ELEMENTS INVOLVED IN THE TERRITORY BRAND FROM RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION: THE CITY OF MÁLAGA

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Abstract: The brand might create a position of the territory that could be useful for the development of geographical spaces. It could also become a solid basis upon which to make decisions about the tourism planning of a city. This paper deals with the features, which are recognized by residents as those that are involved in the creation of Málaga brand.
In order to achieve the goals set in this research, a descriptive methodology has been used. This study has been carried out using a questionnaire in which 1230 residents have participated. The findings have corroborated the hypotheses. Indeed, the results show that Málaga brand is being built under the concept of culture and that some places of the city are vital in the making of the territory image. This also encourages economic growth and hence employment. This paper offers important implications and tools to both public and private institutions insofar as they promote tourism promotion campaigns.

Keywords: territory brand, residents' perception, city brand identity, Málaga tourism**.**

Resumen: La marca puede crear un posicionamiento del territorio de gran utilidad para el desarrollo de un espacio geográfico y una base sobre la que construir la planificación turística de una ciudad. Este artículo tiene por objetivo determinar los elementos que los residentes reconocen como factores clave de identidad en la construcción de la marca territorio Málaga.
Para conseguir este objetivo, se ha usado una metodología descriptiva mediante el uso de un cuestionario. Un total de 1230 residentes participaron en la encuesta y se han verificado las hipótesis planteadas en la investigación. Los hallazgos de este estudio sugieren que la marca Málaga se está construyendo bajo el prisma de la cultura y que ciertos enclaves de la ciudad son vitales para la imagen de la misma. Ello, además, favorece el crecimiento económico del tejido empresarial de Málaga. Creemos que este estudio nos da importantes implicaciones gerenciales, para las instituciones locales, a fin de promover las campañas de promoción turísticas futuras tanto para el caso de Málaga como en otras ciudades del Mediterráneo.

Palabras clave: marca territorio, percepción residente, identidad de marca ciudad, turismo Málaga.

1. INTRODUCTION [1]

The cities of the Mediterranean constitute a geographical space, where tourism represents a source of income for their economies and, territory brands, a formula of application, relatively recent, for the tourist projection of countless territories.

In any case, some authors question whether they are necessary, Belloch, & López Lita, (2006) among others; recognize that the most important issue is to become aware of the possibilities offered by brands, by showing the differential values with respect to the rest of territories and placing value on the identity of a place. It is important, therefore that a city brand are found if we want to market them properly (San Eugenio, 2012) and to make them more competitive (Elizagárate, 2008).

However, this needs to be done within an overall approach to the perception of residents. The typology of these studies offers great advantages, although may fall into potential stereotypes. It is undeniable that this point of view offers a unique opportunity to represent the common history of the territory and it becomes a fundamental piece in branding strategies (Compte-Pujol, et al., 2017).

The perceptions are used as basis for the construction of the experience of "identity", so it should be explored the elements that could form that identity and its relationship with those that, under the broad culture spectrum, offer exclusive advantages that make them different from others.

In contrast to the perception offered by the visitors, the residents 'opinions are always a more complex picture and closer to the sense of identity (Zenker, et al., 2017; Manyiwa, et al., 2018) This studies must be the ground on which to build, improve and polish the existing brands or the brand structures of a territory, in a process called "rebranding" (Olins, 2002; Hankinson, 2004, Anholt, 2007; Pasquinelli, 2010), applied to commercial brands or to the same cities (Bennett, & Savani, 2003).

The coexistence of several brands around a territory (city) determines the importance of rebranding (Bennet & Savani, 2003), in order to implement new strategies and objectives on city brands already known (Herstein, et al., 2014).

Each territory can have different meanings, depending on the people who are linked to it and it is important that these images are perceived individually and collectively and managed by institutions. They would be talking about construction policies and territorial image communication (Wulff, 2016).

The research should base on an informed opinion, and a deeper understanding of the city brand among residents. It will pave the way to a formal and correct involvement of local governments in the review of an appropriate framework, which manages and modifies the attitudes that influence this public good (Merrilees, et al., 2009: 362)

The present paper addresses the city brand from a specific perspective, the residents of the city of Málaga. Until recently, this is the most forgotten aspect of branding studies despite they can legitimize in a political sense the city (Braun, et al., 2013)

In addition, its tourism capacity makes it especially interesting, since the tourism sector can and should rely on the territory brand, to the extent that its own existence allows the generation of products and services related to the promotion of a city (Chias, 2004).

The identity brand building process, considering mainly the identity of the place, may maximize the benefits in the same image that projects, achieving a

certain positioning (López-Lita & Benlloch, 2005 and 2006; San Eugenio 2013: 194). On a practical level, "Place Branding" will associate the identity and the image with the consumption experience in a particular location (Govers, 2009).

To sum up, with regard to this research, the territory brand will be considered, and hence, the city brand, as a set of differential elements of a geographical space, which will be analysed for Málaga, a city that from the urban and tourist point of view, has an interest as a reference of territories within the whole of Spain and a key place for the Mediterranean and international tourism.

Málaga has a total population of 571,069 and is within Spain a city where tourism represents a fundamental sector in the economic context. At the time, it was identified with the sun and the beach, occupying a privileged place in the tourist sector, where the Costa del Sol brand was a claim for tourists who spilled across its borders in the times of mass tourism.

The tourism development has become many-side and versatile. Nowadays it is based on a fundamental piece, the culture, trying to avoid with this new perspective, the saturation of the destination. Tourism is the cultural component of globalization, and cultural tourism, in its diverse manifestations, and is a phenomenon of great relevance in the urban environment (MacCannell, 2003).

The divergence between experts and citizen in relation to the image of the city, is now meaningful and less valuable, in that we analysed the perception with studies that allow us to understand the vision of the users (Insch & Walters 2018; Braun, et al., 2013; Zenker & Petersen, 2013; Merrilees, et al., 2009; Blasco López, et al., 2018; Vollero, et al., 2018).

Territory brand in connection with the tourism sector will have to formulate a proposal, where the sensibilities of each audience will be taken into account (Echeverri, 2014). Although, it is important to clarify that interest groups and lobbies have divergent and different expectations and demands on the tourism agenda (Zamarreño, et al., 2017: 545).

Málaga city brand has been analysed from the residents' point of view in a highly competitive environment, in which the territory brands get a new dimension and, the culture, a new identity sign and a possibility of regeneration of the urban centre (Barrera Fernández, 2014). A bet that takes shape effectively in Málaga.

The ideas on organising events are another formula to apply to the cities' marketing. It could contribute to the development of the city of Málaga and if fact, it has been proved that this serie of actions are working in other cities around the world (Vila López, et al., 2016; Kuster, et al., 2009). This research demonstrates this aspect through the perception of residents and the positioning of the brand Málaga city.

2. STATE OF ART

The complexity of the territory brand and the reality on which it is projected is heterogeneous and diverse, according to Jiménez Morales and San Eugenio (2009: 237).

The evolution and the sense of the territory brand leads to San Eugenio´s view (2012: 197) in the era of the "branding of places". That means strengthening the mark and its capacity for differencing territories.

It is necessary to take into account the identifiable qualities or attributes, whether tangible or intangible, because in this last chapter there are a number of elements of difficult precision such as, for example: beliefs, attitudes and

important experiences that can contribute to the positioning of a brand in relation to the territory (Govers, & Go, 2009, 2016, Sáez, et al., 2011).

In addition, it is precisely on that level where we could talk about the importance of the territories, in the sense in which these become speeches (Hall, 1996), influencing both visitors and residents.

In this way, we will descend from territory brand to city brand, being of vital importance the concretion of it and its proper management in the identity and the projected image.

According to Merrilees et al., (2009) the creation of a city brand should contemplate the perception of residents in a city, whose attitudes represent key elements, capable of affecting the consolidation of a city through its brand. ,

This represents a new research line that allows the city to takes value and that is followed by a group of authors, whose studies deal with the relationship between residents and the own city brand (Kavaratzis, 2012; Insch & Stuart; Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2005; Zenker & Petersen, 2014; Zenker & Seigis 2012; Braun et al., 2013 and Insch & Walter, 2017).

All these authors lead us to consider the interest of analysing the perception of residents and the city brand applied to the Málaga brand. The most common indicators in the definition of the positioning of brand territory and consequently in the city brand will be identity, culture, heritage, traditions and events, among others (San Eugenio, 2013), that duly shaded are included in our hypotheses.

2.1.   **Brand and identity**

Users are being exposed to image of places, symbols and representations, with which they elaborate meanings, on which a particular place can be identified and this is vital both for visitors and for residents (Zenker, et al., 2017: 15).

The development process of the identity of a place begins in childhood and continues through time, therefore, this is a dynamic process and that associates the product of the interaction of memory with the awareness of certain values (Breakwell, 2015).

The identity of the territories is not a minor issue and the construction of the brand involves the research and the enhancement of their identity roots, in a stage that we can describe as contemporary, postmodern and global highlighting the economy of the identity, the image and the symbolism (San Eugenio 2013: 207).

The process of creation of a strategic brand identity, considering mainly the identity of the place may, if it is properly structured, to maximize the benefits in the image that projects, so that on a practical level "Place Branding" will relate the identity and the image of a space with the consumption experience of a place (Govers, 2009).

A good image must be built and sustained, not invented (Anholt, 2008), hence the importance of citizen participation in its construction.

The union of the individual with a place is important (Giuliani, 2003), the citizen participation improves the sense of belonging to a place and this identification can contribute to the cooperations between organizations and clubs (Anton and Lawrence, 2014) and to the union between the resident and his/her city.

The distinctive character of a place can identify the resident (Twigger-Ross and Uzell, 1996), so that identification gains a fundamental relevance.

The identification of the brand by the residents is a benefit for the city (Insch & Walters, 2018) since it reinforces in such a way the own identity, which suggests the interest of formulating the following hypothesis:

H¹· Resident citizens identify with the brand that represents the city.

2.2. Brand and new cultural image

The promotion of culture is a greatest challenge in the design of campaigns to promote cities, in terms of the global economy (Hocaoğlu, 2017). This offers new possibilities to cities that find in this element, a formula to make the promotion a success (Farhat, 2018).

If the residents identify themselves with their city and the institutions do respect their opinions, the city may offer activities in relation with the culture that get to promote the image of the city and at the same time achieving a climate of attraction for tourists, new residents or investors (Insch & Walters, 2017).

The city brand is used for projecting an image in the world and has become a very powerful asset with which to promote tourism., It may also affects citizens quality of life (Fernández de Cavia, 2011) generating new business opportunities, claiming the identity of its territory and, consequently, highlightening its market share (Seisdedos, 2007: 157, Cruz Ruiz, et al., 2017).

The culture significance and entertainment activities in general favour the construction of a destination (Zenker, et al., 2009) and specifically, the culture become a way to authenticate destinations (Govers & Go, 2009) not only for visitors but also for residents.

The role of culture and residents perception of another Mediterranean city as Barcelona (San Eugenio, 2017), can create leverage to address successfully the theme in other places, as this kind of studies for Spanish speakers are still scarce (Compte- Pujol, et al., 2017).

Culture is so important for the brand of the city that is used as a strategy for the economic, social and environmental renewal of the cities, being one of the strategies that improves the competitiveness of destinations (Ozer, 2017).

In addition, many of the studies cited included and the general recognition of the culture as an identifying element of cities, have led us to formulate a new hypothesis.

H²· The resident perceives the new image of Málaga as a cultural city.

2.3. Brand and events
The city brand is defined as the bridge between the real and objective space and its perception, these differences may be key and the great events may, when are created by the organization, modify the attitude towards brands (Wohfeil & Whelan, 2004).

The transcendent is that the event can have the ability so that through the experiences, the city brand can be improved and consolidated. When the event fulfils the requirements and it becomes significant, it will improve the attitude of visitors and residents towards the city brand (visitors and residents) (Merrilees, et al., 2009)

The inherent symbolism to the city is channelled through the brand, which is consolidated as an important intangible asset of the city, on which revolve around

the majority of the urban and/or metropolitan communication processes (San Eugenio, 2013: 204) Big events or those that have a great projection, can become generators of emotions of satisfaction (Kao, et al., 2007), impacting on the city brand.

The differential characteristics of marketing of events exhibited by Vila López, et al. (2016: 195), following Whelan & Wohfeil (2006) show, from the offer side, the capacity of a destination to attract visitors, but also it makes them a better place to live, from the perspective of the residents themselves.

The typology of events that take part in the development of experiential marketing are very diverse (Getz, 1997, Ritichie and Yangzhou, 1987, Law (1993). The examples of studies focus on residents' perceptions for "mega-events" (Chian & Cheng, 2013; Boo, et al., 2011) and the opinion of the residents of a city (Fredline, & Faulkner, 1998).

In addition, the relations that are created between the event and the image that is projected from the city can reveal the importance of the affective and symbolic components, in the transfer process between the perceptions of the sponsored activity and the brand (Kuster, et al., 2009).

In sum, these studies show a relation between emotional experiences and attitude towards the brand, as is confirmed by Vila López, et al. (2016: 197), considering that, the Málaga brand has repercussions on events due to their capacity to promote tourism and to modify the attitude of the residents towards the same city brand.

In this framework, the interest of the events and the repercussions that they may have on the city brand have been exposed and in consequence of this, the following hypothesis has been raised:

H [3] .The emotional experience lived through the events modifies the attitude of the residents and affects the city brand.

3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the survey was to measure the perception and opinion of residents about the Málaga Brand. The quantitative opinion survey was used as a study method in order to answer the questions that were raised in this research.

McMillan and Schumacher (2005), indicate that this technique is defined as the application of a standardized procedure to gather information from a large sample of subjects. This method has been taken into account since after reviewing the literature; we observed that this is the one that best approximates the objective of our research.

Closed questions have been used and the participants were selected using the snowball sampling technique (Sadler, et al., 2010), identifying individuals who compiled the desired profiles for our research.

This procedure may show certain deficiencies (Mathers , et al., 2007) , but it is also true as pointed out by San Eugenio (2017), according to Brickman Bhutta, (2012) and Unkelos Shpigel, et al., (2015), that the snowball sampling formula involves sending the questionnaire via social networks such as Facebook (Chu, 2011;. Park, et al 2009) LinkedIn (Chiang, et al., 2013), mail and Whatsapp. It allows us to gain information through a fast, cheap and efficient process (Francois, 2016). In economic terms, this useful way is considerably cheaper than other methods, taking into account the time and the tools.

On the other hand, Baltar and Brunet (2012) consider that the virtual response rate is higher, when using these procedures, on the traditional snowball technique.

So, because of our link with the University of Málaga, the entire network of professors, students and administrative staff has been invited to participate. According to the list of companies in the city, the invitation has been sent through their Facebook profiles, which means that businesspersons from the province can also see their opinion expressed in the survey. In an exponential way, Whatsapp has been used to reach through family members a whole network of individuals of different ages and professional economic conditions, representative of the reality of the city of Málaga.

Sampling

Data collection was performed during the period between May 15, 2018 and July 15, 2018. We set ourselves a target of a minimum of 1066 participants that included different ranges of age, gender, occupation, level of studies and income among others, so that, in terms of percentage, the resident population of Málaga was represented correctly.

After collecting and debugging the information, 1107 valid questionnaires were validated. An error of 2.1% for a confidence level of 95 % was obtained (p = q = 0.5). In our study, sampling is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	
Geographical area	Málaga
Universe	571,069
Sample size	1107 valid questionnaires (90%)
Sampling error	2.1%
Confidence level	95,00%
Sampling procedure	Snowball technique
Preliminary questionnaire	Pretest to 150 residents
Fieldwork activities	May, June, and July 2.018

Source: The authors

We tested the survey questionnaire in Málaga, carrying out a pilot test on 150 individuals to ensure clarity, relevance and suitability of the research instrument. A few minor changes were corrected, but not other substantial changed were required. The final survey was conducted in the three most important languages in the province of Málaga, Spanish, English and German. Although, 96.6% was answered in Spanish, the majority, we could not forget foreign residents who used in a 3.4% the other two languages.

It should be noted that in the pilot test the answers that would make up the final survey were selected by choosing the items that had been chosen in the highest percentage.

The survey was divided into sections. The first one was profiled to recognize the sociodemographic characteristics of the population. The respondents were

asked about their gender, age, nationality, level of studies, work activity, income level and, also, the number of years that they had been living in Málaga. In the cases in which they were working in companies, self-employed or employed workers, they were asked about some questions related to their business activity.

In the next section, we focus on the fundamental aspects for the research, the questions related to the residents' perception of the Málaga brand.

Table 2: Sample Profile

Characteristic	Percentage
Gender	
Women	52,20%
Man	47,80%
Age	
18-25	7,50%
26-35	11,20%
36-45	19,90%
46-55	11,80%
56-65	25,50%
>66	24,20%
Nationality	
Spanish	96,60%
Other nationality	3,40%
Education	
Primary	1,20%
Secondary	11,80%
Vocational training	6,80%
Graduate	44,10%
Postgraduate /master	21,10%
Doctorade	14,90%
Occupation	
Self-employment	18,60%
Employee	21,10%
Student	6,80%
Retired	26,10%
Unemployed	5,00%
Public Official	13,00%
Others	9,30%
Income Level	
0-15.000	24,30%
15.001-25.000	19,70%
25.001-40.000	32,90%
40.001-60.000	14,50%
60.001 or more	8,60%

Source: The authors

This has been structured in 14 questions, of which, 6 were answered through a Likert scale of 7 points, specifying the level of interest or significance of the issues raised, where "1", represents the least interest or importance and 7 the highest significance.

The rest were closed questions, which will be analysed in the results in relation to the hypotheses proposed.

In an investigation related to the perception of the Málaga city brand, it is a matter of course to have carried out a review of the literature, which allows us to select the items adequately. To achieve this goal, it has been necessary a review of the state of the art, for each of the hypotheses.

Issues are related to the identity and identification with the city brand, its management, the degree of economic interest for companies, its geographic capacity, that is, whether the brand affects the entire province or only the city.

The search for the reconstruction of the Málaga brand (rebranding) has led to intense analysis and debate, appreciating its importance and seeking the perception of the products or services, with which it should be associated.

It is also important to keep in mind that the brand has to give an adequate image not only in the local sphere but also at national and international level.

The choice of the elements (places) that best represent Málaga and the cultural elements that identify it are issues of great interest. In this sense, it has been tried to take into account which words identify the Málaga brand and what are the products or services associated with it.

Third, a series of questions related to the perception that the residents have about events that take place in the city are addressed here. These are "emblematic" celebrations such as Holy Week, The Fair and The Film Festival among others. The objective is to know the degree of satisfaction of the residents since sometimes, these events cause massive tourism in some urban areas of the city.

Finally, the questionnaire reflects on the brand and the senses, because in order to build and position a brand, it must be incorporated elements that activate the senses, since the consumer will not only identify it by its excellence, but also generate sensations and emotional memories that can be connected with the brand.

3.ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The study was based on a sample of 1107 respondents, of whom 47.8% were women and 52.2% men. The distribution by age groups is representative, although a high response rate was given by people over 56 years old. Mainly citizens of Spanish nationality 96.6%.

The educational level is mainly concentrated in those who have higher education. 44.1% have university studies while the primary ones only account for 1.20% of the informants and secondary school is represented by 11.80%.

The distribution by activity is quite dispersed, as shown in Table 2; there is a variety of status, from the unemployed (5%) to retirees (26.1%) The spectrum of self-employed and employed workers are represented by 18.6% and 21.1% respectively.

The level of income was shown in a higher proportion in the intermediate categories; the level of 15,001 to 25,000 euros was recognized by 19.7% of the respondents and between 25,001 to 40,000 euros per month by 32.9%.

We thought it was important to know if the residents had been living in Málaga for a long time, so to the question: How many years have you been living in Málaga? were pronounced "all of life" 59.6%, and 22.4% more than 20 years. It helps us to carry out an important assessment since their answers have a high level of significance.

At this point, the information provided by the residents is key to assess their perception of the brand. This plays a very important role because not only gives answers to the hypotheses raised but also to points that will be carried out in the conclusions.

Responding to the question posed in the first place and in relation to the identification of residents with the Málaga city brand, considering that it has its own identity. 56.4% responded affirmatively while 43.6% said they did not identify with the brand.

However, residents believe that the Málaga brand is not well managed. In this case, the answers (40.1%) are concentrated on the scale used between `1´ and `3´.

In addition, it is important to bear in mind that residents consider that the brand brings benefits to the business fabric, since most of the answers place it in the best sections of the Likert scale. Specifically, 69.4% of the interviewees give a rating between `5´ and `7´.

We found that the participants believe that the management of the brand must be improved. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that 60.9% gave a punctuation between`1´ and `4´. Institutions need time to reflect about this topic because of increasing importance and sensivity for the industry, the economy and the citizen.

Málaga brand is perceive as valid for the province by 67.8% while 32.2% of respondents feel that it only represents to the city and not to the rest of the municipalities.

Additionally, the resident was asked about which of the of brands that are currently used for the projection of the interior and exterior image, consider that contribute more to the economic and social development of Málaga, allowing them to point out the three most significant ones.

The survey also asked a question to know if the resident knows the brands that already exist in the province. In this sense, it was possible to verify that the most well-known brands are related to different economic sectors of Málaga. The main ones are those indicated below.

Graph 1. Resident´s perception of the brands associated with the Málaga brand.
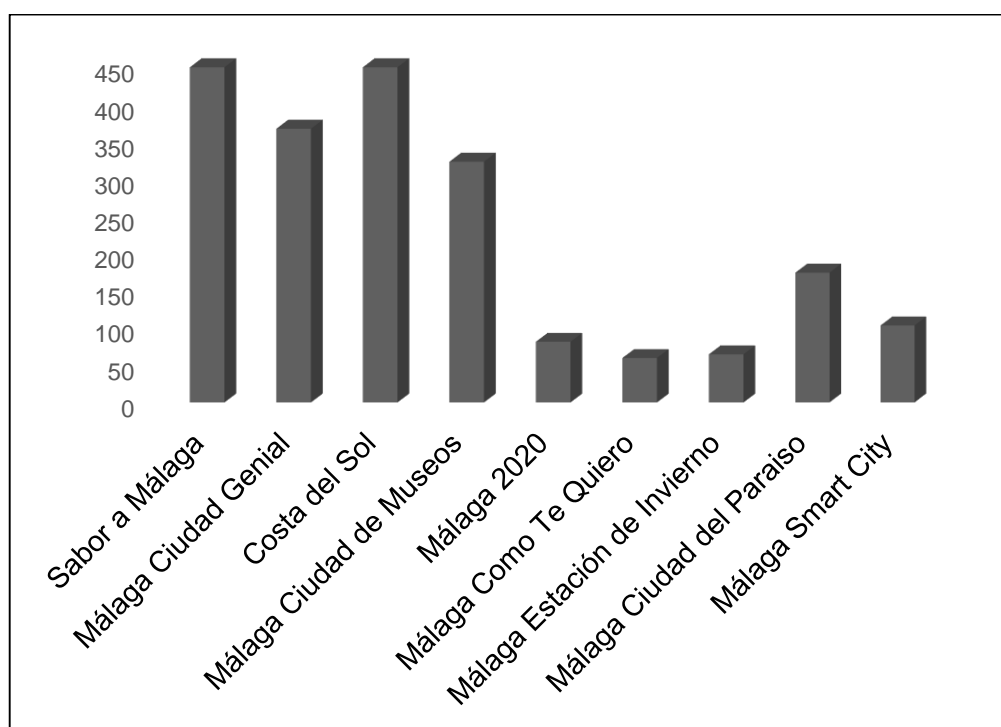
1. Sabor a Málaga, mentioned by 449 informants (Tradition and Gastronomy)
2. Costa del Sol, highlighted by 449 informants (Sun and Beach)
3. Málaga Ciudad Genial, selected by 367 informants (Leisure and Tourism)
4. Málaga Ciudad de los Museos, mentioned by 323 informants (Culture)

With respect to the image of Málaga at national and international level, the resident was satisfied. The sum of the categories of the ratings between `5 'and `7' reached 76.4% and 55.4% respectively.

The question about the type of products that should be associated with the Málaga brand allowed us to observe from the resident's perception a list headed by the cruise sector and culture (767 and 684 respectively). Other outstanding elements are leisure and gastronomy chosen by 487 and 197 interviewed.

The study of the senses has come to offer very significant nuances, about what they think about colours, smells, sounds and places associated with the Málaga brand, as well as the image that best represents them, allowing in this case a maximum of three responses.

Regarding colours the most recognized were green and purple, by 488 and 483 respondents, followed by the range of blues; the lightest, representative of the sky and sea was chosen by 402 interviewees and 175 opted for the dark blue.

Regarding the smells, the *biznaga* flower is the element that best represents the Málaga brand, in particular, it was mentioned by 55.9% of the respondents, followed by the *espetos* and sea saltpeter, with similar percentages of 18, 3% and 17.3% respectively.

Regarding sounds, they associate the Málaga brand with the noise of the sea (42.1%), the *verdiales* (party music and local dances) (40.1%) and finally with the bells of the Cathedral (10.9%).

The places that best capture the spirit of the city are, in the opinion of the residents of Málaga: the Larios Street, the Cathedral, the Port of Málaga, the *Alcazaba* (Roman complex) and *La Farola* (a lighthouse) with 714, 608, 528, 462 and 332 mentions respectively.
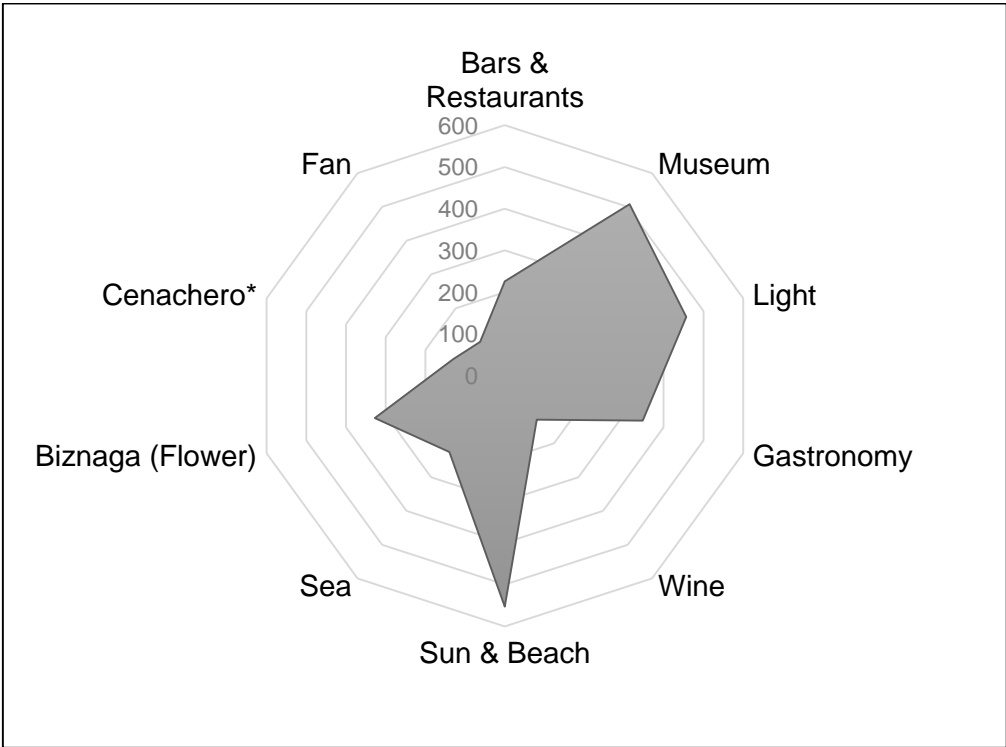
Graph 2. Resident´s perception of the products and/or services associated with the Málaga brand
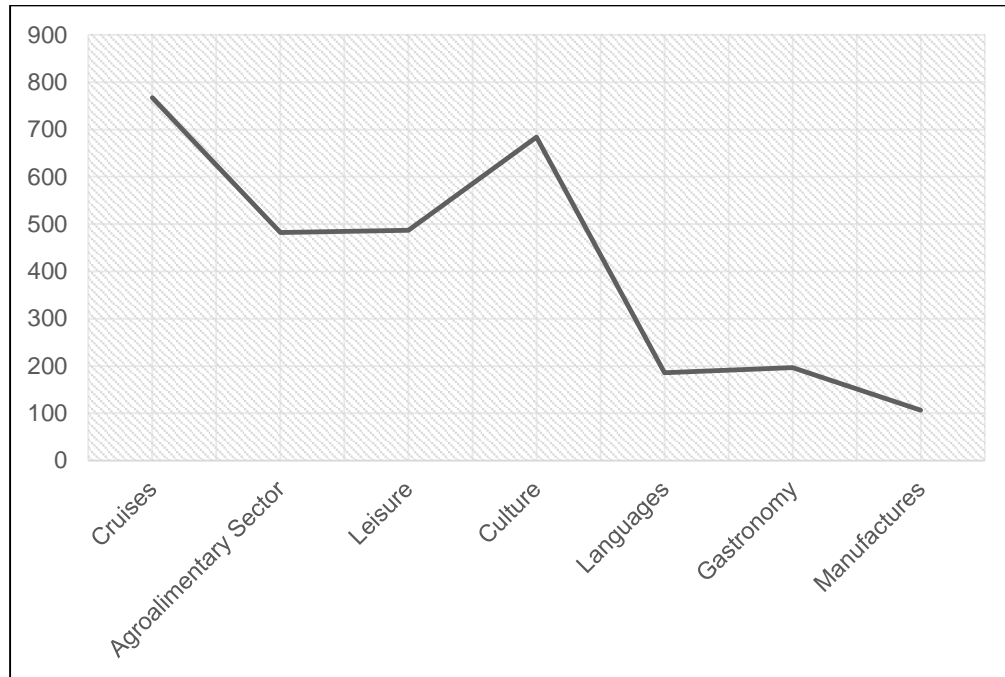
Source: The authors

The new image of the city of Málaga must be projected in relation to the culture. This is one of the ambitious wishes of the institutions so it is always relevant for our research to formulate a hypothesis in this regard. It also allows us to verify if the resident perceives the new image of Málaga as a cultural city.

Graph 3. Residents' perception: Words that identify the Málaga brand

Bars & Restaurants
Museum
Fan
Light
Cenachero*
Gastronomy
Biznaga (Flower)
Sea
Wine
Sun & Beach
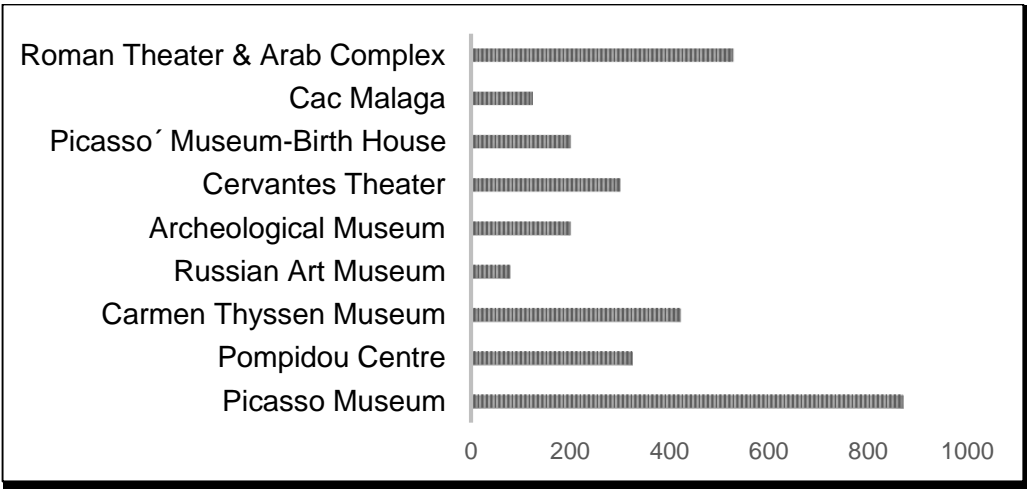
600
500
400
300
200
100
0

Source: The authors

* Fish vendor who holds two baskets one on each arm.

Firstly, respondents were asked about the words that identify the Málaga Brand. As can be seen in Figure 3, Sun y Beach received 553 replies and Museums 508, followed closely by Light and Gastronomy with 457 and 306 respectively.

Graph 4. Residents' perception: Cultural elements identified with the Málaga brand

Roman Theater & Arab Complex
Cac Malaga
Picasso´ Museum-Birth House
Cervantes Theater
Archeological Museum
Russian Art Museum
Carmen Thyssen Museum
Pompidou Centre
Picasso Museum

0   200   400   600   800   1000

Source: The authors

As can be seen in figure 4, when asked about the cultural elements, which identify with the Málaga brand, indicating a maximum of three responses, the most representative would be the Picasso Museum, followed by the *Roman Theater / Alcazaba* with 870 and 528 informants respectively. These are followed by Carmen Thyssen Museum (422) and the Pompidou (322)

In relation to the traditional events, Málaga Fair and Holy Week, we can find some differences, since while the highest rating (7) is given by 16.7% of the respondents to the first, for Holy Week the percentage is 41.1. If we add the 2 levels of maximum impact (6 + 7), we will get 34.6% and 76.8% respectively, with no doubt, a decisive impact of the Holy Week on the Málaga brand, as the most significant among all the proposals.

However, with regard to the Carnival of Málaga, a tradition interrupted sometimes in the history of the last century in the city, we see that the impact is lower. In terms of the perception of residents who think in categories 1 (Lower significance) 18.8% and if we add 1 + 2 then the ratio would rise to 34.1% and if we take the categories 6 + 7 the percentage is only 8.4.

In the group of events that we would be able to describe as the newest in the city, we distinguish Christmas Lights, White Night and Málaga Film Festival. If we take into account the maximum impact on the brand (Likert scale `7´), the results vary from 26.2%, 8.4% and 36.6% respectively, making the Film Festival one of the events with the greatest impact on the Brand.

Therefore, we understand that the emotional experience lived through the events modifies the attitude of the residents and affects the city brand, being the Holy Week, the event with the greatest and the Carnival with the lowest impact on the Málaga brand.

Graph 5. Impact of the events on the Málaga brand
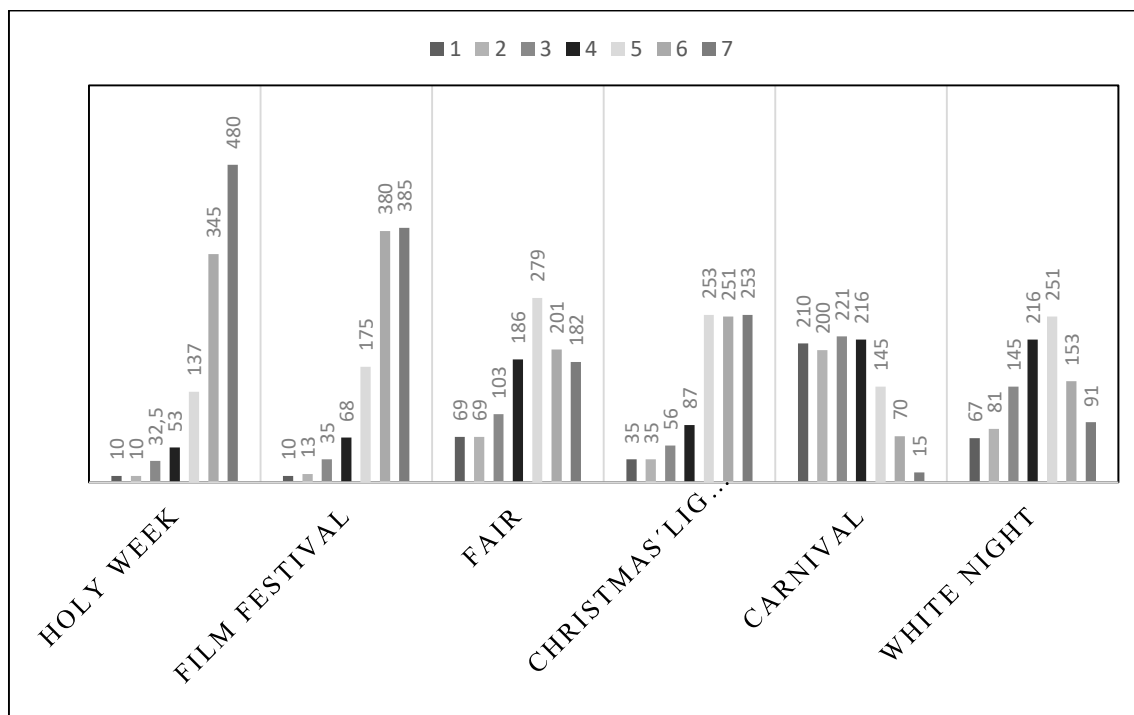
Source: The authors

4. CONCLUSIONS

The branding process is understood as a tool that takes advantage of a coherent and positive image, which serves as the engine to improve the perceptions of the public (Fernández Cavia, 2010: 5) and contributes to improving its competitive capacity.

The coexistence of several brands around a territory (city) determines the need to start a rebranding process. This research has contributed with elements and proposals that led to the successful introduction of an improved base on which a new global brand must be built.

In relation to the first hypothesis, it is verified that the Málaga brand has its own entity and is identified by a significant part of the residents (56.4%), but there is also a high percentage that question this issue (43.6%). Because of this, we understand that institutions must make an effort to raise awareness and improve the brand so that residents are more identified with the brand that represents their city.

In addition, residents consider that it is not well managed in a high percentage (40, 1%), in fact, this is the result of the addition of the scores collected on the Likert scale '1' to '3'. Based on this, we believe it is appropriate to carry out a deep reflection, especially if we pay attention to other data, as for example, 69.4% consider that the brand brings benefits to companies.

With respect to the first hypothesis, it can be observed that if residents identify the Málaga brand, they do not do so as a priority status. They named not only a brand but also a variety, which can become a problem if an adequate strategy is not structured. For this, we must know which are more interesting for the identity of Málaga and consequently for its national and international projection.

The projection of the image of Málaga through its brand should continue to be an institutional work, since at the national level it is indicated in the study a very high percentage of compliance however, with respect to the international level, only a few residents consider that the image that is projected is "the best image".

Residents 'opinions about the products and services that should be associated with the Málaga Brand is very revealing. Cruises and Museums are considered by 69.3% and 67.3% of cases respectively. Leisure and Gastronomy are chosen by 44% and 43.5%, followed in importance by the Wine with 23% of informants.

Therefore, extrapolating from the survey the perception of what are the typologies in relation to the tourism that should be present in the marketing strategies in the city, the answer is clear. We must pay attention to the value with the best rating and according to them, try to carry out policies that guarantee a good management of the brand.

The study also shows the preponderance that exists in the perception of residents about the Costa del Sol brand compared to the Málaga brand. In fact, the participants consider that the first one is still the most important (543 responses between the scores of `6´ and `7´) when it is the second which includes the first (246 choices between the scores of `6´ and `7´)

We understand that this offers another element that corroborates that a new line of research should be opened. A new positioning strategy of the Málaga Brand using the basis of the existing brand structures.

The sensory analysis has given us an excellent insight into residents' perceptions about the union between senses and brand. Thanks to the results, we have been able to recognize the colours, smells and tastes that are in the minds of the residents and that could be used in promotional campaigns in the city of Málaga. When the residents' opinions are taken into account, we can guide the integration of the residents in the decisions of their city. This point is relevant particularly at this time in which turistification and gentrification are two fashion phenomena.

The image occupies a vital and essential position in the creation of a city brand and in the rebranding process of a city. When asked about the image with which they relate to the city, 50% choose Museums compared to the 54.45% that Sun and Beach choose. Some time ago, Málaga was known only as the capital of the Costa del Sol and it is very surprising that residents value the efforts of institutions to create a new image related to culture.

The Picasso Museum, followed by the *Alcazaba – Roman Theatre* are the cultural elements that best identify with the Málaga Brand. The first with 85.6% and the second with 51.9% are the best valuated. The fact that the elements that identify with the city are old buildings and museums is very important news for a city that, as we have said before, wants to change its image towards a cultural identity, where the binomial of Málaga and culture become an indissoluble tandem.

The emotional experience provided by the events has been another of the most important points of the study. On the one hand, we have been able to know that there is no dissatisfaction with events that could be considered overcrowded and, on the other hand, they have offered us a wide spectrum of elements that can help create a brand. In this sense, Holy Week is revealed as the most important event in the city so it would be interesting to help to improve all the elements involved in it.

In conclusion, the opinions of the residents are extremely relevant for the creation of policies that are related to the promotion of their city. Partly because the vision they have is different from what can be seen from other sectors and interest groups. Finally, the diversity of brands that exist in the city should help to establish new strategies that unify and offer to the main public institutions such as the City Council of Málaga and Diputación, a tourist attraction tool.

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