

## **BANDUNG CITY BRANDING: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TO GAIN CITY COMPETITIVE VALUE**

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*Received August 2017; accepted June 2018*

### **Abstracts**

Cities around the world competes each other not just to attract tourists to visit or to invest but also to create a good reputation. City Branding is a way to enhance positive image about the city in order to gain a recognition and distinctive value for the city as a destination which differentiate it with other cities. Brand like in corporate level creates a distinctive value for a city. City brand reflects the image, reputation, credibility, capacity and competitive identity of a city. One approach for city branding is to provide room for community involvement to achieve desired branding objectives. This paper aims to explore the role of community involvement in city branding to gain city competitive value. Secondly to find and propose city special uniqueness which differentiate it from other city that can be utilized as city competitive value. The research takes place in Bandung city for the case study. Research methodology uses qualitative approach. Primary data collection is made through in depth interview with selected informants. Secondary data is taken from various literatures and previous research publications. Observation study is also conducted to enrich data collection. Research result indicates that community participation and involvement contribute to the progress of Bandung city branding. Local people and culture are among supporting elements in the emerging of Bandung as creative city. Creative city is Bandung city capacities which provide city uniqueness to differentiate with other rival cities especially in Indonesia and in south East Asia in general.

### **Research paper**

**Keywords:** City branding, community involvement, competitive value, creative city

**Reference** to this paper should be made as follows: Bastaman, A. (2018). Bandung City Branding: Exploring the Role of Local Community Involvement to Gain City Competitive Value, *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Business and Economics*, 6(1), 144–165.

## **Introduction**

As the 21st century unfolds, and we move ever faster towards global economic integration, the role of major cities, in driving forward growth, prosperity and social wellbeing is changing significantly. Cities today are dense networks of interchanging investments, information, goods and people as well as centers of innovation and knowledge management (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005). Aside from a city's physical infrastructure and geographical location, its most obvious characteristic is its people and its local community participation (Kavaratzis, 2008; Achieng *et al.*, 2014).

There are approximately 400 cities in the world each of which has more than 1 million citizens. The largest metropolitan area, Tokyo, has 28 million citizens and New York City has over 20 million. According to the 2004 United Nations HABITAT report, 60% of the world's population will live in a city by 2030 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005).

In order to enhance their tourism revenues, cities must develop effective city branding strategies to stand out in potential tourists' minds as viable choice possibilities. This kind of strategy will effectively build upon such attributes as unique cultural heritage and local amenities (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009 in Yuwo *et al.*, 2013). We need new perspectives of cities, their dreams, knowledge, creativity, and motivation in order to find new ways to develop strategic city management (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005).

City brand reflects the image, reputation, credibility and competitive identity of a city and assures its audience that what has been promised will be fulfilled. Therefore those cities which seek a prominent and outstanding position in competition with other cities are forced to enter marketing and

branding arena sooner or later (Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014). Besides the material capabilities of cities, how well they are able to brand themselves plays a large part in their success. The number of tourists, investors, new inhabitants, or the products of the city depend on the success of this self-branding. It also affects the locals and their sense of pride and contentment living in the city (Papp-Váry, 2011).

City branding is understood as the means both for achieving competitive advantage in order to increase inward investment and tourism, but also as the means for achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest (Kavaratzis, 2008).

The representation of local community's participation in tourism development is a complicated issue that needs to be further investigated. There is ambiguity about the roles of local communities' functions and the link between their views and planning and development outcomes (Windarti, 2016).

Study by Achieng *et al.*, (2014) established that local community participation is a significant factor to consider in branding cultural sites as ecotourism destinations. Further, improvement of community participation will enhance the brand image of the cultural sites as ecotourism destinations which will give a competitive edge to these destinations in comparison to others. This implies that there is significant relationship between local community participation and city branding development of cultural sites as tourism destinations.

Efforts by community leaders to strengthen or define their community's brand can also lead to deeper citizen engagement and mobilization of

socioeconomic actors. Looking outward, the city community's brand is about how the city community is perceived. This perception can be shaped by what to communicate, and how to communicate about what the community has to offer. As such, the city community brand can be a powerful tool to attract investments, companies and tourism (FCM., 2015). It also strengthens city branding.

This paper aims to explore the role of community involvement in city branding to gain city competitive value. Secondly to find and propose city of Bandung special uniqueness which differentiate it from other city that can be utilized as city competitive value. The research takes place in Bandung city for the case study.

## **Theoretical Review**

Bidgoli *et al.* (2014) argued that Brand identity is the essence of brand. The most prominent and unique qualities of brand is manifested in its identity. Kapferer (in Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014) believes that: "having an identity means being yourself the way you are; following your very own fixed pattern". Several aspects have been considered for brand identity, which are as follow:

- External and graphic details of brand
- Brand personality (describing brand using human personality traits)
- Brand association with the target audience
- Culture
- Quality and other factors

City marketing as part of place marketing is a market-oriented, coordinated set of activities to improve the real quality of a city and to efficient-

ly communicate the quality to target groups (Kotler, 2009, in Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014). Cities have always been brands, in the truest sense of the word (Anholt, 2006).

The reason why place marketing should be emphasized is clear which due to its several dimensions it has some particular complexities. Each person lives in a place – village, town, county, and nation is affected by economy, infrastructures, facilities, attractions, expenses and people of that place. The health and strength of a place is influenced by history, resources, leadership and strategy of that place and due to the fact that cities face key challenges like the inevitable process of urban evolution and growing competition, using marketing techniques should be considered (Kotler, 2009 in Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014; Anholt, 2006). In order for a city to be a good brand, it must possess defining and distinctive characteristics that can be readily identified (Winfield-Pfefferkorn, Julia, 2005).

City brand is a subcategory of place brand which tries to feature the city desirability as a habitable place for the potential and actual residents and the urban business desirability as a place for investing, marketing and branding and management of city brand, goal setting, planning, executing and controlling the city brand and as a result the value and effort to maintain and enhance the value is created (Rahimian, 2012 in Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014). These brand images, just like the brand images of products, of companies and of countries, influence and underpin countless decisions — some of them with very important consequences — made every day by millions of people around the world (Anholt, 2006).

Some of the approaches about city branding by different researchers are stated that city branding is creating a strong relationship between people

and their city's image (Nickerson and Moisey (1991). While Hall (1999) argued the main purpose of city branding is to provide a focused and sustainable communicative strategy to various stakeholders. Further Cai (2002) stated city branding means to choose a combination of compatible brand elements by creating a positive image in order to gain a recognition and distinction value for the city as a destination. Another more fundamental approach is stated by Trueman *et al.* (2004) that brand must be honest so that the communicated identity matches with the actual identity.

In urban strategic planning, brand is a competitive source for increasing the competitive advantage of the cities. City branding should be concerned about how to combine culture, history, economic growth, social development, infrastructures and architecture of landscapes and environment so that it can create a salable identity which is accepted by the majority of people. The key concern of city branding is what the perception of the city is. City branding can be the most important aspect of prosperity of a city. A good brand which produces a sense of attachment to the city should be able to inspire the viewers, industries and people. Talking about this is much easier than performing it and its challenges differ from one city to another and from one country to another (Sharifi *et al.*, 2012 in Bidgoli *et al.*, 2014).

Study by Hadrikurnia (2011) in Achieng *et al.* (2014) argued that three main elements that are necessary to consider in branding of a city as travel destination. The first element involves the physical components of the destination (i.e. Buildings, infrastructures, etc). The second element is individual components (i.e. people, citizens and tourists who are affected by cultural factors - which creates different values, beliefs and characteristics

as social factors, personal factors, such as objectives, personal preferences and so on and psychological factors. The third element involves organizational element (i.e., the group that consist of individuals who share the same objectives and beliefs).

It is crucial for the political and business leaders of cities to understand their brand, and to see how they are viewed by potential visitors, investors, customers and future citizens around the world. And if the image does not match up to the reality, they need to decide what to do in order to close the gap between the two (Anholt, 2006).

The study of city brands and branding is strongly connected to two other concepts with significant relevance to city residents and urban communities. The first is the matter of the city's distinctive identity. As already discussed above, although there is wide agreement that one of the most important assets cities posses is the local character and identity, the argument is raised that marketing implementation in cities has resulted in a tendency towards 'sameness', diminishing local identity (Griffiths 1998; Ashworth 2002 and Vermeulen 2002 in Kavaratzis, 2008). City branding can assist in an attempt to reverse this tendency, since it is largely based upon the distinctive characteristics of the city. Especially useful at this point is the examination of the organizational structure of the city, which underlines subjects such as community participation. The second is the notion of the 'linking value' of products and services and especially brands, a notion developed within the influence of postmodernity on marketing thought (Kavaratzis, 2008). As Cova (1997) in Kavaratzi (2008) remarks, post-modern individuals, seek products and services less for their use value and more for their linking value, in order to satisfy their desire for communities;

in this sense brands have to serve at the same time the person in their individuality and the group ‘togetherness’. This is the case for city brands, especially since the city has always served and still serves as the place of this group togetherness.

Kavaratzis (2007) proposed the frameworks which are grouped into eight categories suggested as components of an integrated approach to managing city brands. The categories are: Vision and Strategy (chosen vision for the city’s future and development of a clear strategy to realise it); Internal culture (spreading a brand orientation through the city management and marketing itself); Local communities (prioritizing local needs; involving local residents, entrepreneurs and businesses in developing and delivering the brand); Synergies (gaining agreement and support of all relevant stakeholders and providing for balanced participation); Infrastructure (providing for basic needs without which the city cannot attempt delivering the expectations created by its brand); Cityscape and Gateways (the ability of the built environment to represent itself and reinforce or damage the city’s brand); Opportunities (opportunities available for targeted individuals (urban lifestyle, good services, education etc.) and companies (financial, labor etc.), which signify the potential of the place); Last, Communications (fine-tuning all intentionally communicated messages).

Simmons (1994) in Windarti (2016) asserts that it is important to embrace community participation in developing tourism plans and policies for two fundamental reasons. The first is that it is the community that undergoes the transformation, either positive or negative due to Tourism. Second, the city’s residents play significant roles in creating the “hospitality atmosphere” that makes tourism flourish or otherwise.

Williams and Lawson (2001) in Windarti (2016) define that a community is “a group of people who share common goals or opinions.” That community does not always a group of people who lives in the same area. Developing community participation for city brand and a successful marketing strategy is as much about process as product. The process is one of active engagement with a full range of stakeholders to explore and come to a collective understanding of the community’s rich diversity and attributes.

“Community Brand” (or “Place Brand”, or “City Brand”): A community brand is a clear and consistent vision and message that conveys what a community represents (i.e., what a community stands for, and the values it holds). The brand is central to the marketing endeavors. It directly addresses the needs of specific target audiences. While “Community Marketing” (or “Place Marketing, or “City Marketing”) presents the relevant and unique assets and experiences that the community can offer customers and visitors, and that differentiate it from neighboring communities and competitors in the wider marketplace. It supports and helps ensure maximum impact of your overall LED efforts (FCM., 2015).

Even in Western society community involvement is perceived very important. In Britain case for example, Blear (in Communities and Local Government, 2007) stated that there isn’t a single service or development which hasn't been improved by actively involving local people.

There is strong evidence that community empowerment is essential element for achieving excellent public services, strong and cohesive communities and at the end support to create and develop city branding not just in Indonesia but also cities in many parts of the world.

## **Research Methodology**

Research methodology uses qualitative approach, as this is a type of exploratory research. The analysis both use primary data and secondary data through a deep and intensive literatures review. Primary data collection is made through in depth interview with selected informants who represent variety of stakeholders, such as: Bandung city inhabitants and community leaders, government officials, students who live in Bandung or people who once lived in Bandung and Bandung visitors. Secondary data is taken from various literatures and relevant previous research publications, including local media. Observation study in the city of Bandung is also conducted to enrich data collection. The research takes place in Bandung city for the case study.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

The city of Bandung, capital of West Java Province is the 3rd largest city by population in Indonesia, located in the western part of Java Island. The city is considered to be one of the major cultural and innovative hub for creativity and entrepreneurship in Indonesia, with their garment manufacturing, arts and design industry as the city's pride. Bandung city population is estimated close to 3 million people. Mostly are Sundanese ethnic, the rest are people from other Indonesia ethnics. Tanzil (2004), Windarti (2016) and UNESCO (2017) indicated that 56% of Bandung's economic activities are design-related, with fashion, graphic design and digital media being the top three subsectors in the local creative economy. With many initiatives driven by the city's young demographic, Bandung hosts a variety of workshops,

conferences and festivals, all encouraging the development of creativity, prototypes and product design in particular.

Bandung city has been appointed as a pilot project of creative cities in East Asia due to the role of creative industries which swiftly develop in the city. There are three factors that influence the improvement of creative industries in Bandung. Firstly, the cultural factor of Sundanese people who are adaptive so that they are able to produce creative goods/services. Second, there are communities that accommodate the agents of creative industries and local people involvement, which do not only benefit for its members but also have a role in improving Bandung City as a creative city. Third, the central and the regional government policies support the enhancement of creative industries in Bandung (Hermawati and Runiawati, 2015). Therefore open Sundanese culture who is the majority of inhabitants has contributed to the city creative development.

From interview and observation can be described that local people are proud with their own city. "I love the city" as all informants said. This pride to the city is often expressed by their participation in variety of local activities to make the city look better. Some people participate in formal community clubs or organizations, while others do it informally with their neighborhood and networks. "It's for Bandung" claimed a community leader. The formal participation can be seen from the emerging of the local community organizations, clubs or forums. In many cases community participation is strongly supported by local government.

One of the formal participation to the city development was the establishment of Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF). BCCF is an association of a various group of communities, which was initiated in December

2008. It is a moral movement to love Bandung city (Pikiran Rakyat, 2009). The group comprises 45 registered representatives of the communities, but the actual number of members is huge. BCCF aims to nurture, develop the potential and creativity of local communities towards the development of Bandung City. For example, “Kampung Kreatif” (creative village) activities seek to transform villages into tourist destinations by attracting visitors to village communities’ events. Through this medium also, people are connected to local resources such as trash bank and processing of garbage into finished goods or souvenirs. Students also participate in this by creating and designing various products to meet market demands (Tanzil, 2004; British Council, 2004; Windarti, 2016; UNESCO, 2017).

BCCF is an initiative that proof local community commitment for the city creativity development. Windarti (2016) further stated that the overriding goal of the BCCF is to transform Bandung into one of the creative cities of the world by identifying, and analyzing the challenges of particular communities, with a view to seeking a local initiative to overcome such challenges. The organization believes that the cooperative dispositions of the people of Bandung can help to mobilize the needed social capital to actualize these dreams.

Information from the informants and previous literature (British Council, 2004 and UNESCO, 2017) indicated that initially the forum began as a form of activism, seeking to uphold the creative expressions and activities of local communities, the balance of urban-natural environment and support marginalized groups. However, since the election of Mayor Ridwan Kamil - an original founding member and former chair of BCCF - they also take more of an assisting role in the provision of local government and ur-

ban development. Yet Ridwan Kamil still recognizes the power of grass-roots collaboration; “we want to make things happen. (We know that) a community effort is more powerful and sustainable” he once explained. The group has gathered a wide range of members from across the creative industries and beyond, including people from the arts, clothing, fashion, music, urban activists, archivists, solicitors, engineers and other people who align themselves closely to BCCF’s holistic approach. Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF) has also partnered with UNEP and The Indonesian Ministry for Environment in holding TUNZA, an international conference for children and youth for the environment, in 2011. In 2012, BCCF and the World Islamic Economic Forum held Marketplace of Creative Arts. In the same year, BCCF partnered with MTV EXIT in a campaign to end human exploitation and trafficking, in a concert and “youth leaders” activation. This community initiative through BCCF has made Bandung creative world lively (British Council, 2004 and UNESCO, 2017). “We would like to do something for our city” said an informant.

Support for local community creative development has also shown by the Bandung Mayor by establishing seven creative districts which are designated by Bandung Mayor’s Regulation no. 530/Kep. 295-DISKUKM.PERINDAG/2009 on Revitalization of Centers for Industries and Trade dated 3 March 2009, which aims to provide programs and incentives for revitalization of local creative industries, positioned for added-value through exports, developed in 7 districts of Bandung: Binong Jati (knitwear), Cibaduyut (footwear), Cigondewah (textile/fabrics), Cihampelas (jeans), Suci (t-shirt and printing), Cibuntu (tofu and tempeh), and Sukamulya (dolls and soft-toys) as reported by Wulan (2011) and UNESCO

(2017). In the other hand, Academic institutions and communities are active in design and creativity-related programs, including international awards and competitions, i.e. Bike Design for Living (2006), Third Automotive Design and Styling Competition (2007), Bike Design and Human Interaction (2007), Eco-Product (2008) and City Car Design Development in Indonesia (2009). Students informant of a leading university believe that as students they should contribute in any form to the development of the city. Participation from academic institution was initiated also by making collaboration between Musashino Arts University (Japan) and the Industrial Design department of ITB in the form of joint exhibition and workshop on Bamboo has started since 2009 (see UNESCO, 2017).

UNESCO (2017) also reported Bandung municipal government support to empower community participation in city development. Municipal government has a strong commitment to stimulate the establishment of 100,000 new creative entrepreneurs over 5 years. The Regional Development Acceleration Innovation Program (PIPPK) is an initiative to financially support Family Welfare Program (PKK), Karang Taruna (Youth Organization) & Civil Society Empowerment Institution (LPM). It amounts to \$7.5 K per organization per village to promote and activate local potentials into programs, including creative industries & One Village One Product (OVOP). Through CSR Forum the city endorses enterprises projects and startups to receive grants or soft loans from companies. Bandung is also developing an online one-door permit system to facilitate startups. The Bandung Online Store acts as a promotional facility for SMEs, with Creative Hubs as a platform in every district. “We accommodate and provide sup-

port”, said a local government official. This strong municipal government support has energized the local community creative development.

Further, local initiatives has also revealed in form of Community-based learning centers in villages or creative places such as Saung Udjo Art Learning Center for Angklung involves more than 1,000 people. Another creative art center is Selasar Sunaryo Art Space which is a cultural center that covers various art disciplines such as visual, performing and literature. School involvement, especially high schools level vocational institutions such as SMKN 14 Bandung that focuses on crafts, design and production of leather, wood, and ceramics and SMKN 10 Bandung that focuses on traditional art and non-classical music, and traditional dance showed the strong commitment from the educational sector on city creative development. “Music is our passion. We like to play music including traditional music together in a group”, said a student in Bandung. Bandung also has more than 70 music schools and performing art communities involving 4,000 youths initiated by local communities. Special design collaboration is exemplified in Creative Village, a community development-based program to cover various art disciplines, i.e. visual art, traditional music, and performing arts. In 2015, 8 Bandung urban villages were established as Creative Villages, made possible by quadruple helix collaboration. These are as UNESCO (2017) argued what had made Bandung as it is today, the integration of factors of place, people and ideas. People who are active in such place like Bandung would generate ideas, which would contribute to their living environment and consequently influence the place, making it more livable. These three factors intermingle, influence each other, and determine a city known as Bandung as it is now.

Some of other examples of local community establishment are: 1. Cikapundung Community, 2. Sakola Cikapundung, 3. Gemicik (Cikapundung Lovers Community) emerge as local community initiatives which make city atmosphere lively. Students, academicians and local people participate in the establishment as well on the operational aspects to achieve its objectives. “Initially I just joined others”, said a participant. “But now I am doing it with passion. I like it”.

Cikapundung Community is doing social service activities and clean-up the river on Sunday. They opened Cikapundung River for tourism by offering some attraction such as rafting (Herdiana, 2016). Sakola Cikapundung introduces 3R (reduce, re-use, recycle) waste management to the residents, teaching English to children, and they also provide instruction to housewives to make garbage into goods used or craft. This craft is expected to be souvenirs offered to the tourists. Besides, Sakola Cikapundung also provides training for a household waste composer that process of household waste into fertilizer. The fertilizers can be used in their gardens. Other significant activities are "Helarfest" - a cultural show festival to support creative economy (Yasa, 2014), Car Free days and Creative village festival which held by local communities and forums. Car Free day is a program to reduce pollution from vehicles. Another is Creative Village, which aiming to build resident of potential to attract tourists so that residents can feel the direct economic impact of tourism activities. These are other examples of local community involvement found in Bandung and as stated by Windarti (2016) and UNESCO (2017).

As described by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2005), today, many cities have formulated strategies for transforming themselves into a ‘knowledge’

or ‘creative’ city. These concepts are driven by rapid economic and societal change. In these modern cities citizens’ knowledge, creativity and innovation are identified as the driving force of wealth creation. Knowledge cities value the quality and density of educational and research excellence and of redeveloping old industrial areas into centers for knowledge workers. Creative cities make an effort to provide the stimulation, diversity and richness of experiences for their citizens. This contributes to the Bandung city brand building.

The reality of Bandung and the opinion from PricewaterhouseCoopers (2005) are in line with Richard Florida, Professor of regional economic development at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh who recognizes the rise of the creative class of scientists, engineers, architects, educators, writers, artists, and entertainers. The creative class is characterized by creativity, individuality, diversity, and merit. Creative people have specific demands of a city. They want action and experience, a dynamic place which offers them the opportunity to be creative, the possibility of expressing themselves and the chance to develop as individuals (Florida, 2002 in PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005). Either called knowledge workers or the creative class, these are the people that the modern city tries to attract: those that will contribute most to the city’s development. Therefore, as Anholt (2008) argued that altering the image of a country or city may require something a little more substantial than graphic design, advertising or PR campaigns.

The local community participation in Bandung is also in line with FCM (2015) which stated that successful local economic development (LED) begins with a shared vision for the future of the community and a

sound strategic plan to realize that vision. Defining the identity of the community and its unique brand, and promoting that brand identity to investors and others, is an essential component of an LED strategy.

Community branding and marketing is more than a compelling logo, good promotional sales pitch, new website and communication materials. It is a synergistic process of engagement and partnership building. The ultimate outcome is to develop broad ownership of the brand identity within your community. Key stakeholders need to be committed to supporting it and to implement the various elements of your LED plan. A well-executed community branding and marketing exercise can be a vital and empowering process of local democratization, active citizenship and participation (FCM., 2015). Local Economic Development (LED) as: “...a process which brings together different partners in a local area to work together and harness local resources for sustainable economic growth.” This argument is also relevant with the emergence of creative community in Bandung which showed strong commitment for the development of Bandung city brand identity as creative city.

What happen with the community initiative in Bandung is also relevant with Dreier (1996) who argued that Community organizations should be able to develop neighborhood-based programs and working relationships with all segments of the community: schools, businesses, religious organization, and local government, including the security institution (police). Community organizing groups are an effective means of educating community residents about the availability of services as part of contribution to city development. Further, Dreier (1996) stated that the heart of the new community empowerment movement is grassroots organizing to solve social

problems and improve economic conditions in urban neighborhoods. Community organizations that engage in successful mobilization efforts sometimes branch out into community development to support city development in general. As UNESCO (2017) concluded that these are what make Bandung as it is today. These community initiatives and involvement play in important role to support the development of Bandung city branding in order to gain city competitive value. Creative city is a strong identity of Bandung city brand that distinguished Bandung with other cities in Indonesia in particular and in South East Asia in general.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion for Future Research**

### **Conclusion**

Local communities in Bandung are very active to explore Bandung city potentials. Initiatives to establish Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF) that accommodates a variety of creative industry subsectors is a proof of strong local community participation in city development. BCCF and other local community initiative, such as Cikapundung community, Sakola Cikapundung, Creative Village, Saung Ujo learning center and Selasar Sunaryo Art have shown to produce a city identity, which is able to unite creative stakeholders of Bandung to become a Creative City. They represent all aspects of creative economy in Bandung, and as the identity of a creative community, place or city. Creative city is embedded in Bandung as city brand identity.

Local community participation has created creative atmosphere in the city. It is believe as reported by UNESCO (2017) this unique identity of Bandung becomes the brand that unifies the city, for an idea that belongs to

the people and produced collectively in a place that defines Bandung. Thus this also support Bandung city branding as a creative city.

### **Implication**

The research implies the important of local community active participation in developing city branding. Support from the local government is required for the sustainability and enhancement of community participation.

### **Suggestion for future research**

Future research is suggested to use quantitative approach using variety of relevant variables to indicate and test the influence of community role in contributing to the city branding development.

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