

The role of city branding in global talent attraction – case Turku

Karoliina Koskinen

Master's Thesis in International Marketing

Supervisor: Anna-Greta Nyström

Faculty of Social Sciences, Business and Economics

Åbo Akademi University, 2022

Abstract for Master's thesis

Subject: International Marketing	
Writer: Karoliina Koskinen	
Title: The role of city branding in global talent attraction – case Turku	
Supervisor: Anna-Greta Nyström	
Abstract: <p>As both globalization and urbanization continue to accelerate the mobility of talent worldwide, local governments are forced to reconsider their position in the global competition. Therefore, many cities are now interested in creating a strong brand to support their marketing, and to help them to gain a competitive edge. Past research on city branding indicates that cities can be branded similarly to consumer goods, and that cities with a well-recognized brand are more likely to attract investment and other resources, such as talents, compared to cities with no brand familiarity.</p> <p>This thesis examines the relationship between city branding and global talent attraction by conducting a case study on the city of Turku. The purpose is to understand what exactly is the role of city branding in global talent attraction, as well as how the city's brand is communicated to global talents in practice. Moreover, the aim is to explore how other cities that lack international recognition can build a brand that helps them to attract global talents. This study is qualitative in its nature and it has been carried out by conducting a focus group discussion with four global talents, as well as two semi-structured interviews with the key personnel of the city of Turku. In addition, the extant literature for both city branding and global talent attraction has been reviewed, in order to propose a framework on their relationship.</p> <p>The results of this thesis study indicate that in smaller countries, such as Finland, city branding has a secondary role in global talent attraction compared to the nation brand. However, the role can also be interpreted as complementary, as city branding helps to keep the communication to global talents coherent, despite the multiple stakeholders involved in the process. In practice, the case study shows that the city brand is primarily a communications tool, which can be utilized, for example, in the tone of voice or talking points of the marketing material for global talents. Moreover, the analysis of this study indicates that city branding has a more prominent role in global talent retention since cities bear a greater responsibility for that part of the global talent attraction work.</p>	
Keywords: city branding, global talent attraction, branding, talent management	
Date: 9.5.2022	Number of pages: 85 (95)

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEMATIZATION.....	6
1.3 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	9
1.4 FOCUS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH METHOD.....	9
1.5 CENTRAL CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS.....	10
2.1 BRANDING.....	12
2.2 PLACE MARKETING AND CITY BRANDING.....	13
2.2.1 MARKETING CITIES AND PLACES.....	13
2.2.2 BRANDING CITIES AND PLACES.....	14
2.2.3 CITY BRAND EQUITY.....	16
2.2.4 PREVIOUS STUDIES ON CITY BRANDING.....	20
2.3 EMPLOYER BRANDING AND TALENT ATTRACTION.....	23
2.4 TALENT MANAGEMENT.....	24
2.4.1 THREE VIEWS ON TALENT MANAGEMENT.....	25
2.4.2 DEFINITION OF A GLOBAL TALENT.....	27
2.4.3 GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION AND MANAGEMENT.....	28
2.5 CITY BRANDING AND GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION.....	29
2.6 SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	30
3. METHODOLOGY.....	34
3.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND CASE STUDY AS RESEARCH DESIGN.....	34
3.2 DATA COLLECTION.....	35
3.2.1 DATA COLLECTION FROM THE FOCUS GROUP.....	36
3.2.2 DATA COLLECTION FROM THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.....	39
3.3 INFORMANTS.....	42
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS.....	44
3.5 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY.....	47
4. RESULTS	49
4.1 THE ROLE AND THE PURPOSE OF CITY BRANDING IN GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION.....	49
4.2 CITY BRANDING AND GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION IN PRACTICE.....	51
4.3 BUILDING AN ATTRACTIVE CITY BRAND.....	52
4.3.1 POSITIVE BRAND ASSOCIATIONS OR ADVANTAGES THAT IMPROVE TALENT ATTRACTION.....	53
4.3.2 NEGATIVE BRAND ASSOCIATIONS OR DISADVANTAGES THAT HINDER TALENT ATTRACTION.....	59
4.4 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS.....	65
5. ANALYSIS	68
5.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITY BRANDING AND GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION.....	68
5.2 THE PRACTICAL ROLE OF CITY BRANDING IN GLOBAL TALENT ATTRACTION WORK.....	70
5.3 CHALLENGES WITH BUILDING AN ATTRACTIVE CITY BRAND.....	71
6. CONCLUSIONS	74

6.1 CONCLUSIONS	74
6.2 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS.....	76
6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	76
6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	77
SWEDISH SUMMARY - SVENSK SAMMANFATTNING	79
REFERENCES	86
APPENDICES	93
APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEWGUIDE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION.....	93
APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEWGUIDE FOR THE FIRST SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW	94
APPENDIX 3. INTERVIEWGUIDE FOR THE SECOND SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW	95

List of figures and tables

FIGURE 1. BRAND EQUITY MODEL BY AAKER	17
FIGURE 2. FRAMEWORK FOR CITY BRAND EQUITY BY LUCARELLI	19
FIGURE 3. CITY BRANDING & TALENT ATTRACTION, OWN WORK	33
FIGURE 4. EXAMPLE OF THE CODING FOR THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION.....	46
TABLE 1. FOCUS GROUP INFORMANTS	43
TABLE 2. INTERVIEWEES FROM THE CITY OF TURKU AND TURKU SCIENCE PARK OY.....	43

1. Introduction

Over half of the world's population lives in cities and according to an estimate by the United Nations, the number is likely to rise to 75% by 2030 (United Nations, 2018). Cities account for over 80% of the global GDP and are, therefore, linked with high economic activity, which means that their impact extends well beyond their geographical borders. Globalization has further diffused these borders, and combined with the increase of decentralization in governance, local governments are becoming increasingly responsible for the future of social and economic development in cities (Robinet, 2019). This requirement for constant development forces cities to compete with each other, because in order to overcome these future challenges posed by urbanization and climate change, cities need resources, especially human capital.

According to research, the Finnish labor market will experience a remarkable shortage of experts both in the public and the private sectors already in the near future, as the working age population in Finland continues to decrease (Talent Boost Programme, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland, 2021). This phenomenon is well-recognized, and its effects can already be seen, but experts estimate that a strong shift will happen once the covid-19 crisis dissolves. One solution to the issue could be global talents, who already have the needed skills and connections. To awaken the interest of these sought-after talents, many cities depend on having a strong brand that can be used to support their marketing.

A report made by the OECD (2008) states that immigration of highly skilled individuals can lead to innovation and increased knowledge flows from international research and development actors to local actors. In addition to being one of the primary sources for innovation, these individuals also help to increase diversity in organizations, which according to Paavola, Rasmussen and Kinnunen (2020), is also considered to be very beneficial. The evolution of global business has indeed put talent into the spotlight, pressuring countries around the globe to compete for the same resource.

In their text, Cascio and Boudreau (2016, p. 104) describe the search for global competence as “a race with no finish line”. However, this seemingly frantic race comes with many hurdles, such as migration policies and legislations, which are set by the government and not by organizations. Therefore, it can be concluded that it is not the organizations that are solely responsible for

scouting and attracting foreign experts, but it is also the countries themselves and their governments that need to bear their share of the responsibility. After all, the success of the organizations is pivotal to the success of the country they operate in.

This mutual dependency on talents is prevalent everywhere, also in Finland, where many nationwide campaigns have been run in recent years to brand the country as a lucrative place to live and work. In fact, before 2017 there was no clear strategy in place for attracting talent to Finland, but ever since then, both the public and the private sector have been working together to create permanent structures to support talent attraction in the country (Paavola et al., 2020).

As both city branding and global talent attraction have a growing role in modern city governance, it raises the question about the nature of their relationship. What exactly is the role of city branding in global talent attraction? How can Finnish cities outside the capital region with less international recognition and media coverage create a brand that attracts global talents? This thesis aims to answer these questions by examining the literature on both topics and by conducting a case study on the city of Turku.

1.2 Background and problematization

Globalization has increased the interaction and interconnectedness of cities worldwide (Cascio & Boudreau, 2016). This has implications on both organizational, regional and even national level, as indicated in a publication made for the Finnish Government in 2020 (Paavola et al., 2020). As previously mentioned, Finland is facing a rapid demographic change, in which the equivalent of one third of the current workforce in the public sector will retire by 2029. Additionally, the publication notes that the number of the working age population will also decrease significantly, due to low birth-rates. Other problems the country will be facing include matching issues, where organizations cannot find suitable candidates to recruit. According to the authors of the publication, it is these matching issues that have particularly deteriorated during the past few years (Paavola et al., 2020).

In recent years, the lack of competence among applicants in Finland has mainly concerned high skill level vacancies, especially in the technology industry. This is something that cannot be

fixed immediately through education or training, but rather requires outsourcing the skill wherever it is available. Despite this urgent need for high-skilled workers, as well as a well-functioning labor market and good living conditions, Finland has been unable to attract talent and brand itself as an ideal place to live and work (Paavola et al., 2020). As the government has started to put more effort into addressing these issues, cities are also rising to the challenge of filling the gaps in regional talent shortages and bringing more talent to Finland.

Although global talent flows have existed for a long time, the research on the topic of global talent management is fairly young. A large body of former research on global talents and global talent management has mainly focused on expatriates and people working in multinational enterprises, also known as MNEs (Carr, Inkson & Thorn, 2005). The main studies on the topic of global talent management have been conducted by Scullion, Collings and Caligiuri (2010), as well as Tarique and Schuler (2010), who provided a thorough literature review and an integrative framework on the topic.

City branding is also a relatively new research area, although a common consensus that places can be branded exactly like consumer goods or services does exist (Caldwell & Freire, 2004). The subject has gained plenty of interest among academia and practitioners during the last few decades, and several case studies have been conducted on cities around the globe, with different perspectives and contexts as their focal point. For example, a large number of studies have been made on city branding in conjunction with major events, such as the Olympics or renowned film festivals (e.g. Zhang & Zhao, 2009).

Since city branding is a part of city marketing, some studies have looked at the phenomenon on a more general level. Based on the literature found on city branding, the following researchers and their studies appear to have created the basis for the majority of other publications on the subject: Rainisto (2003) on place marketing practices both in Northern Europe and in the United States, Trueman, Klemm and Giroud (2004) on the corporate brand of Bradford, and Hankinson (2001) on the branding practices in 12 English cities.

Combining both city branding and global talent attraction, or talent management in general, has received less academic attention. One study on the subject was made by Robinet (2019) in the

form of a literature review that aimed to identify a connection between place branding, city branding, employer branding and talent attraction. On a national level, the relationship of nation brands or country images and global talent attraction has been studied by Nadeau and Olafsen (2015), as well as by Silvanto, Ryan and McNulty (2015).

This study focuses on the city of Turku, a mid-size Finnish city, where several marketing projects and programmes have been created to support global talent attraction in the region. Most recently in the fall of 2021, the city declared a new spearhead project dedicated to spreading and strengthening the city's brand abroad. The "Spearhead project of skill and knowledge" (Finnish. *Osaamisen kärkihanke*) aims to increase the competitiveness of the city by investing in skill and knowledge, and by improving the level of education of the citizens (City of Turku, 2021). The project also aims to respond to possible opportunities and challenges posed by megatrends, such as digitalization, urbanization, and climate change.

In order to improve the reputation and attractiveness of the city internationally, the city of Turku has also been a part of a programme called Talent Boost, which was launched by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland in late 2020. Talent Boost is a cross-administrative programme and a part of the Finnish Government's employment measures, dedicated to attracting global talents. It was first launched in 2017 during Juha Sipilä's Government and then expanded to a larger scale in 2019 by the Government of Sanna Marin (Talent Boost Programme, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland, 2020). The purpose of the programme is to boost immigration of skilled workers, students and researchers, who can help Finnish companies with internationalization, innovation, and growth, both in the private and the public sectors (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland, 2020). It also supports the Government's 75% employment rate target, aiming to help sectors suffering from labor shortage. In the city of Turku, Talent Boost has targeted global talents specifically in high tech-fields, such as programming, life sciences, maritime industries and manufacturing, in order to ease the lack of skilled workers in the region.

1.3 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this thesis is to gain an understanding on the role that city branding has in global talent attraction to the city. This will be done by examining how the city of Turku has managed to attract global talents to the region previously, and how their city brand has impacted it. Therefore, this thesis aims to provide an answer to the following research questions:

What is the role of a city's brand in attracting new global talents to the city?

How is the city's brand communicated to global talents?

How can cities build brands that help them to attract global talents?

1.4 Focus and limitations of the research method

This thesis focuses on the current brand of the city of Turku and how it is utilized in the context of talent attraction, especially of global talents. The key persons of Turku's global talent attraction work are interviewed in a semi-structured manner, in order to examine how the city's brand is currently being utilized in global talent attraction and what advantages or disadvantages the city possesses in this context. Additionally, how the chosen global talents perceive the city of Turku as a place to live and work is also examined, as well as how well they know the city's brand, and how they understand it. This is done by conducting a focus group discussion, where the participants are relatively free to express their opinions and experiences. Further limitations on the chosen research methods are discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

Therefore, the focus of this thesis is limited to the city of Turku, which is the fifth largest city in Finland, located in the Southwestern part of the country. The current brand of the city was published in 2019 but the brand manual is updated on a yearly basis. The latest version of the manual is publicly available on the city's website (city of Turku, 2022). According to the city, the brand provides a coherent way to promote the city and, therefore, it is supposed to be seen

and heard in all of the city's marketing activities, in all of its marketing channels, especially by all of the city's employees but also by its residents (city of Turku, 2019).

Lastly, this thesis is also limited to global talents, referring to people outside Finland, who are highly skilled and have a tertiary education (Özden & Parsons, 2019). Talents with lower levels of education are, therefore, not included in this study, although they might also be considered as global talents in other contexts. This decision is based on the aforementioned fact that Finland suffers from matching issues, where suitable applicants to key positions are hard to find, and to which these global talents could offer a solution in the near future. This has also been noted by the state as in April 2022, the Finnish Government (2022) released a General Governmental Fiscal Plan for 2023 - 2026, in which it was stated that a significant emphasis and, therefore, also resources shall be directed towards developing the country's research and development capacity, as well the labor market integration processes of immigrants.

1.5 Central concepts and definitions

Branding

Branding is a marketing technique that organizations utilize to create an identity, also known as a brand, either for the organization itself or the products/services it offers. A brand can be a name or a term, a visual element such as a logo, or a specific design or a combination of all these that help the organization to differentiate itself from its competitors on the market (Kotler & Keller, 2016, p. 146).

City branding

In city branding, branding techniques are utilized in city marketing. It has gained immense popularity among city officials during the past few decades, because a distinct brand is believed to add value to the location (Kavaratzis, 2004). Moreover, according to Kavaratzis (2004), the city brand provides an excellent starting point for the city's marketing, because it makes

managing the city's image easier and helps to keep the city's communications more coherent. A city's brand can typically be seen in a certain logo or a slogan that the city repeatedly uses in their marketing.

Talent management

Talent management refers to all activities an organization executes, either globally or locally, in order to attract, to identify, develop and engage, to deploy or to retain high-performing individuals within the organization (McDonnell, 2011; Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005). Compared to traditional human resource management, it is a more strategic act, where an organization selects and supports certain key individuals. In talent management, certain individuals are considered to add more value to the organization, which is why they are put into positions that bring the organization competitive advantage (McDonnell, 2011).

Global talent attraction

Global talent attraction is an activity within global talent management, where an organization targets to employ highly skilled professionals from abroad, typically due to a talent shortage in the country of operation. These individuals are often placed into positions that are crucial to the organization's success. However, global talent attraction is not only executed by organizations: in fact, it is cities that work in close collaboration with the government in order to attract talent outside the country (Paavola et al., 2020). Therefore, global talent attraction can also be seen as a marketing activity that combines both city branding and employer branding (Paavola et al., 2020).

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for this thesis. The framework summarizes extant literature on both city branding and city marketing in general, as well as global talent attraction and management. It also features the existing studies found on the subject, in order to gain an understanding of the relationship between these two phenomena in different contexts.

2.1 Branding

Brands are one of the most important and valuable assets an organization can have in the modern world (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). They shape the market and impact consumer behavior like never before. According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is a “*name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.*” (Kotler & Keller, 2016, p. 146).

To put it simply, brands communicate what an organization has to offer to its customers, as well as what makes their product or service special in comparison to others on the market.

Furthermore, they also reflect the customer experience and even the financial value of the organization (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Strong brands are, for example, known to create improved perceptions of product performance and greater customer loyalty. They help organizations to obtain larger margins and make the product or service less sensitive to competition and marketing crises, and even help to impact positively on how consumers react to both price increases and decreases (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

In branding, products or services are given an identity: a name and a visual element, such as a logo, along with an explanation of what the product or service does, and why it is relevant to the customer, which is essentially the brand value proposition (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The idea is to create a set of positive associations around the organization’s product or service and to provide information to the customer in order to ease their decision-making process (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Because despite which market an organization operates on, there are always plenty of

alternatives for customers to choose from. Therefore, brands also serve a purpose to reduce the time and possible risk related to those situations, enhancing customers' confidence (Aaker, 1991).

2.2 Place marketing and city branding

Ever since the 19th century, urban places have been careful about their image, implementing different types of marketing techniques to promote what are now known as cities (Kavaratzis, 2004). From the 1970's onwards, those marketing activities have become more systematic, and during the last few decades, the concept of branding has taken cities by storm. It has been accelerated by the fact that competition on their main audience, investment, tourists and residents, has intensified (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009). The importance of a strong city brand identity only continues to grow, as cities are pushed to improve their positioning not only domestically, but also globally (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009). City brands also need to be increasingly independent from nation brands, as they are less stable and more dependable on market trends. Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009, p. 526) also note that in comparison to nation brands, city brands fulfill more self-expression needs. This statement does not necessarily apply to smaller countries and cities but is rather directed towards modern megalopolises.

As the number of research contributors on both place marketing and place branding has increased considerably in a relatively short time, the terminology used varies from study to study (Zenker & Martin, 2011). In this thesis both the terms "city marketing" and "place marketing", as well as "city branding" and "place branding", are considered to be synonyms.

2.2.1 Marketing cities and places

The 1970s saw the rise of the "entrepreneurial city", where cities started to be led in a similar manner as businesses, bringing risk taking, promotion and profit motivation to governance (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 59). The implementation of marketing soon followed, but was limited in many ways, due to lack of knowledge and skills among public sector workers (Kavaratzis, 2004). However, at the same time, the development of social marketing and non-profit marketing began

to change the notion of traditional marketing, helping cities to control their image in ways that were not possible before (Kavaratzis, 2004).

According to Braun (2008, p. 43) city marketing is “*the coordinate the use of marketing tools supported by a shared customer-oriented philosophy for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging urban offerings that have value for the city’s customers and the city’s community at large*”. This definition notes the importance of the efficient social and economic functioning of the area. Moreover, it highlights its values and image, which according to Zenker and Martin (2011) is often the main goal of city marketing practices.

Defining what a typical city marketing mix consists of has proved to be rather difficult for researchers, as noted by Kavaratzis (2004). Some have opted to make adjustments to the services marketing mix, whilst others have utilized a more geographical approach (Kavaratzis, 2004). However, many researchers, including Boisen et al. (2018), underline that city marketing goes beyond place promotion tasks, and rather deals with managing the supply and demand side of cities.

Thus, it can be summarized that city marketing is demand-driven, aiming to directly meet the target groups’ needs either through communicational and promotional measures or through direct adjustments or developments to the place itself (Boisen et al., 2018). However, city marketing also has to be able to look into the future and, therefore, a clear strategy is needed for cities to be successful in meeting their target groups’ needs, not only now but tomorrow as well (Boisen et al., 2018).

2.2.2 Branding cities and places

City branding and city marketing are closely interrelated, as branding has for long supported the goals of place marketing. According to Kotler et al. (1999), city branding provides a good starting point and a solid framework for managing the place’s, or in this case the image of the city (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 66). It can of course be argued, whether a city’s image or reputation is something that needs to be managed, but the current consensus identified in the literature seems

to be that applying corporate level brands to places help to create value for the location in question (Kavaratzis, 2004).

The whole concept of considering a city or a place as a brand is fairly new, as research on the matter only started emerging in the beginning of the 21st century (Kavaratzis, 2004). Nowadays, city branding draws heavily on corporate branding, which in turn draws on product branding. However, compared to traditional product brands, place brands are far more complex in their nature. With place brands there is practically no control over the branded entity, and the multiple stakeholders involved can have conflicting interests (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013).

The same problem can be identified in the retail marketing perspective, which Hankinson (2001) highlights: one location can be “sold” for more than one purpose, and there is often more than one stakeholder involved. Hankinson (2001) also draws parallels with urban planning, which is mainly handled by the public sector and where the products themselves are multifaceted. By multifaceted Hankinson (2011) means that places entail several offerings, *i.e.* districts and complexes, that all have their own target groups.

Zenker and Martin (2011) argue that cities can be seen as so-called “mega products”, which can create overlaps with the offerings of different target groups. Regarding target groups for city branding, Zenker and Martin (2011) are careful not to make any generalizations. They state that typically, city brand target groups are visitors, residents, and workers, as well as businesses, and industry (Zenker & Martin, 2011, p. 34). This categorization is intentionally broad, because as Zenker and Martin suggest in their text (2011), all of these groups vary; not only in their structure, but also in regard to the different needs and demands they have on the city brand. Kotler et al. (1993) also include export markets as the last target group in their definition, referring to a city’s ability to produce something, either products or services, that others would be willing to purchase.

Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) also address the complex nature of place brands, which are similarly limited in terms of how they can be communicated, due to social sensitivities that need to be addressed. Moreover, they argue that the landscape of a place and its atmosphere cannot be

controlled in the same ways as a product's or as a service's, and that in a physical place, the brand is often embodied in many different actions and objectives, none of which are directly created with the brand in mind but nevertheless have an impact on it (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013).

Thus, the contemporary way of focusing and building the brand solely on a fixed idea of the place's identity is often criticized in literature. The likely explanation for its popularity stems from tourism/vacation marketing, which, according to Hankinson (2001), has largely contributed to the image-side of place branding, where the main focus has been on turning a location into a destination that has a well-defined identity that is easy to recognize, and delivers what it promises.

Considering all these aspects, Zenker and Braun (2010, p. 5) define a place brand as *“a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal and behavioral expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values and general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design”*. According to Zenker and Martin (2011, p. 33), these perceptions can eventually be measured as brand effects or brand equity.

2.2.3 City brand equity

How a customer perceives, thinks or feels about a certain brand and the possible product or service it is attached to, is essentially added value both for the customer themselves, as well as the organization behind the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This added value is often referred to as “brand equity”, which can be managed and measured. Currently, there are several definitions

available on brand equity, as it can be understood in different ways. However, one of the most well-known models is by David A. Aaker, which focuses on brand awareness.

Brand Equity Model

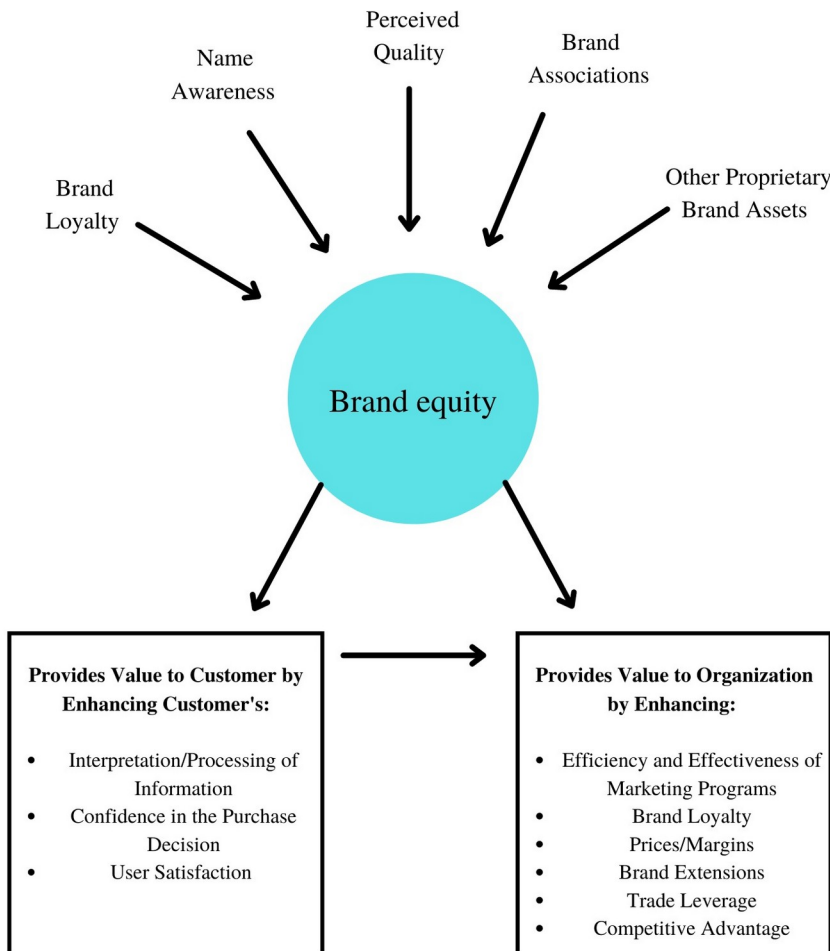


Figure 1. "Brand Equity Model" Aaker, D. A. (1991, p. 27-28)

In Aaker's model (1991, p. 27-28), the assets and liabilities the brand equity is based on is divided into five different categories (see Figure 1.).

1. Brand loyalty
2. Name awareness
3. Perceived quality
4. Brand association in addition to perceived quality
5. Other proprietary brand assets - patents, trademarks, channel relationships, etc.

Together, these assets can create value for both the organization, as well as its customers. Not only do they help the customer to process information more quickly, they can also enhance user experience (Aaker, 1991). On the organization's behalf, the brand assets allow a better margin and premium pricing, and they also make the marketing of new products or extensions more effective, as customers have less skepticism towards the brand quality (Aaker, 1991). Brand loyalty also helps the organization to retain old customers, as well as attract new ones, creating competitive advantage (Aaker, 1991).

From a city's point of view, brand equity centers around name awareness, brand association and image, as well as brand loyalty. To understand the value brands can bring to cities, several researchers have attempted to create a brand equity model for city brands. Most of them have utilized the marketing managerial perspective, which Aaker's model also represents (Lucarelli, 2012). However, one version constructed by Lucarelli (2012) atypically notes that most models on the topic focus heavily on the brand being a set of perceptions on the city's image, neglecting the socio-cultural and economical elements behind city brands. Thus, the three-dimensional framework by Lucarelli (2012) aims to address these aspects as well and according to it, city brand equity consists of city brand elements, measurement and impact.

City brand equity model

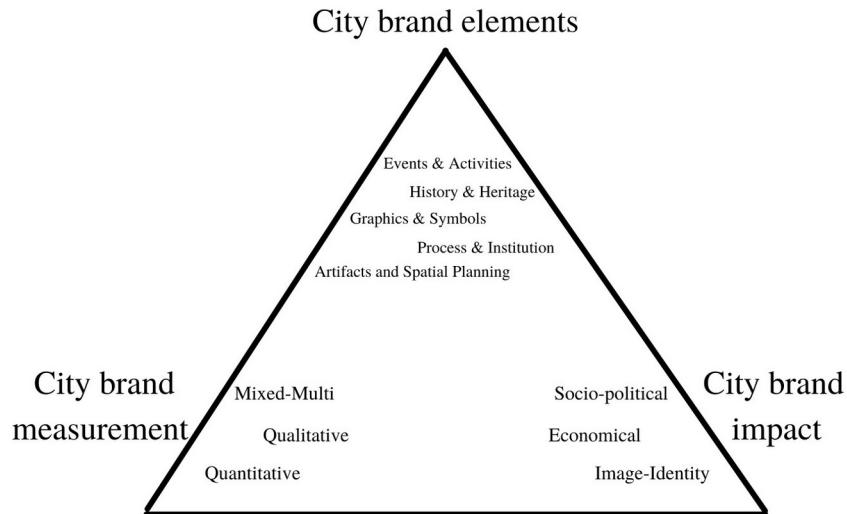


Figure 2. “Framework for city brand equity” Lucarelli (2012, p. 240)

According to Lucarelli (2012, p. 236), city brands consist of five different elements: history and heritage, artifacts and spatial plan, events and activities, processes and institutions and lastly, graphics and symbols (see Figure 2). The first category includes historical narratives and national stories tied to the city in question, as well as historical festivals, and anniversaries. The second focuses on landmarks and buildings, as well as certain distinguishable districts and areas. Third category is about large events related to e.g. sports. The fourth category is perhaps the most important, as it is based on the governance and management of the city, referring to the activities behind the city’s brand. The last category completes the fourth, as it brings the visual elements to the city’s brand marketing (Lucarelli, 2012, p. 236).

Measuring the brand and its impacts can be executed either with qualitative, quantitative or multi-mixed methods (Lucarelli, 2012). Some studies have evaluated the city brand’s impact by interviewing residents or interpreting city brand materials, whereas others have collected data through surveys or by combining questionnaires with focus groups (Lucarelli, 2012). Regardless

of the method, the city brand's impact can be divided into three categories: identity-image, socio-political and economic (Lucarelli, 2012).

The first category is perhaps the most traditional one and the one that branding aims to impact the most. According to Lucarelli (2012), this impact reflects the attitudes of residents and other stakeholders on how the city's image is perceived and consumed. It is also about the sense of place for local people, which ultimately impacts city brand identity formation (Lucarelli, 2012, p. 239). The second category addresses the social, political and cultural impacts of the city's brand. Lucarelli (2012) notes that these impacts are often on the negative side, as branding can create opposition among residents. However, he also notes that, at best, city brands can also help to create a political consensus for example (Lucarelli, 2012). Lastly, the third category is perhaps the strongest incentive for city branding building activities in general, as it centers around the economic impact a brand can have on the city in terms of changes in investments or tourist turnout, to name a few (Lucarelli, 2012).

2.2.4 Previous studies on city branding

The concrete application of branding in city marketing has been studied increasingly over the past years. As mentioned above, one of the first key studies was conducted by Hankinson (2001), who studied the role of branding in the marketing of 12 different English cities, excluding large cities with great media coverage such as London. The purpose of the study was to prove that branding locations, such as cities, is possible, and it provided one of the first frameworks for brand development in this context.

The results of Hankinson's study demonstrated that already in the beginning of 2000's, city branding was widely used, but little understood. Most cities associated branding with visual triggers and all the means used focused on giving the city a "label" (Hankinson, 2001, p. 135). The primary role of branding was, therefore, awareness raising and coordinating or unifying the marketing communications of the multiple stakeholders involved. However, many of the informants also understood that in addition to the physical experiences the location can provide,

the city brand also needed to reflect more intangible, value-based aspects of it that support the perceptual appeal of the brand (Hankinson, 2001).

Main issues identified by the study were that there was “administrative overlap” in terms of responsibility for marketing actions, legal boundaries and even difficulties of defining the place as a product (Hankinson, 2001). There were also issues with measuring the success of brand performance, and many cities suffered from limited resources, referring to the low budgets for marketing in the public sector (Hankinson, 2001). These same challenges are still prevalent to this day, as stated in a more recent study by Moilanen (2015), in which he examined the challenges in city branding in 10 European cities. Other modern obstacles identified in the study by Moilanen (2015) include general slowness and issues with time, poor situational awareness, as well as limited internal buy-in amongst stakeholders.

Understanding a city as a corporate brand and utilizing its brand equity to gain added value was first studied by Trueman, Klemm and Giroud (2004). They explored the strategic potential of case city Bradford as a brand name, and how general perceptions on a city can be improved through the city’s official communication. The study focused on four key issues consisting of conflicting objectives of stakeholders, need for positive visual evidence, a theoretical framework to identify and overcome gaps in brand performance and building brand image and ownership with the help of the AC2ID framework (Trueman et al., 2004).

In their study, Trueman et al. (2004) consider stakeholders to be “consumers”. The stakeholders in this case are the local residents, their communities, businesses, the city council and other authorities. According to them, how these consumers perceive the city and how its brand meets their individual needs, impacts their decisions to either invest in it or to leave elsewhere (Trueman et al., 2004). Some of their needs and objectives can be in conflict with one another, posing a challenge for the brand.

Another challenge related to consumer perceptions on cities are the visual cues or evidence, which can indirectly impact the city brand. In a city context, this refers to the built environment, buildings, parks and streets, and their appearance, which communicate different things to the

consumer. Therefore, they need to be in line with the city brand and vice versa. In Bradford, the issue was that the city center reflected the decline of a former industrial area, which did not match the actual identity of the city and how its residents saw and felt it (Trueman et al., 2004). According to Trueman et al. (2004), it was already then established that environmental improvements have a positive influence on brand value, as proven by the investments made in cities of Bristol and Leeds.

The study shows that dissonances between actual and ideal city identities, and inconsistencies in how the identity is communicated lead to a crisis (Trueman et al. 2004). In city branding, the brand has to be honest, meaning that the image created must match reality. Therefore, the stakeholders must come together and take ownership of the brand, and to develop it further, so that the brand matches the ideal or desired identity of the city. Lastly, Trueman et al. (2004) suggest that negative images need to be counteracted so that the city's reputation stays in line with its identity.

Another well-cited study was done by Rainisto (2003), where the differences between city marketing and branding in Helsinki, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Chicago were studied, underlining the critical success factors in city marketing and how those factors can be utilized in place development. The main findings of this study related to city branding demonstrate that most cities can be branded, and that a well-known brand image helps the city to attract customers more effectively than cities without brand familiarity (Rainisto, 2003).

To summarize, there are clear similarities between previous case studies. Rainisto's (2003) findings can be seen to align with both Trueman et al.'s (2004), as well as with Hankinson's findings (2001). All of them highlight that the identity a city communicates must match reality, and that all communication related to the same city must be consistent. In order to succeed in that, all of them highlight the importance of cooperation between stakeholders. Additionally, they also call for strong leadership; Rainisto (2003) in particular, as he states that because the top management of a city often coordinates the branding, they should also bear the primary responsibility for it.

2.3 Employer branding and talent attraction

To obtain a talent's attention, the brand of the organization matters. According to research, there is a clear relationship between employer brand, as well as talent attraction and retention (Reis, Sousa & Dionísio, 2021). In a literature review conducted by Reis, Sousa and Dionísio (2021), scientific literature on the subject of the last ten years, indexed to two most reputed databases, was analyzed. Based on this analysis, they concluded that a positive employer brand is essential in attracting and retaining talents, which in turn creates competitive advantage for the organization in question (Reis et al., 2021).

Botha, Bussin and De Swardt (2011, p. 3) argue that people are attracted to any source that could fulfill their inherent needs, referring to the well-established Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation. They also claim that people derive motivation to work based on functional, economic and psychological preferences (Botha et al., 2011). An organization's ability to meet these needs and preferences can be referred to as Employer Value Proposition or EVP. The EVP is essentially a differentiation tool, describing how the organization differentiates from other organizations on the market and what unique attributes and benefits for its members it entails (Botha et al., 2011). These attributes are supposed to, on one hand, motivate new talents to join the organization, and on the other hand to motivate existing ones to stay. The EVP is, therefore, also a human capital strategy that aligns with the overall business strategy (Botha et al., 2011).

In employer branding, the basic principles of branding are applied to a human resource or talent management context, meaning that instead of customers, specific talents are targeted. Similarly to other commercial brands, the employer brand encompasses the values, beliefs, practices and policies the organization has (Botha et al., 2011). The brand is in line and communicated in the same ways as the organization's other brands, in order to keep the organization's marketing efforts coherent and to avoid inconsistencies in brand communication. According to Botha et al. (2011) these inconsistencies can lead to, for example, employee cynicism and wasted resources.

Any organization with a good reputation and big promises on salary, work-life balance and career development can attract talent. However, according to Glen (2007), it is the experience

and the relationship between the talent and the organization that defines how willing the talent is to stay. This proves that even though an external brand attracts talent, it is not enough to retain it in the long run (Glen, 2007). Organizations that are well-led and actively engage their members are most likely to not only attract talent but also retain it for a longer period, maximizing the benefits a well-nurtured talent can bring to the organization (Glen, 2007).

2.4 Talent management

Similarly to brands, talented employees can also be a unique source of competitive advantage (Tarique & Schuler, 2010, p. 123). In fact, human capital is seen as one of the main drivers of economic growth and development, as well as innovation, and it also has an important role in driving both social and political change (Özden & Parsons, 2019). Therefore, the whole process of attaining and retaining human capital is pivotal to a region's future success. Whilst there is currently lack of consensus on the conceptual grounding of talent management, new interest towards the subject has grown among scholars (Gulshani, 2019).

Talent management, both local and global, is a multidisciplinary field, and partially because of that, it lacks a singular definition. However, it is commonly agreed that talent management consists of activities and processes of attracting, identifying, developing and engaging, deploying and retaining high-performing individuals within an organization (McDonnell, 2011; Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005). It is first and foremost a strategic act, where an organization carefully selects and supports certain individuals that are of great importance to the organization's objectives, and ultimately, to its success. When talking about talent management, it is established that certain individuals add more value to an organization than others and, therefore, need to be working in key positions that bring the organization competitive advantage (McDonnell, 2011).

Current research shows that developing organization-specific human capital is impossible to copy, which helps the organization in question to gain considerable competitive advantage. Furthermore, according to research, most of the tacit knowledge created through internal training and development is not applicable in a new environment, meaning that even if an individual decides to leave the organization, the competitive edge remains (Gulshani, 2019). These results

have significantly impacted how organizations currently view talent management and how they choose to invest in it.

2.4.1 Three views on talent management

According to Gulshani (2019), there are three prevailing views on talent management. The first one draws heavily upon different types of traditional human resource activities, such as recruitment and selection, as well as development (Scullion, Collings & Caligiuri, 2010). The HRM-like aspect of talent management also includes career and success management, and other functions or activities, where the “talent” themselves is being managed (Gulshani, 2019). This first view on talent management has received a fair share of criticism, as it is seen as a mere substitute for human resource management, limiting the scope and focus of what talent management actually offers to organizations (Scullion et al., 2010). Some even argue that what separates talent management from HRM in this context is the heightened pace of which activities are executed by, for example via the internet or through outsourcing (Lewis & Heckman, 2006).

Another perspective on talent management places more emphasis on the human resource planning side, where managing talent across different levels of the organization lies in focus (Gulshani, 2019). This view is often referred to as RBV, resource-based view (Gulshani, 2019). Major contributors to the research in this particular view, Lepak and Snell (1999), created a HR Architecture Model, where human capital can be viewed through two ubiquitous dimensions or characteristics: value and uniqueness. Lepak and Snell (1999) argue that organizations often get caught up in a “make-or-buy” situation or mindset, where they feel their only options are either to outsource employment, i.e. buy skills and knowledge into the organization, or internalize employment through training the existing employees. Both have their pros and cons, which is why Lepak and Snell (1999) believe that organizations seldom are truly put into these types of situations, but rather are able to utilize both approaches in allocating human capital.

The resource-based view emphasizes the value and uniqueness of human capital and its ability to gain the organization competitive advantage is of the essence. The downside of internalization of human capital, however, is that it increases the managerial and bureaucratic costs (Lepak &

Snell, 1999). Therefore, organizations need to find balance between the skills and costs of the employees, in relation to the value the organization brings to its customers (Lepak & Snell, 1999). The same applies in terms of the uniqueness of the skills, which the employees possess. While internal skill development is often beneficial, and in many cases unique assets are developed internally, sometimes the transactional costs can surpass the benefits, and in those cases outsourcing becomes a more lucrative option (Lepak & Snell, 1999).

The third perspective focuses on talent pools, where talent is seen as an attribute and can be managed on a general level instead of focusing on certain individuals (Gulshani, 2019). Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) claim that if an organization is able to identify a pivotal talent pool inside the organization, even a slight improvement in it would make all the difference in the organization's strategic success. Because of this, and because of the current trends in talent management regarding planned career development, Yarnall (2011) argues that talent pools are becoming increasingly popular in the organizational world. Although in some cases, organizations establish talent pools without much consideration for its future implications. This is partially because it is unclear whether or not creating a talent pool is always the best solution for a specific organization, despite it being a popular approach.

In talent pools high potential individuals are developed and trained towards rounded skills and competences (Yarnall, 2011). This means that individuals are not chosen to fill out specific positions but rather that they, based on their development, shape out the positions for themselves. It is generally agreed that broad experience and generalist careers are preferred for managerial positions, although there is no evidence of it being the most effective approach (Yarnall, 2011). Composing these types of pools has also proven to suffer from bias and lack of diversity. This is understandable because measuring talent and potential is rather difficult, as opposed to measuring performance (Yarnall, 2011).

The second phase of talent pools is maintenance, which is key for the talent pool's success. However, unfortunately according to Yarnall (2011), this is often disregarded by the organization, despite it being the most critical phase. Maintenance includes taking care of the development and training of the talents themselves, as well as ensuring that the skills and

training of the talents correlate with the organization's present and future business needs, as those are prone to change rapidly (Yarnall, 2011).

2.4.2 Definition of a global talent

A global talent is often a high-skilled worker or an academic that migrates from one country to another because of work or studies. The term "high-skilled" is widely used but rather loosely defined. According to Özden and Parsons (2019), some countries use a wage threshold to define someone as a high-skilled worker, whereas other ways to categorize workers are related to the level of education or occupation of the person (Özden & Parsons, 2019). The ISCO or International Standard Classification of Occupation also has categories that countries can utilize to define a person's skill level. Naturally, the high-skilled workers, or in this case global talents, usually land in either category 1 or 2 on the ISCO, referring to different types of senior positions. In an academic context, this typically means that the person holds at least one year of tertiary education (Özden & Parsons, 2019).

Another definition by Cadorin, Klofsten and Löfsten (2021) describes a talent as someone who has skills and experience in one specific field, as well as the drive to outperform their peers. These high performing individuals also possess abilities that help the organization they work in to develop and grow in ways that are hard to copy by other competing organizations, such as in terms of organizational culture for example (Cadorin et al., 2021).

According to Özden and Parsons (2019), there are not many countries that currently collect immigration flow data based on skill level and it is unclear whether there are any countries that collect skill-based migration outflow data. In most countries, the data collected on immigrants might include some details on the person's educational level or occupation but even at best, the quality of data is far too late to actually help the country to recognize its future needs (Özden & Parsons, 2019).

This is also reflected on the organizational level, as according to a report made by ManpowerGroup (2020), 54% of companies around the world reported a shortage of talent in

2019. All of these aspects indicate that whilst many countries have acknowledged the shortage of talent, not many contribute to the monitoring of talent flows, which is why there does not exist a comprehensive view on how talent is currently moving globally.

2.4.3 Global talent attraction and management

In 1998, an American consulting company called McKinsey & Company, declared the war for talent and ever since then, the global business environment has seen rapid changes (Beechler & Woodward, 2009, p. 274). Alongside it, the competition on talent has shifted from local to global (Scullion et al., 2010). Global talent management is naturally very similar to talent management in general but in addition to taking the organizational activities to a global scale, it also acknowledges the national contexts that impact how talents are managed in their country of operation (Scullion et al., 2010).

Whilst global talent management is also similar to international human resource management, in global talent management IHRM activities are utilized more systematically, according to Tarique and Schuler (2010). The aim is not only to attract and retain global talents, but to also develop them in an environment that is dynamic and highly competitive. Compared to IHRM there are also less stakeholders involved, and the concerns and criteria addressed are more specific and focused (Tarique & Schuler, 2010).

As mentioned above, companies are not solely responsible for attracting global talent to a certain region. In fact, Paavola et al. (2020) argue that only the largest and best-known destinations can reach global talents without a clear talent attraction strategy. In other cases, it is typically cities that work in close collaboration with the government to attract talent outside the country, mixing both place branding and employer branding to do so (Paavola et al., 2020).

They also state that generic, destination-focused approaches are expensive and ineffective when talking about talent attraction: global talents need to be targeted specifically with tailored messages, and value propositions that are suitable and relevant for them. High-skilled workers often receive multiple offers from different directions, which is why the complete “package”

needs to be worth relocating for (Paavola et al., 2020). This means that, in addition to the job offer and the possible career opportunities it entails, the quality of life both for the applicant and their family need to be in check, as well as legal matters, such as residence permits.

2.5 City branding and global talent attraction

Based on the literature review, several touchpoints between city branding and talent attraction can be established. However, after examining pre-existing studies on the subject, it can be noted that not many studies have been made about this specific relationship. Moreover, no study set in a global talent attraction context was found. One explanation for this is offered by Robinet (2019), who claims that both talent attraction and city branding are still considered to be rather under-researched topics compared to their prevalence and relevance in practice.

Robinet's (2019) paper is one of the few studies on how city branding can account for talent attraction. Robinet (2019) argues that city branding can be utilized in talent attraction by implementing employer branding principles to it, which is why the paper is based on a literature review on both city branding, employer branding and talent attraction.

The touchpoints between city branding, employer branding and talent attraction identified by Robinet (2019) include integrated stakeholder engagement, opportunity for personal and professional development, unique local identity and work-life balance. With integrated stakeholder engagement Robinet (2019) means that when a city is building their brand, the local government needs to take the needs and capabilities of relevant stakeholders into account, in order for the brand to become something that truly targets and attracts suitable candidates for the stakeholders.

The second touchpoint centers around opportunities and self-development, both of which are common themes in both city branding and employer branding. Similarly work-life balance, the last touchpoint, is promoted in both. Whilst the theme of work-life balance is even more common in employer branding, it in fact has very little control over the realization of this balance, according to Robinet (2019). Thus, city branding is needed to make the city an

enjoyable place (Robinet, 2019).

Perhaps the most apparent similarity between city branding, employer branding and talent attraction is identity and clarity of brand image. Robinet (2019) claims that by having a strong image, the city can gain a unique local identity that helps the city, and the organizations operating in it, to create a competitive edge over other locations, which can help to attract talent to the city through integrated efforts. Therefore, Robinet (2019, p. 41) concludes that talent attraction is the common purpose of both city branding and employer branding, which is why they share a complementary relationship.

As Robinet (2019) notes in her paper, the study was not tested empirically, which is why the results derived from the literature review are limited. However, the nation level conceptual paper on branding and global talent attraction written by Silvanto and Ryan (2014) and the empirical study, which was conducted after that by Silvanto, Ryan, and McNulty (2015) also show similar results in practice. According to Silvanto, Ryan and McNulty (2015, p. 239), research indicates that high-skilled and self-initiated expatriates do indeed pay a significant amount of attention to a country's reputation and the perceived quality of life it can provide.

Nadeau and Olafsen (2015) also note this aspect in their study, which similarly suggests that there is a strong connection between a place's image and a person's willingness to migrate there. According to them, the image of the country impacts migration decisions because high-skilled migrants or talents most often strive to improve their quality of life, not only their economic situation (Nadeau & Olafsen, 2015). This aspect is in fact noted in all of these studies. Furthermore, Nadeau and Olafsen (2015) state that the image of the country's employers plays an important role in the migration decision, supporting the need for integrated stakeholder engagement, as identified in the study by Robinet (2019).

2.6 Summary of the theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis presents the principles of branding in general, as well as in a city branding context. Moreover, employer branding is discussed, as it is closely interrelated to how city branding is utilized in talent attraction. To understand talent attraction, the concept of talent management, especially in a global context, is also discussed. Lastly, previous studies combining these topics are discussed to create a framework for the role of city branding in global talent attraction.

A brand is defined as words or images used to identify one seller from a group of sellers and to differentiate them from their competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, brands communicate what makes an organization unique and what its value proposition is, giving an identity to the product or service in question (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Brands are highly preferred in marketing because they can help an organization to gain competitive advantage through creating positive associations. This competitive advantage and the added value a brand can bring to the organization is often referred to as brand equity.

In place marketing or city marketing, the popularity of branding has been growing steadily over the past few decades. The reason behind is most likely the fact that previous studies on the topic have proven it to be possible to brand cities like products. According to research, city brands are needed because they help cities to improve their positioning both locally and globally (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009). Controlling the image of a city and promoting it is arguably one of the most important aspects of city marketing and city branding can provide a solid framework for it (Kotler et al., 1999).

However, compared to traditional product branding, city branding is very complex in its nature, as there is no control over the whole branded entity and interest conflicts between the city's different stakeholders or target groups are inevitable (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). In fact, cities are considered to be mega products, which is why building the brand takes a lot of consideration, as the perceptions created through marketing activities need to match reality. Moreover, they also have to resonate with different target groups (Zenker & Martin, 2011).

In employer branding, talent attraction plays an important role (Reis et al., 2021). According to research, people naturally seek sources that can fulfill their inherent needs, which is why an employer has to be able to meet those needs in order to motivate the talent to join their organization. However, in order to retain the talent in the long run, the external brand is not enough. Therefore, the branding of the organization needs to be consistent and realistic on all levels (Botha et al., 2011).

Similarly to brands, talented employees help an organization to gain competitive advantage (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). In talent management, important individuals are attracted and identified, as well as developed strategically to derive the best value from them. This can either be done inside the organization or through outsourcing. Regardless, the value and uniqueness of human capital is emphasized, which is why talent management extends beyond traditional human resource management and does so at a heightened pace.

Talent shortages are a prevalent issue world wide, which is why talent management is being increasingly executed in a global context (ManpowerGroup, 2019). In global talent management, IHRM activities are conducted in a systematic and a more focused manner to attract and retain global talents, as well as to develop them in a dynamic environment (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). Because companies are not solely responsible for attracting global talent, governments often have a national strategy for it, which in turn is supported by cities. Typically, talents are targeted in a very specific manner by mixing both place branding and employer branding (Paavola et al., 2020).

Multiple overlaps can be established in the literature on city branding, employer branding, talent management and attraction, both in general and in a global context. Despite these clear similarities, not many studies have been conducted on the relation between city branding and global talent attraction. Therefore, based on this theoretical framework, a following relationship is suggested between city branding and global talent attraction. This framework highlights all notable aspects identified in the literature regarding these phenomena.

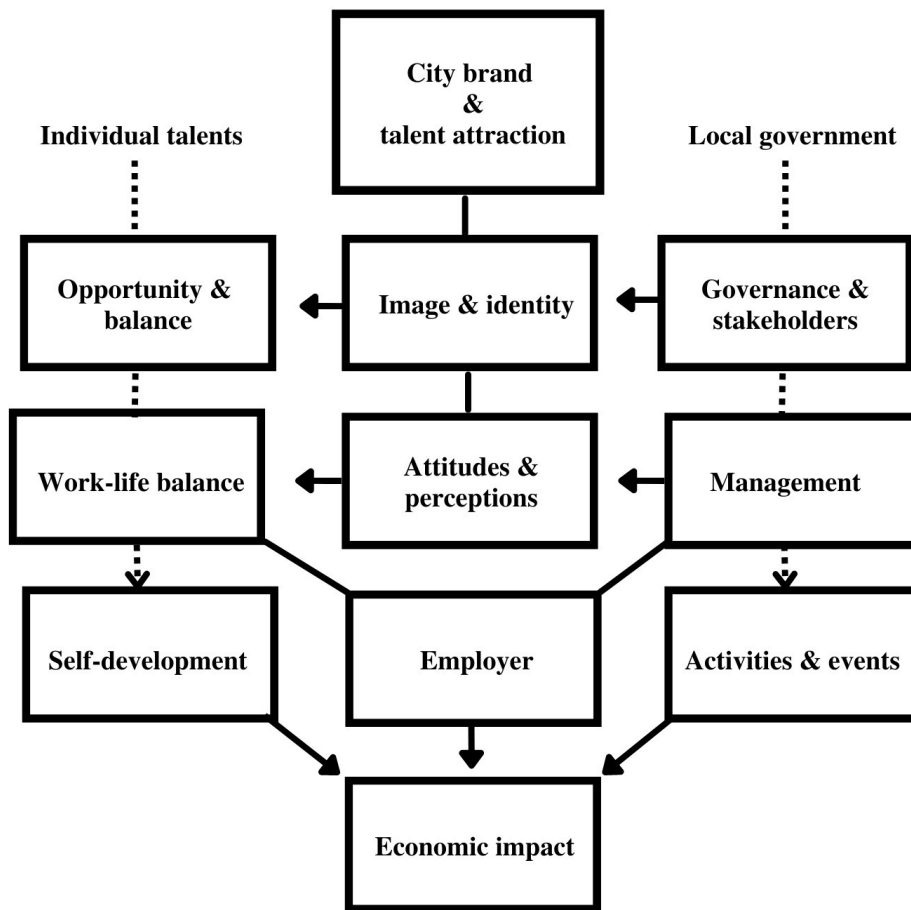


Figure 3. "City branding & talent attraction" Own work.

3. Methodology

The following chapter presents the methods used to conduct this thesis study, completed with a reasoning for the choice of methods. The design of the study and the methods for both data collection and analysis are also presented, followed by a discussion on the limitations of these methods. At the end of this chapter, the reliability, validity and transferability of the study are evaluated.

3.1 Qualitative research and case study as research design

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), qualitative research aims to understand and describe the nature of reality, often through words instead of numbers, as opposed to quantitative research. However, addressing qualitative research in terms of how it differs from quantitative research is not particularly fruitful, as they are not mutually exclusive, and the absence of numbers is not central to qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Although quantitative research methods allow for different phenomena to be measured more easily, and at times more accurately, they typically cannot address more complex, cultural and societal issues that can be examined with qualitative methods (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

Therefore, qualitative research methods are particularly suitable for studies that aim to understand human perceptions or feelings, as well as the social constructions that emerge from human interaction. In qualitative research, the relationship between theory and research is often inductive, which means that theory is built on research results (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This is particularly common in case studies, and according to Alvesson and Kärreman (2011), it is both a pro and a con, as it allows for more creativity in the research design but can be impacted by the researcher's bias. However, Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) also state that due to this high risk of bias, the researcher is continuously challenged to evaluate their interpretations and the subjectivity of them.

In this thesis, the focus of the study is on the perceptions of the global talents. Therefore, there is a clear motivation for the use of qualitative research methods, as those seek to understand how

people perceive and how they are affected by different kinds of societal phenomena, such as brands. Moreover, earlier studies on the impacts of city brands have been conducted as qualitative studies, and are often based on real life cases, which further solidifies the choice for a qualitative approach and focusing on one example case (Lucarelli, 2012).

Although constructing a case study is not considered to be a research method in itself, but rather has more to do with the research design, they have become very popular especially in business research, according to Bryman and Bell (2011). Cases can either be built on a single organization or a single location, and case studies can utilize several different research methods within them. The approach is often inductive, as stated above, and therefore the study often benefits from having a smaller sample of subjects (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). In this study, the city of Turku is examined as a case location and not as an organization. The aim is to provide a very detailed and in-depth explanation of the research problem in this particular location and to make a general conclusion based on the findings (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

This thesis study is also exploratory in its nature, meaning that it explores the research problem and aims to provide answers to the research questions, but does not, however, give a conclusive solution to the problem (Saunders et al., 2012). This approach has been chosen since there are not many existing studies on the topic. The results of this study will, therefore, help to set the phenomenon in a certain type of context, which increases the knowledge on how this specific phenomenon is currently dealt with in one example city.

3.2 Data collection

Qualitative research uses languaged data, which according to Polkinghorne (2005, p. 138), is collected through an intensive exploration with a participant, for example through an interview. Languaged data is far more complex than just words: it is sentences and full discourses that cannot be turned into numbers for analysis purposes (Polkinghorne, 2005). Observational data is often collected alongside languaged data, in order to complement the findings. This includes the participants' behavior, facial expressions and gestures, as well as other, non-verbal indications

that can clarify or supplement what the participant actually says or means during the discussion (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 143).

In this study, the data is collected through a focus group discussion consisting of four global talents and semi-structured interviews with the city's marketing representatives for global talent attraction. By discussing with both sides, the ideal and the actual state of the city's brand and what kind of benefits can be derived from it in the context of global talent attraction, can be assessed.

3.2.1 Data collection from the focus group

This study utilizes focus groups in order to gain an understanding on how the target group, global talents, perceive the city's brand and how it might have impacted their behavior previously. Focus groups are typically used in studies that benefit from a wider discussion, where participants are prompted to reflect and share their own experiences through hearing similar stories from their peers. This interactive characteristic of focus groups sets the method apart from other qualitative methods and helps to quickly generate a wider range of data (Hennink, 2014). Therefore, using a focus group for this study is strongly motivated, because in comparison to traditional one-on-one interviews, the group discussion can help the talents to realize different aspects of their experience that they perhaps have not consciously thought about before (Hennink, 2014).

According to Hennink (2014), focus groups can range anywhere from 5 to 10 participants, but ideally, the group consists of 6 to 8 participants with similar backgrounds or similar experiences. However, mini-focus groups with fewer participants are also used, especially in studies, where the goal is to get an in-depth view of the matter through personal accounts (Morgan, 1997). Typically, the discussion is centered around a specific topic, which is relevant to the study's purpose, and lasts around 60 - 90 minutes, so that there is sufficient time to discuss each question in detail. The discussion is led by the moderator, who stimulates the conversation, but also allows the participants to freely express their perspectives or experiences (Hennink, 2014). The

idea is not to reach any type of consensus but rather to collect different views on the matter. The participants may also help the researcher to uncover new aspects of their study by inventing and asking their own questions during the discussion (Hennink, 2014).

As with all methods, using focus groups has its disadvantages and limitations. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), some of the concerns surrounding the focus group method include the fact that a lot of data is generated in a relatively short amount of time. Transcribing all this data and analyzing it might be time-consuming and requires a strategic approach. Focus groups can also be difficult to organize, and during the discussion, group effects might cause problems, in case some participants talk too much and some too little (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Building the focus group for this study began by contacting Talent Turku representatives, as they had the best understanding of the phenomenon, as well as the needed connections to global talents in the region. A promotional message together with a link to a contact form was posted to a niche group on LinkedIn, as well as on Facebook. The same message was also sent to a mailing list, which consisted of foreigners living in Turku.

Due to the current circumstances caused by covid-19, the focus group discussion was held online. Prior to the discussion, the participants filled out the aforementioned form, which included their contact information, as well as questions about their background, such as their nationality and educational level, current occupation or title, the length of their residency and the reason behind their move to Turku. No questions related to their language proficiency were deemed necessary, as the whole form was in English, as well as all the promotional activities used in recruiting the participants. Their participation in the Talent Boost programme was also asked, but this was regarded as secondary information.

Together, all these questions helped to ensure that the possible participants belonged to the study's target group. The participants were also asked to state their availability on certain dates and a preferred starting time for the discussion. Additionally, the participants were informed that they would stay anonymous throughout the study process, and that the researcher would be

available for any types of questions or comments. The chosen participants for the focus group are presented later on in chapter 3.3.

Two days prior to the discussion, the participants received a meeting invitation to their email, along with some general guidelines on using their webcams and microphone and having a stable internet connection, so that the discussion would not be interrupted by technical difficulties. However, the general expectation was that the participants would already be familiar with online meetings, since remote work had been the global norm for the last two years. They were also notified and asked to express their consent to the meeting being recorded for research purposes.

On the day of the discussion, the interview guide for the discussion was checked together with the supervisor, as well as with a 29-year-old male, whose second language is English, in order to ensure that the questions were easy to understand and relevant in terms of the study's purpose. The interview guide for the focus groups (see Appendix 1) was created similarly to semi-structured interviews described above.

The discussion was held online on Microsoft Teams on the 24th February and it lasted from 19:00 p.m. to roughly 20:05 p.m. The discussion began with a short introduction round on the participants' background and was followed by a short reasoning as to why each participant had moved to Turku in the first place. None of the participants knew each other from before, so this was done to establish a sense of comfort in the participants. The participants were also asked what kind of thoughts or perceptions they had about Turku before they moved, in order to understand how well they knew the city in advance, and how acquainted they were with the city's marketing materials. After this, the participants were asked to think about whether those perceptions or thoughts have changed now that they have been living in the city for several months. The participants were also asked if they knew what a global talent is and whether they identify with the concept themselves. By asking this question, the participants were able to discuss their background and the career-related opportunities they could have in Turku in more detail.

The second part of the discussion focused more on the city's brand and its attractiveness from the

talents' point of view. The participants were asked to describe the city's characteristics, the benefits that can be derived from those characteristics, as well as the values and the personality of the city. Through these questions the talents' understanding and interpretation of the city's brand could be measured.

Lastly, the talents were asked to evaluate the city's marketing and communications, as well as give recommendations for improvement. This helped to understand how the marketing reaches global talents and what channels they deem important. To close the session, the participants were asked whether they would recommend the city to other global talents, in order to measure their overall experience of the city.

3.2.2 Data collection from the semi-structured interviews

In this study, semi-structured interviews are conducted, in order to understand how the city of Turku has created their brand and how they use it in the context of global talent attraction. Interviews are commonly used in qualitative research and they can vary anywhere from a traditional interview to a completely unstructured interview, which borderlines the likes of a regular conversation (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In a semi-structured interview, the researcher uses an interview guide to steer the conversation, but the interviewees are allowed to express their views quite freely, and to emphasize what they deem important (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This particular method has been chosen for this study because it ensures that all relevant topics will be covered during the interview but, at the same time, allows the experts to emphasize the topics that are the most relevant in practice.

The interview guides, both for the focus group and the semi-structured interviews, are formulated based on Kvale's nine different kinds of questions, as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2011). According to them, the interview should begin with introducing questions and then move on to more specific questions about the topic (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The interviewees are asked to specify their answers if needed, and the interviewer can also utilize indirect questions or probing questions, in order to discover how the interviewees truly feel. At the end of the

interview, more direct and even sensible questions can be asked, as well as more interpreting questions, when a mutual sense of trust has been established.

However, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), the most important part of interviews is listening to what the interviewees say, or do not say, and being very responsive during the discussion. The interview should also include different types of questions and touch on different phenomena, if possible within the study's scope. Bryman and Bell (2011) also note that some effort should be put on closing the interview and, therefore, the final question should prompt the interviewee to express their overall personal opinion on a specific issue.

The disadvantages of semi-structured interviews include their labor-intensive and time-consuming nature. According to Adams (2015), they also require a certain level of sophistication from the interviewer's side, meaning that they have to be smart but sensitive, as well as have some knowledge about the topics discussed. In some studies interviews are also inadequate, when it comes to sample size, and can be considered as cost-ineffective (Adams, 2015).

The interview process for this study started by contacting the project specialist of Talent Turku, in order to find out who would be the key persons. After exchanging emails and a brief meeting on Microsoft Teams with the project specialist from Turku Science Park's side and the liaison manager of the city, it became clear that two interviews should be conducted to get the best picture possible of talent attraction in the city of Turku. The chosen informants for the semi-structured interviews are presented in more detail in chapter 3.3.

The first interview was held with Turku Science Park representatives and it was conducted in Finnish. The interview was agreed upon a week prior to the discussion and the informants received some of the questions beforehand, due to time-related constraints. A conscious decision was made that this interview would focus more on the marketing activities in general and would not go deeply into the city's brand, as it was not deemed central by Turku Science Park representatives. The interview guide (Appendix 2) was checked together with the supervisor prior to the interview, to ensure that the questions were relevant considering the purpose of the study.

The interview took place on Microsoft Teams on the 17th of March and it lasted from 14.00 pm. to 14.45. pm. In the beginning of the interview, the researcher presented themselves and briefly explained what the study is about. The researcher also informed the informants that the interview would be recorded for study-related purposes but would not, however, be seen by anybody else other than the researcher. This was followed by a brief introduction of the informants and a quick overview of all relevant marketing activities and campaigns that they are currently involved in.

During the interview, the informants were also asked about which channels they use in their marketing activities to global talents and why they have deemed those specific channels more important than others. They were asked to elaborate, what kind of target groups they aim to reach with their marketing activities and how those target groups are defined. Additionally, different content types were discussed, as well as the concept of customer journey: how do the talents find Talent Turku-content? The role of city branding was also discussed briefly, but due to it being of less importance compared to the role of nation brand, it was not the focus point of the interview. However, it was noted that the city brand and the city of Turku do have aspects that support talent attraction to the region. On the contrary, aspects that hinder talent attraction to the region were also discussed, in order to establish pain points and areas of improvement.

The second interview was held on Microsoft Teams on 29th of March from 8:15-9:00. Similarly to the first interview, the researcher presented themselves and the study and asked for consent to record the discussion. The informant presented themselves and their involvement in the Talent Turku project but the focus of the second interview was more on the brand of the city, as the informant was closely involved in the creation and implementation of it (see Appendix 3).

The informant was asked how the brand of the city can be seen and how it is utilized in the context of marketing for global talents. They were also asked to name some campaigns, where they have chosen to use the brand of the city instead of the Work in Finland-brand, which they are typically obliged to use. It was also confirmed with informant I1 that the biggest overlap or usage of the city brand happens in communications, as stated by Turku Science Oy representatives. The brand was also discussed in terms of which parts of it are the most important

ones in this context and how the city's brand differentiates from other city brands, especially in Finland. Additionally, the role of the city brand in this context was discussed, as well as its purpose. Similarly to the interview with Turku Science Park Oy representatives, the most important marketing channels were discussed and their opinion on how well Turku has succeeded previously in global talent attraction was asked. The informant also shed light on the city's future goals in this context and explained how they collect feedback from global talents and their stakeholders to improve talent attraction. Lastly, the strengths and weaknesses of Turku in terms of global talent attraction were discussed in detail.

3.3 Informants

As stated above, the focus group informants were chosen based on their background and current residency. All focus group informants had moved to Finland within the last five years and currently resided in the city of Turku. To increase the trustworthiness of the study, the focus group informants vary in terms of their age, gender, nationality and current occupation. The focus group discussion was conducted in English, which is why the informants had to be fluent in English.

Although the study explores the work-based relocation of global talents, the focus group informants also had other reasons for their relocation that played a significant role in their decision. However, most of them are currently employed and all of them hold either a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. The focus group informants have been given an identification code to keep them anonymous and therefore details about their age or gender will not be revealed.

Table 1. Focus group informants

F1	Colombian	Master's student, fast food worker	EN
F2	Chinese	Marketing & communications professional, gyrotonic trainer	EN
F3	French	Software developer	EN
F4	British	Talent advisor	EN

Other informants of the study represent the city of Turku, as well as Turku Science Park Oy and they were chosen based on their involvement in the city's marketing, especially in the context of global talent attraction. Therefore, the liaison manager of the city, who is the city's representative for Talent Turku and has been involved in the creation of the city's brand, was chosen as the first informant. Additionally, it was important to get the most accurate understanding possible of how the city's brand is communicated to global talents, which is why the international marketing manager of Turku Science Park Oy was chosen as the second informant. The digital marketing planner of Turku Science Park Oy, who is responsible for the Career in Turku and Southwest Finland-entity, as well as marketing Talent Turku on social media, was chosen as the third informant, in order to get a better picture of how global talent attraction marketing activities are currently executed. All of the interviews were conducted in Finnish.

Table 2. Interviewees from the city of Turku and Turku Science Park Oy

I1	Liaison manager at the city of Turku	FI
I2	Marketing manager at Turku Science Park Oy	FI
I3	Digital marketing planner at Turku Science Park Oy	FI

3.4 Data analysis

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), as well as many other authors, analyzing qualitative data is not very straightforward. No clear rules on how it should be executed exist, nor is the data itself particularly easy to handle, as it is often in the form of unstructured text (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Moreover, as mentioned above, qualitative research often generates a great volume of data, making it even harder to establish a strategic approach for the analysis. However, some general approaches can be utilized to ease the process. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), the most common approaches in qualitative research are deductive and inductive approaches, however, for this thesis an abductive approach has been chosen to best suit the nature of the study.

In the abductive approach, theory is formed by encountering surprising findings in the empirical data. This allows for creativity in the research process and often leads to innovative theory or new descriptions and angles on existing theory. These surprising findings or anomalies in the empirical data are then reflected back on existing theories on similar phenomena, in order to seek a “*situational fit*” between observed facts and rules (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012, p. 171). According to Janiszewski and van Osselaer (2022), the ultimate goal with the abductive approach is to propose original theory, which is why the researcher takes note of existing theories on an informative level but is not directly guided by them. Theory is developed through a recursive process, which is why the original hypothesis is constantly refined throughout the data collection stage. Moreover, Timmermans and Tavory (2012) also describe the process to be iterative, meaning that the researcher constantly moves back and forth between theory and data (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Coding is the most common technique used to ease the data analysis process in qualitative research. In coding, data is broken down into smaller parts that are then named or labeled in a way that summarizes the content (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). This whole coding process should begin quite soon after data collection, because it gives an indication of the central themes and patterns in the data. In this thesis study, the coding process is based on a flexible, blended approach, meaning that it utilizes notions from both inductive and deductive coding and,

therefore, helps to distinguish anomalies and surprises in the data (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

Analyzing the data in this study began by reviewing the video recordings of all discussions. The discussions were transcribed, meaning that they were brought to a text format, word by word. This was executed almost immediately after the discussions were over, in order to ensure high quality in the transcripts. In addition to paying attention to what the participants were saying, their expressions, laughter and other body language indicators were also noted in the transcripts. However, in order to ease the analysis process, some unnecessary filler words were removed from the transcripts, as well as confusing grammatical errors. The latter concerned mainly the focus group discussion, as English was not the first language for most of the participants.

The strategy for coding in this study is based on the suggestions by Skjott Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019). According to them, coding should begin inductively, meaning that the data is “given a voice” (p. 264). This pre-defined list of codes is then revised and given more structure through deductive reasoning. The authors state that this ensures theoretical relevance yet enables inductive exploration of data later on (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Combining both strategies essentially means that the approach is abductive, which helps the researcher to simultaneously emphasize the findings from the data and to also ensure that the theoretical focus remains.

In this study, the focus group discussion was coded first, since the discussion took place several weeks before the interviews. After the interviews with the city of Turku were conducted, they were also transcribed and coded almost immediately to ensure highest possible quality. The coding frames for all discussions were based on research questions, as well as aspects that were deemed important in the theoretical framework. The coding process itself was executed in two cycles, as suggested by Skjott Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019).

The initial codes for the focus group were positive brand association, positive experience, positive cultural stereotype, optimism and hopefulness, lack of information, cultural issue or negative cultural stereotype, negative experience or confusion/disappointment, career-related

disappointment, negative brand association. Later on, the coding was adjusted to also note suggestions for improvement and comparisons to another location, as these were repeatedly noted by the focus group participants. Each code was given its own color and the whole transcript was colored accordingly. In the second coding cycle, the codes were revised one more time, as the coded segments of the transcript were transferred to another page in order to create categories. In total, three categories were established: aspects that have a positive impact on brand performance and improve talent attraction, aspects that cause brand dissonance and have a negative impact on talent attraction, and other aspects that impact the brand experience and can hinder talent attraction.

The coding process for the semi-structured interviews followed a similar path. However, the main difference between the interviews and the focus group discussion was that the interviews were conducted in Finnish, which is why they had to be translated to English after transcription was completed. During the first cycle of coding, the following codes were created for the first interview: helps with attraction, attraction activity, hinders attraction, city branding activity and nation branding. For the second interview, one category called city branding purpose was added to the list, in order to ensure that specific research questions would be answered. Based on these codes, two main categories were established: aspects that support talent attraction and aspects that hinder talent attraction.

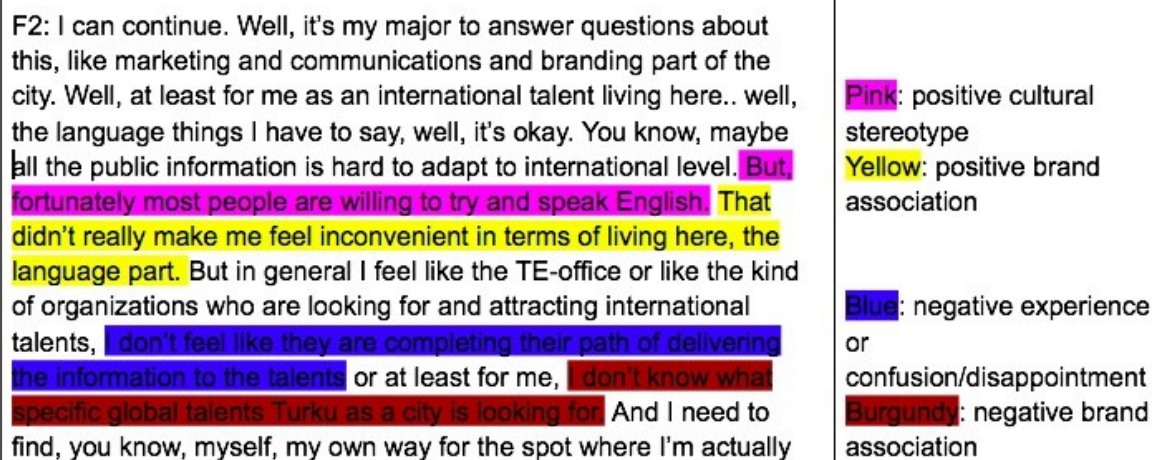


Figure 4. Example of the coding for the focus group discussion

3.5 Evaluation of the study

Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) suggest that the three most important criteria for evaluating business-related studies are the reliability, validity and generalizability of the study. Reliability refers to the results of the study being repeatable or transferrable, which is of particular importance in quantitative research but also relevant in qualitative research. Validity, however, refers to the integrity of the conclusions made in a study and is, therefore, perhaps the most important one out of the three (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 42). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) do note, however, that not all researchers agree on the term “validity” in qualitative research, and that it can have different meanings depending on the context. Lastly, generalizability refers to the extent of which the results of the study can be utilized in other or wider contexts (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, in qualitative research and especially in case studies, generalizability is measured by comparing the empirical results with previously developed theory (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

As mentioned before, conducting a qualitative study requires reflexivity from the researcher, as well as analytic induction. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), in addition to those requirements, the researcher can use triangulation and/or member check, in order to establish validity. In triangulation, multiple perspectives are utilized to refine the findings of the study. For example, the researcher can utilize multiple empirical sources, as well as several theories to interpret the results. In member check the results or findings of the study are checked together with the participants (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

This thesis study is evaluated with the help of frameworks by Gorman and Clayton (2004), as well as Guba and Lincoln (1985). The framework by Guba and Lincoln (1985) consists mainly of techniques that the researcher can use to ensure trustworthiness, which in turn consists of the aforementioned credibility, as well as transferability, dependability and confirmability. Gorman and Clayton’s (2004) framework is perhaps even more practical and can also be utilized as a checklist, as the researcher is asked several questions regarding, for example, the purpose of the study, the choice of method, as well as how the conclusions are presented. Presentation has a particularly prominent role in this framework, as Gorman and Clayton (2004) note that clearly

presented and well-written research is one of the main characteristics in qualitative research.

In terms of techniques, Guba and Lincoln (1985) agree with Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) that triangulation increases the reliability or credibility of the study, which is why this study utilizes it in terms of sources, methods and theories. The data for this study have been collected from multiple sources and from multiple participants in order to achieve an adequate level of saturation in the answers. Both the focus group method, as well as semi-structured interview are utilized. The researcher has also examined previous studies on the topic, which are presented and discussed in the theoretical framework. However, due to the lack of similar studies on this exact topic, no direct comparisons have been made.

To ensure validity, every step of the study has been documented and no data have been left out, including answers that do not necessarily support the researcher's primary assumptions (Gorman & Clayton, 2004). This also has to do with establishing a degree of neutrality, or confirmability, as mentioned in the framework by Guba and Lincoln (1984). Each part of the process has been explained in detail, so that future research on the topic can be conducted. Lastly, the quality of the study has been externally audited through attending thesis seminars, in which the study was discussed together with peers. Feedback received from the seminars aided in identifying and evaluating how the trustworthiness of the study could be improved.

4. Results

This chapter presents the results of this thesis study by discussing the empirical data. The findings are presented and discussed through key themes that were identified in the data analysis. These themes are essentially a combination of the previously categories that were established after coding was complete. Moreover, in this chapter, segments and direct citations from both the focus group discussion, as well as the semi-structured interviews, are provided to give context to the presentation.

4.1 The role and the purpose of city branding in global talent attraction

This first section presents the findings related to the role, as well as the purpose of city branding in global talent attraction. This theme was mainly discussed during both semi-structured interviews, however the purpose of city branding was only discussed with I1, as they were deemed to have the best understanding of the city's brand in this context, due to their position in the organization.

When asked about their view on the city brand's role, I1 prefaced their answer by stating that their view on the matter is not the only one, nor the most correct one. To them, the city brand and its purpose is something that everyone experiences and sees in their own way. They explained that as an organization, the city of Turku has tried to identify what is meaningful and important to their residents, as well as to the businesses and other institutions located in the city. To put it simply, I1 said that the brand is based on all the aspects the residents themselves resonate with and find the most joy in. Therefore, I1 argues that the purpose of the city brand is, not only in global talent attraction but also in general, the fact that someone has thoroughly thought out what and who Turku essentially is.

As it has already been established, Turku is a relatively small city that lacks international recognition, meaning that the attraction work for the city often starts by presenting the country and describing its key characteristics. When there is no existing knowledge or general assumptions about the city, creating that baseline for the city's image requires consistency.

Therefore, it is utterly important that the city can be introduced and explained in a coherent manner, in which the brand has an important role. The brand helps to make sense of the city in a unified manner and, therefore, makes the description of the city less dependent on one person's interpretation of the city.

I1 also stated that, as they have seen several cities' marketing and communications online, Turku as a city is quite well-developed compared to other Finnish cities. This was also noted by the focus group participants, who favorably compared Turku to other Finnish cities. I1 stated that the image part of the city brand, which Lucarelli (2012) names as one of the most important impacts of the city brand, of course impacts heavily on how credible and attractive the city is seen by global talents, as well as other target groups. According to I1, a good image and a strong brand promise inspires trust and awakens interest, which naturally can lead to the city gaining new residents or investments, for example.

To summarize their view on the city brand's role, I1 said that to them, the brand is first and foremost a way of thinking, which is accompanied by different visual tools that one can utilize in their own work. However, they did note that due to the fact that cities are so-called "mega products", as stated by Zenker and Martin (2011), it is impossible to control the brand at all times. Similarly to Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013), they also noted that it would be mindless to even try to do so, and that they acknowledge that the brand is under a constant change - as is the city itself.

I see it so that it is good that we have this visual image. We have organizations that want to organize events - essentially to make the brand real, what Turku is, as I see it. So it is good that we can give them that "use these colors and use our logo like this, and when you tell people about Turku, say it like this". These kinds of actors usually do not have time to think about these things, so we can help them with those and unify these acts into coherent entities. And of course it is nice when I look at other cities' website and their communication online, I do it a lot, and... well, I think we are in a good situation compared to many others. Of course the image, what all the visuals, colors and main messages feel like, impact whether or not this is a credible and attractive city. It increases trust and of course interest...-

-...But I think that you cannot force people, not the city's employees or the residents, we cannot

force them into a mold. It is more a way of thinking and then there are the visual tools and images that you can utilize in your own work. (I1)

4.2 City branding and global talent attraction in practice

This section explains how city branding can currently be seen in the city of Turku's global talent attraction work and how the city brand is communicated to global talents. Therefore, as the focus is on how this type of marketing is conducted in practice, this theme mainly concerned the semi-structured interviews.

Due to the division of responsibilities, the informants had slightly differing views on how the city brand is used in their marketing. Turku Science Park Oy, who are mainly responsible for the attraction part only, stated that the city brand does not in fact play a large part in their marketing. According to I3, it is stated in the project's agreement that all marketing activities in Talent Turku must use the Work in Finland-brand and visuals, due to the aforementioned fact that Finland lacks international recognition. This was confirmed by I1, who also stated that they always use the Work in Finland-brand if possible. Utilizing the nation brand in projects like the Talent Boost helps to maintain and to improve the country's reputation in general, which is why all Talent-projects in Finland utilize it instead of their own brands. In practice, I2 and I3 explained that in Turku this is done by marketing Turku as a working location under the name "Career in Southwest Finland".

However, I3 noted that the city's brand is utilized in some of their campaigns, whenever it is deemed fitting. For example, in 2021 they launched a "Happy Pro"-campaign, in which the city of Turku had a prominent role. The city had its own subsection on the website, and on that website, the typical slogans and other brand content of the city were used. According to I3, this showcases how the nation brand and the city brand can sometimes naturally overlap in their marketing, but simultaneously emphasized that it is rather an exception and not the general rule. I1 also mentioned the International House Turku website, which utilizes the city's brand in a slightly modified version, and also stated that whenever they have events for global talents, they usually give out gifts, such as tote bags and mugs that are branded with the city brand.

Interestingly, I2 did note however that communications-wise they do prefer to use the city of Turku's style and in most cases utilize the city's talking points, as well as its tone of voice. This was confirmed by I1, who thought that it is, in fact, in communications where the brand becomes real. They said that how the city and its people are, what their events are like and how they talk about the city, is what truly embodies and realizes the brand and the brand promises it entails. Therefore, it is essentially the tone of voice where the city brand can mostly be seen in. I1 thought that aggressively and even forcefully marketing the brand rarely works but it is rather how well the brand can be seen in the city's actions that defines its success. In that sense, the city brand of Turku has succeeded since most of the focus group participants were able to identify the most important brand elements and understood the city's brand in a very similar way that it is described in the brand manual.

So, I have been involved in several strategy, image and branding projects that companies have and seen how those have been implemented. I think that the brand becomes real in our words and the way we ourselves embody it, what we want to embody in some strategy or brand promise. It is our everyday actions that matter, but that is usually the hardest part, where people typically go wrong. -... I think it is outdated if we just shout everywhere that we are this international and interesting city at the Baltic Sea, notice us! It is more about our own actions, understanding our own background, which we can lean on, and what Turku wants to be: the oldest city in Finland but, at the same time, boldly renewing and international city, close to the archipelago. A competitive, growing and cultural city. This is what our people are and how we act with our stakeholders. I think that this is the tone of voice that is meaningful and makes the promises and other fine words real. (I1)

4.3 Building an attractive city brand

In order to understand how other Finnish cities similar to Turku can create brands that attract global talents, understanding how well the talents understand the brand and whether they perceive it as attractive is of the essence. Therefore, this section explores the talents' interpretations of the city's current brand, as well as the advantages and disadvantages that the

city of Turku as an organization has identified in their city brand. The idea is to evaluate how well the actual state of the brand matches the ideal state that the city of Turku is aiming for in their global talent attraction work.

4.3.1 Positive brand associations or advantages that improve talent attraction

All participants in the focus group discussion expressed several positive associations and experiences regarding the brand of the city, as well as the quality of life as a foreigner living in Turku. Although most of them had done fairly little research before moving to the city, all of them felt like the city had in many ways exceeded their expectations. Some associations were directly tied to Turku, whilst others had to do with positive stereotypes about Finland and Finnish people in general.

Prior to their move, most participants said that they were fairly optimistic about coming to Finland and to Turku specifically, and that they felt that it would be a convenient location for them. To them, it appeared that foreigners with a good background, e.g. fluency in English and a high level of education, could manage well in the city, in comparison to their country of origin, where not speaking the local language would be a remarkable problem. Some of them had already visited Finland previously and, therefore, had several positive associations about the country in general. Others were convinced that the city would be a good fit for them based on the recommendations they received from people close to them, such as friends or their partner.

In terms of their perception and their interpretation of the city's brand, the answers of the participants were fairly well in line with the city's description about the brand. Several key brand elements, as presented in the framework by Lucarelli (2012) (see Figure 2.), could be identified from their answers. They included examples on concrete landmarks, buildings and institutions, as well as more intangible ones, like the city's history and the symbols used for marketing for example.

Regarding the tangible aspects of the brand, many participants, such as F4 and F2, expressed being particularly fond of the riverside area and the surroundings of the old town, including the

Tuomiokirkko-church. The archipelago, a well-known trait of Finnish coastal cities, was also mentioned as a unique and favorable element by F3. They also expressed great fondness for the nature in the region in general, whereas F2 in turn had a more specific favorite. They highly enjoyed locations like Ruissalo, where they could see man and nature coexist in a particularly harmonious way. Other areas that the participants highlighted during the discussion were Kakola and Port Arthur, which were both seen as very distinguishable residential areas that embodied the intangible aspects of the brand well, and that were still in close proximity to the city center.

I'd say for me, the... it's kinda the riverside, the river Aura, you get straight from the harbor and you just keep walking past the center, cathedral, university... you kind of get quite far by following the riverside. (F4)

For me, it's. everything is so close. Everything is a 20-minute walk so for me it's... I enjoy it because I come from a big city, where it's normal to have a car and everyone's driving. Here I love it that I can go to the city walking, it's a 20-minute walk and it's something that I like. (F1)

This type of peacefulness and convenience that Turku has to offer for foreigners was also expressed by F1 and F3, as they were originally from large cities, where big crowds were inevitable and distances between different places are generally long, which was something that they considered to be problematic. All participants agreed that being able to walk or cycle anywhere in less than 20 minutes is one of the biggest assets of the city. They also had positive experiences of the public transport in the area and were impressed by the connections available from Turku to other cities or even countries. In fact, F1 even described the city as "*small but resourceful*".

I would say like, convenient, for me that would be the word for marketing. Because you can do everything by bike, everything is close, so it's very nice. You don't need a car, you can just take the bus and you have the bus map on your phone. Everything is connected so it's convenient for me. (F3)

Safety and a sense of constant development were also mentioned as important factors for many participants. Although the city is relatively small, it has all the important facilities, such as the Turku University Hospital, which according to F2, gives them a sense of security. The number of institutions for higher education was also deemed as something that inspired trust among the participants. They felt like these institutions could draw experts not only from other parts of Finland but also from abroad. This association likely impacted their view of the local labor market, setting their expectations high on the number of career opportunities they could have. Interestingly, the number of construction sites was also something that they noted as a sign of progression and created this association of a city that is growing and expanding.

The participants agreed that other people living in the city were, at least in general, very friendly and accommodating towards foreigners, despite some participants having had unfortunate encounters in the past. They also had an association that most people in Turku are highly educated and capable of speaking English. The kindness of people towards their surroundings was mentioned as well during the discussion. All participants also agreed that since there are not that many residents, the city has a quiet feeling to it, which was deemed both as a positive, as well as a negative aspect, depending on the participant.

Maybe because it's so quiet and so empty, I could enjoy this great view in this city. But it's a little bit hard in China of course. Their pollution and lots of population... and in Paris, was a little bit busy, especially the metro. But in Finland it's okay, I usually go everywhere by car or you can just walk or bike, I kind of feel like people are living really friendly, to the environment, and trying to keep it balanced. Little bit like that feeling. I feel that people care a little bit more about nature and respect it and that's why I feel it's really nice, when human life is trying to balance itself with nature and its development. (F2)

The participants also described the city's brand impact in a favorable manner and this was particularly true regarding the city's image. According to some of the participants, their interpretation of the brand was quite romantic compared to other Finnish towns. F2 even said that they also feel like Turku has a more "*ritualistic feeling*" to it compared to other towns, referring to the rich history of the city. However, despite the visible culture and the old infrastructure, participants like F3 also felt that the city has a very modern side to it. F1 in

particular highlighted how lively the business life in the region appears to be, and how the city can be seen as a “*hub*” for innovation. This “*physically old, but with a young mind*”-association was shared by most of the participants.

It feels like a hub. I feel like a hub is the center of business, that’s the meaning I’m trying to approach. - ... this city is building right now. It’s like under construction, not literally like the city center, but they’re building it like a company, they’re trying to focus -... you have all types of things here, a lot of startups, yes, but you also have the schools, you have good universities, you have the resources you need, like the transport is here. So, for me, that’s Turku right now: a growing city, with a lot of innovation and technology and businesses that are growing. (F1)

To the participants, how the city communicates itself comes across as very confident. They feel as if the city does not seek approval from others but rather does everything in its own way. The boldness can be seen in things like the “Kiss my Turku”-slogan, which both F2 and F4 mentioned several times during the discussion. This indicates that the bold approach for marketing often evokes a positive response in the target group and that the marketing messages are easier to remember, when they are presented in this way. F4 in particular expressed being impressed by how the city is honest in its communications and does not try to “*sanitize*” the image, despite some people having a negative picture of the city and interpreting this type of communication as arrogance.

F4 also saw Turku as the food capital of Finland, however, most of the participants have moved to Turku during the pandemic, which is why they did not mention any big events or important festivities that they associate with the city. They also had very little to say about the city’s governance aside from the unemployment office. Despite this, some of them already identified themselves as “*turkulainen*”, or as a resident of Turku, which can be seen as a positive indicator about their overall experience of living in the city. In general, the participants felt that Turku has a particularly good image for being a great place to live in for families and it was in fact the number one reason why they would recommend the city to their peers abroad.

When the strengths and advantages that the city of Turku has was asked from the city’s point of view, all of the informants for the semi-structured interviews started by mentioning certain

common themes or aspects. These common themes, such as safety, cleanliness, nature, high quality of life and strong work-life balance are not particularly tied to Turku only, but are regardless emphasized in the city's marketing to global talents, and are something that the talents themselves are very much interested in. This is supported by the fact that these same themes were mentioned during the focus group discussion and were among the things that the participants liked the most about the city of Turku as well.

Other things more specifically tied to Turku that all informants mentioned were the convenience the city has to offer and how ideal it is for families with children especially. According to I1 the latter is of course something that other Finnish cities utilize as well, but compared to the capital region for example, Turku has certain benefits that they do not. One main aspect I1 highlighted was that for a middle-income family, it is possible to buy a house from the center of Turku without being buried in debt. In the capital region, and especially in Helsinki that is not possible. This is something Turku strongly takes advantage of and highlights in their brand, according to I1. I1 also thought that the general location of the city, especially when considering the Baltic Sea and other coastal cities in the region, is quite unique and highly beneficial.

In general, I1 thought that it is a great advantage from a global talent attraction point of view that people in Turku genuinely enjoy living there. According to them, it is easy to market and brand a city, which oneself truly loves and is excited about because it does not feel false. I1 also thought that Turku also had very strong brand promises and liked how the city brand exploits the prejudices and preconceptions, which F4 had noted and wanted to discuss during the focus group discussion. Similarly to the focus group, I1 thought that the unique and bold style Turku uses in their brand communication is something in which the city can differentiate itself from other cities and that often generates a positive response in the target group. This was supported by the focus group participants, as F2 in particular expressed being very fond of this approach.

Due to their role, I2 and I3 highlighted especially the city's expertise in certain industries, such as in the technological sector, as well as in the maritime and health technology industry. I2 even described the tech sector as the "*cash cow*" of the whole region, emphasizing its importance to the whole economy in the region. According to them, a major share of the global talents is

targeted with these sectors in mind, and that they are also what talents themselves are mostly interested in. I1 also brought up the prominent role of higher educational institutions, of which there are four in the city. Two of those institutions are Swedish-speaking, which is unique compared to other Finnish cities. The high volume of students, and especially the number of international students, can be seen as beneficial from the global talent attraction point of view, as it increases the chances for positive word-of-mouth abroad. This had happened to one of the focus group participants, F1, who came to the country to study because their friend had spoken highly of Turku as a city for international students.

The fact that this region or Turku has strengths in certain industries, for example, maritime industry is strong here because we have the shipyards and everything and health sector is really strong, too. Health tech. So, we have taken advantage of these in our marketing, these certain strengths in the region, certain industry-related strengths. Those have been good. And also, the general image, for example in Happy Pro we talk about Turku as a place where work is close, family is close and city and nature are close, and that you can combine good work-life balance and also future-oriented career. These things are easy to come up with and they can be found easily. (I3)

Lastly, I1 saw it as an advantage that the cooperation on the global talent attraction work of the city is very strong in Turku and that the city has allocated enough resources to execute it, not only but also in the future. According to I1, the close cooperation of the quadruple helix, which consists of higher educational institutions in the region, the development company Turku Science Park Oy, the third sector and the city itself, can only be described as exceptional, as it is far more open than in many other Finnish cities. Regarding the resources, I1 stated that the city of Turku will only be adding their funding and personnel on this project. This is due to the fact that the city has recognized that it is through global talents that the city can derive future growth from. Currently, the city has a team of 10 people, who actively work to improve talent attraction in the city, and the city receives funding from the state to run the project, according to I1.

Couple years back I was in a situation where we had no staff and 0 euros. In that situation it is very hard to try to improve websites, let alone big processes. Now that I look four years back and compare it to this situation where we have a team of 10 persons and good resources, good

communication, we have so much good to build upon, so it is nice to be here. Nice to be in this situation. It is the money and the people that are crucial part of this attraction and retention work.
(I1)

4.3.2 Negative brand associations or disadvantages that hinder talent attraction

As stated above, most participants expressed that they did not do much research about the city prior to their move. Some of it was explained by the fact that there was not a lot of information about the city available or that they simply trusted their partner or friend enough not to look too deeply into what the city has to offer. However, after their arrival, all of them have faced different types of difficulties, which ultimately have had a detrimental effect on their view of the city's brand. The fact that most of their difficulties have concentrated on their struggles to navigate in the local labor market is of particular importance, when considering the aspects that hinder talent attraction to the region.

Although the participants expressed a generally positive attitude towards the city's old infrastructure, some parts of it were unpleasant to certain participants. For example, one participant mentioned that they had several negative experiences of older toilets in public spaces. F1 also had problems with the lack of English signs, especially in the international student village, where it would be understandable to have such signs. Many participants agreed with them, however, most of them noted that not all spaces need to have signs in English and that they are used to interpreting local languages in other countries as well.

I have something as simple as Föli. I don't know but you don't find information like in the buses, like it's in English. I have seen even in Arabic or these other languages that I don't recognize, I could say Arabic but yeah, you have Finnish, Swedish and something Arabic but not English.
(F1)

For me, considering Paris, if you visit Paris, there's no translation to English here. So, if you come here (to Paris), you're a foreigner and don't speak French, you have to survive. In my point of view, Turku might do the same thing for attractive sites. I mean your castle, your river, your

university... so these kinds of advantages, you have to underline this and not necessarily have to translate. But it has to be, like I said, very made for foreigners to know what it is. (F3)

According to the participants, Turku is relatively accommodating towards foreigners, but some instances and encounters have made their integration to the country a bit more difficult than they expected. Some instances were more singular accidents, whereas the most disappointing encounters have been about deeper, cultural issues that are prevalent not only in Turku but also in the whole country. Despite their expertise and background in a certain field, most participants have noticed that companies are not that willing to hire people who do not speak perfect Finnish. In fact, F3 used to work for a Finnish company but could not stay there, as the company did not include them in all meetings and, therefore, alienated them from the work community. F2 on the other hand has studied Finnish and knows the basics of the language, yet they still struggle to find a suitable position. This perhaps indicates that although global talents are wanted and needed, there are not enough resources currently allocated to their integration in most Finnish companies.

In addition to the language issue, the participants noted that networks appear to be crucial in Finland and perhaps even more so in Turku. For example, in the country of origin of F1, LinkedIn is not used at all. They have now created an account for themselves and attended several events and fairs to make these important connections. F3 in particular emphasized that in their field, knowing the right people is crucial in acquiring a position. In their opinion, it is even more important in Turku than in other cities, such as Tampere.

Despite the fact that all the participants expressed being very proactive, building these types of networks takes time, and is hindered by many obstacles, such as the language, as well as the ongoing pandemic. For some participants, such as F3 and F2, it has also become evident that there are not that many vacancies in their field of expertise in Turku. Unfortunately, this is something that they were not aware of prior to their move to Turku, because they did not come across such information. The fact that Turku is interpreted as a hub of innovation, and at the same time, there are not that many vacancies in several key fields, causes brand dissonance and ultimately impacts on how accurate and trustworthy global talents perceive the city brand to be.

And I've tried to work in Finland, I had a small job in Tampere, fully remote so it was quite easy. But, in computer science we have a different way of working and it didn't work well with this small company, it was a small start-up, because I didn't integrate well. I mean, they had a kind of meeting in English for me and a meeting in Finnish for them, so I didn't feel integrated in that company and I quit. (F3)

As mentioned above, most of the participants did not do intensive research prior to their move. However, they have done plenty of research after arriving in the city, yet it has still proven to be very difficult for them to find the correct information, especially in career-related matters. This was something that they were not used to, although most of them had previously worked in other countries and, therefore, strongly identified with the term "global talent". The participants felt like Turku does not do that much marketing for global talents or that it is executed in wrong channels that do not reach them and their peers. This is perhaps contradicting with the fact that Turku tries to have a global brand image and tries to profile itself through certain fields of expertise, such as the maritime and the health industry. However, most participants did not know what the current labor needs in the region are and what kind of talent is needed in Turku. Therefore, it has been difficult for them to identify which events or organizations they should interact with, in order to find a suitable position for themselves. However, this was brought up by F4 who eventually did find a position for themselves, after attending several events and networking intensely. In addition to the failure in marketing, the only contact points they have had have also failed to inform them about any suitable possibilities. This was particularly prominent in the answers of F2, who was extremely disappointed how ineffective the local unemployment office has been so far, and how little help and support they have received in their situation.

Talent is kind of, it's meant to be inclusive, it's meant to kind of take into account different levels of education and experience, but I guess from the outside it doesn't always give off that impression. I certainly wasn't sure which events were for me and which events were more for business-oriented people or for more science-oriented people. (F4)

So, there are a lot of things that you need to work out in order to find what are the suitable talents for Turku. That information I haven't received, at least not clearly and it's been more than a year. And no one actually gave me or guided me. -... I received some kind of help from the TE-office, who gave me the Maahanmuuttaja, the kind of integration programme, learning the culture and the language. But it doesn't really help me to get a suitable position for me. (F2)

The disadvantages that the city of Turku has in global talent attraction were also discussed during the semi-structured interviews. The personal role and the background of each informant had a significant impact on their answers, which is why each of them emphasized different aspects. The representatives of Turku Science Park Oy stated that the main disadvantage is that Turku, and Finland in general, is very small. Therefore, there is not that much room in marketing messages to highlight Turku itself, because the country needs to become well-known first. According to I3, the marketing messages they use often start with "Why Finland?" and only after that can they explain "Why Turku?". They thought that it is not perhaps an obstacle, however, it does hinder the work. This could also be seen in the answers of the focus group: not many of them had a lot of information about the country prior to their move.

Another slightly surprising fact that hinders the marketing of Turku as an ideal working location for global talents is that the geographical location of the country is often seen as problematic. According to I3, this matter has come up several times in the past, when they have visited international conferences, and estimated that it will probably become a more substantial problem in the future, due to the current political conflict in Ukraine. I1 agreed that the current situation in the world makes global talent attraction very challenging. Moreover, they mentioned that the fluctuations these uncertain times cause also impact talent attraction, and that this was something that they had recognized years ago. In order to attract certain global talents, there needs to be vacancies for those exact talents, which is of course something that the state of economy usually defines.

This... this marketing for international audiences, particularly the further one goes, it becomes such that you have to always emphasize the Finland-angle. It takes up the space that you could use to tell about Turku in your marketing message. But on the other hand, by doing so, you have

to keep your balance, in terms of how you can contextualize where Turku is located and why it is an important place, and a fine place. And sometimes you have to answer basic questions about Finland: many of our messages begin with “Why Finland?” and after that “Why Turku?”. That is one, it is maybe a hindrance, not an obstacle. (I3)

According to the Turku Science Park Oy representatives, one aspect hindering their work is also the strong competition on talent in the Nordics. Many global talents do not see a significant difference between these places in the quality of life, for example, which is why they often choose better known countries, such as Sweden, over Finland. According to I2 this is something they are trying to improve in and, in addition to marketing Finland and Turku to the talents’ country of origin, they also aim to attract people from other Nordic countries. I1 shared a similar view on the topic, as they said that this competition on talent is very much global and that many other places have much more resources to use in it but was positive that this is something that is recognized and understood in Finland. Finnish cities, regardless of their size, all have similar things to offer, and that is completely fine. According to I1, there is not that much competition on global talents inside the nation but that it is rather considered as an achievement, if Finland is even mentioned in the same discussions on Nordic countries by global talents.

In order for the attraction of global talents to lead to something useful or meaningful, the retention side of the equation has to succeed as well. This is something that Turku Science Park Oy representatives struggle with at times, although they technically do not bear the responsibility for it. However, it does impact their work as well, as they work in close contact with local companies, to whom talents are essentially attracted for. According to I2 and I3, not many of these companies are actually ready for foreign employees, although a lot of improvement has been made over the past years. This is something that I2, who is originally from Slovenia, has also personal experience in. They admitted that getting hired in Finland is still to this day very difficult, although they have been living in the country for 20 years and speak the language. The main problem according to I2 is that there is not enough infrastructure in place to support talent attraction in Turku. Therefore, they find it quite disappointing to attract talents to Turku, who in reality cannot get hired and, thus, have to leave soon after their arrival. In I2’s experience, the

higher education one has, the less of a chance they appear to have to acquire a position, especially if the industry is wrong. This experience appears to be very much in line with the experiences of the focus group participants, who have also struggled to find their place in the local labor market despite their expertise, attitude and language skills.

I have been thinking about it, what we do here, from my own perspective, as I am a global talent. I can be on both sides and look at this from both perspectives. We execute the attraction, yes, but we should also have the infrastructure and companies should be ready to hire these people whom we attract. I find that difficult and it is the area that we should work on. It is disappointing, if we attract people here and they cannot get a job. I know that those who are already here... I of course have a lot of international friends, all of them are highly educated and all of them have had difficulties and still do. The higher education one has, the more difficult it is. You have the technical ones, like I said, technical engineer vacancies and coding vacancies but if you are a doctor of geology, what are you doing here? Like one of my friends. And also, if... if the industry is not right, you will have big problems here. (I2)

Another disadvantage that was brought up during the discussion with the Turku Science Park Oy representatives was the fact that talent attraction in Turku is conducted under several different names: the city of Turku, Turku Science Park and Turku Business Region. According to I2, it is merely a political issue, however, it has a detrimental impact on the reach of their marketing. For example, this arrangement seemed very confusing to the focus group participants and it made finding the right information more complicated for them than perhaps would be necessary. The representatives from Turku Science Park Oy agreed on this and admitted that this should be improved, although currently they are not planning on any concrete changes but rather try to deal with the matter as it is. According to I2, the International House Turku, which was opened recently but has not been actively marketed yet, is a significant improvement to services for global talents in Turku and hopefully it will help the global talents to integrate in a more efficient and better manner.

This lack of infrastructure was also brought up in the discussion with I1, who similarly thought that the International House Turku will bring a significant improvement to their situation. Prior

to its establishment, there has been no place to direct the global talents, and websites like “Career in Turku” have not been found by these talents, unless someone has guided them there, according to I1. They also agreed that the communication of the city in general is very shattered, due to these different names of the organization, and said that it is difficult for even Finnish speakers to find any concrete information on the city’s website: if anyone even visits it. To summarize, I1 thought that the distance between the city and a global talent has been too far and too complicated a path, but at the same time, they admitted that they have not had the time to fix it, as they have been busy building the infrastructure and setting up services in English.

Lastly, legislation is perhaps one obvious hindrance that the whole country, and therefore also Turku, has in global talent attraction. According to I1, there are many challenges related to residence permit matters in Finland and compared to other countries, the process is very long and requires significant effort from the applicant. They noted that the government is currently working hard to fix these hindrances but mentioned that due to the nature of Finnish legislation, changing the process takes time.

4.4 Summary of the results

This chapter presented the results of this thesis study by discussing the findings made in the empirical data. Firstly, it was established that the role of a city’s brand in attracting global talents to the city is mainly to provide a common framework for all the different stakeholders that execute the city’s marketing to these talents. The city brand crystallizes what is important and meaningful to its current residents and summarizes the city’s unique offering in a clear and concise way. Therefore, the brand is not some idealistic fabrication from the city’s governance but rather an embodiment of the everyday life of people and businesses active in the region. To put it shortly, as informant I1 stated, the city brand is a way of thinking that is accompanied by different visual tools, such as logos.

The second section explored how the city brand can be seen in the city of Turku’s global talent attraction work and how the brand is currently communicated to the global talents in practice. According to Turku Science Park Oy representatives, the city brand does not have a prominent

role in their global talent attraction work. This is due to the fact that in the Talent Boost project, all Finnish cities have agreed to use the Work in Finland-brand, in order to increase the exposure of the nation brand. Therefore, the city brand has a secondary role compared to the nation brand and can only be used in contexts, where the target group is assumed to already be familiar with the nation brand. These instances are not common, yet the informants were able to mention some quite recent examples. However, the city brand is actively used in the communications that targets global talents, where the brand can be seen for example in the talking points and tone of voice. According to the city's liaison manager, this can be considered to be even more important than visuals, for example, since it is through communications where the brand is truly realized.

Lastly, the third section explored how the global talents understand the brand of the case city, as well as how the city itself understands the disadvantages and advantages their city brand has in the global talent attraction context. Regarding the focus group discussion, their interpretations and perceptions were divided into positive brand associations and negative brand associations.

The positive associations and the advantages included some common aspects for all Finnish cities, such as safety, cleanliness, abundant nature, high quality of life, and good work-life balance. More specifically, the focus group participants, as well as the city of Turku's representatives expressed that they favor the location of the city, its size and the convenience it has to offer in terms of services and institutions. Certain industries, such as the maritime and the health tech industry, were also highlighted as strengths, although for the focus group participants, this was not something that they could personally relate to. On the contrary, this was something they had a negative brand association with.

However, the focus group had no trouble highlighting the unique factors the city of Turku has and they had a very positive attitude towards the city's bold communications style. This was something that the city's representatives also saw as an advantage, as well as the fact that they themselves enjoy living in Turku, which makes marketing the city as a joyful place to live easy. It can be argued that Turku clearly succeeds in creating this sense of belongingness with their marketing, as it was also present in the answers from the focus group, where some of them mentioned considering themselves as a resident of Turku or in Finnish, as "*turkulainen*". Lastly,

the city's representatives saw it as a significant advantage that they have plenty of resources, both human and financial, to conduct the attraction work with and that those resources will only continue to expand in the future, as the city recognizes global talents as an important source of growth.

A significant disadvantage Turku has in this context is the lack of international recognition Finland as a country has. Large share of the brand marketing for global talents is dedicated for nation branding, which leaves little to no room for marketing the city brand. According to the city's representatives, the current state of the world, both politically as well as economically, also makes marketing Turku and Finland with it, extremely difficult. Competition in the Nordics also poses a challenge to branding Turku, as countries, such as Sweden, have a better position on the market.

However, the main disadvantage Turku has in global talent attraction, as identified by both the global talents, as well as the city representatives, is the lack of infrastructure for global talents. During the focus group discussion, the global talents mentioned that researching the city was difficult and that they have suffered from lack of information even after their move to the city. According to the city of Turku, most of the crucial information is nowadays available in English, however, they admitted that it is in a shattered form, due to the many stakeholders who all have different names. This type of bureaucracy does not only concern the city of Turku but is also present in the country's residence permit matters, which are significantly more time consuming compared to other countries.

Additionally, there are also deep, cultural issues, such as language requirements and instances of xenophobia that make creation of local networks and integration to the region's labor market difficult. This was recognized by the city's representatives as well, as they admitted that no clear infrastructure for guidance has been in place thus far. However, they noted that the recently launched International House Turku will offer a partial solution to this problem, as the talents will have a concrete place to turn to, whenever they need to.

5. Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis of the results presented in the previous chapter and further discusses them in view of the theories and existing studies presented in the theoretical framework. The aim is to highlight the patterns and themes that have emerged from the empirical data, in order to provide context for the conclusions to be made in the final chapter of the thesis.

5.1 The relationship between city branding and global talent attraction

In this section, the possible relationship between city branding and global talent attraction is analyzed further based on the results of this study, as well as the results from previous studies on city branding. In the theoretical framework, previous studies on city branding by Rainisto (2003), Trueman et al. (2004) and Hankinson (2001) were discussed. All of these studies noted that, firstly, cities can be branded similarly to consumer goods and that secondly, an honest and a realistic city brand can help the city to attract “customers”. Therefore, it can be argued that a strong brand also helps the city to attract global talent more easily, in comparison to cities that do not have a clear brand and thus lack brand familiarity (Rainisto, 2003).

Based on the results of this study, the main role of the city brand and the key benefit that a solid city brand can bring is that it makes the communications of the city coherent, also in terms of communication that is directed towards global talents. As mentioned above, the main struggle with city branding in general is that cities are essentially mega products. Therefore, the image of the city is very difficult to control at all fronts, at all times and thus, the main role of the city brand is to serve as a framework or a starting point for the whole marketing of the city, not only in the global talent attraction context, as noted in the theoretical framework by Kavartzis (2004), as well as Kotler et al. (1999).

In a more practical sense, the city brand manual sets general guidelines for the multiple stakeholders that in reality execute the communication, thus making the brand come to life, as

expressed by the city of Turku's liaison manager, I1. By strengthening and unifying the city's image, coherent communication also helps the city to avoid brand dissonance and other inconsistencies, which can lead to different types of negative effects on the city's reputation, such as wasted resources and cynicism, according to Botha et al. (2011).

Reputation in turn is crucial in the global talent attraction context, as the reputation of a city plays an important role in the migration decision of high-skilled professionals, according to a study by Nadeau and Olafsen (2015). Although the global talent informants of this study did not do a significant amount of research prior to their move, the brand dissonances they have experienced since then can be seen in their discouraged views and mixed feelings on their own future employment in the city, despite the fact that in general, they enjoy living in the city and have a positive attitude towards the city's brand.

This positive attitude and positive associations related to the city in general are the other benefits city branding can bring. A distinct brand highlights the city's unique identity in a way that resonates with the people who interact with the city, thus making them more content with their residence or more disposed to relocate to that city. Based on the theoretical framework, the image side is arguably the most important part of city branding, as it helps to grow the city's brand equity, which in turn reflects the value of the city. In a city context Lucarelli (2012) states that brand equity consists of name awareness, brand association and image, as well as brand loyalty. Especially building name awareness is strongly linked to global talent attraction work where gaining international recognition in the form of name awareness is the main purpose. Name awareness however is achieved and strengthened by a positive and interesting image, which global talent attraction tries to promote. Brand loyalty is not directly a part of global talent attraction, but rather is a crucial element in the retention side of the work, where these positive brand associations are to be enforced in order to achieve a sense of loyalty.

All of these aspects suggest that the relationship between city branding and global talent attraction is complementary, similarly to the relationship between city branding and employer branding, as Robinet (2019) suggests in their paper. The global talents help to alleviate labor shortages, which in turn supports the economic development of the region that ultimately is reflected also on the attractiveness of the city brand. The city brand highlights the unique,

competitive edge the city has over others which assists the global talents in selecting which city they personally resonate the most with since according to Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009), city brands fulfill more self-expression needs compared to nation brands. Moreover, the role of the city brand is further emphasized in those cases, where the talents do not have much prior knowledge about the city or the whole country in general. This idea is further supported by the experiences of the focus group participants, who expressed a strong sense of belonging to Turku specifically, despite having very little knowledge about Finland prior to their move.

5.2 The practical role of city branding in global talent attraction work

The case study on the city of Turku conducted for this thesis indicates that in practice, city branding has a secondary role or a complementary role in global talent attraction. Based on the discussions with the city of Turku's representatives, this is particularly true to smaller countries, such as Finland, where the nation brand is not fully developed or lacks international recognition. Therefore, the city brand might be less visible to the global talents considering their migration to Finland, but is very much visible to those, who have already moved to the country and especially to the city. Thus, city branding bears a greater importance in talent retention, however it can be utilized in the attraction side as well, under certain conditions.

In practice, it can be argued that city branding is used as a supporting tool in global talent attraction work. For example, in the city of Turku, the city brand can be seen in the talking points and the tone of voice of Talent Boost content, despite the overall visuals and branding that are taken from the Work in Finland-brand. This way, the city has a better chance at differentiating from other cities under the same brand and with very similar offerings, as noted by the liaison manager of the city, I1. This notion highlights the main purpose of city branding in regular city marketing, as noted previously, however, in a global talent attraction context its utilization is more limited. For example, in the city of Turku's case, the city brand can only be seen in the talking points and tone of voice in regular global talent attraction campaigns or in campaigns that do not cross borders and are thus more intended for foreigners already living in the country. To summarize, it can be noted that city branding is only used in global talent attraction when there is room for it in the marketing, as I3 mentioned during their interview. However, no space is

primarily allocated for it, as the nation brand must come first in most cases.

Despite its secondary role, the practical results of this study do suggest that the city of Turku has indeed managed to communicate its brand fairly well to global talents and that in general, the city brand has had a positive impact on them, which adds to the city's brand equity. This is supported by the fact that the focus group participants expressed a genuinely positive attitude towards the brand and were able to name its key characteristics without assistance. Therefore, it can be argued that the city has had some success with city branding in this context, despite the negative experiences and the strong brand dissonance related to opportunities on the labor market, as mentioned above.

Lastly, many of the focus group participants also had suggestions for improvements that could help the city to minimize the negative experiences global talents might face in the future. However, these suggestions will not reach the city's representatives in the current state, as they admitted to not having any systematic feedback collection in place. This, among other factors, supports a comment made by I1, in which they stated that in practice, the gap between a singular global talent and the city is still a problem that they have to solve, and in which the city brand could also be of assistance.

5.3 Challenges with building an attractive city brand

The findings of this study indicate that an attractive city brand is true and honest, meaning that it reflects the perceptions and the attitudes of the residents in a realistic manner. It emphasizes what is special about the city, however, it is not merely a highlight reel. The brand has to also provide relevant information for the global talents, such as what opportunities and services the city can offer.

As Nadeau and Olafsen (2015) state, global talents do not only seek to improve their economic situation but look for improvements on all fronts, as illustrated in Figure 3. In addition to the position that they relocate for, most of them have a strong sense of self-development, for which the city must provide opportunities. These opportunities are not only related to the talents'

careers, but also include recreational activities and events that the city organizes. All of these are also connected to work-life balance, which at an optimal state, positively impacts on the talents' perception of the city and how well it is managed by the governance and other stakeholders. Ultimately, a well-functioning city branding in a talent attraction context contributes to economic growth in the region, as talents are drawn to the city by its positive image and stay for the opportunities and balance it can offer.

The importance of well-rounded services was especially highlighted in this study, where the lack of infrastructure for global talents was considered as one of the main problems in the city of Turku's global talent attraction. Despite the fruitful attraction work the city has executed in the previous years, the retention side has suffered, meaning that the city has not been able to achieve the maximal benefits that global talents can bring. This indicates that as Robinet (2019) suggests in their paper, city branding shares some common touchpoints with employer branding, in which talent attraction is also a relevant issue, as Reis et al. (2021) indicate. Similarly to employers, a city must be able to convince a talent that they can meet the talent's needs and, therefore, are able to motivate them to relocate.

However, as Botha et al. (2011) suggest, the city branding needs to perform consistently on all levels in order to be successful. As Glen (2007) notes in their paper on talent management, any organization or location can attract talent with great promises, but it is the overall experience that defines whether the talent stays and enables the organization or location to reap the benefits. After all, according to I1 it is ultimately the economic impact global talents bring in the form of new taxpayers that serves as the main motivation as to why global talents are attracted in the first place.

To conclude, in order to create and sustain an attractive brand that benefits the city, brand dissonances must be avoided at all cost. This is perhaps one of the greatest challenges cities face with city branding, as city brands are very complex by nature, which makes it relatively difficult to control the overall brand performance (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Additionally, ensuring optimal brand performance is further complicated by the synergistic nature of the relationship between city branding and talent attraction, as explained with the help of Figure 3.

All of these aspects are something that cities need to consider already in the brand building stage and, therefore, the findings of this study support Robinet's (2019) argument on the crucial role of integrated stakeholder engagement in city branding. If the needs and capabilities of relevant stakeholders, i.e. companies in the region, are not noted when the brand is built, brand dissonances are more likely to emerge. This has, at least to some degree, occurred in the branding of the city of Turku, where the region has been presented to global talents as a hub of innovation, when in fact, local companies have not had the resources or the ability to hire foreigners and the adequate infrastructure for global talents has not been in place. This in turn has had a negative effect on the city's global talent attraction work since the retention side has, in some instances, failed.

6. Conclusions

In this final chapter, the conclusions are presented by providing answers to the research questions. Moreover, the theoretical and practical implications of this study are also discussed, as well as the limitations of the study. At the end of this chapter, suggestions for future research are provided.

6.1 Conclusions

This thesis has aimed to create an understanding of the possible role of city branding in a global talent attraction context. To explore the phenomenon, a case study has been conducted in the city of Turku, a mid-size Finnish city located in the South-Western coast that has actively executed global talent attraction work since 2017 together with the Finnish Government, in a project called Talent Boost. Moreover, the study has also examined how the city brand is currently being communicated to the global talents in practice, as well as how a city can build a brand that attracts talent from abroad. The scope of the study has considered mainly other Finnish cities outside the capital region that, similarly to Turku, lack international recognition.

The study is qualitative in its nature and both the focus group method, as well as the semi-structured interview method have been utilized to gather the empirical data. For the focus group, four highly educated global talents from different countries of origin were chosen to discuss the city of Turku's brand and how it has impacted their behavior. For the interviews, three people that are considered to be the key personnel in the city's global talent attraction were interviewed in two separate sessions, in order to gain an understanding of how the global talent attraction work is conducted in the city, and how the city's brand relates to that.

In the beginning of this thesis, the following three research questions were established:

What is the role of a city's brand in attracting new global talents to the city?

How is the city's brand communicated to global talents?

How can cities build brands that help them to attract global talents?

The findings of this study indicate that the city brand has a complementary role in global talent attraction, as it supports the communications side of the marketing by creating a common framework for the multiple stakeholders of the city. The results support the general assumption that in countries like Finland, it is more relevant to utilize the nation brand in global talent attraction, in order to increase the location's international recognition. Therefore, in practice there is not much room allocated for the city brand in the marketing that targets global talents.

However, based on the results of this study, it can be argued that after a certain baseline has been established, the city brand can help the cities to differentiate from one another. Utilizing the city brand similarly to the city of Turku, where the city brand is seen in the tone of voice and talking points of the marketing for global talents, the brand can be brought to life through communication. These softer communications techniques allow for a more personal touch in the marketing, thus making it easier for the global talents to identify, which city they personally resonate the most with.

Additionally, the findings of this study also suggest that the city brand has a more prominent role in the retention side of global talent management. Therefore, cities need to ensure that the needed infrastructure and integration programmes are in place to also retain the talents. In the case of Turku, it was evident that although the city branding had been successful, the talents still had a negative perception of the city as a place to work. This supports the findings from previous studies on branding that aspects that cause brand dissonances must be avoided at all costs since they can weaken the brand. Thus, it is fundamental that the image the city communicates to the global talents actually matches with the reality that the talents will face upon their arrival.

6.2 Theoretical and practical implications

This study produced new knowledge on the topic of city branding, especially in the global talent attraction context. It suggested that the city brand enables coherent communication of the brand, despite the multiple stakeholders involved in the marketing process, and the fact that cities are complex “mega products” to market. The study also indicated that despite its secondary role compared to nation branding, city brands can help cities to differentiate themselves from one another, regardless if their offerings are relatively same to the target group. Additionally, the study shed light on how city branding for global talents is currently being conducted in a mid-size Finnish city that allocates a moderate amount for resources to global talent attraction work, as well as to city branding.

In practice, the results of this study can be reviewed by cities that share similar characteristics to the city of Turku but perhaps do not actively conduct global attraction work yet. The experiences and both the successes and failures of the city of Turku can assist city officials or other key personnel, to identify how the city brand can be utilized in this context, to which direct it should be developed and what other requirements need to be fulfilled in order to avoid brand dissonance and other negative brand effects.

This thesis study has also offered valuable feedback to the city of Turku. During the interviews with the city’s representatives, the author explained the main viewpoints that were mentioned during the focus group discussion, in order to give insight on how the target group currently experiences the city’s marketing. The group’s recommendations on how the city could improve their marketing in this context were also presented and possible solutions were discussed together with the representatives.

6.3 Limitations of the study

This thesis adds to the knowledge on city branding and proposes an explanation to its relation to global talent attraction. However, it does not provide a general conclusion on the topic, and the

findings of this study cannot be directly transferred to other cities. This is due to the fact that the study only included one case city, in one specific country. Although it allowed for a deeper exploration of the phenomenon, and, therefore, the study was highly descriptive, the results might not be applicable in other contexts.

The study has also been limited by the fact that no previous studies on this exact topic have been found, which is why the study is largely based on an assumption about the possible role of city branding in a global talent attraction context. The studies that were used to build the theoretical framework provided different views on the phenomenon of city branding with varying contexts but could not be used to compare the results of this study directly.

Other possible limitations of this study include the fact that a relatively small number of informants was chosen. However, this was a conscious decision that was made based on the fact that a smaller number would allow for each participant to express their view on the topic in an adequate manner. However, this can also be seen as a limiting factor, especially for the data considering the focus group. Originally, six focus group participants were chosen, however, two of them did not participate in the actual discussion. Another session was not arranged, because it was deemed difficult to find additional four, willing informants to participate in the study. Arranging the second focus group was also partially discarded due to time-related constraints.

Moreover, the initial criteria for focus group participants had to be changed, as most of them expressed other reasons than work as the reason behind their move. Ideally, the study would have considered only the kind of talents, who have moved to Finland solely for work-related reasons. However, the participants of this study did have experience in working in the country after their arrival and all of them were highly educated, which was deemed sufficient for the study's purpose.

6.4 Suggestions for future research

As mentioned above, both city branding and global talent attraction are rather understudied topics. Therefore, future research is needed in order to further clarify the true nature of their

relationship. This thesis study provided one possible explanation, however, similar case studies should be repeated before drawing general conclusions. Moreover, cities with different levels of brand familiarity or brand equity should be included, in order to truly be able to assess the brand's impact on global talent attraction. This could be achieved by conducting a comparative case study with a larger, more influential city that has better international recognition compared to the city of Turku.

Successful city branding, especially in the context of global talent attraction, is highly relative. During the discussions with Turku Science Park Oy it became evident that there are currently no metrics in place for cities in Finland to measure, whether their branding has aided in attracting talents to the country. Should some kind of common key performance indicators be created, it is suggested that those are utilized in future research, to help to identify what makes certain cities more successful in global talent attraction than others.

However, in case a study in this same exact context were to be repeated, a bigger sample size is suggested. As mentioned in the limitations of this study, the number of focus group participants could be increased to ensure better validity of the results. The study could also be conducted in a survey format, which would simultaneously make it less labor-intensive for the researcher and enable better saturation of data. The criteria for informants should also be reviewed, as the focus group participants of this study did not fully match the initial criteria for the participants.

Lastly, based on the results of this study, it is suggested that a more detailed study is conducted in order to assess the role of city branding in global talent retention. Compared to talent attraction, the results of this study indicate that in certain contexts, city brands have a more prominent role in the talent retention side of global talent attraction work. This is due to the fact that in smaller countries like Finland, the attraction side is executed on a national level, whereas cities bear more responsibility on the retention side.

Swedish summary - Svensk sammanfattning

Vilken roll har byggandet av ett stadsvarumärke för global talangattraktion? – Åbo stad som fallstudie

Inledning

I denna avhandling undersöks relationen mellan stadsvarumärkesbyggande och global talangattraktion. Över hälften av världens population lever i städer, och enligt Förenta nationerna (United Nations, 2018) förväntas denna siffra att öka till 75 procent före år 2030. Dessutom ansvarar städer för över 80 procent av världens BNP, vilket betyder att deras inverkan sträcker sig långt över den geografiska gränser. På grund av globalisering och decentralisering blir lokala regeringar allt mer ansvariga för den sociala och ekonomiska utvecklingen i städer i framtiden. Detta tillsammans med de utmaningar som urbanisering och klimatförändring medför sig tvingar städerna att konkurrera med varandra om olika resurser, såsom humankapital.

Studier har visat att den finländska arbetsmarknaden kommer att ha brist på experter både inom den privata och den offentliga sektorn redan i en nära framtid på grund av starka demografiska förändringar. Minskningen av den arbetsföra befolkningen kan orsaka flera olika slags problem men en lösning till dem skulle kunna vara globala talanger som redan har de kunskaper och det nätverk som krävs. Därför har Finlands regering utfört ett nationellt åtgärdsprogram, Talent Boost, som sedan 2017 har syftat till att stöda attraktionsarbetet i finländska städer genom att erbjuda en gemensam strategi och ett gemensamt Work in Finland-varumärke för alla städer. Målet med Talent Boost är att öka Finlands attraktionskraft och position på den globala marknaden och att förbättra landets välfärd och konkurrenskraft på lång sikt, till exempel genom ökad innovation (Talent Boost Programme, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland, 2020).

Både stadsvarumärkesbyggande och talangattraktion på en global nivå har växande roller i modern stadsförvaltning och därför syftar denna avhandling till att ta reda på vilken relation dessa två fenomen har och hurdan roll stads varumärkesbyggande har i den globala

talangattraktionens kontext. Dessutom granskas det hur andra städer i Finland som är mindre internationellt erkända kan bygga ett varumärke som hjälper dem att locka globala talanger. Detta kommer att undersökas med hjälp av en litteraturgranskning inom båda frågorna och genom en fallstudie med Åbo stad som studieobjekt.

Syfte och forskningsfrågor

Syftet med avhandlingen är att bättre förstå vilken roll stadsvarumärkesbyggande har då det gäller att locka globala talanger till staden. Tidigare forskning tyder på att stadsvarumärkesbyggande är möjligt samt lönsamt och att stadens rykte och image har inverkan på hur villiga globala talanger är att flytta till staden. Det finns dock inga existerande studier om vilken roll stadsvarumärkesbyggande har då det gäller att locka explicit globala talanger. I den här avhandlingen undersöks fenomenet genom att överväga hur Åbo stad har lyckats med att locka talanger till staden tidigare och vilken inverkan det har haft på stadens varumärke.

Avhandlingen ska därmed besvara följande tre forskningsfrågor:

Vilken roll har stadens varumärke för att locka nya globala talanger till staden?

Hur kommuniceras stadens varumärke till globala talanger?

Hur kan städer bygga varumärken som hjälper dem att locka globala talanger?

Metoden och datainsamlingen

Eftersom det i avhandlingen undersöks hur globala talanger upplever fallstadens varumärke och hur det har påverkat deras beteende är det motiverat att använda kvalitativa forskningsmetoder som syftar till att förstå kulturella och samhälleliga fenomen (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Dessutom har tidigare studier av stadsvarumärkesbyggande gjorts som fallstudier eftersom denna metod möjliggör en djupare beskrivning av fenomenet i en viss kontext (Lucarelli, 2012). Detta är därmed denna avhandling är både en kvalitativ fallstudie som utnyttjar både fokusgruppmetod

och semistrukturerade intervjuer för att samla in det empiriska materialet.

Datainsamlingen för studien gjordes genom att arrangera en fokusgruppdiskussion med fyra globala talanger bosatta i Åbo samt två skilda semistrukturerade intervjuer med representanter för Åbo stad. Rekryteringen av deltagare för fokusgruppen utfördes online, främst på Facebook och LinkedIn, och alla utvalda deltagare uppfyllde följande krav: de var högutbildade, från olika länder och var antingen anställda eller studerande i Finland.

För stadens del började processen med att kontakta kontaktpersonen för Talent Boost i Åbo och utifrån hens förslag valdes följande representanter. Den första semistrukturerade intervjun var med Turku Science Park Oy:s representanter eftersom de ansvarar för stadens marknadsföring till globala talanger. Den andra intervjun var med stadens kontaktchef som intervjuades på grund av att hen har varit aktivt involverad i utförandet av Talent Boost-programmet i Åbo samt i utvecklandet av stadens varumärke.

Alla diskussioner genomfördes online på Microsoft Teams under februari-mars 2022 på grund av coronapandemin, och varje diskussion hade sin egen intervjuguide som skapades med hjälp av Kvaless anvisningar (Bryman & Bell, 2011). De inspelade diskussionerna transkriberades och alla data färgkodades och kategoriserades i enlighet med Skjott Linneberg och Korsgaards (2019) anvisningar för att analysera resultaten. Dessutom översattes intervjuerna från finska till engelska efter transkriberingen. Åsikter och berättelser från alla diskussioner jämfördes och analyserades för att kunna identifiera gemensamma teman samt överraskande detaljer.

Redogörelse för undersökningen

Data från fokusgruppdiskussionen delades upp i två olika teman: positiva associationer till varumärket och upplevelser som stöder global talangattraktion samt negativa associationer till varumärket och upplevelser som förhindrar global talangattraktion. Allmänt kan man påstå att deltagarna i studiens fokusgrupp har en positiv attityd till Åbo stads varumärke och att de är nöjda med sitt liv i staden. Deras uppfattning och tolkning av stadens varumärke ligger i linje med stadens varumärkesmanual och de kunde identifiera flera nyckelvarumärkeselement som

nämns i Lucarellis (2012) ramverk.

Speciellt den konkreta sidan av varumärket var något som deltagarna var mycket nöjda med. Där ingick till exempel Aura ån och stadens historiska centrum. Dessutom tyckte de också att bostadsområden som Port Arthur och Kakola uttryckte varumärkets mera abstrakta aspekter på ett fint sätt. Gällande den abstrakta sidan gillade alla i fokusgruppen stadens lugna atmosfär samt dess trygghet och uppskattade hur behändigt det är att leva i en stad där avstånden är korta. Dessutom uppskattade deltagarna stadens rika historia som enligt dem syns och känns speciellt i centrumet.

Samtidigt tyckte deltagarna att staden också har en modern sida och att staden kan anses vara en "hub" eller knutpunkt för innovation eftersom det finns flera högskolor i området. De nämnde också att staden verkar vara under stor förändring och att det känns som staden expanderar och utvecklas konstant. Alla dessa aspekter väckte en association hos deltagarna att näringslivet i området är aktivt och att det skulle vara lätt för dem som globala talanger att hitta ett lämpligt jobb.

Fokusgruppen visade också en positiv inställning till stadens kommunikation. De beskrev kommunikationen som modig och intressant och gillade särskilt mycket hur staden vågar marknadsföra sig på ett personligt sätt. De ansåg också att Åbo är ärlig i sin kommunikation och uppskattade det att staden inte försöker vara för steril såsom många andra städer.

Trots att deltagarna i fokusgruppen nämnde flera positiva associationer till Åbos varumärke, uttryckte de också flera negativa associationer som har påverkat deras tankar på ett ogynnsamt sätt. De största problemen hittills har haft att göra med den lokala kulturen och språket. Under sin tid i Åbo hade flera av deltagarna märkt att lokala företag inte vill anställa utländska experter om de inte kan perfekt finska. Dessutom har några av dem haft svårigheter med integrationen på grund av att de inte har fått det stöd och den information som de skulle ha behövt. I Finland och speciellt i Åbo är det extremt viktigt att ha bra nätverk på arbetsmarknaden när man letar efter expert positioner men att kunna skapa sådana nätverk tar tid.

Brist på information var dessutom en återkommande anledning till att fokusgruppens deltagare har haft utmaningar med att komma in på den lokala arbetsmarknaden. Ingen av dem visste mycket om Åbo innan de flyttade till staden vilket har lett till olika slags överraskningar. Trots att de verkade gilla Åbos kommunikationsstil, kände de samtidigt att det inte finns mycket innehåll som är riktad till dem eller att detta innehåll inte finns i rätt kanaler. Dessutom kommunicerar staden under flera namn, såsom Åbo stad, Turku Business Region och Turku Science Park, vilket har gjort det svårt för deltagarna att hitta rätta evenemang och organisationer för dem. Detta har orsakat dissonans vilket i sin tur har lett till negativa effekter på varumärkets trovärdighet.

Samma teman fortsattes togs upp i de semistrukturerade intervjuerna där Åbo stadens styrkor och svagheter då det gäller att locka globala talanger diskuterades på djupet. Dessutom diskuterades användningen av varumärket på ett mera praktiskt sätt för att få en bild av hur attraktionsarbetet sköts och hur stadens varumärke syns där. Gällande stadens fördelar nämnde alla respondenter liknande saker: trygghet, korta avstånd och ett aktivt näringsliv, speciellt inom vissa branscher såsom hälsoteknik. Dessutom tyckte stadens representanter att Åbos högskolor hjälper till att skapa en mera internationell atmosfär i staden vilket kan leda till att ännu flera studerande och forskare vill flytta till staden i framtiden. Även stadens representanter ansåg det också lätt att marknadsföra staden eftersom de själva gillar att bo där.

Den största styrkan var dock att staden allokerar mycket resurser till attraktionsarbetet, och samarbetet mellan staden, det regionala utvecklingsbolaget Turku Science Park Oy, högskolor i området samt den tredje sektornen ansågs fungera väl. Dessutom får projektet finansiering från staten vilket kommer att underlätta attraktionsarbetet för Åbo också i fortsättningen.

Gällande svagheter är Åbos största problem stadens och hela landets storlek. I intervjun med Turku Science Park Oy kom det fram att en stor del av deras marknadsföringsmeddelanden börjar med "varför Finland" istället för "varför Åbo". Dessutom tyckte de att landets geografiska läge är för tillfället väldigt problematiskt och att konjunkturen har en betydande påverkan på hur bra attraktionsarbetet kan utföras. Turku Science Park Oy:s representanter också tyckte att konkurrensen i Norden är hård för talanger och att länder med bättre resurser såsom Sverige

oftast vinner. Ett annat problem är att attraktionsarbete är meningslöst ifall talanger inte kan stanna i Finland på lång sikt. Därför var Åbo stads representanter av samma åsikt som fokusgruppens deltagare om att tillräcklig infrastruktur för globala talanger saknas ännu. Byråkratin, lagstiftningen och mängden olika intressenter kom också upp bland de nackdelar som förhindrar attraktionsarbetet i Åbo.

Enligt diskussionerna med Åbo stads representanter spelar stadens varumärke i praktiken en mindre roll i den marknadsföring som riktas till globala talanger. Som redan nämnt har detta att göra med nationsvarumärkets betydelsefulla roll och att alla städer som är med i Talent Boost måste prioritera det. Enligt Åbo stads representanter syns stadens varumärke mest i kommunikationen i form av liknande samtalspunkter och tonfall. Dessutom används stadens varumärke i mindre kampanjer när det är möjligt. Trots att varumärkets betydelse då det gäller att attrahera talanger inte är stor ansåg Åbo stads representanter att det ändå är viktigt eftersom det erbjuder ett gemensamt ramverk för de olika intressenter som är involverade och på detta sätt är kommunikationen enhetlig.

Resultat

Studiens resultat tyder på att stadsvarumärkesbyggande lönar sig eftersom ett starkt varumärke hjälper till att locka globala talanger till staden. Resultaten bekräftar därmed iakttagelser från tidigare studier om ämnet av Robinet (2019), Rainisto (2003), Trueman et al. (2004) och Hankinson (2001). Dessutom visar resultaten att i praktiken har stads varumärkesbyggande en stödjande och komplementär roll då det gäller global talangattraktion eftersom varumärket förenar stadens kommunikation och gör den enhetlig. En stark kommunikation som lyfter fram varumärkets och därmed stadens unika egenskaper hjälper talangerna till att välja vilken stad de är i dialog med mest, speciellt i sådana fall där talangen inte har mycket information om staden eller landet i fråga.

I praktiken är stads varumärkesbyggande alltså ett stödjande kommunikationsverktyg som syns till exempel i de tonfall och samtalspunkter som staden använder. Kommunikationens roll är ytterst viktig när det handlar om varumärkesbyggande eftersom det är genom kommunikation

som varumärket på riktigt förverkligas. Den största utmaningen med att marknadsföra städer är att städer kan anses vara “megaprodukter” så som Zenker och Martin (2011) poängterar, vilket betyder att de kan vara svåra att ha kontroll över. Om man inte kommunicerar stadens varumärke på ett enhetligt sätt på alla kanaler och till alla målgrupper kan dissonans och inkonsekvenser uppstå vilket enligt Botha et al. (2011) kan leda till negativa effekter för stadens rykte och image.

Resultaten av denna fallstudie tyder på att stads varumärkesbyggande har en mera betydelsefull roll på retentionssidan av global talangattraktionsarbete. För att få maximal nytta av stadsvarumärkesbyggande måste verkligheten motsvara den image som varumärket förmedlar, annars stannar talangerna inte i staden. Åbo stad har tydligen lyckats med att skapa ett starkt och lockande varumärke som de kommunicerar effektivt till globala talanger och som globala talanger har lätt att förstå. Trots det har globala talanger stött på flera besvikelsen under sin tid i staden vilket har haft en negativ påverkan på talangerna och lett till att de inte skulle rekommendera staden till andra talanger innan problemen med till exempel infrastrukturen har åtgärdats.

References

- Aaker, D. A. (1991), *Managing Brand Equity*. New York: The Free Press.
- Adams, W.C. (2015) “Conducting semi-structured interviews” in Newcomer, K. E., Hatry, H. P. & Wholey, J. S. (2015) *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, Wiley. DOI: 10.1002/9781119171386.ch19.
- Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. (2011) *Qualitative research and theory development: Mystery as method*. SAGE.
- Ashworth, G., & Kavaratzis, M. (2009). “Beyond the logo: Brand management for cities. *Journal of Brand Management*”, 16(8), p. 520–531. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.vasa.abo.fi/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550133>
- Beechler, S. & Woodward, I. (2009). “The global “war for talent”. *Journal of International Management*”. 15. p. 273–285. DOI: 10.1016/j.intman.2009.01.002.
- Boisen, M., Terlouw, K., Groote, P. & Couwenberg, O. (2018). Reframing place promotion, place marketing, and place branding - moving beyond conceptual confusion. *Cities*, 80, 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2017.08.021>
- Botha, A., Bussin, M., & De Swardt, L. (2011). “An employer brand predictive model for talent attraction and retention”. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management/SA Tydskrif vir Menslikehulpbronbestuur*, 9(1), Art. 388, 12 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v9i1.388>
- Boudreau, J. W. & Ramstad, P. M. (2005). “Talentship, talent segmentation, and sustainability: A new HR decision science paradigm for a new strategy definition”. *Human resource management*, 44(2), p. 129-136. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20054>

Braun, E. (2008). "City Marketing: Towards an Integrated Approach" No. EPS-2008-142-ORG. ERIM Ph.D. Series Research in Management. Erasmus Research Institute of Management. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/1765/13694>, accessed 25.1.2022.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2011). Business research methods (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Cadorin, E., Klofsten, M. & Löfsten, H. "Science Parks, talent attraction and stakeholder involvement: an international study". J Technol Transf 46, 1–28 (2021). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.vasa.abo.fi/10.1007/s10961-019-09753-w>

Caldwell, N., Freire, J. (2004) "The differences between branding a country, a region and a city: Applying the Brand Box Model". J Brand Manag 12, 50–61. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540201>

Carr, S. C., Inkson, K. & Thorn, K. (2005). "From global careers to talent flow: Reinterpreting 'brain drain'". *Journal of world business: JWB*, 40(4), 386-398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2005.08.006>

Cascio, W. F. & Boudreau, J. W. (2016). "The search for global competence: From international HR to talent management". *Journal of world business : JWB*, 51(1), 103-114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2015.10.002>

City of Turku (2019) "Kaupungin oma brändikirja kertoo, miltä Turku näyttää ja kuulostaa" Retrieved from: https://www.turku.fi/uutinen/2019-08-23_kaupungin-oma-brandikirja-kertoo-milta-turku-nayttaa-ja-kuulostaa, accessed 22.2.2022.

City of Turku (2021) "Kärkihankkeet pormestariohjelmassa" Retrieved from: <https://www.turku.fi/paatoksenteke/pormestariohjelmakarkihankkeet>, accessed 23.11.2021.

City of Turku (2022) “Media: Brand Manual” Retrieved from: <https://www.turku.fi/en/turku-info/media>, accessed 17.2.2022.

Eriksson, P. & Kovalainen, A. (2008). *Qualitative methods in business research*. SAGE.

Finnish Government (2022), “Hallituksen julkisen talouden suunnitelma vuosille 2023 - 2026: Linjauksia Suomen tulevaisuuden, kestävän kasvun ja turvallisuuden takaamiseksi” Retrieved from: <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/10616/hallituksen-julkisen-talouden-suunnitelma-vuosille-2023-2026-linjauksia-suomen-tulevaisuuden-kestavan-kasvun-ja-turvallisuuden-takaamiseksi>, accessed 6.4.2022

Glen, C. (2007), “Fostering talent opportunity: Getting past first-base”, Strategic Direction, Vol. 23 No. 10, pp. 3-5. DOI:10.1108/02580540710824220

Gorman, G., & Clayton, P. (2004). *Qualitative Research for the Information Professional: A Practical Handbook*. Facet. DOI:10.29085/9781856047982

Gulshani, R. (2019). “A Process Model of Talent Management in Structurally Ambidextrous Organizations”. NHRD Network Journal, 12(2), 135-144.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2631454119851986>

Hankinson, G. (2001). Location branding: A study of the branding practices of 12 English cities. *The journal of brand management*, 9(2), 127-142. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540060>

Hennink, M. M. (2014). *Focus group discussions*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.

Janiszewski, C. & van Osselaer, S. M. J. (2022). Abductive Theory Construction. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 32(1), 175-193. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpy.1280>

Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding*, 1(1), 58–73. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.vasa.abo.fi/10.1057/palgrave.pb.5990005>

Kavaratzis, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2013). “The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory”. *Marketing theory*, 13(1), 69-86.

Keller, K. L. (2001). Building customer-based brand equity. *Marketing management (Chicago, Ill.)*, 10(2), 14.

Keller, K. L. & Lehmann, D. R. (2006). Brands and Branding: Research Findings and Future Priorities. *Marketing science (Providence, R.I.)*, 25(6), 740-759. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.1050.0153>

Kotler, P., Asplund, C., Rein, I. & Heider, D. (1999) “Marketing Places Europe: Attracting Investments, Industries, Residents and Visitors to European Cities, Communities, Regions and Nations”, Pearson Education, London, UK.

Kotler, P., Haider, D. H., Rein, I. & Rein, I. J. (1993). *Marketing places: Attracting investment, industry, and tourism to cities, states, and nations*. Free Press.

Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th edition, global edition). Pearson.

Lepak, D. P. & Snell, S. A. (1999). “The Human Resource Architecture: Toward a Theory of Human Capital Allocation and Development”. *The Academy of Management review*, 24(1), 31-48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259035>

Lewis, R. & Heckman, R. (2006). “Talent management: A critical review”. *Human Resource Management Review*. 16. 139-154. DOI: 10.1016/j.hrmr.2006.03.001.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). "Establishing trustworthiness", *Naturalistic Inquiry*, 289(331), p. 289-327.

Lucarelli, A. (2012), "Unraveling the complexity of "city brand equity": a three-dimensional framework", *Journal of Place Management and Development*, Vol. 5 Iss 3 pp. 231 - 252, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17538331211269648>

ManpowerGroup (2020) "Closing the skills gap: what workers want" Retrieved from: https://go.manpowergroup.com/hubfs/MPG_WhatWorkersWant_2020.pdf, accessed 25.1.2022

McDonnell, A. (2011). "Still Fighting the "War for Talent"? Bridging the Science Versus Practice Gap". *Journal of business and psychology*, 26(2), 169-173. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-011-9220-y>

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland (2020) "Talent Boost Programme" Retrieved from: <https://tem.fi/en/talent-boost-en>, accessed 23.11.2021.

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland (2020) "The Talent Boost Programme" Retrieved from: <https://tem.fi/documents/1410877/0/The+Talent+Boost+programme.pdf/6e2c54e9-1efd-c5b8-3c4a-c497a414417f/The+Talent+Boost+programme.pdf?t=1617107068334>, accessed 23.11.2021.

Moilanen, T. (2015). Challenges of city branding: A comparative study of 10 European cities. *Place branding and public diplomacy*, 11(3), 216-225. <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2015.6>

Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Planning focus groups*. SAGE Publications.

Nadeau, J. & Olafsen, A. H. (2015). "Country image evaluations and migration intentions". *Place branding and public diplomacy*, 11(4), 293-308. <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2015.8>

Polkinghorne, D. (2005). "Language and Meaning: Data Collection in Qualitative Research". *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 52. 137-145.
DOI: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.137.

Paavola, J., Rasmussen, R. & Kinnunen, A. (2020) "Talent Attraction on and Work-related Residence Permit Process Models in Comparison Countries" Publication of the Government's analysis, assessment and research activities. Retrieved from: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-017-2>, accessed 25.1.2022.

Rainisto, S. K. (2003) "Success factors of place marketing: A study of place marketing practices in Northern Europe and the United States", Doctoral Dissertation, Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business. Retrieved from: <http://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:tkk-000746>, accessed 25.1.2022.

Reis, I., Sousa, M. J. & Dionísio, A. (2021) "Employer Branding as a Talent Management Tool: A Systematic Literature Revision", *Sustainability (Basel, Switzerland)*, 13(19), 10698.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su131910698>

Robinet, L. M. (2019) "Reconceptualizing city branding to account for talent attraction: Cities as a place to work and live" *Major Papers*. 66. Retrieved from: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/major-papers/66>, accessed 23.11.2021.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012) "Research Methods for Business Students" 6th edition, Pearson Education Limited

Scullion, H., Collings, D. G. & Caligiuri, P. (2010). Global talent management. *Journal of world business : JWB*, 45(2), 105-108. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2009.09.011>

Silvanto, S. & Ryan, J. (2014). Relocation branding: A strategic framework for attracting talent from abroad. *Journal of global mobility*, 2(1), 102-120. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGM-07-2013-0046>

Silvanto, S. & Ryan, J. & McNulty, Y. (2015). “An Empirical Study of Nation Branding for Attracting Internationally Mobile Skilled Professionals”. *Career Development International*. Volume 20. 238 - 258. DOI: 10.1108/CDI-08-2014-0105.

Skjott Linneberg, M. & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: A synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative research journal*, 19(3), 259-270. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012>

Tarique, I. & Schuler, R. S. (2010). Global talent management: Literature review, integrative framework, and suggestions for further research. *Journal of world business : JWB*, 45(2), 122-133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2009.09.019>

Timmermans, S. & Tavory, I. (2012). Theory Construction in Qualitative Research: From Grounded Theory to Abductive Analysis. *Sociological theory*, 30(3), 167-186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275112457914>

Trueman, M. & Klemm, M. & Giroud, A. (2004). “Can a City Communicate? Bradford as a Corporate Brand”. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 9. 317-330. DOI: 10.1108/13563280410564057.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, (2018) “World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision” Online Edition. Retrieved from: <https://population.un.org/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2018-Report.pdf>, accessed 23.11.2021.

Yarnall, J. (2011). “Maximizing the effectiveness of talent pools: A review of case study literature”. *Leadership & organization development journal*, 32(5), 510-526. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437731111146596>

Zenker, S., & Braun, E. (2010). *Branding a City: A Conceptual Approach for Place Branding and Place Brand Management*. Paper presented at the 39th EMAC Annual Conference 2010, Frederiksberg, Denmark.

Zenker, S., & Martin, N. (2011). Measuring success in place marketing and branding. *Place Branding & Public Diplomacy*, 7(1), 32–41. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.vasa.abo.fi/10.1057/pb.2011.5>

Zhang, L., Zhao, S. X. (2009) “City branding and the Olympic effect: A case study of Beijing”, *Cities*, Vol. 26, Issue 5, 2009, p. 245-254, ISSN 0264-2751, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2009.05.002>.

Özden, C. & Parsons C. (2017) “International Mobility of Knowledge Workers and High-Skilled Migration” in Fink, C., & Miguelez, E. (Eds.). (2017). *The International Mobility of Talent and Innovation: New Evidence and Policy Implications (Intellectual Property, Innovation and Economic Development)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316795774

Appendices

Appendix 1. Interviewguide for the focus group discussion

Focus group discussion on city branding and global talent attraction in the city of Turku, Finland
24.2.2022

1. Introductions:

- name, nationality and profession/occupation
- how long have you been living in Turku and why did you move here?

2. What kind of perceptions or thoughts in general did you have about Turku prior to moving here? Did you do any research, and if so, where did you find information about living here?

3. Have your thoughts about Turku changed in some way after living here?

4. What do you think a "global talent" is and do you consider yourself to be one? Did your skills or occupation somehow impact your willingness to move to Turku?

5. How would you describe Turku: name at least 2 to 3 words or things that come to your mind regarding:

-> characteristics (i.e. physical attributes such as places, artifacts etc.)

-> advantages or benefits (that come from these characteristics)

-> values

-> personality

6. Is there something that Turku could improve in terms of their marketing/communications to global talents?

7. Lastly, would you recommend Turku to other non-Finnish professionals?

Appendix 2. Interviewguide for the first semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interview 1, 17.3.2022

1. Esittäytymiset

Engl. introductions

2. Miten Turkua markkinoidaan tällä hetkellä kansainvälisille osaajille? (ajankohtaiset aktiviteetit/kampanjat jne.)

Eng. How is the city of Turku currently being marketed for global talents? (current activities/campaigns etc.)

3. Mitä kanavia hyödynnätte markkinoinnissanne? Minkä perusteella olette valinneet ne?

Eng. What channels are utilized for marketing? Why did you chose them?

4. Miten kaupungin brändi näkyy teidän markkinoinnissa/viestinnässä?

Eng. How can the brand of the city be seen in your marketing activities/communications?

4. Miten Turku on mielestänne onnistunut kansainvälisten osaajien houkuttelussa aikaisemmin?

Mitä tavoitteita teillä on tulevaisuudessa?

Eng. How do you think Turku has succeeded in attracting talent previously? What future goals do you have?

5. Keräättekö palautetta kansainvälisiltä osaajilta ja hyödynnättekö sitä esim. markkinoinnin kehittämisessä? Jos kyllä, niin millaista palautetta olette saaneet?

Eng. Do you collect feedback from global talents and use it to i.e. develop your marketing? If yes, what kind of feedback have you received?

6. 2-3 asiaa, jotka edistävät tai helpottavat kansainvälisten osaajien houkuttelua Turun seudulle?
2-3, jotka hidastavat tai tekevät siitä haastavaa?
Eng. Name 2-3 things that support talent attraction to this region? 2-3 that hinder it?

Appendix 3. Interviewguide for the second semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interview 2, 29.3.2022

1. Esittäytymiset
Engl. introductions

2. Miten kaupungin brändiä hyödynnetään markkinoinnissa kansainvälisille osaajille? Missä se näkyy?
Eng. How is the brand of the city utilized in marketing for global talents? Where can it be seen?

3. Mitkä osat/asiat brändissä ovat tärkeimpiä, kun puhutaan Turun markkinoinnista kansainvälisille osaajille? Miten Turku ja Turun brändi mielestäsi erottautuu muista suomalaisista kaupungeista?
Eng. Which parts of the city's brand are most important when marketing for global talents? How does Turku's brand compare to other Finnish cities?

4. Millainen rooli kaupunkibrändillä on sinun mielestäsi tässä kontekstissa?
Eng. What do you think the city brand's role is in this context?

5. Mitkä ovat kaupungin tärkeimmät markkinointikanavat kansainvälisille osaajille?
Eng. What are the city's most important marketing channels when marketing for global talents?

6. Miten Turku on mielestänne onnistunut kansainvälisten osaajien houkuttelussa aikaisemmin? Mitä tavoitteita teillä on tulevaisuudessa?
Eng. How do you think Turku has succeeded in attracting talent previously? What future goals do you have?

7. Keräättekö palautetta kansainvälisiltä osaajilta ja hyödynnättekö sitä esim. markkinoinnin kehittämisessä? Jos kyllä, niin millaista palautetta olette saaneet?
Eng. Do you collect feedback from global talents and use it to i.e. develop your marketing? If yes, what kind of feedback have you received?

8. 2-3 asiaa, jotka edistävät tai helpottavat kansainvälisten osaajien houkuttelua Turun seudulle?
2-3, jotka hidastavat tai tekevät siitä haastavaa?
Eng. Name 2-3 things that support talent attraction to this region? 2-3 that hinder it?