Nation Branding and Reputation Management:

Suffering and Smiling in the 21st Century -

Case Study of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

By

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Abstract

Purpose – There have been calls for more clarity on the theoretical framework of nation brand reputation. For example, it is crucial to understand how a communicated nation brand identity translates into a more profound brand image over time. In response to this, this research explores the critical concepts of the building blocks of corporate reputation in a national setting by investigating the nation brand personality-identity and image-reputation from a multi-stakeholder perspective.

Design/methodology/approach – This study employs the qualitative case study approach, using an interpretivist orientation, to examine the Nigerian nation brand reputation in two stages. Stage one focuses on internal stakeholders (*Nigerian citizens living in Nigeria*) using semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Stage two uses semi-structured interviews and focus groups with external stakeholders (*expatriates living in Nigeria for a minimum of five years*).

Findings – The findings highlight how Nigeria's national norms and ethos have contributed to the demise of its reputation globally. The results also suggest Nigeria's nation brand is multifaceted (i) corrupt, unethical and inferior from a leadership standpoint (ii) invisible, distracted and lost due to numerous ethnic-tribes (iii) wealthy with regards to its diligent people, customs and traditions.

Research limitations/implications – The findings demonstrate different ethnic-tribes role in redefining a nation's brand identity. An implication of this is the possibility of advancing the knowledge in two distinct areas - Nation branding and Reputation. However, some of the issues emerging from these findings relate specifically to ethnically diverse nations.

Practical implications – The study showed that leadership, not Western-International media as thought, is the chief active agent for nation brand reputation in Nigeria. This understanding will aid different types of local and national governments, especially those in the continental brand of Africa, to audit and deconstruct their national brands for strategic management and development.

Originality/value – This is the first in-depth study that connects and provides a well-balanced view of the theory of nation branding and reputation literature. The case analysis of the corporate-nation brand of Nigeria also presents a developing economy perspective of nation brand reputation. In summary, this study provides an original systematic *"fundamental building block of nation brand reputation"*. Illustrating a new collaborative mechanism that engages individual citizens and governments to co-create new national values that can defend their anticipated reputation worldwide.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   **Problem Statement**

It has previously been observed that *"we need more than jingles"* (Adegoju 2016, p. 1) to emphasise the irregularity with - accentuating temporary 'short-term' measures to help deal with long-standing nation brand contexts (Zeina 2019). In essence, a growing body of literature recognises that; there are no shortcuts to nation branding (Edwards and Ramamurthy 2017; Govers 2019). Contrary to how existing accounts have addressed the topic (Fan 2010; Fanning 2011; Ucok-Hughes and Bagramian 2013), failing to acknowledge and confront the complex nature of nation brands (Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013; Aronczyk 2019). Concurrently, the last two decades have witnessed a growing trend towards applying corporate branding key concepts to a nation brand situation (Pawlusz and Polese 2017; Tan 2018). As a result, critical concepts such as personality, identity, and image (Balmer et al., 1997; Ingenhoff and Fuhrer 2010; Heaton 2018) have increasingly been used to investigate nation branding theory. But one major theoretical issue that has dominated the field in this time is that - these concepts have been explored in isolation and predominantly from the vantage point of an 'image' management perspective (Echeverri et al., 2019). Hence, the volume of studies in corporate - nation branding has not produced the same amount of clarity needed to address the issues and challenges of nation branding, with significant prominence on a long-term focus (Kapferer 2008; Jordan 2014; Biraghi and Gambetti 2015). Instead, nation brands should understand how their personality, identity and image translates into a deeper set of brand images over time - for long-lasting support (Anholt 2016; Papp-Vary 2019; Mariutti and Giraldi 2020). Thus, limited in understanding (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Kaneva 2017; Edwards and Ramamurthy 2017), more systematic approaches (Konecnik and de Chernatony 2013; Stahlberg and Bolin 2016) are two of the most frequently stated calls within nation branding research. Furthermore, the integral elements underpinning a nation brand context remain speculative and are not fully understood (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015; Compte-Pujol, Eugenio-Vela and Frigola-Reig 2018).

But then, central to the brand management area of study is the concept of 'reputation', which is at the heart of our understanding of a systematic and progressive initiative (Roper and Fill 2012; Schultz, Hatch and Adam 2012; Fill 2013) to nation branding research. Thus, this study combines the disparate knowledge of nation branding with the

sub-area of corporate reputation to provide a helpful framework for investigating nation brand reputation. Therefore, this thesis contributes to cross-functional research and expands the nation branding and reputation knowledge base at a higher pace. Up to this point, little attention has been paid to nation brand reputation empirical research (Foroudi et al., 2016; Hao et al., 2019). Even though observations by Anholt (2016), the pioneering scholar of nation branding, has consistently shown that nation branding, on its own, lacks the conceptualisation of the broader perspective (Kaneva 2011; Jordan 2014). The type of perspective dedicated to delivering an integrative approach that envisages a brighter future for nation brands (Aronczyk 2019; Govers 2019).

Understanding the holistic and more comprehensive perspective flanked by nation branding and reputation - will help nation brands and their communities of scholars; obtain impactful clarity on this matter of nation brand reputation (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016). Unfortunately, there is little published data on nation branding and reputation research, and key authors (e.g. Govers 2019; Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020) have affirmed that this deserves more research attention. This study contributes a systematic investigation to establish the significance of nation brand personality, identity, and image, to reach new conclusions on nation brand reputation (Timmermans and Tavory 2012; Anholt 2016). Accordingly, this investigation hopes to uncover underlying factors or elements of these central concepts - which has not been done before in the context of nation brands (Compte-Pujol, Eugenio-Vela and Frigola-Reig 2018), particularly in an African nation brand context (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015; Adegoju 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017; Matiza 2021). Such insight is relevant in general because it mitigates against recuperative problems for the brand management community and provides long-term corporate-like solutions to nation brands (Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020). The following section presents a brief overview of corporate - nation branding research.

1.2. <u>**Corporate - Nation Branding and Reputation Research**</u>

Over the years, corporate branding and reputation research have expanded into different contexts (Melewar, Nguyen and Abimbola 2013; Balmer et al., 2017). Such as politics (Pich, Dean and Punjaisri 2016), education (Chapleo 2011; Spry et al., 2020) and product brands (Strebinger 2014). However, there is limited research in the context of nation brands (Van Ham 2001; Anholt 2007; Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). Studies of corporate brands show the importance of corporate branding and reputation theory (Fan 2005; Kumar and Moller 2018; Lu et al., 2019, Melewar, Foroudi and Jin 2020). They also

establish it is a complex research area involving different stakeholder views of corporate personality, identity, image and reputation (Bickerton 2000; Dowling 2001; Iglesias, Ind and Schultz 2020). For example, a considerable amount of literature has been published to show that corporate brand identity is internal and concerns employees (internal stakeholders) (De Chernatony 1999; Kapferer 2012). In contrast, corporate brand image is external and interests customers (external stakeholders) (Balmer 1999, 2003; Roper and Davies 2007). Many models discuss these concepts from a stand-alone perspective (Bosnjak, Bochmann and Hufschmidt 2017; Kitchen 2013; Iglesias et al., 2020). Conversely, this thesis moves away from the stand-alone perspective to recognising Fill's (2013) building blocks of corporate reputation as the model which best fits corporate branding and reputation theory because it analyses the subject from a multi-stakeholder perspective (internal and external). Dealing with the concepts together as building blocks (Fill 2013). In addition, it expresses that while these concepts are distinct, they are interrelated and mutually interdependent (Abimbola et al., 2012; Beger 2018; Chaurasia and Patel 2018).

Little is known about the relationship between the four concepts of the building blocks of corporate reputation, i.e. personality, identity, image and reputation in a national context (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015; Vecchi, Silva and Jimenez Angel 2020). So it is not understandable that they could be interlinked and mutually interdependent in the way the Fill (2013) corporate reputation model describes (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016). Thus, this thesis explores the extent to which these fundamentals are linked and interrelated in a nation brand setting. To date, no study has looked specifically at the interrelationship and significance of multiple stakeholder perspectives in a nation branding context (Kotsi et al., 2018). Therefore, this proposed research addresses this gap by exploring a nation brand explicitly from an internal and external perspective, examining their distinctness and interrelatedness. Establishing these connections will shape how a nation brand; can be viewed from a multi-stakeholder perspective (Kotsi et al., 2018). This knowledge will advance corporate branding research and provide a deeper insight into corporate branding in new contexts and settings (Biraghi and Gambetti 2015).

Markedly, Anholt (1998) first coined the concept of nation branding in the literature. Subsequent reviews have called for checks on its validity and suitability (Fan 2006; Kaneva 2011) and for in-depth research to confirm the theoretical benefits of corporate branding and corporate reputation literary works in nations' settings (Balmer and Grey 2003; Skinner 2005; Dinnie 2015; Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015). This

issue has grown in importance in light of globalisation and nations seeking a relative advantage to engage in more direct competition (Olins 2002; Angell and Mordhorst 2015; Kavaratzis and Dennis 2018). Therefore, this work will generate novel insights into how nations can deconstruct and understand their brands' personality, identity, image, and reputation to harness their respective strengths (Anholt 2007). Moreover, a nations' brand competitive strength has been associated with a wide range of economic and developmental progression (Rehmet and Dinnie 2013; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). Subsequently, a neglected and complacent nation brand reputation has been shown to be related to adverse effects in national (1) exports, (2) inbound tourism, (3) foreign investment, (4) political influence internationally and (5) negative stereotypes (Fetscherin 2010; Dinnie 2015; Burrai, Buda and Stanford 2019). Therefore, the debate continues about the best strategies for guiding a nation brand to alleviate these adverse circumstances (Morgan, Prichard and Pride 2011; Briciu and Briciu 2019). This thesis is not to examine all the effects of a nation's brand personality, identity, image, and reputation. However, this research offers an in-depth understanding of how nation brands can henceforward elude circumstances prone to hamper their credibility in the future.

Equally important, it is worth emphasising that limited empirical frameworks are available specifically to assess a nation's reputation. However, the Fombrun-RI country reputation index (Passow et al., 2005), adapted from the validated Harris-Fombrun reputation quotient (1996), is one. This country reputation instrument proposed physical, financial, leadership, cultural, social, and emotional appeal as the dimensions used to explore a nation's reputation (Passow et al. 2005). However, having adapted the Fill (2013) building blocks of corporate reputation conceptual knowledge to fit with the existing critical literature reviewed (Anholt 2011; Aronczyk 2013; Dinnie 2015; Anholt 2016; Mariutti, Medeiros and Buarque 2019), significant omissions were noted. Remarkably, five of the six dimensions defined - were firmly focused on the nation as:

- A' space' by itself.
- Independent of people, with little or no emphasis on the nation's citizens/internal stakeholders (internal -identity).
- No importance on who the people are, what they stand for, and how they contribute positively or hurt a nation's reputation.

The proposed investigation addresses this gap by exploring the issue of nation brand reputation from an internal and external perspective; to attain an empirical understanding of a nation's personality and identity from the significant (resident)

citizen's experiences (internal perspective). Then the image and reputation from (resident) expatriate experiences (external perspective). Thus, expressly based on the case context (Nigeria), this investigation will be a significant geographical and situated contribution to knowledge (Adegoju 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). This thesis justifies Nigeria as the choice case context for this study in the next section. Chapter 2 (Background to Nigeria) will provide more detail about the nation – Nigeria.

1.3. <u>Nigeria Nation Brand Reputation Research</u>

Investigating nation branding is a continuing concern spread over multiple research fields, e.g. public diplomacy, international relations and marketing (Jordan 2004; Aronczyk 2013; Avraham 2020). However, it has been observed that most existing research is western (developed economy) focused (Stahlberg and Bolin 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017), obliging nations with favourable images to best promote and manage those images (Wu 2017). Thus, scant research evidence considers nations with much less fortunate image(s) and reputation - for example, those in Africa with challenges and instability (Onafalujo et al. 2010; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). Likewise, many African nations' instability and social insecurity have long been a question of great interest in various fields, both within and outside Africa (Jones and Kubacki 2014; Njozela, Shaw and Burns 2017). For example, migration and humanities scholars (Brzoska and Frohlich 2016; Carothers 2018; Langa, Swanzy and Uetela 2018; Ajide and Alimi 2019) have heightened the issue about the unceasing trend towards political instability and economically poor conditions in Africa - becoming extremely difficult to ignore. Hence, many calls for practical interventions and instruments that can bolster the Africa-specific identity for the new global economy - have been raised (Viosca, Bergiel and Balsmeier 2004; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017; Burnell, Rackner and Randall 2017). This study cannot encompass the entire critical issues for policy and practice in Africa's continental brand. However, this thesis responds to these calls by probing and examining an essential African-nation brand context - Nigeria.

Notably, Nigeria is a nation in the relatively unstable and underdeveloped (Alexander et al., 2012; Sohn 2020) yet economically strategic continent of the world - Africa (Dinnie 2015; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). Hence, like many African nations, Nigeria has long struggled with an unfavourable reputation (Elcher and Lledholm 1970; Odia and Isibor, 2014; Dike 2014; Mintel 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017), predicated and worsened by social-economic and political instability (Adeleke et al., 2014). Markedly, Nigeria has over 206 million (resident) people (Statista 2020), the

most populated nation in Africa (Adeleke et al., 2014; Worldometer 2021). Also, given its economic potential, Nigeria is well recognised as the West African sub-regions significant economy (Odia and Agbonifoh 2015) and Africa's largest economy (Bloomberg 2020; Statista 2020). Therefore, nations in the increasingly unstable African continent; look up to Nigeria (Eneh 2011; Ezeocha 2016; Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike 2016).

Regarding nation brand building in a more general sense, the number of nations that have engaged in nation branding initiatives to favour their perceptions has increased over the years, such as Germany, Scotland, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, and Britain (Anholt 2007; Dinnie 2015). Nigeria has been one of such nations to embark on branding initiatives to improve its perception and reputation. However, in Nigeria's case, despite these branding exercises Nigeria went through, its reputation remains unfavourable (Liewerscheidt 2015; Pierce 2016; Adegoju 2016; Sohn 2020). This point, considered alongside the desire to advance its national brand value (Odia and Agbonifoh, 2015) and the resident challenges previously mentioned, makes Nigeria the ideal context for a - nation brand reputation exploration. Besides, this thesis argues that due to Nigeria's economic capabilities, a successful Nigerian nation-branding effort; is likely to be imitated by other nations in the unstable (Mintel 2016; Sievert and Steinbuks 2020) continental brand of Africa. This inspiration coincides with a specific call by Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi (2015) for nation branding empirical research in the African continent conducted by indigenous Africans. In the interest of addressing some of the residing challenges to nation branding practices in the continent, which may be invisible to non-African interveners. Thus, this research is valuable in being focused methodologically and culturally on the case of Nigeria - Africa.

Significantly, as part of its vision 2020 (Nigeria's NV20:2020 Economic Transformation Blueprint), inaugurated in the year 2008 (Odia and Agbonifoh 2015). Nigeria operationalised strategies to revamp its brand image and enhance its reputation internationally (Ezeocha 2016; Odia and Agbonifoh 2015). Nigeria embarked on this vision in the interest of rapid economic growth, sustained socio-economic development and the view of being a role model to other nations in the African continent (Eneh 2011). However, through the commencement of this vision and now thirteen years on, Nigeria's reputation seems not to have improved. There is also very little research on what Nigeria's brand identity factually is (Bernstein 2017). Then again, Nigeria's desire to strengthen its brand identity and reputation through several nation branding initiatives with the most recent substantial effort identified as the ('Branding Nigeria campaign' -

unveiled on 17th March 2009) and declared 'unsuccessful' (Ademigbuji 2015). These unsuccessful efforts provide clear evidence that marketing campaigns alone cannot directly alter places' negative perceptions (Anholt 2016). Accordingly, these unproductive nation branding attempts; develop part of this study's theoretical gap and due justification, which envisages that it is critically vital for national governments to understand their brand identity from an internal perspective to better their external reputation (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu 2006; Schein 2009; Roper and Fill 2012). The following sections describe the aim, objectives, procedures, and methods used in this investigation.

1.4.   <u>Thesis Aim and Objectives</u>

This study explores a nation brand using the fundamental concepts of personality, identity, image and reputation. Additionally, this study sort to obtain data that will help address the key research gap previously underlined, which is to explore the Nigerian nation brand from a multi-stakeholder perspective in a holistic manner. That is to say, it explicitly follows a case-study design with an in-depth analysis of the Nigerian nation brand. Expressly, as established by Creswell (2007), Farquhar (2012), Corbin and Strauss (2018), the real business of case study research is, understanding the case through an interpretation of the data. Yin (2018) also argues that the niche for case studies is to investigate a contemporary set of events that the researcher barely controls. Thus, a case study is suitable for providing a holistic, in-depth investigation into a current phenomenon in a particular context (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012; Gustafsson 2017). All relevant to this investigation. The following section below (see section 1.5 – thesis structure chapter 4) briefly describes other relevant methodology approaches for this study. Indeed, this study's aim was:

- ***To understand and explain nation brand reputation by exploring the Federal Republic of Nigeria's context - from a multi-stakeholder perspective. Aided by the building blocks of corporate reputation critical concepts of personality, identity, image and reputation.***

In order to achieve this aim, this thesis implemented Farquhar's (2012) "Case Study - Research Tripod" (p. 34) comprising the conceptual framework, research strategy and discussions/contribution (see appendix A – designing case study - research tripod). Therefore, four main objectives stood (i) distinct (Merriam and Tisdell 2015), (ii) broad enough to avoid eliminating any potentially important dimension (Ritchie et al., 2013),

and iii) specific enough (Maxwell 2008; Saunders and Lewis 2012) to help focus the research design and deliver on the thesis aim. These **objectives** were to:

1. Uncover the theoretical scope of corporate-nation brand reputation.
2. Investigate nation brand personality-identity in the context of Nigeria from the perspective of internal stakeholders.
3. Explore nation brand image-reputation in the context of Nigeria from the perspective of external stakeholders.
4. Establish how a nation's brand personality-identity and image-reputation alignment and constructs impact the reputation and how these can be managed and enhanced.

1.5. Thesis Structure

This thesis is composed of eight themed chapters. Chapter One, the introduction, presents the relevance of the research from a theoretical and contextual perspective. In the same vein, it highlights the research contributions, aims, objectives and methodology adopted.

Chapter two presents the Nigerian nation brand in context. This chapter gives Nigeria a background, featuring leading events and principal developments that constitute the Nigerian nation brand in its current form.

Chapter three analyses the thesis's theoretical underpinnings and looks at how the building blocks of corporate reputation key concepts are connected. What follows is a discussion on nation branding and reputation hypothetical dimension. The review of previous theories and research on corporate-nation branding and reputation enabled sharper and more insightful perspectives on nation brand reputation (Farquhar 2012; Yin 2018). Concurrently, the pertinent knowledge and gaps in the body of knowledge are demonstrated, and a proposed conceptual framework is presented (objective #1).

Chapter four is concerned with the methodology used for this study. First, it explains the methodological approach, including the philosophical underpinnings adopted by the researcher. This thesis adopts a subjective ontological stance, an interpretivist tradition,

as the epistemological assumption (Saunders 2011; Marshall and Rossman 2014). Second, the justification for implementing a qualitative case study design to answer the research objectives is put forward. According to Simons (2009), and Yin (2018), a critical relationship exists between qualitative case study research theory and data collection methods. Hence, the corporate branding and reputation' relevant stakeholder propositions informed the data collection of this research in two phases: (i) the resident Nigerian federal government employees with (27 individual semi-structured interviews and 2 focus group discussions) and (ii) resident - expatriates living in Nigeria for a minimum of five years for their long-term experience and perspective of Nigeria with (22 individual semi-structured interviews and 2 focus group discussions). The data collected in this study was until theoretical saturation. The approach to data analysis was an inductive approach to thematic analysis in order to answer the research objectives (Nowell et al., 2017). Thus, allowing ideas, concepts and themes to emerge from the raw data (data-driven) (King and Horrocks 2010; Gioia, Corley and Hamilton 2013). In essence, this research's thematic analysis revealed the outcome of the internal and external stakeholder perspectives on Nigeria's nation brand in terms of inductive commonality (Yin 2018). Finally, this chapter addresses the research quality issues for a qualitative case study.

Chapter five reports the main findings from analysing the internal stakeholder's data (personality and identity - objective #2). This section lays out the emerging themes from Nigeria's nation brand personality. The overarching themes found to make up the core nature and character of the Nigerian nation brand personality were: (1) submission as the 'norm', (2) impact triviality, and (3) positive attributes. The sub-themes were: (i) (Nigerian creole) - 'I pass my neighbour' ethos, (ii) complicacy, (iii) subservience, (iv) wasteful and (v) impulsivity values. Following next are the emerging themes from Nigeria's nation brand identity. Three overarching themes emerged for Nigeria's nation brand identity from the analysis of Nigeria's nation brand. Namely (1) inferior leadership, (2) institutionalised rationalisation and (3) ethno-tribal intercommunications. These themes had some distinct sub-themes, which were: (i) corruption, plague, (ii) immunity, (iii) 'suffering and smiling' culture, (iv) cultural diversity and exclusion, and (v) toxic tribalism. In this section, part of telling the story of the Nigerian nation brand was ordering the themes in a manner that best reflected the connections among the data. A data structure visualising the results from the thematic analysis is shown in the appendix section (see appendix G i and G ii).

Chapter six focuses on the central findings from analysing the external stakeholder's data (image and reputation – objective #3). This section generates a deeper understanding of the Nigerian nation brand from external stakeholders' perspectives by presenting the data's overall narrative - acknowledging Nigeria's image-reputation. As in chapter five, the findings in this chapter are presented to demonstrate the data's connections. The overarching themes from this chapter were: (1) submission as the 'norm', (2) (un) sustainability culture, (3) inferior leadership, (4) leadership communications, (5) cross-cultural mismanagement and (6) positive attributes. These six overarching themes collectively represent how external stakeholders construct and understand their experiences of the Nigerian nation brand. The sub-themes under these overarching themes were: (i) 'predator-prey' culture, (ii) complexity, (iii) self-destructive, (iv) short-termism, (v) omnipresent corruption, (vi) impunity, (vii) cultural diversity and insensitivity and (viii) ethnic-tribal loyalty. A data structure visualising the results from the thematic analysis is shown in the appendix section (see appendix G iii).

Chapter seven provides a critical discussion of this study's empirical findings using significant, relevant, unexpected concepts and themes, likewise adopting the existing literature and theories as a way to connect the themes to a broader discussion (Farquhar 2012; Yin 2018). First, from internal stakeholder viewpoints (personality-identity). Next, from the external stakeholders' perspectives (image-reputation). This knowledge is then further synthesised with the literature and previously 'proposed conceptual framework' (objective #1) from chapter three (see chapter 3 - conceptual background section 3.6. Theoretical-Conceptual Scope of Nation Brand Reputation) to make knowledge claims and originality (Stake 2005; Saunders 2011). This chapter's final section focuses on developing a revised conceptual framework labelled as the *'fundamental building blocks of nation brand reputation'*. This conceptual framework is a theoretical modification developed from the significance of the data's patterns and their broader meaning and implications with the literature - answering objective #4.

Finally, chapter eight addresses the thesis's main conclusions, summarising the essential findings, theoretical contributions, and practical and policy implications. This thesis then closes by expanding on the study's limitations and matters for future research.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND TO NIGERIA

This thesis highlighted the context, scholarly background, and significance of this study in the previous chapter. At the same time, it provided an overview of the research aim, objectives, design, and methods. Therefore, this chapter provides the background, general overview, and political experience of Nigeria so far. Given that Nigeria was the *"extreme, critical and revelatory"* (Yin, 2018 p 49, 50) choice case context for this study (see section 4.5.2 - single versus multiple case design rationale). It was deemed important to provide past information on Nigeria for a preliminary understanding of the Nigerian nation brand (Yin 2018). Thus, this chapter will be structured using key highlights and the historical context of Nigeria that contribute to the actuality and conditions of Nigeria in its present circumstances. First, the nation profile:

2.1.   **Nation Profile**

Many scholars believe Nigeria's federal republic is one of Africa's most significant (Parboteeah, Seriki and Hoegl 2014; Adesola and Brennan 2019). Topographically, Nigeria is located on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa and shares its boundaries with four nations: Benin Republic, Niger, Cameroun, and Chad. Nigeria has 36 states and one federal capital territory within six geopolitical zones (See appendix C - Nigeria geopolitical zones and their states). Nigeria holds many natural resources (petroleum, tin, columbite, iron ore, coal, limestone, lead, zinc, natural gas, hydropower, arable land) (Dinda 2014; The natural resources reserves 2020), including river Niger and Benue - the most extensive waterways in West Africa. It has been reported that a fascinating element exceptional to these waterways is - they meet at a point (Lokoja, Kogi state Nigeria), converged to frame a y-shaped landmark that channels southwards into the Atlantic Ocean (Meseko, Obieje and Karpenko 2018). One of the three notable river confluences in Africa.

Nigeria has an expanse of land measured at 923,768 sq km, with diverse ethnic groups exceeding 250 and having over 500 languages. However, the official language of Nigeria is English. Among the ethnic groups are seven majorities. In order of population and political influence are: the Hausa-Fulani, 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, and Tiv 2.5%. Together, all the ethnic groups bring Nigeria's population to an estimated 210 million, the largest in Africa (Statista 2020). Among different

variables, such as the size of its economy, these have earned Nigeria the name "Giant of Africa" (Bernstein 2017; Sohn 2020) even though it is a fairly young country (Peters 2012; Okeke et al., 2019). Despite Nigeria's youth, compared to other African nations, the area goes back thousands of years. For example, archaeologists have discovered a handful of clay carvings in a town called Nok in central Nigeria - a settlement for a culture that existed in times dating over two thousand years (Rupp, Ameje and Breunig 2005).

2.2.   Regaining Independence

It has been recorded that the transatlantic slave trade from the 16th to 19th Century is noteworthy as a time when Africa became a casualty, many people lost their sense of freedom and sentimentality to human suffering (Rönnbäck 2015; Britannica 2020). Current Nigeria's tribal kingdoms also fell victim to the slave trade and, following her defeat to Britain in the 1800s, became a British protectorate in 1901. In the aftermath of the descent, the British created the area's colonies comprising the northern and southern protectorates. On 1st January 1914, Lord Fredrick Lugard - the north and southern protectorate leader, merged both colonies and formally created Nigeria. Until her independence in 1960, Nigeria was presided over by the British, and precisely on 1st October 1960, Nigeria was granted independence. Consequently, Nigeria became a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, part of the United Nations, and Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a northern Nigerian, was its first president.

2.3.   Religious Tension

It has been reported that many Nigerians were enthusiasts of traditional religions towards the start of the twentieth century (Oladiti 2014). But, British colonial policies dissuaded this, so that Nigerians were categorised predominantly as Muslims and Christians – encouraging the development of ethno-national identities in Nigeria (Vaughan 2016). Currently, religious associations are constitutionally legal in Nigeria; however, the Muslim and Christian religion dominates, and there are persistent clashes between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria (Baldauf 2010; Burgis 2010; Onopajo and Usman 2015). Muslims reside permanently in the northern states and scantly in some southern states, where three-fourths of the public identify with Islam. In contrast, Christians dwell in the eastern states, making up most of the general public.

2.4. Crude Oil and Economic Instability

As was pointed out in the introduction of this thesis, Nigeria's economy in the gross domestic product category is the largest in Africa (Statista 2020). However, the economy has been largely reliant on crude oil, with more than 90% of its export earnings emanating from crude oil commodities (Fapetu and Owoeye 2017). According to many economists, this situation resulted from global increases in oil's monetary value from the 1970s and Nigeria's sudden growth in transportation, construction, manufacturing, and governmental services (Pinto 1987; Marwah 2014; Fuady 2015). Consequently, there was a large influx of rural communities into urban settlements (Pinto 1987). But, the oil industry became unstable as prices continued to diminish and fluctuate (Iwayemi and Fowowe 2011; Jerome and Nabena 2016). However, the significant past movement of Nigeria's urban resettlement had already negatively affected Nigeria's agricultural industry, so agricultural production stagnated (Turner 1999; Marwah 2014). Furthermore, due to fluctuating global oil market prices and the sudden growth in Nigeria's population, the Nigerian agricultural sector continually encountered a crisis (Che, Strand and Vajjhala 2020; Gbadegesin and Olajire-Ajayi 2020; Raifu and Aminu 2020). As a result, Nigeria now largely relies on imports to meet its populace's food and agricultural demands (Ahungwa, Haruna and Muktar 2014; Sani and Alhassan 2018).

2.5. Nigeria's Political Instability - The Civil War, Military Paranoia and Civilian Rule

On 30th May 1967, 'Lt Colonel Ojukwu' announced the formal withdrawal from Nigeria, three eastern region states functioning as - 'the Republic of Biafra'. The Nigerian federal government comprehended this an 'act of rebellion, which ensued in a civil war from 6th July 1967 to the 15th January 1970. Even so, Biafra began to earn recognition from international organisations by securing aid as an immediate aftereffect of its people's starvation (Omake 2014). Although on 24th December 1969, Biafra collapsed, and the leader "Ojukwu" absconded from Nigeria and sought refuge in Cote d'Ivoire on 11th January 1970. Following the leaders' escape, the Biafran delegation surrendered officially to Nigeria's government in Lagos. However, the hope of a united and integrated Nigeria post-independence; had been hampered severely by the civil war (Carter and Marenin 1981; Howard 2017).

After the devastating civil war, it has been reported that the Nigerian government capitalised on the profitable proceeds recorded during the oil boom period and utilised

the generated funds to invest in developmental and formative programs (Ayam 2008). Then came a military coup, and the then-head of state, General Yakubu Gowon, was overthrown in July 1975. He fled Nigeria to Britain, and General Murtala Ramat Mohammed became the successive head of state. It is a widely held view that Murtala Ramat Mohammed introduced a number of reformist actions - but had a short tenure in office. He notably transferred the Nigerian Federal Capital domiciled in Lagos state to Abuja, paving the way for returning to civilian rule (Moore 1984). Tragically, he was ambushed and assassinated in 1976 during a failed coup attempt and succeeded by his Chief of Staff - General Olusegun Obasanjo, on 13th February 1976.

- ❖ **The Second Republic 1979 -1983**

To usher in the second republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo vividly implemented his predecessors plans to terminate military rule in Nigeria and return Nigeria to civilian rule (Osiebe 2018). A new constitution was enacted as a first step, replacing the British-style parliamentary structure with an American-style presidential one (Spalding 2000). Under this presidential style, the presidency's title and office bestow tremendous powers to the officeholder; however, the president could assume office upon the satisfactory completion of an election. One-fourth of an election vote in two-thirds of the states in Nigeria must be secured, and therefore, elections needed to be organised and completed. In the periods leading to the general election, scores of political parties surfaced; however, only five were registered (i) National Party Nigeria (NPN), (ii) Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), (iii) People's Redemption Party (PRP) (iv) Nigeria People's Party (NPN) and (v) Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). The NPN presidential candidate Shehu Shagari won the election. After his first tenure, Shehu Shagari also won the subsequent election. But it has commonly been assumed that the second election was tainted with gross voting anomalies (Ashindorbe and Danjibo 2019). It is also believed that Shehu Shagari's inability to effectively curb the political dilemma and the dwindling economic situation brought about another successful military coup by 31st December 1983 (Chan 1984). Therefore, there was a power change back to military rule, and Major General Muhammad Buhari's emerged as the next head of state (Osiebe 2018).

- ❖ **Military Regimes, 1983-1999**

Major General Muhammad Buhari credited the coup that ousted the previous government by citing persistent social indiscipline and a dwindling economy (Ap- Reuter 1985; Swift 2015). It is reported that his government embarked on a "War Against

Indiscipline" (WAI) program to solve the national-social issues and corruption (Odeka 1988; Echikwonye and Beetseh 2011). This approach gave rise to politicians' detention and imprisonment on a large scale, including people believed to be innocent, such as journalists (May 1984; Dare 1997). Thus, this led to more economic and social burdens experienced by the Nigerian public (Ukaegbu 1997; Jibril 2017). It has commonly been assumed that Nigeria's reputation remarkably began to crumble around this time because of the more frequent governmental and societal problems showcased in the international media (Agbaje and Adisa 1988; Aleyemo 2020). Simultaneously, another military coup brought about General Ibrahim Babangida's emergence as the new head of state in August 1985.

It has been reported that General Ibrahim Babangida facilitated political detainees' freedom and pledged to run a government that places a premium on public opinion (Omagu 2013). However, there was already a public outcry for discontinuing military rule and returning to civilian democracy (Mama 1998). It is believed that in adherence to the public demand, General Ibrahim Babangida aided the emergence of a civilian government overtly. But covertly, he was plotting to subdue the process in a quest to hold on to power (Oyediran and Agbaje 1991; Maier 1992). In 1992, a presidential primary election to transition to civilian rule was declared by him and said to be invalid afterwards, confirming the public's mistrust (Omagu 2013). His government then prohibited all the candidates from participating in politics ever (Omagu 2013). However, even though Babangida annulled the 1992 presidential election and barred all candidates from running for office, a presidential election was scheduled for June 1993 between two pro-government candidates: Chief M.K.O Abiola of the SDP and Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the NRC party. It is thought that the Babangida-led administration envisioned the elections would not materialise. It is also believed that his government assumed the North and South's disagreement would result in a deadlock - if the election occurred. However, the elections took place when due and were tagged free, fair and conflict-free - to his governments surprise (Ford 2002). As a result, Chief MKO Abiola emerged as the election winner.

Regardless, General Ibrahim Babangida declared the election results 'null and void' - before they were formally announced and made public (Ali, Dalaram and Dauda 2018). It has been reported that this led to his resignation as the head of state in 1993. After that, an Interim National Government by Ernest Shonekan, one of the government's senior civilian delegates, was instituted, and he became the new civilian head of state. However, his tenure was short (3 months - 26th August 1993 – 17th November 1993)

because General Sani Abachi overthrew him and returned Nigeria to military rule (Lewis 1994).

It is believed General Sani Abacha unarguably pledged to facilitate the prolonged transition of Nigeria to civilian rule whilst he secretly plotted to retain power (Harrison and Duodu 1995; Marby 1998). Numerous pieces of evidence suggest many anomalies ensued during General Sani Abacha's regime, including gross human rights abuse (Boyd 1999; Abdulrasheed, Ogo and Ani 2015; Muda and Bin Ahmad 2016). It has been reported that his political opponents and critics were violated severely, including Chief Moshood Abiola, who had won the presidential election (Ikpe 2000). Chief Moshood Abiola was imprisoned by Abacha's government in June 1994 and died in detention in July 1998 (By 1998; Adebanwi 2008). Many scholars believe that - due process of law, press freedom, individual liberty, and human rights were all neglected and violated by Abacha's government (Njoku 2001; Black 2003; Ekweremadu 2013). It is also widely reported that trade union movements were banned, protesters killed, and the struggle for democratic rights defeated (Mahmud 1993; Brisman, South and Walters 2020). Abacha later died in June 1998 - believed to have been murdered (King 2016). The successive head of state was General Abdulsam Abubakar, who also pledged to ensure a smooth transition of power to civilians. This time was successful. It has been suggested that because he halted the intimidation of political opponents and set political prisoners free, this boosted Nigeria's image internationally (Childs 1998); however, Nigeria's economic performance remained abysmal (Njoku 2001).

❖ **Return to Civilian Rule - The 1999 Elections**

According to analysts, political activity blossomed after Abacha's regime (Kraxberger 2004). Several political parties formed, but three proceeded to contest for elections - (i) People's Democratic Party (PDP), (ii) Alliance for Democracy, and (iii) All People's Party. Besides the presidential election, sub-elections such as councillors for local governments, legislatures for the state, national assemblies, and state governors were conducted in all earnestness – involving a team of international observers - The Carter Center (Kew 1999; Thurston 2015). After all, Olusegun Obasanjo of the PDP, a former military head of state between (13th February 1976 – 1st October 1979), was declared the winner.

On 29th May 1999, Obasanjo was sworn in as President of Nigeria and created a new Nigerian constitution still in force today. It is thought that the international community and Nigerians who had grown weary of a long and crisis-prone military regime -

welcomed the government change (Oshodi 2007). Obasanjo was re-elected in 2003 in the first civilian-administered elections since Nigeria's independence in 1960.

2.6.   <u>Nigeria's Current Constitutional-Political framework</u>

According to the 1999 Nigerian constitution, Nigeria's administrative and directorial powers are bestowed on the president, who serves as both Chief Executive and Head of State (Mbah 2007). Possible after going through an election and being inaugurated into office to do a four-year or eight-year term, depending on successful re-election. The president, before assuming office, is mandated to nominate a vice-presidential candidate, and upon taking office, the president also has to nominate cabinet members. Also disclosed in the constitution is the facilitation of a two-chambered legislative body called the bicameral National Assembly, made up of the Senate - the upper chamber and the House of Representatives - the lower chamber. Likewise, the 1999 constitution provides a stipulation for each of the states in Nigeria to offer three Senate members. The Federal Capital Territory - Abuja is the exception, offering one senate member. All Senate members are elected into the Senate to serve a four-year term which can be re-contested multiple times. However, the number of house representatives that can emerge from each state varies, and they are elected into office to serve a four-year term or more.

In light of that, the Nigerian government comprises two government levels - functioning beneath the Federal level, the: (i) state government and the (ii) local government. As indicated previously, there are 36 states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (See appendix C - Nigeria geopolitical zones and their states). Within these states are 774 local governments. The state governments controlled the duties and responsibilities at the local government level until 1988. When the Federal government financially backed the local government setups without any intermediaries.

Then again, the 1999 Nigerian constitution allows for additional states to be created as the need arises. Formerly, following independence, Nigeria was sectioned into three regions: Eastern, Western and Northern regions. Subsequently, the government's administration of 1963 created the 'mid-western' region - carved out of the Western region. In 1967 Col. Yakubu Gowon, the then head of state, divided the regions into 12 states - three in the Western region, three in the Eastern region and six in the Northern part. Additionally, General Murtala Mohammed's successive government in 1976 created an additional seven from the existing twelve - making the total nineteen. Continuing in the same vein, General Ibrahim Babangida created eleven states from the existing

nineteen during his regime. Whilst General Sani Abacha formed an additional six making up the current today at 36 states.

In conclusion, Nigeria is still in civilian democracy, and its most recent election was in 2019. However, the periods leading to general elections are always tense and filled with prospective violence speculations (Fafchamps and Vicente 2013; Oyewole and Omotola 2021). A record number of political parties are now registered in Nigeria. However, two are dominant the (i) All Progressive Congress party (APC) and (ii) People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Chidi 2015). In 2015 Muhammad Buhari from the APC, previously a military head of state in Nigeria between (13th December 1983 – 27th August 1985) emerged as president. He won re-election in 2019, and on 29th May 2019, Muhammad Buhari was once again inaugurated as president.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, the background literature in the area of corporate branding and reputation is presented. This existing literature identifies the critical gaps in the nation branding and reputation context. Notably, the extensive body of knowledge in corporate branding and corporate reputation combined; gave justification for this research. It served as a canopy for a broader understanding of nation brand reputation through the key concepts of corporate brand reputation. Therefore, this section begins by presenting how corporate branding is relevant and applicable at large and conceptually. A more detailed account of the aims and intentions of corporate reputation is considered next and followed by highlighting corporate communications role in the corporate branding and reputation process. After presenting the existing literature on corporate branding and reputation, this chapter concludes by combining the key knowledge abducted from the corporate branding and reputation research area. It applies them to contrive - the concept of nation branding and reputation, rationalising their dependent relationship while emphasising the knowledge gap and overall research aim of this study. Thus, at the end of this chapter, a proposed theoretical framework specifying the key constructs underpinning this nation brand reputation research, also answering research objective #1, is presented. This conceptual framework develops from the thorough, critical review and reflection of the concepts and relevant literature written on corporate - nation branding and reputation. The chapter that follows presents the methodological framework of this thesis to address this thesis's research objectives. But first and foremost:

3.1.   The Importance of Corporate Branding

The emphasis on corporate branding is driven by the broader view of a corporate brand and the decision-making considerations of prospective stakeholders (Balmer 2012; Brexendorf and Keller 2017). In the literal sense, corporate branding may appear to be externally focused - in audience composition. But evidence indicates that what actually occurs is - the internal stakeholders inform the external stakeholders about their corporate brand based on their understanding of it (Davies and Chun 2002; Punjaisri and Wilson 2017). As a result, there are potential wider aspects of the corporate brand that can be important solely within an organisation (Spry, Poorrezaei and Pich 2018). According to many in the field (Melewar 2001; Syed, Muhammad and Nguyen 2017;

Yakimova et al. 2017), a shortening primary-products life cycle due to faster innovation, development and less ability to create added value at a product level - gave a rationale for branding at the corporate level. Besides, many scholars believe that the corporate branding rationale is particularly important in the service industry where the employees deliver the 'product', which is the service (Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan 2019). Hence, the need for more corporate branding research in 'non-product or 'people-based contexts such as national brands (Dinnie 2015; Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020). Unsurprisingly, King (1991) predicted that the *'corporate brand'* would become the main discriminator for establishments in the future. In other words, the consumers' choice of what they acquire will depend less on evaluating the functional benefits of the products or services (Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Abratt and Kleyn 2012). But more on assessing the people in the organisation behind it - their skills, attitudes, behaviour, design, altruism, modes of communication, speed of response, and indeed the whole organisation's culture (Ravasi and Schultz 2006; Guckian et al., 2018). To a large extent, this projection now appears to be the case (Balmer 2017; Schmidt and Redler 2018). This shift also established a firm connection between corporate brand strategy, longer-term plans, and internal stakeholders (Roper and Fill 2012; Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). A rationalisation which other sub-disciplines, for example, national brands, can use to good advantage (Balmer and Grey 2003; Rojas-Mendez 2013). But first, the need to illuminate what a corporate brand is.

3.1.1   Corporate Brand: What is it?

The definition of a corporate brand has evolved (Ind 1997; Balmer 2010; Schroeder 2017). On its whole, it has been described as the expression of an organisation; whose aim is to convey a message to the public and, more importantly, to its target audience (Balmer 2017; Cowan and Guzman 2020). According to de Chernatony (2010), a corporate brand combines all the elements and attributes associated with an organisation in all its forms (Kapferer 2012). From every little thing - to more compound - personality traits (Keller and Richey 2006), communicated identity (Hatch and Schultz 2008), its image(s) (Bravo Montaner and Pina 2012). Including the strategies by which they are implemented (Fill 2012). They are all contained within and are essential parts of a corporate brand (Melewar and Karaosmamgolu 2008). Balmer and Gray (2003) use the term 'entirety' to refer to a corporate brand, while Muzellec (2006), Gregory (2007), Cowan and Guzman (2020) revealed a corporate brand labels an organisation on many levels, principally for who and what it is composed of'. That is to say, a corporate brand

is an overarching term that requires the combined efforts of all a corporation's working parts to implement or convey successfully (De Roeck, Maon and Lejeune 2013).

Thereupon, Knox and Bickerton (2003, p. 1012) proposed a helpful definition of a corporate brand *"as the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of an organisation's unique business model"*. Although this definition set a standard by which organisations required their internal stakeholders to follow, this definition will continue to evolve. Still, there is academic grouping around various factors in considering what constitutes a strong corporate brand. Some conclusions, for instance, centre on values (Balmer, Greyser and Urde 2009; Spry, Poorrezaei and Pich 2018) and the subsequent corporate expressions thereof (Hofstede and McCrae 2004; Roper and Fill 2012; Gehani 2016). While others, Ackerman (1998), Aaker, Fournier and Brasel (2004), Iglesias, Singh and Casabayo (2011), focus on ensuring the delivery of the goals and commitments of a corporate brand. In particular, Fill (2013) insists a corporate brand's goal is to convey a great deal of information about an organisation within a limited space, time, or a single thought. Regarding 'who and what is this organisation?', 'what does it stand for?' what are its principles?' 'what is important to it?' 'why should I engage with its products/services?' These questions and more are contained within and answered by the corporate brand (Hatch and Schultz 2001; Schmidt and Redler 2018).

Simultaneously, some definitions have been essential for what they excluded. For instance, according to Ind (1997) and Aaker (2009), the corporate brand was well-defined as the totality of what an organisation intends to offer while representing an active agent for public trust. This definition helps distinguish a corporate brand clearly from its product/service brands because it detaches from the organisation's existing business and focuses on the prospective. Continuing in the same vein, Balmer (2017) argued corporate brands are, amongst other things, a standard by which an organisation will be perceived and judged unconsciously. Therefore, it is reasonable to say a corporate brand encompasses an organisation's past, present, and future appraisal and value. A rationale most studies in nation branding have not focused on (Govers 2019).

Furthermore, Gotsi and Wilson (2001); Melewar et al. (2012) reached identical conclusions by affirming that organisations seeking to build durable corporate brands must align their up-to-date and imminent communications with fundamental organisational values. Correspondingly, Balmer and Gray (2003) established that corporate brands signify partnership and a channel by which multiple stakeholders can enjoy gratifying experiences (Kapferer 2012). However, Brexendorf and Keller (2017)

maintain that these definitions do not successfully capture a corporate brand's entire essence and layered nature. This multidimensional character is highlighted by a number of authors (Spear and Roper 2013; Hsu et al. 2016; Park 2016) who advocate on positions centred on the complexity of corporate brands and the need to systematically connect all of the different variables central to a corporate brand. Furthermore, Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004) once argued that an organisation instantly is a corporate brand from when it presents itself into the marketplace whether 'they' (those responsible) know it or not. Ind (1997) also supported the concepts of intangibility and complexity of corporate brands, emphasising boundaries between an organisation and the multiple stakeholders it involves. Expressly, Hatch and Schultz (2001), Melewar (2001), and Balmer (2010) established that there were two broad categories of stakeholders involved with an organisation's corporate brand, which are: a) internal and b) external. In essence, there is a definite need for more research to explore the applicability of these stakeholder relationships in other contexts, such as nations (Kaneva 2017).

In terms of managing a corporate brand, Balmer and Gray (2003), Schmidt and Redler (2018), and Stuart (2018) maintain that corporate brands are unique in terms of disciplinary scope and administration and could have a multidimensional focus even inside the organisation (Balmer et al., 2017). They conclude that the capabilities of an organisation's corporate brand are influenced by who is responsible for managing it. Though more extensive by their detail, these positions still fall short in the totality of what makes up a corporate brand. However, the significance of the interrelationship between the overarching factors such as people (Marwick and Fill 1997; Zerfass and Duhring 2012), knowledge (Spear and Roper 2013) and conditions (Xie and Boggs 2006; Balmer 2010) has been well-established in the literature. Abratt and Shee (1989), Balmer (1998, 2008), and Broon (2007) were among the first scholars to offer an explanatory theory that supports these driving forces. Such as corporate brand personality, identity, image, and eventually reputation, which should be the ultimate goal of any worthwhile organisation (Dowling and Moran 2012; Broon and Broon 2017). Overall, all the divergent positions mentioned above highlight a corporate brands' elaborate reality and the incompleteness of defining it without indicating corporate branding and corporate reputation. Therefore, further research is required to establish the conceptual efficiency of these concepts in other important settings, such as nations (Papp-Vary 2019). This section has determined what is meant by a corporate brand. This thesis will now discuss corporate branding.

3.1.2   Corporate Branding: The Significance

A lot of research has historically been done in the branding literature at the product level, where scholars Dolich (1969), Austin (1967), Neuhaus and Taylor (1972) were primarily concerned about prescribing unique identities to differentiate given products. Although by the 1970s, Brunner (1973), McArdle (1989), Balmer (1995), Allen (2007), the intricacies of corporate branding relevancy began to be recognised. Ever since, a considerable amount of literature has been dedicated to moving branding up the corporate agenda by many scholars (Olins 2000, Balmer 2010, Melewar, Foroudi and Jin 2020). Despite that, other authors (Brown and Dacin 1997; Carey 2001; Muzellec and Lambkin 2008; Savavedra 2016) question the suitability of the corporate branding rationale with the risks and implications it poses for the product brands and the company legacy if things abruptly go wrong. However, many analysts (Melewar et al. 2012; Cornelissen et al. 2012; Chaurasia and Patel 2018; Stuart 2018) maintain that the scheme of corporate branding has been reliably successful over the years. Urde (2013), Schroeder (2017), for example, argue that corporate branding has been outstanding in avoiding misinterpretation of organisations and is handy in shaping critical stakeholders' opinions, thus is worthwhile.

Concurrently, corporate branding has progressively become recognised as a strategic means to generate and support value creation (Aaker 1996, 2009; Balmer and Wilson 2001; Barney 2002). One of the first people to uncover this aspect of corporate branding in detail was Balmer (1995), who established that there must be an accord between the company behind the brand and its multiple stakeholders for corporate branding to occur. Hatch and Schultz (2008) also reflected that all-encompassing sentiment by insisting effective corporate branding relied on the balanced rationality between tactical vision, organisational ethos, and image. Likewise, Fill (2013) highlighted corporate branding meant emphasising key aspects of a corporate brand to encourage a particular corporate brand image (Fill 2013). There are still a few differences of opinion (Iglesias, Ind and Schultz 2020). However, there appears to be some agreement that corporate branding is concerned with the construct (Melewar, Gotsi and Andriopoulos 2012) and delivery (Yoganathan, Mcleay and Hart 2018) of a corporate brand's unwavering message to resonate with multiple stakeholders (Balmer et al. 2017).

There have also been many significant distinctions on why corporate branding is substantial. For example, Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer (2007) affirm that corporate branding gives a corporate brand a creditable 'identity'. Balmer, Greyser and Urde

(2009) added that corporate branding reinforces the corporate brands aim and rigorous objectives. Meanwhile, Fill (2019) proved corporate branding was critical to assessing beneficial word-of-mouth publicity for organisations. Aaker (2009), Kapferer (2012), Halliburton, and Bach (2012) have also argued for the advantage of cordial external stakeholder relations and brand equity. Since corporate branding effectively minimises the need for extensive marketing initiatives for every department or product/service brand initiated. This point of view is certainly valid for external stakeholders such as consumers having a pre-set understanding of the corporate brands quality, reliability and purpose (Schultz et al. 2000; Balmer 2008; Kumar and Moller 2018).

However, according to Balmer et al. (1997); Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan (2019), the utmost compelling justification for corporate branding has been the idea of actualising the corporate brands' aims and objectives. For decent organisations have specific goals they want to achieve, commonly referred to as the 'vision' (Hatch and Schultz 2001; Yakimova et al. 2017). Also, it has been well established that the stakeholders at the top level within the organisation are responsible for fulfilling that vision (Balmer, Brexendorf and Kernstock 2013; Mingione 2015; Schroeder 2017). Hence, many scholars hold the view that corporate branding is the 'one and only' master plan that can likely help senior managers attain that vision responsibly (Hatch and Schultz 2008; Purnomo 2019). Data from several studies suggest that corporate branding ensures this by helping all those within the organisation work towards achieving the same goal (Balmer et al., 2017; Boone and Uysal 2020). Serving each other maintain uniformity towards that goal and creates an atmosphere of ethical standards or practices that align everyone in the same direction of achieving that shared goal/vision (Schumann and Sartain 2009; Goodman, Johansen and Nielsen 2011). This indicates that the notion of corporate branding can often provide a valuable blueprint for corporate brands that find unethical and dishonourable practices challenging to their growth and development. This is a bearing that needs exploring in other contexts, such as nations (Vitolla et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it has been reported that corporate branding ensures the various obligations set aside to achieve this vision within the organisation are perceived to align from outside the organisation (Azoulay and Kapferer 2003; O'Sullivan, Lim and Luck 2012). There is a consensus among scholars that this situation reflects a plan; envisaging sustainability from the external stakeholder's viewpoint (Aronczyk 2009, Rosenbaum-Elliot, Percy and Pervan 2011; Spear and Roper 2013). Evidence also suggests that with corporate branding, external stakeholders, in particular, maintain certain perceptions

about organisations, and those perceptions are not separated from the products or services that the organisation may offer (Einwiller and Will 2002; Yakimova et al., 2017). That is to say, the two - organisation and products/services, in many settings, become one in the mind of external stakeholders (Balmer 2012, Stuart 2018). Under those circumstances, corporate branding's significance cannot be understated. Given that once stakeholders form sentiments about a corporate brand, they usually can become almost permanent, and an organisation slow to recognise this can actively hamper its development over time (Esenyel and Emeagwali 2018; Boone and Uysal 2020).

Significantly, it has been widely reported that - a factuality that needs particular careful emphasis is that corporate branding and product branding are two separate entities sometimes conflated (Gregory 2004; Abratt and Kleyn 2012). Hence, many scholars have underlined the key areas where significant differences are found (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). For example, Urde (2013), Fill (2013), Yogonathan, McLeay and Hart (2018) agree that wherein product branding emphasises the 'selling points' of a product to the target audience, corporate branding seeks to enlighten them about the organisation itself. As an illustration, product branding intends to inform consumers why they should buy a product because it is tasty or healthy. Corporate branding aims to declare why they should invest money in that particular organisation by becoming customers or clients. Also, Xie and Boggs (2006); Schroeder (2017) affirm that product branding is contingent upon the 'particular product' not receiving an upgrade or discontinued in favour of something else. While Mingione (2015) argues that the branding denoted to a product is temporary or short-lived as opposed to corporate branding, meant to be durable, long-lasting (Gregory 2004), and as permanent as possible (Biraghi and Gambetti 2015). This rationale indicates that corporate branding requires an overall message (Spear and Roper 2013). A company-wide approach that highlights what a company stands for (Cornelissen Thoger and Kinuthia 2012). In contrast, product branding calls for a narrow message looking at a specific product/service or group of products/services, as the product/service is the 'key' (Kitchen 2004).

Moreover, in the 21st Century, consumers have become more knowledgeable about products and corporations generally (Melewar et al. 2012). For instance, according to Schroeder (2017), it is now particularly difficult for organisations to get away from external stakeholder opinions regarding their employee working environment, social responsibility, and community involvement. Consequently, elements such as corporate brand values, beliefs, ideals, goals, and organisations' behaviour have become a significant focus (Melewar, Foroudi and Jin 2020). Hence, the support for corporate

branding can help organisations align all of these powerful elements (Balmer, Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Roper and Fill 2012). Moreover, nation brands that want to achieve positive sentiments altogether can examine this type of interpretation - making branding research at a corporate level exceptionally significant. Thus far, this thesis has focused on the 'corporate brand and corporate branding'. It will now consider the key elements that make up the corporate brand.

3.1.3   Corporate Brand Personality

Understanding how a corporate brands' personality (generally understood to mean its characteristics or traits Fill 2013, Japutra and Molinillo, 2019) influences its stakeholders; has always been a subject area of interest (Keller and Richey 2006; Tucdogan and Volberda 2020). However, the generalisability of the more published research on product brand personality in the context of corporate brands has been problematic (Choi and Hyun, 2017; Tong, Su and Xu, 2018). A classic example of this is Aaker's (1997 p. 349) well-known research on 60 product brands, which showed that personality fell into five main clusters *"sincerity, competence, excitement, sophistication and ruggedness"*, which has often been applied to corporate brands (Mishra and Mohanty 2013; Kumar 2018). Instead, the comprehension should be that corporate brands will typically have a set of deeper personality traits than those of each product/service brand owned by the corporate brand (Keller and Richie 2006, Ahmad and Thyagaraj 2014). Furthermore, few studies have investigated the impact of this rationale in other fundamental settings, such as nation brands (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015).

In addition, product attributes and elements are likely, not dependable enough to foster a corporate brand personality; since other organisations can easily imitate them (Azoulay and Kapferer 2003). That is why for Fill (2013 p. 263), corporate brand personality has been notably defined as *"the totality of the characteristics that identify an organisation"*. This definition is the most precise produced so far. Equally important, the literature highlights that the characteristics or traits used to describe personality generally reflect an outcome or result of some kind (Raffelt, Schmitt and Meyer 2013, Ramaseshan and Stein 2014). For example, the *'HP Inc'* corporate brand conferred the personality of 'competence' and *'Coca-Cola'* as 'real' and 'authentic' (Tong, Su and Xu 2018, Japutra and Molinillo, 2019). Thus, it can be implied that corporate brand personality can be qualified as the answer to – 'what an organisation takes seriously or not'. From this, we can deduce that a corporate brands personality allows looking deeper

into the core of the corporate brand hoping that the prevailing personality is what the corporate brand desires (Mishra and Mohanty 2013) or how corporate brands can modify them (Fill 2013). However, relatively little is understood about this in other contexts, such as nation brands (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015).

Furthermore, almost every paper written on corporate brand personality includes a section on organisational culture. Some authors, Keller, Sternthal and Tybout (2002), Becker, Einwiller and Medjedovic (2014), have mainly been interested in questions concerning the balance of traits uniform in an organisation and how they form the primary culture and personality of the organisation. Others (Banerjee 2016; Tuncdogan and Volberda 2020) have highlighted the relevance of customer-centric factors such as demographics, consumer personality, self-congruity and how they influence a corporate brand personality. Notably, Davies et al. (2004); Tong, Su and Xu (2018), highlighting culture and personality, have been able to show that external stakeholders are likely to deal with organisations mainly based on their core nature, essence and how they make them feel (Davies 2002; Heaton 2018). According to Tuncdogan and Volberda (2020), when external stakeholders perceive a corporate brand as possessing personality traits they identify with, it has been claimed to bind their relationships extensively. Hence as Otto, Chater and Stott (2011), Fill (2013) established, a rooted and critical component of external stakeholder views on image and reputation would be the corporate brand personality. Research attention directed towards exploring this insight in a nation brand context will be valuable (Ishii and Watanabe 2015).

Notwithstanding, some writers have suggested a need for more attention on external stakeholders' role in developing a corporate brand personality (Chapleo 2011; Benerjee 2016). According to Otto, Charter and Stott (2011), when external stakeholders get involved with an organisation, for example, purchase their products or services, they participate in co-creating the organisation's personality. A classic example presented was that of the motorcycle manufacturer *'Harley-Davidson Inc',* whose corporate personality occurred as 'rugged' - developed following the rugged outlook of users who use their bikes (Vincent 2002).

Meanwhile, Anatolevena Anisimova (2007); Urde (2009) have argued that corporate brand personality would echo the values and actions of the corporate brand. The stakeholders within the organisation will express these values (Roper and Fill 2012; Spry, Poorrezaei and Pich 2018). Therefore, the internal stakeholders must comprehend the corporate brand values (Keller and Richie 2006; Palazzo and Basu 2007; Mishra and

Mohanty 2013). In essence, corporate brand personality is internal to an organisation and should reflect an alignment with the organisation's objectives and intentionally espoused values (Yoganathan, Mcleay and Hart 2018; Hao et al., 2019). According to the existing literature, only when a corporate brand solidifies an appropriate set of values that drive internal stakeholder conduct can it attain sustainable success with its personality (Otto, Chater and Stott 2011) and overall brand identity (Fill 2013; Patwa, Abraham and D'Cruz 2018). Besides, Banerjee (2016) argues that an organisation will have a personality whether they like it or not because they constantly project their values knowingly or unknowingly (Fetscherin and Usunier 2012). For example, through customer service employees, being friendly or efficient (Ingenhoff and Fuhrer 2010). In a sense, this expresses the relationship between corporate strategy and corporate brand personality (Balmer 2012; Fill 2013; Karaosmanoglu, Altinigne and Isiksai 2016).

In conclusion, with the help of corporate brand personality, a corporate brand can establish several valuable associations in the minds of all of its multiple stakeholders, both internal and external (Becker and Einwiller and Medjedovic 2014). That is why the corporate brand personality should be concerned about - what an organisation sincerely wants to be. The answer to this underlying question should be the framework for anything that interests a corporate brand (Spear and Roper 2013; Becker, Einwiller and Medjedovic 2014). This thesis will now move on to consider corporate brand identity.

3.1.4   Corporate Brand Identity

According to the reviews provided by Kapferer (2008), de Chernatony (2010, p. 53), and Fill (2013, p. 364), *"corporate brand identity can be defined as the central idea, meaning or cues a corporate brand uses to shape the way it wants to be thought of"*. However, there is a variance of opinions among scholars concerning the components of a corporate brand identity. Mainly because it draws from a vast body of knowledge, including organisational identity (Abimbola and Vallester 2007; Wickert, Vaccaro and Cornelissen 2017), corporate marketing (Howard, Howell and Ryans 1990; Karaosmano et al. 2011), as well as brand identity (de Chernatony 1999; Kapferer 1994; Urde 2003). Although, it is now well established from the various sources that corporate brand identity provides a means whereby a corporate brand can differentiate and position itself (Balmer et al., 2017; Yakimovo et al., 2017; Iglesias et al., 2020). It has also conclusively been shown that corporate brand identity is often turned into reality by expressions such as logos, slogans, business name, employee attitude and conduct (Balmer 2008; Jabes, Sciangula and Russo 2012; Heaton 2018; Hao et al. 2019). That is why de Chernatony

(2010), Roper and Fill (2012), and Yakimova et al. (2017) argue that corporate brand identity is the underpinning concept that eventually shapes a corporate brands image. Chaurasia and Patel (2018), Iglesias et al. (2020) also note that a corporate brand identity can be shaped continuously, depending on changed views. However, Urde (2013), Gehani (2016) affirm that having a clearly defined corporate brand identity from the inception of a corporate brand is the bedrock for a corporate brand's long-term success. Whereas Otubanjo, Amujo and Cornelius (2010), Urde (2016) underline that it is essential for organisations to be aware that - they are constantly communicating their identity formally or informally.

Commenting on the cruciality of corporate brand identity, Balmer (2008) argued for an 'identity-based view' of a firm - solely. Since corporate brand identity exists in internal stakeholders' minds, making it sentimental and powerful enough to drive everything else that concerns the corporate brand. This theme also led to numerous corporate brand identity management research to establish that its 'manner of management' will help authenticate what a corporate brand wants to be known for. For Fill (2013), in particular, corporate brand identity offers three main ideas to a corporate brand's multiple stakeholders: i) what the corporate brand is, ii) what it does, and iii) how it does it. In fact, a consensus in the academic literature agrees that corporate brand identity and a corporate brand are the same thing and cannot be separated (Abimbola et al., 2012; Schmidt and Redler 2018). Balmer (2017) maintains that the answers to questions such as those mentioned above; lie with the ethos, performance, history, and relationships the corporate brand has built with its multiple stakeholders through the years (Davie and Chun 2002; Balmer and Gray 2003; Stuart 2018).

With this in mind, it is essential to ask, 'what influences the corporate brand identity?'. Research into this has a long history (Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Hatch and Schultz 2008; Jindal 2011). Traditionally, corporate executives were solely responsible for creating and defending corporate brand identities (Heaton 2018). As the corporate brand identity strenuously reflected the individual identity of the organisation's founders. While this may still be relevant, more evidence suggests the need for the inclusive treatment of all internal stakeholders to uphold and defend the corporate brand identity (Fetscherin and Usunier 2012; Balmer 2017; Thornton et al. 2019). Collectively, these studies outline the critical role of communications in general (Otubanjo, Amujo and Cornelius 2010; Urde (2016) in achieving this integration. As Balmer (2017) also reminded us, internal stakeholders should understand the corporate brands' goals and strategic objectives to align with them. These subtle yet powerful dimensions underlie a

corporate brand identity and determine the level of commitment employees are likely to have towards the corporate brand (Punjaisri and Wilson 2017). Despite this, many other contexts, such as national brands, have not explored this rationalisation of a corporate – nation brand identity for greater success (Dinnie 2015).

Essentially, corporate brand identity is inside a corporate brand and emanates from the corporate brand personality, which is equally internal (Urde and Greyser 2016; Iglesias et al. 2020). Hence the examples or signals displayed by a corporate brand underwrites or endorses its corporate brand identity (Fill 2013, Chaurasia and Patel 2018). Balmer Brexendorf and Kernstock (2013); Schroeder (2017) argue that corporate brand identity exists as a strategic component that senior managers should well-exploit in an organisation. That is to say, corporate brands need to care about how they manifest, in this case, the message(s) they put out about themselves (Dowling 2018). At this point, the notion of corporate communications also becomes central, according to many scholars (Balmer, Stuart and Greyser 2009; Roper and Fill 21012). Under those circumstances, most corporate brands tend to hire skilled practitioners to oversee their brand identity's market-based communications (Fill 2019). Still, according to Subari and Riady (2015), Punjaisri and Wilson (2017), it is not just about the marketplace; Corporate brands should first connect to their internal stakeholders (Robichauud, Richelieu and Kozak 2012; Chaurasia and Patel 2018) about how they intend to be identified. By following a corporate strategy and developing the organisational culture (Azoulay and Kapferer 2003), it has been recorded that internal stakeholders can understand the organisation's needed identity (Hofstede and McCrea 2004).

According to Balmer (2012), Chaurasia and Patel (2018), an essential element of corporate brand identity is its core values. Linked back to the corporate brand personality that begins this theoretical scope, core values often identify a corporate brand more than anything else, according to Layman (1999), Spry, Poorrezaei and Pich (2018). For instance, a corporate brand seen as taking corporate social responsibility seriously - is likely to be identified as 'socially responsible'. Thus, as indicated earlier, communications become an essential part of corporate brand identity (Karaosmanoglu and Melewar 2006; Cowan and Guzman 2020), both internally and externally (Amujo and Cornelius 2010; Schroeder 2017). All of these are specifically designed to build longevity to the relationships a corporate brand forms with all of its stakeholder's over-time (Morsen and Kristensen 2002; Slavich, Cappetta and Giangreco 2014). As an illustration, Goldfayn (2012) found that the corporate brand 'Amazon' had developed the corporate brand identity of being 'innovative to accommodate customer needs and that

had become its reputation. (Robischon 2017). However, if Amazon can maintain that reputation in the longer term, this will primarily be the sole obligation of its corporate brand identity (Abimbola et al., 2012; Melewar, Gambetti and Martin 2014). In effect, corporate brand identity is crucial for an organisation's reputation (Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Urde and Greyser 2016). One classic example would be that of 'Enron Inc', which got the reputation of being 'corrupt' because of its identity of having 'corrupt executives' (Sims and Brinkmann 2003; Greyser, 2009), which eventually led to its downfall. Hence, the corporate brand identity perspective's applicability further explored in other contexts, such as national brands, is a suitable area for research that could enhance the experiences of nation brands (Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). According to Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004), corporate brand image is profoundly different from corporate brand identity (Pich, Armannsdottir and Spry 2018). A more detailed account of this is given in the following section.

3.1.5   Corporate Brand Image

This chapter so far has demonstrated how a corporate brand is constructed from an internal perspective considering its personality and identity (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). It is now necessary to consider what would have been built so far. Different words have existed to describe this outcome of a corporate brand, including brand image and corporate image (Rindell and Strandvik 2010; Mingione 2015), often used interchangeably. In the literature, the term corporate brand image has two overlapping - even slightly confusing meanings. First, the mental association groups of external audiences have of a corporate brand (Schmitt 1997; Balmer and Greyser 2003). Second, the short-term impressions external stakeholders develop from experiencing a corporate brand (de Chernatony and Harris 2000; Iglesias 2014; Perez 2015). In any case, the connotations show the idea of a corporate brand image culminates from a set of perceptions about a corporate brand (Fetscherin and Usunier 2012), very similar to corporate brand identity (Biraghi and Gambetti 2015) previously illustrated and sometimes causing a problem because of this (Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Schroeder 2017). Since the definition of the corporate brand image varies among researchers, it is essential to clarify how the term is used in this thesis from the well-established definition provided by Cornelissen (2000).

According to Cornelissen (2000), corporate brand image was defined as the short-term thoughts and feelings external stakeholders have of a particular corporate brand identity (Fill 2013). This definition is helpful because it highlights where the corporate brand

image resides - which has to do with its possession and what differentiates it from corporate brand personality and identity (Fill 2013; Dowling 2018). However, according to Aronczyk (2019), Govers (2019), this detail deserves more research attention in a nation branding context. Nevertheless, the corporate brand image tends to occur outside of an organisation because it refers to how external stakeholders view the corporate brand, partly due to the cues or signals that the organisation gives out (Foroudi, Melewar and Gupta 2014). Therefore, some scholars believe that if corporate brands had just one task only, it would chiefly be to influence what external stakeholders think of the corporate brand in a positive way (Dennis, King and Martenson 2007; Slavich, Cappetta and Giangreco 2014; Stuart 2018). However, as indicated previously, to achieve this task, the corporate brand must start by swaying its internal stakeholders first (Spear and Roper 2013; Badawy, Fahmy and Magdy 2017) by getting its personality and identity upright (Azoulay and Kapferer 2003). That is why organisations tend to engage in corporate branding to develop a certain kind of corporate brand identity that will, in turn, reproduce a compelling corporate brand image and, in due course, a favourable and powerful reputation (Song, Ruan and Park 2019; Boone ad Uysal 2020). The structure and functions of the corporate brand reputation are explained in greater detail in the following section.

3.2. <u>Corporate Brand Reputation: The Ultimate Destination</u>

This chapter began by arguing for a corporate branding rationale. It went on to describe corporate brand personality, identity and image. It demonstrated that based on their interactions and relatedness, they are key concepts of a longer-term goal of corporate brand reputation (Argenti and Drcenmiller 2004; Urde and Greyser 2016). Correspondingly, this section will portray corporate brand reputation characterised as the longer-term view of a corporate brand (Gotsi and Wilson 2001; Fetscherin and Usunier 2012). There is consensus in the literature that corporate brand image affects corporate brand reputation (Cornelissen, Harlem and Balmer 2007; Dowling 2018). Still, relatively little is understood about reputation in a nation brand context as an outcome of other key concepts such as identity and image (Dinnie 2015) and not a stand-alone notion (Angell and Mordhorst 2015). This perspective deserves more attention in nation branding and reputation research (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Stahlberg and Bolin 2016).

In effect, corporate reputation concerns have increasingly become essential in enhancing corporate performance in the modern-day corporate world (Balmer 2001; Boone and

Uysal 2020). de Chernatony (2010) and Bueno et al. (2015) affirm that a favourable corporate brand reputation helps organisations maintain or aim for a desirable position in the minds of their multiple stakeholders long-term (Schmidt and Redler 2018). However, several corporate brands cannot achieve efficiency in their corporate reputation foresight owing to a lack of understanding of the various facets that drive corporate brand reputation (Wei, Ouyang and Chen 2017). Formbrun (2001), Agarwal, Osiyevskyy and Feldman (2015), Urde and Greyser (2016) posit that the scope of corporate brand reputation is broad and requires a deconstruction of the significant factors stimulating its development and influence. According to Fetscherin and Usunier (2012), such factors justify understanding how corporate brand reputation affects corporate brand achievements and goals (Fombrun and Van Riel 2004). Furthermore, according to Braun et al. (2018), Govers (2019), there is scant evidence that this type of rationalisation has been explored in other meaningful contexts, such as national brands.

Pich, Armannsdottir and Spry (2018) noted that corporate brand reputation is complex and difficult to operationalise (Agarwal, Osiyevskyy and Feldman 2015). This conclusion is particularly true, as seen in the existing literature, highlighting several areas through which corporate brand reputation is developed. For example, according to many in the field, corporate brand reputation sets from (i) visibility (Capitello et al. 2014), (ii) financial performance (Roberts and Dowling 2002), (iii) products reliability and service delivery (Song, Ruan and Park 2019), (iv) innovation (Corkindale and Belder 2009, (v) media exposure (Cabral 2016; Carroll 2017), (vi) compliance or non-compliance with legislation and regulations (Gregory 2005), (vii) how the corporate brand deals with a crisis (Greyser 2009; Wei, Ouyang and Chen 2017), (viii) customer and staff retention rates (Balmer et al. 2006; Dowling 2018), (ix) corporate environmental policy and actions (Melewar, Gambetti and Martin 2014; Bianchi, Bruno and Sarabia-Sanchez 2019) amongst others. As can be seen, corporate brand reputation can be entangled, challenging to understand and even misconstrued with the corporate brands' image occasionally (Gotsi and Wilson 2001; Fetscherin and Usunier 2012). More so, there is scant evidence of identifying such valuable factors underlying a nation's brand reputation (Yang et al., 2008; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017) in a national setting. This primary complexity of corporate reputation also advocates a conceptual and systematic approach to corporate brand reputation (Fill 2013). Yet to be explored in a nation brand context (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017).

Nevertheless, there is consensus with many published studies that corporate brand reputation is the cumulated image of a corporate brand's past 'identity' cues (Balmer et

al. 2006; Foroudi, Melewar and Gupta 2014; Sampath, Gardberg and Rahman 2018; Gomez-Trujillo, Valez-Ocompo and Gonzalez-Perez 2020). In addition, aligning the perceptions of internal (identity) and external (image) stakeholders is thought to help corporate brands clarify and influence their reputation (de Chernatony and Harris 2000; Davies and Chun 2002). However, few studies have investigated this impact on nation brands (Govers 2019). On the other hand, Balmer (2012), Fombrun (2015) claim that to argue for a case of corporate reputation concerns occasionally proves unworkable because many establishments often overlook it as sort of out of their control. This view is most certainly accurate in less vocational settings like nations (Kotsi et al., 2018; Hao et al., 2019), where the literature observed that government agencies often brush off their nation brand reputation matters to communications departments or marketing organisations - for anything (Dinnie 2015; Desatova 2018; Govers 2019). According to Chun et al. (2005) and Urde and Greyser (2016), such kinds of disregard for corporate brand reputation is mainly because intangible assets like brands and reputation are not precisely documented by many performances and financial reports (Collins and Porras 2005; Balmer 2010; O'Sullivan, Lim and Luck 2012). Hence there are definite calls for research devoted to longitudinal studies, necessary to show the subtle changes or track the cause-and-effect relationships of corporate brand reputation initiatives (Musteen, Rhyne and Zheng 2013; Feldman, Bahamonde and Bellido 2014). Which, in turn, could inform the relevance of corporate reputation principles in many other contexts.

Other studies have adopted a sharper focus to argue for a case of corporate reputation due to its subjectivity (Gotsi and Wilson 2001; Balmer and Greyser 2006). For example, Boone and Uysal (2018) established the spill-over effects of corporate reputation on organisations using "reputational capital". Their innovative analysis of organisational performance and practices resulted in corporate reputation emerging as one of the greatest assets of a corporate brand (Minor and Morgan 2011; O'Sullivan, Lim and Luck 2012). Therefore, this insight indicates that corporate brand reputation attention and recognition can help corporate brands realise the prospects of their reputation - taking into account how the corporate brand's actions or inactions of today would impact the reputation of the future (Foroudi et al. 2019; Lu et al. 2019). This recognition deserves more research attention in other critical backgrounds, such as nations. (Passow, Fehlmann and Grahlow 2005; Kim 2013).

Several studies (Chun et al. 2005; Smith, Smith and Wang 2010; Esenyel and Emeagwali 2019) also have identified the increased endorsements for corporate brands perceived to have positive reputations. As Eckert (2017) and Wang et al. (2019) proved, external

stakeholders are more likely to align themselves with corporate brands that possess an impressive reputation to their likeness (Foroudi, Melewar and Gupta 2014). For instance, this position manifests in the case of stakeholders, mainly external, choosing to pay a higher price for a product/service from a corporate brand they value, as an alternative to paying a lower price from an unstated or undervalued corporate brand (Roberts and Dowling 1997; Iglesias et al. 2020). According to Halliburton and Bach (2012), a positive corporate brand reputation also underlines confidence in the future of corporate brands. Scott and Walsham (2005), Goodman and Trapp (2010) demonstrate this confidence with reduced risk and increased profits for corporate brands. Considering that investors were more likely to invest in reputable firms, granting better access to financial markets at reduced costs while presenting new opportunities (Cowan and Guzman 2020). Therefore, there would be a definite need for financially strained corporate brands to aim for a positive reputation in a lasting way. This is a rationalisation that nation branding research can focus on since most studies on nation branding have focused on short-term (image) consequences (Waeraas and Byrkjeflot 2012; Govers 2019).

Accordingly, corporate brand reputation has notably been described as having a *'cumulative and 'sticky nature'* (Ang and Wight 2009, p. 28) because corporate brands that perform well have a better reputation. Then those with consistently good performances realise a sustainable better reputation (Formbrun 2012; Comyns and Johnson 2018). In other words, sustainability and consistency are vital to an efficient corporate brand reputation (Cwan and Guzman 2020; Gomez-Trujillo, Valez-Ocompo and Gonzalez-Perez 2020)). For instance, a customer will positively perceive a corporate brand when they have purchased its product/service multiple times. Each time, the corporate brand delivers on its promise (Argenti and Druckenmiller 2004). That is why Chun et al. (2005) and Nguyen and Nguyen (2017) insist consistency is well essential when approaching the concept of corporate brand reputation. However, as Gotsi and Wilson (2001) and Chang, Wang and Arnett (2018) put it, corporate reputation is not developed overnight, and it takes time. Melewar, Gambetti and Martin (2014) also highlight that it takes multiple brand images. This recognition also indicates that corporate brand reputation is more deep-seated and takes longer to change when negative (Fill 2013).

Significantly, research has suggested that it can only be a win-win situation for corporate brands that present a conscious identity for themselves internally and externally - in perspective of their reputation (Cowan and Guzman 2020; Gomez-Trujillo, Valez-

Ocompo and Gonzalez-Perez 2020). However, to the best of our knowledge, no empirical study has focused on clarifying this account for a nation brand context (Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020). For one, Chun and Davies (2010) demonstrated that corporate brands with well-established reputations could attract, develop, and retain talented internal stakeholders, which further contributes to their brand reputation and competitive advantage (Ragas and Culp 2014). According to Urde (2016), advantages such as these are partly because the employees are more loyal and devoted to working with a corporate brand with a good reputation, knowing they helped contribute to that reputation. Taghian, D'Souza and Polonsky (2010) also revealed that dedicated and devoted employees are more resourceful and efficient, giving corporate brands with favourable reputations the opportunity to modernise and innovate. In addition, to attracting new customers (Roberts and Dowling 2002) while retaining old ones (Harris and de Chernatony 2001). This type of comprehension can help unproductive corporate - nation brands systematically deconstruct their brands to determine if their reputation hinders them.

Along the same line, recent studies have begun to examine the ongoing relationship between the CEOs' reputation and the reputation of their corporate brand in more detail (Liu et al., 2016; Schulz and Flickinger 2018). For example, Love, Lim and Bednar (2017) conducted a series of semi-structured interviews and proved that the reputation of a CEO largely impacted the corporate reputation of the organisation they worked for (Love, Lim and Bednar 2017). According to Lanis et al. (2019), the main reason for this influence is that organisations' CEOs were likely to gain more media attention and possibly be seen receiving industry awards, accolades, or harsh criticisms. This perspective was supported by Weng and Chen (2017). They revealed that CEOs who continually receive positive attention from the media led to their organisations having more progressive reputations in the minds of external stakeholders. Men (2012) also pointed out that CEOs awarded or commended positively impact other internal stakeholders. In contrast, when CEOs receive negative attention from the media, this burdens the course and progression of their brand reputation (O'Reilly et al., 2014).

Nevertheless, as indicated previously, it is wholly understood that the corporate reputation of a corporate brand takes much longer to build than its CEO's reputation, which is more short-term and temporary (Balmer 2012; Men 2012). Therefore, several factors need to be considered when corporate brands change from one CEO to the other successively; the numerous short-term perceptions of different CEOs add up to the organisation's more long-term view (reputation) (Abratt and Kleyn 2012). Although this

may already be the case for firms, this type of explanation may help internal stakeholders in slightly less vocational settings like nation brands.

Several corporate reputation factors remain about which relatively little is known (Dowling 2018; Gomez-Trujillo, Valez-Ocompo and Gonzalez-Perez 2020). For example, little is known about the underlying reputation factors in a national setting (Li, Min and Lee 2021). This situation reveals the need to investigate further key facets of reputation in a nation brand context (Jordan 2014; Papp-Vary 2019; Murti 2020). Indeed, Brammer and Jackson (2012) once drew attention to regulatory institutions' influence on a corporate brand's reputation. However, as Taghian, D'Souza and Polonsky (2010) noted, corporate brand reputation appeared to be constructively related to legal and institutional procedures. In the sense that they offer a cause for organisations to shape their reputation (O'Sullivan, Lim and Luck 2012). Bhawnani (2018) also argued this cause is related to external stakeholder views on organisations adhering to standards and regulations within a particular industry. Thus, some theorists such as Deephouse and Carter (2005), Yue and Ingram (2012), and Szocs et al. (2016) underline the impact of adhering to regulations as the driving force for shaping and regulating corporate brand reputation. This understanding is critical, according to Perez, de Quevedo and Delgado (2019), because irrespective of the goals and ambitions of a corporate brand, 'institutions' put into consideration the formal rules of the industry they belong to on the grounds of law (Gregory 2005; Brammer and Jackson 2012).

Bitektine (2011) also highlighted the specific roles of institutions in influencing corporate brand reputation within countries with less developed institutional and legal frameworks. Unfortunately, the literature on the connections between regulations and corporate brand reputation is scarce. Thus, new marketing researchers developing theories on approaching corporate brand reputation can consider exploring institutional requirements in tandem (Perez, de Quevedo and Delgado 2019). This gap also reveals the need for further research on integrating corporate branding and reputation in settings with possibly less rigorous institutions and regulations, such as national brands. This chapter so far has justified a streamlined and systematic approach to corporate–nation brand(ing) and reputation. The model that underpins this streamlined-systematic approach is given in the following section.

3.3. The Conceptual Link between Corporate Personality, Identity, Image and Reputation using – Fill (2013) - Building Blocks of Corporate Reputation Model.
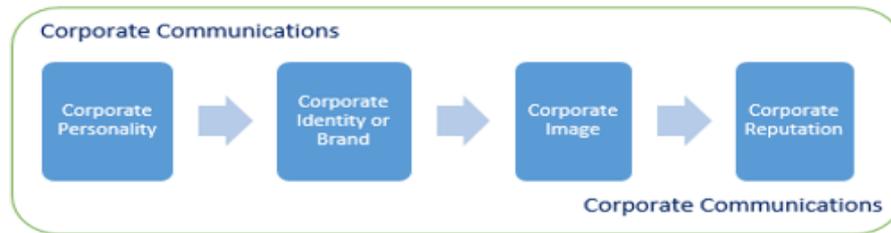
Figure 1: The Building Blocks of Corporate Reputation Model (Fill 2013 p. 361).

As indicated in previous sections, corporate brand reputation is a rather complex area of study, which involves a multi-stakeholder view (internal and external) of a corporate brand (de Chernatony and Harris 2000; Roper and Davies 2007; Fill 2013). However, the concept of corporate branding, which resides at the centre of corporate reputation (Foroudi, Melewar and Gupta 2014), overcomes that complexity and allows an intricate focus on the building blocks of corporate brand reputation (Roper and Fill 2012). Key building blocks such as personality and identity make up the internal perspective (Marwick and Fill 1997; de Chernatony 1999), while image and reputation represent the external perspective (Abimbola et al. 2012; Fill 2013; Balmer 2017).

As pointed out in the introduction of this chapter, several models reference the corporate branding and reputation concepts from a stand-alone perspective. However, this thesis recognises Fill's (2013) building blocks of corporate reputation model (see - Figure 1 above – building blocks of corporate reputation) - as the model that best represents corporate branding and reputation theory. This acknowledgement is because it analyses the subject in-depth from a multi-stakeholder (internal and external) perspective by dealing with these concepts together as fundamental pillars.

The building blocks corporate reputation model underlines that corporate brands project their *'personalities'* through their *'identity'*. That identity is then expressed through 'communications', e.g. symbolisms (symbolic communications), advertising (marketing communications), internal stakeholders' behaviour and actions (behavioural communications). Therefore, the external audience's perception of the 'identity'

expressed becomes the *'image'* they have of the organisation. Through time and accumulated contacts with the corporate brand, 'multiple images' are formed and fused into a *'reputation'*—a long-standing disposition that individuals attribute to the corporate brand (Fill 2013). Thus, as the model highlights, 'communications' takes a background yet crucial role in binding all the building blocks together (Fill 2013). (See next section 3.5 for the role of communications in the corporate branding and reputation process).

3.4. The Role of Corporate Communications in the Branding and Reputation Process

So far, this thesis has focused on the branding and reputation of corporate brands, taking into account their personality, identity, image and reputation. What follows is an account of corporate communications' strategic contribution to this branding and reputation process. In the field of marketing, various definitions of corporate communications are found. According to Van Riel and Fombrun's (2007) definition, corporate communications is the process that translates a corporate brand into a corporate image. This definition is straightforward, yet it raises many consolidative points, including the fact that an external image-reputation cannot exist without communications from the internal personality-identity (Dowling and Moran 2012). As well as, a corporate brand could not carry out branding without communications (Balmer, Stuart and Greyser 2009; Friedmann 2010). Likewise, the idea that the bearings of corporate communications are not solely to exchange information but also to strategically craft and project a particular image to an organisation's stakeholders is reflected in this elemental definition and vastly highlighted in the corporate branding literature (Dalia 2014; Manley and Valin 2017). Karaosmanoglu and Melewar (2006) are known to argue that a corporate brand that uses corporate communications effectively and authentically (Goodman and Bishop 2006) can successfully manage the perceptions of all of its essential stakeholders with ease (Cornelissen 2014; Thornton et al., 2019). Since branding generally is all about working perceptions (Melewar et al., 2012; Balmer 2017), corporate communications argue for a critical component of the corporate branding and reputation process (Christensen, Morsing and Cheney 2008; Fetscherin and Usunier 2012).

Indeed, despite the criticality of communications to the branding and reputation process, the effects and constructs of corporate communications have not been consistent in the literature (Pozner 2008; Cornelissen, Christensen and Kinuthia 2012; Schultz and

Flickinger 2018). Also, much research on the subject has been confusing and mostly restricted to limited comparisons of total corporate communications (Balmer and Yen 2017; Balmer 2017) over various individual forms of elements; identified to be attributed to corporate communications (Marion 1998; Van Riel and Fombrun 2007; Anwar 2015). While multiple explanations of what constitutes corporate communications exist, key researchers such as Balmer and Greyser (2006) contend for a case of the total corporate communications (primary, secondary and tertiary) perspective. However, this thesis questions the notion of 'total corporate communications' considering if corporate communications can be 'total' or complete? Moreover, Balmer (2017), one of the advocates of total corporate communications, has recently affirmed the need to be transparent that corporate communications cannot be fully managed. Therefore, this section explores the subject of corporate communications as documented by Fill's (2013) building blocks of corporate branding and reputation model. Using the distinct elements of (Symbolic, Management, Marketing, Organisational and Behavioural) communications known as the 'corporate communications mix' and critical to understanding and explaining nation branding and reputation research (Van Riel and Fombrun 2007; Fill 2013; Podnar 2014).

Furthermore, the conceptualisation of the corporate communications mix is critical to understanding and explaining the nation branding and reputation gaps in knowledge, such as a systematic approach that considers nation branding and reputation from a multi-stakeholder perspective (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Govers 2019). Furthermore, they contribute to this thesis's theoretical propositions under the 'nation communication mix' headings in the theoretical framework. Therefore, the forms of corporate communications based on Fill (2013) are presented next.

3.4.1. Symbolic Communications

The definition of symbolic communications varies in the literature, and there is terminological confusion (Anwar 2015; Denzin 2016). However, for Petrovici (2014), symbolic communications are defined as message broadcasting through different symbolic signs representing a form of projective communication. Furthermore, the literature on symbolic communication has highlighted several specimens of symbolisms that a corporate-nation brand uses to manifest or present itself (Valentzas and Broni 2014). Main features have been highlighted, such as colour pattern, name (Balmer 2008), logos, captions, gifts (Bruhn 1996), architecture (Raffelt, Schmitt and Meyer 2013), symbols, seals (Alvesson 1998; McQuail and Windahl 2015),

metaphorical/connotative taglines and slogans (Clarke 2011; Anwar 2015; Yan 2017). Including flags, national anthems and coats of arms for national brands in particular (Kotsi et al., 2018). Some published studies have described the role of symbolic communications as 'visual identity' and the most exclusive element of corporate brand identity management (Lewison 2001; Van Riel and Hasselt 2002; Holland 2012). Others hold the view that symbolic communications are much narrow in scope and focus than the collective action of a corporate brand identity (Denzin 2016; Yan 2017).

Most notably, symbolic communications have been associated with persuasive techniques by many academics (Penny 2012; Toncar and Fetscherin 2012; Gregersen and Johansen 2018) and practitioners (By 2001; Bennett 2011). That is why the specific logos, corporate names, symbols, images colours used by thriving corporate brands have not been accidental (Tourish 1997). As Christensen, Firat and Cornelissen (2009) and Fill (2013) noted, they offer a degree of harmonisation to all of the identity cues a corporate brand presents. This view was exemplified in the seminal study of Green and Loveluck (1994), which showed that symbols and logos were indicative of the continuity and dependability of corporate brands in the minds of stakeholders. Similarly, Rafaeli, Sagy and Derfler-Rozin (2008) presented an account of the power of corporate brands' symbolic communications. They examined the relationship between the presence or absence of a corporate brand logo on compliance documents and found the presence of a logo drove higher compliance rates and responsibility. In comparison, Lee-Reichert (2005) observed that symbolic communications are more cost-effective than marketing communications campaigns in disseminating a corporate brand's message.

Petrovici (2014) has advocated that symbolic communications are a quick way to stimulate undeveloped interests with internal and external stakeholders. As an illustration, Bhui and Ibrahim (2013) found that symbolic communications are single-handedly used to fuel radicalisation and religious extremism through the internet. Hollensen and Schmidt (2014) also believe symbolic communications deliver an extraordinary level of authority and responsibility to the organisation's internal stakeholders, as it is proven to mean 'something' unique to them (App, Merk and Buttgen 2012; Schee 2015). According to Russ (1991); Lewison (2001), one remarkable attribute of symbolic communications that likely distinguishes it from the other elements of corporate communications is that it can be internal-centric and external-centric simultaneously. This insight has been established in tourism progressive nations, where flags, country names or coat of arms can mean nationhood and patriotism for citizens.

At the same time, it could mean cosmopolitan and polished for tourists (Palmer 1999; Schuhly and Tenzer 2017).

Notably, Dordevic (2010) observed that for an organisation with a positive image, one of its most vital tasks would be successfully retaining its symbolic expressions in the minds of its stakeholders. In contrast, Alexander, Giesen and Mast (2006) argue that when a corporate brand image is perceived to be negative, the symbolic expressions of the corporate brand are much more easily preserved in the minds of stakeholders. Wesley and Folke (2018) address this disparity by expressing symbolic communications as mini billboards of an organisation's values, thoughts, also feelings (Frederick and Phillips 1995) and negativity around these travels at a faster rate (Denzin 2016). Regardless, this section has shown symbolic communications can connect meanings for a corporate brand. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that nation brands that want to commit themselves to all stakeholders, their symbolic communications should be strategic, intentional and purposeful for their branding and reputation interest (Grunig 1993; Petrovic 2014). The section below describes management communications.

3.4.2. Management Communications

It has been reported that the first serious discussions and analyses of management communications emerged because senior executives realised the criticality of connecting effectively with stakeholders to build and maintain a favourable reputation (Hooghiemsstra 2000; Robichaud, Richelieu and Kozak 2012). Now management communication has been considered to be at the very heart of corporate branding and reputation (Kornberger 2010; Cornelissen 2014). This stance is understandable, given that management establishes the corporate vision, mission (Foreman and Argenti 2005; Balmer 2017), and message eventually communicated through other forms of communications (e.g. behavioural and marketing communications). Furthermore, much of the current literature on management communications pay particular attention to bridging the hierarchical gap within the organisation (Marcelo 2015; Thornton et al. 2019). For the reason that management communications are tasked with disseminating the corporate brands' goals and objectives in the form of a shared culture and values (Nandan 2005; Balmer et al. 2012), even to the lowest segment in the organisation (Dordevic 2010; Subari and Riady 2015). That is why Gillette (1994); Neill (2015) argue that clarity within management communication has to be firmly well-established to reinforce the corporate principles and values, specifically, to have 'meaning' for internal

stakeholders (Rosenbaum-Elliot, Percy and Pervan 2011; Gregersen and Johansen 2018).

Karaosmanoglu and Melewar (2006) affirm that management communications functions to build internal stakeholders' interpersonal relationships (Punjaisri and Wilson 2017), engagement, and promote openness (Ragas and Culp 2014) in the organisation. Consequently, this leads to sharing of ideas and helps the organisation achieve its set objectives (Dordevic 2010; Podnar 2014). Similarly, Esenyel and Emeagwali (2019) posited that defective management communications create a sense of inferiority, stagnation, and an atmosphere of resentment within an organisation (Klein 1996). Therefore, it is reasonable to say poor management communications can be instrumental in ceasing an organisation's creative spirit and resourcefulness. Also, it is considered the duty of management to communicate with various stakeholders for diverse reasons at a strategic level (Goodman, Johansen and Nielsen 2011; Neill 2015), from press conferences to internal briefing sessions. According to Burmann and Zeplin (2005); Balmer (2017), it is paramount that 'management' must not be seen as closed off or detached from receiving communication from those they manage (Hovanyi 2009; Biraghi and Gambetti 2015). According to Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003), Schultz, Hatch and Adams (2012), Fill (2019), this circumstance can affect the organisation's overall culture and how external stakeholders perceive the organisation. This type of rationalisation can be significant for national brands. However, this section has highlighted that even though management communication acknowledges managers, it is like a two-way street. To be effective, it ought to be mutual, open-ended and reciprocal (Welch and Jackson 2007; Zerfass 2010). In a way that encourages all internal stakeholders to be dedicated and committed to being collaborative with their management and corporate brand (Hatch and Schultz 2008; Balmer 2013). The section that follows moves on to consider marketing communications.

3.4.3. Marketing Communications

Another significant aspect of corporate communications is marketing communications (Balmer 2017; Fill 2019). Traditionally, the term marketing communications has been used to describe promotions or sales to a specific target market (West 2007). Also, many published studies illustrate the primary function of marketing communications as conveying messages to engage external stakeholders about a corporate brand's offering (Amaretta and Hendriana 2011; Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Eagle 2015; Kitchen 2016). As Fill (2019) argues, it could also be about endorsing the corporate brand identity to

internal stakeholders (Du Preez, Bendixen and Abratt 2017). Eagle (2015) posits that to a more significant extent and in more advanced marketing communications functions, it plays an inimitable role in introducing the public to an organisation's brand personality when used effectively (Hatch and Schultz 1997). For Ots and Nyilasy (2015), marketing communications is an incredibly practice-based approach to dealing with corporate communications, branding and reputation. To the extent that most of the marketing communications literature is practitioner-oriented and tends to focus on being 'integrated' using different tools and mediums to deliver a consistent message (Pickton and Broderick 2001; Holm 2006; Ots and Nyilasy 2017). According to Fill (2019), how the 'message' of marketing communications interacts with other variables, such as public opinions, interpretation and implications, should be the focus of marketing communications research (Schultz, Martin and Meyer 2017). This stance has been highlighted in the criticisms received by well-known brands such as 'PepsiCo' through marketing campaigns considered controversial by important stakeholders, such as pressure groups and consumers, which tainted their image (Bowd 2017).

Nevertheless, there are three reasons why marketing communications have been deemed dominant in the corporate communication and branding process, according to Berens, Van Riel and Van Bruggen (2005), Goodman and Trapp (2010), Melewar et al. (2012); Foroudi et al. (2019). These are its role in (i) internal marketing communications, (ii) external marketing communications, and (iii) unplanned and planned marketing communications. In the first place, internal marketing's concerned group is employees (internal stakeholders) (Balmer 2017). Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan (2019) noted its primary purpose is to provide job satisfaction and better internal communications. To Mingione (2015), internal marketing plays a significant role in ensuring effective and comprehensive employee management and performance (Yao, Chen and Cai 2013). While Christensen, Firat and Cornelissen (2009) affirm that winning all employees on board to participate and deliver on the shared vision or goals that the organisation is trying to achieve is an integral part of internal communications (Halliburton and Bach 2012).

On the other hand, external marketing's concerned group is external stakeholders (Fill 2013). Commenting on signalling/impression theory, Fombrun (2012) argues that a more modest role of external marketing promotes a particular product or service of the corporate brand. However, its overall goal is to advance the corporate brand identity and convey its personality through the identity (Heaton 2018). Some authors have considered the effects of marketing communications in building a robust relationship

with external stakeholders, boosting the corporate brand image concurrently (Goodman, Johansen and Nielsen 2011). Fill and Jamieson (2014) noted that the process begins with effectively understanding the marketplace and external stakeholders' needs and wants. According to Batra and Keller (2016), this lies in skillfully crafting marketing communications messages to evoke customers to prioritise that corporate brand over others. Although, as demonstrated in preceding sections, external marketing on its own is not enough to create the desired corporate brand image and reputation (Melewar, Gambetti and Martin 2014). Key nation branding scholars (Anholt 2016; Aronczyk 2019; Govers 2019) have emphasised the need for this type of awareness in a nation branding context. However, little has been written about communications in a nation branding and reputation context.

Nevertheless, marketing communications commonly deliver planned messages that play a significant role in increasing brand awareness (Belch and Belch 2003; Heath 2018). While planned messages are deliberately delivered to external stakeholders, unplanned messages are not (Cornelissen and Lock 2001; Davies et al., 2003). Unplanned messages could include media coverage, positive or negative information presented or published about any aspect of the corporate brand, including its products or internal stakeholders (Roper and Davies 2007; Nguyen, Melewar and Schultz 2017). Including terrorism or natural disaster in the case of national brands (Avraham 2009; Yousaf 2017). In essence, there are so many reasons for national brands to be concerned about unplanned messages; however, as Dinnie et al. (2010) states, governmental organisations adopting a coordinated marketing approach aligning with public stakeholders can be helpful to their nation branding activities. The following section describes organisational communications.

3.4.4. Organisational Communications

Organisational communications is challenging to define because its scope is somewhat controversial, and there is no general agreement about its measures (Berens 2007; Zerfass and Viertmann 2017). It also comes with many misconceptions about management communications (Marques 2010) and communications within an organisation, which is otherwise acknowledged as internal communications by various scholars (Subari and Riady 2015; Du Preez, Bendixen and Abratt 2017). Furthermore, the existing accounts fail to resolve the contradiction between organisational communications and the communications department within an organisation (Cornelissen and Lock 2001; Martynenko 2015). These variances highlight the

complexities of organisational communications as it draws from various management specialities (Wickert, Vaccaro and Cornelissen 2017). Notwithstanding, there is a consensus among organisational theorists that organisational communications may serve as a path for corporate identity construction (Dolphin and Fan 2000; Van Riel and Fombrun 2007) at a supreme level (Hovanyi 2009). Frandsen and Johansen (2018) argue that the main aim of organisational communication is not to generate revenue for the organisation but to serve a more long-term purpose of building mutually benefiting relationships with influential corporate audiences (Kidner et al., 2013).

Similarly, Fill (2013) asserts that organisational communications 'is' a corporate brand embracing a range of public relations activities directed at a wide variety of trade stakeholders to build its credibility. This description has been broadened by Allen and Reiter-Palmon (2019) to include community engagement and labour relations (Dupe 2015) that drive an organisation's authority and reputation among its peers over time (Cooren et al. 2015). For Christensen, Morsing and Cheney (2008), Allen and Reiter-Palmon (2019), organisational communications is about a corporate brand having a noble purpose and embracing some 'responsibility specialisation' to help achieve the corporate brands' mission and vision (Mohamad et al. 2014). Illustratively, Mosher (2012), Fill (2013 p. 375) demonstrated how the 'Diageo' brand operated five organisational communications tactics in their corporate identity management program. Including supporting 'prevention programs' focused on responsible retail practices to persuade *"policymakers, public health and medical groups"* about its commitment to *"deter underage drinking and other social harms associated with its products"* (Fill 2013 p. 375).

Nonetheless, few writers have drawn on any systematic research into organisational communications and reputation in detail (Tench et al., 2017). Furthermore, corporate brands vary significantly in incorporating organisational communications into their operations - adding to the irregularity (Dozier, Grunig and Grunig 2013). According to Christensen (2002), it is common for corporate brands to allow external PR (public relations) departments to handle organisational communications on their behalf. This predisposition has prompted some analysts (e.g. Mazzei 2014) to draw a fine distinction between organisational communications and marketing communications in the corporate branding and reputation process. As a result of its link to public affairs, corporate advertising (Balmer et al., 2013) and media relations (Manley and Valin 2017). Ultimately, this has emphasised that organisational communications employ different messages contrary to marketing communications (Klewes et al., 2017). For the most part,

marketing ploys such as exaggerations and promotions are minimal with organisational communications, and the message is more formal (Van Riel and Fombrun 2007; Spatzier 2016). This insight merely illustrates the severity of organisational communications and the need for research in corporate branding to provide a clear and practical conceptualisation for the uniqueness of organisational communications. To conclude this section on corporate communications, the literature briefly identifies behavioural communications.

3.4.5. Behavioural Communications

Behavioural communications is an integral pillar of the corporate branding process because, according to Zeplin (2005), organisations remain primarily made up of 'people' despite the artificial intelligence era of the 21st century (Klewes et al., 2017). Thus, behavioural communications have been defined as the 'manner of interaction' between key internal stakeholders, e.g. senior managers and the overall internal stakeholder group, including external stakeholders (Popescu 2013; Fill 2019). Different theories exist in the literature regarding behavioural communications; however, researchers in the marketing discipline have not treated behavioural communications in much detail despite its criticality to the corporate branding and reputation process since it involves the ethos of internal stakeholders (Fill 2013; Du Preez, Bendixen and Abratt 2017; Chaurasia and Patel 2018). Nevertheless, Scholars like McDougall and Ruckstuhl (2018) have highlighted the significance of behavioural communications using 'behavioural mimicry' theory to explain how employees in organisations will subconsciously synchronise their work behaviours with one another to identify with a group. Similarly, Duening (2016) applied the 'emotional contagion theory' to explain how an invisible connecting chain shapes the behaviours of employees, to form shared thoughts and feelings (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011), which can be transmitted within the organisation as readily as the common cold. Thus, the notion of behavioural communications helps us understand the actualisation of shared culture and values in a corporate - nation branding context. However, to the best of my knowledge, no study has investigated the impact of behavioural communications of internal stakeholders on their nation brand reputation. This acknowledgement further deserves more research to understand nation branding and reputation (Aronczyk 2019). Accordingly, this thesis will consider the nation branding and reputation sub-area after exploring the corporate branding and reputation body of knowledge.

3.5.   The Concept of Nation Branding and Reputation

So far, this thesis has comprehensively examined the literature on corporate brand reputation. As was pointed out in the introduction of this chapter, this thesis needed the critical theories of corporate branding and reputation to rationalize and explain the sub-discipline of nation branding and reputation. As described in the previous sections, it is clear that extensive research has been carried out on corporate branding and reputation (Boone and Uysal 2020; Mariutti and Giraldi 2020). However, limited research has been conducted on understanding nation branding and reputation through the key concepts (personality, identity, image and reputation) of the building blocks of corporate reputation. Particularly from an internal and external perspective, to challenge nation branding and reputation from a multi-stakeholder point of view (Ali and Rehman 2015; Dinnie 2015). In other words, existing research in nation branding has focused on specific concepts of the building blocks and failed to explore these key concepts together (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015).

Consequently, the following part of this chapter discusses the existing literature in the sub-discipline of nation branding and reputation, which is the main focus of this research to address the gaps indicated previously.

3.5.1.   Nation Branding: The Application

The power of the 'brand', described as (i) 'soft power' (Fan 2006; Li et al. 2020), (ii) 'sort of religion' (Leitch and Richardson 2003), (iii) 'emotionally connective' (Davis and Edwards-Warren 2015) (iv) 'legal advocate' (O'Sullivan, Lim and Luck 2012) among others, is being explored in various settings, inclusive of nations (Olins 2002; Fan 2006; Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Schuhly and Tenzer 2017). As explained in the introduction of this thesis, the concept of 'nation branding' limited research was first coined by Anholt (1996). Since then, it has frequently been discussed in the literature (Desatova 2018), but there is no consensus about its definition to date. Nation branding is also challenging to define because terminological confusion exists in the literature and is interchangeably referred to as destination branding (Briciu and Bricuu 2019; Avraham 2020), place branding (Hanna and Rowley 2012; Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020), and place marketing (Aitken and Campelo 2011; Warnaby and Medway 2013). However, the definition of what a 'nation brand' is, has been detailed. In his seminal study, the

notable pioneering scholar of nation branding defined a nation brand as the *"sum of people's perceptions of a country across six areas of national competence" (tourism; exports; governance; investments and immigration; culture and heritage; people)* (Anholt 2005 p. 186). According to Anholt's nation brand index (2005) (see appendix B – Synthesis of the theoretical framework, Nation brand Index), these six dimensions are the parameters used to measure the power and quality of a country's brand image. Such definition poses a problem because it is restricted and remarkably externally focused (image) and does not classify the people involved. On the other hand, Dinnie (2015 p. 15) established another well-known definition of a nation brand as *"the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally-grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences".* This definition was helpful to highlight the relevance of different audiences. However, it will need to evolve to highlight specific differences between the audiences - internal (identity) and external (image) (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). Other definitions of a nation brand have been proposed, and differences of opinion still exist in the literature (Silvanto and Ryan 2018).

Nevertheless, the explanations on nation branding propose that a nation brand projects some intuitive interactions between stakeholders (Kim and Lee 2018) and their society, both geographically (Loo and Davies 2006; Desatova 2018) and culturally (Melewar and Dennis 2016; Hao et al. 2019). However, few writers have drawn on any systematic academic research or convincing argument to explore the meanings and implications of these interactions for a nation brand(ing). So much that Anholt (2016), the pioneering scholar of nation branding, is now known to critic the idea of nation branding, insisting that 'places' cannot be branded because the task is excessively ambitious and unproven. This thesis responds by laying the empirical foundation highlighting the significant contributory factors to national governments and nation branding research. Thus, addressing the gap to systemically explore the critical components of a nation brand (personality, identity, image, reputation) and expand the academic body of knowledge within nation branding and reputation.

As indicated in the introduction of this thesis, the existing literature on nation branding is somewhat nebulous since there is also disciplinary instability (Browning 2016; Kim and Lee 2018). Numerous fields have been used to explore the subject, from international relations (Gilboa 2008; Eugenio and San 2013) and public diplomacy (Kerr and Balakrishnan 2012) to economics (Angelina, Biruta and Tatjana 2017). A classic example of this confusion within nation branding literature is a multidisciplinary definition

proposed by Aronczyk and Budnitsky (2017). Nation branding was defined as a *"form of strategic communication adopted by national elites and related decision-makers to communicate national priorities among domestic and international populations for a variety of interrelated purposes"* (Aronczyk and Budnitsky 2017, p. 49). This definition is challenged, as it is needlessly multidirectional and disorganised with an extraneous focus on communication. It would have been more pertinent to have steadily clarified the features and boundaries of the active agents named (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011; Melewar et al. 2012).

Notably, some authors have argued that loosely using marketing and PR terminologies; mostly adds to the ambiguity and chaos in nation branding research (Browning 2016; Govers 2019). This conclusion is undoubtedly true, as shown by the case of Anholt (2016), highlighted previously as one of the pioneering scholars of nation branding. In his works, Anholt (2008; 2010) writes nations could have a brand identity and image, which are iterative of the marketing and brand management branch of knowledge (Chaurasia and Patel 2018; Fill 2019). Yet, he insists the concept of nation branding employing marketing communications techniques is silly (Anholt 2016). Anholt fails to consider the differing roles and responsibilities of nation branding, the nation brand, and marketing communications. As explained in the corporate communications section, although marketing communications should not be solely relied upon in the branding and reputation process, different phases of marketing communications can be precious to the nation branding process (Dinnie 2015). Such inconsistency with Anholt's (2008; 2010; 2016) agreements and arguments which many authors rely on, raises the question of if there is a possible misconception in the literature and beyond that - the nation brand, nation branding, or the aim of intentionally communicating a nation brand to an audience are the same thing. If branding is about managing perceptions, as illustrated by many scholars in the previous sections on corporate branding (Biraghi and Gambetti 2015; Wickert, Vaccaro and Cornelissen 2017), why can't a nation be branded?

Furthermore, in the same way, as corporate brands, nations seek a 'competitive advantage' to engage in more direct competition (Olins 2002; Volpe 2014; Li, Min and Lee 2021). However, some authors, e.g. Browning and Ferraz (2017), are much more concerned with peace promotion in a nation branding context. Thus, it is reasonable to say nations can likely deconstruct their brands in terms of their personality and identity brought together (Otto, Chater and Stott 2011; Fill 2013), as identified in the corporate branding literature, to understand them categorically (Balmer and Greyser 2003). This awareness could allow nation brands to try for a competitive edge (Dinnie 2015) or

possibly advance their identified brand personality and identity beyond (Balmer, Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Roper and Fill 2012). Dinnie's (2015) five goals of nation branding are an excellent illustration of this 'competitive advantage' 1) grow exports, 2) develop inbound tourism, 3) attract foreign investment, 4) improve political influence internationally and 5) effectively control negative stereotypes.

Also, in their formative research, Pritchard and Morgan (2001); Skinner and Kubacki (2007) pointed out that several nations were not mindful of what constitutes their nation brand and even more recently (Bonakdar and Audirac 2020). From this, we can infer that to fully understand a nation's brand, a good grasp of the underpinnings from which the brand emanates is crucial (Balmer 2017; Schmidt and Redler 2018). Yet half of the studies evaluated have failed to specify in-depth whether or how a nation brand is assigned or shaped (Hao et al., 2019). Also, much of the available literature on nation branding merely deals with the debate and argument of why nation branding is profitable and beneficial for a nation (Fan 2010; Bisa 2013; Silvanto and Ryan 2018). Others have highlighted the relevance of selling a nation's brand to promote its appealing image or features, which have market value to external stakeholders, such as other nations or individual tourists, as the magical answer to nation branding research (Chan and Marafa 2013; Pawlusz and Polese 2017). These studies would have been more helpful if they had focused on what thoroughly constitutes the nation's brand image, be it alluring or not (Urde 2013; Ali and Rehman 2015).

Besides, short-term views of nation brands such as these do not necessarily show the understated perceptions multiple stakeholders may have for a nation brand over time (Cowan and Guzman 2020). Not to mention that when an overall nation brand perception is promising, it is much easier to endorse to external stakeholders, thereby leaving nations with a much unfavourable brand perception at risk of inaccessible advancement potential (Carroll 2017; Aronczyk 2019).

A systematic approach is vital (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016) to explore this subject of nation branding because a nation brand likely develops from feelings about what is central (Szondi 2010; Dowling 2018), enduring and distinctive about the character of that nation (Neil 2015; Rumelili and Suleymanoglu-Kurum 2017). Which can reasonably be appreciated methodically (Melewar, Gambetti and Martin 2014). In summary, this review shows that the nation branding rationalisation may help those nation brands with little experience in perception management practices in the long term (Kotsi et al., 2018; Govers 2019). Therefore, this thesis will now turn to nation brand reputation.

3.5.2. What does Nation Brand Reputation Involve?

Nation brand reputation theory is still highly misunderstood, and a precise definition of nation brand reputation in the literature has proved elusive (Stahlberg and Bolin 2016; Mariutti, Medeiros and Buarque 2019; Li, Min and Lee 2021). The most prominent attention on nation brand reputation has focused on providing reliable and valid country reputation measurement models (Passow, Fehlmann and Grahlow 2005; Lee, Toth and Shin 2008) or inter-nation competition - to increase soft and hard power (Angell and Mordhorst 2015; Tan 2018). Some authors have mainly been interested in questions concerning the overall familiarity and substantial knowledge external stakeholders have of a nation (Lee, Toth and Shin 2008; Kerr and Balakrishnan 2012) - overlooking internal stakeholders. Others have highlighted the relevance of external audiences' personal and second-hand experiences regarding a nation brand (Yang et al., 2008).

However, all the studies reviewed so far suffer from the fact that they view nation brand reputation as autonomous and primarily assigned to the nation rather than constructed from fundamental concepts. How corporate brand reputation literature describes (Schultz, Hatch and Adam 2012; Dowling 2018; Cowan and Guzman 2020 Cowan, K., and Guzman). As a result, questions like who should take most interests (Viktorin et al. 2018), who is responsible (Loo and Davies 2006), in control or accountable for a nation's reputation concerns are still daunting to answer meaningfully (Anholt 2005; Govers 2019). According to (Novcic and Stavljanin 2015; Govers 2019), this drawback is partly due to the vague and fragmented view of nation brand reputation within the numerous disciplines exploring nation branding in the literature.

By drawing on the concept of nation brand identity and image, Dinnie (2015) has shown that adapting corporate branding theory to the context of nation branding is practicable and worthwhile to improve their relevance (Caldwell and Freire 2004; Fan 2010; Li, Min Lee 2020). However, the literature on corporate brand reputation has proved that this is not enough for a national brand reputation situation (Fill 2013; Urde 2016). Considering identity-image conceptualisations are a short-term perspective of the nation brand (Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Abimbola et al. 2012). In contrast, a long-term outlook can be more broad-minded and progressive for nations overall (Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Ghimire 2013; Handayani and Rashid 2018). Moreover, the existing literature fails to clearly distinguish a nation's brand image and reputation in light of a short-term or long-term perspective (Zeineddine 2017) to better understand the nation brand reputation.

A classic example of this disadvantage is the work done by Simion, Bucovetchi and Dumitrescu (2017), in which the authors offered the image and reputation of a nation a shared definition as *the image or the reputation of a nation refers to the set of beliefs and opinions that a person has about a nation"*. (2017, p. 18). Perhaps the most serious disadvantage of this definition is that it fails to give sufficient consideration to the embedded nature of nation brand reputation as long-lasting (Fill 2013). In audience composition, it is also severely curtailed to deliberate on 'a person' (Perez 2015). Nevertheless, if a broader perspective investigation of a nation brand; can be a successful and reasonable reflection of the nation brand, are the kind of theoretical gaps that are still lacking (Chaploe 2004; Li, Min and Lee 2021).

Thus far, some writers, e.g. Kemming and Humborg (2010), have attempted to signal fine correlations between the performance of a nation's democracy and the nations brand reputation. Others Skilling (2010) question the usefulness of nation brand reputation discourse. For instance, Zeina (2019) suggests that while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) benefited from many nation branding initiatives focused on its tourism image development, they did not positively impact its reputation due to the prevailing gender issues. Although the author overlooks the fact that multiple positive images can contribute to reputation eventually and critically (Chun 2005; Dowling and Moran 2012), it indicates a more short-term practitioner-academia view of nation branding (Kaneva 2011). According to Papp-Vary (2019), this issue is comprehensible considering that nation branding and reputation is a budding area; therefore, relatively lacking in research, especially longitudinal studies (Govers 2019).

Equally important, according to Dinnie (2015); Anholt (2016), having an unfavourable reputation or none at all is a severe handicap for nations seeking to gain that competitive edge previously described. This notion suggests a need to be explicit about precisely what is meant by the term nation brand reputation (Stuart et al., 2013; Mariutti 2017; Zeina 2019)—traced back to the corporate branding and reputation literature (Gray and Balmer 1998; Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Roper and Fill 2012; Urde and Greyser 2016; Dowling 2018). This thesis defines 'nation brand reputation' as the long-term representation of a nation's brand, encompassing of all its stakeholder views; at the same time, owned by the internal stakeholders and deep enough to be referred to as shared amongst them (Fill 2013; Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016). This form of reasoning may help multi-cultural nation brands eliminate bias and or competition amongst them for their nation brand reputation advantage (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). This position was anticipated by Van (2001), calling for more research attention into nation brand

reputation while advocating that the idea of nation brand reputation has the potential to replace the concept of nationalism in the distant future (Jordan 2014). So far, this section has defined what is meant by the nation brand, nation branding and nation brand reputation. This thesis will now discuss the critical constituent elements that frame nation brand reputation.

3.5.3. Nation Brand Personality

A growing body of literature calls for a reliable and valid set of dimensions that show the link between a nation's core character (personality) and overall reputation (McCrea and Terracciano 2006; Hao et al., 2019). Still, there is little consensus about what nation brand personality means amongst scholars (Song and Sung 2013; Matzler et al., 2016; Hao et al., 2019). This imbalance is exemplified in Rojas-Mendez, Murphy and Papadopoulos's (2013) work, where it appears the ideas of reputation are applied to denote personality. As a result, their definition for nation brand personality exists as:

> *"a set of positive and/or negative human personality traits comprising specific dimensions that internal and external audiences associate to a country name, based on previous experiences and perceptions as a consequence of the actions, intentions and opinions of that country's government, companies and institutions and society at large"* (Rojas-Mendez, Murphy and Papadopoulos 2013, P. 1029).

The problem with this definition is that it includes excessive information and, therefore, is - considerably broad. One possible implication of this is that it loses the essence, uniqueness and particularity of personality in a nation brand context (Balmer and Grey 2003; Tuncdogan and Volberda 2020). Besides, nation brand personality is not after the personality of destinations or separate brands of a nation in the way the current literature describes (Murphy, Moscardo and Benckendorff 2007; Chaykina, Guerreiro and Mendez 2014). This shortcoming is also evident in how product brand personality traits and concepts are applied to the nation brand personality literature (Xie and Lee 2013; Savas and Burcin 2014; Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015). Moreover, employing product brand personality traits to a nation brand situation is questionable because a nation brand deals with the nation in its entirety, not some tourist attractions, products or places within the nation (Hofstede and McCrea 2004; Nguyen, Melewar and Schultz 2017). In other words, nations usually are more complex than products, including corporate brands (Hao et al., 2019).

Similarly, in their seminal research, D'Astous and Boujbel (2007) concluded six dimensions *"wickedness, agreeableness, snobbism, assiduousness, conformity, unobtrusiveness"* (p. 483) of nation brand personality. Through instigating a representative scale, employing several external stakeholders to generate the personality traits of different countries. In the same vein, Kim (2013) engaged topical *"adjectives"* and external stakeholders (college students) to determine the personality types of other different nations through *"leadership, excitement, sophistication, tradition, and peacefulness"* (p. 39). Although supportive, these studies might have been much more persuasive if the authors widely included internal stakeholders from the said countries examined (Zenker Braun and Petersen 2017; Mariutti, Meideiros and Buarque 2019). Moreover, nation brand personality should not be limited to how stakeholders, internal or external, would describe a nation brand through some predetermined or proxy traits (David et al., 2017). Furthermore, it can reasonably be said that most nations may well be thriving or declining along the lines of the pre-determined personality at some point or the other, depending on short-term circumstances (Mariutti and Giraldi 2020). This understanding also highlights an approach to using categories not fully understood within the nation brand personality research.

Indeed, drawing on the corporate brand personality literature, nation brand personality would concern internal stakeholders of a nation (Balmer and Gray 2003; Braun et al., 2018). Therefore, they should be the primary focus of research on nation brand personality (Otto, Charter and Stott 2011). Better studies would examine a large, carefully selected sample of internal and external stakeholders within the boundaries of the nations of interest - to analyse nation brand personality and beyond (Hao et al., 2019). Equally, it is now well established from various sources (Stockburger-Sauer 2011; Kim 2013; Hao et al. 2019) that personality can be a competitive tool for building a strong nation brand. Although centred on tourist destinations, a detailed analysis to detect whether tourists ascribed personality traits to destinations underlines this point reasonably (Hultman et al., 2017). Results from this study (Hultman et al., 2017) indicated tourists could articulate different destination brand personalities for each area they explored.

Furthermore, according to Eckinci and Uysal's (2006) destination personality research, it was found that destination personalities impacted tourists' intention to recommend that destination. This insight mirrors corporate brand personality literature, where researchers such as Davies et al. (2004) Banerjee (2016) affirmed that a corporate brand personality influences consumer preference and usage (Bosnjak, Bochmann and

Hufschmidt 2007; Tichindelean and Beca 2015). In their analysis of the US brand personality in China, Rojas-Mendez, Murphy, and Papadopoulos et al. (2013) also proposed that peculiarities of a nation's brand personality can generally be classed under 1) positive, 2) negative, and 3) neutral. Although this is vastly subjective and prone to interpreter bias, it could be a valuable resource for nation brands to seek out their nation's positive personality dimensions, developing them further for advancement while improving the negative aspects.

Nevertheless, it has been implied that a nation's brand personality is primarily associated with the core character and traits that identify the internal stakeholders of a nation (Song and Sung 2013). Although, from an internal perspective, it is not well established in the literature if the stakeholders regard these traits as part of themselves (Mariutti and Giraldi 2020). According to Ishii and Watanabe (2015), this limitation is partly due to the oblivious and elusive discourse practices situated within nation branding research and the nation brand itself. For example, political, economic, social, cultural, natural environment, sovereignty, territory, and citizens (Kotler and Getner 2002). Thus, even though a nation brand may appear complex and intricate (Skinner and Kubacki 2007; Hao et al., 2019). Evidence from corporate branding and reputation literature has shown that strategically considering a nation's brand personality could simplify overseeing a nation brand (Fombrun 2012; Papadopoulos and Heslop 2002). This recognition deserves more research attention in a nation branding context (Braun et al., 2018). Correspondingly, Kim Shim and Dinnie (2013) indicated the need for empirical research to investigate the impact of nation brand personality on national credibility while proposing that *"nation brand personality is responsible for associations that may add to or subtract from the perceived attractiveness of a nation"* (p. 36). Also, Clifton (2014), while observing that the vast majority of work on nation brand personality had not been focused and systemic, highlighted that nation brand personality can determine the power of a *'country of origin effect'*. For example, an instinctive preference for a made-in-Germany versus a made-in-Nigeria product (Clifton 2014; Ruis-Ulldemolins 2015).

In summary, this section has attempted to provide an overview of the existing literature relating to nation brand personality. It has been shown from this review that there is limited research investigating nation brand personality from the well-defined abstract knowledge of corporate brand personalities such as values and culture (Fill 2013; Folse, Burton and Netemeyer 2013). This insight deserves more research attention in a nation branding context (Wu 2017). Therefore, let us now consider the nation brand identity.

3.5.4. Nation Brand Identity

In Fill's (2013) noteworthy analysis of corporate branding and reputation, our attention was drawn to the notion that a corporate brand and corporate brand identity are the same and inseparable (Balmer 2017). This type of reasoning can be valuable to the nation brand identity body of knowledge. Nevertheless, there have been explicit models and several studies on nation brand identity distinctly (see table 1 below - Determinants of nation brand identity) (Rusciano 2003; Kubacki and Skinner 2006Aitken and Campelo 2011). These studies demonstrate a remarkable degree of correlation that a nation's brand identity is somewhat composed of the nation's dominant culture and values (Jaworski and Fosher 2003; Jansen 2008; Novcic and Stavljanin 2015). Thus, they are instrumental when structurally interpreting the concept of nation brand identity (Browning 2016; Pawlusz and Polese 2017) and comparable to corporate branding and identity literature, which affirm that the corporate brand's values and culture are preconditions of the corporate brand identity (Hatch and Schultz 2008; Balmer, Brexendorf and Kernstock 2013). However, the existing accounts fail to resolve the contradiction between nation brand personality and nation brand identity (Fill 2013). A much more systematic approach will identify how the nation's brand identity interacts with the nation's brand personality, which is believed to be linked to values and culture (Konecnik Ruzzier and de Chernatony 2013).

Table 1 - Determinants of Nation Brand Identity

Author	Nation of Study	Determinants of Nation Brand Identity
Anderson, (1991)	Various	Language Beliefs shared by people
Earley and Singh (1995)	America	Economic systems Legal systems Cultural systems Political systems
Stebbins (1997)	Various	Cultural tourism
Cameron (1999)	United Kingdom	Cultural symbols Passport Residence Language
Williams, (1999)	The United Kingdom and Spain	Cultural symbols Language
Zielonka and Mair (1999)	Current and prospective EU member states	Political culture Language Religious beliefs Popular culture
Rusciano (2003)	23 Nations	Culture Religion
Pritchard and Morgan (2001)	Wales	Language Culture
Fuchs and Klingermann, (1999)	Western European & Central and Eastern European countries	Clearly defined territory
Laitin (1999)	Various	Language Religion

Author	Nation of Study	Determinants of Nation Brand Identity
		Popular shallow culture Deep culture
Kubacki and Skinner (2006)	Poland	Cultural indicators
Palmer, (1999) Ballesteros and Ramírez, (2007)	Southern Spain and England	Heritage Tourism
Konecnik and Go, (2008).	Slovenia	Country Operations Country Behaviours Country Aspirations
Lin, Pearson and Cai (2011)	Turkey	Food
Li, Min and Lee 2021	Korea	Cosmetic surgery tourism

Then again, as with corporate brand identity, which is mostly 'planned' (Golant 2012; Fetscherin and Usunier 2012), therefore communicated through various facets like the corporate brands' logo; colours; slogan (Frederick and Phillips 1995; Kapferer 2012), vision; mission; values (Balmer 1999; Urde 2016). One question that remains unanswered from these studies on nation brand identity is whether a nation's brand identity is planned or unplanned? 'Something of which the internal stakeholders are aware of, or is it an identity which others bestow upon them accidentally? (Cameron 1999; Govers 2019). This type of clarification deserves more research attention in the nation brand identity exploration (Aronczyk 2019).

Expressly, Dinnie's (2015) explanation of nation branding helped highlight the identity-image gap in a nation brand context *"as a negative factor"* (Dinnie 2008, p. 42). However, his work did not clarify the differences between internal and external audiences in describing the concepts (Yakimova et al., 2017). It would have also been more valuable to demonstrate how individuals (internal and external) respond to what they know or believe about a nation brand (Koukoutsaki-Monnier 2015; Anholt 2016; Desatova 2018). There is a need for more precision and clarity on all this in the nation branding and reputation literature (Aronczyk 2019; Govers 2019). This thesis's theoretical contributions will explore this by explicitly investigating a nation's brand from an internal and external perspective, analysing their interrelatedness, interactions, and influences.

In essence, there remain several aspects of nation brand identity about which relatively little is known (Aronczyk 2019). However, considering all the evidence from corporate branding and reputation literature, we can deduce that the current studies on nation brand identity remain disjointed and narrow in focus, dealing with nation brand identity (Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2012; Kim 2013). For the most part, a nation's brand identity would have a compelling impact on the internal stakeholders and vice versa (internal

stakeholders having a powerful effect on the nation's brand identity) (Valadez-Elias 2014; Balmer 2017). This inference is undoubtedly valid in various unsuccessful nation branding campaigns intended to modify the prevailing identity of some nation brands to external audiences (image); while overlooking the internal stakeholders (Pomering 2013; Dinnie 2015; Schuhly and Tenzer 2017). A classic example was pointed out in the introduction of this thesis with the case of Nigeria (Adegoju 2016). Likewise, the case of Ukraine, as noted by Stahlberg and Bolin (2016).

Nonetheless, the unsuccessful outcomes of the nation branding interventions proved that marketing communications programs alone could not change countries' negative perceptions (Kaneva 2011; Anholt 2016). Despite this, there is limited research investigating the impact of internal stakeholders' prerogatives on nation brand identity, particularly in a negative reputation context (Yousaf and Samreen 2016). Although this thesis's theoretical contributions will address this gap, advance corporate brand identity, and provide a deeper understanding of corporate branding and reputation in new contexts. In summary, this section has reviewed the critical arguments in nation brand identity literature, providing a table that summarises the outcomes of the existing nation brand identity research, observing the determinants of nation brand identity. The following section will discuss the literature on nation brand image in more detail.

3.5.5. Nation Brand Image

A nation's brand image differs from its identity in crucial ways (Kemming and Sandikci 2007; Foroudi et al., 2016). According to Dinnie (2015), the term nation brand image has broadly evolved into how a nation brand is perceived from abroad. This depiction is close to Fanning's (2011), who described nation brand image as *"the evoked series of ideas, attributes, associations and opinions in the minds of a proportion of people in other countries"* (p. 23). These explanations have relatively modelled corporate brand image literature, highlighting the ownership and possible deconstruction of the nation brand image; to reflect what a nation's brand identity communicates - to external audiences (Kemming and Humborg 2010; Gina Pipoli and Juan Alejandro 2015). However, according to Anholt (2011), unlike corporate brands, nations would always have brand images, even though external audiences have not directly experienced the nation brand (Amine and Chao 2005). Go and Govers (2011) offered an explanatory theory for this outcome by proposing that individuals naturally seek simplicity for complex phenomena like nations; therefore, nation brand images are driven mainly by stereotypical depictions (Caldwell and Freire 2004; Kemming and Sandikci 2007).

Meanwhile, two basic approaches have been predominantly adopted in research into nation brand image. One is the analysis of nation brand identity elements such as visual, auditory, symbols and slogans (Kotsi et al., 2018; Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). The other is an exploration of demand-driven factors that drive the idealisation of a nation's brand image. For instance – Ireland and Spirituality (Fanning 2011); Korea – IT (information technology) and cosmetics (Chung, Rhee and Cha 2020) (see table 2 - Determinants of nation brand image). Other studies include that of Novcic and Stavljanin (2015), which set out to discover the perception of Serbia's brand identity from internal and external audiences and stated a three-part essence of nation brand image (i) perception discrepancy, (ii) matching perception and (iii) lack of knowledge. However, the paper does not expand on such image dimensions' consequences (Foroudi et al., 2016; Echeverri et al., 2019). Lee and Chun (2017) also offered a subjective external perspective to nation brand image analysis where the media service 'Wikipedia' was found to be a 'real-time authority' to nation brand images, over experiencing the nation. This interpretation is similar to that of Bolin and Stahlberg (2020). In addition, they argued that media changes from mass to digital as well as interactive personal media profoundly impact how nations are now imagined (Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). However, other researchers looking at nation brand image have found that a nation's individual citizens have as much influence as governments in shaping their nation brand image and possibly reputation. For example, a recent study by Pinchera and Rinallo (2020) revealed how a single fashion entrepreneur in the 1950s single-handedly shaped the nation brand image of Italy to that of 'a fashion country' through his organised fashion shows. Similarly, Chung, Rhee and Cha (2020) presented an account of how the Korean public's dissemination of information about their national brand online and on social networking sites superseded that of the government's initiatives to propagate the Korean nation brand identity-image.

Table 2: Determinants of Nation Brand Image

Author	Nation of Study	Factors of Nation Brand Image
Amine and Chao (2005)	Taiwan	Foreign direct investors, businesspeople, public policy makers, consumers and tourists
J.D. and Sandikci, (2007)	Turkey	Stereotypes and cultural practices related to Turks and Turkey
Fan (2006)	Western, Eastern Europe and Asia	National identity and characteristics, e.g. Britishness
Cai, (2002)	Various	Relevant associations held in tourists' memory
Earley and Singh (1995)	New Zealand	Emotional meaning Conversational value

Author	Nation of Study	Factors of Nation Brand Image
		Celebrity value
Palmer, (1999)	England	National Identity
Stebbins (1997)	Various	Citizens social skills
		History of a country
Alhemoud and Armstrong (1996)	Kuwait	Cultural attractions
Echtner and Ritchie (1993)	Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Switzerland	Stereotypical mental pictures
Pritchard and Morgan (2001)	Wales	Historical stereotypes of people
Fanning (2011)	Ireland	Spirituality
Lee and Chun (2017)	Korea- Japan- China-	Entertainment and Films; Pop culture, cosmetics; Military; People and Language
Clark and Rice (2019)	Scotland	Tourism Events
Echeverri et al. (2019)	Columbia	Nature and Coffee
Murti (2020)	Japan and Indonesia	Rural heritage and identity

On the one hand, Anholt (2005), Konecnik and Go (2008), Pawlusz and Polese (2017) highlight tourism as a primary driver of a nation's brand image, while Kemming and Sandikci (2007), Handayani and Rashid (2018) are more concerned with the brand dimension 'people'. For example, in their pioneering examination, Kemming and Sandikci (2007) showed that the cultural practices and stereotypes related to Turks shaped the brand image of Turkey; tourism not as much (Kerr and Balakrishnan 2012). This insight suggests that the investigation of the nation brand image should go outside of the isolated image dimensions to a more integral view that probes the key components influential to creating a nation's brand image (Rojas-Mendez 2013). This recognition also points to an unambiguous relationship between the nation brand identity-image gap and communications, as many scholars advocate in corporate brand image literature (Hatch and Schultz 2001; Davies and Chun 2002; Chapleo 2011; Kapferer 2012; Balmer 2017; Punjaisri and Wilson 2017).

Ultimately, different theories exist in the literature regarding nation brand image in many countries (White 2012; Handayani and Rashid 2018). Still, there is limited research investigating nation brand identity-image in Africa's continental brand (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015; le Pere 2017). Also, little has been written about the identity-image relationship in Nigeria as a representative case study, typical of a negative image and reputation (Amujo and Otubanjo 2012; Odia and Agbonifoh 2015; Adegoju 2016). Additionally, many published studies on nation brand management rely too heavily on emphasizing the relevance of branding to the nation brand image area (Anholt 2011; Dinnie 2015). Subsequently, the critical implication of this approach is that the nation's brand image is regarded as more relevant for the long term (Kaneva 2012; Mannarina and Talo 2013). A more comprehensive perspective will systematically

consider and qualify the associations between nation brand personality, identity, image and reputation as building blocks. Therefore, it calls for more research attention (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Govers 2019). In summary, this section has reviewed the existing literature on nation brand image. Another significant aspect of conceptual understanding found in the nation branding and reputation literature is the notion of direct citizen participation in the nation brand reputation process.

3.5.6. Direct Citizen Participation?

Thus far, this chapter has argued for a holistic and systematic approach to nation branding and reputation research using the established concepts of personality, identity, image and reputation (Foroudi et al., 2016; Hao et al., 2019). Markedly, in the nation branding context, some authors have questioned the relevance of citizen's/resident's participation and engagement to the nation branding process (Callahan 2007; Rehmet and Dinnie 2013; Zenker, Braun and Petersen 2017) or a matter of national governments. Together these studies indicate that the credence of this factor is complex and uncertain (Zenker and Seigis 2012; Eshuis, Klijn and Braun 2014; Braun et al., 2018). However, those who advocate enhanced citizen participation defend reasons such as reducing conflict, increasing transparency (Mannarini and Talò 2013), and building social capital (Waheduzzaman 2010; Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013). In contrast, the critics raise concerns such as that most citizens are driven by their interests and not the public (Insch and Walters 2018). This clarification - if citizens should be directly involved in potential local or national government's branding and reputation matters, can be an important area of interest for future research (Insch and Walters 2018).

This thesis will next present the theoretical framework emanating from this study's conceptual scope. But first, the illustration of the main arguments of nation brand reputation are highlighted in table 3 below (see table 3 – themes and elements of nation brand reputation). What follows is the image of the conceptual framework.

Table 3: Themes and Elements of Nation (Brand) Reputation

Theme	Element	Literature Source
Nation Personality	1. Dominant Culture	Fill (2013); Abratt and Kleyn (2012); Hatch and Schultz (2008); Pritchard and Morgan (2001) Keller and Richey (2006)
	2. Strategy development Process	Fill (2013); Balmer (2013); Dowling and Moran (2012); Otubanjo et al., (2010)
Nation Identity	3. Core Values	Ind (2007); de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2006); Van Riel and Balmer (1997); Cai (2002)
Or Brand	4. Norms	Kemming and Sandikci (2007); Smith (1991); Balmer (2008); Fan (2010)
	5. Guiding Behaviours	Knox and Bickerson (2003); Pritchard and Morgan (2001); Stuart and Muzellec (2004)
Nation Communication Mix		
(Organisational)	6. Governance	Fill (2013); Anholt (2008); Abratt and Keyn (2012); Hatch and Schultz (2008) Balmer et al., (2006)
	7. Policies	Fill (2013); Dinnie (2015); Amine and Chao (2005)
	8. Public Relations	Van Riel and Fombrun (2007); Fill (2013); Brønn (2007); Morgan and Pritchard (2005)
(Management)	9. Leader(s) Personal Brand	Fill (2013); Roper and Fill (2012); Amine and Chao (2005); Cornelissen (2014)
(Symbolic)	10. Visual	Melewar et al., (2006); Kotsi et al., (2018)
	11. Auditory	Kotsi et al., (2018)
(Marketing)	12. Planned	Fill (2013); Dinnie (2015); Ekinci and Hosany (2006)
	13. Unplanned	Fill (2013); Grönroos (2004); Gertner and Kotler (2004)
(Behavioural)	14. Modes of Engagement	Hatch and Schultz (2008); Chun (2005); Morgan et al., (2011)
The Public/Society	15. 'Citizens' - lived formative years ≥	Anholt (2005); Welch and Jackson (2007); Aronczyk (2009); Kaneva (2011); Denhardt et al., (2009)
Direct Citizen Participation	16. Citizen involvement	Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013); Waheduzzaman (2010); Callahan (2007); Mannarini and Talo (2013) Insch and Walters(2018)
Nation Image	17. Tourism	Anholt (2011); Handayani and Rashid (2018); Amine and Chao (2005); Echtner and Ritchie 2003; Ekinci and Hosany (2006)
	18. Media	Dinnie (2015); Balmer and Greyser (2006)
	19. Exports	Anholt (2005); Dinnie (2015)
	20. Citizens Behaviour	Kemming and Sandikci (2007); Cai (2002);
	21. Public Diplomacy	Olins (2005); Cornelissen et al., (2007); Szondi (2007); Anholt (2016)
Nation Reputation	22. Elapsed Time Period?	Fill (2013); Gotsi and Wilson (2001); Keller et al., (2011).

3.6. Theoretical-Conceptual Scope of Nation Brand Reputation (Objective #1)

In the previous sections, the theory that underpins this thesis was reviewed and presented. The critical concepts of corporate branding and reputation have been applied to the sub-discipline of nation branding and reputation. This section captures the researchers' reasoning based on the literature review and interlink of both subject areas (corporate - nation branding and reputation). To provide a tentative understanding of nation brand reputation and thus answers objective #1 of this thesis to - **Uncover the theoretical scope of corporate-nation brand reputation**.
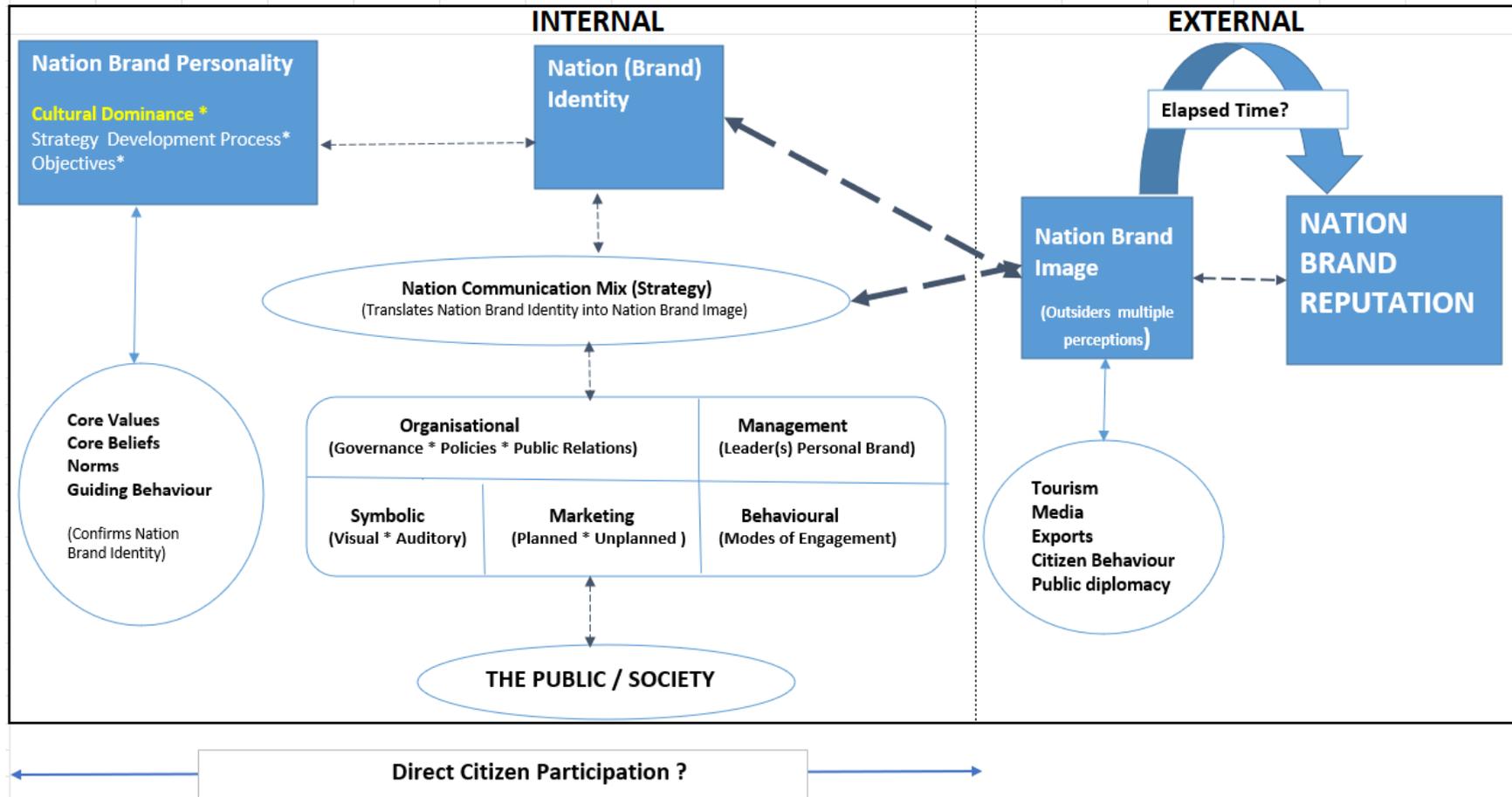
Figure 2: Proposed Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation – Izegwire (2020), adapted from (Fill 2013), Dinnie (2015), Callahan (2007), Anholt (2005).

These building blocks of nation brand reputation considers the key existing models by Fill (2013), Anholt (2005), and Dinnie (2008, 2015) (see appendix B, synthesis of theoretical models), including the extensive body of knowledge in the corporate - nation branding and reputation literature. In addition, it highlights the gaps identified (represented by dotted lines) in the nation branding and reputation literature. This thesis has approached this nation brand reputation research from a multi-stakeholder (internal and external) perspective, illustrated next.

Internal – in the framework of the internal perspective, the two critical facets identified to make up a nation's brand personality are the nation's dominant culture and the approach through which strategy is developed, but not the strategy itself (Laitin 1999; Pritchard and Morgan 2001; Kubacki and Skinner 2006, Dinnie et al. 2010, Fill 2013). A nation's brand personality is also about its core values (Smith 1991; Balmer and Greyser 2006; Hatch and Schultz 2008; Otubanjo et al. 2010; Dowling and Moran 2012) and how it is managed through governance, influenced by the nation's brand objectives (Anholt 2005; Konecnik and Go 2008). How these are communicated internally with all internal stakeholders feeds into the nation's brand identity (Dinnie 2015). The literature identified that a nation's brand identity is expected to articulate what the country is, what it does, how it does it and is expressed through communications – deliberately (e.g. planned marketing) or by default (e.g. citizens guiding behaviour). All these are conveyed through cues and signals that guide internal and external audiences to understand the nation's brand identity (Aronczyk 2019).

External – On the right side of the framework is the nation's brand image and reputation, which results from the short-term and long-term interpretations and meanings external audiences ascribe to the identity cues presented by the nation brand (Cai 2002; Murti 2020). For example, tourists or business visitors' perceptions of a nation after visiting and how that perception will likely compound or change over time following numerous visits or encounters. In addition, external perceptions can also be borne out of the media, branded exports and public diplomacy activities (Dinnie 2015).

Employing this conceptual framework, the researcher explores the subject of nation branding and reputation in the Nigerian nation brand context through the systematic personality-identity and image-reputation gap identified in the literature from a

multi-stakeholder perspective (internal and external). The empirical findings from this investigation will be the author's independent contribution to knowledge, as this has not been done before in the nation branding and reputation fields of study.

However, central tensions still shape the agendas of corporate and nation branding despite the increasing significance of the themes (Balmer 2017; Stuart 2018; Beise-Zee 2021). In the corporate branding phase, one criticism of much of the literature is the rapid evolution of thinking witnessed in the corporate branding area of knowledge (Melewar, Gotsi and Andriopoulos 2012; Veloutsou and Guzman 2017; Sabir et al., 2022). For example, according to Greyser and Urde (2019), Iglesias et al., (2020), Cornelissen et al., (2021), Nelke (2021), the uncertain role of corporate leadership, corporate culture, and employees, among others, have also cast doubts on some of the conclusions of corporate branding. Several writers have also reviewed that corporate branding is not yet interpreted, created and co-created from a socially constructed perspective and call for areas of future research (Kristal, Baumgarth and Henseler 2018; Kenyon, Manoli and Bodet 2020; Carlini and Grace 2021). Critics have also argued that researchers have not investigated corporate branding in the context of the corporate brand being an interaction with all possible stakeholders (Merrilees 2017; Tarnovskaya and Biedenbach 2018; Nelke 2021). Understanding how corporate brands can represent and convey this relational and inclusive approach is critical to managing the tension in the corporate branding field of study (Kaufmann, Loureiro and Manarioti 2016; Iglesias and Ind 2020; Cullinan, Abratt and Mingione 2021; Spry et al., 2021).

Likewise, the relatively new area of nation branding has been challenged by many writers within academia and public authorities because it tends to represent differing and myriad interests which are far more unpredictable and difficult to manage (Insch and Walters 2017; Benerjee 2020). A rather small body of literature is also concerned with understanding nation brands and how residents/people practically and emotionally relate to the problems of nation branding (Ho 2017; Insch and Walters 2018; Einarsdottir 2020; Li and Feng 2021; Jimenez-Martinez 2022). Thus, little appears to be known about nation branding from a systemic and conceptual perspective (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Govers 2019; Foroudi, Dennis and Melewar 2020). For example, how sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies scholars have drawn our attention to the way certain cultures having a dominant presence in a society's key institutions, direct the ideas, values, and beliefs that become the central worldview of the society/nation brand (Oka 2002; Spring 2013;

Kaiser 2017; Adams 2018). Subsequently, the cultural elites of such societies, as they are often referred to, spread their dominant ideologies and philosophies through institutions related to law, government, education, information dissemination, arts, and business (Gottfried 2002; Harbour et al., 2003; Bodley 2011; Jacob 2015; Lal 2022). The evidence of cultural dominance can be seen in the contagion effect of culture influencing the business decisions of SMEs in Ghana (Agyei et al., 2019). By illustration, Okon and Noah (2021) also show how weaker cultures can lose their indigenous characteristics, such as language, through cultural dominance. As far as we know, no previous study has investigated the impact of such significant underpinning in a nation branding context (Jimenez-Martinez 2022). Hence unearthing empirically established factors which are influential to the positive perceptions of a nation brand is key to managing the tension within academia and public authorities for the nation branding area of study (Xuereb 2017; Hoefte and Veenendaal 2019; Saifer 2020; Jimenez-Martinez 2022). The following section concludes and provides a brief summary of this chapter.

3.7.   <u>**Summary of Conceptual Background**</u>

This chapter presented the existing literature on corporate - nation branding and reputation. It highlighted a distinct gap in the body of knowledge for a systematic approach to re-organise nation branding and reputation research through the key concepts of the building blocks of corporate reputation model (personality, identity, image and reputation) (Fill 2013). It has been shown from this review that subsequent studies on nation branding and reputation have only successfully recognised the relationship between specific corporate branding concepts and nation branding concepts independently (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Govers 2019). This standalone approach lacks substantive associations established in the corporate branding and reputation literature (Fombrun 2012; Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016 Urde and Greyser 2016). Furthermore, present studies in the nation branding and reputation literature mostly overlook the fact that these concepts are interlinked (Fombrun and Van Riel 2004; Roper and Fill 2012) and broadly interdependent in influencing a nation's brand reputation over time (Boone and Uysal 2018). The proposed research addresses these gaps identified by exploring nation branding and reputation from an internal and external perspective. Aiming to empirically understand the personality and identity of the Nigerian nation brand from the viewpoint of Nigerian public officials (internal) and the image and reputation from

the perspective of expatriates (external) living in the nation. The next chapter describes the methodological framework used in this investigation.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The previous chapters discussed the literature in the broader context of corporate branding and reputation as it gave rise to the relatively new setting of nation branding and reputation. This chapter will explain the research methodology adopted in exploring the relevance of the corporate branding and reputation critical concepts in a nation brand situation. According to Cassell and Symons (2004), Kumar and Phrommathed (2005), research methodology is the methods and processes that underpin the rationale of research, encompassing the research philosophy, theories, ethics, values, design and methods (Somekh and Lewin 2005; Gray 2014). Similarly, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) argue that research methodology serves as the integral framework that links and provides a basis and justification for connecting any decisions or choices undertaken in a research process (Marshall and Rossman 2014; Yin 2018). In other words, research methodology is comprehensive (Choy 2014; Yin 2018). However, this chapter will begin by explaining the philosophy and research paradigm that strengthens this study. Then the research design, case study approach and data collection methods are considered. Finally, the sampling and data analysis methods are explored, complemented by how the thesis ascertained quality throughout the research—turning now to the research philosophy.

4.1. Research Philosophy

Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) advocate that it is unwise to conduct any research without a clear-cut understanding of the philosophical assumptions that underpin the study. Thus, they defined the term philosophy as the "beliefs that guide an action" (2012, p. 3), an action that invariably guides knowledge development and the interpretation of such knowledge (Guba 1990; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012). According to Creswell and Clark (2007), research philosophy relates to the knowledge development process in a particular field of study and how relevant that knowledge is in that field. Bernard and Ryan (2010) affirmed that research philosophy is also an observer of the researchers' beliefs and worldview; hence, it influences the research design adopted (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). For the reason that the researchers' worldview vastly impacts their research concerns, aims, objectives, research design/strategy, and methodological approaches (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson's (2009) guidelines highlighted four

underlying reasons for considering research philosophy for this study (i) it was a connecting link between research paradigm and methodology, (ii) it represented the rationale for choices made in the research process, (iii) helped the researcher decipher knowledge development in the particular field of corporate – nation brand reputation and (iv) allowed the researcher, create an effective way of thinking throughout their research process. Equally important, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012) argue that the philosophical position in any research is important because it offers the basis for any conclusions made from the data analysis (Marshall and Rossman 2014; Yin 2018). Therefore, a researcher with good knowledge of research philosophy can make the right decisions in their research (Creswell and Poth 2016). For example, the philosophical assumptions of this qualitative inquiry on Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity, wherein data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus groups, would be generally different from that of survey questionnaires (Bell, Bryman and Harley 2018; Ward and Shortt 2018).

Crossan (2003), Saunders et al. (2016) agree that research philosophy is recognised in terms of (i) ontology (the known), (ii) epistemology (knowledge development and disposition), and (iii) methodology (research design/methods). Establishing these beliefs helped clarify the appropriate design and methods to carry out this research (Hammersley 2006). Hence these overarching terms are discussed further.

4.1.1 Ontology

Scotland (2012) considered ontology as a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of being and the concepts in a given subject domain (Cassell, Cunliffe and Grandy 2017). While Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey (2016) revealed that the ontological assumptions probe the very essence of the proposed research and concentrate on how the researcher interprets reality: patterned, predictable, or constructed through human interactions (Marshall and Rossman 2014; Yin 2018). Thus, the ontological assumptions helped the researcher think through the objects existing within their research domain (Hancock and Algozzine 2017; Rahman 2017) - how they were categorised (e.g. internal-external) and how the relationships between the objects are formed (e.g. identity-image) (Ormston et al., 2014). Significantly, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) established that ontology is about what is known, the state of facts in a particular field of study and the researcher's perception and understanding of what has been previously studied (Merriam and Tisdell 2015). Somekh and Lewin (2005) also posit that ontology is about "becoming, being and

belonging" with attention to the researcher, becoming a viable researcher in their field of study.

In particular, according to Bell (2018), ontology helped the researcher reflect on her assumptions. It required the researcher to probe the foundation of how judgments were made regarding the choices of this study. Markedly, the immense role ontology played in this research is that it helped link the generalised knowledge of corporate branding and reputation to the specific expertise of nation branding and reputation (Creswell 2015; Foroudi et al. 2016). Consequently, a broader gap identified through the literature review - to holistically explore a nation brand explicitly from a multi-stakeholder perspective, resulted in this study (Davies and Chun 2002; Gover 2019). One that explores Nigeria's case study through the fundamental concepts of personality, identity, image, and reputation to systematically understand and explain nation brand reputation from internal and external stakeholders' perspectives. As indicated previously, that is this thesis's original contribution to knowledge. Definitely, according to Welty (2003), Sanders (2011), the all-embracing importance of research ontology is that - it would influence a researcher's epistemological view. Composed of two key branches – (i) objectivism and (ii) subjectivism—discussed further below.

4.1.2   Epistemology

According to Hammerberg, Kirkman and De Lacey (2016), research epistemology concerns knowledge development, the nature and suitability of such knowledge. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) illustrated that epistemology is the link between a research paradigm and methodology. Indeed, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) defined epistemology as a branch of philosophy that reminds the researcher to consider their research's origin, nature, methods, and limits (Cohen, Manion and Morrison; Patton 2014). In other words, epistemology concerns knowledge limitations and how the researcher justifies those limitations (Scott and Garner 2013). Likewise, Lewis (2015) pointed out that epistemology clarifies the researcher's legitimate sources to verify and evidence knowledge. While Bryman (2016) put it simply as - the researchers' theory of knowledge before engaging with any data set - is their epistemology. Therefore, epistemology becomes the rationale for selecting a specific research design strategy, methods and analysis over others (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012).

Holden and Lynch (2004), Joy (2007) have advocated that there are two compelling epistemological stances in research, namely (objective and subjective). The objective stance supports positivists theory meaning a researcher takes a detached position from what is being studied. For example, in the natural sciences, researchers have no influence or ability to shape what is being learned and usually is appropriate for quantitative research (Holden and Lynch 2004; Joy 2007). On the other hand, the subjective requires an interpretivist stance (Lewis 2015; Marshall and Rossman 2014). As a result, the researcher's instinctive influence becomes part of the phenomena under investigation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012; Corbin and Strauss 2018). Thus, as Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) proved, the researcher becomes a co-creator of what is studied. Due to the subjective nature of the learning, and is intrinsically accomplished through a qualitative inquiry (Saunders 2011). Therefore, this thesis adopts a qualitative, subjective stance to answer the research objectives (Gibbs 2018). This thesis will consider this further in other sections. What follows is the explanation of the research paradigm.

4.2. <u>Research Paradigm</u>

The previous section specified the ontology and epistemology schools of thought associated with a research philosophy (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister and Zechmeister 2000). Conversely, the research paradigm relates to a researcher's thinking and worldview (Feilzer, 2010; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). According to Kumar and Phrommathed (2005), Marshall et al. (2013), Lewis (2015), the two extreme views that dominate social sciences research are (i) positivism and (ii) interpretivism. Newman (2002), Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013), O'Leary (2017) proved that these two theories have a contrasting position connected with thoughts and judgments. Significantly, positivism is specifically associated with a quantitative study, whereby the researchers seek concrete facts or causes of social phenomena (Cooper and Schindler 2003; Creswell 2015; Yin 2015). In contrast, interpretivism accepts that the truth and reality are situated in the subjects' social life and lived experiences and are generally qualitative (Bowen 2009; Farquhar, Michels and Robson 2020). Other known types of paradigms have emerged due to the limitations of these two extreme views (Saunders et al., 2012), for example, post-positivism, realism, and critical realism, which is appropriate in mixed-methods research (Creswell 2014). However, the central two identified in this section are discussed further.

4.2.1 Positivism

Crossan (2003), Bell, Bryman and Hartley (2018) established that researchers could adopt any particular paradigm in their study following the relevant justifications. As indicated earlier, one of the prevalent paradigms is the epistemological stance of positivism (Feilzer 2010). The literature maintains that positivist researchers believe in objective reality (Fuller et al., 2016; Yin 2018). A belief that truth is 'out there' to be discovered by all (Bryman 2016). As a result, positivists stress that research can only be proficient through evident phenomena (Fuller et al., 2016). Therefore the practicality behind this perspective is that credibility in research is attained through generalisable courses (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Wherein hypotheses (Black 1999; Saunders 2011) are developed and tested through large statistical data - to verify a causal relationship between variables (Creswell 2013). Consequently, this paradigm is usually quantitative in definition (Bryman and Bell 2011; Saunders et al., 2016) and deductive with vastly structured big data (Esterberg 2002; Fuller et al., 2016; Bryman 2016). Where the data can typically be analysed statistically (Holden and Lynch 2004), collected through surveys/questionnaires or experimental methods (Patton 1990; Fowler 2013; Saunders 2011). Notably, Tekin and Kotaman (2013) underlined the strengths of a positivist paradigm as (i) allows examining for cause and effect to produce a generalised hypothesis, (ii) results can be tested to achieve consistent empirical outcomes, (iii) the research can be examined objectively, free from any bias (Bryman and Hartley 2018).

4.2.2 Interpretivism

Another extensively acknowledged paradigm is interpretivism, which affirms that the social world is subjective to different interpretations (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister and Zechmeister 2000; Bryman 2016); Reality lies in the manufactured rather than natural or rational circumstances (Denzin and Lincoln 2011; Creswell 2013). Therefore the historical experiences and beliefs (Esterberg 2002) of social actors' are significant (Holden and Lynch 2004; Denzin and Lincoln 2011). That is to say, people's lived experiences, perspectives and perceptions are required to explain a phenomenon of interest (Ritchie et al., 2013). Hence, it is about the social actors' worldview, affecting how they sense a situation (Bryman and Hartley 2018). Furthermore, according to Saunders et al. (2012), it is noteworthy that interpretivist realities are context-bound which constantly evolves to understand the meaning behind actions and realities (Yin 2018). Hence, the context of the study becomes

essential and embedded in the investigation (Cooper and Schindler 2003). Similarly, Creswell (2014) asserts that the interpretivist views the world differently, so the role of the researcher and study participants are critical since they generate together; the realities of what is being investigated (Saunders 2011). However, as mentioned, this stance is customarily qualitative by nature (Nowell et al., 2017). Therefore, data are collected primarily through qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews, open-ended interviews, unstructured interviews, observation or focus group discussion (King and Harrock 2010; Creswell 2013).

This study adopted the philosophical stance of interpretivism because it examined the culturally derived brand personality-identity (Fill 2013; Heaton 2018) and the historically situated (Van Riel and Fombrun 2007; Dowling and Moran 2012) interpretations of image-reputation in Nigeria's social world (Holden and Lynch 2004; Smith et al., 2009). The interpretivist stance also complimented the participants (internal and external stakeholders) pre-understanding and experience (Saunders et al., 2007) of the Nigerian culture; likewise, the researchers', having lived and studied in Nigeria for over twenty years (Cresswell and Poth 2016). Furthermore, it matched the exploratory research objectives, which involved investigating the deep-rooted understanding of people's perceptions, associations, words and imagery (Milliken 2001) to understand better (Lewis 2015) Nigeria's nation brand reputation. Contrary to a positivist philosophy focusing on descriptions, generalisations, and measurements (Crossan 2003; Crewell and Clark 2007). In essence, the interpretivism philosophy was fitting for this study since the participants and the researcher had the tendency to co-create the research findings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). In addition to justifying subsequent decisions during the research process for an exploratory research such as this (Creswell 2014).

In summary, the context specificity of this thesis was an indication that the interpretivist paradigm was apt (Bryman and Bell 2011; Yin 2018). It enabled a study embedded in the Nigerian context and allowed the comprehension of the Nigerian national character, ethos, mindset, values, culture, and identity from an internal and external perspective (Fill 2013; Balmer 2017). In the same line, the qualitative paradigm of this study meant that the interpretivist orientation was consistent with the research methods, where data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions - to be analysed inductively (Farquhar 2012; St Pierre et al. 2014). These analytical procedures are described in subsequent sections of this

chapter. This chapter will now consider another significant aspect of this thesis - the research logic.

4.3. <u>Inductive/Deductive</u>

According to Collis and Hussey (2013), research logic in the social sciences relates to the reasoning and philosophy of how theory interprets a phenomenon (Blaikie and Priest 2019). As noted by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), Bell, Bryman and Hartley (2018), three types of reasoning exist: deductive, inductive, and abductive. However, many analysts Parke (1993); Bryman and Allan (2015), argue that there is no pure inductive logic in qualitative research. At the same time, others (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006) assert that deductive logic is widely acknowledged for quantitative research. Wherein hypotheses are tested for theory development to seek implications of the theory with data (Feilzer 2010; Javadi and Zarea 2016). Therefore, deductive reasoning is commonly about research findings that move from the general level to specific ones. Thus findings are derived from general interpretations (Bryman 2011). Figure 3 below illustrates how theories are introduced in a case study research inductively and deductively.
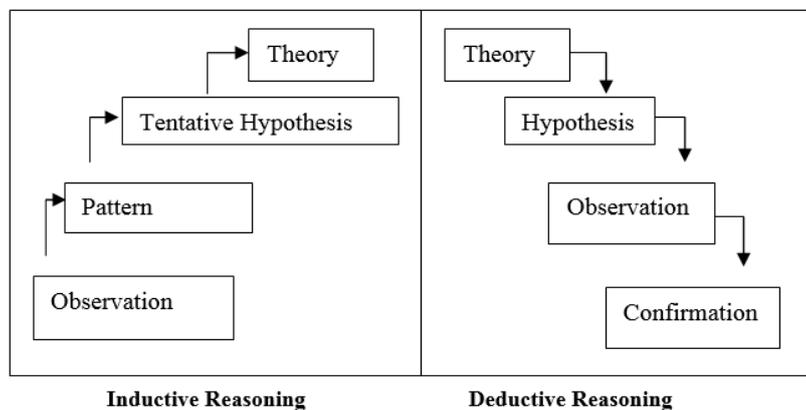
Figure 3: Inductive and Deductive Reasoning in Research - Adapted from (Trochim and Donnelly 2010).

Then again, according to Ormston et al. (2014), inductive logic is linked chiefly to qualitative research. It relates to how researchers move precisely from their data to theory development, meaning that those theories developed from the empirical data and then used to interpret findings (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, inductive logic seeks to generate new theories (Creswell and Clark 2007). However, several lines of evidence insist that abductive logic has been proven to reasonably combine both

inductive and deductive logic in a particular study and therefore addresses both inductive and deductive shortcomings (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Moreover, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) advocate that research with a wealth of information in one context but far less in the context of interest will benefit more from an abductive approach enabling the researcher to modify an existing theory. Hence for this thesis, the theory of corporate branding and reputation was far more than that of nation branding and reputation, indicating that an abductive approach was more appropriate for this research investigation (Bell, Bryman and Hartley 2018). In other words, analysing and reflecting upon what theoretical themes the data suggested, moving back and forth the data, and using the existing knowledge of corporate– nation brand reputation to draw conclusions where appropriate (Creswell 2014; Bell, Bryman and Harley 2018).

Given these points, the interpretivist stance and the qualitative embedded single case study design of this thesis meant an abductive logic was more relevant to explore the phenomenon under investigation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). More importantly, to answer the research aim and objectives (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Predominantly, abductive logic to research allowed the researcher to use extant literature to identify the research gap and allowed the flexibility to approach the analysis in a recursive manner (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). As it was important to realise, this study aimed to construe the data for patterns and develop a theory explaining those patterns (Bell, Bryman and Harley 2018). In summary, this section has shown that an abductive approach was imperative to explore the specific phenomenon (nation branding and reputation) where identifying themes and patterns from the data was vital and valuable for developing theory rather than testing theory (Eisenhardt 1989; Saunders et al. 2012). In the next section, this thesis will present the research design of the current investigation.

4.4. Research Design

The research design for this study developed from 'how' the researcher planned to achieve their research aims and objectives (Saunders and Lewis 2012; Patton 2014). Influenced by the philosophical positioning and theory adopted, this eventually impacted subsequent decisions made in the research process regarding data collection, sampling, analysis, and interpretation (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Creswell 2013). Thus, choosing the right research design was an organising framework for this study. Two main research designs dominate social science research - quantitative and

qualitative (Ritchie et al., 2013; Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2013). From understanding each of these, the researcher was better positioned to decide on the one that validated their knowledge development (Ritchie et al., 2013). According to Shaughnessy, Zechmeister and Zechmeister (2000), distinguishing between quantitative and qualitative research design can be difficult for researchers. Hence, understanding each's strengths and weaknesses helped the researcher make the right decision (Bryman 2012; Choy 2014). Table 4, on page 79, highlights the differences and similarities between quantitative and qualitative paradigms. For the most part, as noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Fuller et al. (2016), the quantitative and qualitative research design represents two contrasting views in a continuum. While quantitative research aligns with the positivism (objectivist) orientation, qualitative aligns with the interpretivism (subjectivist) (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). These two paradigms are summarized next.

4.4.1. Quantitative Paradigm

Quantitative research calculates the correlation between defined variables through data quantification (Bryman 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Commenting on the quantitative paradigm Kumar and Phrommathed (2005) underlined that - it requires a large volume of highly structured data analysed to generate results numerically in order to generate findings (Bryman and Bell 2011). Also, the quantitative paradigm offers an opportunity to develop hypotheses tested through deductive means of knowledge development (Saunders 2011). Equally important to a quantitative inquiry is standardised instruments, such as structured survey questionnaires for data collection (Farquhar 2012). Thus, quantitative research aims to measure the validity and reliability of the phenomenon of interest, with sole reliance on statistical data and analysis (Choy 2014). However, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013), Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018), one major drawback of this design is its superficiality, without human input in terms of phenomenon description and narrative of events. This section will now move on to consider the qualitative paradigm.

4.4.2. Qualitative Paradigm

In contrast to the previously stated quantitative paradigm, the qualitative paradigm emphasises words or narratives rather than data quantification (Bryman 2012; Rahman 2017). It is confined to the interpretivist school of thought (Denzin and

Lincoln 2011), inductive and imperative for theory development (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). According to Creswell (2013), qualitative paradigm research requires the researcher to gather rich and in-depth information about the study participants to understand their lived experiences (Creswell 2013; Yin 2014). As indicated previously, this would require an interpretivist stance; hence, the research theme(s) can mainly be explored through interactions between the researcher and participants (Fuller et al., 2016; Van Rijnsoever 2017).

Furthermore, this study sought people's perceptions and associations regarding the fundamental concepts of (personality, identity, image and reputation). Hence, the depth and richness of the data allowed addressing intangibles (Davies et al. 2004; Spear and Roper 2013) such as these (concepts) (Saunders 2011). Significantly, a qualitative paradigm, which 'usually emphasised 'words' rather than 'quantification' (Marshall et al., 2013; Bryman and Bell 2007) in collecting and analysing data, was adopted to answer the research objectives. As Rubin and Rubin (2011); Gibbs (2018) remind us, the collection of statistics and number management is not the answer to understanding meanings, beliefs, and experiences better understood through qualitative data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012).

Moreover, as Lewis (2015) highlighted, quantitative research procedures are appropriate in social science research when 'factual' data must answer the research inquiry. Also, when overall or probability evidence is sought after on preferences, attitudes, or views (Neuman 2003). Likewise, when the question(s) or problem(s) is known, clear and unambiguous (Creswell 2013; Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey 2016). In comparison, the qualitative paradigm is employed to answer questions about experiences, meanings, and perceptions, most often from the participants' perspective (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012; Lewis 2015). These data are usually not susceptible to counting or measuring, and the techniques include semi-structured interviews and small-group discussions (Rubin and Rubin 2011; St Pierre et al. 2014). Furthermore, the qualitative paradigm favour investigating socially made beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour (Milliken 2001; King and Horrocks 2010; Denzin and Lincoln 2011), usually through small sample sizes (Boddy 2016). Nevertheless, Rubin and Rubin (2011), Guercini (2014) pointed out that generating information through direct interaction between research actors can be challenging, demanding specific researcher skills.

Accordingly, much of social science research has highlighted the benefits and drawbacks of the qualitative research paradigm. For example, Butler-Kiesber (2010) Farquhar (2012) presented an account of the primary data collection instruments as a disadvantage, which can be problematic in ascertaining data validity and reliability. In addition, Bryman and Bell (2011) pointed out its 'subjectivism' rather than facts could be a weakness (Baxter and Jack 2008). Another widely held shortcoming of the qualitative paradigm is the issue of generalisation (Bowen 2009; Yin 2015) due to the context specificity of qualitative research methods (Flyvbjerg 2006). As indicated previously, table 4 illustrates vital differences between the qualitative and quantitative paradigms.

Table 4: Difference between a Quantitative and Qualitative Paradigm.

Component	Quantitative	Qualitative
Philosophical positioning	Positivism, objectivism of reality, researchers are independent of what is being studied	Interpretivism, naturalist, social, multiple and subjective reality interactions between all study actors'
Types of study	Quasi-experimental, experimental, single subject and descriptive, comparative, correlational	Phenomenology, grounded theory, cultural studies, ethnography
Purpose of Research	Generalisability, explanation, prediction	In-depth understanding, insight, embedded in context and interpretation
Questions or Hypothesis	The hypothesis is defined to be tested to establish causal relationships	The research question is flexible and evolving
Participants	Can be randomly sampled in proportion to the general representation of the population being studied	A small number of samples can be purposely or randomly sampled for non - representative cases
Researchers' role	objective, neutral, detached and impartial	Co-create a phenomenon, personal involvement, could be biased
Data collection	Structured statistics, integrated data, Questionnaires, surveys, and tests.	Interviews, written documents from fieldwork, video, audio, pictures, observations, objects, and artefacts
Data Analysis	Deductive process: statistical procedures to test a theory	Inductive process: codes, themes, and patterns to generate theory

Adapted from: Bryman and Bell (2011); Bryman (2012); Saunders et al. (2012); Creswell (2013).

Under the circumstances of the critical points of table 4, a qualitative paradigm was indispensable in understanding the complex multi-stakeholder phenomenon of 'nation branding and reputation' (Dowling and Moran 2012; Urde and Greyser 2016). In addition, using interviews and focus group discussions as data collection methods

enabled the researcher to build a close relationship with research participants (Creswell 2013), boosting the richness of the data (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Nevertheless, a qualitative study was time-consuming, especially in the data collection and analysis phases (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). Although, as indicated previously, this enabled an in-depth description and deconstruction of participants' personal perceptions and experiences of the phenomenon under investigation. So far, this section has focused on the research design. The following section will discuss the case study strategy.

4.5.   <u>Case Study Research</u>

This section discusses the case study and the rationale for choosing a case study research strategy. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) noted that what constitutes a 'case study' is broadly disputed (Baxter and jack 2008). Moreover, the term's meaning has not been consistent throughout the literature (Gustafsson 2017). Therefore, this thesis uses the definition offered by Yin (2018) as an "exploration of multiple perspectives rooted in a particular context" (2018, p. 29). Under those circumstances, this thesis adopted a case study strategy to explore the multiple perspectives of personality-identity and image-reputation in a nation brand context. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) also argued that a case study is an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon, set within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not obvious. In the same line, Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) highlighted that a case study occurs within a bounded context to deliver rounded, detailed illustrations of the case of interest. This view is supported by Ragin and Amoroso (2011). They posit that a case study encourages practical investigations whilst understanding that findings will help the belief that the parts of something are interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole (Hartley 2004, Gustafsson 2017). Correspondingly, Stake (2005) established that a case study is critical when exploring an entangled phenomenon with a limited number of cases in-depth (e.g. internal and external perspectives of nation branding and reputation).

Accordingly, a case study strategy was suitable for this study to explain nation branding and reputation concurrently to understand the personality-identity of Nigeria from the perspectives of resident indigenous citizens. Then the image-reputation from the standpoint of expatriates in Nigeria. In addition, a case study was crucial to understanding and explaining the real-world case of Nigeria's unfavourable

reputation (Stake 2005; Odia and Isibor 2014; Ezeocha 2016). As Yin and Davis (2007) noted, the case study strategy can significantly contribute to social science research and generate robust findings with policy-making impacts and contributions that can influence the situation or case studied (Gerring 2006; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Thus, a case study strategy becomes essential to develop and expand theory in a specific context (Yin, 2014; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Ultimately, this thesis adopted a case study strategy; otherwise, it would have been impossible for the researcher to unravel a nation brand's power relationships (Denzin and Lincoln 2011) from a multi-stakeholder perspective (residents and expatriates).

The Yin (2018) case study design process was adopted and followed throughout this study. Having reviewed the Yin (2014, 2018) case study design and methods to fit with other literature read (Stake 1995; Gillham 2000; Bryne and Ragin 2009; Simons 2009; Wahyuni 2012; Hancock and Algozzine 2017). Yin (2018) illustrated the best applications and methods to do case study research. Markedly, one advantage of applying Yin's (2018) case study design and methods was that it identified six phases in case study research. Fundamental, to offer an effective way to deliver on the research aims and objectives. Figure 4 below illustrates the case study research as a linear but iterative process model - adapted from Yin's (2018) case study research and application. Table 5 explains the stages of this model in regard to this thesis.

"A Linear but Iterative Process"
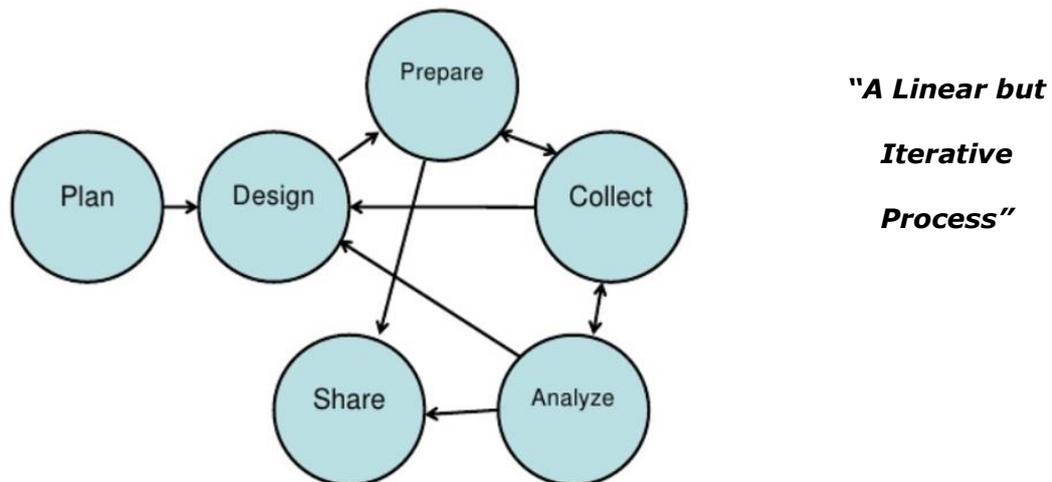
Figure 4: The Case Study Design Process, Adapted from Yin (2018 p. 164).

Table 5: Linear but Iterative Process of Case Study Research - Adapted from Yin (2018).

No.	Phase	Description
1	Plan	Concerned revisiting and asserting the intentions of the study and the rationale for employing the case study approach as the most appropriate solution to the research aim and objectives
2	Design	This phase involved the extensive literature review underpinning corporate branding and reputation to inform the research design, define the research objectives, propose an original concept (nation branding and reputation), and designed the conceptual framework.
3	Prepare	Identified the study participants and decided on the sampling methods. Next, developed the interview guide, obtained ethical approval to begin data collection and recruited participants
4	Collect	Embarked on the fieldwork in Nigeria for data collection of the pilot and main study. Face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Nigeria with selected participants
5	Analyse	Developed an analytical strategy; working the transcribed data from the ground up inductively - to foresee promising patterns, insights and concepts in the data
6	Share	Composed the report for the audience.

Nevertheless, different approaches to case study research have been highlighted in the literature, such as contextual explanation, focusing not only on generating explanations but also considering the 'why' and 'how' of research outcomes in the particular context (Welch et al., 2020). Also, theory-building aims to generate new theories from empirical data and the relationship between variables (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The natural experiment (Duika et al., 2016) and sense-making (Stake 1995) approaches have also been identified in the literature, and they have all been subject to criticism (Winter 2011). Furthermore, a particular case study can be a combination of different approaches (Yin 2018). However, the main arguments of the literature on case study research centre on the 'specification' of the case study research function. Significantly, to explain and understand the uniqueness of a 'case' from the participant's perspectives (Mcdonnell and Read 2000; Saunders and Lewis 2012; Yin 2018).

Indeed, as explained in the conceptual background chapter (see chapter 3), it is clear that this study started from a theoretical perspective and is conceptually linked to the existing literature on corporate branding and reputation. Where a gap in nation

branding and reputation was highlighted and a theoretical framework constructed. Accordingly, this theoretical perspective helped generate the sampling framework and interview guide/questions (see appendix D – Interview guide) for this case study. Balmers ACID test, helpful in exploring and understanding a corporate brand's communicated identity and actual identity, was also employed to develop the interview guide (Balmer and Soenen 1999; Balmer and Gray 2003). The proposed conceptual framework also helped analytically and not statistically generalise the new findings that emerged after completing the research (Farquhar 2012). This thesis will discuss these essential points in detail in subsequent sections. However, this section has attempted to explain that this thesis adopted a case study research design. Therefore, the following section will consider the categories and boundaries of this research's case study design.

4.5.1. Types of Case Study Design

Yin (2018) noted that formalised designs in qualitative case study research, although not as enforced as in survey or experimental research, were beneficial to make the analysis more manageable, valuable, and robust (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Accordingly, as reported by Yin (2018), there are four different categories of case study designs, namely, (i) holistic single case study, (ii) holistic multiple case study, (iii) embedded single case study and (iv) embedded multiple case study. What differentiates them is their unit of analysis (Yin 2018). A study's unit of analysis is 'what' is being studied, for instance, processes, organisations, individuals, groups of persons, a phenomenon, management style or a community (Gustafsson 2017; Yin 2018). As a result, it could be a daunting task to decide on the appropriate unit of analysis for a case study (Hancock and Algozzine 2017). Figure 5 below illustrates the different types of case study designs and their unit of analysis framework, as Yin (2018, p. 50) shows. They are described in more detail next.
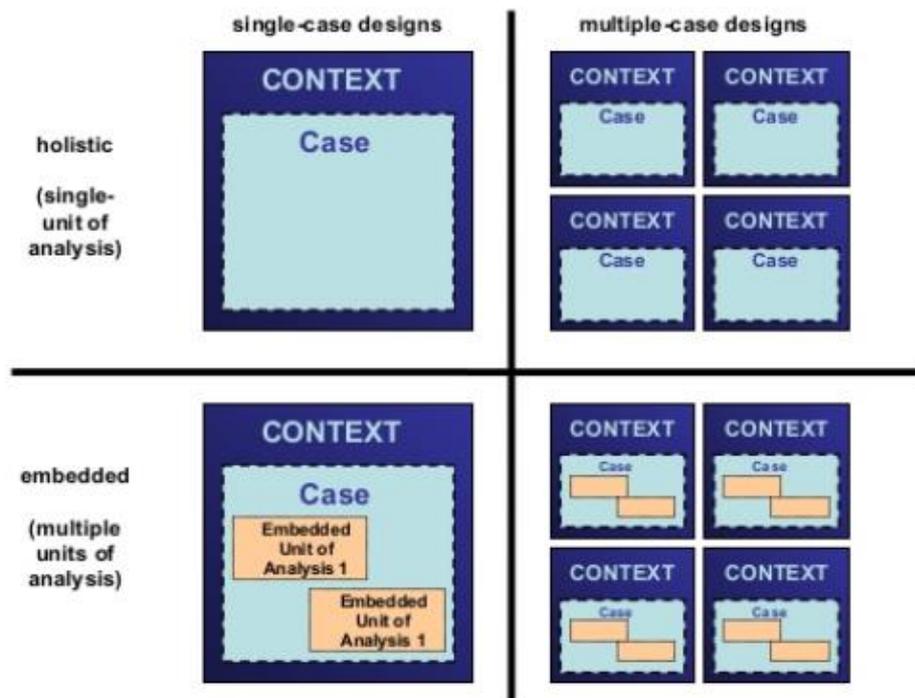
Figure 5: Types of Case Study Design - Source: (Yin 2018, p.50).

4.5.2. Single versus Multiple case design

As previously indicated, case designs can be single or multiple (Bryne and Ragin 2009). Multiple-case designs involve examining various cases, such as different organisations, comparing findings across the various cases (Gustafsson 2017). By contrast, a single case will explore just one significant organisation (Simons 2009; Reichow, Barton and Maggin 2018). The literature on case study research has highlighted several factors for employing single or multiple-case designs; however, this thesis adopted a single-case design (Nigeria). According to Yin (2018) works on case study research and application, a single case is justifiable where the 'case' and phenomenon of interest represent certain conditions. Thus according to Yin (2018), the conditions for exploring this research subject with a single case - Nigeria were: First, (i) it was an 'extreme case' (Yin 2018, p. 50), one that was typical of the particular situation of interest (an unconstructive reputation). Significantly, Nigeria was singled out as a candidate case because it had an extensive history and a current account of a negative reputation (Odia and Agbonifoh 2015; Akindola and Ehinomen 2017). Moreover, some key authors (Mahoney 2007; Schatz 2009; Alvesson and Karreman 2011) have argued that the choice of a case that included situations where the phenomenon of interest is extreme (e.g. Nigeria's severe negative reputation) is valuable to theory development because they may cover for cases where the situation

is less extreme (e.g. nations with more favourable reputations) (Gerring 2007). Second, (i) it was a 'critical case' (Yin 2018, p. 49) exploring the critical theoretical propositions of the building blocks of corporate reputation to challenge and extend the theory in a nation brand setting. Decisive for numerous nations needing to bolster their reputation, especially in the continental brand of Africa. Third, (iii) it was a 'revelatory case' (Yin 2018, p. 50) – one that can disclose a justification of two distinct areas (branding and reputation) to which scant attention has been paid in a nation brand context (Hao et al., 2019).

In essence, this section has attempted to explain that the rationale for this study existed outside the accounts of a multiple-case design (Yin 2018). Altogether, this supported the notion that an embedded (internal and external) single (Nigeria) case design was most appropriate to achieve the aims and objectives of this research (Yin 2018). Also, this recognition was a justification for selecting specific data collection methods explained later in the chapter (King and Horrocks 2010; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson 2012). Therefore, let us now turn to the sampling structure.

4.6.   **Sampling Framework**

The aim and objectives of this study were the most important considerations when deciding on 'what' or 'whom' to sample (Curtis et al., 2000; Gentles et al., 2015). Hence the theoretical propositions of the conceptual framework (research objective #1) internal and external stakeholders helped the researcher consider participants who possessed relevant knowledge about the subjects of interest and settled the sample size considerations (Suri 2011; Marshall et al. 2013). Schreuder, Gregoire and Weyer (2001) suggest that the core types of sampling methods that dominate and offer an effective way of doing case study research are (i) non-probability (purposive) sampling and (ii) probability (representative) (Yin 2012; Gentles et al. 2015). Study samples in probability sampling also referred to as representative sampling, require a large selection of statistical data to target a large population and demonstrate that population (Schmidt and Hollensen 2011; Robinson 2014; Patton 2014). Many analysts (Curtis et al. 2000; Clearly, Horsfall and Hayter 2014; Gentles et al. 2015) maintain that studies for such sampling seek generalisation towards the entire population and fall within the boundaries of a quantitative investigation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012) (see section 4.7.1 – Quantitative paradigm).

In contrast, non-probability sampling, referred to as purposive sampling (Buelens and Burger 2018; Yin 2018), is primarily employed in qualitative exploratory research such as this current study (see section 4.7.2 – Qualitative paradigm). Suri (2011) Robinson (2014) also showed that this type of sampling is beneficial for theoretical propositions. Hence no claim is made to generalisation but theoretical propositions (Farquhar 2012; Yin 2018). Creswell and Poth (2016), Gibbs (2018) have affirmed that there are no grounds to dismiss a qualitative case study investigation such as this; because of its weak claims to generalisability. Given that the rich finding obtained will make up for its shortcomings on generalisations. Whereas Flyvbjerg (2006), Elliot (2018), whilst advocating for qualitative case study research, argued that formal generalisations based on quantitative case study research are often overrated in their contributions to social science research. Other critics (Meyer 2000; Baxter and Jack 2008) have questioned the dependability of theory and knowledge emanating from research in particular contexts. While Simons (2009), Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) argue for context-reliant understanding, affirming that universal principles and knowledge are unfit for human affairs. With all this in mind, the study findings were generalised towards the theory of nation branding and reputation rather than the whole population of Nigeria or other nations worldwide (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). However, some policy contributions from the contextual explanation of this research would be offered to Nigeria's particular case context (Welch et al., 2011; Yin 2018).

Accordingly, Farquhar (2012), Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) have proved that the subjective decision of the inquirer becomes vital in the purposive sampling process (Coyne 1997; Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016), which is particularly useful to capture the complexities in the case of interest. Hence this study adopted purposive sampling to capture the complexities of nation branding and reputation from a multi-stakeholder perspective. As Yin (2018) pointed out, for a qualitative embedded-single case design such as this (to explore the concepts of personality, identity, image and reputation all embedded within the case of Nigeria), purposive sampling was recognised as a more practical method to deliver on the research objectives (Silverman 2004; Robinson 2014). Similarly, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012), Gentles et al. (2015) showed that for exploratory research like this, identifying participants who could deliver rich data may well strengthen the research's depth and findings. Thus, this indicated that purposive sampling was most appropriate (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2013; Ritchie et al. 2013; Elliot 2018).

Therefore, the participant's selection process involved two stages (internal and external) (see section 3.8 methods – research objectives 1 and 2). Before the participant's sampling began, a criterion was defined (see table 6 - sample criteria for inclusion and exclusion) that had to be met before a participant was included (Daymon and Holloway 2011). Table 6 below points out these criteria.

Table 6: Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of internal and external stakeholder participants.

Criteria	(Phase 1) Resident Citizens	(Phase 2) Resident Expatriates	Justification
Length of residence in Nigeria	Birth – 18th birthday and above	≥ Five years	Indication of extensive and substantial experience and understanding of the Nigerian ingrained culture
Age	≥ 50 years	≥ 25 years	Indication of past and present experiences/perceptions of Nigeria's personality and identity
Employment	Ten ≥ years of employment in one of the three industries identified	Five ≥ years of employment in one of the three industries highlighted	Indication of an extensive level of personal responsibility and understanding of the procedures of the organisation/Nigeria
Education	Bachelor's degree and above	Bachelor's degree and above	Indication of informed mind and a tendency to give cultured, rich and well-thought-out feedback
Ethnicity	Nigerian	Non- West-African	An indication that both internal and external perspectives are being considered to reach a comprehensive conclusion. A selection of non-west African external stakeholders to eliminate bias and a richer external perspective based on the cultural homogeneity that runs through the West African region.

As has been noted, the sampling was systematic, following carefully defined theoretical propositions of the proposed conceptual framework to identify participants who could provide ample information about the Nigerian nation brand from both an internal and external perspective (St Pierre et al. 2014). Expressly, the criteria for selecting the internal participants (personality-identity) for this study were. First, participants linked to been indigenous (grew up in Nigerian from birth to a senior age - continuous), selected from different of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria (see appendix C – Geopolitical zones in Nigeria and their states), and educated (having at least a bachelor's degree). Second – the external participants linked to living and working in Nigeria for a minimum of five years - continuous, therefore expatriates, were considered external stakeholders. Who were also degree educated as well as not west Africans. Still, following the theoretical propositions of

the conceptual framework, the senior age for the internal stakeholders and the minimum stay in Nigeria for the external stakeholders was particularly significant to explore this research from both perspectives well-proportioned (Simons 2009).

Considering that the understanding that comes from the theoretical propositions of reputation was recognised as manifesting over the long term (Chaurasia and Patel 2018). Although for the external stakeholders, the literature has speculated that it takes a minimum of a year for an image (which is the short-term understanding of the brand) to be considered reputation (which is the long-term understanding of the brand (Pich, Armannsdottir and Spry 2018). In essence, this section has described the sampling framework for both the internal and external participants. What follows is an account of the methods used to conduct the investigation.

4.6.1. Further justification for sampling framework – Civil servants and Expatriates as the stakeholder participant groups.

Fill's (2013) building blocks of corporate reputation theory, which underpins this research in a nation brand context, established that - personality and identity concern internal stakeholders, while image and reputation relate to external stakeholders (please see section 3.3 - The conceptual link between personality, identity, image and reputation). As an illustration, nation brands project their 'personalities' through their 'identity'. That identity is 'communicated' as a matter of course (Balmer 2017; Purnomo 2019), and the external stakeholder's perception of this projected 'identity' becomes the 'image' of the nation (Dinnie 2015). Then, through time and accumulated relations with the communicated identity, 'numerous images' are formed and fused into a 'reputation'—a long-term disposition individuals attribute to the national brand.

The selected participants were those deemed to deliver rich data to strengthen the depth and findings of this 'personality-identity' and 'image-reputation' exploratory research of Nigeria (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2013; Ritchie et al. 2013; Elliot 2018) (see also table 6 – section 4.6 - Sampling Framework – Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of internal and external stakeholder participants). It was, therefore, essential to identify Nigeria's primary and most influential internal and external stakeholders (Madsen and Ulhoi 2001; Friedman and Mason 2004; Sartas et al., 2018). This was achieved using the proven 'salience stakeholder theory of prioritisation' (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997, p. 860) based on "power" (how much

weight the stakeholder' carry in the brand's operations) and somewhat alluding to the notion of cultural dominance highlighted previously (Oka 2002; Spring 2013; Kaiser 2017; Adams 2018), "legitimacy" (what effect the stakeholder' have on the public perception) and "urgency" (the ability of the stakeholder' to find swift actions) (Adongo and Kim 2018; Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997; Thijssens, Bollen and Hassink 2015). Therefore, stakeholders with influential-investive interests predicated on power, legitimacy, and urgency were required (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997, p. 860).

Nigeria still depends exclusively on its public sector venture (Ijeweeme 2015; Udeh, Onwuka and Agbaeze 2015; Onifade et al., 2020) and is primarily described by economists as 'an oil-based rentier economy' (McNicoll 2011, p. 195; Adeosun et al., 2021). Hence, residents as - civil servants responsible for the dominant and influential industries in Nigeria's public sector, including the 'oil and gas', were deemed most appropriate (following power, legitimacy, and urgency) as the participant group to provide the rich data that answers the research objective #1 - of exploring Nigeria's 'personality - identity' from an internal stakeholder perspective (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997). Likewise, to identify the relevant and most influential stakeholder participants who could deliver on Nigeria's image and reputation perception from an outsider's perspective. Residents as – expatriates who, as their title implies, (i) did not grow/develop in the Nigerian state/culture, (ii) are in longer-term Nigerian employment and (iii) known to occupy privileged and high-level positions in Nigeria's top industries (Goxe and Paris 2016; Benson 2019; Odutola 2021) were deemed most appropriate as the relevant participant group (following power, legitimacy, and urgency) (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997; Neville and Menguc 2006). For clarity, this thesis uses the definition of "expatriate" suggested by Adeosun (2019) as *"an individual domiciled out of the country of his or her birth for an unknown duration of time, with the tendency of returning back to his or her country of origin"* (Adeosun 2019. p 41).

Again, various scholars have noted that stakeholders are individuals with specific needs and demands (Polonsky 1995; Bourne and Walker 2005; Ferrero-Fererro et al., 2018). However, these groups – 'civil servants' and 'expatriates' were deemed the most appropriate on the practical grounds that they are highly vested in Nigeria's improved performance to ensure they continue to be paid and retain their jobs (Mitchell, Agle and Wood 1997; Crane and Ruebottom 2011). Appendix L(i) and L(ii) give an anonymised summary of the civil servants and expatriate participants.

4.7.   **Methods**

According to Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018), the research methods entailed the processes, procedures, and instruments applied in this study's data collection and analysis. To ensure the thesis appropriately answered the research aims and objectives (Creswell 2013). As Farquhar, Michels and Robson (2020) remind us, the research methods are influenced by the philosophical positioning, design and context (Pich, Dean and Punjaisri 2016). Accordingly, this study's qualitative and interpretivist orientations meant face-to-face semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were appropriate to achieve the research objectives (Bryman 2012; Yin 2014; Corbin and Strauss 2018). In addition, the 'association' projective technique, defined as connecting the research theme with images and thoughts, was incorporated as a dependable method to elicit the participant's associations and feelings about Nigeria's nation brand personality (Kubacki and Siemieniako 2017). It has been reported that qualitative projective techniques can uncover participant's deep-rooted thoughts - namely "*preconscious, conscious,* and *intuitive*" (Ramsey, Ibbotson and McCole 2006, p. 554), also emotions towards a brand's personality (Pich and Dean 2015), which may be otherwise difficult to access due to their intrinsic and sensitive peculiarities (Ramsey, Ibbotson and McCole 2006). The projective technique questions also served as a reliable ice breaker and enhanced rapport during data collection (Boddy 2007). Accordingly, the data collection occurred in two phases to capture the essential internal and external dimensions of the phenomenon of interest - distinctly (Miles et al., 2013).

Many in the field (Farquhar, Michels and Robson 2020; Hercegovac, Kernot and Stanley 2020) also insist that one of the advantages of a qualitative case study is collecting data using different techniques, improving the study findings, and triangulating the data (Yin 2018). In this study, the data was collected in two segments. Firstly, a pilot study was conducted, followed by the main interviews and focus group discussions (see sections 4.7.3 and 4.7.4 - for the pilot and primary data collection detail). The extent of the data collected in this study was until theoretical saturation (Polkinghorne 2005; Boddy 2016) and illustrated in table 7 below (see table 7 – Data collected). O'Reilly and Parker (2013), Rowlands, Waddell and Mckenna (2016), Nelson (2017) have affirmed that for interpretivist researchers, theoretical saturation is at the discretion of the researcher to stop sampling participants when informants no longer add new insights. Alternatively, when the researcher feels they are satisfied with their understanding of the plurality of phases

involved in the phenomenon of interest (Rubin and Rubin 2011; Van Rijnsoever 2017).

Table 7: Data collected

	Phase 1	Phase 2
Pilot Study	- 6 individual interviews - 1 focus group with 5 participants	- 5 individual interviews - 1 focus group with 6 participants
Main study	- 21 individual interviews - 1 focus group with 8 participants	- 17 individual interviews - 1 focus group with 7 participants
Total	27 individual interviews 2 focus groups	22 individual interviews 2 focus groups

Correspondingly, this study was able to triangulate the data from interviews, focus groups and secondary published documents. The aim was to map out and illustrate the richness and complexity of the Nigerian nation brand by analysing it from multiple perspectives (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018). Besides, Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018), Yin (2018) posit that triangulation of evidence ensured the accuracy of the information and credibility of the underlying concepts resulting from this study. Following this section, an explanation of the structure and function of the data obtained is next described.

4.7.1. Research Objective #2: Exploring the personality-identity of Nigeria.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, since the nation brand personality-identity is internal to a Nation (Kim 2013; Dinnie 2015; Aronczyk 2019). This qualitative case study of Nigeria adopted semi-structured interview guides with open-ended questions for the Nigerian residents/internal stakeholders (Noor 2008; Rubin and Rubin 2011). This thesis accessed internal stakeholders through the industries (Oil and gas, Agricultural and Services) recognised as long contributing to the Nigerian economy (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016, 2017, 2018). Based on the theoretical propositions of the conceptual framework, it was advocated that as these critical industries largely determined the state of the Nigerian economy. Therefore, they are likely to shape and be a superior reflection of the identity (Nwoye et al., 2015; Dinnie 2015).

Furthermore, the theoretical propositions of the conceptual framework emphasised that the Nigerian government workers in these industries were established as a more accurate reflection of the Nigerian national personality-identity (Fill 2013; Balmer

and Greyser 2006; Keller et al. 2011; Schultz, Martin and Meyer 2017). For the sake of an in-depth investigation of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity. In contrast to accessing Nigerian individuals through international businesses, in which several organisations in the industries, as mentioned earlier, would be considered part.

4.7.2. Research Objective #3: Exploring the image-reputation of Nigeria.

Also pointed out in the literature review section was nation brand image-reputation, which are considered external stakeholders view (Balmer 2017; Govers 2019). Therefore, based on the theoretical propositions of the conceptual framework, semi-structured interview guides with open-ended questions were adopted for expatriates, as explained in the sampling framework. Like the internal stakeholders, expatriates were accessed through the three leading industries in Nigeria mentioned previously. However, getting expatriates who worked in Nigerian national/governmental organisations (ministries) was challenging. Many expatriates worked for international oil and gas and service industries in Nigeria and were accessed through them. Besides, the expatriates identified in the Nigerian government ministries were very short-term business visitors and entrepreneurs whose perceptions of Nigeria may have been too short-term, based on this thesis's theoretical and conceptual background. Moreover, in most cases, they were inaccessible due to time constraints, unlike the expatriates on long-run contracts.

4.7.3. Pilot Study in Case Study Research

Conducting a pilot study was crucial in doing this qualitative case study research. Furthermore, it served as a learning process or assessment for the researcher to understand the full-scale study demands before collecting the main primary data (Doody and Doody 2015; Quinlan, Babin and Griffin 2019). In other words, the pilot study was a simulation of the main study to investigate its viability (Marshall and Rossman 2014). Before the pilot study, the interview guide was designed and reviewed by the supervisory team and the school's ethics committee. Their feedback was used to make corrections and modifications where required. As Creswell (2007) noted, this also formed part of the validation process (Balog 2016). In addition, before the pilot study in Nigeria, some practice interviews and a focus group discussion were carried out with research colleagues in the UK to have a feel of the actual pilot interviews and focus groups (Yin 2018).

Accordingly, the pilot interviews and focus group discussions were employed in Nigeria between February 3rd and March 10th, 2019, with six interviews and one focus group discussion for research objective #2. Then five interviews and one focus group discussion for research objective #3. (see section 4.7 - table 7 - Data collected). After each interview and focus group discussion, participants were consulted on their observations and thoughts of the session and the interviewer's performance. These comments were used to adjust and revise the data collection procedure, instrument, and interview guide (Ritchie et al., 2013).

In effect, the pilot study enabled the researcher to make corrections to possible flaws, which were (i) modified linguistic misunderstandings for particular words, for example (legacy versus heritage) and (ii) broke down single comparative form questions into two, for example, 'least and most' into (1) least and (2) most, as well as (iii) eliminated repetitive questions (Yin 2018). Significantly, fulfilling a pilot study concluded the main study was feasible to achieve the research aim and objectives, with no necessary changes to the research design. According to Goffin et al. (2019), this awareness further enhanced the research's credibility and quality (Hartley 2004). Furthermore, this trial extra prepared the researcher for the full-scale data collection. Finally, it reinforced their confidence to conduct interviews and focus group discussions with participants at different levels during the fieldwork.

4.7.4. Main Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

As previously noted, the study participants were scheduled for the interview and focus group discussion with specific dates, times and locations after sampling. The researcher sought consent from all individuals contacted, and only those who agreed to sign the consent form became part of the study (Lewis 2015; Yin 2018). The face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions moderation guides; were developed before the pilot study and used to guide the questioning of participants during fieldwork (Marshall and Rossman 2014). The fieldwork for the main data collection took place in Nigeria between March 18th and July 31st, 2019. With twenty-one interviews and one focus group discussion for research objective #2. Then seventeen interviews and one focus group discussion for research objective #3. (see section 4.7 – table 7 - Data collected).

The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in the English language, audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed (in verbatim) manually by the

researcher. Each interview lasted between 40 and 60 minutes, of which the focus group discussions lasted approximately 90 minutes for each session. The purpose of the study was explained to participants before the start of each interview, and they were allowed to opt out if required (see also section 4.10 – ethical considerations). However, as far as opting out was concerned, no participant did, within and after the interviews. Except for one external stakeholder participant, who permitted note-taking 'only' to answer specific questions and to elaborate on certain points that came up during the interview session - whilst the audio recording was paused. Altogether, this section has described the methods and processes involved in the data collection of this research. Another significant aspect of this research is the approach to data analysis explained next.

4.8.   Data Analysis

Commenting on the credibility of qualitative case study research, Elliot (2018) argues that a highly significant aspect of the research methodology is deciding on the type of analysis appropriate for a study. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) have defined data analysis as extracting meaningful information from 'data' collected, usually influenced by the research philosophy, aims, and objectives (Yin 2018; Butler-Kisber, 2018). As pointed out by Corbin and Strauss (2018), another significant distinction between a quantitative and qualitative study is that data analysis in qualitative research can commence immediately after the data collection begins (Srivastava and Hopwood 2009). In contrast to qualitative research, data must be entirely collected before analysis can commence (Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson 2009). In effect, notes were taken during and immediately after each semi-structured interview and focus group discussion. Then the researcher started to reflect on the notes to think about what the informants had said and not said (Gibbs 2018). As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) wrote, this process was essential in uncovering feelings and perceptions towards the research objectives before the main analysis. Also similar to Braun and Clarke (2006) process of familiarisation with the data.

A large number of published studies describe critical approaches to qualitative data analysis. One of the significant reviews on qualitative inquiry is by Butler-Kisber (2018); three types of analysis suitable for research that seeks to exploit 'interpretations' like this one were illustrated. Butler-Kisber (2018) subdivided the data analysis methods into three: (i) thematic, (ii) narrative and (iii) arts-based. Different from each other in many important ways, for example, the methods for

interpretation. However, having reviewed them all, a thematic analysis that uses labelling as an approach was deemed more appropriate to answer this qualitative case study research objectives (Clarke and Braun 2017; Elliot 2018; Butler-Kisber 2018). Furthermore, it has been established that for an interpretivist study such as this, the thematic analysis method was a systematic method to ensure the confirmability of the research findings (Bell, Bryman and Hartley 2018). For Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis is defined as translating and interpreting data, using codes before categories, to produce a series of concept maps followed by emerging themes. Significantly, the thematic analysis was helpful in this study to connect ideas (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012; Patton 2014) and make sense of central issues to arrive at rigorous conclusions (King and Horrocks 2010). In addition, it was helpful for its generic and flexible approach to permit interpretations at various levels and dimensions (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton 2013), which enhanced the researcher's ability to arrive at research findings that were in-depth enough to contribute to knowledge (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2011).

Similarly, King and Horrocks (2010) and Braun and Clarke (2012) suggested that thematic analysis was particularly useful for exploring different participants' perspectives in this research. In effect, conceptually highlighting the similarities and differences between Nigeria's internal and external stakeholder views and generating unpredicted insights (King and Horrocks 2010; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). Therefore, the thematic analysis method permitted the researcher to interpret what meanings internal participants make of the Nigerian nation brand and how the prevailing nation brand personality-identity influences their lived experiences. This insight implies that the thematic analysis helped reflect the reality that participants found themselves in Nigeria (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006).

On the question of what counts as a theme, after extensive reviews, this thesis uses the definition offered by King and Harrock (2010). They defined a 'theme' *"as recurrent and distinctive features of participants accounts, characterising particular perceptions and/or experiences which the researcher sees as relevant to the research objectives"* (p. 150). That is why as indicated in the research logic, pre-existing theoretical themes were not suitable before the data analysis to answer the research objectives (Javadi and Zarea 2016). However, King and Harrock (2010); Gioia et al. (2013) argued that interpretivist qualitative researchers should feel empowered enough to treat themselves as knowledgeable agents, reasoning at numerous levels. In order to meaningfully combine participants' perceptions and

theoretical knowledge to deliver on more substantiated narratives to rigorously answer the research objectives. Butler-Kisber (2010) continued that the themes generated *"provide an explanation of the context under study, that is grounded carefully in the field text materials"* (p. 47).

Nonetheless, some analysts, Lester, Cho and Lochmiller (2020), have highlighted that the thematic method of data analysis involves a possible absence of uniformity and rationality errors due to its flexibility (Clarke and Braun 2017). This study applied explicit epistemological stances that reinforced all of the findings, to endorse uniformity and coherence systematically (King and Horrocks 2010). As Farquhar (2012) also noted, another advantage of the thematic analysis is that data could be coded through computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), such as the NVivo software package (Cope 2014; Butler-Kisber 2018). Hence Nvivo was used in the coding stage of this study as *"an able assistant and reliable tool"* (Yin 2018, p. 166).

Consequently, after familiarising with the transcribed data, the next stage was to import the transcribed data files into the NVivo IBM qualitative software package. Then, the data analysis was done in two phases or units of analysis as described by Yin (2018) in precisely the same way, (i) (objective #2– personality and identity (ii) objective #3 – image-reputation. First, the data coding began, considering the framework and analytical process suggested by King and Harrock (2010) and Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013). Figure 6 below illustrates the stages in the thematic analytical process using King and Harrock's thematic analysis model (king and Harrock 2010).
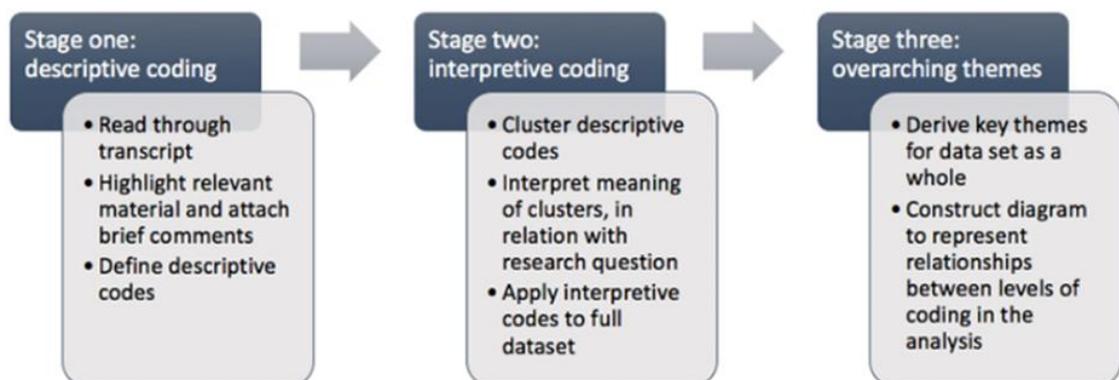
Figure 6: Stages in the Process of Thematic Analysis (Adopted from King and Horrocks 2010).

Through descriptive coding, the researcher looked in the data for informant-centric ideas, terms and codes. This stage of data coding, often referred to as open coding (Corbin and Strauss 2015), was repeated several times, going through the data line by line to identify sentences, short phrases and words with similar meanings (King and Harrock 2010). According to Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013, p 20), in this stage, the idea was to *"try to adhere faithfully to informant terms"* (p. 20) to form first-order categories/codes (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton 2013). This analysis stage produced a total of 43 first-order categories/codes for phase 1 (personality-identity) and 29 for phase 2 (image-reputation) (see data structure pg. 334-337). As the analysis progressed, similarities and differences among the categories were sought concerning the research objectives, and a deeper, abstract narrative of the codes in the theoretical realm (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton 2013) and sub-themes emerged (interpretive coding). According to Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013), the next stage was to distil the emergent sub-themes further to over-arching themes where possible. Appendix G, H, I (see data structure pg 332-334) presents the data structure for the data analysis in terms of the first-order categories/codes, sub-themes and over-arching themes for phases 1 and 2 of the research. While appendix H (i, ii), I (i, ii), and K (i, ii, iii) present the exemplar snapshot of the project map, node tree and quote extracts using Nvivo 12 pro. The finding chapters (see Chapters 5 and 6 – Findings) give a detailed description of all the sub-themes and overarching themes. As an illustration, the derivation of the first overarching theme - Submission as the "Norm" is presented in the next section. Following that, this thesis will reflect the quality of qualitative case study research.

4.8.1. Derivation of the first overarching theme - Submission as the "Norm".

As part of the first step and initial coding, interview and focus group transcripts, entered as text files in NVivo, were coded using in-depth "in vivo" words. These words comprised phrases, terminology, and descriptions offered by participants, which related to the core nature of the Nigerian nation brand. Among these descriptions were comment(s) on Nigeria's cultural characteristics or commentaries that had appeared meaningful to participants' descriptions of Nigeria's core values and beliefs. During this stage, the coded files were re-read for more in vivo words and abstract-conceptual patterns, and NVivo facilitated the organisation of all generated codes. At the end of this first step, there were 531 coded passages relating to Nigeria's predominant culture and characteristics. The second step of the analysis looked for relationships across the interviews and focus groups that could be collapsed into

higher-level nodes. For example, comments on 'status aspiration', 'ethno-tribal predominance', or 'favouritism as a result of cultural/social class' could be grouped into a node labelled "Status (really) Matters". The language used by participants was retained as much as possible.

These higher-level nodes were then refined using source triangulation (interviews, focus groups and secondary published articles) into a set of first-order categories. For instance, the first-order categories "dominance orientation," "lack of transparency", and "extensive deference to authority" were used. By looking for links among first-order categories, the researcher could collapse these into theoretically distinct clusters or second-order themes to complete the third step of the analysis. The process was recursive rather than linear (Yin 2018), shifting iteratively between the first-order categories and emerging patterns in the data until appropriate conceptual themes arose (Eisenhardt, 1989). For example, categories encompassing situations in which internal stakeholders discussed vast subordination to tribal/cultural elders, political actors, supervisors at work or easily influenced were merged into the 'Subservience' second-order theme (sub-theme). The second-order themes were - Nigerian creole - 'I pass my neighbour' ethos" (Status inequality), 'Complicacy values' and 'Subservience'. The fourth step of the analysis involved organising the second-order themes into the overarching dimensions (theme) of - Submission as the 'Norm'.

Appendix J (i) and (ii) show a Nvivo mind-map of this over-arching theme - Submission as the 'Norm' (see Appendix J (i) and (ii) – Mind Map – Overarching theme - Submission as the 'Norm'). The findings chapter (see section 5.2. Emerged Themes) profoundly illustrates this over-arching theme (Submission as the 'Norm'). At the same time, the data analysis stage (See section 4.8 – Data analysis for greater detail) produced a total of 43 codes for stage 1 (personality-identity) and 29 for stage 2 (image-reputation), featured in Appendix G (i, ii, iii – The data structure).

4.9.   <u>Quality in Case Study Research</u>

In an interpretivist epistemology, qualitative case study research like this one, Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1994) developed three criteria for assessing rigour and trustworthiness. They include credibility, transferability, confirmability and are discussed below.

4.9.1. Credibility

According to Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), Yin (2018), this criterion for proving trustworthiness is demonstrated in adopting appropriate and accepted knowledge as research methods to help the reader or targeted audience believe in the outcome. This study established credibility by implementing applicable and well-recognised research methods in three ways (Bryman 1998; Farquhar 2012). Firstly, the research design of this study was concerned with exploring the perceptions of internal and external stakeholders towards the Nigerian nation brand. Therefore, interviews and focus groups generated the primary data for the study. Secondly, for the internal case, the researcher was able to gain access to governmental stakeholders in the three leading industries (Oil & Gas, Agriculture, and Services) in Nigeria. Nigeria's case profile ascertained that internal stakeholders from these federal government ministries reflected Nigeria's assertive personality and identity. Given that the industries they worked for have long dominated and controlled the Nigerian economy (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics 2018). For example, the oil and gas industry has consistently accounted for over 87.7% of Nigeria's total export earnings (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics 2018). On the other hand, in the external case, expatriates employed in oil & gas and service - international firms were participants. Significant for valued comparative interpretations of the Nigerian nation brand from both perspectives. In addition, internal and external stakeholders were asked similar questions regarding Nigeria's nation brand for well-balanced comparative data. Thirdly according to Cassell and Symon (2004), the researcher's credibility relating to what they bring to the investigation in terms of their perspective and experience is also a measure of trustworthiness (Patton 1999; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006). Being an indigene of Nigeria, the researcher is familiar with the Nigerian environment and engagements. Fourthly, data triangulation (Yin 2018; Farquhar, Michels and Robson 2020) - involving multiple sources of evidence where the primary source of evidence (interview and focus group) was combined with secondary sources.

4.9.2. Transferability

The degree to which the results can be repeated in another context while maintaining the investigation's result is known as transferability (Polit and Beck 2010; Farquhar 2012). Although, as indicated earlier, if the findings of the case study research can be transferred to other contexts is not the prime interest of the case study researcher (Saunders 2011; Farquhar 2012). However, Lincoln and Guba (1994), Stake (1995)

recommend a researcher can engage in thick descriptions to argue for transferability. This guidance involves confirming the research was bounded within the appropriate theory and the case being an opportunity to advance understanding within that theory. Accordingly, this research was explicitly bounded within the fundamental concepts of the building blocks of corporate reputation theory (Fill 2013). Furthermore, employing this building blocks theory, a gap was identified to explore these critical concepts in a nation setting to advance the nation branding and reputation field of study. Therefore, a study designed using the same strategy, approach, process and theory in a different context or nation, especially in Africa, may achieve similar results, findings, and conclusions (Bryman and Bell 2015). Although Nigeria stands out in this research, the circumstances in Nigeria bear a resemblance with many African countries.

4.9.3. Confirmability

Confirmability refers to how well the researcher has explained the interpretivist approach has not been excessively influenced by theoretical inclinations and personal bias or beliefs (Lincoln and Guba 1994; Farquar 2012). Confirmability was achieved in this study using a research design aided by a rigorous review of the literature to ascertain a conceptual framework that guided the research objectives. Also, the theoretical propositions of the conceptual framework guided the interview guide, questioning and choice of data informants and method of data analysis. Furthermore, an example of the coding data structure is presented in the appendix (see Appendix G - i, ii, iii – The Data structure).

4.10. **Ethical Considerations**

The researcher had to consider the ethical consequences of this study in several important ways. In the first place, ethical approval had to be obtained from Nottingham Trent University before commencing any primary data collection from participants (Collis and Hussey 2013). Besides, the ethical approval met moral standards, reassured participants about the quality of the study and relieved negative scepticism toward the researcher and research topic, as emphasised by a few participants. Thus, improving the study's credibility (Yin 2018) and addressing the confidentiality issues of the investigation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012; Yin 2018). Secondly, all participants were fully informed of the aims and objectives of the study by providing a detailed information sheet (see Appendix E - participant

information sheet) (Lincoln and Guba (1994). As shown, all participants were required to complete informed consent forms (see Appendix F – consent forms) with specific options to opt-out of identification audio recording at any moment during and after the interview. Thirdly, how the data would be processed before and after the study was taken into account. The data obtained during this study was password-protected and stored on the university's online OneDrive. In the following section, I present my reflective statement undertaking this research.

4.11. <u>Reflective Statement</u>

Engaging with reflexivity during my doctoral project, I have been able to bring into awareness and embrace the familiarity of my identity and positionality in a way as to draw on it while building rapport with participants in my project (Finlay and Gough 2008; Koboyashi 2020). Reflexivity refers to the "idea of (self) awareness" (Gilgun's 2010, p. 1) or self-examination and self-transformation researchers and participants undergo during the knowledge exchange process (Attia and Edge 2017). Thus, in the case of my research, even though I am highly inquisitive about how nation branding works in the Nigerian state regarding its identity, image and reputation, I am also reflective and attentive to how I think about the processes I employ in carrying out my research enquiry (Mauthner and Doucet 2003; Gao 2020). An essential part of my reflectivity involved being aware of my subjectivity in the field and accounting for the personal and professional meanings of the topic I investigated (Winter, Buck, and Sobiechowska 1999; Gilgun 2010; Berger 2015). In the case of this research, my professional relationship marketing experience, which involved stakeholder relationship functions in international and national organisations in Nigeria, helped me think about Nigeria as a corporate-nation brand. I was also able to reflect on its reactive and volatile approach to stakeholder engagements at a national level and how this has affected its reputation at an international level. Thus the potential applicability of corporate branding theories to Nigeria came into my consciousness.

My situated knowledge from being an indigene of Nigeria, my invested understanding of Nigeria's long struggle with a negative reputation (Akindola and Ehinomen 2017; Ojukwu-Ogba and Osode 2020), and my vested interest in Nigeria's favourable reputation also led me to think about my research aim, objectives and interview guide (questions) with a solution-based mindset (Kpazai and Attikleme 2012). Therefore, my subjectivity impacts the reality of Nigeria in this research (D'Cruz, Gillingham and Melendez 2019). I consider this project's participants have co-created knowledge with

me through this solution-based lens from my experience of a high level of probing into my interest in the research topic and their delight in the subject matter. My emotional engagement with Nigeria's unfavourable reputation also made me more attuned to the participants' responses that focused on and could deliver practical value to the Nigerian case context (Way, Kanak Zwier and Tracy 2015). There is a possibility that the reality and account of Nigeria would be very different if my approach and mindset to this research were not solution-based and informed by local knowledge about the country (Cunliffe 2003; Tuffour 2018).

My professional experience also impacted my interest in theorising the research topic at a conceptual level, as according to Holland (1999) and Harding (2004), it is somewhat impossible to have an unemotional theory abstraction. Hence my positionality in the field, being of international and national employment backgrounds, endorsed the choice of the theoretical framework underpinning this research (Fill 2013, p. 361). This suggests that I am well positioned to investigate a corporate–nation brand from internal and external perspectives for the long-term consideration of the brand (Fill 2013; Greyser and Urde 2019). Thereby I was partisanly positioned to critically apply and develop the integrated concepts of brand personality, identity, image and reputation to understand how it works in a national setting.

Additionally, my positionality is evident in how ethics was carried out with participant selection in the research process (Guillemin and Gillam 2004; Hsiung 2008; Reid et al., 2018). This meant that data collection was carried out with highly literate and cultured professional participants who could carefully process the information offered in the data collection stage. The participants' professional subjectivities also meant they had a knowledgeable experience of international and national relations and work backgrounds like me. Also, in carrying out the fieldwork, the nature of the 'spaces' (participants' offices) in which the data was collected also positively impacted the temperament, feelings, sensitivities and safety of myself and the participants in this research (Pezalla, Pettigrew and Miller-Day 2012; Roulston 2018). Perhaps the research outcome would differ widely if the participants were not literate or well-educated members of the Nigerian public (Holland 1999; Fook 2015).

Likewise, on a personal note, Gummesson (2000) explains that a researcher's preconception and perspective (McCabe and Holmes 2009) is an essential tenet of qualitative research and that qualitative research lacking pre-understanding will be

open to criticisms and misleading discoveries. Given that I have lived in Nigeria for more than twenty years, this gave me an in-depth insider knowledge of Nigeria (Cassell, Cunliffe and Grandy 2018). During the data analysis, this was also particularly useful in evolving cultural terms and creoles to thematic accounts (Macbeth 2001; Mauthner and Doucet 2003). Also, being out of Nigeria for over five years carrying out this research gave me an acculturated outsider perspective of the country (Sam et al., 2008; Kwame 2017). Collectively, these embedded internal and external perspectives also impacted the beliefs and priorities (Berger 2015) that contributed to the organisation of the research phases, first from an internal perspective and then from an external perspective.

Furthermore, as a prior resident Nigerian, I understood some of the reality and experiences of Nigeria from a broader socio-cultural perspective (Lynch 2000, Kwame 2017). In particular, it was a challenge listening in and probing some key conventional issues of the Nigerian nation with participants. Such as corruption and tribalism, as these practices were already known to me. Listening to the recorded transcripts, I realised this might have disappointed some participants, especially expatriates, who wanted to explore the subjects with me. Lynch (2008) explains this aspect of my reflexivity as having a researcher's sensorium and being open to the accounts and experiences I will quickly absorb during the research without being aware.

Another critical view of my reflexivity refers to my gendered perspective on how I think about the world and the social-cultural characteristics I was attuned to during the data analysis stage (Harding 2004; Rolin 2009; Mosedale 2014; Sandlund et al., 2018). This gendered position also somewhat implies that I did this social science research from a woman(ist) perspective, understanding that Nigeria's brand interpretations would probably look different from other genders' perspectives (Watson et al., 2018; Obasi 2022). Therefore, I acknowledge that my subjectivity imbued with my preconceptions, hunches, and way of thinking about things may have influenced my decision and interpretations in this research. Nevertheless, to ensure trustworthiness and rigour during the research process, I set aside but did not wholly discount my pre-understanding of the topic (Dowling 2006; Stark and Trinidad 2007). I did this by documenting memos throughout the data collection and analysis process, employing self-reflexive diaries made throughout the research process to document the evolution of my ideas as I immersed myself in the data (Cutcliffe, 2003; Tufford and Newman, 2012). All these processes made me feel worthy and confident

about the knowledge construction of this research and understanding that, in essence, the key is to keep developing, thinking about knowledge, and linking reflexivity to my self-development (Caretta 2015; Attia and Edge 2017). The following section concludes and provides a brief summary of this chapter.

4.12. <u>**Summary of Research Methodology**</u>

In summary, this chapter delivered the research methodology adopted as part of this thesis and discussed the researcher's philosophical position, the research approach, methods and analytical procedures. Expressly, this thesis adopts the philosophy of interpretivism as the realities of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity, and image-reputation can be explained from the perceptions and associations of internal and external stakeholders. Furthermore, a qualitative case study design was used to explore the single selected case - Nigeria. The research methods adopted were semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions for both phases of the research (i) internal and (ii) external, enhanced with projective techniques. Finally, the information gathered was analysed using an inductive approach to thematic analysis. The next chapter presents the investigation findings from phase one of the research.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS - INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS (PERSONALITY-IDENTITY) OBJECTIVE #2

The previous chapter focused on the methodological framework of this thesis, including the philosophical underpinnings, research approach, research methods, sampling framework and analytical process for the two-fold phases of this research. This chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis of phase one of the investigation. A phase that focused on exploring Nigeria's nation brand personality and identity from the perspectives of internal Nigerian resident citizens/participants. Understanding Nigeria's nation brand personality and identity served as the foundation for phase one and objective #2 of this research. In addition, it helped to explain the applicability of the findings to the building blocks of 'nation brand reputation' interpreted in the discussions chapter (see section 7.1, chapter 7 - Discussions of findings).

Tables 8, 9 and 10 below illustrate the examples of the codification used for citing the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions of this study. As indicated, the internal Nigerian stakeholders ranged from public sector workers in the oil and gas, agriculture and health services - Nigerian Federal Government Ministries. The codes were:

Table 8: Level 1 Coding used for Citing - Internal stakeholders

Code	Source of data – Ministry
FMPR	Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources
FMAR	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development
FMHS	Federal Ministry of Health Services

Table 9: Level 2 Coding used for Citing - Internal stakeholders

Code	Source of data - Geopolitical Zone
SE	South-East
SS	South-South
SW	South-West
NE	North-East
NW	North-West
NC	North-Central

Table 10: Example of Nomenclature Used For Citing Internal Stakeholders.

Code	Internal Stakeholder
P6FMAR-int-SW	Participant six, from the federal ministry of agricultural resources - an individual semi-structured interview - participant from the south-west geopolitical zone
P8FMPR-fg2-NC	Participant eight, from the federal ministry of petroleum resources - from the second focus group – participant from the north-central geopolitical zone

As indicated in the methodology chapter, the stages of analysis are discussed in detail through the inductive approach to data analysis. First-order concepts were formed by triangulating sources (semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, published articles with similar investigations, interviewer field notes), and finally, themes emerged. The overarching themes that emerged from the analysis on Nigeria's nation brand personality were: (i) 'submission' as the norm, (ii) impact triviality and (iii) positive attributes. The sub-themes for Nigeria's personality were (i) (Nigerian creole) - 'I pass my neighbour' ethos, (ii) complicacy, (iii) subservience, (iv) wasteful and (v) impulsivity values. Whereas the overarching themes that emerged for Nigeria's nation brand identity were (i) inferior leadership, (ii) institutionalised rationalisation, and (iii) ethno-tribal intercommunications. The sub-themes for Nigeria's identity were (i) corruption, (ii) immunity, (iii) suffering and smiling culture, (iv) cultural diversity and exclusion and (iv) toxic tribalism. The following part of this chapter moves on to describe the themes in greater detail. However, before explaining these themes, it is necessary to remind us of the principal aspects of nation brand personality.

5.1. Nation Brand Personality

The conceptual background chapter highlighted that the core characteristics and traits that identify a nation brand are its personality. Hence this thesis investigated the interviewee's deep-rooted associations and feelings regarding the Nigerian nation brand. It was also deduced that marketing researchers could analyse a corporate– nation brands' personality by uncovering the internal stakeholder's intrinsic feelings and perceptions towards the brand. Therefore, they could have poignant and expressive peculiarities. Haven recounted on nation brand personality, the empirical findings on Nigeria's nation brand personality are presented next as emerged themes.

5.2.   **Emerged Themes**

As previously stated, the emerging findings, which are the outcome of the inductive analysis conducted on the data corpus, are presented in this section. Based on the rigorous cross-examination of the data and the account of significant contextual patterns and themes. Expressly, the overarching themes found to make up the core nature and character of the Nigerian nation brand personality were: (1) 'submission' as the norm, (2) impact triviality and (3) positive attributes. The sub-themes were: (i) (Nigerian creole) - 'I pass my neighbour' ethos, (ii) complicacy, (iii) subservience, (iv) wasteful and (v) impulsivity values. What follows is an account of the themes in greater detail.

5.2.1.   'SUBMISSION' AS THE NORM

The national standard of dominion and meekness to authority influence was a significant component found to drive the core personality of the Nigerian nation brand and labelled as 'submission' as the norm - The first overarching theme to emerge from Nigeria's nation brand personality. The sub-themes discussed by internal stakeholders within this perspective were: (i) (Nigerian creole) "I pass my neighbour" ethos, (ii) complicacy, and (iii) subservience. These themes formed part of the deep-rooted characteristics that make up Nigeria's nation brand - from internal stakeholders' perspectives. Collectively, they underpin the norm and tradition of 'submission' and contribute to shaping the Nigerian nation brands' personality. A more detailed account of the sub-themes is explained next.

5.2.1.1 'I pass my neighbour' ethos (Status inequality).

As far as Nigeria's nation brand personality is concerned, the first subtheme to be presented is the 'I pass my neighbour' ethos, encompassing status inequality in the Nigerian creole. In their accounts of the events surrounding Nigeria's nation brand character, a number of SE, SW and NC internal stakeholders used the Nigerian creole term *"I better pass my neighbour"* (P18FMHS-int-SE) to recount some deep-rooted values of Nigeria. However, when probed for clarity on Q: *"who is your neighbour?"* participants were unanimous in the view that "*your neighbour is anybody else apart from you or your immediate family"* (P1FMAR-fg2-SS). Given this, understanding how the two different terms 'pass' [outclass] and 'neighbour' fit together defined some of the technical aspects of Nigeria's nation brand. Therefore, this Nigerian-creole term was preserved as a theme - to depict some of the cultural feelings and

associations regarding the Nigerian nation brand from internal stakeholders' perspectives. The feelings in question involved an inclination to *"surpass"* (P23FMAR-int-NC) or be considerably *"superior to others* [fellow citizens/neighbours]*"* (P13FMPR-int-SW) in the sense of 'status inequality' or *"having the upper hand"* (P12FMPR-int-SW). As the comments below illustrate:

> *"In Nigeria - this idea that you have to pass your neighbour, there is nothing like succeeding together, as a nation or people, there is nothing like that - so that they* [neighbour] *can keep coming to you* [non-neighbour] *for more and more assistance, that kind of thing* [feeling] *- people love that* [having the upper-hand]*"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE).

These internal stakeholders' comments suggested that the Nigerian nation brand was inclined to *"devious"* (P8FMHS-int-SS) inequality to a greater degree than shared national advancement. Comparable views were shared by some internal stakeholders from the SE and NW who felt "*any opportunity is a set up for unfair treatment…there is long term deprivation here* [Nigeria] *and countless people like* [enjoy] *that"* (18FMHS-int-SE), *"Nigeria is a nation divided by dishonest advantage… you are always at someone's else mercy in Nigeria"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW). These internal stakeholders' views not only highlighted the predisposition for inequality in Nigeria for unfair advantage but also underlined the layout for non-resistance. Another internal stakeholder from the SE echoed this view through a publication in a Nigerian sustainability blog (Aligbe 2020) in April 2020. The account reported:

> *"The dangers of the "I Better Pass My Neighbour" Nigerian Thinking* [mindset]- *"always wanting to be bigger than everyone else, richer than everyone to show off, the mindset that people have to always bow* [submit] *to you* [non-neighbour] *and be subject to* [vulnerable to] *you…*[in Nigeria] *the idea is to be better than your "neighbour", to always feel a pseudo sense of bliss, superiority at the expense of millions* [of other people]*"* (Source: Aligbe 2020).

This internal stakeholder's perspective highlighted the nuance to which the 'pass' your 'neighbour' ethos elaborated on social inequality in Nigeria and the presumable gratification related to this.

Furthermore, this desire for inequality also resurfaced in relation to a 'possessions' gap across the interview dataset. There was a sense amongst internal stakeholders

from the SS, SW and NE of recognition through 'possessions disparity' in their accounts of the value-system of the Nigerian nation brand. For example, flamboyant and flashy belongings such as *"big house"* [superior house] (P15FMPR-int-NE), *"big account* [higher-ranking financial statements]*"* (P8FMHS-int-SS), *"big car"* [dominant car] (P3FMHS-int-SW) were recounted as critical markers of differentiation and supremacy from internal stakeholders' perspectives. For example, one internal stakeholder from the SW stated:

> *"if you see the number of SUVs* [big cars] *on the road in Nigeria, you see that people no matter what, they would like to buy an SUV rather than ride in a car that is appropriate to their level of income"* (P13FMPR-int-SW).

And another internal stakeholder from the SS considered:

> *"Nigerians tend to aim for this flamboyant lifestyle...flamboyant lifestyle because they believe that, when you ride a big car you got the big chance, when you own a big house, then the big guys come to you and tend to recognise you* (P2FMHS-int-SS).

In these comments, the interviewees described a moral belief in Nigeria as the intense desire to possess high-end accessories, for example, cars - *"by any means necessary"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE), as a *"symbol of superiority"* (P9FMAR-int-SW) and for recognition.

In the same way, the majority of respondents from the SW, NE and NW referred to or annotated *"big man"* [superior/influential person] when articulating some of Nigeria's nation brand values and ideals. Several internal stakeholders believed there was a vigour for the specific identity of the *"big man status"* (P14FMHS-int-NW) in Nigeria. When asked about the "*big man status*", a number of internal stakeholders considered the pursuance of *"repressive positions of superiority"* (P5FMHS-fg2-SW) and *"unequal status"* (P16FMAR-NW), acted as the independent force - for the motivation of the Nigerian big man. Talking about this issue, a NE internal stakeholder said: "*as far as Nigeria is concerned, the big men can do and undo, AGAINST ALL, so everybody wants to be the big man in their own little way*" (P10FMAR-int-NE). Similar views were shared by other internal stakeholders who considered: "*you know you have to push to be or go through some, you know, important people* [big man/woman] *so-called in the society to achieve anything meaningful*" (P22FMPR-int-NW), so "*the main goal* [for people] *turns out to be*

[become] *one of them* [big man] *in any capacity"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC). These comments explain that peoples' influence is required to achieve meaningful things in Nigeria. Therefore, 'influence differences' or *"dominance"* (P27FMPR-int-SS) in any way possible is a principal driver of the Nigerian nation brand. On the whole, numerous internal stakeholders believed that *"supporting* [backing] - *people are in vulnerable circumstances"* (P21FMPR-int-NE), exacted by *"inequality"* (P3FMHS-fg1-SS) for utmost submission, was a core value of the Nigerian nation brand. In summary, this sub-theme has highlighted the desire for the status inequality values of the Nigerian nation brand.

5.2.1.2 Complicacy

Another personality sub-theme to emerge from the investigation of Nigeria's nation brand – from internal stakeholder's perspectives, was the 'complicacy' of public processes and procedures to endorse 'submission' to bribery, illegal means and interference. As highlighted in chapter 2 (see – Background to Nigeria), Nigeria has been identified as one of the most ethnically diverse nations globally. Thus, intrinsically, there was some level of complexity expected from Nigeria's nation brand. However, surprisingly, only a minority of internal stakeholders from the SS considered the complicacy of Nigeria from an ethnic perspective. Hence this theme stood out and came up, for example, in focus group discussions of Nigeria's public sector *"manoeuvres"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW) and processes. Internal stakeholders were of the view that aggregates of Nigeria's operational and administrative procedures stood *"ceaselessly mysterious"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE) and had an *"aimless multiplicity of parts"* (P6FMPR-int-SE) in terms of attainment. As one SW participant – talking about a system of administrative burden, put it: *"it's never clear at any one time what needs doing... things are never straight* [straightforward] *in this country"* (P7FMPR-int-SW). These comments suggested that the Nigerian public sector '*administrative procedures'* were prone to *"high levels of surprises"* (P13FMPR-int-SW) and ambiguity. While a NW participant considered, *"we are talking about a system* [Nigeria] *where there is no innovation to structure, or the way work is done...ABSOLUTE CHAOS"* (P2FMHS-fg2-NW). This perspective highlighted that the Nigerian public sector was disorganised in terms of structural parts and operational procedures.

Also, some concerns regarding perpetual bribery and corruption in Nigeria reiterated this theme. There were some suggestions that the *"jumble"* [disorder] (P27FMPR-int-

SS) of processes or excessive *"constrained arrangements* [systems]*"* (P19FMAR-int-NC) in the Nigerian public sector discouraged scrutiny of corruption and swayed bribery in Nigeria. For example, one SW internal stakeholder stated, *"MANY at times you would see on the news they are making noise about investigating one corruption scandal or the other, then you HEAR NOTHING, just like that! Because it's always a dead end and LEADS NOWHERE* [entangled situation]*"* (P11FMPR-int-SW). And another NW participant commented, *"if the processes* [public sector] *were not a burden, who will pay bribe?"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW). Similar views were shared by a NC participant who argued, *"you cannot beat this our system, when many offices* [departments] *are involved in one simple transacting, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY* [besides bribery]*"* (P26FMAR-int-NC). These internal stakeholders' perspectives suggested that - to some level, taking part in bribery and/or corruption in Nigeria is characteristic of complicated public sector processes. Correspondingly, a united nation's (2017) investigation on the patterns and modalities of bribery and corruption in Nigeria, coming from internal stakeholders' perspectives - shared comparable views - by stating: *"covering a one-year period* [June 2015 – May 2016]*...a total of 82.3 million bribes were paid* [to public sector workers]*...bribes are mainly paid to speed up and finalise* [public sector] *administrative procedures"* (United Nations 2017). This view of a *"never-ending"* (P4FMPR-fg1-SE) or impediment to administrative procedures in the Nigerian public sector; was echoed by one more united nation (December 2019) inquiry. This inquiry dealing with the subject of active profiteering and corruption in Nigeria - from internal stakeholders' perspectives reported:

> *"*[in Nigeria] *the fact that the majority of bribes are requested by public officials* [public sector workers] *and are paid in advance of a service* [public service]*, is a strong indication that such bribes are paid by citizens* [Nigerian public] *in exchange for a service that the public official is duty-bound to provide for free* [unimpeded]. *This may be because they* [Nigerian public] *have been informed, either implicitly or explicitly, that their request will not be processed* [unconstrained] *without the payment of a kickback* [bribe] *to the corrupt official"* (Source: United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, 2019).

These excerpts not only illuminated the position of induced hassles and difficulties surrounding centralised operations in Nigeria from within the public sector. They also highlighted the easiness to submit to bribery from outside the public sector - to facilitate processes. Equally important, these perspectives also explained further the complicacy dimension of the Nigerian nation brand beyond the accounts that the

participants for this study provided (non-public sector workers). Given that the participants for this study (civil servants) representing internal stakeholders of Nigeria; also embodied the public sector workers under investigation - in the analysis of the united nations.

Meanwhile, the majority of participants from the SE, SW and NC alluded to the notion of *"lack of transparency* [inexplicability]*"* (P3FMPR-fg2-SW) in the Nigerian system, which warranted 'internal affairs' to be *"confusional"* (P5FMHS-fg1-NC), *"not fathomable"* (P4-FMPR-fg2) and *"shrouded in secrecy"* [ambiguity] (P2FMHS-int-SS). For example, one SE internal stakeholder said, when asked: Q: *"What will you change about the core values of your ministry*?"

> *"No transparency, YES! that is what I will change* [because] *you can have a project going on and they* [senior management] *will tell you they want to complete it in one year, and you are not told exactly how they intend to complete it in one year, and you know so at least, what is actually completing in one year?* [what aspect of the project] *how are you completing it in one year*? *No one can make sense of"* (P18FMHS-int-SE).

This internal stakeholder explains a vagueness to internal communications regarding projects in their ministry, which *"confuses"* (P3FMHS-int-SW) and makes internal affairs incomprehensible to employees. Similarly, commenting on a *"challenging uncertainty"* (P5FMHS-fg2-NC) regarding some matters of state in Nigeria, some internal stakeholders from the SE felt that *"No transparency is what I don't like about Nigeria's human rights issues and public law"* (P18FMHS-int-SE), *"There is no transparency in the national budgetary framework at all"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE). And another internal stakeholder from the SS commented:

> *"One of the things about Nigeria is ehm every time* [always], *the absence of CLARITY...for example - the national budget, are oftentimes NEVER BASED ON ANY MEANINGFUL* [comprehensible] *DATA, that's what I can say about Nigeria and secondly also, most of the time, the top government officials, tend to KEEP AWAY IMPORTANT INFORMATION from the citizens so you often time don't HAVE A CLUE* [explanation] *on what is going on in the government"* (P15FMPR-int-NE).

As reported by these internal stakeholders, there is a lack of clarity in how domestic affairs are conducted in the Nigerian system.

Finally, to reiterate this theme, a common view amongst internal stakeholders from the SE, SW, NW and NC was how - *"changes"* [irregularity] (P5FMHS-fg2-SW) during times of Nigeria's political dispensations in recent decades (*"after Nigeria's independence"* P5FMPR-int-SE), had affected the Nigerian people's mindset to default *"hassle"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW). For instance, some internal stakeholders raised concerns that the majority of Nigerians in the present circumstances valued extensive degrees of *"difficulties"* (P20FMHS-int-NC) and *"complicatedness"* (P1FMPR-int-SE) as a rational way of life. As the comments below illustrate in greater detail:

> *"We* [Nigerians] *have an attitude that everything has to be difficult* [complicated]. *We like to make life difficult for each other. So when you see a policeman on the road, things must be difficult, to get to the policeman, it must be difficult, we don't believe that anything can come easily... to get light* [electricity], *it must be difficult... even the one that surprises you is water, it doesn't matter whether you get water or what kind of water you will get...if you need water, you must get it in a difficult way* [the hard way]; *if not, YOU DON'T NEED IT* (P7FMPR- int-SW).

This perspective demonstrated that individuals in Nigeria consider it necessary to entertain and foster difficulties accessing basic amenities and going about their daily lives. For the most part, suggestions from internal stakeholders were that - Nigeria's nation brand's complicacy aspect was a root cause of people *"succumbing to various forms of unethical activities"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SW); to manage or avoid - the complicacy. This subtheme has described the Nigerian nation's personality as inherently bureaucratic and disjointed, being set up for bribery, corruption and subordination.

5.2.1.3 Subservience

Reminiscent of the first sub-theme describing status inequality ('I pass my neighbour' ethos), subservience was the final sub-theme that effected the overarching theme of - 'submission' as the norm. In their explanation of the Nigerian nation brands' core set of beliefs and attitudes, a number of internal stakeholders conceptualised 'subservience' to perceived person(s) of influence or *"power"* (P12FMPR-int-SW) as a core disposition of the Nigerian nation brand. Six broad concepts emerged from this subtheme, which were subservience to: *"parents"* (P22FMPR-int-NW), *"tribal elders"* (P1FMPR-int-SE), *"religious leaders"* (P18FMHS-int-SE), *"politicians"* (P3FMHS-fg1-SS), *"managers/supervisors at work* [workplace]*"* (P21FMPR-int-NE) *and "God"*

(P6FMAR-fg2-NW). By the same token, "Sheep [animal]" (P2FMHS-int-SS) in the context of *"blind obedience"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE) and 'susceptible *"to control"* (P18FMHS-int-SE) recurred in the data, in response to the question: Q: "*If you were to describe Nigeria as an animal, what kind of animal would it be*?". The projective technique exercise uncovered this result. Table 11 below highlights the "why" of those responses:

Table 11: Nigeria Nation Brand - Sheep Personality.

Quote	Participant
"Because they are animals you need to control all the time."	P3FMHS-fg1-SS
"Because we [Nigeria] *are TOO ready to agree to be controlled...or let me say blindly obey."*	P2FMHS-int-SS
"Being that we [Nigerian public] *show esteem to undeserving* [corrupt] *leaders* [person(s) of influence]... *even when we know they are robbing* [stealing from] *us - we just dey look"* [Nigerian creole meaning - we just stay silent and accept]."	P1FMAR-fg2-SS
"As it is not in our character [culture] *to have a difference of opinion* [freedom of expression] *and Nigerians are brought up* [nurtured] *in a way that a child has to pass his feelings* [thoughts] *through the adults* [dictate].	P27FMPR-int-SS

These comments, predominantly from among internal stakeholders from the SS, suggested that the Nigerian nation brand character was dependent-prone and inclined to assume domination from those at the *"position of influence"* (P10FMAR-int-NE) or power.

Comparable views were shared by other internal stakeholders from the SW and NC who alluded to the notion of impressionability; in recounting some of the core values associated with the Nigerian nation brand. Talking about the issue of conducting internal affairs in Nigeria - *"inefficiently"* (P11FMPR-int-SW), one internal stakeholder said: *"We* [Nigeria] *are always changing, we have no permanent position on anything... so are easily influenced"* (P23FMAR-int-NC), *"Agreeable"* (P5FMHS-fg1-NC). And another internal stakeholder considered, *"You* [Nigeria] *have yourself a population of people that are easily manipulated* [influenced] *whether they are educated or not...by those leading them"* (P20FMHS-int-NC). In these comments, the internal stakeholders described the Nigerian public; as being impressionable in the sense of readily *"Yielding to* [the] *abuse of power by the political elites"* (P13FMPR-int-SW). Similarly, there were some negative comments about work environments that enabled *"Stomach*[ing-tolerating] *ill-treatments by*

bosses" (P2FMHS-fg2-NW) in the Nigerian public sector. As the comments below illustrate:

> *"If you are in a meeting* [at their workplace]*, you find out that it happens even that, you can't just contribute* [participate] *or just get up and be speaking* [make a contribution]*…until your boss says you have to* [allowed to] *speak, it is not like that in other environments* [sectors]*, where when you are in a meeting, and you can't express* [contribute] *what you know about something"* (P1FMPR-int-SE).

This internal stakeholder's perspective stressed that in their ministry, individuals are most *"subdued"* [subservient] (P13FMPR-int-SW) and therefore unwilling to contribute in meetings without their bosses 'say-so' despite having the knowledge or solutions to address the issues in question. Comparatively, a publication (July 2019) by a SE internal stakeholder on the factors affecting the productivity and professionalism of the Nigerian public sector echoed this point. The account revealed:

> *"In* [the] *private sector, everybody has a voice. Nobody's opinion is undermined. This is not so in the public sector. In fact, during staff meetings or briefings, unless a junior staff was called upon to explain something, he dare not talk… Even if he gives his suggestions, it will not be considered… only the opinions of the management team are important"* (Source: Okey-Kalu 2019).

This internal stakeholder's perspective not only described the extent to which individuals are inclined to be constrained by authority figures in Nigeria but also the degree to which the authority figures are enabled to repressively *"undermine* [supress] *their subordinate opinions"* (P5FMHS-fg1-NC) and expressions.

Relatively, a topical subject on deference to elders - amongst internal stakeholders from the SE, SW, NW and NC also reiterated this theme. For example, a number of internal stakeholders from the SE argued that conformity to *"tribal elders"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW) was a precious virtue of the Nigerian nation brand. In one case, the participant commented when asked, Q: *"What do you like the most about Nigeria's national character?*

> *"Respect* [deference] *for elders I would say, that is one good thing about Nigeria, when you go to the western countries, for instance, that is not there, but we have that here* [Nigeria]*…and it's a very good thing, elders* [tribal-patriarchs of communities] *have a lot of wisdom the nation benefits from"* (P20FMHS-int-NC).

Whilst other internal stakeholders from the SE and NW considered the idea - of deference to elders as what they liked the least about Nigeria's nation brand character. For instance, one SE internal stakeholder argued:

> *"In this country* [Nigeria]*, nobody challenges anything... like puppets, that is what I like the least, people just ACCEPT BLINDLY, especially anything coming from the elderly statesmen* [tribal - patriarchs of communities]*... and those guys are stuck in the past, that is why we cannot move forward in this country"* (P5FMPR-int-SE).

These comments indicated - the idea of deference shown to others because of their age or prominence was conceivably significant to the Nigerian nation brand.

Further to this, the participants, on the whole, demonstrated submitting to something else - greater than themselves as a deeply-rooted view of reality in Nigeria. This conception came up, for example, in discussions of the desired nation brand personality of Nigeria. A number of internal stakeholders from the SW, NE and NW referred to submitting the 'matters' relating to Nigeria's nation brand to 'God''. For example, one SW internal stakeholder commented when asked:

Q: *"If you were able to shift the mindset of Nigerians in a way that will benefit the nation, how would you do this?"*

> *"It will be to fear GOD. We* [the Nigerian public] *have to fear God. We need to get people* [Nigerian public] *to fear God, surrender to the will of God and appreciate the faithfulness of God in our lives; God will do it for us; we cannot do anything without God"* (P7FMPR-int-SW).

According to another SW internal stakeholder:

> *"We have tried to keep Nigeria one* [not split]*, and Nigeria is a firm believer of God as we continue to look up to him* [God]*. That's one good thing about Nigeria; it's a GODLY* [religious] *country, be it Christian or Muslim, and I like that... as long as we always obey and submit to him for guidance in everything about this nation, then we can change our situation"* (P9FMAR-int-SW).

These internal stakeholder comments suggested that submitting the internal affairs of Nigeria to 'God' would change the state of affairs in Nigeria. Some internal stakeholders also considered: *"God is the ultimate planner, and we have to leave the future for him"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE). Similar views were shared by another internal

stakeholder – talking about their perception of Nigeria's heritage, stated: *"What comes to my mind* [concerning Nigeria's heritage] *- is the ability to serve* [obey] *God in truth and in spirit, abiding by his will for us* [Nigerian public] *and NOTHING ELSE"* (P3FMHS-int-SW). In one case, when probed for clarity as to their suggestions on 'God' helping with Nigeria's nation brand character, the internal stakeholder considered, *"We have our religious leaders to intercede for us"* (P4FMPR-int-SE). From these comments, it is evident that the submission to religion and/or religious leaders is extraordinary to the Nigerian nation brand. Fundamentally, it is seen that the majority of internal stakeholders in Nigeria make sense of authority and 'perceived' persons of influence as objects *"to be feared"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC) and be submissive to. In conclusion, this sub-theme has explained the Nigerian nation brand s' personality core hierarchical values and beliefs - framing internal stakeholders to be submissive and subdued.

5.2.2. IMPACT TRIVIALITY

'Impact triviality' emerged as the second overarching theme from Nigeria's nation brand personality investigation. Developed from internal stakeholders' perspectives regarding the standard practice in their respective federal government ministries for policies and decisions not to be evaluated or considered for their overall impact on the nation - in its entirety. Accordingly, internal stakeholders outlined perceptions of this theme in the framework of sub-themes, such as 'wasteful' and 'impulsivity values' analysed in the following sections:

5.2.2.1 Wasteful

The first subtheme to be presented under the 'impact triviality' overarching theme is 'wasteful'. From internal stakeholders, perspectives, 'wasteful' and 'mismanagement of resources' in Nigeria recurred throughout the data. Two discrete reasons emerged from this. The first was various excessive *"government-led malpractices"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SS), including: *"lavish cost of governance"* (P22FMPR-int-NW) and *"resource squandering"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE). The second was various nationalised inefficient practices, in particular - public sector lack of productivity, *"overlooking competence"* (P6FMPR-int-SE) and *"lost-time* [potential]*"* (P11FMPR-int-SW). For instance, in their accounts of the events surrounding the misspend of financial and natural resources in Nigeria, a number of internal stakeholders from the SE, SW and NC suggested that Nigeria fails to make additional efforts to cut expenditure and

"decrease misallocation [wastage] *of resources"* (P26FMAR-int-NC). As the comment by a SE internal stakeholder illustrates in greater detail:

> *"WE* [Nigeria] *are WASTEFUL, in so many ways, wasteful that all the resources* [natural resources] *we are ENDOWED with especially let's look at it in the issue of our oil resources…Nigeria as a nation being one of the top producers of crude oil* [natural resource] *in the world,* [yet]*we prefer* [favour] *to import finished products* [e.g. gasoline, diesel fuel]. *When we know that if we develop our capacity inward* [developing oil refinery's domestically - in Nigeria]*, we can refine our products within this place* [Nigeria] *and make it available at a cheaper rate for domestic consumption. It is like that* [currently] *in gas production* [in Nigeria] *you find out that as a nation we prefer to export the gas* [raw material] *and start buying back from the international market. So, it's something that in all parameters* [across Nigeria]*, you find out that we like to spend more money to get what we could have by careful management of our system* [resources]*, we could have gotten at a cheaper rate".* (P1FMPR-int)

This internal stakeholder emphasised that in the federal ministry they belonged to (petroleum resources), the raw material (gas) sourced from Nigeria's natural deposits; is exported from Nigeria to the international markets and bought back (imported) - as refined gas for domestic consumption. Pointing out that opportunities to refine the raw material (gas) in Nigeria, which can be most cost-effective, generate domestic income/jobs, whilst boosting the Nigerian economy, are often overlooked. A previous publication by a SE internal stakeholder on the contributions of the oil and gas natural resource-proceeds - to the Nigerian economy shared comparable views. It was suggested that:

> *"It is quite amazing that the stupendous resources* [wealth] *gained from oil* [natural resources] *have not been reflected in the rate and level of development in Nigeria. Rather, it has become a major source of concern that such resources might, when we look at the economic indices, be classified as having been wasted* [misspent]*"* (Source: Onyeukwu 2007).

This perspective referred to the fact that Nigeria had been a persistent developmental *"growth-loser"* (P14FMHS-int-NW) due to the squandering of proceeds from its oil and gas natural resources.

Furthermore, the majority of participants in the federal ministry of agricultural resources from the SW and NE agreed with the statement that "*Nigeria could do more in reducing the amount of money lost*" (P10FMAR-int-NE) "*in annual export opportunities*" (P9FMAR-int-SW) through agriculture. Supporting these findings, another research by a SS internal stakeholder on water management, policy and practices in Nigeria projected similar views. The account stated:

> "*How Nigeria is wasting its rich water resources…Nigeria is so rich in water resources that many of its 36 states are named after rivers* [bodies of water]. *In addition to surface water found in nearly every part of the country, there's also plenty stored in the ground. The country has 215 cubic kilometres a year of available surface water…One would imagine that Nigerians* [Nigerian public] *have plenty of water to drink. But this isn't the case. The lack of accessible, reliable and safe drinking water, together with poor sanitation and hygiene, is estimated to cost Nigeria about [USD] $1.3 billion* [annually] *in access time, loss due to premature death, productive time lost and health care costs*". (Source: The Conversation Africa 2017).

According to these comments, Nigeria has abundant 'natural' water resources; however, the wasteful management of these resources; mean Nigeria suffers from "*economic water scarcity*". This means that a great many of the Nigerian public lack access to safe drinking water, which impacts their quality of life and integrative social-financial losses for the nation.

Also, issues related to the wasted human resources of the Nigerian public sector were particularly prominent in the focus group dataset. It was suggested that: "*The Nigerian public sector is built on a wasteful, inefficient and irresponsive system – that transcends to every area of the economy* (P4FMPR-fg1-SE), "*even the private sectors*" (P3FMHS-fg1-SS). Talking about the unproductivity of the Nigerian civil service, one SW interviewee argued: "*The civil service is over bloating* [overstaffed] *and INEFFECTIVE, a lot of people find the civil service as a place of REST* [leisure]*, not a place of work*" (P3FMHS-int-SW). This point was echoed by another NC internal stakeholder when asked, Q: "*what will you change about the corporate values of the federal civil service?*" said:

"There is no efficiency in the [federal] *civil service, SO FOR ME, THE FIRST THING TO DO is to change the general outlook of the average civil servant, change whatever they have in their mind; this place is not a place to come and just gist* [unwind] *and go home... it's a place where you have to BE PRODUCTIVE, and I will tell them* [ask them] *what does productivity mean to you - so that's the place to start and then, I will reduce the size, it's been quite frankly overdone* [overstaffed] *for TOO LONG now"* (P23FMAR-int-NC).

These comments not only suggested the Nigerian civil service was wasteful with its available time and human resources but also its financial resources in maintaining an inefficient-oversized human capacity.

Meanwhile, other internal stakeholders from the SS and NW alluded to the notion of socio-economic, environmental ineffectiveness, and a prominent national philosophy of *"Investment in liabilities"* (P5FMHS-fg2-SW) to echo this point. As one SW internal stakeholder put it, *"I see occasionally husband, wife and children* [cohabiting] *ride a different Jeep* [big car] *to church - to the SAME church service!"* (P7FMPR-int-SW). This internal stakeholder considered the *"improvident use"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW) of personal possessions amongst certain individuals in Nigeria. In one case, the internal stakeholder talking about government perpetual misspending, considered, *"Technically, that attitude* [government misspending] *has pervaded the society* [Nigeria wide] *to the point where even people invest their money in you know LIABILITIES UPON LIABILITIES that don't add value* [to the economy] *and* [there is] *VERY LITTLE investment in PRODUCTIVE SECTORS by the people* [Nigerian public]*"* (P2FMHS-int-SS). This perspective considered that - the Nigerian public capable of investing in the Nigerian economy - financing Nigeria's sustainable development, prefer to spend money on *"liabilities such as high-priced cars"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW) or belongings. Talking about the issue of *"misplaced priorities"* (P13FMPR-int-SW) in the Nigerian public sector, another NC internal stakeholder from the federal ministry of agriculture shared comparable views when asked: Q: *"What will you change about the corporate values of your ministry (FMAR)"*,

> *"For an agency* [federal ministry of agricultural resources -FMAR] *as big as ours, we have…to be* [more] *responsible and accountable for inefficiency when it comes to the national economy.* [for example] *Presently, we* [Nigeria] *deal with a very high post-harvest loss due to wastages* [from poor storage facilities], *and we can definitely do better if it is made a priority. So, more attention should be on those kinds of values - you know to reduce the waste, maybe some innovation or storage investment and* [to consider] *the LOSSES the poor farmers have to continuously endure and the environment, we rather need attention there"* (P26FMAR-int-NC).

These comments not only demonstrated the mood of the internal stakeholder regarding upholding the values of their ministry toward reducing wastages; but also signified the impact thereof on the lives of the farmers, the economy and the environment. Essentially, the majority of internal stakeholders considered that addressing the 'setbacks' inefficient operations created for their ministries should be the focal point of the Nigerian nation brand. To sum up, this subtheme has explained the Nigerian nation brands' personality as uneconomic with resources.

5.2.2.2 Impulsivity Values

The second subtheme that brought forth the overarching theme of 'impact triviality' regarding Nigeria's nation brand personality was 'impulsivity values'. A number of internal stakeholders expressed a variety of perspectives concerning the recklessness and indiscretion of the Nigerian nation brands' disposition, including - personnel' *"Obtaining bribes at the expense of public interest"* (P2FMHS-int-SS), *"Government lacking foresight as concerns* [regarding] *future generations* [youth development]*"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC), *"Thoughtless"* (P9FMAR-int-SW) social attitudes and *'Myopic decision making'* (P1FMPR-int-SE). According to a SE and NE internal stakeholder, *"The atmosphere in this country, everything is for the NOW - the people* [big man] *that have any say in anything don't think about prolonged* [long-lasting] *usefulness"* (P18FMHS-int-SE), *"Here* [Nigeria], [there is] *no patience* [broadmindedness]*…that is why during elections, these bad* [corrupt] *politicians can easily buy peoples votes with little incentives* [bribes] (P21FMPR-int-NE). A similar point shared by another NC internal stakeholder, talking about *"Indiscreet election rigging"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW) and enablers, said: *"Many people are more than willing to - during elections sell their votes over here* [Nigeria]*"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW). These comments highlighted the internal stakeholder depiction of ill-considered bribery accepted to sell votes to corrupt politicians during government elections in Nigeria.

Similarly, the idea of this theme was echoed by internal stakeholders from the SS and NW, talking about Nigeria's historical and future economic evolution. A number of internal stakeholders conceived that the Nigerian nation brand *"Fail*[s] *to bear in mind future national developments"* (P2FMHS-fg2-NW). The term *"poor planning"* (P2FMHS-int-SS) was also echoed by a number of internal stakeholders discussing specific issues such as – *"Nigeria's large-scale dependence on oil-revenue"* (P1FMPR-int-SE), *"Non-diversification of the economy"* (P27FMPR-int-SS) and *'absence of a viable sustainable vision'* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC) for Nigeria. In one case, a SE internal stakeholder commented:

> *"The one concern I have for Nigeria is* [that] *our future economic growth is already undermined even before getting there...because we HAVE poor planning in Nigeria...that is one of the critical challenges* [why] *Nigeria is UNDERDEVELOPED, it's* [because of] *poor planning"* (P6FMPR-int-SE).

This perspective associated the deplorable underdevelopment of Nigeria with the lack of good forethought and ill-conceived plans. This view was shared by another NE internal stakeholder when probed for clarity on what the values of the Nigerian federal civil service meant to them - commented:

> *"In this place* [civil service] *VALUES ?... the strategy is things* [decisions] *are done based on like as the spirit* [mood] *leads me* [federal civil service] *to; Let me just do - that's mainly how things are done"* (P10FMAR-int-NE).

In these comments, the internal stakeholder described their experience with management decisions concerning the civil service - done decisively or thoughtlessly without having strategic values for the future.

Furthermore, in their account of the events surrounding the core values of the Nigerian nation brand, the idea of this theme came up in discussions amongst internal stakeholders from the SW and NC, describing a key driver of the Nigerian youths. As stated in chapter two, Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa, with one of the world's largest youth populations. With this in mind, a number of internal stakeholders raised concerns on the issue of the Nigerian youths considering mainly *"Immediate advantages in their critical actions"* (P25FMPR-int-NC). For instance, one SW interviewee suggested: *"Get rich QUICK attitude"* (P5FMHS-fg2-SW) had

become the objective of many Nigerian youths. Whilst other internal stakeholders considered: *"They* [Nigerian youth] *want something* [possessions] *inappropriate to their level of income"* (P13FMPR-int-SW), *"Wanting something not merited or something they deserve"* (P2FMHS-int-SS), *"Many youngsters* [Nigerian youth] *these days, are copying the crooked politicians because they want big things and not* [don't] *want to put in the work for it - to earn it"* (P2FMHS-fg2-NW). In one case, the internal stakeholder believed that *"Nigeria is MISERABLY FAILING to identify and address issues that would enhance the lives of the youths for the future"* (P7FMPR-int-SW) which could positively impact the nation as a whol*e* and possibly *"pave the way for the OVERALL NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT"* (P7FMPR-int-SW).

Ultimately, one consistent argument that seemed to spark in the focus group discussions which reiterated this theme of impulsivity values was a *"trade-off mentality"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE). Some internal stakeholders were of the view that accepting bribes over the common good was appropriate and relative to the poverty levels in Nigeria - or as one NC participant put it - *"To address pressing short-term problems - like hand to mouth living"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE). Other internal stakeholders argued that having a trade-off mentality was inappropriate in terms of *"creating long-lasting problems"* (P5FMHS-fg1-NC). However, the majority of internal stakeholders agreed that for a nation as *"ethnically complex as Nigeria"* (P14FMHS-int-NW), *"going beyond immediate goals…will certainly be recommended"* (P4FMPR-int-SE) for the *"future regard"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC) of Nigeria's nation brand. In summary, this section has reviewed the subtheme of 'impulsivity values', as it expresses the overarching theme of 'impact triviality'. In essence, describing Nigeria's nation's brand personality as not impact considerate and, therefore, more reactive than proactive.

So far, this chapter has presented the Nigerian nation brand personality under the disposition of inequality, short-term focus and a reactive value system. The third overarching theme to be described is 'positive attributes' expressing the positive perceptions of Nigeria's nation brand personality proffered by internal stakeholders' perspectives.

5.2.3. POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

Despite internal stakeholders projecting specific unfavourable attributes regarding Nigeria's nation brand, some admirations were expressed. The words

"*accommodating*" and "*warm*", in particular, were echoed by several internal stakeholders - in association with the Nigerian nation brand, as highlighted in table 12.

Table 12: Nigeria Nation Brand - Warm Personality.

Quote	Participant
"*We are accommodating people, and it shows, whenever you see Nigerians, they are ready to open their doors and are warm towards you.*"	P4FMPR-int-SE
"*We are very hospitable; we are very warm.*"	P1FMAR-fg2-SS
"*Nigerians will go out of their way to make you feel welcome; we are very open and warm.* "	P19FMAR-int-NC
"*We give people the best chance, you know - we receive people warmly.*"	P13FMPR-int-SW
"*We are warm* [friendly] *people…I think we relate to people in a warm way* [warmly]*, we are not conservative, we are not cold, cos* [because] *sometimes other people outside Nigeria are COLD* [unwelcoming].*"	P11FMPR-int-SW

These comments suggested - the Nigerian nation brand had this warm and welcoming personality. However, a minority of those interviewed stressed that these personality traits were primely geared towards outsiders [foreigners]. As one NE internal stakeholder described: "*W*e are very hospitable [but] *we have that hospitality for foreigners…we are more friendly with them* [foreigners] *than ourselves* [fellow citizens]*"* (P21FMPR-int). And other internal stakeholders from the SS considered, "*We can sometimes put more energy into making foreigners feel more at home than ourselves*" (P3FMHS-int-SW), "*We like to LOOK GOOD* [impress] *for the outside people* [foreigners] *FIRST - before ourselves*" (P1FMPR-int-SE).

Also, a recurrent theme across the data was the idea that the Nigerian nation brand was regarded as being "*resilient*" (P7FMPR-int-SW) and "*strong*" (P14FMHS-NW). As the comment below illustrates:

> "*The resilience of Nigeria is seen in the people* [Nigerian public]*, in that irrespective of what the bad leadership of the nation is doing to underdevelop and undermine the resources of this nation, the people are still VERY VERY eager to move on* [forge ahead]*…they* [Nigerian public] *always still believe that the future is brighter. So that resilience helps us to move on knowing that it will be better*" (P1FMPR-int-SE).

This perspective acclaimed that the Nigerian public is most capable of recovering quickly from problems put down to *"unfortunate governance"* (P8FMPR-NC) and mismanagement in the Nigerian system. Talking about this subject of resilience, another NW internal stakeholder, when asked, Q: *"what do you like the most about Nigeria's national character?"* commended, *"You know with the hardship* [difficulties]*, we* [Nigerian public] *STILL - people still find time to be happy AND ADJUST* [adapt]*...that is one GREAT thing"* (P16FMAR-int-NW). In one case, the internal stakeholder thought, *"In some nations, if they suffer the kind of things* [difficult conditions] *we* [Nigerian public] *suffer here* [Nigeria]*, the rate of suicide will be VERY HIGH, so Nigerians are most strong* [resilient]*"* (P23FMAR-int-NC). This perspective valued the reality that the suicide rate of the Nigerian public was presumably low in relation to the level of adversity in Nigeria - attributable to their resilience.

Likewise, a common view amongst several internal stakeholders was that Nigerians were considerable *"go-getters"* (P9FMAR-int-SW) and diligent, given the right opportunities. For example, one SE internal stakeholder argued:

> *"About Nigerians, when you go out there* [outside Nigeria]*, you see the average Nigerian - go* [probe] *to the schools where they attend schools in the US* [united states] *for instance, they* [Nigerians] *are always among the top* [best students]*, they are very industrious; go* [probe] *to the different fields of human endeavours, you will see Nigerians been represented in the nursing this thing* [profession] *in the US for instance now, there are a lot of Nigerians that have made a name in that industry* [health care]*. In commerce, even in* [the] *UK* [United Kingdom] *where you* [interviewer] *are - you find out that Bayo Ogunlesi* [successful Nigerian lawyer and investment banker with aviation businesses in the UK] *IS A PRODUCT OF NIGERIA"* (P6FMPR-int-SE).

This perspective considered that the *"diligence and determination"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SW) of Nigerians is representational abroad [outside Nigeria] through the healthcare and educational sectors. Comparable views were shared by another NW internal stakeholder who considered: *"Nigerians are determined and hardworking, and Nigerians in the diaspora can attest to* [prove] *that, we are just being misrepresented by a few bad eggs that are seen, but the Nigerians in the diaspora, mostly are hardworking and represent us well"* (P3FMHS-int-SW). Overall, the majority of internal stakeholders believed the Nigerian public was enthusiastic and

diligent - given *"suitable opportunities"* (P17FMAR-int-NW). In summary, this theme has highlighted the internal stakeholders' positive perceptions of Nigeria's nation brand as hospitable and diligent. The following part of this chapter moves on to explain the findings on Nigeria's nation brand identity.

5.3. <u>Nation Brand Identity</u>

Thus far, this chapter has established that internal stakeholders consider the personality of Nigeria under three notable dimensions (overarching themes). First, 'submission as the norm' is the cultural characteristic through which individuals are absorbed into particular values and behaviours of inequality. Second, the core values and beliefs that are part of the national philosophy of 'impact triviality'. Third, the positive attributes of the Nigerian nation brand personality perceived by internal stakeholders.

Compared to the nation brand personality, a nations' brand identity is feelings about how a nation brand presents itself, influencing how internal and external stakeholders perceive it. In the context of this research objective, that will be feelings and perceptions about how the Nigerian nation brand is presented - from the perspectives of Nigeria's internal stakeholders. The next chapter describes how Nigeria is presented from the external stakeholders' perspectives (see chapter 6 – external stakeholders' image-reputation). Let us now consider the emerged themes from the data's inductive thematic analysis.

5.4. <u>Emerged Themes</u>

In the framework of this research, three overarching themes emerged as Nigeria's nation brand identity from the analysis of Nigeria's nation brand. Namely (1) inferior leadership, (2) institutionalised rationalisation and (3) ethno-tribal intercommunications. These themes had some distinct sub-themes: (i) corruption plague, (ii) immunity, (iii) suffering and smiling culture, (iv) cultural diversity and exclusion, and (v) toxic tribalism. Collectively, internal stakeholders expressed these themes as representative of the Nigerian nation's brand identity. The following sections present the overarching and sub-themes in greater detail.

5.4.1 INFERIOR LEADERSHIP

The first overarching theme presented regarding Nigeria's nation brand identity from internal stakeholder views was inferior leadership in the Nigerian context. Considerably, inferior government-political administrations; turned out to be a significant factor in portraying Nigeria's nation brand identity from internal stakeholders' perspectives. These internal stakeholders' perspectives manifested through their conceptions of a 'multitude of corruption-related cases' at the governmental policy-making level and a 'culture of impunity' in key institutions. Bearing in mind that rationally the purpose of leadership is to lead and make noble decisions on behalf of people and, in this research context – a nation brand. These perspectives, therefore, raised serious questions about the nature of leadership in Nigeria. In the analysis of the data corpus, two sub-themes emerged from this over-arching theme. These were: 'corruption plague' and 'immunity' - presented next.

5.4.1.1 Corruption Plague

The first sub-theme presented under the overarching theme of inferior leadership is 'corruption plague'. The majority of internal stakeholders from the SE, SS, SW, NE, NW and NC conceived that corruption and the predisposition to engage in corruption were leading indicators of the Nigerian nation brand. It was suggested that this central theme had continued to be strengthened through long periods of governmental-electoral misconduct in Nigeria. For example, some internal stakeholders from the SS and NE reported: *"The sustained tolerance for corruption in the government - has spread across and provided freedom for even more wrongdoings* [corruption-related] *for SO LONG"* (P8FMHS-int-SS), *"In Nigeria, the matter* [core issue] *has BEEN, corruption is part of the electoral this thing* [process]...*you are not going to find a party* [political] *that is not shady, to tell the truth"* (P15FMPR-int-NE), *"Political corruption is the reason it* [nationwide corruption] *is REALLY REALLY bad and has eaten deep* [far-reaching]" (P3FMHS-fg1-SS). These perspectives considered that corruption in Nigeria has been *"vastly"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE) enabled by the activities of the Nigerian political system. These points were outlined by a previous publication in the 'journal review of African political economy' - talking about the historical perspective of corruption in Nigeria by a SW internal stakeholder. The account reported:

> *"In Nigeria, it* [corruption] *became the principal means of private accumulation during the decolonisation period, in the absence of other means, and came to shape political activity and competition after independence. All subsequent regimes, military and civilian, have been pervaded by corruption. Aided and enhanced by oil revenues, this has created a deepening crisis of kleptocracy, shown in its most extreme form since 1984. It results in a combination of scandalous wealth among the ruling class* [political elites] *with growing poverty, misery and degradation among the mass of Nigerians* [Nigerian public]. *Political life* [politics] *has become dominated by winner-take-all... while the economy and social institutions have been driven into decay. Corruption has thus become a way of life in Nigeria, one which existing governments neither wish to nor can control"* (Source: Osoba 1996).

This internal stakeholder's historical perspective on corruption in Nigeria not only demonstrated its operative succession among the ruling class but also highlighted the *"objection"* (P6FMPR-int-SE) addressing the issue due to *"illegitimate... private gains"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SW).

Then again, two divergent and often conflicting discourses emerged amongst internal stakeholders that reiterated this central theme - corruption. The discourses in question involved - 'whom' and 'what' was corrupt. Furthermore, this raised questions on the issues of 'responsibilities' and 'blame culture' in the Nigerian public sector. A number of internal stakeholders from the SW and NC desired to stress that - politicians and individuals in positions of power were the corrupt individuals. In comparison, other internal stakeholders from the NC considered that the overall Nigerian public was corrupt. For example, one SW internal stakeholder argued:

> *"Generally, there are a few bad individuals...but on a larger scale, the government and leaders are VERY BAD, VERY BAD... it is a we against them feeling in Nigeria. And the 'WE' are the people* [Nigerian public], *and the 'THEM' are the leaders* [political elites] *or anybody in power...THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, STATE GOVERNMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT...once they get there* [government position], *it becomes...THEY ARE NO LONGER PART OF US and they are the corrupt ones, not ourselves* (P3FMHS-int-SW).

Comparable views were projected by a NC internal stakeholder who stated: *"Corruption is a public office thing"* (P25FMPR-int-NC). When probed for clarity on '*public office*' as their employment was part of the public office, the internal

stakeholder continued: *"Yes, we are part of the civil service, but the corruption comes from the top, NOT ME, NOT US"* (P25FMPR-int). This perspective suggested that corruption was most widespread in the Nigerian system.

Also, the perspectives of a *"severe"* (P12FMPR-int-SW), *"uncontrolled"* (P2FMHS-int-SS), *"conflict of interest"* (P19FMAR-int-NC) and giving or receiving *"preferential treatments in Nigeria's main agencies* [key institution's]*"* (P3FMPR-fg2-SW) recurred throughout the data; reiterating the theme of corruption plague. For instance, some internal stakeholders from the SS and NW felt that: *"I'm not saying the use of connections* [favoured treatment] *is bad - I mean we all need these things to some degree, but here* [Nigeria]*, it's so BAD that you cannot get any job or promotion or anything...without KNOWING SOMEBODY* [through partiality]*"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE) or *"been PRESSURED to be that somebody"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW) that can *"push the right buttons"* (P27FMPR-int-SS). While other internal stakeholders from the SW and NC considered that, to obtain anything *"meaningful"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC)*, "there has to be a friend"* (P20FMHS-int-NC) *"family member or even church member involved - and it affects EVERYTHING* [in Nigeria]*"* (P13FMPR-int-SW). One SW internal stakeholder continued, *"lobbying affects* [political] *decision making MOSTLY - in Nigeria because, in the government and other key areas, interests of the numerous extended family and friends COME FIRST...we* [Nigeria] *NEED to change that"* (P2FMHS-int-SS). These comments highlighted that undue influence-peddling in Nigeria *"inhibited"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE) fair opportunities and impartiality for the Nigerian public.

Nevertheless, a small number of those interviewed believed that corruption was part of Nigeria's political evolution as a developing country and was *"quite reasonable"* (P5FMPR-int-SE). As one SE and NC internal stakeholders' argued: *"Corruption is no big deal, it is part of our development, the countries you see today that have minimal corruption have experienced what we are going through in the past"* (P23FMAR-int-NC) *"we have to go through this* [corruption] *to be developed, it is understandable"* (P5FMPR-int-SE). These comments demonstrate the normative and cultural perspective of corruption in Nigeria, as it is seen as the 'standard'. Furthermore, there were some positive comments regarding corruption in Nigeria. For instance, it was suggested that corruption and *"bribery - which is another form of corruption"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW) made it possible to attract some foreign direct investments into the country. For a small number of participants, prevailing corruption was why some international firms found it attractive to invest in Nigeria.

As one SE internal stakeholder argued: *"You can't have it all, you win some and lose the others... without corruption, some of these foreign firms won't be here* [Nigeria], *so it comes with its own advantages"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE). And another NC internal stakeholder considered: *"*[Corruption] *that's the attraction for them* [certain foreign firms] *to do business with us* [Nigeria]*"* (P26FMAR-int-NC). These internal stakeholder comments established a mood about the widespread presence of corruption in Nigeria and perhaps the practical 'serenity' associated with it - from a leadership perspective. In summary, this sub-theme of 'corruption plague' has described how the internal stakeholders understand the Nigerian culture to be shaped by the historical and current prevalence of corruption.

5.4.1.2 Immunity

In addition to feelings of a longstanding experience with corruption, another enduring sub-theme acknowledged from internal stakeholders' perspectives regarding Nigeria's nation brand identity was 'immunity'. Several internal stakeholders determined the perception of *"untouchables"* (P1FMAR-fg2-SS) for various forms of misconduct and *"indiscipline"* (P7FMPR-int-SW) for Nigeria's nation brand. Talking about this issue in the Nigerian civil service, one NW and NE internal stakeholder commented, *"Not obeying traffic laws, people getting to work late and leaving early, or people not coming to work at all"* (P2FMHS-fg2-NW) *"staffs disobeying lawful instructions because there is no consequence for disobedience"* (P21FMPR-int-NE). This point was echoed by other internal stakeholders from the SW. For example, one internal stakeholder outlined when asked Q: *"If you were invited to be part of a committee to advise the federal government on its administrations' corporate vision and mission, what would you advise?"*.

> *"THE FIRST THING to do is to enforce the laws; LET THERE BE CONSEQUENCES of breaking the laws and for corruption in Nigeria. I will give you an example, in a place like CHINA, if you steal one dollar, you are going to be... that's a consequence of corruption, NOTHING like that happens HERE* [Nigeria]*, we have the laws, but we are not following the laws in Nigeria.* [secondly] *Then re-organise the judiciary so that corruption cases can be held FAST. The judiciary ITSELF is a corrupt institution, VERY CORRUPT, so we must re-organise it and make it FUNCTIONAL. If Nigeria conquers corruption, our economy will improve"* (P3FMHS-int-SW).

This perspective considered that there was a *"very high tendency to go unpunished"* (P16FMAR-int-NW), especially for breaking the laws in Nigeria and for cases of corruption to go unaddressed by the justice system in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the *"sense of condonation"* (P18FMHS-int-SE) and *"lack of accountability"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE), sustained under the basis of unethical leadership and law enforcement in Nigeria, recurred throughout the dataset. As one SS internal stakeholder said: *"This place* [Nigeria], *let's just call it the BLANK CHEQUE...across the board, people are not accountable FOR ANYTHING"* (P27FMPR-int-SS). And other SE and NC internal stakeholders considered, *"Even THE LAWMAKERS break the law here* [Nigeria] *– and are not accountable"* (P26FMAR-int-NC) and *"including law enforcement* [are without accountability]*"* (P8FMHS-int-SS). These views suggested that Nigeria's national forces of law and order are *"known to do wrong"* (P18FMHS-int-SE) and enjoy immunity from prosecution. A NC internal stakeholder continued, *"Policemen PUBLICLY on the road - collecting bribes* (P20FMHS-int-NC) *"*[Police] *at the airport asking for bribes from travellers"* (P1FMAR-fg2-SW) *"FROM FOREIGNERS* [external stakeholders]*"* (P12FMPR-int-SW) and *"there are no consequences for that"* (P15FMPR-int-NE).

Similarly, this idea of immunity in Nigeria was particularly acknowledged by a SE and SS internal stakeholder in an account talking about the issues of *"hindrances to national development"* (P19FMAR-int-NC) and *"resolving complex issues of insecurity"* (P23FMAR-int-NC) in Nigeria. The account considered that the government's failings to investigate and hold perpetrators accountable had catalysed a deep culture of impunity in the nation by stating:

> *"The foregoing* [insecurity and violence] *indicates the incapacity of the Nigerian state to protect the lives of its citizens and non-citizens residing in the country. The frequency of communal, religious, and political violence is indicative of a system where impunity reigns supreme. By failing to investigate and bring to justice violators of the right to life as contained in section 33 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), the government has succeeded in strengthening perpetrators"* (Source: Eke and Tonwe 2016).

This perspective indicated that there was a sense of indifference and *"endorsement of conscienceless activities"* (P3FMPR-fg2-SW) in Nigeria, strengthened by the failure of the government to hold perpetrators accountable. Further to this, a small number

of those interviewed suggested that - an *"*[insusceptibility] *to penalisation"* (P9FMAR-int-SW) *"kills the average person's morale* (P14FMHS-int-NW) *and commitment to the Nigeria*[n]*"* (P10FMAR-int-NE) nation brand. For example, one SE participant revealed:

> *"In the ministry, I work* [FMPR] *- we have a tenure-based promotion system... and we also have SPELT OUT ways of promoting people* [eligibility criteria] *to different cadres. But not once or twice* [several times/instances] *I've witnessed where a particular CEO, he discarded everything about the set-out procedures and processes of promoting people - the exam base, EVERYTHING... and chose to* [go] *against what the company policy is and* [promoted others unfairly]. *People PROTESTED AND PROTESTED within the limits they can protest...but NOTHING* [no implications] *CAME OUT OF IT* [protest] *- it destroyed OUR morale to work* (P1FMPR-int-SE).

Inherently, from the wordings used by this internal stakeholder, it is evident that the performance of the Nigerian public sector is strained - by the feelings of 'nonliability' or *"licence to break the rule of law"* (P3FMHS-fg1-SS), especially by leadership. In summary, this section has explained internal stakeholders' feelings regarding the Nigerian nation brand; procedural immunity, unaccountability, and a nonprogressive culture - empowered by inferior leadership.

5.4.2 INSTITUTIONALISED RATIONALISATION

The second overarching theme of Nigeria's nation brand identity from the internal stakeholder's perspectives was 'institutionalised rationalisation'. This theme depicts a complex ensemble of certain 'coping' beliefs and mechanisms of the Nigerian public to deal with Nigeria's prior mentioned unpleasant personality and identity conditions. Under a particular integrated sub-theme of 'suffering and smiling', the notion of 'suffering' was rationalised as tolerable and admirable in the Nigerian context by internal stakeholders. Thus, this thesis established this overarching theme as highly instrumental to how internal stakeholders made sense of the Nigerian nation brand. There emerged only one sub-theme under the overarching theme of institutionalised rationalisation. This sub-theme was 'suffering and smiling culture' and is explained next.

5.4.2.1 'Suffering and Smiling' Culture

Suffering and smiling culture was the first and only sub-theme under this dimension of Nigeria's nation brand identity. The majority of internal stakeholders recounted that - the Nigerian nation brand had an *"embracing* [acceptance]*"* (P19FMAR-int-NC) for adversity and *"sufferings"* (P7FMPR-int-SW), *"with good spirits* [contentment]*"* (P24FMPR-int-NW) and satisfaction. The metaphorical theme *"suffering and smiling"* was used by a number of internal stakeholders from the SE, SW, NE and NC to capture and express matters around this perspective. Hence was preserved as a structuring device for comparison and symbolism. According to some internal stakeholders from the SW, this sense of suffering *"acceptance"* (P3FMPR-fg2-SW) was intensified and sustained due to the 'immunity' dimension of the Nigerian nation brand. For example, one SW internal stakeholder revealed, *"Naija* [Nigeria] *suffering and smiling is our motto here... carrying on with life as if nothing is wrong because you know, even if you challenge anything...NOTHING* [implications] *will come out of it"* (P11FMPR-int-SW) or *"change"* (P12FMPR-int-SW). Whilst a SE internal stakeholder considered, *"one main character I know about Nigeria is what Fela* [famous '70s and 80's Nigerian musician] *described as 'suffering and smiling' you know just suffer and smile - that's what we do best"* (P18FMHS-int-SE). In one case, a SS and NW internal stakeholder commented: *"even if you don't do* [smile]*, the suffering won't stop"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW), *so better to just stomach it and show off* [be untroubled]*"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SS). These comments pointed out that unpleasant feelings of suffering in Nigeria warded off with smiling (metaphorically) was the reality of the Nigerian nation brand - as an adaptation process. A SS internal stakeholder shared this point in a Nigerian newspaper article (October 2019) who considered:

> *"The phrase "suffering and smiling" encapsulates our tendencies in Nigeria... This evolves in my thought processes as I meander from crater to crater to mini-Lagoons* [floods from heavy rains and blocked sewages]*, avoiding floating houses and women in wrapper with nothing under* [undergarments] *scooping the Lagos lagoon* [floods] *out of their bedrooms. What else can we do, since we cannot fight those* [politicians/leaders] *who say they have the master plan but to continue to smile at our suffering"* (Source: Edgar 2019, Ripples Nigeria Newspaper).

This perspective demonstrated the devastating mood of the Nigerian community described and the rationale to remain passive to the devastation by keeping to the *"suffering and smiling mantra"* (P21FMPR-int-NE).

Furthermore, exploring the relationship between the twofold description (i. Suffering) and (ii. Smiling) of this theme provided closer attention to other distinctive sub-dimensions of the Nigerian nation brand identity - from internal stakeholders' perspectives. This attention surfaced mainly in relation to a deep mindset of the Nigerian public across two discrete details. First was a notable degree of optimism, and the second was the perception of religion as 'objects of fear'. As one SE internal stakeholder argued: *"The general mindset is that when its time... he* [God] *will step in and they* [people] *need to keep suffering and smiling in the main time"* (P4FMPR-int-SE) or *"till they get to heaven"* (P2FMHS-int-SS). While one SS and NW internal stakeholder, when probed for clarity on the 'suffering and smiling' predisposition mentioned - said: *"We put our complete trust in God, that no matter what... the future will be brighter"* (P8FMHS-int-SS), and *"every situation is God's will, including bad ones and we cannot oppose Gods will"* (P2FMPR-fg1-NW). These comments demonstrated that religion and utmost optimism were material to how internal stakeholders conceived the suffering and smiling culture - relative to the Nigerian nation brand. Comparable views were projected by a publication (November 2017) on this notion of 'suffering and smiling' in the Nigerian context by a NW internal stakeholder. The account considered:

> *"In his song, "Suffering and Smiling," Fela* [famous '70s and 80's Nigerian musician] *quotes religious leaders enjoying themselves, while the masses continuously suffer in cramped spaces while paying homage and acting like sheep to religious leaders by doing their every bidding. Nigerians are on record as being some of the happiest people in the world, and suffering and smiling continues to be the mantra. According to a report by the World Economic Forum, the country is plagued by depressing economic statistics. 'Managing'* [coping] *is the watchword for the average Nigerian who continues to shoulder the effects of corruption in their daily lives"* (Source: Abdulkareem 2017).

This perspective not only demonstrated the conceptualisation of this recurring theme, as it pertains to guiding Nigerians to make sense of their daily lives and realities but also highlighted its corruption-enabling prerogative.

Nevertheless, a minority of internal stakeholders considered the idea of this theme 'suffering and smiling' as a good attribute central to the Nigerian nation brand. For example, one SS internal stakeholder talking about their perception of suffering and smiling in the Nigerian context, said:

> "*Although many people in Nigeria, you know, deserve a more decent life in this nation... [but] even without that, you can see that people are just willing to carry on suffering and smiling...and that is a huge blessing - in many other nations, there would be far more VIOLENCE, with the way things have been going on here* [Nigeria]" (P27FMPR-int-SS).

Owing to this internal stakeholder perspective, *"a less violent"* [lesser amount of violence] (P5FMHS-fg1-NC) setting is sustained in Nigeria as a result of the institutional rationalisation of 'suffering and smiling'. In summary, it has been shown from this sub-theme of 'suffering and smiling' that the internal stakeholder's adoption of an optimistic, positive and aspirational mindset is a coping mechanism but also one that endorses hardship, the leniency of corruption and indulgence of substandard administrations in the Nigerian context. Therefore, the third and final overarching theme recounting Nigeria's nation brand identity is presented next.

5.4.3 ETHNO-TRIBAL INTERCOMMUNICATIONS

So far, this chapter has argued that the Nigerian nation brand identity can be considered under two overarching themes. First, it constitutes a strategy of 'inferior leadership' that endorses a specific culture of corruption and non-accountability principles. Second is the outcome of institutionalised rationalisation, which prevails over the stability of a 'suffering and smiling' culture. In addition, the analysis also found that the attention paid to the degree of mutual communication between ethnicities and tribes in Nigeria; had a profound bearing on the nation brand identity of Nigeria. Hence the third overarching theme to emanate from Nigeria's nation brand identity analysis was 'ethno-tribal' intercommunications. Under this overarching theme were two sub-themes: i) cultural diversity and exclusion and ii) toxic tribalism. These themes expressed the internal stakeholder's perceptions of critical factors that severely influenced Nigeria's politics, nationalism and value decadence in Nigeria. They are elaborated on below.

5.4.3.1 Cultural Diversity and Exclusion

For participants who constituted internal stakeholders from the six geopolitical zones within Nigeria (SE, SS, SW, NE, NW, NC), the majority acknowledged that cultural diversity and exclusion was predominant in their understanding of Nigeria's nation brand identity. Hence is the first sub-theme regarding the overarching theme of 'ethno-tribal intercommunications' to be narrated. This subtheme expressed internal stakeholders' views concerning associations of cultural-ethnic differences and marginalisation in Nigeria. Several internal stakeholders recalled experiencing marginalisation in connection with their ethnicity or tribe, particularly in the educational sector. For example, one SE internal stakeholder considered: "*In the* [Nigerian] *education system! in a public school! - IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY! - Unilag* [the university of Lagos in the southwest-SW of Nigeria], *I had very good grades but was denied admission BECAUSE I AM NOT YORUBA* [one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria]*"* (P4FMPR-int-SE). Another NC internal stakeholder - talking about college admissions in a state (province) they inhabited but not ethnically from, stated: "*A state we've lived* [in] *all our LIVES…my children CAN'T get into school* [university] *there"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC). These internal stakeholder comments illustrated that their preferred university admission within Nigeria was refused based on their Nigerian ethnicity. Comparable views were projected by other internal stakeholders from the SE and SS talking about their desired brand identity for the Nigerian nation brand, considered: "*Let me say ADMISSIONS* [university]*, for example, would not be based on that - 90% WILL BE from one tribe, 10% WILL BE LEFT FOR OTHER TRIBES"* (P2FMHS-int-SS), "*[Integrative university admissions] that will doubtlessly be a clear indication of Nigeria's cultural assimilation - TO ME"* (P1FMPR-int-SE). These perspectives indicated that university admissions in Nigeria are based on systems that consider people from particular ethnic groups and *"bypass"* (P7FMPR-fg2-NE) others.

In the same way, a number of internal stakeholders from the NE and SS - in their account of the events surrounding what they would reform about Nigeria's nation brand; acknowledged issues of "*Interculturalism* (P27FMPR-int-SS), *"Cohesion"* (P1FMAR-fg2-SS), and *"Oneness"* (P15FMPR-int-NE), in Nigeria. For example, one SE internal stakeholder suggested, when asked: Q: *"Imagine you were appointed by the secretary-general of the United Nations, to reform what you liked the least about Nigeria's national character, from an insider's perspective; what would you explore?"*

"FIRST THINGS FIRST, is for people [Nigerian public] to start seeing themselves as ONE and a COHESIVE body. And then like most other countries THAT ARE ONE, like the United States, where people don't consider themselves as TEXANS, they don't consider themselves as NEWYORKANS, but they are AMERICANS FIRST, and they move around and integrate like ONE; and same for Britain, and even Africa - some other African countries don't look at themselves differently [like Nigeria]" (P5FMPR-int-SE).*

These comments indicated that *"ethnic solidarity"* (P19FMAR-int-NC) and inclusiveness in Nigeria were, in the present circumstances - not encouraged. This point also came up in discussions about conceiving a Nigerian nation brand amongst internal stakeholders from the SE, SW and NC. A number of internal stakeholders firmly opposed the idea of a homogeneous view of a Nigerian nation brand during data collection, as highlighted in table 13. It was argued,

Table 13: Nigeria Nation Brand - Diversity and Exclusion Identity

Quote	Participant
"I think Nigeria does not have one [corporate-nation brand] *personality... it's a very separate* [divided] *country, very separate* [divided]*."*	P8FMPR-fg2-NC
"There is no individual Nigeria in my book [opinion]*; I don't think there is."*	P10FMAR-int-NE
"National character? [the character of] *where the tribe is FROM - maybe - but not national."*	P1FMAR-fg1-SW
"Cultural character...you [interviewer] *mean to say? because northerners have a certain characteristic, the south has a certain characteristic; the southeast has another one, south-west has another one, each one is very different and does not care much about what the other is doing."*	P18FMHS-int-SE
"There is no uniform Nigeria character or anything uniform about Nigeria... IT'S NOT JUST THERE"	P25FMPR-int-NC

These comments demonstrated a sense amongst internal stakeholders that the heterogeneity of Nigeria's cultural heritage - was conceived as measures of detachment and *"separation"* (P19FMAR-int-NC).

Congruently, concerns raised about the capability of Nigeria to successfully and *"conscientiously carry on"* [steward] (P4FMPR-fg1-SE) its diverse ethnic groups and regions reiterated this theme. For example, a SS internal stakeholder argued:

> *"As a country...we have over 200 plus tribes, and the system we are running; IT IS JUST IMPOSSIBLE, it has been impossible to carry the 200 tribes along. So, you find it is a problem here in the civil service, in organisations where there has to be controversy and partiality* [ethnic marginalisation] *because you can't just carry everybody along, IT'S JUST IMPOSSIBLE"* (P2FMHS-int-SS).

This perspective deemed it inevitable to exclude some Nigerian ethnicities and tribes in domestic affairs due to their numerosity. This contentious issue was also explored by another SW internal stakeholder who thought:

> *"*[Ethnic] *diversity is a multiple, MULTIPLE problem. That is one of the FUNDAMENTALS of Nigeria's problem, and honestly also if you look at; that's one of the fundamentals of Africa, nearly all countries, the more diversity they have in terms of ethnicity; The more confused they are, the more trouble they have, and no other country give more* [better] *example than NIGERIA AND CONGO, they just can't achieve any unity unless...people MUST recognise...that every tribe has a right, they have a right to exist and be included in the governmental dialogue, WHICH IS HARDLY THE CASE and also DIFFICULT to pull through"* (P9FMAR-int-SW).

This perspective considered the necessity and strain involved in a national agenda to - integrate a sizably diverse group of ethnicities and tribes in Nigeria. This subject was also particularly prominent in the focus group regarding Nigeria's independence and ethnic challenges. As a SE and NC internal stakeholder put it: "*Since Nigeria's independence, we have never achieved any acceptance among ourselves*" (P4FMPR-fg2-SE), "*things have been falling apart in Nigeria post-independence*" (P5FMHS-fg1-NC), when probed about, Q: "*why do you think this is the case?*" participants were unanimous in the view that "*it's ehm largely because of sectional* [ethnic] *interests and sidelining* [exclusion]" (P7FMPR-fg2-NE). Although a few counterarguments ensued, which were on "*religious interests*" (P3FMHS-fg1-SS) *and "political evolutions"* (P6FMAR-fg2-NW). However, in all cases, internal stakeholders reported that the Nigerian nation brand lacked mutual collaboration and acceptance between its ethnicities and tribes.

5.4.3.2 Toxic Tribalism

The second and final sub-theme to be presented from the over-arching theme of ethno-tribal intercommunications and this chapter is - 'toxic tribalism'. This sub-

theme conveyed the views of internal stakeholders regarding the reality of unhealthy and destructive competition as it concerns the variety of ethnicities and tribes in Nigeria. It was suggested (see table 14),

Table 14: Nigeria Nation Brand - Toxic Tribalism Identity

Quote	Participant
"when there is any kind of ehm misunderstanding across the tribal lines, you see that each person is ready to kill the other"	P8FMPR-fg2-NC
"most Nigerians think of themselves, their family and tribe alone, even if the next community [tribe] *is dying or wasting away, it's not a problem* [no concerns].*"*	P27FMPR-int-SS
"it's always a we [inborn tribe] *against them* [other tribes] *orientation here* [Nigeria].*"*	P3FMHS-fg1-SS
"tribalism is...deeply destructive and threatening us here [Nigeria]	P6FMPR-int-SE
"tribalism in Nigeria is now more divisive than beneficial; it used to be about relationships [common ancestry] *and looking out for each other BUT NOT ANYMORE."*	P20FMHS-int-NC
"[in Nigeria] *tribalism moved from - feelings of having a common identity - to hindering the thinking for national development."*	P12FMPR-int-SW
"Tribal loyalism is the source of our many woes in Nigeria [and] *it doesn't have to be that way."*	P17FMAR-int-NW

These views not only highlighted how the Nigerian nation brand is conceived through *"unpleasant tribalism"* (P21FMPR-int-NE) by internal stakeholders but also raised concerns about the impact of tribalism on Nigeria's national development. This point was explored in reverse by other internal stakeholders from the SS and SW, talking about the Nigerian national football team. Some internal stakeholders from the SS and SW felt that "*As it concerns Nigeria...when a Nigerian team* [football] *is playing, the whole country comes together* [overlooking tribe]...*that's the ONE occasion*" (P9FMAR-int-SW). "*The ONLY thing that gives us JOY* [no tribal conflict] *along the length and breadth of Nigeria is FOOTBALL...whenever super eagles* [Nigeria's men's national football team] *are playing or any of the national teams, the whole country comes together* [*waves tribe aside*]*"* (P3FMPR-fg2-SS). Whilst other internal stakeholders from the SE considered, *"The quota system* [favouring tribal groups] *is a key issue that is affecting every part of the country - EXCEPT IN FOOTBALL, where they don't mind if the WHOLE PLAYERS in a team, can come from ONE REGION OR TRIBE"* (P6FMPR-int-SE) and *"*[in Nigeria] *there is unity* [tribal unity] *in football - ONLY in football"* (P4FMPR-fg1). These comments stressed that football

sports in Nigeria were the only national situations individuals had no objection to setting aside ethnic-tribal differences - to achieve victory.

Internal stakeholders raised a number of other vital issues to resonate with this point of unhealthy tribalism across the data. The most prominent of which was *"perpetual preference for incompetence over competence"* (P23FMAR-int-NC) in the Nigerian public sector; as a result of *"tribal vested interests"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC). Talking about this issue, one SW internal stakeholder argued:

> *"Here* [workplace - health services ministry] *promotions...are not always on merit* [worthiness]*, the appraisal system is not merit-based...tribal issues* [conflicts] *control* [promotions] *in Nigeria, ...if there are ten positions available...top management positions, you can't just say let me pick* [nominate] *all these 10* [people] *based on who can deliver* [competence]*. Every region has his own quota; you have to give them* [managerial positions],*...NO MATTER who is there, WHETHER HE KNOWS ANYTHING TO CONTRIBUTE OR NOT; you have to share the quota and MAKE SURE THEY GET THE POSITION IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR ABILITIES"* (P3FMHS-int-SW).

These remarks demonstrated that leadership and decision-making positions in their respective ministry were appointed based only on candidate ethnicity and not their abilities.

Additionally, concerns were also expressed about *"reinforced tribalism"* (P23FMAR-int-NC) in Nigeria, stirred as a result of *"generational* [family] *refuelling"* (P4FMPR-int-SE) and *"tribe-inclined leaders"* (P20FMHS-int-NC) whose opinions and contributions were predominantly tribal. A publication by a SW internal stakeholder expressing these concerns shared similar views. The publication considered:

> *"In Nigeria today, tribalism has been elevated to dominate national discourse, controls how people think and talk, and determines what they oppose or support. It is promoted by the political elites, embraced by the young and the old, passed from generation to generation, and even has base in the* [Nigerian] *constitution. This explains the assumption that conflicts in Nigeria is motivated by ethnic competition. Nigerians must ask, 'How did we get here, what and who are responsible? Why are other countries (India, Indonesia, Brazil, the United States, Switzerland, Belgium, China, etc.) which are as diverse as Nigeria not half as obsessed with their diversity? The*

ethnic diversity of Nigeria has more or less been a threat, rather than a source of national pride and development, as countries above have experienced" (Source: Adeyanju 2014).

This view established the idea and threats of *"encouraging 'toxicity' to tribalism by higher forces in the Nigerian society"* (P4FMPR-fg2-SE). A small number of those interviewed shared comparable views by suggesting an implicit stimulus to prioritise ethnic and/or cultural interests above national interests in their professions. For example, one NE and NC internal stakeholder commented: *"Here* [workplace] *considering* [for opportunities] *where people come from within Nigeria is more important in my role as…"* (P21FMPR-int), "[it matters more] *whether someone is Igbo or Yoruba or Hausa* [different ethnic groups in Nigeria]…*and I don't want to lose my job, so I just follow the unwritten rules from the top"* (P13FMPR-int-SW).

However, despite the majority of internal stakeholders revealing the realities of tribalism in Nigeria in relation to *"inter-tribal rivalry"* (P1FMPR-int-SE) and *"hostility"* (P17FMAR-int-NW). A small number of participants pointed out that - the toxic peculiarity of tribalism in Nigeria was *"less pronounced"* (P2FMHS-int-SS) in the *"work environment and between work colleagues"* (P8FMPR-fg2-NC) in comparison to the nation, taken as a whole. For instance, a NW internal stakeholder reported:

> *"In the office environment in Nigeria, you find out that all these tribalism and all the hatred in the country, you find that it is - THE BROTHERHOOD WITHIN THE OFFICE space…A NUCLEAR OFFICE SPACE is always VERY PRONOUNCED than the ENTIRETY OF NIGERIA, the way it is pronounced - what I'm trying to say is that we have that confined spirit of brotherhood, within sections in the office compared to the country as a group* [nationwide]*"* (P24FMPR-int-NW).

This perspective suggested that the immediacy for *"malicious"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SW) tribalism in the office environment was less than that of the Nigerian society. This point was shared by another SW internal stakeholder who mentioned when asked, Q: *"If you were to think about how Nigeria's heritage is manifested through its people, what common traits will come to your mind?"*

> *"It will be tribalism, but funny enough when you are at work, you can interact more easily with people of different tribes, and people interact very well, but when you are outside that place* [office]*, it becomes a different ball game, but at the same time the tribalism outside* [society] *still influences what happens within the office somehow, but it's NOT AS BAD within the organisation, at work"* (P13FMAR-int-SW).

Markedly, for a minority of internal stakeholders, from the NC and SS, the idea of ardent tribalism in Nigeria was regarded as a *"blessing"* [protection] (P25FMPR-int-NC) necessary to cater for marginal tribes, which could be easily overlooked. For example, one NC and NE internal stakeholder considered: *"I've always thought it's the bigger* [more populated] *tribes that have the issue* [of tribalism] *here* [Nigeria]*, but those kinds of problems are good in this country* (P5FMHS-fg2-NC), *"to be honest, I won't say I don't like tribal disputes* [in Nigeria] *or hope they stop because they keep my own little tribe relevant"* (P10FMAR-int-NE). These views considered the issue of tribalism in Nigeria as encouraging and as a resource for relevance.

In conclusion, some internal stakeholders alluded to the notion of *"decentralisation of power* [political-government]*"* (P1FMAR-fg1-SW) in the Nigerian government to reiterate this theme. As one SE internal stakeholder argued:

> *"The hatred and malice* [in Nigeria] *are coming from the social structure… there is so much CENTRALISATION OF POWER at THE FEDERAL LEVEL, the concentration of power at the federal level where indeed the states should be seen to be running some of their issues. It will help to improve the ONENESS and then with that little bit of decentralisation; people will now start realising the value of others and then ehm try to integrate, rather than been extremely combative and oppositional as we* [Nigerians] *are now"* (P4FMPR-int-SE)

These comments illustrate how the internal stakeholder feels the centralisation of power at the federal level in Nigeria creates value decadence and the issue of different tribes not appreciating or *"recognising"* (P5FMHS-fg1-NC) the significance and *"contributions"* (P1FMAR-fg2-SS) of each other - resulting in more *"malicious"* (P21FMPR-int-NE) tribalism. In essence, this sub-theme has described that the majority of internal stakeholders believed the Nigerian nation brand could better balance and *"negotiate"* (P13FMPR-int-SW); the distribution and management of its resources. Across its ethnicity and tribes for considerable integration and harmony.

5.5. <u>SUMMARY</u>

In this chapter, this thesis presented the findings generated from phase one of this research. The emphasis was on - exploring the brand personality and identity of Nigeria's nation brand from the perspectives of internal stakeholders. Twenty-seven in-depth interviews and two focus group discussions were conducted with civil service employees in the ministries identified from three leading industries in Nigeria's public sector. The interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed by the researcher. Subsequently, the emerged over-arching themes identified for Nigeria's nation brand personality were - submission as the norm, impact triviality and some positive attributes. In addition, the overarching themes identified for Nigeria's nation brand identity were: inferior leadership, institutionalised rationalisation and ethno-tribal intercommunications. The following chapter will present the findings from phase two of the research and will be succeeded by discussing the results.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS - EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS (IMAGE-REPUTATION) OBJECTIVE #3

The previous chapter presented findings for phase one of this study, which investigated Nigeria's nation brand personality and identity from the perspectives of internal stakeholders. This chapter presents the results generated from phase two of the study, focused on developing a greater understanding of Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation from expatriates' perspectives. Table 15 below illustrates an example of codification used for citing this study's in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Table 15: Example of Nomenclature used for Citing External Stakeholders.

Code	External Stakeholder
P1-int-OG	Participant one, an individual semi-structured interview from the oil and gas industry/sector
P1-fg2-SVC	Participant one, focus group number two from the service industry/sector
P21-int-SVC	Participant twenty-one, an individual semi-structured interview from the service industry/sector

The following section briefly reiterates the conceptual background of nation brand image-reputation. The emerged themes are presented next.

6.1.   Nation Brand Image and Reputation

As cited in the conceptual background chapter, nation brand image-reputation is concerned with the perceptions of different audiences external to the nation brand. A nation's brand image-reputation also results from the interpretations and meanings external audiences ascribe to the identity cues presented by the nation's brand. Therefore, this thesis explored external stakeholders' perceptions, thoughts, and feelings towards the Nigerian nation brand to answer the third research objective. The results obtained from the analytical procedure are described next through the emerged themes.

6.2.   Emerged Themes

This section presents the emerging findings, which were the outcome of the inductive analysis conducted on the data corpus. These results were based on the rigorous cross-examination of the external stakeholder data and the account of significant contextual themes that emerged from the data regarding Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation. The overarching themes included: - (1) 'submission' as the norm, (2) unsustainability culture, (3) inferior leadership, (4) leadership communications, (5) cross-cultural mismanagement and (6) positive attributes. These six overarching themes collectively represent how external stakeholders construct and understand their experiences of the Nigerian nation brand. They are presented next with their sub-themes: (i) Predator-prey culture, (ii) complexity, (iii) self-destructive, (iv) short-termism, (v) omnipresent corruption, (vi) impunity, (vii) cultural diversity and insensitivity, (viii) ethnic-tribal loyalty.

6.2.1.   'SUBMISSION' AS THE NORM

The first overarching theme to be presented from external stakeholders' perspectives concerning Nigeria's nation brand is 'submission' as a norm. This theme expressed the external stakeholder's interpretations of the Nigerian nations' brand identity regarding an impulse for constraint and yielding to authoritarian beliefs. Two sub-themes gave rise to this overarching theme: 'predator-prey culture' and 'complexity'. These themes were part of the broader interpretations and meanings external stakeholders attributed to the identity cues presented by Nigeria's nation brand. Collectively, these themes contribute to shaping the Nigerian nation brand image-reputation from external stakeholders' perspectives. The following section presents them in a more detailed account.

6.2.1.1 'Predator-prey' Culture

Predator-prey culture is the first sub-theme to be explained under the overarching theme of submission as the 'norm'. This theme highlights the interpretations of external stakeholders regarding the effect of an exploitative authoritarian culture in Nigeria. As an illustration, a number of external stakeholders considered Nigeria a *"Type A predatory society"* (P3-fg1-OG). A common view was that purposive acts of *"curtailments"* (P11-int-OG) and *"unfair privileges"* (P10-int-SVC) were a core driver of the Nigerian nation brand. Also, the word *"DELIBERATE"* reoccurred throughout the data as regards several external stakeholder views of poor, *"depraved"* (P1-int-

OG), *"social conditions"* (P16-fg1-OG) and *"civic environments"* (P3-int-SVC) within Nigeria. For example, some external stakeholders from the oil and gas industry said: *"In this system* [Nigeria]*, things can be easier"* (P6-fg1-OG) *"people's lives can be BETTER, but they are deliberately not allowed to be"* (P18-int-OG). According to another external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry:

> *"There is an agenda, it's DELIBERATE - to keep people ignorant, you are a country that has 46% of illiterate people, and probably you have more than 65% of functionally illiterate people. So, they know how to read, but they don't understand what they are reading, so IGNORANCE is a way of manipulation in Nigeria"* (P2-int-OG).

This perspective considered that the *"sorry quality"* (P16-int-SVC) of functional literacy and knowledge exchange in Nigeria was a strategic means for manipulation and exploitation. This point was shared by other external stakeholders from the service industry who also felt that: *"INFORMATION...Nigerians do not have information, and I see it almost as a deliberate thing* [from the influential's] (P4-fg2-SVC), *"they* [Nigerian public] *need information, you know - quality information...and of course, information generates power, so information will make it difficult for those in power* [dominants, big man] *to continue with STATUS QUO"* (P19-int-SVC). In another case, an external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry, talking about utilising *"hunger as an instrument"* (P4-fg2-OG) for unfair treatment in Nigeria, stated:

> *"HUNGER is used deliberately here* [Nigeria]*..., a lot of people in Nigeria are HUNGRY, so if you throw them any kind of help... they will be happy and worship* [be submissive to] *you* [predator]*; so you see this program that they give* [incentivise] *people 10000, 5000 Naira* [Nigerian currency - the equivalent of £20 and £10 respectively]*, that's not gonna* [going to] *solve their problem, that's just a way TO CALM PEOPLE DOWN* [exploit their vulnerabilities]*"* (P16-int-SVC).

This perspective suggested that the *"more prevalent issue of lack of food security"* (P12-int-OG) and *"state of poverty"* (P21-int-SVC) in Nigeria - was intended to impose constraints and exploit vulnerabilities as required.

Furthermore, a number of external stakeholders from the service industry alluded to the notion of widespread *"engrossment with extortion"* (P17-int-SVC),

"embezzlement" (P13-int-SVC) and *"no remorse corruption"* (P3-int-SVC) in Nigeria - to reiterate this theme. It was reported that; Nigeria encountered many problems of economic underdevelopment as a result of characteristic *"money-grubbing ways"* (P2-fg1-SVC) and *"lack of empathy for others"* (P9-int-OG). As the comments below illustrate:

> *"Lack of empathy is everywhere* [Nigeria]*, the way people treat each other, don't care about each other, treating each other as OBJECTS, not caring about the wellbeing of others or how the decisions they make will affect others....*[Influentials; political actors] *stealing money that is meant for the greater good OF EVERYONE ELSE to enrich personal pockets...those type of things are cruel – wicked and* [a] *lack of empathy"* (P4-fg2-SVC).

These comments suggested that Nigeria's current attitude to 'authority' corruption was marked by the inability to empathise with co-citizens. Another external stakeholder echoed this view; when asked Q: *"what do you like the least about Nigeria's national character?"* - stated: "*the dog eats dog thing* [mentality]*, you know the lack of empathy towards others"* (P10-int-SVC). And another external stakeholder reiterated, *"taking bribe that will affect the outcome of things, THAT WILL AFFECT OTHERS when the bribe enriches only yourself at the peril of others, that is lack of empathy for others"* (P3-int-SVC). This view considered that *"conscienceless buy offs* [bribes]*"* (P15-int-OG) for *"own advantage"* (P1-int-OG) was typical of the Nigerian nation brand and characteristic of a lack of national compassion and empathy.

This idea of a destructive *"self-interest"* (P4-int-OG) also came up, for example, in discussions of the general business climate in Nigeria amongst external stakeholders from the service industry. Some negative comments about persistent "*corporate exploitations"* (P1-fg2-SVC) embroiled in conducting businesses in Nigeria was widespread. The projective technique exercise helped to uncover this substantial commercial perspective. As one external stakeholder said - when asked: Q: *"If you were to describe Nigeria as an animal, what kind of animal would it be?", "A predator kind of animal, like a lion or a shark...because a predator just goes out there to TAKE, TAKE, TAKE and cares about nothing else - in business"* (P18-int-OG). And another external stakeholder argued, *"A SHARK...I have very good friends here in Nigeria, but my experience with the general business climate is ehm VERY self-centred and ehm and VERY self-focused and without REGARD OFTEN for impact on others, and that is why I say A SHARK* [predator animal]*"* (P2-int-OG). According to one external stakeholder, *"the business climate* [in Nigeria] *is self-*

centred, but the people [Nigerian public] *are not"* (P5-fg2-SVC). These perspectives described their experience with a predatory business climate in Nigeria. Whereas, for a minority of external stakeholders from the oil and gas industry, there was a correlation between the 'perceived' predatory business climate in Nigeria and the kind of foreign direct investment Nigeria had been able to attract. For example, one external stakeholder commented - when asked: Q: *"if you were to think about the message Nigeria consistently presents to the rest of the world about itself, what would you say they were?", "For me, Nigeria's pictures* [presents] *to the world all the time, that it is not a place to be believed, TAKEN SERIOUSLY, it's a place that you GO, you see how much money you can make* [do business for a brief period] *AND GO* [leave]*"* (P11-int-OG). And another argued: *"you* [foreign-owned enterprises] *come here mainly to do CHARITY…. or as a place to exploit, taking advantage of the oil* [industry]*, because what* [do] *they* [Nigeria] *have to offer other than oil?...they have the population BUT SO WHAT?* (P13-int-SVC). These comments recapped the notion of a predatory-exploitative perspective of the Nigerian nation brand from an enterprise - external perspective.

Identically, from a national leadership viewpoint, the idea of this theme resurfaced throughout the focus group dataset. In their accounts of the events surrounding politics and governance in Nigeria, a number of external stakeholder concerns regarding Nigeria's governmental institution - iterated a negative exploitative and abusive understanding of the Nigerian nation brand. As the comments highlighted in Table 16 illustrate.

Table 16: Nigeria Nation Brand - Predatory Leadership.

Quote	Participant
"In terms of the politics [in Nigeria], *people* [influential; political elites] *take* [make] *decisions without either thinking it through or without necessarily having the good of the country* [people] *in mind, and therefore it is a decision THAT WORKS FOR THEM* [political elites], *but NOT FOR THE COUNTRY* [the Nigerian public]."	P2-fg1-SVC
"The masses [Nigerian public] *are only poor in this country because the government people* [dominants, political elites] *are rich, the opportunities for the masses are confiscated by the few* [influential; big man], *and there seems to be some pride* [sense of achievement] *in that."*	P6-fg1-OG
"The government don't treat people the way they are supposed to be treated [inhumane treatment], *the government should look after people, for example with the minimum wage of 30000 Naira* [Nigerian currency] *monthly salary* [the equivalent of about £60], *WHAT IS ANYBODY GOING TO DO WITH THAT KIND OF SALARY?, Let's be honest with ourselves, when you have a family to feed, your kids and they go to school, how do you expect somebody with a 50000 naira salary to not be preoccupied with or do all these bad things, so you can see its deliberate!"*	P7-fg2-OG
"[in Nigeria] *There is a lot of disparity between people - the rich and the poor, YES - A LOT, it is a rich country, but the money does not spread to everybody, the government can do better with* [about] *that, BUT THEY DON'T, because they like it this way* [exploitative disparity]."	P4-fg1-SVC
"They [political elites] *can do much better in terms of better education and health* [in Nigeria] *BUT DON'T… so you can take as an example - if your presidents are travelling to the UK, to be treated there!* [undergo medical treatment] *but in terms of hospitals here* [Nigeria], *ELECTRICITY, in terms of WATER, in terms of ROADS, in terms of a lot HERE* [Nigeria] *they DELIBERATELY do nothing."*	P4-fg2-OG
"If you see countries similar to Nigeria, e.g. Indonesia like in the '70s these people, the government, THEY DIVERSIFIED THEIR ECONOMY, INDUSTRY, but in Nigeria the main revenue is oil, and they [influentials; political elites] *keep it that way because that one is easier to steal and exploit."*	P5-fg2-SVC
"The big men [influentials; political elites; leaders/powerful politicians] *- they are part of this WEB and involution that make things intentionally difficult here* [Nigeria]	P1-fg1-OG
"People at the moment are not civilised, but they are uncivilised because there is a LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE and there are NO RULES, the rules keep changing, and the system, [government administration] *IS DELIBERATELY WICKED."*	P16-int-SVC

These comments stressed the notion that political leaders in Nigeria cease to opt for economic progress intentionally for discriminatory powers and disparity in opportunities - to their advantage.

Further to this, some external stakeholders revealed that the Nigerian nation brand; was conceived through predatory *"gender imbalances"* (P3-fg1-OG). As the comments by an external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry illustrate:

> *"The human conditions of womanhood in this country are built on unfairness throughout...There is a lot of gender oppression against women and girls in Nigeria, and the men are delighted at keeping it as* [the] *ballgame* [status quo] *because they benefit. - you can see it widespread in the country, and it's letting the country down greatly...gender issues are is a BIG BIG problem in Nigeria"* (P18-int-OG).

Similar views were shared by another external stakeholder from the service industry in greater detail, who argued,

> *"People in this country need CLEVER EDUCATION, not just education per se* [by definition] *- but education to be liberated and* [be] *more open-minded... is it necessary for the chap who lives in a rural environment* [in Nigeria], *deep rural environment to know about the Napoleonic war?...so sort of information ehm which provides basic skills of life and at the same time deals with issues of morality and GENDER INEQUALITY more importantly... in the north* [of Nigeria]*, for instance, men are making sure women and girls are not enlightened* [educated]*, so they can be financially dependent on them and lose their freedom.... You can see similar forms of this gender cruelty and inequality values cut across the entire nation and surface in different forms, not just in the NORTH* [of Nigeria]*, those kinds of issues need clever education to be addressed"* (P5-int-SVC).

These perspectives expressed concerns regarding the predatory scope of gender inequality in Nigeria and the necessity to address the issue with a progressive and innovative education system. Essentially, the majority of external stakeholders conceived that *"in the modern era"* (P6-fg1-OG) of Nigeria, different forms of submission were occurring, permitting predation to thrive in Nigeria. In summary, this theme has explained that many external stakeholders conceived the Nigerian nation brand as an unequal and intentionally exploitative society – held back by the political elites/state.

6.2.1.2 Complexity

Complexity was the second sub-theme that brought forth the overarching theme of 'submission' as the norm – regarding Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation. There was a sense of certain forceful and authoritative complexity regarding bureaucracy, public affairs and politics in Nigeria from external stakeholder accounts. For example, a number of external stakeholders revealed that their familiarity with *"multiple levels*

of interconnections" (P14-int-OG) involved in different aspects of Nigeria was the reason for their *"lack of confidence"* (P19-int-SVC) in the Nigerian nation brand. As one external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry put it:

> *"WELL, you cannot understand this country* [Nigeria]*..., politics is complex, ethnicity is complex, UNDERSTANDING human interactions is complex, getting around is complex... nothing works...and YET it all works, so that's just SO dubious* [distrustful]*"* (P2-int-OG).

And another stated: *"It's very complex in this place* [Nigeria], *and it just means everything becomes complicated FOR NO REASON* [for some purpose] *- the people become complicated, the system - things are REALLY awkward* [causing inconvenience]*"* (P14-int-OG). These comments highlighted that the Nigerian nation brand's communicative attitude was coerced to be incomprehensible and complicated.

Similar views were shared by a number of external stakeholders from the service industry, who alluded to the notion of *"unpredictability"* (P16-int-SVC) to describe the Nigerian nation brand as it relates to complexity and forceful constraints. Talking about the *"laws of* [service] *operations"* (P3-fg2-SVC) in Nigeria, some external stakeholders echoed: *"It's not always visible, what is happening in this country* [unpredictable circumstances]*"* (P5-int-SVC), *"One typical thing about Nigeria is that the rules are not clear...things change SO FAST* [altering circumstances]*"* (P2-fg1-SVC). And another considered, *"What is the rule today is NO LONGER a rule tomorrow - in Nigeria"* (P6-fg2-SVC). These views suggested that a *"quick change in LAWS"* (P1-fg2-SVC) in Nigeria led to indeterminacy and *"out of options"* [hindered] (P16-int-SVC) circumstances - hence dependency. Whilst comparable views were echoed by other external stakeholders from the oil and gas industry who shared: *"You do a contract today, the contract will be valid until the next month or the next quarter and its no longer valid"* (P7-fg2-OG), *"Before you know it, you can be out of the WATER* [stake], *when it comes to doing business here* [Nigeria] *- because things are changing all the time OUT OF THE BLUE"* [unprepared for] (P22-int-OG). These perspectives considered that unpredictable trade guidelines in Nigeria relegated the possibilities and positions of others. In one case, an external stakeholder revealed:

> *"It's very difficult to deal with a country like Nigeria, so the people* [other external stakeholders] *that start to do business here* [Nigeria] *are the ones looking for huge returns because THE RISK is VERY VERY huge because of the complexity and unpredictability - it's BOGUS* [extremely large]*"* (P6-fg1-OG).

This perspective suggested that - the complexity of Nigeria's work environment deterred some foreign direct investments in the nation. Similar views were shared by another external stakeholder from the service industry who argued:

> *"Nigeria could be on the group of countries that are like Russia, India, China, Brazil - the BRICS, but they are NOT - BECAUSE it is difficult to take Nigeria as a serious partner MAINLY BECAUSE the* [their] *RULES ARE NOT ALWAYS GONNA BE THE SAME, you know… the contracts are not necessarily going to be respected* [causing inconvenience]*"* (P10-int-SVC).

These comments highlighted that the Nigerian nation brand was reckoned with an *"unviable partnership"* (P10-int-SVC) due to its unpredictability and disposition to complexity principles. In summary, this theme has explained that many external stakeholders conceived that the intricacy values of the Nigerian nation brand stimulated 'submission' at different levels.

6.2.2. (UN-) SUSTAINABILITY CULTURE

One more overarching theme external stakeholders conceived of Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation was - 'unsustainability culture.' Several external stakeholders considered the Nigerian nation brand was 'interim needs-driven, at the cost of its sustainable success and development. This perception was conceptualised from discussions with external stakeholders under the sub-themes of self-destructive and short-termism, examined in the following sections.

6.2.2.1 Self-Destructive

As the first subtheme in this section of unsustainability culture (overarching theme), self-destructive describes the perceptions of external stakeholders regarding the Nigerian internal stakeholder's not supporting the development of Nigerian institutions and encouraging dysfunctionality to thrive in Nigeria. Several issues were identified, such as voluntary *"recruitment of INCOMPETENT employees on the*

grounds of a quota" (P1-int-OG), "tribal system" (P14-int-OG), "promoting institutional decay with NEGLIGENCE" (P19-int-SVC), as well as "endorsing ACUTE nepotism"(P6-fg1-OG). In addition, concerns regarding the frequency and extent of "regressive" (P4-fg2-OG) and "counterproductive" (P3-int-SVC) measures tolerable and encouraged in Nigeria; were widespread in the data. For example, one external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry talking about their perception of regressivity in Nigeria reported:

> "I will take you back to an experience I had when I was in Indonesia because it reminds me A LOT of Nigeria...I had one of the very best young geophysicists in the whole company, he was Japanese, HE WAS YOUNG, HE WAS BRILLIANT, could work anywhere in the world. I offered him a promotion above some of his other Japanese that were older and more experienced, he turned it down. He said THAT WILL SHOW DISRESPECT TO MY ELDERS, so he CAN'T DO IT. Nigeria is EXACTLY that [retrogressive], IT'S NOT REALLY ABOUT INCOMPETENCE, Nigeria has great competence, Nigerians are very competent, but they are overridden CONSTANTLY - BECAUSE THE PEOPLE ALLOW IT. It's [Nigeria] regressive in that sense" (P6-int-OG).

This perspective suggested that the Nigerian nation brand offers the opportunity for incompetence to flourish in strategic priorities and duties - detrimental to its progress.

Similar concerns were expressed, regarding the issue of "pointless" (P2-fg2-OG) and "DESERT [unrewarding] EFFORTS" (P7-fg2-OG), serving as core objectives in Nigeria's domestic affairs. According to one external stakeholder from the service industry:

> "People of this country waste HUGE energy...they will go in a direction and chase it as HARD as they can, and ehm very easily they will see it is not working and then go somewhere else and start the whole UNPRODUCTIVE process, ALL OVER AGAIN" (P4-fg1-SVC).

These comments highlighted that the Nigerian nation brand was self-defeating by failing to be purposive and prudent with its functions. Comparable views were shared by another external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry, who stated:

"*In terms of the many problems in Nigeria, you can get to the solution FASTER if you sit, look, study a bit, and then MOVE, but in this country, you would see that they* [key institutions/internal stakeholders] *just gesticulate and ehm spend a lot of energy UNNECESSARILY - where you* [Nigeria] *could have achieved the same thing without so much energy and resources*" (P9-int-OG).

This perspective highlighted that Nigeria's many "ill-considered" (P15-int-OG) and dysfunctional efforts were "reckless" (P6-fg2-SVC) and wasteful to the resolutions of Nigeria's economic and developmental problems. Subsequently, a number of external stakeholder views on *"political bickering"* (P12-int-OG) in Nigeria reiterated this point. A recurrent theme in the interviews was that Nigeria's *"political persons* [politicians] [mostly] *focus on frivolous matters"* (P5-int-SVC), unfavourable to the more developmental and fundamental issues of the Nigerian economy. As the comments in table 17 illustrate:

Table 17: Nigeria Nation Brand - Political Bickering.

Quote	Participant
"*Political bickering is the topmost issue HERE* [Nigeria], *you know INSTEAD OF getting UNITED for A COURSE, many of the politicians in Nigeria and those running the helm of affairs just waste a lot of time and energy on you know personal arguments, religion, tribes and language disputes, that doesn't solve ANY of the issues on the ground* [in Nigeria]."	P12-int-OG
"*I know all the states* [geographic entity] *in Nigeria, but ehm, Borno state. I have been to ALL states; NIGERIA IS NOT LAGOS* [commercial hub of Nigeria]; *people* [internal stakeholders] *say they know Nigeria because they know Lagos; Port Harcourt and Abuja* [the big states/cities] *- in ALL these states I've been to - the story is the same…it's only when there is a DISASTER you see the politicians pretend to care or ask questions, other than that, they are busy MICKEY-MOUSING about* [been futile]."	P16-int-SVC
Here [Nigeria] *before the disaster, they* [politicians] *pay attention to mundane things then after the disaster, you see them pay attention for a short while, then it's back to business as usual of FOCUSING on trivial things, that cannot solve the major underlying problems. THAT'S THE STORY OF NIGERIA."*	P4-int-OG
"*I see how people suffer in Nigeria, I know the conditions they are in, Nigeria needs to do more of prevention…most problems here* [Nigeria] *can be prevented including extreme poverty…but the politicians focus on interim CURE that doesn't solve any problems when you can save and achieve far more by preventing, BUT THEY DON'T FOCUS ON THAT."*	P9-int-OG

These comments suggested that the Nigerian government's *"levity"* (P1-fg1-OG) towards recognising and prioritising graver underlying problems in Nigeria increased the risk of more damaging outcomes. In one publication, an external stakeholder

expressing their views on the handling of counter-terrorism and security by the Nigerian government outlined:

> "*Key Nigerians ripe for bribery are making this* [relating to terrorism and insecurity] *possible. They are aware they are bringing about the destruction of their own nation, they simply don't care. The attitude there* [Nigerian government] *is 'every man for himself.' Another way of describing those currently in power, including and especially officials in counter-terrorism and security in Nigeria, is 'rats abandoning a sinking ship'* "(Source: Duff 2014, Republic Reporters).

This perspective suggested that - the Nigerian nation brand management of its security and terrorism problems were most self-destructive.

Additionally, for a minority of external stakeholders from the service industry, Nigeria's *"laxity"* (P2-fg1-SVC) and indifference to tackle its *"infamous"* (P1-int-OG) reputation proved self-destructive. Talking about this issue, an external stakeholder from the service industry explained:

> "*Nigeria is not helping itself in the sense of tacking its perception of CRIMINALITY, I'll give you a story, I had a friend of mine* [another external stakeholder]...*who was well travelled in Africa and had never been to Nigeria, and he came to LAGOS* [big city in Nigeria] *for the first time...and when we met the first thing he told me saying 'can you imagine I've been close to 48 hours* [in Lagos Nigeria] *and nobody has tried to mug* [rob] *me'. SO his own expectation was that he was going to land* [in Nigeria] *and watching his wallet every time and ehm in 24 hours there will be at least ten attempts to rob him or something like that, and he was almost disappointed that he had not even witnessed ONE ATTEMPT. But somehow Nigeria has got that ehm perception* [of criminality] *on it and has failed to deal with* [it] *it is destroying itself by not tackling that"* (P13-int-SVC).

This perspective indicated that the Nigerian nation brand was self-sabotaging without tackling its infamous reputation. Another external stakeholder from the service industry shared comparable views, talking about their perception of Nigeria before emigrating to Nigeria:

> *"It* [Nigeria] *is against itself* [self-sabotaging] *for ignoring these things* [negative image-reputation]... *for instance, my perception of Nigeria after living in Nigeria is very different because you know you have problems in Nigeria, well everybody* [every nation] *has problems like everywhere in the world - even in New York I know I don't have to go to the street at certain times or even in Paris or London - but the people of Nigeria when you think about all the other places that show more better image than Nigeria, the people of Nigeria are BETTER than THEM. My experience from Nigerians in Nigeria is very positive, but you know the world don't see it THAT WAY, and Nigeria just do nothing about it* [bad image-reputation] (P16-int-SVC).

This perspective considered the Nigerian nation brand was ineffective and inattentive to tackling its infamous reputation, which proved self-destructive. Essentially, several external stakeholders proposed that the Nigerian nation brand can conceivably *"be better committed"* (P7-fg2-OG) to a *"viable"* (P4-int-OG) sustainability-led culture for its development. In summary, this 'self-destructive' sub-theme has detailed the external stakeholder's perceptions of Nigeria's complacent and reckless stance towards its internal affairs and managing its prevailing negative reputation.

6.2.2.2. Short-termism

In common with self-destructive, the majority of external stakeholders believed that the Nigerian nation brand disregarded long-term national goals and aspirations. Hence short-termism as the second sub-theme of unsustainability culture (overarching theme) is reported in this section. According to a number of external stakeholders from the oil and gas sector (see table 18):

Table 18: Nigeria Nation Brand - Short-Termism Precedence.

Quote	Participant
"In Nigeria, I see it [short-term mindset] *everywhere - it is kind of scary actually, I see there is this profound lack of understanding of continuity."*	P8-int-OG
"TOMORROW does not exist in Nigeria's dictionary; it's all about TODAY; I'll solve the problems today because either the regulator is on my back or because my boss is saying so or because you know it's the right thing to do TODAY or because I [Nigeria] *benefit from doing it today."*	P15-int-OG
"Nigeria don't [does not] *think what's going to be the consequence* [of this] *in the future - NOT AT ALL."*	P4-intOG
"People [Nigerian public] *are very narrow-minded, on just trying to solve one point, and they don't understand the wake of that* [after-effect] *for the future."*	P1-fg1-OG
"The government don't relate the consequences of their current actions on the future of Nigeria."	P3-int-SVC
"In [participant country of origin], *there is a long-term focus rather than a short-term one. The same is LACKING HERE* [Nigeria]."	P2-fg2-OG

These views pointed out that the *"idea of continuity* [sustainability] *IS MEANINGLESS"* (P8-int-OG) to the Nigerian nation brand. This point was echoed by another external stakeholder from the service industry in greater detail - when asked Q: *"what do you like the least about Nigeria's national character?"* stated:

> *"What I like the least is this pretending stuff, this idea of I JUST DO IT TO SHOW UP, I'll do it to tell people that I'm doing, but then what's the real return! What's the real benefit? What's the continuation of that? People here* [Nigeria] *don't know what MAINTENANCE means; IMPLEMENTATION means you know what PROJECT means, WHAT PLANNING MEANS. They* [national agendas] *are all done in a rush, just to show that it has been done and ehm what happens later afterwards, people DONT CARE"* (P7-int-SVC).

This perspective suggested that *"wholeness"* (P3-int-SVC) and interrelatedness were overlooked in fulfilling Nigeria's internal affairs and that the Nigerian system was reactive instead of proactive. This proposition was shared by other external stakeholders from the service industry, talking about the Nigerian nation's brand approach to its domestic issues. For example, one external stakeholder said:

> *"Nigeria is like A PUZZLE, but also, a puzzle, IT TAKES TIME,... so you've got this puzzle to do, and you're* [Nigeria] *trying to do it in ehm five minutes* [impatiently], *but this is a big puzzle* [Nigeria], *and the pieces are small* [250+ different ethnic tribes], *and therefore it will take time, you will get there, but it will take time... provided that Nigeria can understand the benefits of investing the time* [long-term]*"* (P10-int-SVC).

These comments stressed that the Nigerian nation brand would benefit from a long-term management outlook. Comparable views were shared by another external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry who argued:

> *"You* [Nigeria] *need an INSPIRED NIGERIA...these guys* [past and current political actors] *they have NO CLUE* [vision] *and therefore are not getting ANYWHERE, and you have an element of democracy that gets into the way of long term planning because there is no long term vision in Nigeria, the vision stops after four years* [tenure for choosing/changing political representatives in Nigeria], *AT BEST"* (P6-fg1-OG).

This view related the condition of administrative irresponsibility and the tenure for electioneering in Nigeria with short-term national intentions and goals.

A number of external stakeholders also alluded to the notion of - Nigeria "*not tapping its huge potentials*" (P3-fg2-SVC) and prospectives to express ideas surrounding this theme of short-termism. As the comments below illustrate:

> *"From MY VIEW and depending on who you talk to, there is a feeling that the future is AFRICA and Africa is equated to NIGERIA because of essentially its size, its population size. And that therefore it is kind of a SLEEPY CONTINENT because - a place with so much potentials like Nigeria - LACKS FORESIGHT...and THEN when that place* [Nigeria] *WAKES UP, then that will have a huge economic impact on the continent as a whole"* (P11-int-OG).

This perspective highlighted that the Nigerian nations' brand lack of sustainability foresight elevated the developmental challenges for the whole African continent. In one case, an external stakeholder from the service industry outlined:

> *"NIGERIA can be a valuable customer to the rest of the world because you* [Nigeria] *need to sort of feed all these people - or as a problem for the rest of the world because - this place will not be able to take care of itself or as a driver of Africa's economic development to now get into a proper future...DEPENDENT ON forward-looking initiatives"* (P17-int-SVC).

Additionally, for a small number of external stakeholders from the service industry, the idea of a short-term disposition - was the reason for a *"vanity* [triviality] *based value-system"* (P5-fg2-SVC) in Nigeria. It was suggested *"vanity metrics...[trivial personal possessions]"* (P5-fg2-SVC) were esteemed to create bonds and relationships in Nigeria; Therefore drove the core value-system of the Nigerian nation brand. For example, some external stakeholders argued (see table 19):

Table 19: Nigeria Nation Brand - Vanity Value-System.

Quote	Participant
"Everybody loves using BLING BLING everything here [Nigeria]*, it's all about MONEY, which CAR I* [Nigerians] *use...what position* [status] *I have."*	P21-int-SVC
"It's all about image [exterior-impression] *in Nigeria, and people here* [Nigeria] *WORK TO GET THAT IMAGE because that is what people* [Nigerian public] *WILL ADMIRE and be fond of"*	P5-fg2-SVC
"He [Nigerian public] *doesn't care if he doesn't have the money* [prospects] *FOR TOMORROW...but if he's driving a FANTASTIC CAR TODAY, the majority of the people* [Nigerian public] *will be happy with that."*	P6-fg2-SVC
"Here [Nigeria] *it doesn't matter if you're* [Nigerian public] *doing the job or not you just form you did, you say beautiful words, no one questions about THE CONTENT...THE SIGNIFICANCE, THE VALUE."*	P16-int-SVC

Inherently, these comments pointed out that the Nigerian nation brand was more focused on short-term impression management than desirable results for a sustainable future. In essence, this section has presented the perception of Nigeria's nation brand under the overarching theme of unsustainability culture, strengthened by the self-destructive and short-termism dispositions. The following section will portray the third overarching theme – inferior leadership.

6.2.3. INFERIOR LEADERSHIP

Considerably, inferior leadership turned out to be a significant factor in shaping the nation brand image-reputation of Nigeria. Rationally, the purpose of leadership is to

lead or manage a system of people. In the context of this research, also a 'nation'. However, external stakeholders interpreted the leadership of Nigeria's nation brand as mostly inferior and lacking a comprehensive understanding of what leadership entails. In the analysis of the data corpus, two sub-themes brought about this overarching theme. These were: 'omnipresent corruption' and 'impunity'. Together these themes formed part of the significant interpretations and meanings external stakeholders ascribed to the Nigerian nation brand.

6.2.3.1 Omnipresent Corruption

The data corpus portrayed external stakeholders' perceptions of widespread encounters and experiences with corruption in Nigeria. Thus, omnipresent corruption emerged as the first sub-theme representing the overarching theme of inferior leadership. External stakeholders' opinions on *"resident corruption"* (P9-int-OG), as *"A BIG PART of Nigeria's"* (P5-fg1-OG) nation brand, were widespread throughout the data. Markedly, several comments about external stakeholders disseminating particular experiences with corruption in Nigeria echoed this point. For example, one external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry revealed:

> *"Where I sit* [Job position] *the amount of FRAUD and the ATTEMPT at fraud and the INGENIOUSITY of those frauds I see in this country* [Nigeria] *ITS ALARMING...a colleague of mine* [fellow expatriate]*, from... and with a thirty years...career and his last job was here with us* [firm] *in Nigeria. And on leaving* [migrating out of Nigeria] *after staying with us* [firm] *for three years, he said that he saw more in three years in Nigeria in terms of FRAUD and CORRUPTION than he has EVER seen in his ENTIRE CAREER...it* [corruption] *is quite disturbing when we talk about our experiences* [to other external stakeholders] (P18-int-OG).

These perspectives not only reflected the profundity of Nigeria's nation brand through *"excessive corruption"* (P3-fg2-SVC) but also an example of unfortunate exports of the Nigerian nation brand. This point was explored by another external stakeholder from the service industry who outlined, *"When I tell all my friends in the Western world, and I'm talking about Europe and I'm talking about America, and I reveal to them the level of corruption, I have experienced, in-person, in this country* [Nigeria]*, THEY ARE SPEECHLESS"* (P7-int-SVC). This view also highlighted the conception and dispersion of Nigeria's nation brand through *"pervasive corruption"* (P1-int-OG).

Whilst a minority of external stakeholders mentioned, corruption in Nigeria, was *"determinative of political frameworks* [conditions]*"* (P3-fg1-OG), all conceived that it was part of the implicit core values of the Nigerian nation brand. For example, one external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector, when asked: Q: *"Can you talk me through the values of your organisation?"* stated:

> *"COMPROMISE that's the only 'values' I recognise in this organisation, we compromise A LOT, maybe because it's needed - LOOK, I'm not here to judge anyone, but that's how I perceive it. Every other 'values' written down are just for framing to put on the wall, they are told to everybody, they are on the walls right now as we speak* [in their office], *but bribery and corruption drive most things here, but they can't put that on the walls, CAN THEY?"* (P1-int-OG).

This perspective highlighted that, inherently, compromise to accommodate bribery and corruption in Nigeria was central to the Nigerian nation brand. Another external stakeholder from the service industry shared comparable views by reporting:

> *"We* [their organisation] *have important values, but I'm a bit cynical about them, in the sense that if you take a survey of 10…in Nigeria and ask them for their values, you will very quickly find a lot of commonality among them* [scripted values]. *Whether now that truly reflects is a DIFFERENT THING ALTOGETHER…because you will find that they* [values] *will all more or less converge into a sort of four or five key themes,…such as that, we are DYNAMIC, WE ARE HONEST, WE ARE TRUSTWORTHY, WE ARE CUSTOMER-FOCUSED… that's why I said I'm a bit cynical, that the values will be that way* [scripted], *but the REALITY is based on bribery and corruption MAINLY"* (P21-int-SVC).

These comments indicated that corruption *"most thoroughly"* (P11-int-OG) guides many services in Nigeria.

Additionally, in the focus group discussions, there was a sense amongst external stakeholders they had become accustomed to and settled into the idea of corruption in Nigeria due to its *"infinite power"* (P6-fg2-SVC). As the comments amongst external stakeholders from the oil and gas and service industry illustrated: *"if you* [prospective external stakeholders] *want to come and do business here* [Nigeria], *you have to be VERY TOUGH AND HEADSTRONG and able to BE PATIENT, to evade corruption"* (P5-fg1-OG), *"Understanding how to not get CAUGHT UP in the*

corruption that is far and wide [in Nigeria] *is disciplinary"* (P6-fg1-OG), *"Doing business without being pulled into the corruption in this country* [Nigeria] *will be the HARDEST THING - ANYONE will ever have to do in their life"* (P3-fg2-SVC). In one case, the external stakeholder reported:

> *"Back home in* [participant country of origin], *if you talk about Nigerians, you'll* [you will] *be talking about people that like quick money, CORRUPT MONEY... all this is published in the newspaper, they* [Nigerians] *are not the only ones, but they like QUICK EASY MONEY IN GENERAL due to the corruption they are CONVERSANT WITH THEIR GOVERNMENT - that only focus on corruption and making quick money from the country"* (P4-fg2-OG).

Fundamentally, numerous external stakeholders believed that the Nigerian nation brand remained a *"heavy corruption warehouse"* (P7-int-SVC), *"put down to leadership"* (P2-fg1-SVC) in Nigeria. Overall, this sub-theme has explained external stakeholders' perceptions of prevalent corruption in Nigeria as it affects all aspects of life and industry – conflated with inferior leadership.

6.2.3.2 Impunity

The second sub-theme of inferior leadership was 'impunity', illustrating external stakeholders' interpretation of Nigeria's nation brand through apparent freedom from illegal and unlawful practices. Many external stakeholders provided varied interpretations of *"non-liability corruption"* (P7-int-OG) and *"overindulgence of misconducts"* (P2-int-OG) as they related to the Nigerian nation brand. Some external stakeholders from the service industry argued that: *"There is SO much INDULGENCE for inappropriate behaviour in Nigeria - even PRAISEWORTHY by many"* (P5-int-SVC), *"People have been so disappointed by Buhari* [current president of Nigeria]*, that he came on an agenda of FIGHTING CORRUPTION, but that has not BEING the case...there is still TOO MUCH LEEWAY* [tolerance]*, for it here* [Nigeria] (P13-int-SVC). While an external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector considered, *"You* [Nigeria] *have to do it* [actions against misconducts] *by example - LAWLESS and CORRUPT behaviour has to be PUNISHED and HAS TO BE SEEN as being punished.... That's what Nigeria has FAILED TO DO and continually fails to do"* (P14-int-OG). These comments highlighted the feeling of *"freedom to carry out lawless and corrupt malpractices"* (P4-fg1-SVC) in Nigeria. This point was echoed by

another external stakeholder from the service sector, talking about what they would reform, about Nigeria's national character - given the chance:

> "The 419 [advance fee scam/cybercrime] *and corruption HAS TO BE CHALLENGED... I feel that there is too much tolerance of it* [419] *and people internally kind of almost BOAST about it that you know BECAUSE it* [419] *requires skill and there is some sort of admiration to that and of corruption,...the criminalisation of corruption is vital since it is highly ENDORSED here* [Nigeria]. (P19-int-SVC).

Additionally, a number of external stakeholders from the oil and gas sector - proposed a disposition of *"unfair penalisation"* (P6-fg1-OG) and *"willful blindness"* (P18-int-OG) ascribed to the Nigerian nation brand leadership. Some felt that *"As we speak now, there are people in the entourage of the elected - head of state* [president] *himself and some of them have even BEEN CORRUPT and convinced of corruption and that has not been dealt with or confronted"* (P2-fg2-OG), *"In Nigeria, there is a feeling of that - for the same CRIME depending on whether you are my friend or my enemy, the punishment IF ANY!, will be different"* (P7-fg2-OG), *"Nigeria is without accountability on a VERY LARGE SCALE and punishment* [*penalisation*], *although SCARCELY ANY are not consistently applied"* (P15-int-OG). These comments pointed to the notion that - susceptibility to penalisation for corruption in Nigeria appeared widely dependent on political influences. Whilst other external stakeholders from the service industry considered: *"What happens in Nigeria is, you* [Nigeria] *are not recognising the bad deeds and having consequences for breaking the rule of law - because no one changes behaviour if the bad deeds have no consequences"* (P17-int-SVC). This perspective demonstrated that there were no repercussions for misdeeds in Nigeria, which in particular *"liberates wrongdoings"* (P6-fg2-SVC).

Similar views were echoed by another external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector, who commented: *"What's missing* [in Nigeria] *is SOMEONE* [leader] *that will ENFORCE the rule of law...not through convincing people but by ENFORCING IT and taking charge from high up* [leadership]. *But you don't have that in Nigeria...hence the problem of pervading bad behaviour* [misconducts]*"* (P1-fg1-OG). In one case, the external stakeholder revealed: *"I see Nigeria as an 'extortion hall pass' because the POLICEMAN EXTORTS MONEY on the road - OPENLY in front of their BOSSES...and people* [Nigerian public] *pay, NO QUESTIONS ASKED"* (P3-fg2-SVC). This view indicated that the Nigerian nation brand was *"petty*

[inconsequential] *with law enforcement, breaking the law"* (P11-int-OG) in Nigeria. Conclusively, the majority of external stakeholders conceived that on the strength of inferior leadership in Nigeria, *"there is very limited example of mismanagements* [corruption] *that has been attacked* [challenged]*"* (P6-fg2-SVC), and another external stakeholder argued:

> *"there exists MANY PEOPLE from old regimes that everybody believed were highly corrupt. NOTHING HAS HAPPENED TO THEM...some left the country; the former minister of petroleum was one of the key ones... there was a bit of noise, but NOTHING has happened to her and EVERYBODY ELSE"* (P8-int-OG).

To summarise, this theme has outlined the predominant perception of inferior leadership in Nigeria through the conviction that penalisation for corruption and other malpractices is non-existent or rare in Nigeria. The fourth overarching theme of leadership communications is next illustrated.

6.2.4. LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS

Leadership communications as a theme depicted how external stakeholders interpreted the Nigerian public's civilisation, and social conduct was influenced negatively by Nigeria's political-cultural elites' behaviour and mode of life. Many external stakeholders conceived that the historical and accumulated impacts of communications emanating from a leadership level in Nigeria were *"supremest"* [of high authority] (P11-int-OG) to the Nigerian nation brand. There was much debate about the Nigerian public *"modelling the behaviour of the elite leaders"* (P5-fg1-OG), as well as Nigeria's leadership *"modus operandi* [way of doing things]*"* (P3-fg2-SVC), being *"symbolic"* (P7-fg2-OG) of the Nigerian nation brand. One external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector argued, *"People don't follow the rule of law in Nigeria because they follow the examples of the politicians and the leaders, RATHER THAN THE RULE"* (P4-fg2-OG). Reflecting on this issue, another external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector stated:

"People [Nigerian public] *see the politicians don't value it* [Law], *and then - THEY* [Nigerian public] *DON'T. I thought in...they* [Nigeria] *were starting to develop and people were starting to obey traffic lights...but then THEY* [Nigerian public] *JUST SEE - NO 'BIG OGA'* [elite leaders and politicians] *obeys the traffic light, no 'big oga' THINKS THAT THE RULES APPLY TO THEM and then that goes down to all of society. And so, people* [Nigerian public] *SAY, they* [elite leaders and politicians] *don't do it* [obey the laws] *why should I* [Nigerian public] *do it!"* (P14-int-OG).

These comments stressed that the Nigerian public - fails to observe the rules of law in Nigeria because *"they see quite clearly* [the] *majority of foremost* [elite] *leaders do not obey the laws"* (P4-fg1-SVC). Similar views were shared by a number of external stakeholders from the service industry. For example, one external stakeholder, commenting on the issue of tribalism in Nigeria, suggested:

"It's [tribalism] *a top-down* [leadership to society] *situational problem...as far as in, the leadership, you* [leaders] *keep respecting those things* [tribalism], *as a way of deploying power and appointing* [electing for opportunities] *people, then that is been implicit* [communications] *as the way of doing things...therefore, why the people below you* [leader] *are not going to change their way of seeing things* [become tribalistic] (P2-int-OG).

This perspective indicated that leaders in Nigeria implicitly reinforce tribalism by deploying power and official appointments on a tribal basis.

Furthermore, there was also a sense amongst a number of external stakeholders that the character of the government and *"CV* [curriculum vitae] *of the political elites"* (P6-fg2-SVC) in Nigeria overshadowed that of the nation as a whole. For example, one external stakeholder from the service sector outlined:

"I came [to Nigeria] *with a negative perception, it was the corrupt government and embezzlement and all that, but it's ehm a lot more POSITIVE... I've lived in many countries, and I've seen that when you come to a country and you have a good perception of that country...over time, that good perception - you start now seeing the things that IRRITATE YOU, so it navigates to a bad perception...but in Nigeria, it was the total opposite of that"* (P1-fg1-SVC).

This external stakeholder indicated how their prior unfavourable perception of Nigeria based on *"government corruption"* (P4-fg2-OG) was countered with a more optimistic one after living in Nigeria - contrary to their previous expatriate experiences. Comparable views were shared by a number of external stakeholders in greater detail, as the comments in table 20 illustrate:

Table 20: Nigerian Nation Brand - Infamous Leadership.

Quote	Participant
"We [including spouse] *did the most of the kind of the negativeness associated with government corruption, and we were not happy* [before coming to Nigeria]*... But people have kind of like related to us WELL, and we've ended up having people that till date have remained our BEST FRIENDS; because apart from the government fraudulence and let-downs, THE PEOPLE ARE VERY OK."*	P3-int-SVC
"My perception of Nigeria became of a POSITIVE one because I got to know the place BETTER, after taking away [discounting] *the corrupt government officials."*	P6-fg1-OG
"For Nigeria, it's [the negative perception] *surprisingly the reverse, I started on the low* [unfavourable]*, because of the you know corruption and extreme poverty which is still an appearance of government corruption and greed...and now it's high* [more favourable]*."*	P18-int-OG
"I think Nigerians are very hard-working people, and if I have to change anything, I will change from the top [government/political elites] *of the country. Because it's like you have two different countries when you look at the people at the top* [top government officials] *and the regular Nigerians* [Nigerian public]*...and unfortunately, it is the people at the top that are seen and remembered."*	P22-int-IG
"What is happening in the country [Nigeria is known for] *is what they* [government] *communicate...today it is the kidnapping of the girls, tomorrow it's something else that has to do with insecurity or another government failure or one corrupt politician or the other; they* [government] *did not develop like a fantastic park where children can play or develop the country; they* [government] *don't try to develop their tourism OR ANYTHING, you know like the way other countries will do...they* [government] *only focus on corrupt practices. So it's really bad and negative - what they are communicating...But again, when you're living in the country, it's a different experience because THE PEOPLE* [Nigerian public] *ARE BETTER THAN THAT"*	P12-int-OG
"In terms of "NATIONAL character, I don't see anything that's positive right now [about Nigeria]*; I do see the people* [Nigerian public] *all right! I think if we are gonna* [going to] *talk about the PEOPLE, it is a different thing...I see a lot of intelligent Nigerians, smart guys, savvy people that they manage to survive despite of...THEY ARE AMAZING YOU KNOW!... the problem is that they see themselves WORKING LIKE CRAZY and they see a lot of people on the TOP* [leaders/politicians] *NOT DOING THAT and getting all the rewards, so this is the ISSUE for many people* [Nigerian public] [they] *simply GET TIRED, and some people join...the POLITICIANS MISBEHAVIOUR AND THIEVERY kind of a NORM in Nigeria."*	P19-int-SVC
"After living here for SO long [5years]*, changed my perception* [of Nigeria]*, it actually gave me THE FACTS about Nigeria which is, a very heroic people* [Nigerian public] *trying to survive DAY IN DAY OUT despite all the challenges you can imagine, from their leader's corruption."*	P2-int-OG

"I know most of the people that I know, who have lived here [Nigeria] *they've thought very highly of Nigeria; it's different when you get away from the bad press and the poor leadership NIGERIA PUTS OUT, it's very different and encouraging."*	P5-int-SVC

These perspectives not only highlighted the conception of Nigeria's nation brand precast and *"moulded by matters of leadership"* (P4-fg2-OG) but also featured the impact of communications that flow from the Nigerian leadership perspective; on the Nigerian nation brand. One external stakeholder from the service industry continued:

> *"They* [external stakeholders] *understand* [about Nigeria's nation brand] *things like corruption, 419* [advance fee scam] *and you know your leader* [current president of Nigeria – Mohammadu Buhari] *goes out* [internationally] *and says we* [Nigerians], *ever are a corrupt people ALL THE TIME; rather than saying what you REALLY ARE, one of the HARDEST working groups of people that are willing to do ANYTHING...But that's not projected. What is projected? the rest of the world sees Nigeria, NOT GOING TO TALK TO A NIGERIAN BECAUSE THEY MAY BE CORRUPT; THEY ARE GOING TO TRY TO SCAM ME* [OUTSIDER] *OVER OR SOMETHING - because you do have some people like that, BUT they also have... THE BEST GEOLOGIST I KNOW ALL OVER THE WORLD IS A NIGERIAN who lives in the US, THE BEST IT PERSON I KNOW IS A NIGERIAN who lives in Thailand now, great doctors worldwide - you have all of it GOOD, but corruption by the leaders OVERSHADOWS ALL OF THAT"* (P3-int-SVC).

This viewpoint not only indicated how the conception of Nigeria's nation brand image and reputation remounted to the issue of leadership corruption but also the idea of Nigeria's leadership - unsuitably communicating adverse notions about the Nigerian nation brand internationally.

Additionally, some external stakeholders from the service sector considered: *"Nigeria in the world, is being known* [identified] *as a country that you have to be very careful* [avoid] *because there are no minimum life* [living] *conditions* [in poverty], *because the LEADERS, have stolen all the money"* (P10-int-SVC), *"In Nigeria, if you observe the leaders, it's just about ME ME ME and ME again, that's all they resound and what do you expect! People* [Nigerian public] *just follow suits in that* [follow those ideals]*"* (P21-int-SVC). While other external stakeholders from the oil and gas industry reported: *"I tried to talk to some of the leaders of the Nation, and there was no real listening, very much selfish approach, and there is no real PATRIOTISM amongst them* [leaders] *like you see in other countries, and that* [lack of patriotism]

just spreads across the whole country [Nigeria] *like wildfire"* (P20-int-OG), *"I would say Nigeria is a country that is blessed with just about everything in the world, to make it one of the top five countries in the world, they have an educated people, people that are ENERGETIC, that want to work, they have resources* [natural]*, they have water, they have agriculture, you* [Nigeria] *have everything except the leaders - that are making everything else LOOK BAD"* (P12-int-OG). Ultimately, as highlighted by these comments, the majority of external stakeholders conceived that the interpretations of Nigeria's nation brand were generally rooted in the *"decadence of* [its] *leaders"* (P1-fg1-OG). In summary, this theme has demonstrated that the Nigerian public's malpractices and behaviour echo the behavioural communications emanating from decisive leaders and politicians in Nigeria. The overarching theme of cross-cultural mismanagement is next described.

6.2.5. CROSS-CULTURAL MISMANAGEMENT

So far, this thesis has argued that the nation brand image-reputation of Nigeria can be considered under four compositions. First, it constitutes a societal norm of 'submission' that elaborates a particular predator-prey and complex culture. Second, the unsustainability culture element which warrants the stability of self-destructive and short-termism principles - counter to future generations. Third, inferior leadership that - endorses corruption and immunity from implications. The fourth part being, leadership behavioural communications that influence the Nigerian public values of malpractices and uncivilization.

Still, the analysis found that the level of tolerance and mismanagement of Nigeria's dynamic, cultural and ethnic background substantially engrossed Nigeria's nation brand's conceptualisation from external stakeholder's perspectives. Hence 'cross-cultural mismanagement' emanated as another overarching theme from external stakeholders' understanding of Nigeria. This theme illustrated that the dealings and sound interactions amongst Nigeria's diverse cultures and tribes were severely discouraged. Two sub-themes gave rise to this overarching theme: (i) cultural diversity and insensitivity and ii) ethnic-tribal loyalty. They elaborated on next.

6.2.5.1 Cultural Diversity and Insensitivity

The external stakeholder's interpretation of the Nigerian nations brand inability to embrace and make the most of its different cultures, customs, and traditions resulted

in the sub-theme of cultural diversity and insensitivity. The majority of external stakeholders perceived that the Nigerian nation brand failed to value and *"actively harmonise"* (P8-int-OG) the *"multiplicity"* (P1-int-OG) and diversity that cuts across its numerous cultures and tribes. According to one external stakeholder from the service industry,

> *"in Nigeria, you have very different groups of people* [tribes] *that really don't want to deal with other people* [tribes]*, they really just want to stay with their tribe and their understanding, and THEIR way THINGS WORK"* (P6-fg2-SVC).

Another external stakeholder from the service industry shared comparable views:

> *"The country is very majorly broken up culturally... you have the northern group which is very different than the southern group, and you have of course the western group which is even different than everybody else, and then you have got south-east, each one has its own character* [culture]*...I can tell you about the different characters of these places because it's very interesting to me, but speaking to many Nigerians...they have no interest whatsoever in places they do not originate* [ancestral place of origin] *from, once they* [ancestry] *are not from there, they don't give a hoot* [care] *about that place."* (P17-int-SVC).

This perspective revealed a sense of disinterest and *"distrust"* (P21-int-SVC) for other people's tribes in Nigeria. In one case, the external stakeholder echoed, *"everybody needs to be ACCEPTING and EAGER of everybody's culture and cultural differences, but this has not been the case here* [Nigeria]*"* (P3-fg1-OG).

Similarly, from a number of external stakeholders' perspectives - discussions about *"Insecurity problems in Nigeria"* (P9-int-OG) because of the distrust and *"dismissal of ethnic-cultural differences"* (P5-fg1-OG) reiterated this theme of cultural diversity and insensitivity. For example, one external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry, talking about the herder-farmer insecurity problems in Nigeria, argued:

> *"Here* [Nigeria] *people talk about Boko-haram* [jihadist terrorist organisation based in north-eastern Nigeria] *as the main problem in this country, THE MAIN PROBLEM IS THE FULANIS* [nomadic tribe in the North of Nigeria], *and it has been FOREVER...the Fulani problem is complicated because, they are unable to get along and respect other ethnic beliefs and customs, they* [the Fulani tribe] *don't believe in private property, they believe that they have the right to go everywhere with their cattle and that's been done for DECADES, so my question is how can people* [Nigerian government] *ENGAGE with those individuals* [Fulani tribe], *try to explain to them that in the current MODERN society, there is something called private property and you SHOULD RESPECT THAT"* (P4-int-OG).

This perspective considered that the herder-farmer conflicts in Nigeria are a consequence of a failure to recognise the differences in cultures and the obligation of the Nigerian government administrators to narrow the gap - amongst the different ethnicities and tribes. This point was echoed by another external stakeholder from the service industry who considered: *"Since the day I arrived here* [Nigeria - 2013], *I've not seen any concrete national effort* [government influence] *that provides the Fulani herds' men with some land, so they can actually do what they have to do in terms of taking care of their cattle. DOING NOTHING DOESN'T HELP because it keeps causing conflicts in communities"* (P3-fg2-SVC). This external stakeholder view considered that the Nigerian nation brand *"taking some sort of action"* (P7-fg2-OG) in light of the distinctiveness of the Fulani tribe in Nigeria, *"potentially will address the community conflicts"* (P15-int-OG).

Additionally, this proposition of cultural diversity and insensitivity was explored in greater detail by a number of external stakeholders, who believed there was this - *"absence of a uniform nationality"* (P2-fg1-SVC) in Nigeria. For example, one external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry explained:

> *"I have, you know, moved all over the world, AND the biggest culture shock I EVER HAD wasn't when I moved to Malaysia, Indonesia or China or Yemen or Saudi or Egypt or Switzerland. It was when I went from Boston to Louisiana, from the North to the South in the US* [America]. *The US is a very different country* [culturally]...*BUT we* [Americans] *have a uniform nationality - BEEN AN AMERICAN, Nigeria doesn't have that AT ALL. Nigeria has never made a uniform nationality within the country...hopefully, eventually, they* [Nigerians] *will get there, but for now, all the arrows*

are pointing in the direction of more diversity and intolerance" (P18-int-OG).

These comments suggested that the ethnic affiliation of different cultures and tribes to establish a uniform nationality was unsupported in Nigeria. This point was shared by another external stakeholder from the service industry - in more depth:

> *"AT TIMES, I'm feeling that I'm MORE PATRIOTIC and optimistic than Nigerians over Nigeria...you see, I'm looking at Nigeria almost as a puzzle* [jigsaw], *and you know a puzzle... if you have a puzzle, you have the various PIECES, but what we* [Nigeria] *have now is random PIECES, so you have - if you imagine my desk being a puzzle* [pointing to different corners and drawing lines across their work desk]*, you will have this corner has been done, this one in the middle, has been done, SO where you stand, you will have no clue of what the entire puzzle looks like, but at some point, as you start to put all the PIECES, suddenly the picture will BECOME VISIBLE, that in THOSE random PIECES EVENTUALLY, you will have a complete image THAT MAKES SENSE. But that is where Nigeria has failed to successfully put those random pieces together to give this IMAGE OF A NIGERIA. Right now, there is NO IMAGE OF A UNIFORM NIGERIA, and NOBODY IS WORKING TOWARDS THAT"* (P10-int-SVC).

This perspective indicated that the awareness and acceptance of Nigeria's cultural diversity and heritage; was *"a long way from being"* (P1-fg2-SVC) explored in Nigeria's interest of nationhood and patriotism. Ultimately, many external stakeholders proposed, *"It's my vision"* (P1-int-OG), *"it's my hope"* (P16-int-SVC), *"it's my dream"* (P5-fg2-SVC) that *"eventually all Nigeria's pieces* [ethnic-tribes] *will join"* (P19-int-SVC) and *"get something - which is more united to be the driver of Africa's development"* (P4-fg2-OG). This sub-theme has described the Nigerian nation brand's presentation of not effectively managing/encouraging its ethnic-cultural diversity or working towards a uniform nationality. The next subtheme under the overarching theme of cross-cultural mismanagement is next explained.

6.2.5.2 Ethnic-Tribal Loyalty

Similar to cultural diversity and insensitivity, the second sub-theme that elaborated the overarching theme of cross-cultural mismanagement was ethnic-tribal loyalty. Despite external stakeholders revealing positive feelings about the Nigerian nation brand *"adeptness"* (P3-fg1-OG) to retain many of its ethno-tribal customs and traditions amid modernity - it was discovered that there was a *"hostile"* (P1-fg1-OG)

level of *"allegiance to the tribe"* (P5-int-SVC) in Nigeria, *"forsaking nationhood"* (P4-fg2-OG). Thus, this sub-theme interpreted the external stakeholder's perception of internal stakeholder's commitment and devotion to their ancestral ethnic-tribal regions solely. External stakeholders concerning this theme - expressed a variety of perspectives. For example, some external stakeholders from the oil and gas sector stated, *"In Nigeria, the tribes, the language and the religion comes first and foremost - AT WHATEVER COST"* (P6-fg2-OG), *"When it comes to Nigeria, I am Hausa first* [a tribe in the North of Nigeria]*, I am Yoruba first* [a tribe in the West of Nigeria]*, I am Igbo first* [a tribe in the East of Nigeria]*, I am a Christian first ehm I am a Muslim first"* (P16-int-OG). These comments suggested that *"at all accounts"* (P7-fg2-OG), there was more commitment to tribes and the religion predominant to the tribe in Nigeria. Whilst other external stakeholders from the service industry argued:

> *"People* [in Nigerian] *come to me, and I ask where are you from, they don't tell me where they were born, they talk about the tribe or the village their parents came from...that's just SO CONTROVERSIAL and I'VE NEVER SEEN THAT IN MY LIFE"* (P13-int-SVC).

This perspective considered that the idea a tribal place of origin was more relevant than 'place of birth' in Nigeria was a *"divisive issue"* (P18-int-OG) *"at odds with"* (P5-fg2-SVC) *"patriotism"* (P2-fg2-OG) and *"national consciousness"* (P12-int-OG), in Nigeria. This point was echoed by another external stakeholder from the service sector who argued:

> *"When you ask someone, where are you from in America! He's gonna* [going to] *say I am from Kentucky - BECAUSE HE WAS BORN THERE, you ask someone in London, they are gonna say I'm from Northern England - BECAUSE HE WAS BORN IN NORTHERN ENGLAND, the fact that his family was probably from Sweden IS IRRELEVANT; HERE!* [Nigeria] *NO - here people are born and live in Lagos* [state in the south-west of Nigeria]*, and they don't say they are from Lagos; they are from Onitsha* [city in the south-east of Nigeria] *WHY IS THAT? Because his father or her mother came from Onitsha. So, YOU* [Nigeria] *DON'T have this kind of belonging AS A NATION; THE ONITSHA FACTOR IS MORE IMPORTANT than the WHOLE NIGERIAN FACTOR"* (P7-int-SVC).

These comments considered that social identification with ancestral – *"tribal place of origin"* (P1-int-OG), rather than *"place of birth"* (P17-int-SVC), or habitation, was *"contentious"* (P4-fg1-SVC) to nationhood in Nigeria.

This proposition of tribal allegiance or *"not putting the country first"* (P13-int-SVC) also came up in discussions of *"entitlement culture"* (P7-fg2-OG) and *"enabling incompetence to thrive in the* [Nigerian] *workplace"* (P1-fg1-OG). A number of external stakeholders perceived that *"Here* [Nigeria] *the menace of tribalism reflects in positions of the private companies and in the public companies because if I* [Nigerian public], *don't help my brother from Ibadan* [city in the south-west of Nigeria] *when I have a POSITION, I am not WELL-PERCEIVED in IBADAN"* (P6-int-OG), *"there is a general consensus that if he* [Nigerian public] *doesn't offer all the contracts to people from his tribe, that he will be badly thought of at home* [tribal place of origin]*...that's the feeling here* [Nigeria]*"* (P16-int-SVC). These perspectives indicated that the idea of loyalty to tribes for acceptance and recognition is *"unhelpful"* (P2-fg1-OG) to *"patriotic sentiments"* (P3-fg1-OG) in Nigeria. In one case, an external stakeholder from the service sector considered:

> *"In Nigeria, it's not about meritocracy, it's about where he* [internal stakeholder] *comes from* [tribal place of origin], *a lot of times TO GET A JOB and that means essential jobs which are the LIFEBLOOD of a nation, THINK ABOUT HEALTHCARE, THINK ABOUT EDUCATION...are not always filled by efficient* [competent] *people that can deliver on the job"* (P5-int-SVC).

Further to this, a number of external stakeholders alluded to the notion of pessimistic inter-nation migration to reiterate this theme of ethnic tribal loyalty. Talking about this issue, some external stakeholders from the service and oil and gas industry reported: (see table 21),

Table 21: Nigeria Nation Brand - Pessimistic Inter-Nation Migration.

Quote	Participant
"I grew up a little south of Boston; I went for my masters in Louisiana and my PHD in Texas, then I went to Malaysia. I mean IN ALL, I never moved back there [Boston], *and when I retire, I will move back to the Northeast because that's where I'm comfortable with the type of people that I'm associating with; But NIGERIANS will ALWAYS ALWAYS go back* [tribal place of origin]."	P8-int-OG
"Most people in Nigeria never LEAVE their comfort zone [tribe]...*they don't want to leave what they are COMFORTABLE WITH, and the very few that leave, have to go back* [tribal place of origin]."	P5-fg1-OG
"If you were from Kaduna [state in north-west Nigeria], *I have some of my co-workers that are up from that area, they still go home* [Kaduna-tribal place of origin], *even though they live here..., they still go up there, because their family heritage is there."*	P11-int-OG
"There is always a type of connection, NO MATTER WHAT, to the ancestral home in Nigeria, and it shouldn't necessarily be encouraged for Nigeria's sake...if you stay in one spot too long, YOUR ENTITY BECOMES THAT, and Nigerians HAVEN'T REALLY EVER moved around the country."	P5-fg2-SVC
"Generations [family] *upon generations have always been in this* [one] *area* [ethic region] *forever, RESENTING EVERYWHERE ELSE."*	P3-fg1-SVC

These comments suggested that inter-nation migration in Nigeria had not been fully explored to benefit nationhood in Nigeria, and internal stakeholders constructed their identity from their ethnic-tribal community. One external stakeholder from the service sector continued: *"It's* [Nigeria] *a very tribalistic country...even when you get down to little things like SECURITY, where you have to worry about if a tribal ruler tells somebody - DO SOMETHING* [bad], *they are going TO DO IT because they have to live in that community* [tribal place of origin] *FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIFE"* (P10-int-SVC). Ultimately, most external stakeholders believed the Nigerian nation brand could be strengthened by comprehending and reducing the gap amongst its different cultures and tribes for Nigeria's efficient functioning and identity. This thesis will now present the final theme of this chapter – 'positive attributes'.

6.2.6. POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

The sixth and final key theme of this chapter is positive attributes. This theme portrays the positive perception external stakeholders expressed regarding their understanding of the Nigerian nation brand. Several external stakeholders provided a diverse range of positive attributes connected with the Nigerian nation brand. For example, Nigeria was regarded as highly successful in preserving its culture and traditions despite embracing modernisation. As the comments in table 22 illustrate:

Quote	Participant
"Nigeria has a REALLY NICE BLEND between being able to retain its customs and traditions with [the] *contemporary world."*	P5-fg2-SVC
"What I like the most about Nigeria is its combination of tradition, and the modern thing, that you will come in the office like you [interviewer] *are now, and you will find somebody dressed in western dress speaking the Queen's English…and you will see the same person in the evening, dressed traditionally; eating traditional* [Nigerian] *food; dancing traditional music."*	P-16-int-OG
"There is a good combo of the modern times and local traditions here [Nigeria]*…and it makes people* [Nigerian public] *RICHER towards been able to successfully combine that sort of mixture."*	P7-fg2-OG
"The arts, culture, the fact that you [Nigeria] *still have your Kings, your Oba's* [traditional rulers in the west of Nigeria] *and the Emirs in the north* [traditional rulers in the North of Nigeria], *they follow their traditions and are PROUD to speak their different local languages and eat their different foods, THAT'S REMARKABLE"*	P22-int-OG
"You just need to attend whether it's a wedding or funeral or naming ceremony…all the key events in life TO APPRECIATE NIGERIA…I once attended a funeral [in Nigeria], *and I attended a two-phase of the funeral…one* [phase] *could have been somewhere in the countryside in England, but the night before it was a totally different ornament, with the people, the arts, I knew THIS WAS AFRICA, and these were the same people, so that's just so amazing, it's really really nice."*	P17-int-SVC
"Sometimes people [foreigners/outsiders] *are struggling because they never know which Nigerian persona they're meeting, whether they are meeting kind of the 21st-century guys with his computer or whatever, or they are meeting the 19th-century guy with his traditional dress, traditional values. And for me, I find that fascinating because I think it's a good mix."*	P9-int-OG

These perspectives suggested that - there was value in the Nigerian nation brand successfully combining its traditionally-established cultures with contemporary lifestyle. Some other external stakeholders talking about their perception of Africa's experience with colonialism shared comparable views. For example, one external stakeholder from the service sector argued:

> *"If you go to East Africa; places like Kenya, Zambia, you will find that people do not have a traditional dress and it's gone as far as they've lost their traditional food, so they eat PEAS AND CARROTS AND ROAST BEEF, they have lost that* [traditional foods]. *They've been wiped out culturally by the colonisation, and Nigeria has nicely resisted; while still in the modern world economy, you could see that there are still a lot of traditional... and I find that absolutely encouraging about Nigeria, that they can maintain that"* (P19-int-SVC).

Similar views included, *"I've been to other parts of Africa, and there was no music* [native] *whatsoever, including even traditional singing, THERE WAS NONE, it's all dead* [from colonisation] *- but Nigeria has retained SO MANY of that"* (P7-int-SVC). Similarly, an external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry reported a keenness of Nigerian music and entertainment from a different perspective. The account stated:

> *Two marvellous things I definitely associate Nigeria with is its music and entertainment; you know Nigerian music ehm has invaded ehm certainly the whole of Africa and beyond, and the other one is movies, it's Nollywood* [Nigeria's movie industry] *that ehm has - I'm not sure it has invaded the world but certainly has invaded Africa. Before that, ehm - you see I lived in Egypt for 5 years, and everybody would talk about NIGERIA because there were some talented football players, so Nigeria used to communicate football, but.... where maybe 10 years ago, you* [Nigeria] *had prominent Nigerian players playing across Europe and Nigerian image would have been one of ehm - FOOTBALL SUPERPOWER. Which has now faded ehm across Africa and also across the world, but the one that has MOVED UP has been certainly the Nollywood* [Nigeria movie industry] *side AND THEN THE* [NIGERIAN] *MUSIC.* (P6-int-OG).

Additionally, several external stakeholders commended on - receiving *"a great deal of love"* (P18-int-OG) and devotion from the Nigerian public *"countless times"* (P5-int-SVC). As a number of external stakeholders put it, *"As a foreigner here* [Nigeria]*, the love you receive from the locals, is tremendous"* (P1-int-OG). *"People* [Nigerian public] *are always welcoming you, wherever you are, you can be in the north, in the south, in the east, west, always friendly"* (P2-fg2-OG), *"Nigerians always give you a warm welcome"* (P18-int-OG), *"People are always smiling to you* [foreigner]*, they are always smiling and trying to make things move* [quickly] *for you - as a foreigner"* (P7-int-SVC). In one case, the external stakeholder, when asked, Q: *"what do you like the most about Nigeria's national character?"* commented, *"the characters of Nigerians, VERY FRIENDLY AND SYMPATHETIC"* (P4-fg1-SVC).

A number of external stakeholders also favourably conceived the Nigerian nation brand as *"dynamic"* (P12-int-OG) and *"energetic"* (P17-int-SVC). According to one external stakeholder from the service sector, *"The energy here* [Nigeria] *is BRILLIANT, people say* [to me] *when I'm back in* [home country]...*you must be TIRED! But I say - GUESS WHAT - I FEEL ENERGISED after coming from Nigeria"* (P10-int-SVC). And another external stakeholder from the oil and gas industry stated: *"Nigeria is dynamic; it changes all the time, but with energy - POSITIVE ENERGY"* (P5-fg1-OG). One external stakeholder from the service sector, reflecting on the perceived vigour of Nigeria's nation brand, commented:

> *"People* [external stakeholders] *would say to me, Nigeria is aggressive, but for me, it's a bit more positive after living here longer because now I would say dynamic rather than aggressive. Dynamic gives you a sense that he* [internal stakeholder] *is aggressive with a purpose, rather than aggressive been just quarrelsome"* (P1-fg2-SVC).

Comparable views were shared by another external stakeholder from the service industry who said - *"People* [external stakeholders] *are always surprised by the dynamism of Nigeria, a dynamism that you've* [Nigerian nation brand] *got, a young population that seems to be kind of - ON THE MOVE...Nigeria is a good combination of youth and ENERGY"* (P21-int-SVC). In one case, an external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector, when asked, Q: *"Why did you choose 'energetic' as a word you would associate with Nigeria?"* said:

> *"Energetic because Nigerians are one of the HARDEST working people, that are always striving to get more education, they are striving to find a way to improve themselves... I mean I have people that come to this office that travel 3 hours each way* [to and fro]*, I mean they are WILLING TO WORK, they are willing to try to learn new skills to put themselves better, that's something very SPECIAL"* (P4-int-OG).

Similar views were shared by another external stakeholder from the oil and gas sector when asked Q: *"What three words would you associate with Nigeria"?* stated: "[1]*NEVER* – [2]*GIVE* – [3]*UP, because - NO MATTER WHAT they* [Nigerian public]*, always keep smiling and always find a solution to solve their problems"* (P14-int-OG). In summary, it has been shown from this theme that external stakeholders ascribed positive meanings to the Nigerian nation brand, such as

retaining some of its cultural heritage amidst colonisation and modernity, tenacity and enthusiasm. To conclude this chapter, a brief summary is presented.

6.3. <u>SUMMARY</u>

In this chapter, this thesis presented the findings generated from phase two of this research. The emphasis was on - exploring the brand image-reputation of Nigeria's nation brand from the perspectives of external Nigerian stakeholders. The external stakeholder's perspectives were the long-term interpretations of Nigeria's nation brand as they had experienced Nigeria for a minimum of five years. Hence the image and reputation were presented together. Correspondingly, the emerged over-arching themes identified for Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation were - 'submission' as the norm, unsustainability culture, inferior leadership, leadership communications, cross-cultural mismanagement and positive attributes. The following chapter will discuss the implications of the findings generated from phases one (personality-identity) and two (image-reputation) of this research and relate them to the existing literature, highlighting this study's contributions to the body of knowledge.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS AND LINKS TO PREVIOUS LITERATURE

This thesis aimed to understand and explain 'nation brand reputation' by exploring the Nigerian context using the building blocks of corporate reputation's key concepts: personality, identity, image, and reputation. The second research objective facilitated this – 'to investigate nation brand personality-identity from internal stakeholders' perspectives' (Objective #2). Next, to explore 'image-reputation' from external stakeholders' perspectives (Objective #3). Finally, as a follow-up, this chapter will discuss the implications of the findings concerning (objective #4) – 'to establish how a nation's brand personality-identity and image-reputation alignment and constructs impact the reputation; and how these can be managed and enhanced'. The previous chapter on 'findings' (chapters 5 and 6) presented the inductive structure of the data based on the emerged patterns and themes. These patterns and themes are presented visually (see Figure 7 below: Visual representation of Nigeria's Nation Brand Personality, Identity, Image and Reputation).
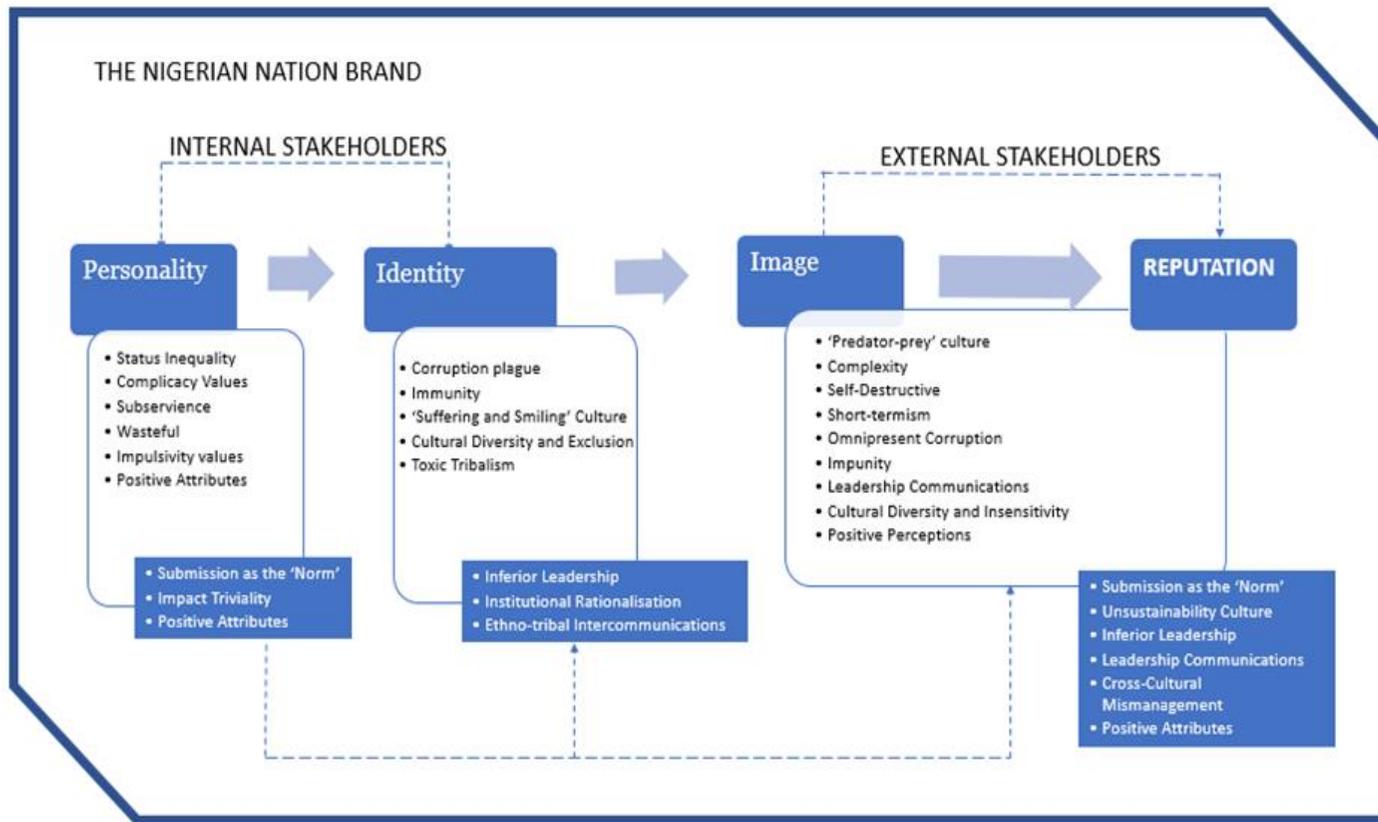
Figure 7: Visual Representation of Nigeria's Nation Brand Personality, Identity, Image and Reputation.

Figure 7 represents a visualisation of the Nigerian nation brand uncovered and discussed in chapters 5 and 6, provides a mind's eye representation (Yin 2018) of the Nigerian nation brand and shows a connection within the data not easily explained with words (King and Horrocks 2010).

Thus, conceptually, with the implications of the findings, this chapter returns to the broader academic literature and studies to interpret these data patterns and themes for the Nigerian case study (Stake 2005; Farquar 2012; Yin 2018) as a contribution to the nation brand(ing) and reputation branch of knowledge. Ultimately, this chapter will put forward a revised conceptual framework (*The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation Model*) – developed by the author for nation brands. At the end of this chapter (see page 201), the definitions of the key terms in this revised conceptual framework are presented in table 23 (*The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation - Key Points*). Next are the discussions and interpretations of critical elements of Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation and then Nigeria's personality-identity.

7.1. <u>Critical Elements of Nigeria's Nation Brand Image-Reputation Investigation.</u>

(i)   Acute Leadership Challenges

The findings on image-reputation were critical to this research. They provided the most extensive set of significant clusters referencing the appraisal and detriment of Nigeria's lack of competent leadership - (grounded in the data from overarching themes of *"inferior leadership", "leadership communications",* and *"cross-cultural mismanagement"* (please see sections 6.2.3, 6.2.4 and 6.2.5 – Chapter 6 – image-reputation findings chapter). Through these themes, it was argued that the Nigerian nation brand continually presented the identity of (i) little or no accountability for political leadership misconducts and corruption, (ii) no allowance for genuine justice and (iii) little catering for the public or value for citizen's life(Onwumere et al., 2012; Ugboaja 2017; Ashishie et al., 2021). Correspondingly, these findings also affirmed that most external stakeholders; projected unfavourable perceptions towards Nigeria's inefficient leadership/leaders, somewhat different from that of the Nigerian public. This affirmation reflects that Nigeria's most prominent image-reputation; is understood as that of its leadership's accountability let-downs (such as the - tolerability of acute corruption in the Nigerian society; public emulating the scripts of

the 'big ogas'/political actor's misconducts, familiarisation of malpractices around law enforcement) (Okafor, Opara and Adebisi 2019; Ojolo and Adeoluwa 2020; Ojukwu-Ogba and Osode 2020). As a result, this thesis advocates that the current Nigerian nation's reputation is that of the political actors and not the nation brand itself.

The findings from the internal stakeholder perspective of this study may partly explain this outcome - as it was observed that the Nigerian nation brand seems to have an identity crisis. Consequently, the political actors' identities shine through to the interpretations of external audiences, overshadowing that of the frail Nigerian nation's brand identity. Nevertheless, this present result is significant in at least three major respects. First, it accords with findings in the extant literature, which showed that ethical leadership is an essential factor required for a successful corporate-nation brand (Channer 2001; Hatch and Schultz 2003; Balmer 2015; Mea and Sims 2019). Second, it clarifies the assumption that Nigeria's leadership and not western international media are responsible for Nigeria's unfavourable reputation, as postulated by many authors (Adegbola Skarda-Mitchell and Gearhart 2018). Third, the result implies that the Nigerian nation brand, in particular, can benefit from nation-branding targeted measures as a resource for mastering its identity (Kaneva 2017) to overpower that of political actors. Then again, the notion that the political actors' identity can dominate that of the Nigerian nation, from an external stakeholder's perspective, asserts that the Nigerian nation brand has an identity crisis that needs crucial resolution (Agbiboa and Maiangwa 2013).

Equally important, the results of this study corroborate the ideas of Seyyed and Abikari (2016), Riera and Iborra (2017), and Lu et al. (2019), who established that leadership irresponsibility at a corporate and social level could stimulate external stakeholders' negative emotions toward a brand. This reflection implies that eventually, there is a price to pay for many years to come for national brands having severe inferior and ineffective leadership, like Nigeria, if action is not taken (Eniayejuni and Evcan 2015; Duening 2016). A reasonable approach to tackle this issue of mediocre leadership in Nigeria and probably the continental brand of Africa could be for the education system to affect leadership lessons in the early education curriculum. It has been affirmed that the provision of leadership education early on could introduce critical-reflective thinking at a national level sooner (Ay et al. 2015; Hill 2018) and lessen irrational patterns of conduct domestically (Dike 2014; Fox, Flynn and Austin 2015). To aid internal stakeholders in making good quality decisions

in their lifetime and on behalf of the nation brand for long-term development. Following this is the notion of a 'Predator-prey' society.

(ii)   'Predator-prey' Society

Distinctively, the current study found that external stakeholders understood Nigeria as a 'Predator-prey' society, grounded in the sub-theme of *"Predator-prey culture"* (see section 6.2.1.1 of chapter 6 - image-reputation findings). Notably, this 'Predator-prey' theme clarified that impoverishment and inequality in Nigerian society go beyond typical income (wealth) inequality of nations to deliberate acts of exploitation and manipulation to create environments that reinforce inequality. A possible explanation for this disposition may be the primary impulse of competition and hierarchy among ethnicities and tribes displayed in the personality-identity perceptions of Nigeria from internal stakeholder's perspectives (see themes of *"cultural diversity and exclusion"* and *"toxic tribalism"* in sections 5.4.3.1 and 5.4.3.2 of chapter 5 - personality-identity findings). Nevertheless, it is encouraging to compare this finding with Beekman and Bulte (2015), who found that 'Predator-prey' relationships thrived in societies where ethnic identities and differences were in force. Furthermore, it has been suggested that many African societies are affected by deep-seated predatory practices or *"Predatory forms of domination"* Carbone, Memoli and Quartapelle (2016, p. 33), heightened by their experiences with colonisation (Carbone, Memoli and Quartapelle 2016).

This proposition also accords with Rafiu, Owolabi and Folasayo's (2009) and Yusuf's (2018) positions. They affirmed that the adoption of a colonial governance template in Nigeria, traced back to the period of colonisation, favoured the root cause of systemic abuse, conflict, and authoritarianism/repression in Nigeria (Justine, Fidelia and Loretho 2019). This explanation appears to be the case with the Nigerian nation brand following this 'Predator-prey' finding. This understanding is of significance because it may help us understand possible motives and targeting of communities for underdevelopment by decisive internal stakeholders (e.g. the political elites) in ethnically diverse nations (Goldsmith 2004) or weak states (Sorensen 2007; Markus 2012). Moreover, external stakeholders' perspectives acknowledged this 'Predator-prey' culture in Nigeria, not internal stakeholders. This understanding is substantial and can be partly explained by the proximity of the internal stakeholders to their national brand, being closely ingrained in it (Desatova 2018) and obscured to such perceptivity (Schein and Schein 2017). This perspective discrepancy further justifies

a nation brand's internal and external viewpoint for a more robust understanding of the brand (Fill2013; Dinnie 2015).

Correspondingly, with attention to the internal stakeholders' perspectives in the (i) *submission as the 'norm'* overarching theme, (ii) Nigerian creole *'I pass my neighbour' ethos (status inequality)* sub-theme, (iii) *Complicacy* sub-theme and (iv) *Subservience* sub-themes (please see chapter 5, personality-identity findings, sections 5.2.1, 5.2.1.1, 5.2.12, and 5.2.1.3 for accounts of the stated themes). In conjunction with the specific *'lack of empathy'* code (see section 6.2.1.1, *"Predator-prey culture"* sub-theme in chapter 6 – image-reputation findings, for an account of the 'lack of empathy' code) and the researchers' curiosity. This thesis found that a strong relationship between *'status inequality'*, *'lack of empathy'*, and narcissistic personality disorder has been widely reported in the literature by many clinical psychology scholars, e.g., Ritter et al., (2011); Farber (2012); Fatfouta et al., (2015).

Resnick et al. (2009) and Higgs (2009) have also attributed the dark side of leadership and its moral disengaging behaviours, including predatory dispositions, to narcissism, among other studies (Jones 2014; Mousa et al., 2021; Shen et al., 2021). Thus the results from this study corroborate the findings of a great deal of work in the psychology and (human) social behaviour and personality branch of knowledge such as Paulhus and William (2002), Levy et al., (2009), Ronningstam (2010), Back et al., (2013), Boldero et al., (2015), Hart et al., (2017), Hart et al., 2019, Yao et al., (2019), O'Reilly and Pfeffer (2021). They have proved that (i) patterns of grandiosity, (ii) a deep need for excessive admiration and deference, particularly at a leadership and authority level, power exertion, and devaluation of people (Asawo and George 2018; Alhasnawi and Abbas 2021; Shen et al., 2021), (iii) self-centeredness, (iv) impulsivity values, (v) short-termism, (vi) impact negligence or a general disregard for cause-effect relationships (Muhammad 2015; Akindola and Ehinomen 2017; Ibrahim and Ahmad 2020), all widespread in the data of this study (see themes of - *'I pass my neighbour' ethos (status inequality)*, *impact triviality*, *'Predator-prey' culture*, *short-termism*, *self-destructive* and *positive attributes*, chapter 5 and 6 – findings chapters), are core-features of narcissistic personality disorder backgrounds. Moreover, given that the theoretical-conceptual proposition that underpins this study features the *'public/society'* element of nation branding and reputation management (see figure 2, section 3.6, the theoretical-conceptual framework). These findings may help us understand how internal stakeholders' dominant-cultural personality types through micro and macro lenses (Durvasula 2017; Shen et al., 2021) can lead to the

instability or stability of their national brand (Abdulrasheed, Muda and Bin Ahmad 2016).

These findings encourage understanding and explain Nigeria's nation brand in its current form. However, suppose this consideration is to be moved forward, a better understanding of social-personality disorders in particular national or continental contexts needs to be developed (Asrar-ul-Haq and Anjum 2020; Alhasnawi and Abbas 2021). Ultimately, these results have emphasised an incidental finding of value, which the researcher labels as - 'Empathy-led political leadership' not declared in the literature - regarding nation branding and reputation management prior to this point. What follows is an imperative account of corruption in Nigeria from external stakeholders' perspectives.

(iii)   Corruption Distinction

For this thesis, with respect to the third research objective (objective #3), this study found that the image-reputation of the Nigerian nation brand was predominantly associated with 'pervasive corruption'. These results corroborate the findings of many previous works reported on Nigeria's corruption stance (Fisman 2010; Pierce 2016; Ugboaja 2017). This study also revealed that many external stakeholders, to a greater degree, undervalued and looked down on the Nigerian nation brand due to this corruption derivative. These outcomes mirror those of Passow et al. (2005), who found that the *'emotional appeal'* of a nation's brand, which reflects how a country is *"liked", "admired" and "respected"* (Passow et al. 2005, p. 313) by external stakeholders, was a distinguishing narrative of its reputation. Thus, due to the prevalence of perceived corruption in Nigeria, this study may help us understand that any nation branding-reputation considerations in Nigeria, contributing nothing to challenge corruption domestically, will be wasteful. This conceptualisation would alter how the nation branding academic community will explore and address nation branding and reputation challenges as we advance.

Equally important, the findings of this study showed that external stakeholders were highly condemnatory of Nigeria's governmental negligence in tackling its infamous reputation for corruption. Furthermore, several reports (Yeh 2011; Bello 2014; Shulman 2014; Eniayejuni and Evcan 2015) have shown that numerous internal and external stakeholders have done much work addressing how Nigeria and Africa can tackle this corruption problem. Nevertheless, corruption continues to thrive in

Nigeria (Ugboaja 2017). These observations contribute to the conceptual premise that for nation brands to be strengthened and successful, there must be a genuine domestic interest or commitment to detoxify the brand where necessary (Okonjo-Iweala 2012; Dzionek-Kozlowska 2015; Wu 2017). According to the understanding of Nigeria's nation brand, from external stakeholder perspectives, we can infer that this national interest pertains primarily to the Nigerian political actors, in many parts, the Nigerian public or a successful collaboration of both interests (Callahan 2007; Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013). This rationalisation will help create an environment where nation brands can continuously improve their identity and reputation beyond ethnic or sectional interests. The issue of gender inequality affecting a nation's brand reputation is presented next.

(iv)   Gender Issues

This study found that hierarchy and status prerequisites also instigated gender inequality issues in Nigeria from external stakeholders' perspectives. It is interesting to note that external stakeholders emphasised gender issues in reporting Nigeria's nation brand with no account of the same issue from the internal stakeholder's perspective. A possible explanation for this discrepancy may be the domestic lack of consciousness or education around the problem (Pereira 2005; Hyde 2012; Eniola 2018). Nonetheless, this finding aligns with Rankin's (2012) results, which confirmed that a nation brand's gender(ed) dimensions actively communicate the nation's overall image to multiple global audiences. Furthermore, this thesis argues that a number of prominent external stakeholder perceptions of the Nigerian nation brand found in this study - e.g. *419* (cyber criminals)*, yahoo boys, big man, political actors' corruption* - all accrue principally from a male or masculine objectiveness. This finding was somewhat surprising because there has been a statistically little difference between Nigeria's male and female populations (Statista 2021).

The result, however, agrees with Zeina's (2019) findings, which found that while the UAE (United Arab Emirates) benefits from numerous nation branding initiatives through tourism, there had been no positive impact on its reputation as a result of the gender issues there. Therefore, these insights affirm that in the 21st Century, gender equality contributes to a favourable nation's brand reputation. Significantly, this study's findings underline that a nation's brand reputation is not gender-biased and affects every internal stakeholder uniformly (Rankin 2012). Irrespective of which gender is blameworthy (Loftsdottir 2015; Einarsdottir 2020). In addition, despite the

'power distance relationships' explained in the personality-identity section of this chapter and how it affects inequality and the desire for status inequalities in the Nigerian context (Fiske 2001; Umukoro 2014) (See also section 7.2 (iv), 'High Cultural Power Distance' subtitle). An implication of this specific 'gender inequality' conclusion in a nation brand reputation context suggests that, in the 21st Century, nation brands that want their identity and reputation to be perceived as favourable - need to recognise, address or close the gaps relating to gender inequality domestically and critically (Fiske 2001; Inglehart, Norris and Ronald 2003; Einarsdottir 2020). The interpretations of Nigeria's history and heritage concerning nation brand image-reputation are described next.

(v)   Nigeria's History and Heritage

This study found that external stakeholders made sense of Nigeria's identity through its history and heritage more so than internal stakeholders (Ezenagu and Geraghty 2020; Ugwaanyi 2021). Akanji (2011) proposed an explanatory theory for this variation, stating that the recognised distinction between 'natives' and 'settlers' predating the Nigerian state, hindered the belief in Nigeria's integrative history and heritage. It is, therefore, reasonable to say that the national approach to Nigeria's history and heritage affects how Nigeria currently has an identity crisis (Ugwuanyi 2020). There may be other possible explanations beyond this research's scope to analyse further. However, the findings from this study broadly support the work of other studies in the social sciences, connecting a functional national history with a strong national identity (Raffe 2010; Ghosh 2014; Del-Percio 2016; Samuelson 2017). These explanations agree with Samuelson's (2017) findings, which showed that history education at schools in multicultural societies could contribute to solid national identities and social cohesion in such societies. Similarly, Hague et al. (2006) have insisted that the interpretation and narrative provided by history; give identity to a place.

Correspondingly, this thesis argues that exploring national history and heritage, irrespective of the experiences encountered, could provide valuable lessons for a nation's present and future internal stakeholders. This type of exploration can potentially enhance and retain the notion of a shared national identity in its internal stakeholder's minds in the long term (Jaworski and Fosher 2003; Aronczyk 2019; Iglesias et al., 2020). Significantly, this finding can encourage post-colonial nations, for example, Nigeria, to start thinking about revamping their identity through the

narrative of their collective history and heritage; instead of settling for competing identities. This suggestion follows Liebrenz-Himes et al. (2007) and Wiedmann et al. (2013), who found that a brand's heritage aspect actualises the depth of authenticity and credibility in the tensions between the past, present and future of the brand's identity (Ugwuanyi 2021). Therefore, there is a definite need for nation brands struggling with their identity, like Nigeria, to recognise and appreciate their history and heritage and infuse a shared meaning to build feelings of community and fellowship at a national level. The critical element of law and order to Nigeria's brand reputation is discussed next.

(vi)   Law & Order

The current study found that many external stakeholders revealed great concern about a compelling degree of disregard for the rule of law in Nigeria. This finding was similar to internal stakeholders' perspectives and conjointly reflected the interpretations of *"impunity"* and *"immunity"* sub-themes, respectively (see section 5.4.1.2, *"immunity"* and 6.2.3.2, *"impunity"* of the findings chapters 5 and 6). It was argued that the Nigerian nation's brand identity existed as *"being above the law"* to the detriment of its brand image-reputation. Another critical account from both perspectives was that 'Nigerian law enforcement' was part of the problem of breaching and non-compliance with the law. These findings reflect those of Eke and Tonwe (2016) and Igbo (2017), who found that significant consequences were lacking for the breach of law in Nigeria by law enforcement and critical politicians (Markovska and Adams, 2015). Therefore, this thesis suggests a profound connection between a nation's brand dealings with its 'law and order' and its image-reputation. The literature review found no comparative literature between the association of 'law and order' and a nation's brand reputation. However, it has been reported that the degree of 'law and order' (compliance) in nations, is primarily seen as a factor related to the stability and well-being of the nation brand (Allott 2002; Stack and Adamzyck 2007). In the same vein, nation brands that do not have good records on their 'law and order' critical brand element have been ranked poorly in promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies (Gallup 2019), which in turn impacts their image-reputation on a broader scale. This understanding advocates reforming the current policing methods and practises of law enforcement in Nigeria (Ladapo 2011; Sule 2017). However, despite these reasonable explanations, questions remain concerning the frameworks necessary to ensure non-tribal or apolitical approaches to law enforcement in multi-

ethnic states (Klantschnig 2009) like Nigeria. Cultural artefacts' functions in the nation brand reputation context are described below, concluding this section.

(vii)   Cultural Artefacts

Critical nation branding scholars (e.g. Dinnie 2015; Aronczyk 2019) have described a nation brand's cultural artefacts as - films, works of art, products, architecture etc., being crucial communicators of its identity. This study also found that cultural artefacts and resources such as Nigeria's traditional food, music, local traditions and entertainment are communicators of Nigeria's nation brand identity to an external image-reputation. However, it was interesting to note that in all of the personality-identity data of this study, there was no reference to Nigeria's cultural artefacts, customs, or traditions in exploring the personality-identity of Nigeria from internal stakeholders' perspectives. Meanwhile, to a considerable degree, some external stakeholders found these to be the essence of Nigeria's nation brand identity. A possible explanation for this dissimilarity may be that Nigeria's numerous customs and traditions are perceived as part of an identity dispute - from internal stakeholders' perspectives, and hence, they are not valued or explored further as national resources. Nevertheless, these findings on Nigeria's cultural artefacts' fondness from an external perspective indicated some scope for nation brands struggling with their identity to utilise their cultural artefacts and representations to assemble and frame that identity.

Correspondingly, the findings of this study reflect those of Lin, Pearson and Cai (2011) and Coombe et al. (2014), who found that cultural legacy, traditional goods and practices, cannot only distinguish nations for reputational purposes but also help reinforce their cultural-intellectual property. In other words, these cultural artefacts can be valuable resources to consistently manifesting a nation's brand identity. Moreover, the notion that external stakeholders from an economically underdeveloped nation such as Nigeria were particularly passionate and enthusiastic about Nigeria's local customs and traditions is substantial. This understanding is disclosure for nation brands, especially in developing contexts, to look beyond international cosmopolitanism or sophistication (Papp-Vary 2019) for their nation branding and reputation goals (Anholt 2016). But a note of caution is due here since there were no specifics to the types and kinds of customs and traditions experienced by external stakeholders in Nigeria. Besides, having positive perceptions about a nation's customs and traditions may not automatically translate into a positive

reputation, however, they could add up over time for a more favourable nation brand reputation.

7.2. Critical Elements of Nigerians Nation Brand Personality-Identity

(i) Nation Brand (Core) Values

The literature on nation branding and reputation management has not yet explored the relationship between nation brand (core) values and brand personality-identity (Aronczyk 2019; Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). Hence, it has not been evident how influential the 'core brand values' critical brand element is to a nation's brand personality-identity; therefore, this study clarifies that. For example, it is now understood that Nigeria's *'lack of transparency'* core values plays an essential role in Nigeria's *'complicacy'* identity (see section 5.2.1.2 for an account of the complicacy sub-theme). Likewise, the core values of *'poor planning'* is associated with Nigeria's reactive and *'impulsivity'* brand personality (see section 5.2.2.2 for an account of the impulsivity values sub-theme). Furthermore, the presence of a *'lack of transparency'* core values in Nigeria we now understand is an important driving factor of bribery (Kura 2016), corruption, and immunity from misconduct(s) (see sections 5.4.1.1 and 5.4.1.2 – *"corruption plague"* and *"immunity"* sub-themes for accounts of bribery, corruption, and immunity from misconducts). These findings have illustrated that the core values of a nation's brand are essential to its existent personality-identity. This study has also provided further empirical evidence that the core values congruent with a nation's brand's internal stakeholders play a vital role in bringing about the nation's brand personality and identity (Jaworski and Fosher 2003; Ucanok and Karabati 2013). This finding is critical to national brands because it explains that internal stakeholders' core characteristics and traits can be an impediment or advantage to their national personality-identity (Hao et al., 2019).

This study also found that the (core) values of key internal stakeholders in Nigeria, for example, politicians and senior civil servants/leaders, had a stronger socio-cultural and behavioural influence on the public/society's core values at large, more than any communications observed (Onafalujo et al., 2010). Thus, the findings do not support the corporate branding understanding that organisations must consistently communicate and publicise their brand values to be understood and believed by internal stakeholders (Zerfass and Sherzada 2015; Patwa, Abraham and D'cruz 2018; Schmidt and Redler 2018; Yoganathan, Mcleay and Hart 2018). As an illustration,

one of the critical ministries explored in this study - The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources. The department's websites offered its core values as *"Understanding stakeholder expectation", "Leadership and professionalism", "Accountability", "Transparency and Teamwork"* (Nigerian Department of Petroleum Resources, 2021). Whereas it was apparent from this study that these expressed values contradict the values emanating from the perspective of internal stakeholders from this ministry (see sections 5.4.1, *"inferior leadership"* overarching theme). Thus, it is observable that some key Nigerian internal stakeholders overseeing critical departments like the one mentioned above may not comprehend the importance of leading with said organisational values (Golant 2012; Kumar and Moller 2018) for improved performance (Pich et al., 2020). Which in turn affects the nation's brand personality-identity. Also, it is possible to posit that this situation is less likely to occur in contexts where critical internal stakeholders, e.g. politicians and senior leaders, understand the impact of core values on a nation's brand personality-identity (Tong, Su and Xu 2018; Hao et al., 2019). Next, the critical element of 'social norms' to a nation's brand personality-identity is discussed.

(ii)   Social Norms

This study's findings revealed that prominent social norms and ethos are presently known to influence Nigeria's personality and identity (Ocheje 2017; Torgbenu et al., 2021). Notably, the findings section showed Nigeria's *'toxic tribalism'* identity resulting from the unfavourable social norms of ethnic-tribal discrimination and exclusion (Torgbenu et al., 2021; Tawiah, Zakari and Wang 2022) (see sections 5.4.3.1 and 5.4.3.2 for *"cultural diversity, exclusion"* and *"toxic tribalism"* - sub-themes). Some social-behavioural science theorists have distinguished social norms from (core) values as culturally salient guidelines for day-to-day activities that provide the boundaries for moral intuitions and values (Nielsen 2002; Viorel 2015; Corradi-Dell'Acqua 2016). The findings from this study thus support the sense that favourable social norms are vital to a nation brand (Qobo 2017), may be more important than individuals (Viorel 2015) and could autonomously forecast a nation's brand personality-identity.

The findings from this study also confirm the association between positive social norms and national development found in the work of Dai (2020). Dai's (2020) research evaluated the interventions seeking to reinforce good social norms in China and found that a 'social credit system project' positively enforced moral virtues of -

trustworthiness, promise-keeping, law-abiding, integrity and decency, that applied to most areas of China's social life and interactions (Dai 2020). Similarly, there are connections between the attitude expressed by Nigerian internal stakeholders in this study regarding the social norms of *'inequality'* and *'poor socio-economic development'* and those described by Njozela et al. (2017). Drawing on an extensive range of sources, Njozela et al. (2017) point out how 'inclusive' social norms strongly contribute to social cohesion, economic and social development.

In the literature, little is written regarding social norms in the context of nation branding and reputation management (Jaeger and Bastos 2021). However, the influence of social norms underlining its interrelationship with 'core values' previously discussed are highlighted in this study. Therefore, it appears that nation brands struggling with an unfavourable personality-identity like Nigeria, can adopt positive social norms to influence their identity and reputation in the long term (Lee et al., 2010; Ajzen 2011; Corradi-Dell'Acqua 2016; Qobo 2017). The following section will discuss dominant culture as a core element of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity.

(iii)   Dominant Culture

This thesis indicated in the conceptual background chapter that the dominant culture of a society is established by the group of individuals that direct the ruling ideas, values and beliefs that become the central worldview of the society/nation brand. Those are usually individuals with the most power and influence (Bodley 2012; Koh et al., 2020). As a result, they spread their dominant ideologies through education, religion, and politics (Lewis 2001; Gottfried 2002; Jacob 2015). Explicitly, in the case of this research findings, the predominant cultural practice of deference to political elites and tribal elders was one of the many factors that helped explain Nigeria's *"subservience"* and *"sheep"* personality, which contributes to developing a *'suffering and smiling'* societal identity (see section 5.2.1.3 and 5.4.2.1 for accounts of *"subservience"* and *"suffering and smiling"* sub-themes). Whereby the public/society complies with inferior leadership and pervasive corruption without reservation (Eker 1981; Rafiu, Owolabi and Folasayo 2009; Aleyemo 2020). Another illustration from this research findings is the culture of flamboyant lifestyle by the Nigerian political elites, having a significant influence on the Nigerian identity of *'corruption'* and *'immunity'* from prosecution, in order for the political elites to fund and enjoy the flamboyant lifestyle without prosecution of perpetrators (Nageri, Umar and Abdul

2013; Bazuaye and Oriakhogba 2016). Some of Nigeria's younger generation internal stakeholders imitating the political elites to desire a flamboyant lifestyle (or 'big man' status) through 419 (cybercrime) was another assessment of the dominant culture critical brand element interpretation (Akanle, Adesina and Akarah 2016; Pierce 2016; Monica 2018).

This study has, however, been unable to demonstrate that the way a nation brand hopes to be perceived dictates the development of its dominant culture, as advocated in observations on corporate brands (Hatch and Schultz 2008; Abratt and Kleyn 2012; Thornton et al., 2019). This divergence could be because the dominant culture in a nation brand context develops over time, unlike business-corporate brands created mainly by dominant personalities like CEOs or founders who set the tone for the corporate brand dominant culture (Weng and Chen 2017; Schulz and Flickinger 2018). However, the findings from this study are significant in informing the brand management community and national governments about the influence of the dominant cultural characteristics in developing a successful national brand personality-identity. The following section presents the critical Nigerian personality-identity element of 'incompetence culture'.

(iv)   Culture of Incompetence - Crisis

In accord with the image-reputation findings of this study, the personality-identity perspective demonstrates that a culture of incompetence (particularly in leadership) could be a major factor, if not the only one, causing weak nation brands (Segesvary 2017) (see sections 5.4.3.2 and 6.2.2.1 for *"toxic tribalism"* and *"self-destructive"* sub-themes). This study also found that a 'culture of entitlement' stemming from tribalism and increasing the risk of thriving incompetence profoundly shaped Nigeria's 'underdeveloped' reality (Akindola and Ehinomen 2017; Eja and Ramegowda 2020). One notable personality-identity finding revealing this was that Nigeria's leadership disregarded the quota ethnic-selection arrangement in Nigeria solely in national football (see section 5.4.3.2, *"toxic tribalism"* sub-theme for narrative). For the reason that national football is competency-based as opposed to quota-ethnic based. In other words, to attain progressive results in sports activities in Nigeria, internal stakeholders that can deliver competently, rather than those entitled by their ethnic backgrounds, are sought after. It has been advocated that multi-ethnic nation brands should perpetuate and prioritise economic development over ethnic-tribal interests (Agbiboa 2013; Pierce 2016; Akindola and Ehinomen 2017; Omamuyovwi 2021).

However, according to the findings from this study, we can infer that this has not been the case with Nigeria's national brand context (Attah 2013; Ideke et al., 2019; Jaeger and Bastos 2021).

The combination of lack of *'accountability'* and *'transparency'* codes found in this study (see section 5.2.1.2 and 5.4.1.2 for *"immunity"* and *"complicacy"* sub-themes) also provides some support for the propositions of Anderson (2002), Kaufman (2011) and Dike (2014), suggesting that accountability and transparency could not thrive in an environment with a 'culture of entitlement'. This problem appears to be the case with the Nigerian nation brand. Although several reports have shown that weeding out perpetrating internal stakeholders at a corporate level can quickly curtail a culture of entitlement for corporate branding (Evans 2013; Cairns 2017). At a nation branding level, it would be necessary to establish how nations caught up in a deep-seated culture of entitlement like Nigeria can transition to a culture devoted to competence rather than ethic-tribal loyalties (Adejuwon 2012; Eja and Ramegowda 2020). Ultimately, this study's findings on the *'degree of competence'* in Nigeria's internal affairs from both (internal and external) perspectives establish that a competency-based perception is related to a favourable nation brand identity and reputation. The interpretations of the critical concept of high cultural power distance as it relates to Nigeria's personality-identity are described in the following section.

(v)   High Cultural Power Distance

This study found a relationship between the personality-identity of *'submission'* and a high cultural power distance relationship in Nigeria (see section 5.2.1 – submission as the 'norm' - overarching theme). Thus it is now understood that cultural power distance, which is *"the extent to which inequality is expected and accepted"* in societies (Winterich and Zhang 2014, p. 275), plays a vital role in explaining Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity of inequality (Jaeger and Bastos 2021) (see also section 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.1.3 for *"status inequality"* and *"subservience"* sub-themes). These findings match those observed in earlier studies by Hofstede (2002), Inglehart, Norris and Ronald (2003), revealing how individuals in cultures demonstrating a high-power distance are much more deferential to figures of authority and generally accept inequality (Hofstede 2002; Winterich and Zhand 2014; Wu 2017). In contrast, individuals in low power distance cultures readily question authority and expect to participate in decisions that affect their lives (Hofstede 2002; Krause, Filatotchev and Burton 2016). These findings accord with prominent cultural power distance theories

and highlight the underlying implications of a dominant culture based on colonial beliefs in Nigeria (Jaeger and Bastos 2021).

Winterich and Zhang (2014) found that high power distance cultures result in weaker perceptions of responsibilities by the state. Again, in Nigeria's case context, this reflects the 'lack of accountability' problem at a political-governmental level found in this Nigerian nation brand investigation. These findings also explain why the high-powered internal stakeholders in Nigeria, e.g. political elites, do not take the responsibilities and custodianship of the Nigerian nation brand seriously (Nageri, Umar and Abdul 2013; Bazuaye and Oriakhogba 2016), owing to the chances of a high power distance culture in Nigeria (Shen et al., 2021). Although the dominant cultures of a nation's brand would be challenging to change suddenly (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2005; Cortina, Arel and Smith-Darden 2017), this understanding is valuable at this point because it emphasises developing the appropriate level of collaboration between the high power and low power stakeholders in a nation branding and reputation context (Ramaswami, Huang and Dreher 2014; Hon and Lu 2016). Concurrently, the empirical findings of this study provide a new understanding of the desire for hierarchy and superiority culture in particular high-power distance societies like Nigeria amid community closeness (Taras, Kirkman and Steel 2010; Boubakri 2016; Shen et al., 2021). That is to say, while there is vast inequality, there is aspiration amongst the public/society that stimulates the nation brand. Next are the blended views of identity uncertainty and internal communications relating to Nigeria's national brand personality - identity.

(vi) Identity Uncertainty and (Internal) Communications

The overarching themes of ethno-tribal intercommunications and cross-cultural mismanagement (see sections 5.4.3 and 6.2.5, *"ethno-tribal intercommunications"* and *"cross-cultural mismanagement"* themes) demonstrate the causal role of effective internal communications in the Nigerian nation brand identity and reputation alignment. In particular, the findings on impulsivity values relating to Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity (see section 5.2.2.2, *"impulsivity values"* sub-theme) revealed that poor internal communication is partially responsible for most internal stakeholders from this study not understanding their crucial institution's values, mission and vision propositions. As a result, they did not resonate positively with the Nigerian nation brand and the corporate aspirations of these institutions (Okurame 2009; Asawo and George 2018; Adisa and Gbadamosi 2019).

Another issue from this study's findings on the standard of internal communications was the internal stakeholders' views regarding how internal affairs and projects in their respective governmental ministries had been vaguely and poorly communicated, alluding to a lack of transparency issue (see section 5.2.1.2, *"complicacy"* sub-theme). Although this study is focused on the Nigerian nation brand itself and not only on the investigated government ministries, these findings may help us understand why critical Nigerian internal stakeholders (e.g., politicians and senior civil servants/leaders) seem not to have long-term aspirations for the Nigerian nation brand (Adejuwon 2012; Omamuyovwi 2021). Considering critical sectors like the ministries explored in this study cannot effectively disseminate their internal undertakings, mission, and vision propositions.

The literature on corporate branding has emphasised that in the absence of an effective communications strategy, internal stakeholders, in particular, become misinformed and unconcerned about the direction of the corporate brand (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011; Balmer 2012). Such disinterest appears to be the case in Nigeria's nation brand context. This finding is relevant to a nation brand and reputation exploration because it demonstrates that internal stakeholders' understanding of their nation brand identity interests can enhance their advocacy for their nation brand (Wu 2017; Patwa, Abraham and D'cruz 2018), generally seen as a factor strongly related to a more certain brand personality-identity (King and Grace 2012; Du Preez and Bendixen 2015; Balmer 2017; Cornelissen et al., 2021).

Similarly, Jones (2010) has suggested that a self-evident brand 'vision' can play a significant role in overcoming major resistance(s) to brand identity engagement(s) within an organisation. This insight has significant implications for national brands in that it can be helpful to nation brands that desire to improve their brand personality-identity in general. Also, it can benefit complex nation brands, such as a multi-ethnic one like Nigeria, to ensure a joint (long-term) vision that could unify the different complex ethnicities and regions (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). This increases the chances of their identity certainty, trust and cohesion for the nation brand (Kaneva 2011; Mea and Sims 2019; Pich et al., 2020). These findings also support the conceptual premise that international boosting of a nation's brand image must primarily embrace national brand personality-identity building to be effective (Adegoju 2016; Kaneva 2017).

This thesis also argues for having practical and realistic goals when developing a nation's brand vision, as this can positively affect the believability and credibility of the projected vision, mission, and values by internal stakeholders (Johnson and Roberts 2006; Balmer 2012; Song, Ruan and Park 2019). As an illustration, one of the critical ministries explored in this study was the Nigerian Federal Government Ministry of Health Services. Their 'vision' is to be a *"world-class government institution"* (Nigeria Federal Ministry of Health, 2021). However, it is quite clear from this study's findings that this corporate 'vision' is rather ambitious for the Nigerian federal government, considering the lack of infrastructure (Nwajiuba et al., 2020; Iseolorunkanmi et al., 2021; Pilling 2022) and resources conceptualised from the internal and external stakeholders' views (see also section 5.4.2.1 and 6.2.1.1, *"suffering and smiling culture"* and *"Predator-prey culture"* sub-themes). A more realistic 'vision' would have 'West African or Africa' ambitions. This form of representative internal communication raises the possibility of internal stakeholders' commitment and advocacy for their ministry (Ingenhoff and Fuhrer 2010; Wu 2017), possibly overflowing to the Nigerian nation brand and the economy.

Nonetheless, on the back of internal communications alone, the results of this study indicate that the Nigerian nation brand was not a successful brand. This understanding suggests that unsuccessful nation brands could approach the issue of nation branding and reputation with strategic internal communications and aspirations in order to develop their personality-identity confidence and certainty (King and Grace 2012; Du Preez and Bendixen 2015). Next, this thesis interprets the critical brand elements of competing sub-identities and the culture of mistrust concerning Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity.

(vii)   Absent National Identity and the Culture of Mistrust

The current study found that Nigerian ethnic-tribes advocate for their particular sub-identities while the national identity is abandoned (Akanji 2011; Odia and Agbonifo 2015), as shown in the toxic tribalism and ethnic-tribal loyalty sub-themes (see section 5.4.3.2 and 6.2.5.2 for *"Toxic tribalism"* and *"Ethnic-tribal loyalty"* themes). These findings provide a deeper insight into how Nigeria constructs its identity based on its ethnic-tribes (sub-identities), decreasing the chances of a solid Nigerian nation brand identity (Badrabadi 2020; Ismail and Tejumaiye 2022) and creating a culture of mistrust (Wiewiora 2011; Kujala, Lehtimaki and Pucetaite 2016; Erasmus et al., 2017). Thus, this study has established that a particular Nigerian nation brand

identity from the perspectives of internal stakeholders is lost or non-existent (Pierce 2016; Adegoju 2016). This insight may help us understand why emotive responses of internal stakeholders towards the Nigerian nation brand were somewhat disappointing, highlighting issues of toxic tribalism, unfavourable competition (competing identities) and lack of trust amongst cultures and ethnicities in Nigeria (Mitchison 1964; Shaw-Taylor 2008; Muhammad 2015).

On the position of trust, in particular, several papers have hypothesised that *'trust'* is a critical element in socio-cultural advancement and is widely considered morally necessary in national development (Houtte 2006; Bornhorst et al., 2010; Audi, Loughran and McDonald 2016; Nestle et al., 2019; Westjohn et al., 2021). According to Connelly et al., (2018), a 'trust' relationship exists when each party credits the other's reliability and integrity. To Franklin and Marshall (2019), the concept of trust relates to a party's expectation that another will be cooperative, fulfil its obligations, and pull their weight in the relationship. Whilst Ghosh and Roy (2011), citing Gustafsson (2005) and Baier (1986), simply put 'trust' as *"reliance on another's goodwill"* (p. 55). Reflecting on the competing sub-identity narrative of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity seen in this study's – *"toxic tribalism"* and *"ethnic-tribal loyalty"* sub-themes (see sections 5.4.3.2 and 6.2.5.2), this study raises questions on the antecedents and consequences of trust for nation branding and reputation management, especially in competitive, ethnically diverse nations like Nigeria. The facet of 'trust' is also likely to be influential in many other aspects of Nigeria's economic interactions, activities and public perception. However, this thesis leaves these additional connections for future inquiry to explore. Nevertheless, this study has highlighted the prospect of using the 'trust' component to desensitise the issues of ethnicity and tribes in Nigeria (Akindola and Ehinomen 2017; Oyedeji 2017; Mea and Sims 2019). To conclude the interpretations of Nigeria's personality-identity critical brand elements, the concept of 'complicacy values' emanating from Nigeria's brand personality–identity exploration is described next.

(viii) Complicacy (public sector) values

Finally, another significant finding from this investigation was that a large part of Nigeria's nation brand instability stems from the complicacy and complexity of the Nigerian public sector (see sections 5.2.1.2 and 6.2.1.2 *"complicacy"* and *"complexity"* sub-themes). For example, this study found that complicated processes in the Nigerian public sector guaranteed that Nigeria could mask 'accountability', promote

a lack of transparency and thereby perpetuate the impunity and corruption cycle (see sections 5.4.1 and 6.2.3 for accounts of corruption and impunity narratives). As a result, this research has revealed one critical empirical factor responsible for Nigeria's unfavourable brand identity elements: "immunity" from misconduct and "corruption". These findings, in reverse, extensively support the work of many scholars in the area of organisational studies associating 'simplicity' with reputable organisational performance, accountability and transparency (Lumpkin and Dess 1995; Drago 1999; Barki and Pinsonneault 2005; Margetts 2011; Partlow et al. 2015; Mubazi 2016; Singh and Bhatia 2016). Following this study's findings, all of which were lacking in Nigeria's case context (Adejuwon 2012; Ashishie et al., 2021) (see also sections 5.2.1.2, 5.4.1.1, and 5.4.1.2 for *"complicacy"*, *"immunity"* and *"corruption plague"* sub-themes). Transparency and accountability, particularly because there is clarity on who and what is responsible for different administrative procedures and processes (Cafolla 2009; Margetts 2011), and entities can be identified easily (Schmitt 2007).

Similarly, prior studies that have noted the importance of a nation's brand public sector have established that it is the core of a nation's organisational machinery (Verbeeten and Spekle 2015; Lobont et al., 2018)—promoting shared national values of integrity, fairness, and efficiency (Lobont et al., 2018; Suebvises 2018) when managed effectively (Overman and VanThiel 2016). Not to mention that most nations rely heavily on public or social sector projects and services to cater effectively to society (Sataoen and Waeraas 2015; Adebisi et al., 2018). Moreover, following this study's findings on toxic tribalism and the competing sub-identity narrative of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity (see sections 5.4.3.2 and 6.2.5.2 for *"Toxic tribalism"* and *"Ethnic-tribal loyalty"* sub-themes). It is now possible to affirm that Nigeria's public sector complicacy and complexity conditions can largely be explained by the Nigerian public sector saddled in ethnic and sectional interests (Osaghae 1988; Oloyede 2014; Ideke et al., 2019). An interest that does not act together for the greater good of the Nigerian brand identity but for particular ethnic regions, creating a system of identity complexity and confusion (Hall 2007; Agbiboa 2012). There are other possible explanations, but this thesis has provided a deeper insight into public sector density and nation brand identity crisis.

These findings have important implications for developing unifying frameworks and systems that simplify multi-ethnic states' administrative procedures and processes while curtailing bureaucracy for nation branding and reputation considerations. Similarly, these findings allow us to understand how achieving 'clarity' and 'unity' at

a public sector level may help nation brands stand out, distinguish themselves or stabilise their identity. This awareness could be an important issue for future research. Alternatively, public sector branding could be a new direction for research in the brand management academic community (Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan 2019). Nonetheless, ample evidence suggests that the principles of *'keeping things simple'* (Marshall 2007) may help the Nigerian brand context rectify its grave 'corruption' brand personality-identity and image-reputation status quo. This thesis presents the revised conceptual framework that clarifies the critical Nigerian nation brand elements and their relationships in the following section. The definitions of the key terms in this revised conceptual framework follow that in table 23 - (*Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation - Key Points)* on page 204.

7.3.   The Nation Brand Reputation Model (Revised Conceptual Framework)

The previous section demonstrated that the concepts of nation brand personality, identity, image and reputation could be explored from an internal and external perspective for a deeper understanding of a nation brand. This study also needed to consider the applicability of the cases' (Nigeria) findings to the subject of nation branding and reputation management at large. Thus, the researcher presents a revised conceptual framework of this thesis in Figure 8 below, defined as the *"Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation".* This revised conceptual framework is based on this research's findings and the critique of the existing literature on nation branding and reputation management (Saunders 2011; Farquhar 2012; Mea and Sims 2019). Accordingly, the findings from this study demonstrate that the concepts of the "fundamental building blocks of nation brand reputation" are similar to the theoretical-conceptual framework produced in section 3.9, figure 2 (see section 3.6 – Proposed building blocks of nation brand reputation). For example, the revised conceptual framework accurately reflects that the nation brand personality, identity, image and reputation are interlinked and mutually interdependent, with communications considerably in the background - holding all of the building blocks together (Gregersen and Johansen 2018; Kotsi et al., 2018; Fill 2019; Thornton et al., 2019). However, due to the implications of the ethnic-tribal sub-identities established in this study, the revised conceptual framework also highlights - *cross-cultural management* as relevant in the background of the building blocks - to hold them together.
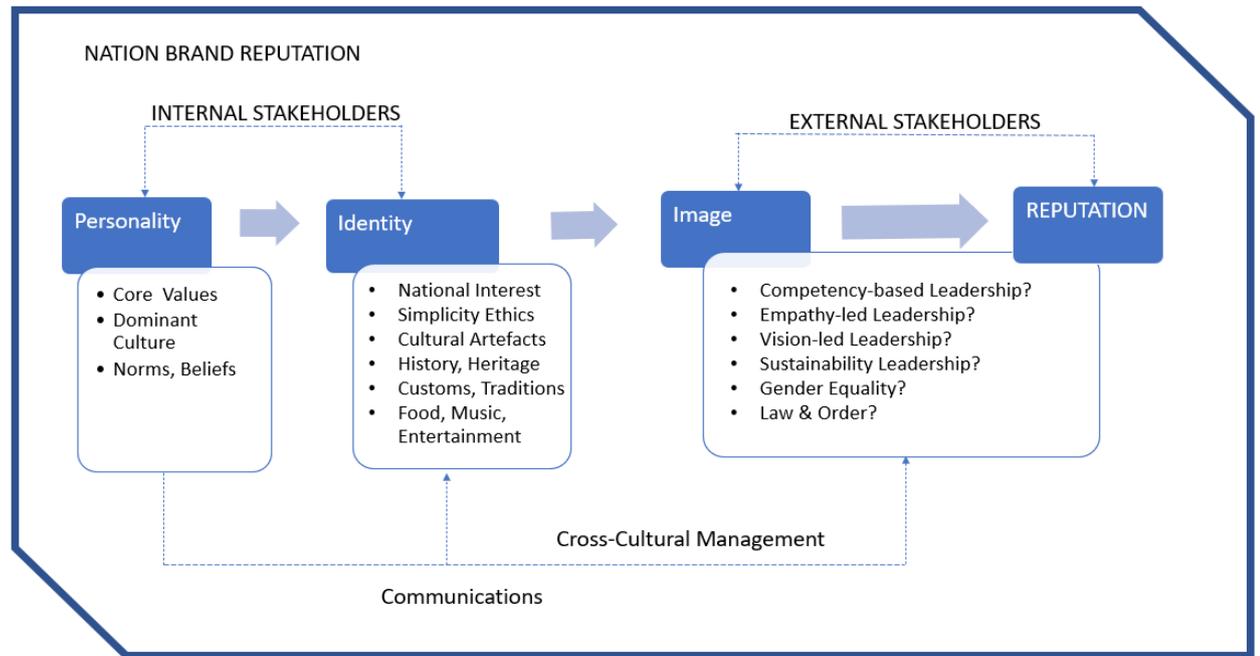
Figure 8: The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation.

The revised conceptual framework is similar to the proposed one in that it clearly illustrates that internal stakeholders project their nation's brand personality through their identity. This personality derives from the nation's core values, norms, beliefs, and dominant cultural characteristics (Viorel 2015; Balmer 2017; Aronczyk 2019). It also demonstrates that the brand personality-identity elements focus solely on internal stakeholders (Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan 2019); given that (whom the nation brand personality-identity tends to) has not been clarified in the nation branding and reputation literature (Mariutti 2017; Govers 2019).

The proposed conceptual framework also highlighted the impacts of the 'nation brand communication mix'. Whilst these might be relevant to the success of specific national re-branding projects and agendas, the revised conceptual framework considers the applicability of the key findings of this study and provides clarity on the critical elements deemed pertinent to a 21st-century nation brand identity, as discussed in section 7.2 of this chapter (critical elements of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity). These are - the degree of interest internal stakeholders have for their national brand; the ethics of simplicity; cultural artefacts; history and heritage; customs; traditions; food, music and entertainment.

Likewise, as in the proposed conceptual framework, the revised conceptual framework reflects that the external audiences' first impressions of the identity elements of a nation's brand become the nation's image (Anholt 2011; Handayani and Rashid 2018). The image and reputation also sit with external stakeholders (Roper and Davies 2007; Balmer 2017). Still, on the subject of external audiences, the proposed conceptual framework identified the influence of tourism, media, exports, and citizens' behaviour on a nation's image. However, the revised conceptual framework does not take these image elements further because it is essential to acknowledge that they are short-term and tentative and have been well-acknowledged in the literature on nation branding as a subject area (Anholt 2005; Stokburger-Sauer 2011; Dinnie 2015; Avraham 2020). For instance, the nation brand in the context (Nigeria) under investigation had a clearly defined reputation amid scarce perspectives on tourism and export products from the participant's perspective. Thus, this thesis found a weak connection between those elements to understand and explain 'nation brand reputation' and claims that they are self-regulatory with the positive or negative perceptions of the nation's brand (Dinnie 2015). Nevertheless, this thesis recognises that these elements could be significant for a nation to re-brand using them as different agendas and projects, adding up over time for a more favourable reputation in the long term. This thesis also acknowledges that every decision made on behalf of a nation brand, both internally and externally (e.g., exports, media, resident/citizen activities), is somehow a piece of translation of its identity (Mariutti, Medeiros and Buarque 2019).

Expressly, the revised conceptual framework provides a set of dimensions that nation brands can revolve around to deconstruct, understand and manage their brand personality, identity, image and reputation - as discussed in the previous sections (7.1 and 7.2, critical elements of Nigeria's nation brand image-reputation and personality-identity respectively). A critical point highlighted in this study's findings and reflected in the revised conceptual framework is, arguably, due to international and humanitarian best practices (in the 21st Century) rather than nation branding logic. This study showed that external audiences inevitably judge nation brands around these dimensions (hence the question mark). The dimensions are competency-based political leadership; empathy-led political leadership; vision-led political leadership; sustainability political leadership; gender equality; and law and order. For conceptual and illustrative purposes, the dimensions of image and reputation are presented together in the revised framework because this study showed that, in reality, the

process of separating these two concepts is complex and dynamic, and the boundaries between their ideal phases are fluid and permeable.

Though the image and reputation manifestations are distinct (Roper and Fill 2012; Dowling 2018), the perceptions that make them up may occur sequentially or simultaneously beyond control. However, the longer arrow between the image and reputation building blocks symbolises the longer time frame it takes for a reputation to set in. Some scholars, e.g. Pich, Armannsdottir and Spry (2018), have posited a strong possibility that a recurrent experience with the brand in about twelve months is the time it takes for the image to be definitive as a reputation. If the understanding is to be developed further, a longitudinal study focusing on that could be an essential issue for future research. This thesis has now presented the discussions of the findings from this study. To conclude this chapter, the definitions of the key points in the revised conceptual framework, as represented in the model, are presented in table 23 (see below - Table 23: Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation - Key Points). The conclusions chapter follows this table.

Table 23: Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation - Key Points.

Building blocks and Perspectives	Underlying Dimensions	Key Points
Internal Personality		**Refers to the core values, dominant culture, norms and beliefs that characterise the nation brand**
	Core Values	Refers to the root criteria internal stakeholders use in decision-making and arranging priorities
	Dominant Culture	Refers to the established dominant cultural practices of critical institutions in the society
	Norms, Beliefs	Refers to the social-religious behaviour various internal stakeholders are expected to follow
Internal Identity		**Refers to the functional and emotional cues internal stakeholders use to present a nation brand**
	National Interest	Refers to the degree of attention and concern internal stakeholders share for the national brand
	Simplicity Ethics	Refers to the national morals and integrity towards simplifying procedures and processes in the nation
	Cultural Artefacts	Refers to the communicators of a national identity through objects that give information about the internal stakeholder's cultures
	History	Refers to significant past events that have contributed to the present understanding of the nation brand
	Heritage	Refers to the historical facts of a national identity that continue to be relevant
	Customs, Traditions	Refers to the internal stakeholder's social-ethnic-tribal practices passed on from generation to generation
	Food, Music, Entertainment	Refers to the food, music, and entertainment that express the cultural identity of the nation brand
External Image		**Refers to the external stakeholders' tentative, initial first impressions of the nation brand**
	Competency-based Leadership?	Refers to the external stakeholders' perceptions of the 'political actors' executive and behavioural competence
	Empathy-Led Leadership?	Refers to the external stakeholders' perceptions of the 'political actors' genuine devotion to serving public needs and addressing societal sufferings and challenges
	Vision-Led Leadership?	Refers to the external stakeholders' perceptions of the 'political actors' inspiration for proactive policy frameworks
	Sustainability Leadership?	Refers to the external stakeholders' perceptions of the 'political actors' commitment to systemic and progressive schemes for the nation brand
	Gender Equality?	Refers to the genuine attitude toward equal opportunities for women and girls
	Law & Order?	Refers to how the external stakeholders expect the citizens to be law-abiding
External Reputation		**Refers to the external stakeholders' conclusive opinions of a nation brand**
	Cross-Cultural Management	Considered the practical understanding and management of the diverse cultural backgrounds of a nation brand
	Communications	Considered how the diverse activities of a nation brand are linked and continuously interrelating

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to understand and explore a nation's brand reputation aided by the principal concepts of personality, identity, image and reputation. Since reported in 1998, nation brands have attracted much interest (Browning 2015; Chung, Rhee and Cha 2020), although research is still in its infancy (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015; Li, Min and Lee 2021). Traditionally, national governments have subscribed to the belief that they can engage with necessary international stakeholders and participants to enhance their image (short-term) (Mariutti, Medeiros and Buarque 2019). As a result, nation-brand research has tended to be limited and focused on prescriptive and generalised claims (Hao et al., 2019), lacking context and construct rationality (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015; Papp-Vary 2019). This study was thereby crucial because there was increasing concern that some nation brands could be disadvantaged or weakened by understating their brand's long-term consideration and interdependences (Zeina 2019; Li, Min and Lee 2021). Accordingly, this project provides a significant opportunity to understand how a national brand can benefit from long-term considerations and values such as its reputation (Govers 2019; Mariutti and Giraldi 2020). Markedly, this study provides the first comprehensive empirical assessment of a nation brand from internal and external perspectives to explore its deep-rooted reputation. Also, it was essential to contribute the empirical findings that emanated from this case's context (Nigeria), which also served as areas for future research directions (Farquhar 2012; Corbin and Strauss 2018; Yin 2018).

Returning briefly to the subject of empirical findings from this study (see chapters 5 and 6 – Findings - personality-identity and image-reputation), the overarching themes that emerged from phase 1 (personality-identity) were: (1) submission as the 'norm', (2) impact triviality, and (3) positive attributes. The sub-themes were: (i) (Nigerian creole) - 'I pass my neighbour' ethos, (ii) complicacy, (iii) subservience, (iv) wasteful and (v) impulsivity values. That of Nigeria's brand identity were overarching themes: (1) inferior leadership, (2) institutionalised rationalisation and (3) ethno-tribal intercommunications. The sub-themes were: (i) corruption, plague, (ii) immunity, (iii) 'suffering and smiling' culture, (iv) cultural diversity and exclusion, and (v) toxic tribalism. As previously mentioned, this list of themes made up the

Nigerian nation brand's core nature, character and disposition from internal stakeholders' perspectives. Whilst phase 2 (image-reputation) consisted of six overarching themes: (1) submission as the 'norm', (2) (un) sustainability culture, (3) inferior leadership, (4) leadership communications, (5) cross-cultural mismanagement and (6) positive attributes. Their sub-themes were: (i) 'predator-prey' culture, (ii) complexity, (iii) self-destructive, (iv) short-termism, (v) omnipresent corruption, (vi) impunity, (vii) cultural diversity and insensitivity, (viii) ethnic-tribal loyalty. As explained earlier, these themes collectively represented how external stakeholders constructed and understood their experiences of the Nigerian nation brand. The critical elements of these empirical findings and how they operate within the context of the Nigerian nation brand are presented in Figure 9 below (The Nigerian Nation Brand - Personality, Identity, Image and Reputation, Critical Brand Elements Model).
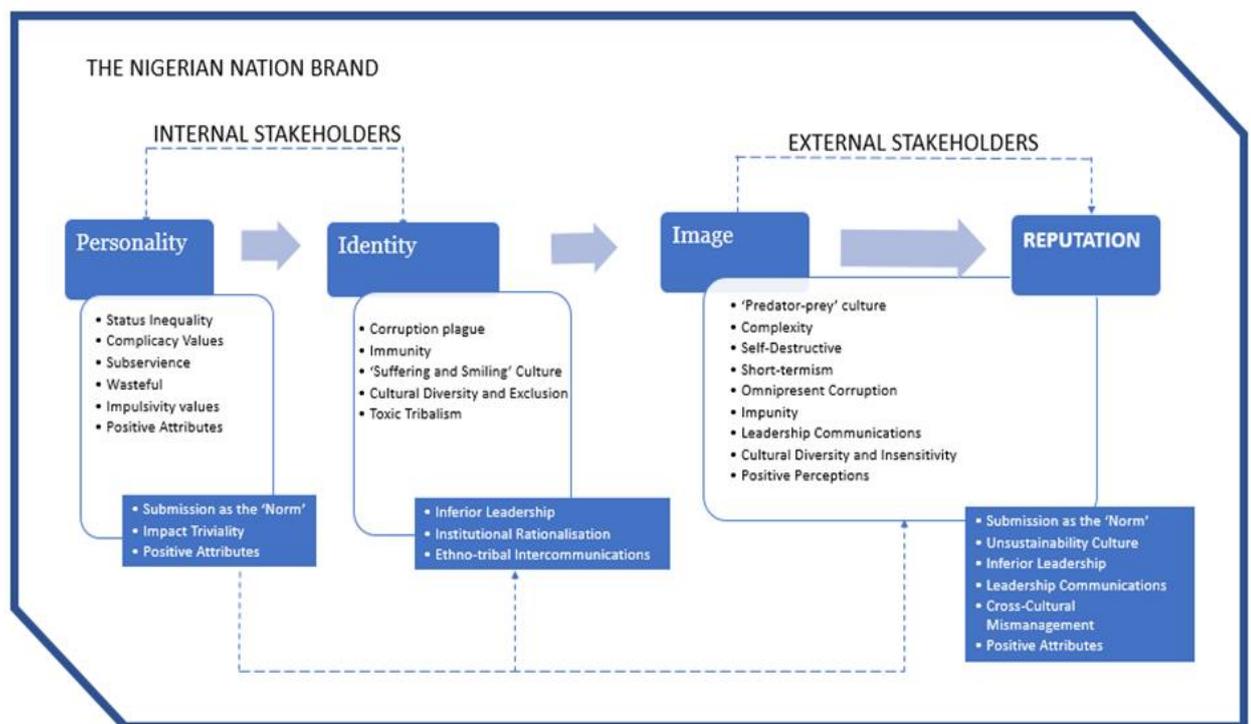
Figure 9: The Nigerian Nation Brand (personality-identity and image-reputation critical brand elements model) developed by the author – Izegwire (2021).

As pointed out in the introduction of this thesis, Nigeria's characteristics relating to its socio-economic background in Africa, population, and unsuccessful nation branding experiences provided a valuable context for investigating nation branding

and reputation management for the 21st century (Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015; Adegoju 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). For the final analysis, the following part of this chapter concludes the thesis by:

(i) Summarising the key findings of this study concerning the research objectives reported in the previous chapters,

(ii) Highlighting theoretical contributions to the brand management community,

(iii) Presenting practical implications for the Nigerian national government and

(iv) Illustrating limitations and directions for future research.

The following section summarises the findings from Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity - internal stakeholder perspectives.

8.1.   <u>Summary of Nigeria's Personality - Identity</u>

The investigation of Nigeria's nation brand personality-identity has shown that the various characteristics and dispositions that identify a nation brand are constructed and evoked from internal stakeholders' core values. The research has also shown that the Nigerian society/public echo the ethical-behavioural values of key institutions/senior leaders above all else, as shown in the "leadership communications" core theme (see section 6.2.4 – *"leadership communications"* overarching theme). Thus this study has identified that the practical dissemination of moral-ethical values using key institutions can deeply influence the success of a nation brand.

This investigation has also shown that the Nigerian nation brand needs a shared-coordinated vision and acknowledgement between its ethnicities and tribes for 'value' appreciation and ethicality, as shown in the 'ethno-tribal intercommunications' core theme (see section 5.4.3 – *"ethno-tribal intercommunications"* overarching theme). This study also acknowledged that Nigeria's public internal stakeholders generally do not trust the Nigerian national government (Ani 2018); therefore, they construct their identity based on their community and religion (Agbibao and Okem 2011; Onopajo and Usman 2015). Whilst close community-mindedness may have its positive side, Aysa-Lastra's (2012) research has shown that they create an atmosphere for abuse and maltreatment, which can lead to toxicity at an ethnic tribal level - without the appropriate systems in place. This study identified this toxic condition based on

gender and ethnic inequalities in Nigeria (Pereira 2005; Owoo, Agadjanian and Chama-Chiliba 2021) amidst a dysfunctional national system (Ikeanyibe 2014; Eniola 2018; Isaac 2020; Ugwueze, Omenna and Okwueze 2022) (see sections 5.4.3.2 and 6.2.1.1 for accounts of toxic tribalism and gender issues).

Meanwhile, this close-community mindedness also emerged as a reliable predictor of high family-community dependence, bribery and corruption to accommodate the family-dependence needs and unhealthy tribal competition (as demonstrated in the 'toxic tribalism' and 'cultural diversity and exclusion' sub-themes - see sections 5.4.3.1 and 5.4.3.2). Thus this study has also identified that, particularly in multi-ethnic nations like Nigeria, establishing trust between the public and the national government can significantly differentiate between a confident and uncertain nation brand identity, which in turn contributes to the success of the nation brand long term. Consistently, the findings of this investigation show that Nigeria can reduce its ethnic-tribal dependence and unhealthy competition by creating a system that encourages a national identity to thrive (Esses et al., 2001; Pich et al., 2020). Furthermore, it identified that understanding the current brand identity of a nation will help address a nation's brand clarity issue and encourage internal stakeholders to build a strong, believable, engaging national brand (Spry et al., 2020).

Uniquely, this study also identified several issues that impede the Nigerian nation brand, including wasteful-lavish governance, lack of progressive leadership, and impulsivity values as shown in the 'impact triviality' and 'inferior leadership' core themes (see sections 5.2.2 and 5.4.1, *"impact triviality"* and *"inferior leadership"* overarching themes), all emerged as dependable interpreters of a profound lack of understanding as to what makes a nation work (Foroudi et al., 2016). Therefore, this study highlights the importance of high-quality commercial awareness and competency management systems regarding national governments and political actors, especially in underdeveloped nations that need to enhance their identity in a competitive global marketplace (Micheli and Neely 2010). Thus, this study's empirical evidence on incompetence culture, as shown in the *"self-destructive"*, *"ethnic tribal loyalty"*, and *"toxic tribalism"* sub-themes (see sections 5.4.3.2, 6.2.2.1 and 6.2.5.2, see also discussions chapter, section 7.2 (iv) culture of incompetence crisis) emphasises the significance and impacts of 'Competency-Based Political Leadership' in a nation branding and reputation management context. In Nigeria's case context particularly, this refers to how the public/society must choose political actors and

leaders based on what difficulties and challenges they can skilfully resolve for the nation rather than their ethnic-tribal identities.

Ultimately, the Nigerian nation brand personality-identity investigation has shown that the current Nigerian identity is confusing, unloved by internal stakeholders and therefore needs a clear and post-independence solid identity (Oluwaseyi 2021; Ismail and Tejumade 2022; Pugh 2022). As such, one of the significant findings from this investigation was that there is no unifying idea of Nigeria's brand identity to internal stakeholders, which plays a role in determining Nigeria's political instability (Pereira 2005; Nageri, Umar and Abdul 2013; Pugh 2022). This study, therefore, advocates for the interests of a 'Nation Brand Emotional Identity' - an intangible asset that refers to how internal stakeholders identify with and develop a sense of connection with their national brand. Nevertheless, the research confirmed that the Nigerian nation brand possesses well-defined, positive personality-identity traits resonating with internal stakeholders amid the identity confusion (see section 5.2.3, *"positive attributes"* overarching theme). As a result, this study has observed that national governments should periodically review internal stakeholders' perceptions, which could help them take advantage of their positive perceptions or play to their strengths while strengthening their identity visions in the long term.

In conclusion, this investigation has also shown that a nation's brand identity is not fixed or permanent and continues to evolve. This understanding makes a strong case for the relevance and advancement of nation branding and reputation scholarship among the subjects (Browning 2015). Furthermore, even though this study focuses on Nigeria, the findings may have a bearing on propositions developed to close the gaps between a nation's current identity and a desired one (Balmer and Soenen 1999; Robichaud, Richlieu and Kozak 2012; Fill 2019). A summary of the main findings on Nigeria's image - reputation is provided in the next section.

8.2. <u>Summary of Nigeria's Image - Reputation</u>

The most prominent finding from this study's image-reputation investigation is that the Nigerian nation brand is exceedingly complex. Multifaceted and puzzling in terms of the numerous ethnicities and tribes assembled, tangled in dysfunctional political-governmental instability (Dare 1997; Ajide and Alimi 2019; Oluwaseyi 2021) and difficult in how business is done most bureaucratically – as indicated in the 'complexity', 'short-termism', omnipresent corruption and 'cultural diversity and

insensitivity' sub-themes (see sections 6.2.1.2, 6.2.2.2, 6.2.3.1 and 6.2.5.1 for accounts of sub-themes). Yet, one of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that - combating bribery and corruption (identified as a severe reputational problem of Nigeria (Nageri, Umar and Abdul 2013; Aleyomi 2020; Sohn 2020; Arowolo 2022) see also section 5.4.1.1 and 6.2.3.1 'corruption plague' and 'omnipresent corruption' sub-themes) must be a fight against complexity. This research confirmed that the Nigerian system/government could achieve accountability and responsibility through 'simple' and 'uncomplicated' institutional and administrative systems. However, the Nigerian system's complexity stimulates complexity to support bribery and mask corruption. These findings have significant implications for understanding how 'institutional transparency' could affect institutional corruption and the image-reputation of a nation's brand. While this study centres on Nigeria, the results may well bear on nations dealing with pervasive corruption, ethnic density, and cartel-like governments (Rowbottom 2016; Bolaji, Campbell-Evans and Gray 2017). These 'complexity' conclusions also support the criticality of technological advancement and e-services in African governmental institutions (Foroudi et al., 2016; Okunogbe and Pouliquen 2018). In effect, economically underdeveloped nations should prioritise employing technology in their governmental/nation brand-building initiatives to mitigate the risk of human impediments or biases against combating corruption. This finding would interest technology-based organisations and investors as a business opportunity.

This Nigerian image-reputation investigation has also shown that no matter how complex or multi-layered a nation brand may be, external stakeholders still make sense of it from its dominant personalities or traits. This understanding confirms and contributes to existing knowledge on corporate brand reputation, which proposes that corporate brands have some form of identity whether they like it or not (Balmer et al., 2017; Stuart 2018). In a nation brand and reputation management context, these findings imply that national governments should take charge of how external stakeholders interpret their identity rather than leaving it to chance (Wæraas and Byrkjeflot 2012). Once more, these findings strengthen the idea and relevance of nation branding and reputation management techniques, which national and local governments can adopt to advance their national identity and reputation in the long term (Avraham 2020). Again, Nigeria's image-reputation investigation showed external stakeholders were warm to Nigeria's traditional customs, food, music and entertainment despite unfavourable perceptions towards the brand - as shown in the positive attributes core theme (see section 6.2.6, *"positive attributes"* overarching

theme). These findings suggest that the Nigerian national government can explore these positive attributes to uncover the brand identity and enhance the reputation of Nigeria in the long term.

The image-reputation perspective of this research has also shown the criticality of 'leadership' in a political-national brand setting (O'Reilly et al., 2014; Pich et al., 2020). This study confirms that from external stakeholders' perspectives, leadership significantly impacted Nigeria's negative perceptions – including the complacency to tackle its prevailing negative reputation as shown in the '(un)sustainability culture' and 'inferior leadership' core themes (see section 6.2.2 and 6.2.3). However, the current study also highlighted the gravity of 'followers' (Nigerian public/society) in the nation brand reputation construct as the Nigerian public has chosen its leaders in the past two decades of Nigeria's democracy. Hence, the findings of this investigation complement those of several leadership scholars (Hur 2008; Nielsen and Daniels 2012; Steinbauer et al., 2014; Beekman and Bulte 2015; Tepper et al., 2018) who insist that the roles of followers, in particular, as well as the environment, are commonly under-reported in leadership matters. In other words, analysing leadership outcomes should articulate followers' roles and the environment for fair balance. In a nation branding and reputation management context, this understanding justifies nation brand reputation interventions by national governments, to begin with, the underlying personality-identity issues for more meaningful impacts.

All in all, the investigation of Nigeria's image-reputation from external stakeholders' perspectives, in agreement with the internal stakeholder's views, has shown that the Nigerian society/public has gained resilience and diligence due to the adversity put down by inferior leadership in Nigeria, as shown in the *"positive attributes"* core themes (see section 5.2.3 and 6.2.6). Additionally, external stakeholder perceptions of 'lack of empathy' in the Nigerian system, as shown in the *"Predator-prey culture"* sub-theme (see section 6.2.1), makes this thesis advocate for the specialisms of *"Empathy-Led Political Leadership",* defined by this thesis as *'political leadership capable of understanding the societal needs, sufferings and challenges of its people/society'.* This *"Empathy-Led Political Leadership"* will be a crucial society-hearted solution to lead a multi-ethnic state like Nigeria progressively. The theoretical contribution, another significant aspect of this chapter, is explained next.

8.3. <u>Theoretical Contributions to Nation Brand Reputation Research</u>

This thesis makes critical theoretical contributions to nation branding and reputation fields of enquiry. First, this thesis combines the disparate-established concepts of

corporate brand personality, identity, image and reputation (Fill 2013; Dinnie 2015) to investigate the broader stereotyped issue of nation brand reputation (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015). This study's empirical findings reveal consistency between internal and external stakeholder views, thus providing a new understanding of how a nation brand can be explained from an internal and external perspective to understand its operating reputation. Concurrently, it highlights the differences between internal and external stakeholder views, their distinctness and their interrelatedness. Given these points, this thesis demonstrates the vast transfer potential of the corporate (brand) reputation building blocks to national brands. Therefore primarily affirming the corporate brand management branch of knowledge as a lens to reconceptualise the reputation of a nation and how it works (Rojas-Mendez, Papadopoulos and Alwan 2015).

Second, the literature review highlighted that empirical research on nation brands is scarce (Dinnie 2015; Anholt 2016; Matiza 2021). In particular, research that applies nation brand identity and image theory to nation branding and reputation analysis (Govers 2019; Zeina 2019; Li, Min and Lee 2021). Furthermore, an anomaly in the body of knowledge disclosed that prior studies that have noted the importance of nation brands have overlooked how a communicated nation brand identity translates into a deeper set of brand image(s) over time (Jordan 2014; Viktorin et al., 2018; Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). Hence, this research's second principal theoretical contribution was developing the revised framework – *"The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation"* (presented in figure 10 below), which clarifies the theoretical, conceptual scope of nation branding and reputation (Anholt 2016; Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Aronczyk 2019; Govers 2019). This revised framework also answers the definite calls for a systematic approach to nation branding and reputation management in the literature (Merkelsen and Rasmussen 2016; Govers 2019; Bolin and Stahlberg 2020). Indeed, national governments and researchers can use this framework to develop a deeper understanding of their national brands' *personality-identity* and *image-reputation* key concepts, independently or jointly. This deeper understanding is essential because it will help identify inconsistencies and consistencies with the nation brand, thereby offering the opportunity to uncover and manage the disparities between the key concepts. This means the academic community, nation branding practitioners, and national governments can now routinely deconstruct, reconstruct or even manage nation brands for long-term merits amid socio-political and economic instability.
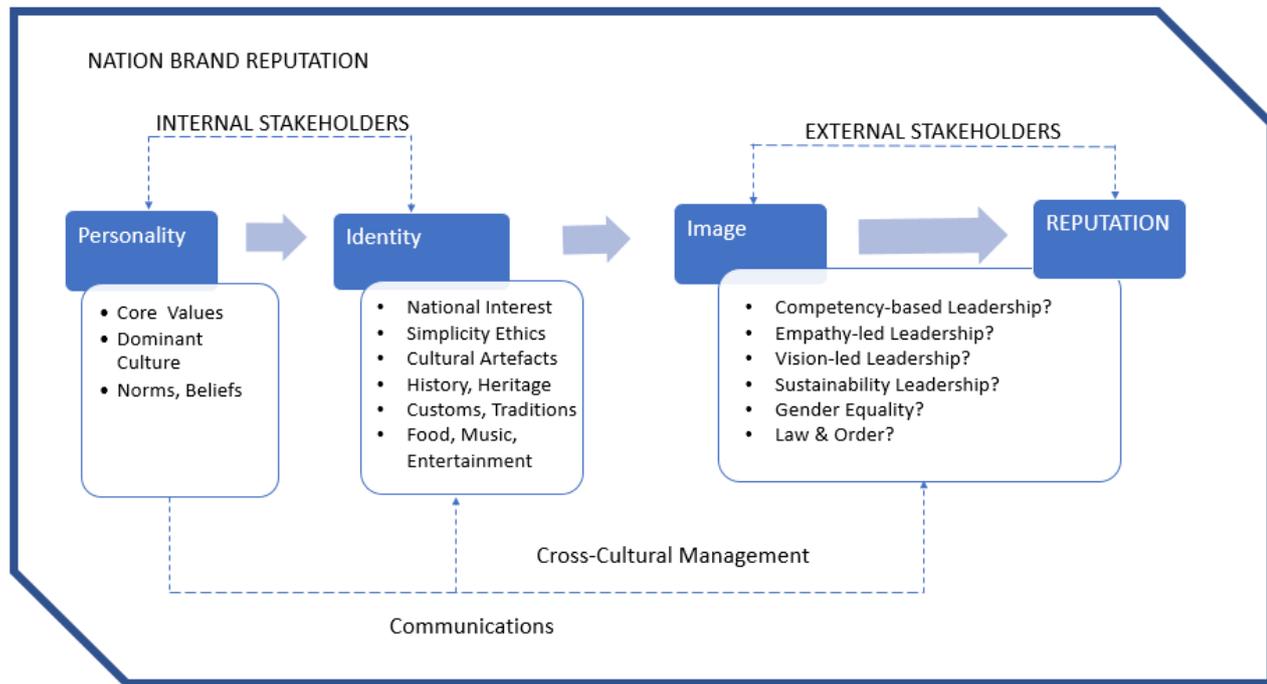
Figure 10: Theoretical Contribution – The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation developed by the author - Izegwire (2021).

Distinctly, this study also captured the internal brand values, personality and identity of a crucial African nation brand, Nigeria (Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi 2015; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017) and their implications. This has not been researched before in previous research on nation brands, Africa's continental brand or Nigeria (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017; Kavaratzis and Dennis 2018). Thus, this study's critical brand element conclusions, notably the *"High cultural power distance"* interpretations (see section 7.2 (v) - 'High cultural power distance', Discussions chapter 7) theoretically contribute to understanding power relationships and the ramifications in an economically underdeveloped nation brand context (Browning 2016; Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017). Compatibly, the *'Predator-prey culture'* conclusions of this research (see sections 6.2.1.1 and 7.1 (ii), "Predator-prey culture" sub-theme and "Predator-prey society" - Discussions chapter 7) are in agreement with Carbone, Memoli and Quartapelle (2016), Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira (2017), Burnell, Rackner and Randall (2017); and it lays the groundwork for investigating psychological-personality disorders and nation brand personality-identity and image-reputation in high power distance and post-colonial nations. Likewise, the conclusions of Nigeria's *"Complicacy (public sector) values"*, critical brand element (see sections 5.2.1.2 and 7.1 (viii), "complicacy" sub-theme and "complicacy (public sector) values" - Discussions chapter 7), has extended our knowledge of the extreme impacts of corruption on a nation's brand. Furthermore,

the *"Simplicity Ethics"* recommendation of this thesis also adds to the knowledge on anti-corruption and corruption alleviation (Funaki and Glencorse 2014; Ismail and Ibrahim 2020), particularly in an economically underdeveloped, multi-ethnic African-nation context.

This study's empirical findings also found new evidence that shines a light on the old issue and problem of economic underdevelopment in Nigeria and possibly Africa. The applicability of the critical model that underpins this research (see section 3.3 Figure 1 - The building blocks of corporate reputation model - Fill 2013) also contributes to the justification of using western theory in different contexts. Furthermore, this investigation was conducted by a native Nigerian researcher and therefore answered the specific call by Papadopoulos and Hamzaoui-Essoussi (2015) for nation branding research in Africa by indigenous Africans to uncover some of the challenges to nation branding and economic development in the continent - which may be obscured and imperceptible to non-African or western researchers (Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira 2017).

In conclusion, as highlighted in previous sections of this chapter, this study made original concept developments of *"Empathy-Led Political Leadership"*, *"Nation Brand Emotional Identity"*, and a practical understanding of *"Competency-Based Political Leadership"* (see also discussions chapter 7, critical brand elements: 'Predator-prey society', 'absent national identity and culture of mistrust' and 'culture of incompetence crisis'). Before this study, little was known about the link between empathy and nation (under) development in the literature, and no clear evidence of a nation's brand emotional identity had been reported. In essence, this study suggests a role for these new concepts in the function and advancement of a nation's brand identity and, ultimately, reputation. The practical implications of this investigation are presented next.

8.4. <u>Practical Implications for National Brands</u>

This thesis provides practical implications for national governments and policymakers in that politicians and governments can use the new 'Nation Brand Reputation Model' as a tool to explore the consistency between the personality-identity and image-reputation of their national brand (see section 8.3 for - The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation Model, developed by the author - Izegwire 2021). In particular, to detect perceptual differences between their communicated identity-reputation and their desired one (Balmer 2017; Einarsdottir

2020). Understanding the perceptual differences between a nation's brand personality, identity, image and reputation will enhance the clarity and alignment dynamics of the nation brand and reduce oversights by national governments and key stakeholders. This study's framework's personality, identity, image and reputation system can also be treated as a means of building and maintaining a favourable internal image with residents and an external image with outsiders both in the medium and long term. A key practical priority should therefore be purposefully planning for a nation's brand long-term care; this will help national governments (practitioners) maintain an excellent emotional link between a nation and its audiences, promoting a positive, trust-based, lasting relationship. Next are the policy implications for the Nigerian case context.

8.5. <u>Policy Implications for the Nigerian Case Context</u>

Figure 9 above (see conclusions, chapter 8 - The Nigerian Nation Brand, personality-identity and image-reputation critical brand elements model) highlighted the critical brand elements resulting from this study and how they operate within the context of the Nigerian nation brand. Thus these critical brand elements conclusions have several policy implications for the Nigerian nation brand. For instance, a piece of compelling evidence was that systemic social and economic inequity seems to be a critical factor unsettling Nigeria's identity and reputation, as shown in the 'cultural diversity and exclusion', 'I pass my neighbour' ethos (status inequality), 'suffering and smiling culture', 'Predator-prey culture' 'corruption plague' and 'omnipresent corruption' sub-themes (see sections 5.4.3.1, 5.2.1.1, 5.4.2.1, 6.2.1.1 and 5.4.1.1 and 6.2.3.1 respectively). Thus, the Nigerian government can use information from this study to develop targeted interventions to improve the Nigerian society's cultural knowledge on the problems and disservices of internal social and economic inequity. Furthermore, mainstream media programs dedicated to cultural understanding and education tackling inequality and other social issues identified in Nigeria, such as moral issues, gender inequality, human rights, and possibly overpopulation (Prince, George and Ejimkaraonye 2020; Onah and Agbo 2021; Owoo, Agadjanian and Chama-Chiliba 2021; Ugwueze, Omenna and Okwueze 2022), can be implemented.
This study's findings also suggest several courses of action for the Nigerian government to develop or restore avenues to foster ethno-tribal and cross-cultural assimilation in the Nigerian society, as shown in the 'ethno-tribal intercommunications' and 'cross-cultural mismanagement' core themes (see sections 5.4.3 and 6.2.5, *"ethno-tribal intercommunications"* and *"cross-cultural*

mismanagement" overarching themes). A reasonable approach could encourage inter-nation social inclusiveness through higher education and accessible employment opportunities for every Nigerian internal stakeholder, irrespective of their tribal or ancestral origin. Other forms of society-level policy derived from this study's critical brand element conclusions include:

(a)   The modification of the ethnic and ancestral place of origin as the foremost and official national identifier in Nigeria. For example, the ethnic and ancestral place of origin can be withdrawn from decisive official documents and applications for approval. Since it seems that unless the Nigerian national government desensitises internal stakeholders' ancestral place of origin, Nigeria will not attain the idea of a uniform nationality.

(b)   Ensuring appropriate systems and funding are put in place to prevent and terminate child abuse, maltreatment, and neglect in Nigeria. The literature (Freinhar 1986; Cohen, Brown and Smailes 2001; Mosquera, Gonzalez and Leeds 2014) has identified these as underlying factors for developing mental-personality disorders in children, later manifesting in adulthood (Wiehe 2003; Hart et al., 2017). Hence Nigeria should prioritise effective and practical child-youth well-being and development. There is also the strong possibility that putting children and young people at the heart of Nigeria's policy and practice will be a progressive solution to tackle Nigeria's identity and economic underdevelopment crisis. The Nigerian education system needs to teach the younger generation adherence to moral and ethical principles, challenging the status quo (critical thinking), being more resourceful, making decent decisions, and fostering a liking for social integrity – relating to the interests of everyone and the betterment of society (Lareau 2015; Gberevbie et al., 2017). There is a high likelihood that the Nigerian system/society may have lost these convictions during the times and experiences of Nigeria's brutality, as highlighted in the background to Nigeria chapter (see chapter 2 – Background to Nigeria) - so they must be re-incorporated into the society.

(c)   Considering Nigeria is dealing with numerous and diverse ethnic groups and tribes, the Nigerian government should avoid uncertainties and unpredictability regarding internal affairs in Nigeria. In other words, 'transparency' should be a key policy priority in Nigeria. It is almost certain that this will reduce the unhealthy ethnic-tribal scepticism, competition and mistrust.

(d)　　The findings from this study also provide the basis and justification for measuring and assessing 'empathy' in Nigeria's prospective senior leaders and political actors – due to the thriving 'lack of accountability' (Idemudia 2009; Nageri, Umar and Abdul 2013; Erchick et al., 2016; Ashishie et al., 2021). 'High Power Distance' cultures and other economically underdeveloped nations can also benefit from this (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010; Peltokorpi 2019). However, it will be more challenging in Nigeria's case since it has been suggested that the political elites in Nigeria are part of the problem and run a clientelistic and cartel-like kind of government (Ikeanyibe 2014; Castro and Philips 2018). Continued efforts are therefore needed to get ethical, right-minded officials into government in Nigeria.

(e)　　The background to Nigeria chapter (see chapter 2 – Background to Nigeria) indicated that there were three ethnic regions/states (Northern, Eastern and Western) at the inception of Nigeria post-independence in 1960. Thirty-six states at the time of this research have now been created from those initial three. As shown in the *"cultural diversity – insensitivity and exclusion"* sub-themes (see sections 6.2.5.1 and 5.4.3.1), this study's findings demonstrate that the Nigerian government should avoid further dividing up the internal stakeholders within Nigeria. There is a chance this instils a more artificial divide and the idea of separateness in Nigeria.

(f)　　More extraordinary efforts are also needed to curb the Nigerian brand element's core 'poor planning' factor, as shown in the 'wasteful' and 'impulsivity values' sub-themes (see section 5.2.2 – *"impact triviality"* overarching theme). Nigeria's national government should be more long-term needs-driven. The Nigerian government can use this study's conceptual 'Nation Brand Reputation Model' to be more foresighted. This model can also help the Nigerian government reconstruct Nigeria's brand identity and close the existing and more desirable identity-reputation gaps.

(g)　　In conclusion, the Nigerian national government should practice and encourage a 'culture of meritocracy' so the people's ingeniousness and resilience, as shown in the positive attributes core themes (see sections 5.2.3 and 6.2.6, *"positive attributes"* overarching themes) - can be put towards beneficial nation-building initiatives. As indicated in the discussions chapter, this research supports the idea that meritocracy and competency in national leadership can bring stability and progressiveness to the Nigerian nation brand, thus overflowing into a dominant national culture and philosophy. This will mean there is hope for Nigeria to be an

economically developed, successful nation brand. In the final analysis, this study's limitations and future research direction will be considered to conclude this chapter and thesis.

8.6. <u>Limitations and Future Research Direction</u>

This thesis has some limitations and suggestions for additional empirical investigations. Firstly, it is unfortunate that the study did not include perceptions of Nigerian politicians for some relative analysis. Despite this limitation, the study certainly adds to our understanding of political elites' power and influence on a nation's brand identity and reputation. However, to move the understanding forward, further studies could assess the long-term impacts of 'political regimes' in conceptualising a nation's brand identity and reputation, particularly in more economically developed nations. This understanding can provide a blueprint of proven methodologies that struggling or economically underdeveloped nations can use to solidify their identities - for the prospects of a brighter future for global nation brands.

Secondly, the *"cultural diversity and insensitivity"* subject matter emanating from this study (see section 6.2.5.1 – *"cultural diversity and insensitivity"* sub-theme) is intriguing and could be usefully explored in future research on the question of 'cultural diversity and inclusion'. Considering that a success story of Nigeria's cultural-ethnic assimilation, of which Nigeria has been identified as one of the most ethnically diverse nations in the world, could translate to valuable propositions for global 'diversity and inclusion' theories. There is also ample room for further progress in determining how the issues of ethnicity and tribes in Nigeria or multi-ethnic states can be desensitised realistically. As nations become more multicultural (Bouma 2016; Bordas 2021), this study lays the groundwork for future research into multiculturalism and nation brand reputation. Likewise, future research needs to examine the links between national-cultural dimensions of individualism, collectivism and nation brand reputation (Beck and Beck-Gernshieim 2002; Hofstede and McCrae 2004).

Likewise, thirdly, the implication of this study's *"ethnic-tribal loyalty"*, "*toxic tribalism",* and *"absent national identity and trust deficit"* critical brand element conclusions has thrown up many questions. For example, the possibility that, as with corporate brands, nation brands could proudly and harmlessly have 'healthily competing' multiple sub-identities contributive to a central nation brand identity -

when managed effectively. Thus, despite this study's brand personality-identity exploratory nature, it offers insight into the valuable scholarship of brand architecture (Muzellec and Lambkin 2008; Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Leijerholt, Chapleo and O'Sullivan 2019) in a nation brand identity-reputation setting. Studies regarding the role of brand architecture in multi-ethnic or multi-cultural nation brand contexts would be worthwhile.

Ultimately, this research has provided a deeper insight into how national brands can consider their long-term bases and positions. Therefore, this work's natural progression is to explore 'crisis management theories' (Liu and Fraustino 2014), which are relevant to a nation brand(ing) and reputation context. This investigation would have significant implications for understanding how national brands can best react to unexpected unfavourable events. Nevertheless, any future research on nation branding and reputation management would be advised to use this study's revised conceptual framework - The Fundamental Building Blocks of Nation Brand Reputation Model. This model provides valuable insights for future research on longitudinal and comparative studies on nation brand reputation.

CHAPTER 9

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Appendix A - Designing Case study - Research Tripod

Case Study Research for Business
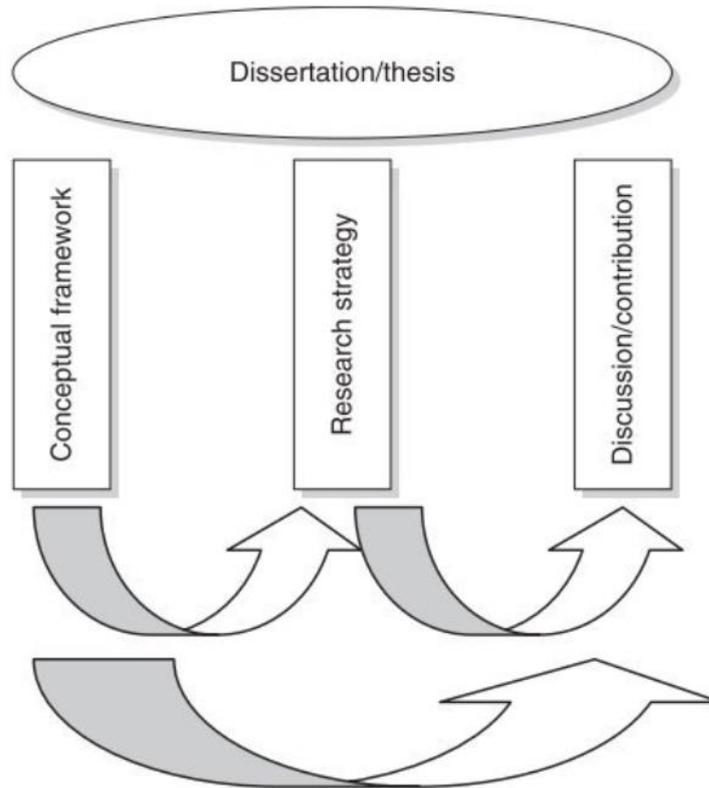
Adapted from (Farquar 2012, p. 34).

Appendix B - Synthesis of Proposed Theoretical Framework

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:
Proposed Building blocks of Nation Reputation, Izegwire (2019)

BUILDING BLOCKS OF CORPORATE REPUTATION:

Fill (2013)

THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF NATION BRAND IDENTITY & IMAGE:

Dinnie (2015)

COUNTRY REPUTATION INDEX:

Passow et al. (2005)

Dimension	Meaning
Emotional appeal	How much the country is liked, admired, and respected
Physical appeal	Perceptions of the country's infrastructure such as roads, housing, services, health care, and communications
Financial appeal	Perceptions of the country's competitiveness, profitability, growth prospects, and risk of investment
Leadership appeal	How well the country demonstrates a strong leadership and communicates an appealing vision of the country
Cultural appeal	How well the country retains the values of distinct, appealing culture and a rich historical past
Social appeal	Perceptions of the country as having high standards in its dealings with global community, good causes, and environmental policies

NATION BRAND INDEX:

Anholt (2005)

Appendix C - Nigeria Geopolitical Zones and their States.

NIGERIA GEO-POLITICAL ZONES

ZONES
- South West Zone
- South East Zone
- North West Zone
- North East Zone
- North Central Zone
- South South Zone

South-east -5 states = (Abia, Anambra, Eboyi, Enugu, Imo)

South-South -6 states = (Akwa-ibom, Bayelsa, Cross river, Delta, Edo, Rivers)

South-West – 6 states = (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo)

North-East – 6 states = (Adamawa, Bauchi, Burno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe)

North-West- 7 states = (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara)

North-Central-6 states= (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau)

Appendix D - Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE- STAGE 1 - (Internal Stakeholders – Nigerian resident citizens as participants).

Opening - Introduction

Good Morning/Afternoon. (Smile and handshake) Thanks for taking some time to let me interview you. You have a nice workplace set up here.

As I mentioned on the phone and via email, I'm doing this interview for my PhD research. I want to find out more about Nigeria's brand personality and identity from an internal perspective.

There are mainly two topics I would like to ask you about this afternoon: Nigeria's Actual personality and identity, your Desired Nigeria's personality and identity, and then any General questions I may presume helpful as we go along. Explain:

- Research outline – Confidentiality – Audio Tape Recording

How would it be best to contact you later on if necessary?

- *Record contact details, including name:*

Do you have any questions for me before I start?

Body - Revealing the nation

Actual Personality

1. **Ice Breaker** – If you were to describe Nigeria as an animal, what kind of animal would it be?
   Probe: why did you choose that animal?

2. What 3 words would you associate with Nigeria?
   Probe: In what way is Nigeria ……
        why did you choose……
        what about Nigeria do you find……

3. What do you like the most about Nigeria's national character?
   Probe: Can you elaborate on "the most."

4. What do you like the least about Nigeria's national character?
   Probe: Can you give me examples of experiences that confirms "the least" to you

5. What comes to your mind when you think about the heritage of Nigeria?
   Probe: explain why this is the case

6. When you think about the core values of the people of Nigeria, what 3 words would come to your mind?
        Probe: In what way are Nigerians ……
            why did you choose……
            what about Nigerians do you find……

7. Could you talk me through the values of the Federal Civil Service and what they mean to you?
   Probe: How did you learn about these?

8. If you were to think about how Nigeria's heritage is manifested through its people, what common traits will come to your mind?
    Probe: could you give me an example(s) where you have experienced some of these traits.

9. …. can you picture 2 sides in your mind… Nigeria… (side A); the rest of the world (side B). If you were to think about the message Nigeria consistently communicates to the rest of the world about herself, in your opinion, what would you say they were.

10. How do you think these messages of …… as you have mentioned, are same or different from the perceptions of foreigners living in Nigeria
    Probe: Can you explain why this is the case

11. What indicators would you say give away these messages of……as you've mentioned?
    Probe: could you give me some specific examples, maybe of an encounter or personal experiences of the indicator mentioned

12. What do you know about the Ministry of ……. corporate vision, mission, and values
    Probe: How did you learn about them?

13. Can you tell me about how Nigeria is governed now compared to how it was when you were younger?
    Probe: what happened that made you think that?

14. How do you think these changes have affected the Nigerian people?
    Probe: Do you have some specific examples in mind?

Desired Personality

15. What will you change about the corporate values of the Federal civil service? linked to answer in question 7
    Probe: why did you pick these values?

16. If you were able to shift the mindset of Nigerians to create opportunity for the kind of changes you want to see, how would you do this?
    Probe: Talk me through what you would do step by step

Desired Identity

17. Imagine the secretary-general of the United Nations appointed you to reform what you like the least about Nigeria's national character; from an insiders' perspective, what would you explore?...linked to question 4.
    Probe: why did you choose these?

18. If you were invited to be part of a committee to advise the federal government on its administrations' corporate vision, mission and values, what would you advise...linked to question 12.
    Probe:

19. Overall, what changes among Nigerians would confirm that all your guidance has been implemented successfully?

1. Is there anything I have not asked about that you think I should know?

2. What would you tell your friends or colleagues you did in this interview session today?

3. If today's interview session was a novel or a song, what title will you give it?

4. Questions for me

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer my questions,
(Summarise Findings, Ethical procedures, Double-check phone number or other contact details on the first page)

Handshake, goodbye.

Appendix E - Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Date:

Title of Study: Nation Branding and Reputation Management: Nigeria - the hidden ramifications of Culture, Ethics, and Values of its people.

Name of Researcher(s): Irene IZEGWIRE

I would like to invite you to take part in my research study. Before making up your mind on your participation, I would like for you to understand the reasons for the research and what your involvement will mean for you. I will go through the information sheet with you, and you can also talk to others if you so wish. I will answer any of your questions and do everything I can to ensure that any unclear area is fully explained.

What is the purpose of the study?

The proposed study is to investigate the subject of nation branding and reputation management by attempting to understand the identity and brand of Nigeria, from the perspectives of its citizens (internal); and the image and reputation from the perspective of outsiders (external); such as expatriates who are living in the country.

Why have I been invited?

You are being invited to take part because you fit the sample of people that can give us useful information on the subject of interest. We are inviting 48 members of the Nigerian federal civil service and 30 expatriates like you living in Nigeria to take part.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Nothing, as it will be a straightforward process. We would like you to take part in an interview lasting approximately an hour. It will take place in a location favourable to yourself and will be arranged at a time convenient to you. The topics to be covered are set out on nation branding and reputation management, with a focus on key themes such as -personality, identity, image, and reputation. The interview will be carried out by myself following a pre-set schedule. There will be plenty of opportunities to have other matters that concern the chosen topic, especially around local and national issues.

We will ask for your written permission to tape the interview to ensure that the information you give us is accurately recorded.

What will happen to the information I give in my interview?

The data collected from you will be transcribed. We will then analyse the information and feed it into our results.

At the end of the study, all the transcripts may be shared with the authorised university personnel. However, the transcripts will be fully anonymised before they are archived. Any information that identifies you or your organisation or that gives any clues to your identity will be removed. I can assure you that the measures taken to ensure the data is not traced back to you are robust and will not fail.

Expenses and payments

Participants will not be paid an allowance to participate in the study, but there will be complimentary refreshments during the interviews, and any travel expenses will also be covered.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The main disadvantage and risk is the fact that you may give us information that is not of benefit to you, your organisation, or that runs counter to the government's agenda or contravenes data protection laws.

I am very confident that the arrangements described above will prevent any of your information from being shared with anyone outside the research team. For this reason, we believe that the risk of detriment is very low. I will not seek information about identifiable colleagues, individuals, or any known government officials.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Even though I cannot promise the study will help you personally, I can assure you the information we get from this study will help you understand Nigeria better and more appreciate your role in the country as a valued stakeholder in its future. We also hope that you will find the interview interesting and will take satisfaction from helping to develop knowledge of this important topic – Nation Branding and Reputation Management.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you can ask me, and I will do my best to answer your questions. This project is being administered on behalf of Nottingham Trent University and therefore, the university is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the project.

If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the Director of Studies / Supervisor. All contact details are given at the end of this information sheet.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All ethical and legal practice will be observed, and all information about you will be handled in confidence. I will ensure all due care is taken so that you cannot be identified by any way in my findings.

If you join the study, the data collected for the study will be looked at by authorised persons from the university. There is also a possibility it could be looked at by other authorised people to ensure the study is being done properly. All persons involved will have a duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant, and we will do our best to meet this duty.

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept **strictly confidential**, stored in a secure and locked office, and on an encrypted password-protected database. Any information about you which leaves the University will have your name and address removed (anonymised). Anonymised data may also be stored in data archives for future researchers interested in this area.

Your personal data (address, telephone number) will be kept for (3 years) after the end of the study so that we are able to contact you about the findings of the study *and possible follow-up studies* (unless you advise us that you do not wish to be contacted). All research data will be kept securely for a few years.

After this time, your data will be disposed of securely. During this time, all precautions will be taken by all those involved to maintain your confidentiality. Only members of the research team will have access to your personal data.

What will happen if I do not want to carry on with the study?

Participation in this research study is solely down to your choice. If you agree to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form (completion and return of a Questionnaire can be taken as implied consent). You are free to withdraw at any time - speedily by contacting the researcher on the contact details provided below, or the Director of studies, or Project office (all contact details provided below); without giving any reason or your legal rights being affected. If you withdraw, then the information collected so far may not be possible to extract and erase after (4 weeks), and this information may still be used in the project analysis.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

We will write up the results for the Thesis document and will publish an academic article on my research as part of my PhD programme.

The article may appear in journals that are widely read by practitioners and academics in my area of study. The results are likely to be published in 1350 – 231X ABS Journal of Brand Management by May 2020 and 0013 – 0079 – ABS Journal of Economic Development and Cultural change by November 2020.

Please note that you will not be named or otherwise identified in any report/publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being organised by the University and is being funded by myself.

Who has reviewed the study?

All research in the university is looked at by a group of people, called the College Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and approved by the College of Business Law & Social Science Ethics Committee.

Further information and contact details:

Researcher: xxxxxxxxxx@my.ntu.ac.uk, Tel: xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Director of Studies / Supervisor: xxxxxxxxxxxx Tel: xxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Please feel very welcome to contact the project office for further information at the following address:

College of Business Law & Social Sciences
Nottingham Trent University,
50 Shakespeare Street,
Nottingham, United Kingdom,
NG1 4FQ.

Appendix F - Participant Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Research project title: Nation Branding and Reputation Management: Nigeria - the hidden ramifications of Culture, Ethics, and Values of its people.

Research investigator: **Irene Izegwire**

The interview will take: **(approx. 50mins).**

Name of location………Lagos, Nigeria……………

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken from UK institutions require that interviewees explicitly agree to be interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and agree to your participation conditions.

Would you, therefore, read the accompanying information sheet, initial the appropriate box(es), and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following terms:

1. I confirm that the purpose of the project has been explained to me, that I have been given information about it in writing, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any implications for my legal rights

☐

3 I give permission for the interview to be tape-recorded by the researcher on the understanding that the data gathered in this study will be stored anonymously and securely and may be used for future research

☐

4. I agree to take part in this project

☐

_____   _____   _____
Name of respondent   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
Name of researcher taking consent   Date   Signature

Contact Information

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Nottingham Trent University Research Ethics Board. If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact:
Researcher: Irene Izegwire – xxxxxxxxxxxx@my.ntu.ac.uk, Tel: +xxxxxxxxxxxx or;
Director of Studies / Supervisor: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Tel: +xxxxxxxxxxxx.

1st Order Concepts/Categories	2nd Order Themes (Sub-themes)	Aggregate Dimensions (Overarching themes)

1. Status matters for inequality / Vigour for status identities and recognition e.g., 'Big man' status, chieftain status, dictator status
2. Validation through possession disparity /"I better pass my neighbour" (Nigerian creole)
3. Strategic dominance orientation / Belittlement values

→ 'I Pass My Neighbour' ethos (Status Inequality)

7. Multiple stressors in public domain and nationalised activities
8. "Don't believe anything can be easy" / Favour for hardship culture
9. Mysteriousness with national data and information / Lack of transparency

→ Complicacy Values

4. 'Sheep personality'/ Extensive deference to dominators e.g., tribal elders, political actors, parents, work superiors
5. Impressionable / Unfavourable agreements used to please outsiders
6. Conceding national accountabilities/responsibilities to 'God'

→ Subservience

Submission as the 'Norm'

10. Embracing incompetency in national matters
11. Investments in liabilities / value dissipation
12. Lavish cost of governance e.g., Unfrugal ministry operations, Loitered civil service
13. Policy-making irrelevance
14. (Natural) resource squandering

→ Wasteful

15. Reactive allocation of resources
16. Engrossed on immediate bribery at expense of public interest / inconsiderate trade off mentality
17. Large-scale dependency on proceeds from (volatile) oil & gas resources
18. Future developments are ill-considered

→ Impulsivity values

Impact Triviality

19. Accommodating and warm people
20. "We are very hospitable to foreigners"
21. "With the hardship still, people find time to be happy and adjust" / "We're very resilient"
22. "The majority of people are diligent, hardworking and have that determination"

→ Positive perceptions

Positive Attributes

Appendix G (ii) - Data Structure – Nigeria Nation Brand Identity

1st Order Concepts (codes)

1. Uncontrolled conflict of interests in national institutions/elections
2. Political actors' private accumulation / self-dealing
3. Standardised corruption
4. Consequential corruption catering for foreign investments

5. "Untouchables" / Indulgence to break the rule of law
6. Unrestricted political authority
7. Lack of accountability
8. Normalised bribery involving law enforcement

9. "We have corrupt leaders there is nothing we can do"
10. "The economy is governments problem, not up to us"
11. Inclination to embrace adversity
12. "Every situation is Gods will, nothing can be done"
13. "Suffering and Smiling is our number 1 motto"
14. Suffer and smile abets national peace

15. "As a country, culturally, we differ without a connection"
16. State of origin (ancestral) statutory prompts opportunities e.g., university admissions, employment
17. Ethnic saturation viewed as weakness
18. Ethnic origin as a primary social identifier

19. Ethnic tribal interest takes precedence over national interests
20. Nurtured religious/tribal intolerance
21. Power structure challenges

2nd Order Themes (Sub-themes)

- Corruption Plague
- Immunity
- 'Suffering and Smiling' Culture
- Cultural Diversity and Exclusion
- Toxic Tribalism

Aggregate Dimensions (Overarching themes)

- Inferior Leadership
- Institutionalised Rationalisation
- Ethno-tribal Intercommunications

Appendix G (iii) - Data Structure - Nigeria Nation Brand Image – Reputation

1st Order Concepts/categories	2nd Order Themes (Sub-themes)	Aggregate Dimensions (Overarching themes)

1. Exploitative political and social order / "The Nigerian system"
2. Self-centred business climate
3. Status Quo strengthening elements e.g., systematic hunger/poverty, curtailment of information, embezzlement of public resources
4. There is more to gender-based inequities

→ 'Predator-Prey' Culture

5. Sense of ambiguous management of internal affairs / Unpredictability
6. Concealment of information develops a propensity for bribery
7. Multiplicity of parts with administrative processes

→ Complexity

⟹ Submission as the 'Norm'

8. 'Indifference to / aiding the collapse of (internal) Nigerian institutions
9. Counterproductivity and incompetence are allowed to thrive
10. "Political Bickering" as a calamity issue

→ Self-Destructive

11. "Tomorrow does not exist in Nigeria's dictionary, it's all about today" / lacking foresight
12. "Centrally, it's all about 'the image' in Nigeria"/ Vanity-based value system

→ Short-termism

⟹ (Un)Sustainability Culture

13. Expatriates become accustomed to the generality of corruption
14. Sympathetic export of Nigeria's corruption

→ Omnipresent Corruption

15. Untarnished corruption
16. Familiarity with malpractices around law enforcement
17. Extensive toleration of anti-social behaviour
18. Absence of accountability

→ Impunity

⟹ Inferior Leadership

1st Order Concepts (codes)　　　　　　　　　　**2nd Order Themes** (Sub-themes)　　　**Aggregate Dimensions**(overarching themes)

| 19. Society follows the scripts of the 'big ogas' misbehaviours and misconducts
20. Precast negative perception of Nigeria emanates from leadership roles and accountabilities. | → | Leadership Communications | → | Leadership Communications |

| 21. Ethnic-culture used as a vetting strategy
22. Disdain for cultural heterogeneity
23. Discouraged uniform nationality | → | Cultural Diversity and Insensitivity | → | Cross-Cultural Mismanagement |

| 24. Ethnic-tribal origin as a primary social identifier
25. Political and Opportunities regionalism
26. Pessimistic inter-nation migration | → | Ethnic-Tribal Loyalty | | |

| 27. Successfully preserved customs and traditions
28. "As a foreigner here, Nigerians always give you a warm welcome"
29. Good combination of youth and energy / Resilient | → | Positive perceptions | → | Positive Attributes |

Appendix H (i) – Snapshot of Project Map – Nigeria Nation Brand Personality, using Nvivo 12 Pro.

Impulsivity values

Impact Triviality

Policy-making
irrelevance

Reactive allocation
of resources

"The majority of
people are diligent,
hardworking and
have that
determination"

"With the hardship
still, people find
time to be happy
and adjust" -
"We're very
resilient"

Positive
perceptions

Positive Attributes

Status matters for
inequality - Vigour
for status identities
and recognition

Personality

Accommodating
and warm people

We are very
hospitable to
foreigners

Submission as the
'Norm'

Status Inequality

Unrestricted
political authority

Suffe
abet

Uncontrolled
conflict of interests
in national
institutions-
elections

We have corrupt
leaders there is
nothing we can do

'Suffering and
Smiling' Culture

Suf
Smi
num

Inferior Leadership

Standardised
corruption

Corruption Plague

Identity

Institutionalised
Rationalisation

The economy is
governments
problem, not up to
us

Political actors'
private
accumulation -self-
dealing

Consequential
corruption catering
for foreign
investments

Ethno-tribal
Intercommunication

Power structure
challenges

Appendix I (i) – Nvivo List of Nodes - Nigeria Nation Brand Identity.

Name	Files	References
Nodes		Search Project
Inferior Leadership	0	0
Immunity	0	0
"Untouchables" - Indulgence to break the rule of law	12	17
Unrestricted political authority	6	42
Lack of accountability	6	30
Normalised bribery involving law enforcement	5	18
Corruption Plague	0	0
Uncontrolled conflict of interests in national institutions-elections	15	112
Political actors' private accumulation -self-dealing	7	49
Standardised corruption	11	153
Consequential corruption catering for foreign investments	2	5
Institutionalised Rationalisation	0	0
'Suffering and Smiling' Culture	0	0
We have corrupt leaders there is nothing we can do	14	77
The economy is governments problem, not up to us	3	3
Inclination to embrace adversity	2	8
Every situation is Gods will, nothing can be done	5	22
Suffering and Smiling is our number 1 motto	4	19
Suffer and smile abets national peace	3	9
Ethno-tribal Intercommunications	0	0
Toxic Tribalism	0	0
Power structure challenges	7	31

Appendix I (ii) – Nvivo List of Nodes - Nigeria Nation Brand Image - Reputation.

Nodes

Name	Files	References
Submission as the 'Norm'		0
Predator-Prey Culture		0
There is more to gender-based inequities		5
Status Quo strengthening elements e.g., systematic hunger - poverty, curtailment of information, embezzlement of public resources		8
Self-centred business climate		14
Exploitative political and social order - "The Nigerian system"		18
Complexity		0
Sense of ambiguous management of internal affairs - Unpredictability		6
Concealment of information develops a propensity for bribery		7
Multiplicity of parts with administrative processes		13
(Un)Sustainability Culture		0
Self-Destructive		0
Counterproductivity and incompetence are allowed to thrive		12
Political Bickering" as a calamity issue		9
Indifference to - aiding the collapse of (internal) Nigerian institutions		10
Short-termism		0
Centrally, it's all about 'the image' in Nigeria" Vanity - based value system		13
Tomorrow does not exist in Nigeria's dictionary, it's all about today" - lacking foresight		15
Inferior Leadership		0
Omnipresent Corruption		0
Sympathetic export of Nigeria's corruption		6
Expatriates become accustomed to the generality of corruption		20

Appendix J (i) – Mind Map for the Overarching theme - Submission as the 'Norm' (Personality) using Nvivo 12 Pro.
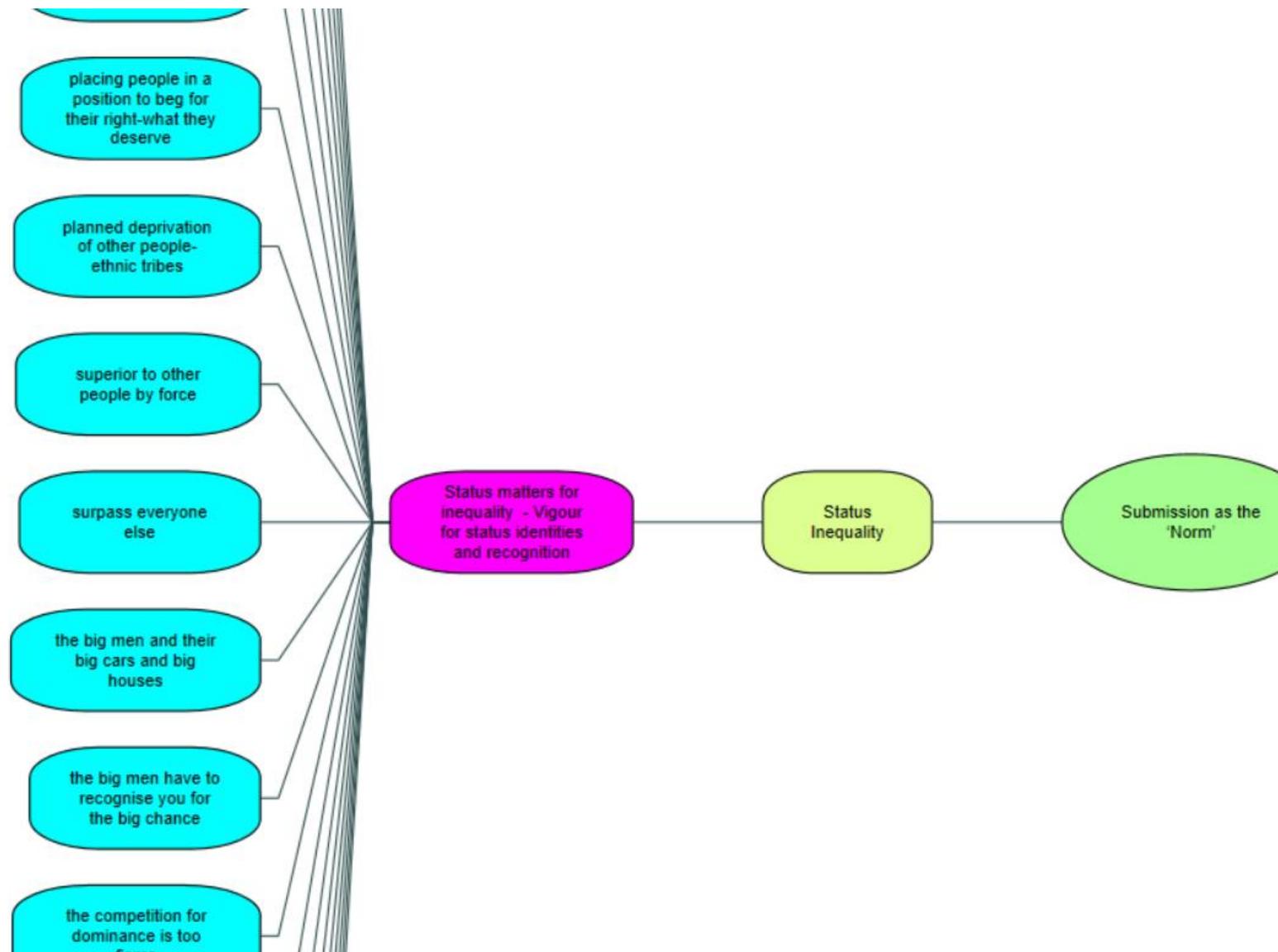
Appendix K (i)– Exemplar text frequency from 'Lack of Accountability' Code (Personality) using Nvivo 12 Pro.

○ Lack of accountability ✕

<Files\\Stage 1\\Participant 1 - Interview> - § 1 reference coded [4.16% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.16% Coverage

people protested and protested within the limits they can protest, because you are still carrying the organisations ID card and so, but nothing came out of it, nothing happened to the lawbreaker

<Files\\Stage 1\\Participant 2 – focus group 2> - § 1 reference coded [5.71% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 5.71% Coverage

actions are carried out in contravention of legal processes here, people can even continue to ignore court's Judgment because there are no consequences for that, this never occurs in other places at this type of rate, because we have the laws but people don't obey them

<Files\\Stage 1\\Participant 27-Interview> - § 1 reference coded [4.29% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.29% Coverage

this place let's just call it the blank cheque even when it comes down to as far as the police clearly meant to be warrantable, in fact across the board, people are not accountable for anything

<Files\\Stage 1\\Participant 8 - Interview> - § 1 reference coded [2.87% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.87% Coverage

their conclusion is always about bad leadership that because they see that perpetrators are seldom brought to book by the law

Summary   Reference   Text

Appendix K (ii) – Exemplar text frequency from 'Indifference to Aiding the collapse of internal Nigerian institutions' code (Image-Reputation) using Nvivo 12 Pro.

○ Indifference to - aiding the collap ✕

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 13 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [0.99% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.99% Coverage

It is destroying itself by not tackling that

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 16 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [1.08% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.08% Coverage

it is against itself for ignoring these things

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 2 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [2.15% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.15% Coverage

they're well aware that they're bringing about their own demise, but they don't seem to mind.

<Files\\Stage 2\\SPD 03> - § 1 reference coded [1.98% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.98% Coverage

They are aware they are bringing about their own destruction, but they simply don't care

Summary   Reference   Text

Appendix K (iii) – Exemplar text frequency from 'Political Bickering as a Calamity issue' code (Image-Reputation) using Nvivo 12 Pro.

○ Political Bickering" as a calamity ✕

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 12 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [4.33% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.33% Coverage

those running the helm of affairs just waste a lot of time and energy on you know personal arguments, religion, tribes and language disputes, that doesn't solve any of the issues on the ground

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 4 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [4.01% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.01% Coverage

After the disaster, you see them pay attention for a short while, then its back to business as usual of focusing on trivial things that cannot solve the major underlying problems

<Files\\Stage 2\\Participant 9 – Interview> - § 1 reference coded [3.42% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.42% Coverage

the politicians focus on interim cure that doesn't solve any problems when you can save and achieve far more by preventing; but they don't focus on that

Appendix L (i) – Anonymised Summary Details of Participants – Phase 1 – Internal Stakeholders

Phase 1 - Portfolio of Civil Servants Individually Interviewed

SN	Interviewee	Industry-Ministry	Geopolitical Zone	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	[X] Manager Project [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
2	XX	Service - FMHS	SS	Assistant Director at [X]	M	6[X]
3	XX	Service - FMHS	SW	Consultant [X]gist at [X]	M	5[X]
4	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	Deputy Manager at [X]	F	5[X]
5	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	[X] Petrophysicist at [X]	M	5[X]
6	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	[X] Compliance Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
7	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SW	[X] [X] Director [X] and [X]	M	5[X]
8	XX	Service - FMHS	SS	Medical Director at [X]	M	5[X]
9	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	SW	[X] General Manager [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
10	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NE	[X] officer at [X]	M	5[X]
11	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SW	[X] Analyst at [X]	F	5[X]
12	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SW	Project [X] Engineer at [X]	M	5[X]
13	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SW	[X] [X] Engineering at [X]	F	5[X]
14	XX	Service - FMHS	NW	[X] Director [X] Services at [X]	M	5[X]
15	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NE	Medical Director at [X]	M	6[X]
16	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NW	Senior Officer [X] and [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
17	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NW	[X] Software [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
18	XX	Service - FMHS	SE	Senior Registrar at [X]	M	5[X]
19	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NC	Head [X] & [X] at [X]	F	5[X]
20	XX	Service - FMHS	NC	Consultant [X]gist at [X]	M	6[X]
21	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NE	[X] [X] Geologist at [X]	M	5[X]
22	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NW	Deputy Chief [X] [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
23	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NC	[X] Manager [X] Services at [X]	M	5[X]
24	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NW	[X] [X] [X] Coordinator at [X]	F	5[X]
25	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NC	Deputy Manager [X] & [X] [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
26	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NC	[X] Accountant at [X]	M	5[X]
27	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SS	Manager [X] & [X] [X] Division at [X]	M	5[X]

Phase 1 - Portfolio of Civil Servants – Focus Group 1

SN	Interviewee	Industry-Ministry	Geopolitical Zone	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	SW	[XX] Policy Analyst at [X]	M	5[X]
2	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NW	[X] Surveyor at [X]	M	5[X]
3	XX	Service - FMHS	SS	Clinical [X] Specialist at [X]	M	5[X]
4	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	[X] [X] [X] Engineer at [X]	M	5[X]
5	XX	Service - FMHS	NC	[X] Resident at [X]	F	5[X]

Phase 1 - Portfolio of Civil Servants – Focus Group 2

SN	Interviewee	Industry-Ministry	Geopolitical Zone	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	SS	Deputy Manager [X] [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
2	XX	Service - FMHS	NW	Paediatric [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
3	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SW	[X] Economist [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
4	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	SE	[X] [X] officer at [X]	F	5[X]
5	XX	Service - FMHS	SW	X] Medicine Resident at [X]	M	5[X]
6	XX	Agriculture - FMAR	NW	[X] Operations Supervisor at [X]	F	5[X]
7	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NE	[X] Controller at [X]	M	5[X]
8	XX	Oil & Gas - FMPR	NC	[X] Program Officer at [X]	M	5[X]

Appendix L (ii) – Anonymised Summary Details of Participants – Phase 2 – External Stakeholders

Phase 2 - Portfolio of Expatriates Individually Interviewed

SN	Interviewee	Industry	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Oil & Gas	Manager [XXX] at [X]	M	5[X]
2	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
3	XX	Service	Chief [X] [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
4	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
5	XX	Service	Executive Director [X] at [X]	M	6[X]
6	XX	Oil & Gas	Managing Director at [X]	M	5[X]
7	XX	Service	Financial [X] at [X]	F	4[X]
8	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
9	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [X] at [X]	M	4[X]
10	XX	Service	Managing Director at [X]	M	5[X]
11	XX	Oil & Gas	Regional [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
12	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
13	XX	Service	Head of [XX] at [X]	M	5[X]
14	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [X] at [X]	M	4[X]
15	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Analyst at [X]	F	3[X]
16	XX	Service	Managing Director at [X]	M	5[X]
17	XX	Service	Managing Director at [X]	M	5[X]
18	XX	Oil & Gas	[XX] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
19	XX	Service	Chief [X] [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
20	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	3[X]
21	XX	Service	Director of [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
22	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]

Phase 2 - Portfolio of Expatriates – Focus Group 1

SN	Interviewee	Industry	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Oil & Gas	[XX] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
2	XX	Service	Director of [X] at [X]	M	5[X]
3	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [XX] at [X]	F	4[X]
4	XX	Service	[X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
5	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
6	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [X] at [X]	M	5[X]

Phase 2 - Portfolio of Expatriates – Focus Group 2

SN	Interviewee	Industry	Job Role	Gender	Age
1	XX	Service	Africa [X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
2	XX	Oil & Gas	Head of [XX] at [X]	M	5[X]
3	XX	Service	[X] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
4	XX	Oil & Gas	[XX] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
5	XX	Service	[XX] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]
6	XX	Service	Risk [X] Manager at [X]	M	5[X]
7	XX	Oil & Gas	[X] Manager at [X]	M	4[X]