

# Branding Resilience: Shaping Gaza's Global Identity through Narrative, Solidarity, and Advocacy

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**Abstract** This paper outlines a comprehensive exploration of branding Gaza within the context of its historical and ongoing struggles. It begins with an introduction that highlights Gaza's significant role in drawing global attention to the Palestinian cause, attributed to the hardships faced by its population and the impact of social media, grassroots activism, and international solidarity. The paper aims to discuss the potential of branding Gaza as a means to re-emphasise Palestinian rights, cultural identity, and economic opportunities, drawing parallels with the branding of the Holocaust by Israel for mobilising global support. The literature review argues for the strategic use of branding to differentiate Gaza, highlighting its unique aspects like cultural identity, economic potential, and resilience amidst adversity. The methodology uses a narrative analysis to understand Gaza's resilience and resistance, relying on media reports and social media narratives post the 2023 war. This approach aims to uncover themes that could support a brand strategy advocating for Palestinian resilience and resistance. The researchers discuss the various aspects to be included in Gaza's brand, such as its unique resilience, cultural and historical significance, community engagement, and urgent humanitarian needs, aiming to foster global solidarity and awareness. The paper concludes with strategies for capitalising on Gaza's reputation, emphasising storytelling, advocacy, and socio-economic development to transform adversity into a source of strength and unity. It calls for a coordinated effort to communicate Gaza's narrative globally, aiming to change perceptions and support Gazans' aspirations for peace and justice.

**Keywords** Gaza, Branding, Reputation, Resilience, Resistance, Value Creation, Palestinian Cause

## 1. Introduction

For more than a decade, Gaza has played a pivotal role in reshaping the global perception of the Palestinian cause and the occupation. Maybe due to the level of atrocities that more than two million have been suffering from in the last two decades, or due to the consistent fierce wars that end up every time with high loss of lives, casualties and, besides, loss of all, the basis of quality of life. Through the power of the internet, social media, grassroots activism, cultural expression, and international solidarity, Gaza has succeeded in amplifying the voices of its people and its community, garnering attention from around the world.

In this paper, we shall present the importance of capitalising on branding Gaza, by starting a literature review about the importance of branding for any cause, and then the importance of branding for cities or countries. The authors also explore how 'Gaza' can be a differentiated brand that brings with it, for example, approaches that re-emphasise the Palestinians' rights as the development of cultural identity,

the development of economic opportunities, etc. Mariuttia and Giraldi (2021).

The literature review is used by the researchers to setup the main constructs that help create the Gaza Brand, using specific factors of reference and learning in the same time from the Holocaust branding experience that Israel managed to mobilise the world to. The creation of the brand also could capitalise on the genocide happened in Gaza since October 2023. Mihalache and Vukman (2005).

The authors visualise that the process of the design of Gaza's brand should help its reposition and fair representation of its unique resilience, hardiness, besides its community strong faith, Al Ries and Trout (2001). The Gaza brand also should take into consideration the cultural and historical significance of the city, the urgency and necessities of the humanitarian needs, the global solidarity, community engagement, the narrative redefinition of Gaza. The paper finally shows how this branding should be combined with an international awareness campaign about Gaza and Palestine by Capitalising on Gaza Reputation. Buheji (2023).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. What is a Brand?

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We are surrounded by brands, not just for products or services, because the brands exceed that to touch all things and thoughts around us. The brands of nations and counties, the brand of cases and beliefs. We create the brands, and brands can reshape our consciousness about ourselves and others.

A brand, as articulated by influential authors such as Aaker (2014), Neumeier (2005), Al Ries (2001), and Trout (2001) is a holistic entity encompassing more than tangible products or services. It's a composite of tangible and intangible elements, embodying the total of consumer experiences, emotions, and perceptions. They see a brand can serve as a strategic tool, creating a distinctive and memorable identity that goes beyond mere functional attributes. It is not solely what an entity claims it to be but, as Neumeier emphasises, what customers perceive it to be.

A brand occupies a unique mental space in the consumer's mind, shaped by associations, positioning, and emotional connections. This dynamic construct is instrumental in influencing consumer behaviour and fostering loyalty. When viewed as a perception in people's minds, a brand is the sum total of thoughts, feelings, associations, and experiences that individuals have with a particular product, service, or entity. It goes beyond the tangible elements like logos and products to encompass the intangible aspects such as emotions, values, and expectations. In this context, a brand is not what the entity says it is but rather what people perceive and believe it to be. Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024).

## 2.2. Why is branding important for any Cause?

The perception of a brand is shaped by various interactions, communication, and experiences that consumers have with it over time. It's a dynamic and evolving construct influenced by advertising, word-of-mouth, user experiences, and cultural associations. A strong brand perception is characterised by positive associations, trust, and a unique identity that sets it apart in the minds of consumers. Managing and influencing this perception is a key aspect of brand management, as it directly impacts consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Aaker (2014), Aaker (1995).

All that is one of the aspects of brand, and the major one that is tangible for people, besides there are other aspects when we talk about the brand from different perspectives and effectiveness. Therefore, the brand of nations and counties and even cities, is all about how we perceive a specific nation, country or city in our mind. Efe Sevin (2014).

When we talk about Germany, we have a mindset about this country, and it was created over many years, and the same things when we are talking about nations, such as the Japanese people, and the perception we had about this nation with their love of work, full commitments, etc. And that perception leads to action, to buying a product from that country or talking positively or negatively about that nation. So, the brand plays a major role in our actions, perceptions, and behaviour at the end of the day.

The concept of a brand involves a strategic effort to create

a distinctive and memorable identity that differentiates it from competitors and resonates with the target audience. Thus, the meaning of brand exceeds the commercial use to be in the wider scale of everything around us. From thoughts to beliefs, from tangible to intangible things. It's all around the frames that we choose to see things through. For example, one of the things that create an impact on society's mindset is the perception of certain cities and people, and that perception creates new types of brands that can take place in our thoughts and stands. Neumeier (2005).

## 2.3. The Importance of Cities or Countries' Branding

A "brand city" refers to the strategic management and promotion of a city as a brand. Similar to how companies build and manage their brands, cities engage in branding initiatives to create a distinctive identity, communicate their unique attributes, and enhance their overall reputation. Efe Sevin (2014).

A brand city approach involves shaping perceptions, fostering civic pride, attracting residents, tourists, businesses, and investments, and creating a positive and memorable image on a local, national, and often international scale, Efe Sevin (2014). The concept of a brand city recognises that cities, like products or services, can benefit from deliberate efforts to differentiate themselves and build a strong, positive image. This includes considerations for cultural identity, urban planning, public services, tourism promotion, and community engagement. The goal is to establish a city as not just a geographical location but a dynamic and appealing entity with its personality, values, and promises to those who live in, visit, or invest in it, or have empathy with. Buheji et al. (2024).

Brand City became one of the biggest objectives that governments around the world are willing to invest in, and it is taking the right place in positioning compared with others, to be a destination, not just a location. You can just name any well-known city, and you will figure out the perception that was created, from different aspects, economy, nature, pleasure and entertainment, culture and heritage, etc. Al Ries and Trout (2001).

## 2.4. History of Gaza Strip that Created Its Initial Brand

The Gaza Strip, long embroiled in conflict, has developed a distinctive reputation characterised by resilience, patience, persistence, and resistance. Since 2016, UNDP highlighted the issues of poverty and vulnerability of the people of the Gaza strip. The economic sanction that Israel has taken to Gaza in ten years' blockade on access to resources hampered economic development and increased misery in the population. Besides, the hostility has triggered the destruction of infrastructure like houses, water, power plants, industrial infrastructure, and affected the fertility and health of the land. It also affected the functioning of key public sectors, including schools and hospitals. The crisis increased food insecurity and unemployment, especially among the youth, and 58% of the population had no source of income. GIZ

(2023), UNDP (2016).

This reputation, especially during and after the war on Gaza 2023 war, offers unique opportunities for value creation, both within Gaza and in the global context. This paper aims to explore these opportunities, proposing pathways to transform challenges into strengths.

## 2.5. 'Gaza' as a Differentiated Brand

But we have a city or place that creates its strong brand in a new way, and far away from the typical produce of building a brand for a city, where you cannot find even the basic needs of life, and this city can empower, inspire and encourage millions of people all around the world to know more about this city and place. It's GAZA in Palestine!

The brand of Gaza is shaped by a variety of factors that collectively contribute to its identity, reputation, and overall image. Here are some main factors influencing Gaza to differentiate its brand from other cities' brands. Mariutti and Giraldi (2021).

### 2.5.1. Cultural Identity

Gaza has built a cultural identity that even differentiates itself from other cities in Palestinian territories today. The city is known for its resistance and resilience, which are combined with high faith, and it has gone through approximately two decades of being under siege.

### 2.5.2. Economic Opportunities

Gaza is full of economic opportunities due to its economy of scale, the entrepreneurship spirit within the Gazans and now specifically due to the total destruction done by the Israeli forces. Allen (2007).

### 2.5.3. Urban Design and Infrastructure

The bombardment of Gaza for more than four months now is considered a turning point and a shame on humanity. Hence, the Gaza brand would resemble the level of inhuman we reached in this world during this certain time.

### 2.5.4. Environmental Sustainability

The genocide in Gaza created a total environmental impact that reached ecocide. The Israeli forces didn't keep any sign of life without destroying it; even the animals and the plants were destroyed by the lethal bombs or the bulldozers.

### 2.5.5. Quality of Life

Gaza brand is would be a memory about how we humans can lose our quality of life due to human atrocities or man-made conflicts or due to inhuman occupation.

### 2.5.6. Tourism and Hospitality

Gaza is not open for tourism due to its being under siege by the Israeli regime for many years, despite it having a historic heritage. The brand of Gaza can represent how depriving people and communities of life can impact our

opportunities to discover the world and know our human follows.

### 2.5.7. Innovation and Technology

Despite its challenges, Gaza managed to build hi-tech hubs and incubators, besides doing good academic development where colleges of engineering and medicine, besides other disciplines, were producing scientists and professionals that served all means of life. The Israeli forces have all now demolished this, and thus, the brand would resemble the destruction made in this area.

### 2.5.8. Community Engagement and Inclusivity

The Gazans have proven that they are one of the highest communities in the world that are resilient, persistent, focused on their goals, supportive of a common cause, and have high synergy with each other with high engagement and inclusivity.

### 2.5.9. Governance and Leadership

The recent history of Gaza after the takeover of Hamas shows how governance and leadership, when transparent and clean, can have a significant impact with little resources.

### 2.5.10. Public Relations and Marketing

Gazan overcame its siege situation by building relations through social media activists and influencers all over the world. This had a highly positive impact during the War on Gaza that started in October 2023.

### 2.5.11. Safety and Security

Gaza brand also can capitalise on its people's experience that have been developed over the years on how they survived and maintained their safety and security despite all of Gaza being under fire during the War of 2023 specifically and also in the last two decades.

### 2.5.12. Crisis Management

Similar to the previous factor, the accumulated experience that Gaza authority and Gazans built during the last five wars brought them to be among the most potential experts or sources of expertise in crisis management. The brand of Gaza should represent this, too.

## 3. Methodology

This paper focuses on how to build a brand for Gaza that would help support Palestinian resilience and resistance (in the Context of the 2023 War). The researchers build an in-depth understanding through narratives, perceptions, and symbolic meanings associated with Gaza's resilience and resistance.

Adopt a narrative analysis approach aims to understand and interpret the stories and experiences shared by individuals related to Gaza's resilience and resistance. This

method will help uncover the underlying themes and symbols that can contribute to building a supportive brand for Palestinian resilience and resistance.

The researchers collectively analysed the collective media reports and social media posts in the last three months since the start of the War on Gaza in October 2023.

c and cultural narratives surrounding Gaza.

A deep understanding of the required brand that would be associated with Gaza's resilience and resistance. This study seeks to lay the groundwork for a brand strategy that authentically represents and supports Palestinian resilience and resistance, offering a pathway to socio-economic empowerment and global solidarity with Free-Palestine in general, starting with the cease-fire on Gaza. Neumeier (2005).

## 4. Creation of Gaza Brand

### 4.1. Factors that are Set for the Creation of Gaza Brand

Establishing a Gaza brand that supports the Palestinian Liberation Journey, which could represent the movement to stop Israeli oppression, and break the barriers for the largest open-air prison in the world, is becoming a necessity. It is a necessity since it is time to capitalise on all the collective pain and suffering that Gaza has gone through so that it won't continue its suffering in the future. Buheji (2024a), Mihalache and Vukman (2005).

The Gaza brand can be the centre of attention all around the world since it is a symbol of many communications between humans where people all around the world could understand and share when they work for the cause of Gaza and Palestine. Such a brand would make Gaza a purely human dignity case against the last occupation in modern times from Israel (The occupier).

This Gaza brand has all that it requires to be successful and unique since it has the people's story, i.e. those under oppression, and the place, which is the strip under siege. The other success factor is the case of Gaza, and its unique resilience story, besides the amount of media coverage, Buheji (2024a). This unique position for Gaza in the world's mindset today makes it the right time to create a brand from all these accumulated factors. This brand is expected to be recognised by many people around the world in order to support or show solidarity towards the cause of liberating Gaza and Palestine. Al Ries and Trout (2001).

### 4.2. Learning from the Holocaust Branding

Learning from how Israelis have branded the event of the Holocaust so that Gazans could brand the ongoing genocide and its ramifications can create a profound contribution to the Gaza brand. The holocaust used the power of narrative, memory, and identity to shape global perceptions and create internal solidarity. Lascu and Amesquita (2011).

Both cases of the holocaust and the genocide in Gaza involve the use of historical trauma in the brand construction, which communicates resilience, victimhood, and the need

for international support and recognition. However, we need to consider that the contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes of each of these two branding might differ significantly due to the historical, political, and social differences between the two cases.

The Holocaust became today central to Israeli identity, utilised as a narrative of extreme victimhood leading to resilience and the justification for the establishment of a Jewish state as a safe haven. The brand of the holocaust brings with it museums, memorials, and education systems worldwide that emphasise the Holocaust's atrocities, underlining the moral imperative to prevent such genocide.

The branding of the Holocaust involves a structured, global outreach program, including Holocaust Remembrance Day, testimonies from survivors, youth activities and extensive use of media and literature. The narrative of the holocaust is supported by strong institutional frameworks which has gained widespread international recognition, partly due to the global Jewish diaspora's efforts and the universal moral lessons it conveys. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023b).

The Holocaust branding has successfully garnered international sympathy and support for Israel, contributing to its establishment and ongoing support. It became attached to the global education about genocide prevention and the importance of human rights.

The Israeli's worked hard to ensure that the Holocaust's branding does not overshadow current issues or justify injustices. The Holocaust's brand came to have a goodwill value that carries moral weight in the name of promoting peace, tolerance, and justice worldwide. Lascu and Amesquita (2011).

### 4.3. Branding Based on the Genocide in Gaza

The war on Gaza is characterised now by an international court and even all international observers to have created a severe threat to human rights with many violations that surpassed the approximately many years of blockade. The Israeli military assaults and the amount of destruction and demolishment to human, animals, and the environment would be a witness to the devastating genocide in Gaza. Buheji and Al-Muhannadi (2023)

The narrative of the Gaza brand could focus on the resilience of Gazans in the face of ongoing oppression, their persistence to gain their right to self-determination, and the amount of the humanitarian crisis that the world witnessed without real intervention. The branding should use decentralised and grassroots empathisers who would optimise the brand by relying on social media, personal stories, and international activists. Buheji et al. (2024)

The branding of Gazan resistance and suffering should be dependent on the grassroots and less dependent on the institutional support at the beginning of the launch of the brand till it picks up. It should rely on social media, NGOs, and individual activists. This should real-time sharing of images, stories, and videos from Gaza play a crucial role in shaping its brand, emphasising the immediacy and ongoing

nature of the conflict.

The efforts to brand Gaza's experience aim to highlight the humanitarian crisis and garner international support for Gazans' rights and self-determination. However, the brand of Gaza is also expected to face some challenges, including media censorship, and political bias. The target is to capitalise on the opportunities of Gaza's reputation to create a unified, compelling brand that mobilises international support for Gazans' human rights and political solutions to the conflict. Mihalache and Vukman (2005).

#### 4.4. The Message of Gaza's Brand

While Gaza may face difficulties in fulfilling some of the conventional criteria for building a competitive brand, it can still develop a distinct and meaningful brand through alternative approaches. The brand of Gaza might bring in some potential factors that could contribute to its differentiation in the following areas:

##### 4.4.1. Representation of Gaza's Unique Resilience and Strength

Gaza can showcase its resilience through this branding exercise. That means Gaza is unique in its ability to successfully adapt to stressors, and maintain psychological wellbeing in the face of adversity. And that's what the world sees every day from Gaza, and from its people of different ages. That's what inspired many people around the world and let them think twice about the main power and strength of Gaza people to be more resilient and stronger in such inhumane circumstances, because of the sage and the bloody war from Israel against innocent civilians in Gaza. Buheji and Khunji (2023).

All these situations of resilience and strength create a unique identity for this place and become a source of inspiration and lessons about resilience and strength.

##### 4.4.2. Representation of Gaza's Cultural and Historical Significance

Despite challenges, Gaza has a rich cultural and historical heritage. Promoting this aspect can contribute to building a brand that emphasises the city's significance in the region. Promoting the cultural and Historical aspects of Gaza is very important to remind the world about the main case, the occupation, and let people know more about this angle in Gaza to see the bigger picture of the unfair case is still open because of injustice and the mindset of discrimination from Israeli regime and the powers that supporting him.

Despite challenges, there are artists and cultural expressions in Gaza. Promoting cultural exchange, artistic initiatives, and creative endeavours can contribute to building a unique brand identity. The art support takes place in different shapes, from creating icons related to Gaza and Palestine (The watermelon) to the resistance in Gaza against occupiers to become new icons for heroes for kids and adults, through digital art, animation, and even small clips with music and songs.

Culture and Art are two of the widest areas that you can see the solidarity coming from, where you can see the cartoonist from Brazil to a calligrapher from Egypt drawing manga from Japan, and merge cultures between Palestine and the original Americans "The red Indians" through music and songs, and the list goes on and on. All those are resources for a strong brand of Gaza.

##### 4.4.3. Representation of Gazan's Strong Faith

Besides their hardiness characteristics, Gazans have shown the world how faith and belief in God could play a role in their persistence and perseverance. This unique, strong faith among the majority of Gaza's community makes them deserve the unique brand. Buheji (2023).

Gaza's strong faith often refers to the deep religious and spiritual convictions held by many of its inhabitants. Gaza is a predominantly Muslim population, with Islam playing a significant role in their daily lives and cultural identity, and they are known for their resilience and steadfastness, aspects of character that are closely tied to their faith. Therefore, faith is considered one of the main sources of community strength and solidarity. It offers a sense of hope and endurance amidst the challenging circumstances that the region has faced over the years, including conflict, blockades, and economic hardships. Religious practices, community prayers, and the teachings of Islam provide a framework through which many Gazans navigate their experiences, finding solace and purpose.

Moreover, this strong faith is a cornerstone for the resilience and perseverance that characterise the people of Gaza. It inspires acts of charity, community support, and a deep sense of brotherhood and sisterhood among the population. Despite the adversities faced, the faith of the Gazans remains a powerful testament to their collective identity and hope for a better future.

##### 4.4.4. Representation of Gaza's Humanitarian Needs

The international community recognises the humanitarian challenges faced by Gaza. Emphasising the city's resilience, humanitarian efforts, and the spirit of its people can contribute to shaping a positive brand. This could become like a snowball when people read and search and see more about what happens in Gaza, leading them to take action online through social media and sign petitions and offline through demonstrations and boycotting the brands that support the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF).

##### 4.4.5. Representation of Gaza's Need for Global Solidarity

The image of Gaza and its identity can be shaped by the leverage of global solidarity initiatives and partnerships that bring incollaborations with humanitarian organisations, and international support can contribute to positive perceptions. One of the recent milestones in this title is the case that was raised from South Africa Against Israel in The International Court of Justice (ICJ).

#### 4.4.6. Representation of Gaza's Community Engagement

The Gaza brand would help involve the community in initiatives that contribute to the betterment of the city and its residents, which can foster a sense of pride and engagement. The brand would characterise Gaza's community engagement as remarked by its resilience and adaptability, despite the territory's unique challenges.

Grassroots organisations, a strong culture of volunteerism, and deep cultural and religious cohesion form the backbone of community engagement. Young Gazans play a pivotal role in driving community initiatives, focusing on education, empowerment, and innovation despite the constraints of economic blockades and restricted movement. The brand should show how the community's adaptability in Gaza is evident in its creative responses to adversity, including the development of underground networks and the use of technology to maintain communication and resource distribution.

#### 4.4.7. Narrative Redefinition of Gaza

Gaza brand could work on redefining its narrative beyond conflict, showcasing aspects of daily life, community initiatives, and positive stories that challenge stereotypes. Despite the biased Western media, the narrative of Gaza is still the strongest presence and has more impact than others, and that's coming from different people and from different backgrounds.

#### 4.4.8. International Awareness Campaigns about Gaza

The brand could help create more sustained awareness campaigns about Gaza for the international community and can showcase the daily life, challenges, and aspirations of Gazans, fostering understanding and empathy. Through this branding, we can see the solidarity coming from gorilla marketing, to street arts, and others and from different countries to raise awareness about what's going on in Gaza.

Yes, the factors mentioned earlier represent additional considerations that can contribute to shaping a city's brand, especially in unique or challenging circumstances. While the conventional criteria for city branding include aspects like economic development, tourism, and infrastructure, cities facing distinctive challenges can leverage alternative factors to build a brand that reflects their unique identity and resilience. The factors mentioned for Gaza highlight alternative avenues for brand development, considering the city's specific context and the need for a nuanced approach.

## 5. Capitalising on Gaza Reputation

### 5.1. Understanding Gaza's Reputation

This work aims to review how Gaza's historical and contemporary context has shaped its reputation and built its reputation, image, and brand. The framework focus on how to capitalise on this value creation through examining the socio-cultural capital, the type of resilience in Gaza, and

identity-based value creation.

Capitalising on Gaza's reputation involves transforming its image of resilience and resistance into a powerful narrative that can mobilise support, foster solidarity, and drive socio-economic development. This means we can articulate Gaza's identity around its core values of resilience, resistance, endurance, and the quest for freedom. This narrative should highlight the strength and perseverance of the Gazan people despite the challenges they face.

### 5.2. Gaza's Reputation as an Asset

The authors aim to analyse how the traits of Gaza's collective patience, and persistence, often seen in the light of endurance and adaptability, contribute to community cohesion and resilience. The authors also explore how resistance has become a symbol of identity and empowerment for Gazans, influencing local and global perceptions. Besides, this work target to assess the impact of these traits on the collective psyche and societal structures in Gaza.

The Gaza brand is considered one of the forms of its non-financial wealth, which enriches its support by keeping people connected with it and even goes further to teach educational programs about Gaza's history, the current situation, and its people's resilience. Hopefully, this would bring many opportunities to Gazans through for example, different development funding, and exchange programs that could allow people from other countries to visit Gaza (when possible) and vice versa, fostering a deeper understanding and personal connections of this unique city.

### 5.3. How 'Gaza Brand' Would Help to Shed More Lights on Its Humanitarian Needs

GAZA has been grappling with a severe humanitarian crisis, largely due to the Israeli blockade that has lasted for over a decade. The dire living conditions, limited access to basic necessities, and restricted movement have garnered significant attention from the international community. Images and stories depicting the struggles faced by Gazans have circulated widely, highlighting the urgency of the situation and generating empathy from people worldwide.

The perception built around the brand would help to create a reputation that comes from the stories of the people of Gaza themselves, and their suffering of the Israeli occupation, and its apartheid system. The war on Gaza created a new position for this district and city, a positioning that attracts empathy and understanding from many people all around the world because the uniqueness of Gaza is the Human basic needs, water and medicine, shelter, security, and the main thing is their freedom. It's a reaction chain, starting from the people of Gaza with their patience, resistance, and resilience against the Israeli apartheid system. Al Ries and Trout (2001).

Their case of basic human rights to live in their land without the occupier are today witnessed and experienced by the global audience who are frustrated with the biased governments and media. This close day-to-day, minute-by-minute coverage helps to create awareness and that's coming from people to

people, not from the official media. The snowball becomes bigger when people put pressure on their government in the West mainly to take a non-biased stand for this case. And with continuous pressure from public demonstrations to public figures, and all that creates the positioning for Gaza in the world map, which can be capitalised upon. And that's is to take the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

What's needed to create a solid brand for Gaza is to work around the Human Centric Case (HCC), the term coined to emphasise the centrality of humans in various cases, including those related to human rights, innovation, and other aspects. The term suggests a focus on putting humans at the centre of consideration and decision-making in different contexts.

#### **5.4. Strategies for Capitalising on Gaza's Reputation**

These initiatives target to bring better economic empowerment, including local entrepreneurship and international collaborations for Gaza, after the war of 2023. This means that Gaza sympathisers can help technically in developing programs that promote Gaza's narrative, fostering cultural pride and learning resilience. These can be reflected in strategies that utilise Gaza's reputation in diplomacy and international advocacy.

The brand should be marketed by sharing real-life stories of Gazans who embody the spirit of resilience through using various media platforms, thus building a community around Gaza's brand. The hashtag campaigns can help in rallying support and engaging the brand with a global audience. Part of the Gaza brand should be involved with producing high-quality content, including documentaries, articles, and photo essays that showcase Gaza's history, culture, and the daily lives of its people. Highlight the human aspect behind the conflict.

The Palestinians in the diaspora can mobilise themselves to act as brand ambassadors for Gaza. Their personal stories and connections can help authenticate the brand's narrative and garner international support. They can organise cultural events and exhibitions abroad that celebrate Gazan culture, art, and heritage, enhancing its global image.

The new Gaza branding should help foster partnerships with international NGOs, civil society organisations, and other entities that can help in amplifying Gaza's voice. Collaborative efforts in humanitarian aid, cultural exchange, and advocacy can strengthen Gaza's brand. The brand would be like the bridge that aligns with global solidarity and social justice movements to create synergies and mutual support platforms.

Through the new Gaza brand, Gazans entrepreneurs and innovators can show how they are who are building solutions under siege. Highlighting their achievements can shift the narrative towards hope and progress. This could attract investment in sectors like technology, education, and renewable energy, along with sustainable development projects that can provide employment and improve living conditions.

## **6. Repositioning Gaza through Its Brand**

The GAZA strip has become a focal point for resistance, resilience, and the pursuit of justice. Through its steadfast determination and the unwavering spirit of its people, GAZA has successfully captured the attention of the world, drawing international support and amplifying the call for an end to the occupation.

### **6.1. Role of Gaza Brand to Illustrate Its Impact on the World**

By reframing the narrative and highlighting the human stories behind the War on Gaza, the brand can garner empathy and create more sustained understanding from the international community. Centering around the Gazan stories and the daily struggles its people face would ensure that the brand spread with personal narratives and would help to shed light on the impact of the Israeli aggression on individuals, families, and communities. This should make the world better empathise with the human case in Gaza. Social media campaigns, documentaries, and art exhibitions can serve as powerful tools to amplify these stories, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the people of Gaza.

Gaza's branding strategy should also highlight the humanitarian efforts and initiatives aimed at rebuilding the city and improving the lives of its residents. By showcasing the resilience and resourcefulness of the local community, as well as the support they receive from global organisations and individuals, the Gaza brand can inspire compassion and solidarity. This can be done through highlighting projects that focus on infrastructure development, healthcare, education, and economic empowerment.

Social media platforms can play a crucial role in disseminating information about the Gaza brand and raising awareness about the plight of the Palestinian people in general. Branding Gaza while documenting the events as they unfold would help to raise the goodwill value of the brand. For example, the brand, when linked with personal stories and real-time updates, would gain trust among global audiences, and this would help foster a deeper understanding of the realities on the ground.

### **6.2. Sustaining the Gaza Brand Influence**

To sustain the influence and the impact of Gaza brand, including creating further empathy and support for those surviving the genocide, the brand requires engaging the global community in a meaningful way. This can be achieved through partnerships with international organisations, cultural exchanges, and events that promote dialogue and understanding. Additionally, inviting journalists, bloggers, and influencers to experience Gaza firsthand can help dispel misconceptions and build bridges of compassion between the people of Gaza and the rest of the world.

Art and culture can be used here to serve as a powerful medium for conveying the Palestinian narrative to a global audience. Through using the brand during music, film, poetry, and visual arts, and artists' event; the Gaza brand would be able to depict their experiences, hopes, and struggles. Sustaining the brand would help to provide a unique platform to engage in conversations about Palestine and the occupation.

### **6.3. Capitalising on the Opportunity for Repositioning Gaza**

The war in Gaza has brought immense suffering and devastation, but it has also created an opportunity for the city to reposition itself in the global consciousness. By leveraging the power of storytelling, promoting the rights of Gazans' and Palestinian people in general about living in their land with freedom, the world not is fully connected with this issue like never before.

Branding Gaza would help to highlight the importance of the flow, the type and the level of the humanitarian efforts that the global community needs to engage with in this strip. Through repositioning Gaza through its brand, it can be transformed from an image that would have from a place of war to one of empathy, resilience, and resistance to take its right to live and stay strong without occupation, not just for Gaza but for all land of Palestine from the river to the sea.

The repositioning of Gaza would bring more structured collective efforts, where the world can come to realise the depth of the human case in Gaza, fostering compassion and working towards a better future for the city. It is a strategic move that would help all of the Palestinians to see the possibility of returning their rights and reaching freedom with independence from the occupier overtime.

### **6.4. Constructs of Gaza Brand Value Proposition**

Gaza can capitalise on instances of its people's resilience stories and bring more to Gaza's brand and Goodwill value or reputation that garner more international empathy, support, and collaboration. Even this can bring hard currency for Gaza, when people use Gaza's name or official logos.

To raise Gaza's value proposition and brand the production and global marketing of Gaza's unique crafts, textiles, and other artisanal products need to be organised and encouraged. Therefore, the authors suggest establishing online platforms to sell Gaza-branded products internationally, showcasing Gaza's rich cultural heritage. This can also be supported by cultural festivals and exhibitions, both locally and internationally, to showcase Gaza's art, music, dance, and culinary traditions. Production of documentaries and digital storytelling projects that narrate the stories of Gazans, focusing on their daily lives, challenges, and resilience, should be part of the brand support initiatives.

### **6.5. Branding that Contains Empathy Building**

The resilience and determination of the people in the GAZA district have inspired grassroots activism and

solidarity movements around the world. Protests, demonstrations, and advocacy campaigns have been organised in major cities, demanding an end to the occupation and supporting the rights of the Palestinian people. Gaza has become a symbol of resistance, galvanising collective action and encouraging dialogue on a global scale.

Empathy would be further triggered when global campaigns that highlight the resilience and cultural richness of Gaza are launched through its brand. Changing the narrative from one of conflict to one of culture, innovation, and human resilience would also help to capitalise on bringing in a new level of capacity and empathy building. This can be achieved through a strategy that leverages social media platforms that share positive stories, achievements, and cultural aspects of Gaza with a global audience.

## **7. Discussion and Conclusion**

### **7.1. 'Gaza' Beyond Conventional Branding**

In the process of branding Gaza, it should be remembered that this venture is beyond conventional marketing strategies to embrace the profound complexities and challenges of Gaza's socio-political context. It advocates for the strategic utilisation of branding to highlight Gaza's unique resilience, cultural identity, economic potential, and the critical humanitarian needs of its people.

By drawing parallels with the branding of the Holocaust and leveraging the narrative of resilience and resistance, the paper proposes a nuanced approach to construct Gaza's brand as a symbol of human dignity against oppression.

### **7.2. Gaza Brand as a Catalyst Change**

The conclusion underscores the transformative potential of this branding exercise. It emphasises that through effective storytelling, advocacy, and a focus on socio-economic development, Gaza's brand can become a catalyst for change. The paper calls for a coordinated global effort to communicate Gaza's narrative, aiming to alter perceptions and rally support for Gazans' aspirations for peace, justice, and self-determination. By capitalising on Gaza's reputation and the collective empathy generated worldwide, the paper envisions a brand that not only garners international solidarity but also fosters a sustainable pathway towards socio-economic empowerment and the fulfilment of the Palestinian cause.

### **7.3. Raising Global Consciousness through Gaza Repositioning**

This strategic branding, rooted in authenticity and grounded in the lived experiences of Gazans, aims to reposition Gaza in the global consciousness. It seeks to transform the image of Gaza from a place of conflict to a beacon of resilience, resistance, and human rights advocacy. The paper concludes with a call to action for stakeholders at all levels to engage with and support this branding initiative,

highlighting the crucial role of international awareness campaigns, community engagement, and the leveraging of Gaza's cultural and historical significance. Through this comprehensive branding approach, Gaza's narrative can inspire a global movement towards empathy, solidarity, and, ultimately, a just resolution to the long-standing Palestinian struggle.

It's essential to recognise that the process of positioning the brand of Gaza might differ from more conventional city branding strategies. The unique context of Gaza requires a thoughtful, culturally sensitive, and community-driven approach that emphasises the city's strengths and aspirations. The global community's understanding and recognition of Gaza's challenges and resilience can play a crucial role in shaping its brand.

#### **7.4. Priorities towards Building Gaza's Brand**

Capitalising on Gaza's reputation is not about exploiting suffering but about transforming adversity into a source of strength, unity, and development. It requires strategic, coordinated efforts that transcend mere branding to encompass genuine storytelling, advocacy, and socio-economic development. By effectively communicating Gaza's narrative of resilience and resistance, there is potential to not only change perceptions but also to foster real progress and support for Gazans' rights and aspirations for peace.

The comparative analysis reveals that while both Israelis' branding of the Holocaust and Gazans' efforts to brand their suffering underlie attempts to construct narratives that ensure survival, garner support, and foster identity, the strategies, contexts, and impacts of these efforts differ markedly. The Holocaust's branding benefits from historical distance, allowing for a more unified, institutional approach that has deeply penetrated global consciousness. In contrast, Gazan branding efforts face the immediacy of ongoing conflict and a fragmented narrative landscape, necessitating more grassroots, decentralised strategies. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for both cases to leverage their histories and current situations in promoting their rights, narratives, and visions for the future.

#### **7.5. The Potential for Success of Gaza's Brand**

The potential for success of a brand capitalising on Gaza hinges on its authenticity, ability to resonate globally, and effectiveness in mobilising solidarity and advocacy. Key to this success is genuine community engagement, strategic international partnerships, adept use of digital platforms for storytelling, and overcoming political counter-narratives. Moreover, aligning the brand with socio-economic initiatives that offer tangible benefits to Gaza and highlighting its rich cultural heritage can deepen global connections. Despite the

challenges posed by the complex political context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a carefully strategised brand that authentically represents Gaza's resilience, culture, and humanitarian needs has a significant opportunity to change perceptions and galvanise support for the Palestinian cause worldwide.

#### **7.6. How Would Age Define Supporting the Gaza Brand?**

The Gaza brand, with its focus on resilience, cultural identity, and humanitarian advocacy, is likely to attract a diverse age demographic, each drawn for different reasons. Young adults (ages 18-34), as digital natives and active participants in social movements, are expected to be the most engaged, leveraging their social media savviness and passion for social justice to advocate for the cause.

Middle-aged adults (ages 35-54) are expected to offer financial stability and a deeper engagement with the brand's narrative, appreciating its cultural and historical depth. Older adults (ages 55+), with their broad perspective on historical and political contexts, may provide empathetic support and financial backing, drawn to the brand's emphasis on humanitarian needs. Together, these demographics form a comprehensive support base for the Gaza brand, each contributing uniquely to its advocacy and outreach efforts.

#### **7.7. Implication of the Paper and Proposed Framework**

This paper explores ways to translate global empathy into tangible support and sustainable partnerships. It also confronts and corrects the global misunderstandings about Gaza's reputation. The main contribution of this paper is that it calls for balancing resilience with growth, which shall ensure the focus on resilience does not overshadow the need for progressive development. This supports the direction of the paper for the development of Gaza's resilience-based value creation. This should help to effectively engage with and support Gaza's unique position and lead to Gaza's socio-economic and cultural development.

Figure (1) represents the framework proposed for capitalising on Gaza brand. In a nutshell, the framework is divided into appreciating the necessities for the Gaza brand, what it takes to create, and how we can capitalise on this brand towards the main cause of freeing Gaza and Palestine. Then, finally, how could the impact of the Gaza brand be maintained? The researcher here calls for gaining the momentum of the brand by having more virtual museums, and galleries in Gaza that could support its historical artifacts, art, and cultural narratives to attract a global audience. This should help to explore the Goodwill values that Gaza can bring to the world through its accumulated reputation for having the spirit of resistance and resilience till human rights and freedom are achieved.



**Figure (1).** Illustrate the Phases for Capitalising on the Gaza Brand

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