical logos, and in turn have a positive effect on consumers' evaluations. With regards to characters, logos depicting characters, places, animals, fruits or any other item are considered more recognisable (Henderson & Cote, 1998).

The typeface is another element of a logo. It is the art of mechanically producing letters, numbers, symbols, and shapes through an understanding of the essential elements, principles, and attributes of design (Solomon, 1986). It is considered the 'the art or skill of designing communication by means of the printed word' (Childers & Jass, 2002, p. 2), and highlights a significant design decision which plays an essential role in the way an organisation presents itself to both external and internal stakeholders (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019) Typeface plays a crucial role in distinguishing an organisation's visual identity and can become characteristic enough that they can appear on their own without a symbol, for example, the typeface of Coca-Cola (Kapferer, 1994). The typeface is an important component to convey communication goals. A conscious, creative decision is required in selecting the right typeface as a visual identity for a brand. The choice of a typeface can manipulate the meaning of the word it is applied to (Childers & Jass, 2002). University of Greenwich, UK, uses

Antonio, a commercial font which they consider to be a strong, punchy typeface used to add visual impact. Mogaji (2018) identified a typology of the typeface. There are the customised fonts (where a typeface is designed explicitly for a brand, for example, the 2012 Olympic typeface), the commercial typeface (brands buy them because it's not commonly available, for example Palatino designed by Hermann Zapf and used by Keele University, UK), and common types (these fonts are available on most, if not all, word processing software and are free to use because they do not require a font licence).

Colour is an integral element of corporate visual brand identity and marketing communications (Marsden, 2019). It induces emotions and moods and influences an individual's perception of a brand. (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019). Brands can also use colours to position and differentiate themselves in a competitive market. Like Typeface, colour can also remind consumers of certain brands (Singh, 2006). For example, red and yellow for McDonald's, red for KFC, and green for Starbucks. It is therefore not surprising to see universities trademark primary colour which they use on their marketing communication, sports team, and souvenirs. The trademark allows the universities to use a particular combination and shade of colour in their sector. The University of Texas at Austin has the Pantone Colour #159 which they called Burnt Orange, Queens University (Belfast, Northern Ireland) has Pantone 185c called Queen's Red, and University of Greenwich (London, England) has the Greenwich Navy Blue colour (Mogaji, 2018). These colours play a significant role in establishing the universities' identity and should be implemented consistently across all touchpoints (Mogaji, 2019c).

With universities under intense pressure to set themselves apart from others, they are rebranding and creating new corporate visual identities (Mogaji, 2018). UK universities rebrand to refresh their brand and be more appealing. They want to remain dynamic, contemporary, and relevant (Sanjit chapter). This opens an opportunity for a better understanding of how other countries, particularly those in the developing economies, are making an effort to create their brand identities.

Methodology

The research was designed to be exploratory, aiming to provide an initial understanding of the different versions of typology used for African universities' brand identities. The research took a predominantly inductive and qualitative approach (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019). Qualitative seemed to be the most appropriate way to build a picture based on the ideas of informants.

There were three critical stages in the adopted methodology. A summary is presented in **Figure 11.1**.

Stage 1: Identifying the University – The purpose of the study was to identify the types of expressions embedded within the design of African universities’ brand identity. To this end, a broad purposive sample of 200 highest-ranked universities in Africa, according to the UniRank 2019 African University Ranking (UniRank, 2019), were selected for the analysis. These are all universities licensed and accredited by the appropriate higher education-related organisation in each country. These universities are considered the best in Africa, according to the league table, and with the indication that they can give an overview of the brand identity of universities in Africa. As illustrated in **Table 11.1**, 24 African universities were presented on the league table, that is 44.4% of the 54 recognised African countries. Nigeria has the highest number of universities with 17.5% of the sample (n=35), Egypt followed this with 16.5% (n=33), and Algeria has 14.5% of the sample (n=29).

Table 11.1 List of sampled country and numbers of universities

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>No of Universities</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	Nigeria	35	17.5
2.	Egypt	33	16.5
3.	Algeria	29	14.5
4.	South Africa	22	11
5.	Botswana	10	5
6.	Morocco	10	5
7.	Angola	9	4.5
8.	Kenya	9	4.5
9.	Ethiopia	7	3.5
10.	Sudan	5	2.5
11.	Tanzania	5	2.5
12.	Ghana	4	2
13.	Libya	3	1.5
14.	Namibia	3	1.5
15.	Uganda	3	1.5
16.	Zimbabwe	3	1.5

17.	Mozambique	2	1
18.	Tunisia	2	1
19.	Mauritius	1	0.5
20.	Réunion	1	0.5
21.	Rwanda	1	0.5
22.	Saint Helena	1	0.5
23.	Swaziland	1	0.5
24.	Zambia	1	0.5
—	TOTAL	200	100

Stage 2: Identifying the Logo – The second aspect of the selection process involved examining each of the websites of the 200 African universities, to determine which logo they were using on their website that is public-facing. These logos were collected in May 2019. Some universities, while celebrating their anniversary, had modified their logo (such as the American University in Cairo, Egypt and Stellenbosch University, South Africa). This was collected as their logo for that period. The logos were copied from the website and saved in a serial form as a PDF document. The collected logos are available within an online depository at Mogaji (2019).

Stage 3: Identifying the Elements – The coding system for this study incorporated a structured approach that drew from the literature and offered a progressive approach that allowed codes to develop layered details from the logo analysis. The PDF documents (in Stage 2 above) was imported into NVIVO, a qualitative analysis software tool (Farinloye, Mogaji, Aririguzoh, & Kieu, 2019). The NVIVO analysis offered a content analysis of the sampled logo. The analysis includes exploring the shape of the logo, the colours, and specific lettering case in a wordmark (Xu, Chen, & Liu, 2017). Following the methodological approach of Henderson, et al. (2004), an offline focus group was organised with five brand identity designers (from Nigeria, Italy, Kenya, UK and Canada) to critically evaluate the design characteristics on different dimensions such as design, subjective familiarity, and recognition. The designers were informed about the research and consented to participate. The designers were asked to rate the design and select their top 20 logos from the pool of 200 logos, and give justifications for their choices. The first author coordinated the meeting and analysed the minute.

<Insert Figure 11.1 here>

Figure 11.1 Summary of three stages of the methodology.

Results

An analysis of the logo of African universities was carried in the first part of Stage 3 of the methodology to understand the recurring themes with regards to the creative elements being used. The analysis revealed the shape of the logos, the colours being used and the typeface. Besides, professional opinions of brand designers were elicited during the second part of Stage 3. The designers critically evaluated these brand visual identities, which informs the theoretical framework for future design consideration.

Logo elements

As earlier argued, there are three elements of a logo – the shape, the typeface, and the colour. These three elements served as the coding framework for the universities' logo, and the results are presented in the subsequent section.

Shape

The shape serves as the containers for the other creative elements that form the logo. The circle was the most predominantly used shape of African universities; 30.5 per cent (n=61) of the sampled logo was in the shape of a circle. This was closely followed by shields – 21.5 per cent (n=43) of the total sample. The shield, however, had different variations, such as inverted shield, flat top, and pointed bottom. There were universities as well that used the coat of arms as a brand identity on their website. While some universities used regular shapes like circles, rectangles, and ovals, some universities used irregular shaped items for the identity. Perhaps that is a creative choice they have made which may have inherent meaning in their culture. This was predominantly from universities from North Africa. **Table 11.2** illustrates different shapes of the logo that were used and examples of universities using them.

Table 11.2 Different shapes of logo that were used and examples of universities using them

<i>Shapes</i>	<i>Universities</i>
Circles	The University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Lagos, Tshwane University of Technology, Mansoura University, Université Kasdi Merbah de Ouargla, Addis

		Ababa University
Semi-circle		University of KwaZulu-Natal, Université des Sciences et de la Technologie Houari Boumediène, Africa University
Oval		University of Dar es Salaam, University of Zambia
Shields	Flat top and pointed bottom	Rhodes University, University of Ilorin, University of Zimbabwe
	Round top and pointed bottom	University of Botswana, Uganda Christian University, Mount Kenya University
	Flat top and rounded bottom	University of Fort Hare, Obafemi Awolowo University, University of Nigeria
	Round top and round bottom	The University of Ilorin, University of Port Harcourt Sohag university
	Inverted shields	Ahmadu Bello University, Zagazig University
Triangle		Libyan International Medical University, Delta University for Science and Technology, Menoufia University, ABM University College
Rectangle		Babcock University, Université Larbi Tébéssi de Tébessa, Nahda University, Université Djillali Liabès de Sidi-Bel-Abbès
Octagons		Usmanu Danfodio University, Bayero University Kano, Université Mohammed Premier
Abstract shape		Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Universidade Metodista de Angola, Durban University of Technology, United States International University Africa
Coat of arms		University of Nairobi, Makerere University, Kenyatta University, Vaal University of Technology

Irregular shape Université Mouloud Maameri de Tizi Ouzou, Université Ibn Tofail, Université 20 Août 1955 de Skikda, Université Larbi Ben Mhidi de Oum El Bouaghi, Université Hassan 1er

Internal component of the shape

While the shape of the logo is recognised as an outline and container for the logo, the internal components are worth considering, as it became a unique feature of most of the African universities' logos. For example, Obafemi Awolowo University had a shape of flat top, round bottom shield, but contained a human face and an icon relevant to knowledge (signified by the book). Another Africa university had the shape of a semi-circle and contained a natural element. There is presence of different elements within the shape, as presented in Table 11.3. They include animals and natural elements; perhaps something that aligns with the natural habitats and environments in Africa. Likewise, there were icons relevant to knowledge such as open books, microscope (for sciences and health-related universities), and gears (for engineering and technology universities). Besides, shape of human faces was also presented in the logos.

An example is the Egyptian royalties in Egyptian universities and cultural artefact in Nigerian universities. The University of Benin had the face of a Benin Prince, which illustrated the cultural background of the university in the Benin Kingdom of Nigeria. Also, Obafemi Awolowo University had the face of Oduduwa – who was the first ruler of Ile Ife and progenitor of various independent royal dynasties in Yorubaland in Nigeria where the university is situated.

Table 11.3 Different logo shape content and examples of universities using them

<i>Shape Content</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Example of Universities</i>
Animals	Cow, elephant, lion, Eagle	Rhodes University, University of Nigeria, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Swaziland
Natural elements	Mountain, sun, trees, plants, water, and leaves	Universiteit Stellenbosch, Africa University, Beni-Suef

Icons relevant to knowledge	Books, microscope, gear	University, Université de Sfax University of Johannesburg, Obafemi Awolowo University, Osun State University, Université Hadj Lakhder de Batna 1
Physical elements	Map, anchor, tractor, lighthouse, flame, and pyramid	Addis Ababa University, University of Pretoria Alexandria University, University of Dar es Salaam
Human face	Founder, royalties of Egypt	Damanhour University, Minia University, Université Hassiba Ben Bouali de Chlef, University of Benin, Universidade Óscar Ribas, Zagazig University

External component of the shape

The most prominent external components of the logo are the swirls. These are ribbon-shaped items often below and sometimes above the logo. This is often used to complement the logo and contains information relevant to the brand, such as their name and the motto. University of Zambia, Universidade Pedagógica, and Egerton University had swirls above and below their logo. Universities like Mansoura University, University of Limpopo, Egerton University, and Olabisi Onabanjo University, had their names on the swirls. For universities with a motto on the swirls, these were sometimes presented in English, like in the case of the University of Lagos, Makerere University, and Obafemi Awolowo University. While the University of Ghana, University of Ibadan, and Vaal University of Technology, amongst others, had non-English motto on the swirls. Modern Sciences and Arts University, however, had an empty swirl.

Colours

African universities appear to be very colourful. Seven per cent of the sample (n=14) only had two colours in their logo. Examples include the University of Johannesburg with orange and white, North-West University, University of Benin and Rhodes University with Purple and white, Université de la Réunion and Nahda University with blue and white, and Walter

Sisulu University in black and white. Obafemi Awolowo University has two colours, which are navy blue and yellow. Majority of the logos were very colourful. Ninety-three per cent of the sample (n=186) had more than two colours. This includes the colours that were used in the shape (including icons and coat of arms) and typeface. Durban University of Technology had seven colours – six on the icon and one for the typeface, while University of KwaZulu-Natal had more than six colours in their logo.

It is also essential to recognise that universities in Africa tend to represent their country in their brand visual identity. This in particular with the use of the country's flag colour. The red diagonal band radiating diagonally from the lower hoist-side corner of the Namibian flag was replicated in the Namibia University of Science and Technology logo. Likewise, the red colour is shown on the University of Namibia's logo as a red book. The green and white colours of the Nigerian flag is well represented on the University of Nigeria's logo, albeit horizontally. The University of Port Harcourt also has the Nigerian flag colour on its logo. Usmanu Danfodio University, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, and Federal University Oye-Ekiti also adopted the Green colour of their Nation – Nigeria. Nelson Mandela University, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Tshwane University of Technology also have used a shade of their national colour.

Universities with the inter-governmental agreement were also noted to be strategic with the choice of their brand visual identity colours. The German University in Cairo – which is an independent, non-profit oriented, Egyptian, the private institution managed by a consortium of Germans and Egyptians – had the black, red, and gold colours of German flags on their logo. Likewise, The British University in Egypt has both the flag of Britain and Egypt on its logo. Despite its link with the United States of America, The United States International University Africa, however, did not adopt the colours of USA. Instead, they went for blue and yellow.

Typeface

The typeface, as a logo element, represents the creative decision with regards to how the font is being presented to create a message. Some fonts are selected to make a bold statement, while some are presented to make a real statement. The font size and boldness are also creative decisions to make a statement and a form of identification. In the analysis of typeface used as logo elements in African's higher education, the study focused on the characteristics and not a response (e.g. innovativeness).

Serifs and sans serif

Serif typeface contains a little decorative stroke at the end of the characters, while sans serif does not contain such decorative strokes. University logos were predominantly presented in the sans serif typeface, which is known to be modern, contemporary, and simple. Nine per cent of the sampled logo (n=18) were found to have used the serif typeface. Prominent amongst which are University of the Witwatersrand, Rhodes University, and Landmark University. Sans serif is considered modern, and it is not surprising to see that some of the newer universities are adopting such typeface on their logo. Examples include University of the Free State, Nelson Mandela University, and University of Johannesburg – all in South Africa. There are other instances where both typeface characters are combined. University of Namibia used the serif for the acronym (UNAM) and sans serif for the full brand name (University of Namibia). Modern Sciences and Arts University also adopted this approach. The United States International University Africa, however, had a different approach, as their wordmark was reshaped to have both serifs and sans serif.

Letter cases

Letter case is the written distinction between letters in upper and lowercase (Xu, Chen, & Liu, 2017). The letter case of the typefaces used in the logo was also analysed as an indication of the university's brand visual identity. Though consumers have been found to feel closer to lowercase wordmarks, which increase perceptions of brand friendliness, compared with the uppercase wordmarks (Xu, Chen, & Liu, 2017), majority of African universities are still adopting all uppercase wordmarks in their logo. As presented in the table below, a typology of five different letter cases strategies was adopted by the African universities. Fifty-one per cent of the sampled logo (n=102) used all uppercase in same font size for the logo wordmarks. This was followed by an uppercase first letter which was used by 15.5 per cent (n=31) of the universities. There were instances whereby both upper and lower cases were combined. For example, Strathmore University where the word 'Strathmore' was in uppercased first letter, while the word 'University' was in all uppercases while using the same font size. Sohrag University was the only university which has all lowercase for their logo wordmark.

Table 11.4 Typology of logo letter cases and examples of universities using them

<i>s/N</i>	—	<i>Illustration</i>	<i>Example</i>
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1	All uppercase, same font size	UNIVERSITY OF UNIVERSITY	University of Pretoria, Kenyatta University, Landmark University
2	All uppercase, different font size	UNIVERSITY OF UNIVERSITY	Rhodes University, Sudan University of Science and Technology, Université Ziane Achour de Djelfa, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture
3	Uppercase first letter	University of University	Tshwane University of Technology, Ahmadu Bello University, University of Fort Hare
4	All lower cases	university of university	Sohrag University
5	Mixed cases	UNIVERSITY of UNIVERSITY	University of the Western Cape, Universidade Jean Piaget de Angola, Strathmore University

Letter boldness

The boldness of the typeface as an indication of emphasis was also analysed. The brand identity of the University of Cape Town was boldly written in English, while the translation in two other languages had a smaller font and placed under the English translation. This was, however not the case with the University of the Free State, which made the ‘Free State’ bold in all the three languages used on the wordmarks. Likewise for the University of KwaZulu-Natal where ‘KwaZulu-Natal’ was made bolder and more prominent compared to other typefaces in all the two languages that were used. In the University of the Witwatersrand’s wordmarks, ‘Witwatersrand’ was made bolder and more prominent than Johannesburg. Perhaps the emphasis was more on Witwatersrand and not on Johannesburg. Nelson Mandela University, Strathmore University, and Babcock University, all made their brand identity bolder by placing more emphasis on the brand name and not the word ‘University’, which is used by every other brand in the market. Durban University of Technology and Alexandria University are examples of universities that placed more emphasis on brand location and not on the word ‘University’. Namibia University of Science and Technology placed more emphasis on ‘Namibia University’ while the British University in Egypt placed more emphasis on their initials. This highlights how individual universities are making creative decision with regards to brand identifies.

Languages

The analysis of the typeface recognises the different languages used in the word marks. This use of different languages appears to be relatively unique for African brands, especially universities in the south and north of the continent. In North Africa, where English is not the official language, universities such as Damietta University and Université Hassan placed more emphasis on the Arabic language on top of the wordmarks, while the English language was below. The German University in Cairo, the British University in Egypt, Future University in Egypt and Nahda University had the English language and then followed by the Arabic language, on their logo. This indicates that the universities considered the English language as their primary language, which is not necessarily the official language in the country. Université Abderrahmane Mira de Béjaia, Université Djillali Liabès de Sidi-Bel-Abbès, and Université Larbi Ben Mhidi de Oum El Bouaghi had three different languages on their logo, but do not have an English translation.

In South Africa, especially where the constitution recognises 11 official languages, universities reflect this diversity in their brand identities. While some universities like the University of the Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg, and Nelson Mandela University did not include any other languages apart from English, there are universities that included one or two additional languages. The prominence of English, however, varied. The University of Pretoria had three languages. All were in the same typeface, but Dutch language was used first; followed by the English language. The University of Cape Town had three languages but in different typeface. The primary language was English with larger fonts, followed by Xhosa, and Dutch language was used last. Universiteit Stellenbosch also had three languages with same typeface, but English language was used last. University of KwaZulu-Natal, however, had two languages in same typeface, but English was used first and followed by Zulu Language.

Selected top 20 HEI logos in Africa

The designers were asked to rate the design and select their top 20 logos from the pool of 200 logos and give justifications for their choices. The five designers initially selected 36 logos as their top logo. However, there were deliberations and discussion to witter the list to 20 (10% of the sample). In the end, **Table 11.5** presents the selected 20 logos across different countries, with their justification for inclusion.

Table 11.5 Selected top 20 logos and their justification for inclusion

<i>Rank</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1.	University of the Witwatersrand	Image South Africa.gif South Africa	The choice of font The layout All in uppercase Emphasis more on Witwatersrand by increasing the font size and less on Johannesburg. The icon could have been made bigger to align with Johannesburg.
2.	University of Johannesburg	Image South Africa.gif South Africa	Choice of colour Negative space (between birds)to form a book All in uppercase Emphasis more on Johannesburg by increasing the font size and less on university Structurally fit. Centrally aligned and balanced
3.	University of KwaZulu- Natal	Image South Africa.gif South Africa	The choice of colour, closely related to multiple colours of the South African flag Balance and simple use of colour. Sunshine has more than one colour Same font and size for the wordmark Structurally balanced, icon aligns with the wordmark Emphasis more on Kwazulu-Natal by increasing the font size and boldness; and less on University
4.	Universiteit van die Vrystaat	Image South Africa.gif South	The line design is abstract but still relevant and relatable

		Africa	<p>Initials on one side and full meaning on the other side.</p> <p>Three different languages, but well balanced and arranged.</p> <p>Emphasis more on Free State in all languages by increasing the font boldness, and less on University</p>
5.	Nelson Mandela University	<p>Image South Africa.gif</p> <p>South Africa</p>	<p>All solid and flat</p> <p>Colour sparingly used but focused.</p> <p>The circle and triangle bring attention.</p> <p>Background colour contrasts as well</p> <p>Emphasis more on the name – bolder and bigger and less on University</p>
6.	Durban University of Technology	<p>Image South Africa.gif</p> <p>South Africa</p>	<p>Beautiful use of colours in the icon</p> <p>Initials used, but also full meaning is presented.</p> <p>Structurally balanced with key features</p> <p>Typography looks good with focus on Durban, making it bold and more significant. DUT is still prominent with a colourful balance on the left.</p>
7.	The German University in Cairo	<p>Image Egypt.gif</p> <p>Egypt</p>	<p>The use of colour to represent Germany</p> <p>The shape of the icon -an arrangement from the initials</p> <p>Initials provided (could have been bolder and more imposing)</p> <p>Structural balance with other</p>

			language going across the full length. Perhaps an indication of emphasis on the other language
8.	Namibia University of Science and Technology	Image Namibia.gif Namibia	The choice of colour The red bar (from the flag of Namibia) is well integrated. Unique font. The 'N' is different, similar to the N in the logo. Emphasis on University and less on Science and Technology
9.	University of Namibia	Image Namibia.gif Namibia	The choice of colour The icon is simple, relatable, and unique; moving from the usual nook and sunshine logo. The icon can stand well on its own without the wordmark (however, the word mark should have been made bigger to align with the icon) Initials were boldly presented and full meaning provided
10.	The British University in Egypt	Image Egypt.gif Egypt	The choice of colour. Sticking a balance between both the British and Egyptian shield. Having both countries flag equally placed. Structurally balanced and aligned. Like the concept of GUC (no. 7), the initial is provided and also the initials. However, both languages were aligned under the initials. It appeared more structurally balanced.

11.	Strathmore University	Image Kenya.gif Kenya	<p>The choice of font. Solid enough to convey strength.</p> <p>Imposing and cannot be missed.</p> <p>It was not used in upper case to avoid too much noise, but instead, the word university appeared relaxed and subtle, even though it's all in uppercase.</p> <p>The emphasis still on Strathmore and less on University</p> <p>The icon could be made to refreshing like the words</p> <p>Words could also be made more colourful, but still looks good in black.</p>
12.	United States International University Africa	Image Kenya.gif Kenya	<p>Very unconventional. Looks modern, simple, and refreshed.</p> <p>Moves away from the use of the country's colour. America was not well represented with its stripe and stars, more so there is no yellow colour in then Kenya flag.</p> <p>The font is also unique and appears bespoke as it has been customised.</p> <p>It contains both serifs and sans serif features.</p> <p>Initials provided, and likewise the full meaning.</p>
13.	Université Hassiba Ben Bouali de Chlef	Image Algeria.gif Algeria	<p>One of the best logo in circle.</p> <p>Key features are all contained – the name of the university is included in both halves in different languages.</p>

			<p>The colour is simple enough – green and orange with white</p> <p>The best thing is the use of negative space to contain all the elements – the face, the bird with leaves, the bridge, the year, and lettering.</p>
14.	Babcock University	Image Nigeria.gif Nigeria	<p>The shape looks solid and imposing. It contains the icon.</p> <p>There is much emphasis on Babcock; which is bolder, and less on the word ‘University’, and more so less on location.</p> <p>The location was allowed to be out of line with the icon as it appeared aligned with word ‘University’</p> <p>The word on the logo. However, it appeared to compete with the wordmark.</p>
15.	American University of Nigeria	Image Nigeria.gif Nigeria	<p>The choice of colour – the Green of Nigeria and Blue of America, unlike BUE (No 10) where both country’s flag was equally placed. Nigeria was given more priority here.</p> <p>The arrangement of the initials also looks unique, which raises questions with regards to emphasis. Perhaps the A is the red of America flag colour and N is the white of Nigeria flag colour.</p>
16.	Future University in Egypt	Image Egypt.gif Egypt	<p>Both icon and wordmark are aligned</p>

Universities' corporate visual identities

- Emphasis on 'future' by making it upper case (but it could have been bolder)
- 'University in Egypt' was also well placed (it could have been made bigger)
- More emphasis on English as the official language of the university. Hence, the other language was made smaller under the logo
- Structurally balanced, but size needs to be increased.
- Simple colour as well
17. Nahda University Image Egypt.gif
Egypt
- The panel considered this as one of the best logos from an Egyptian university.
- The icon moved from just having a pyramid, graphically illustrating it in a simple, related, and unique style.
- The focus is on the initials. Unlike DUT (Number 6), less emphasis on the full meaning, even less emphasis on the university and location.
- More emphasis on English as the official language of the university, as the other language was made smaller under the logo
- Choice of colour – background colour contrasting the text and icon very well.
18. BA ISAGO University Image Botswana.gif
- The shape is unique and

		Botswana	<p>straightforward. It looks like a flame with colourful light, flying like a flag.</p> <p>The choice of multiple colours makes it stand out.</p> <p>Emphasis on 'Ba Isago' made bolder and more prominent, and less on the 'University'. The question is, could 'University' be well spaced out to be aligned under the 'Ba Isago'?</p> <p>The logo looks well aligned, as well.</p>
19.	Nile University	Image Egypt.gif Egypt	<p>Another beautiful logo from Egypt. The focus is on 'N' and 'U' which has been reshaped to offer a unique and intriguing perspective. Though it looks imbalance, it is simple, unique, and structurally fit.</p> <p>The wordmark was well placed as well. Both words have equal emphasis, same font, boldness, and size.</p> <p>The font looks solid enough to complement the shaped icon.</p> <p>The choice of colour – fresh and appealing.</p> <p>No emphasis on another language.</p>
20.	Université Hassan II de Casablanca	Image Morocco.gif Morroco	<p>The typeface is aligned with an emphasis on the first language (different colour shade) which indicates the priority</p> <p>The icon is also creatively</p>

arranged under the wordmark. The U is placed on top of the H with different shades and Roman figure II cutting across.

The choice of colour – using different shade makes it unique as well.

Discussion and conclusion

The study sought to understand the creative elements adopted in creating visual brand identities for African universities. While there are many forms of visual brand identities, this chapter focuses, especially on logos. Overall, there appears to be a lack of understanding with regards to the creative design of brand identities by African universities. The thought process behind the brand identities is questionable. The analysis raises question about the person/team responsible for designing Africa university logos. Could it be a staff within the university adopting a template or a brand agency was commissioned to develop the identity? There appears to be confusion between logo and coat of arms. African universities tend to have logos with features of coat of arms as different elements, and perhaps inherent meanings were included in their logo. This makes the logos very congested, making it more confusing, busy, and challenging to integrate. Though with some exceptions as illustrated in the top 20 logos selected, there is a considerable need to recognise the importance of brand identities and making an effort to rejuvenate and rebrand the institutions.

On a more positive note, these cultural elements incorporated into the African universities makes it unique and offers a different perspective to brand identity and design. Perhaps this can be better integrated to develop a coat of arms that wholeheartedly celebrate and encapsulate the diverse cultural heritage on the continent, as seen with the logo of Obafemi Awolowo University, which had the face of Oduduwa – who was the first ruler of Ile Ife. The University was founded in 1961 as University of Ife as a federal government-owned and operated Nigerian university. The university is in the ancient city of Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, which suggests the reasons for having Oduduwa on the logo. However, it was renamed Obafemi Awolowo University in 1987 in honour of Chief Obafemi Awolowo (1909–1987), first premier of the Western Region of Nigeria, but the logo was never changed (at the time of writing this chapter) to the face of the founder. This highlights respect for the cultural heritage of the university.

African universities tend to adopt the heraldic devices, which can be considered a coat of arms. However, these are not done correctly and well-executed. It appeared the universities and designers have seen it on other universities and older institutions, like churches and the military, and though such ideas could be adopted in their case, Machado et al. (2015) noted that heraldic devices elicit a sense of familiarity as the association of heraldry with older institutions provides some indication of what may be considered a ‘meaningful’ name/logo. Simply because numerous established universities have long associated themselves with them, it is not surprising that some African universities adopted it. However, as Mogaji (2019b) noted, coat of arm is different from a logo. Coat of arm is often used for ceremonial act and generally used as the university’s identity. It will be necessary for African universities to align with the principles of the coat of arm by redesigning it and restrict its usage to very formal or legal communications as well as for prestigious occasions, such as graduations, and have a logo that is more public-facing and regularly used.

We believe this article contributes to expanding our understanding of the logo literature, especially from an African perspective, and this allows for some essential managerial considerations. Universities can benefit from having a strong brand image and identity within the competitive market (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009); it is, however, crucial that the university recognises the need and urge to develop and reposition their brand. This might take a new Vice-Chancellor to recognise this and provide a new strategic direction. As African universities seek to position themselves in the market place, they also need to update their image (Peterson, AlShebil, & Bishop, 2015) and stand out from other players in the market place. The University must decide on their distinct positioning as they engage with stakeholders – what it is and what it stands for (Khanna, Jacob, & Yadav, 2014). Recognising the fact that the university identity is not useful, current, and no longer relevant, taking effort to work on it is crucial. A survey or opinion poll on the university’s brand identity might justify this need. It is also essential to look at how other universities around the world are designing their identity for motivation.

Theoretically, this chapter presents a conceptual framework which highlights the three key features of a logo design. The framework recognises the relationship between the shape of the logo which serves as the container for other creative elements, the choice of colour and the typeface for the wordmark. As illustrated in **Figure 11.2**, the design process of a logo involves a creative decision around these three elements. A detailed explanation about these elements are presented in **Table 11.6**. This offers theoretical underpinning for future

improvement of brand identity. Not only for African HEI's brand identity but for other brands as well.

<Insert **Figure 11.2** here>

Figure 11.2 The conceptual framework which highlights the three key features of a logo design.

Table 11.6 Description of the three key features of a logo design

<i>LOGO DESIGN</i>		
<i>Shape</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Typeface</i>
Distinctive, unique, simple, easily recognisable, and memorable enough for people to easily recreate by hand, off memory	The logo should be recognisable in monochrome. Start design in black and white before adding further colours as	Consider the use of font – Bespoke, commercial, or system fonts. The text should always be readable on all platform.
Avoid irregularly shaped logo, and it should be scalable and be able to be used on different media and platform appropriate for the intended audience.	Colours are very subjective and emotional. Using colours with inherent meaning and associations with other brands (like colours of the country) is encouraged.	Consider font type, size, spacing, boldness, and letter case. Making a font bold is seen as making an emphasis, uppercase typeface can indicate a strong sense of authority, while the use of lowercase exudes a more approachable, casual vibe.
Visual balance of all elements (including internal components of shape).	Explore two or three colours. Avoid distraction with multiple colours	Typography, the style, and appearance of wordmark can also present a different meaning. Is an emphasis on the city or the word 'University'
Wordmark and shape should be aligned and sized up.	Background colour should give enough contrast with the text.	The emphasis on language is essential. How many languages? Which is the most important or all are essential?
Make it versatile, structurally sound, and fit.	Colour of shape and typeface should be considered.	
Icons and conceptual ideas can be explored.		
Internal components should be timely and relevant to the target audience. There is more to university than		

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book and microscopes.

Taglines are not needed. Year
of establishment may be
included.

While it is recommended that African universities need to consider updating their CVI, Airey (2009) noted that there are two types of logo redesign – i.e. evolutionary logo redesign and revolutionary logo redesign. Some universities, perhaps the more established universities, may decide to carry out an evolutionary logo redesign as this involves a small change in logo design, while others may go for a revolutionary redesign which involves a substantial change. In making these changes, universities must recognise that stakeholders, especially students and staff, will have some reservations about the logo redesign. Brand identity is dynamic and can be very subjective, so, therefore, stakeholders must be carried along through the process. The brand (or marketing managers) of the university is not the sole creator of brand identity. As [Foroudi et al. \(2017\)](#) suggested, the logo needs to be managed through a multidisciplinary approach, perhaps not just an individual from the communications team developing the logo, but carrying everyone along. Students, staff, and alumni should be asked what the university means for them. Students can be encouraged to come up with new logos, organise a competition to pick the best five logos and then they can work with brand agencies to develop the best identity. This is about co-creating identities that reflect the values of the university and its identities.

The idea of using more than one language is recognised and respected. However, effort should be made towards better integration. This includes aligning it properly and giving preferences or making all the languages the same. Most of the South African universities have done it very well. However, the North African universities have not all done this well, with some few exceptions. Besides, the use of initials is not discouraged, but it should be thought out properly. If those initials are adopted as the name, then it should be consistent with websites and other profiles. Both the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Durban University of Technology (DUT) had initials on their logo, and this was reflected in their website addresses.

While recognising that icons (of African universities) are known to have an imbedded meaning, not everything can be used, and that is where the creativity comes in. The University of Johannesburg had an image of two hoopoe birds, and the negative space had the outline of a book. Another good example was the logo of Université Hassiba Ben Bouali de Chlef in Algeria, which has a different element that was creatively integrated within the

circle. It has a bridge with a year (1983), a dove carrying leaves and a negative space that forms the face of a woman.

It is considered worthwhile that the swirls should be removed on all the logo. It is an element of the coat of arms, and therefore it should be appropriately designed and used. Irregularly shaped icons should be changed, as this makes it difficult for brand consistency and integration. Colours are essential brand elements, and they are highly communicative. They play an essential role in reinforcing the universities' brand identity programme and the consistent use of these colours is encouraged by universities, as it will contribute to the cohesive and harmonious look of identity across all relevant media (Mogaji, 2018). Even though there is evidence of universities adopting the colours of their countries, they need to choose colours that are consistent with their images to avoid sending conflicting messages (Hynes, 2009).

The typeface is essential elements of brand identities and universities are encouraged to be unique in their selection. Mogaji (2018) recognised a typology of typeface which is 1) bespoke font which are customised fonts for the university – it provides a distinctive look; 2) commercial font which is bought by the university – quite expensive, but unique even though still available for any brand who wants to buy it; and 3) system fonts which are freely available on most of all word processing software and are free to use, thus, do not require a font licence. As a brand, universities are better off using the bespoke font or the commercial fonts as that makes them unique and stands out.

While designing with the fonts, emphasis should be placed on critical features of the universities – the university of the location. This could also be achieved with the capitalisation (upper/lower cases) and the font size or boldness of the names. For example, University of South Africa placed more attention on their abbreviation 'UNISA' by making it bigger and all in upper cases, while the full meaning was in lower cases, unlike the Durban University of Technology with the full meaning in all uppercase. Tshwane University of Technology's name on their logo was not presented in all uppercase, unlike the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, while the University of the Western Cape had all its name in upper case apart from 'of the'. Also, the University of the Witwatersrand gave less attention (in terms of size) to 'Johannesburg' regarding their logo, unlike the University of Johannesburg where 'Johannesburg' had a much bigger size. These highlight creative design decisions to place emphasis and hierarchy with the brand identity.

With various elements coming together to form the University brand identity, it is essential to communicate these elements in a clear, consistent manner across different touchpoints as this

is necessary to build an efficient and powerful brand (Mogaji, 2019a). To achieve this, a brand guideline is essential. The brand guideline is considered one of the rebranding deliverables that is prepared for the brand by the brand agency. The brand guideline should contain information about the font, the shades of colour, and how to use the university logo. Both internal and external users should be made aware of the brand guidelines and encouraged to use it to ensure consistent use of the brand identities. This document should be made available online on the company's website or a downloadable PDF version.

There are various ways of presenting the logo in several consumer touchpoints (e.g. packaging, website, mobile/mobile application, logo placement, etc.), animated logos, and sonic logos (Kim & Lim, 2019). This implies that stakeholders will be exposed to the university's logo multiple times in different circumstances. The adoption and integration of the new logo are essential. This integration is not just about changing the logo that no one wants to use; universities must make an effort to integrate the new brand across these different touchpoints properly. To create more awareness and also to be consistent, create more familiarity and recognition.

Creating a logo or rebranding incurs a considerable expense, and it is crucial to get it right (Mogaji, 2019a). This suggests the need for managers to make an effort in creating an identity, that corporate identity of the university in a reliable manner (Van den Bosch et al., 2006), reflect its values, mission statement, strategy, and characteristics, and the logo design (Hynes, 2009) and stakeholders will find it appealing and relevant (Mogaji, 2019c). Effective positioning of the university brand should focus on what the stakeholders perceive is essential and not necessarily what university administrators believe is significant (Khanna et al., 2014). The emotional aspect of the corporate logo is recognised as a critical element of corporate identity (Foroudi & Nguyen, 2019). Rather than merely focusing on what is fashionable and modern, efforts should be made by the designers and managers to recognise this possibility and arouse emotions through the logo, perhaps through the use of colours and images (Mogaji, 2018).

The finding of the current research has vital implications for university decision-makers, brand agencies, and graphic designers who wish to understand the African universities' CVI and identify how to improve their brands. This clear understating of the dimensions of the relevant concepts of African universities' CVI can assist managers and designers in understanding the principles of designing, selecting, and modifying a university logo, which will create a strong marketing communication, brand image, and reputation.

This chapter provided some suggestions to extend the current body of knowledge in the literature on the corporate logo and corporate visual identity, especially with a focus on HEI branding in the African context. This study employed exploratory research. A replicated study is needed to explore whether the relationships found in this study hold in other countries and continents, and also in order to gain greater generalisability and validity for the typology and the theoretical framework of universities' brand identities.

Limitations and directions for future research

The limits of the study should receive consideration before generalising any findings. One limitation of this study is the selection of the logos which may not give a holistic approach about logo designs of Africa universities. While efforts were made to use logs from the top 200 Universities which are considered the best, there are many other hundreds of logos that were not included. Besides, only universities from 24 countries (of 54) in Africa were included in the analysis. As creativity (in brand identity design) can be very subjective and relative to different individuals, organisation, and culture, it should be noted that the critical appraisal of the logos was based on the professional opinion of selected brand designers which may not necessarily be generalisable. In like manner, there could be some inherent cultural meanings which were not discovered during the analysis. It should be noted as well that some universities may have changed their logo and rebranded since these samples were collected. Hence, readers' discretion is requested when referring to this chapter.

Having acknowledged that there is a shortage of theoretical understanding of the CVIs of African universities, future research is needed to have a better understanding of these brands' element. Future study should examine the effect of logo design on affective response towards the brand. Perhaps exploring how stakeholders are engaging with the logos, to have a better understanding of their perception and response to logo design, and in particular, the influence of the different types of designs as this may lead to co-creation of better brand identities. With universities aiming to differentiate themselves in the market and provide an element of brand distinctiveness, it is suggested that there be future research to examine the perceived brand personality of the institution by students, staff, and other stakeholders (Watkins & Gonzenbach, 2013).

Further research can explore wordmark design characteristics (Xu et al., 2017). This includes the letter case and boldness, and how they affect consumers' perceptions of the brands. Besides, future research should acknowledge the unique contextual situation of African universities to understand better the various factors that build a higher education brand. This

can be approached from an individual country approach or a regional approach (like West Africa). As a university's brand becomes an aid to efficient recruitment of staff and students, future research can explore the congruency in values between the individual and the organisation. University brand managers could benefit from developing a better understanding of how the prospective staff and students interact with their brand in order to develop more effective recruiting material, advertisements, and other marketing efforts.

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