



**Design Issues In Visual Corporate Identities Of Egyptian
Academic Institutions and Their Environmental Relevance**

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Summary:

Design Issues in Visual Corporate Identities of Egyptian Academic Institutions and Their Environmental Relevance

The relation between art and culture is an integrated one just as the relation between an object and its particles. A people's culture consists of a group of different elements including; creativity, taste for the art, methods of creating tools that facilitate accommodation with the environment. The cultural identity include values, believes, in addition to, language, religion and history represented in heritage and geography represented in location. Privacy varies according to the environment. The cultural identity is a result of intellectual processes and the information related to the past and interconnected thus defining the nature of the people. The identity is acquired by the influence of the environment and all of its elements and acquiring them is a main entrance to form the identity. The main foundation of any structure requires having an integrated system with subsequent phases that leads to building the cultural identity of the designer. The designing process follows a course of that system. The growth degree of any system increases with the degree of attachment to the environment. So the designer's relation to the surrounding environment is the first step of the designing process and it is the core of successful design.

Identity as a general concept means a mix of experiences and concepts that developed through the incidents and facts that took thousands of years in the forms of traditions and costumes. The identity is one of the concepts that refer to an intellectual, historical, social and cultural existence. This modern world has many other identities, and each of them is part of a certain science such as philosophy, mathematics, social science and psychology, business, computer science and religion. Such concepts include; national identity, gender identity, religious identity, cultural identity, personal identity and finally corporate identity, which was tackled in details within the thesis. Many specialists in communication define the corporate identity as a group of special visual elements to present the message to different groups of public and to build a constant visual corporate identity among them and analyzing the content of such identities also led to defining other types of the variables related to creating a visual corporate identity of the visual identity.

Achieving a program for visual corporate identities of each part of the institution is of major importance to many institutions especially for those working in the services fields.

So the design based upon visual identities of the same identity with all its features becomes very sensitive for it is the only face the institution has to offer the public . Therefore the logo or brand name does not play alone a major role in asserting this visual identity as such visual identity extends to the institution's buildings and their colors. The surrounding environment within the work settings and the public service centers. The visual corporate identity programs are the definition of the total design and in each course the institution follows to confirm its character and identity. It is a universal visual corporate identity of the institution from its largest to smallest element. So according to such concept it is crucial to make an authentic and precise design to reflect the true face.

The technological revolution affected both the visual corporate identity programs and the multimedia developments deeply, for most of what the multimedia offers is considered technological breakthrough. But on the other hand graphic design is still primitive and has not developed as the technology did and as fits its significance and a factor for changing the world especially in terms of presenting the visual corporate identity on screens through electronic media. The visual corporate identity of the visual identity through some input such as color specifications, clear space and size requirements, type face, grid, fixed titles or logos locations.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed many changes and developments both quantitatively and qualitatively in the academic institution education systems all over the world that included their philosophies and visions upon which they rely to define their roles and functions and to run their programs and structures, which rendered such universities capable of comprehending the twentieth century's developments represented in technological and informational developments and utilizing their inputs, as well as, adjusting to them. So the strategic planning has become one of the main elements for universities seeking to achieve their objectives and to approve their measures as tools for measuring the different activities and achieve their societies' goals all this was clearly achieved in the advanced world universities, but as for the third world's universities they still lack applying these concepts.

The role of universities is determined through three main tasks revolve around science; preparing staff through teaching (spreading science), scientific research (developing science), community service (employing science). These tasks are not of universities alone as other institutions take part therein, as they reflect the significance of the universities' roles in their communities on both the individual and collective levels at the same time. This refers that such role is a complicated one as it is a scientific, economic, social, political and cultural role. The importance of the cultural role is based on the university, as culture is important to improve the university's performance of its main role. So the universities of the twenty first century should bear new features. Universities, either private or public, now are required to become an institution capable of improving their budgets and finding self supported income sources through acquiring a productive or semi productive institutions. The academic institutions should clearly link the knowledge they offer with the outcome of this knowledge not only on individual level but also on the collective one, through motivating the academic institutions as an institution to market its research- scientific capital.

No doubt the coming years shall witness strong competition among universities around Arab countries. Such competition in the field of education shall be useful and important and shall help in improving our universities' quality and their output. In fact there are two types of competition that each academic institutions should consider; the competition with local universities and the competition between local and foreign universities, of increasing numbers in Arab countries. Such increase in their number, which is part of such foreign universities' effort to market their scientific capitals, which can serve our countries especially that these foreign universities are affiliates to well esteemed universities in UK, USA and France. They have developed their academic levels through long years of experience of the mother universities. This motivates local universities, either

private or public to improve their performance through applying international quality measures and criteria if they wish to survive.

This research aims at shedding some light on the visual communication language and the visual relations between the design's different elements to create a comprehensive design program to confirm the visual corporate identity that contribute in confirming and continuing the visual product and achieving it through a comprehensive system for visual corporate identities at the academic institution of Alexandria university and its colleges to create communication with the public and the method it applies to present itself visually. This will not only help in improving the university's rank but will also improve its reputation and status, in addition to, ascertaining its visual identity that interlink such educational and cultural institution and its fields of activity, through linking the visual identity elements in accordance with the Egyptian culture, especially in choosing colors that play a major role in design's success. Due to colors' great influence on attracting attention and the psychological aspects among audience which control the message's influence upon them. One of the basic of colors is the thoughts they trigger, for a color expresses a thought or a group of thoughts based on person's previous experiences. Psychological tests and experiences proved that there are general connotations for colors that are common among the vast majority of people of the same culture, environment and weather. Experts say that colors can be used to express certain symbols and determine the link between the expressive and symbolic connotations' of a color with the cultural environment, finding solutions and treatments for designing difficulties in the visual corporate identities of Egyptian universities and their colleges in accordance with the Egyptian culture, especially the ones that are not related to one place of its own and that do not comply with the basic rules of designing visual corporate identities and neglect the rule related to designing such images of the academic institution which are related to its scientific and cultural outstanding levels . Also they are used for defining the knowledge and bases for planning and coordinating and the visual relations and sequences among the design's elements within the identity, the design properties that fit the institution's setting and the extent they participate in the visual product's quality, plus analyzing, understanding and developing the working abilities within the right design's setting because of the significance of both the design and the designing process through the visual and organizational levels and the compatibility between the content and design and the distribution of the graphic elements such as identities , symbols, figures, texts and main heading to give a role that creates communication between the institution and the audience. These elements affect the information transfer process and the evaluation of the visual content of the design in a well studied manner through visual and linguistic vision of the space and the organization of the graphic elements to achieve the best integration to deliver the message to the recipient.

The research consists of three sections, the first and second sections include three chapters each. The third section includes the scientific experience. The first sections is preceded with an introduction that reviewed the research problem, objectives, these are; how to achieve the institutions' visual identity and the unified effect that helps the viewers to identify that institution through a real visual system based upon realistic and scientific studies in the field especially in multiple applications in different social, economic and cultural activities and highlighting the relation between the visual identity to and the its meaning so the message can be delivered clearly to the audience form different cultures.

The introduction referred to the research's significance due to the necessities imposed by the need for developing different social activity fields. It also mentioned the significance of treating the different deficiencies in the visual communication and its integration with the Egyptian environment, in addition to, how to present the designs suitable for these technologies, especially after the massive qualitatively and quantitative developments of the academic institution education systems around the world. As the visual corporate identity program has extended widely, any academic institution can develop its corporate identity to comply with its new identity. Also every state or geographic region has its identity across the world and special local character and might deal with the needs of the local community thereof as well as the shifts around the world. The best visual corporate identity is that; the one expressing the values and beliefs of the university and reflect its commitments, as well as, its organizational philosophy and culture and acquiring people's trust. So the visual identity should be a direct reflection of the identity. So the corporate identity concept has become a basic part of the characterization strategy among universities. The studies discussing the corporate identity became very interesting for researchers especially those tackling the designing process aspects and preserving the cultural and corporate identity as a system that contributes affectively in the age of information through the targeted properties of communication and how to present shapes that are suitable with the different technologies with different potentials in delivering information, through analyzing the basic elements and roles of the academic institutions' visual corporate identities' elements.

The first section sheds light on the concepts of different media and communication theories. The first chapter is about the importance of communication as a major factor in life continuity and prosperity on earth along time ago. The human civilization would not have reached this stage without communication among people. It is impossible to form a community without communication between its members and means of communication have played a major role in developing the human intellect and progress and many scholars have considered it as a criterion for comparing different civilizations as their development was measured by their progress in this field. It also reviewed some concepts.

The second chapter deals with identity systems and corporate identities in general, the definition of identity in different sciences. Identity is a concept which means an intellectual, historical, social and cultural existence. This chapter reviews the visual identity interlinked in their design with the corporate identity and the special designs in propaganda and advertising, thus emerged the concept of visual identity that became widely used in the visual and verbal phrasing of brand names and trademarks, including the related applications such as designing letters, business cards, packets and packages among others it is also called brand identity and the corporate identity.

The third explores the different settings in several institutions and their identities to review the main differences regarding the impact of the setting on the visual corporate identity and studies the different functions of some institutions and their identities to show the main differences in function effect on the visual identity. The chapter reviews studies of some different identities which the researcher has grouped in four axes to clear the influence of environment, culture and function upon the institution's corporate identity.

The second section studies the corporate visual identities in more details as the first chapter reviews multiple comparative studies from different countries to clear the concept

of corporate identity, as well as, a detailed review of related literature in addition to, many definitions of experts specialized in communication and the concept of corporate identity, which defines it as, a group of special visual elements to present the message for different groups of the audience as a means of expression and to build the corporate visual identity.

The second chapter includes a study of the effective visual recognition and explaining the elements of visual corporate identity such as; color specifications, clear space and size requirements, type face, grid, image, logos and headings locations and a study of the design problems with explanation of the best methods for designing the corporate identity and the color applications on the visual identity. It also included the concept of color and its effect in designing the visual identity, the difference among color applications of publishing and screens to view the corporate visual identity so they are easily identified and that such general effect should help viewers identify such institution. Each institution has its varied audience and has varied elements that it seeks introducing to this audience, so the institutional visual identity extends outside the institution's buildings and into the signs system applied in all its working settings and public service centers.

The third chapter includes an introduction about the technological development and its application in visual communication and how it can be employed in achieving highest visual efficiency of corporate identity either on screens or in publications, as well as, other types of materials that can be used in viewing the visual identity images.

Finally the third section, that is, an applied study of the corporate visual identity of Alexandria University. It includes an introduction, the study of the psychological effect of the Alexandrian community through the environment, the search for the forms and shapes that are most related to the city and the university's natures and the internal organization of the university and the colleges and how to: present the university's corporate visual identities, explain and solve designing problems and clear the visual value from the researcher's point of view. The chapter also discusses the importance of practical application and its different values, the objective of application on the artistic and creative aspects, as well as, the modern technologies, the visual organizing of institutional visual identity, in addition to, its basic considerations.