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The Impact of Social Media coverage of Egyptian Film Festivals on Promoting Nation Branding in Egypt: A case study of Gouna Film Festival

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the role of international Gouna Film festivals (GFF) in promoting nation branding of Egypt and forming positive images about the country based on social media coverage and direct experience using the six Anholt model aspects. This research is based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis and will rely on 2 tools of data analysis: (1)In-depth interviewing,(2) Content Analysis. Findings showed that Gouna Film Festival as well as Social Media content of the festival play a limited role in Egypt Nation branding, as there are many perspectives not covered in the promotion strategies adopted by the festival, as well as highlight several research themes that can be done in future to improve the role of the festival and make it more significant on Egypt nation branding.

Keywords: Country image, Nation branding, Festivals, Film Festival, Gouna, Film Industry, Social Media, Anholt Model

Introduction

Film festivals have become significant events that show the creativity of filmmakers while simultaneously serving as platforms for countries to enhance their international image and branding. In recent years, the Gouna Film Festival (GFF) has emerged as a prominent cultural event in Egypt, attracting famous filmmakers, artists, and cinema enthusiasts from around the world. The Gouna Film Festival acts as a spark in preserving and promoting Egypt's rich cultural heritage by showcasing a diverse range of Egyptian and international films. It provides a valuable platform for filmmakers to celebrate the country's artistic expressions, encourage creative collaborations, and highlight Egypt's unique cultural identity. Furthermore, the Gouna Film Festival plays a crucial role in economic development in Egypt. The inflow of international visitors who attend the festival has a direct impact on Egypt's tourism industry. By attracting tourists from around the world, GFF contributes to the growth of the travel and hospitality sectors, ultimately boosting the country's economy. Additionally, the festival's demand for various services, such as transportation, accommodation, and catering, creates employment opportunities and stimulates local businesses. Nation branding as a concept can, therefore, be seen as the branding of the different 'product claims' of the nation (Kotler & Gertner, 2011; Anholt, 2020).

The advent of social media has further amplified the influence of cultural events like the Gouna Film Festival. Social media platforms offer a unique way for events to reach global audiences, enabling users to engage with content in real-time. As social media becomes more integral to how people interact with cultural events, its impact on nation branding has become increasingly significant. Recent studies suggest that social media's role in shaping public perceptions is undeniable, as it allows nations to craft their brand narratives while simultaneously fostering cross-cultural engagement (Keller, 2020). The GFF, with its vast social media presence, utilizes platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to showcase its films, celebrities, and cultural initiatives, which in turn contribute to reinforcing Egypt's national image on the global stage.

Social media coverage not only boosts the visibility of events like the Gouna Film Festival but also has a measurable impact on Egypt's soft power. According to recent findings by (Timotijevic & Vignoles, 2021), nation branding is significantly influenced by digital interactions, where positive coverage on social media can lead to improved perceptions of a country's image. By engaging international audiences through behind-the-scenes content, live coverage, and audience interactions, the GFF positions itself as a key player in elevating Egypt's standing within the international film industry. This research aims to fill a gap by examining the impact of the Gouna

Film Festival on Egypt's nation branding, focusing specifically on the role social media plays in promoting this transformation. Through this analysis, the research seeks to provide valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and industry professionals. Understanding the role and significance of GFF can guide strategic planning, contribute to economic growth, preserve cultural heritage, strengthen national identity, and shape a positive brand image for Egypt on the global stage.

Problem Statement

Egypt has a rich cultural heritage and is known for its iconic landmarks, ancient history, and vibrant arts scene. In recent years, the country has sought to promote itself as a modern and dynamic destination for tourism and investment and culture as well, with a focus on enhancing its image and reputation on the global stage. The **aim of this research** is to examine the role of international Gouna Film festivals in promoting nation branding of Egypt and forming positive images about the country based on social media coverage and direct experience. The study will rely on Anholt Model that argue nation branding depends on six elements: Governance, Exports, Tourism, Investment and Immigration, Cultural and Heritage and people. This research takes Gouna film festival (GFF) 2023 edition in Egypt as a case study and proposing its role in forming a positive image about Egypt to non-Egyptians who participate or attend this event by examining the official Instagram platform content as a medium to promote branding and in-depth interviews with stakeholders.

Importance

The Gouna Film Festival (GFF) has become a significant cultural event in the Middle East and North Africa region, offering Egypt an opportunity to enhance its nation branding. By showcasing Egyptian talent, cultural heritage, and the dynamic local film industry, the festival plays a crucial role in shaping how Egypt is perceived internationally. Researching the impact of GFF on Egypt's nation branding can provide insights into how the festival helps improve the country's image, attract tourism, investment, and cultural exchange. Understanding these dynamics is essential for policymakers and stakeholders aiming to leverage the festival to promote Egypt as a global cultural destination.

Beyond its cultural significance, GFF has substantial economic implications for Egypt. The festival generates an influx of international visitors, media attention, and business opportunities, which contribute to tourism, hospitality, and related industries. Studying its economic impact will allow policymakers to better understand how the festival can stimulate job creation, revenue growth, and broader economic development. This research can also highlight potential

challenges and areas for improvement, enabling Egypt to strengthen its position as a hub for international film festivals and related industries.

finally, the research into GFF's social media content offers valuable insights into the festival's role in Egypt's soft power and cultural diplomacy. Social media platforms provide real-time insights and measurable data that can help researchers assess public sentiment and Egypt's positioning on the global stage. By analyzing which content resonates with audiences, the research can identify strategies for refining Egypt's nation branding efforts and enhancing its influence internationally. This comprehensive analysis will guide Egypt in optimizing the festival's impact on its global image, economic development, and diplomatic relations.

Research Objectives

This research aims to investigate the role of Gouna Film Festival in promoting nation branding in Egypt. Specifically, the study will examine the ways in which film festivals contribute to the country's image and reputation, and how they can be leveraged to enhance Egypt's national brand.

Through a qualitative research method of in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in the film festival industry and an examination of literature review. and a quantitative research method through official social media content analysis.

This research seeks to provide insights into the potential of film festivals as a tool for promoting nation branding in Egypt using social media platforms by:

- (1) To examine how GFF organizers can use the nation branding elements identified Anholt's model to enhance Egypt's nation branding through the festival.
- (2) To identify the most represented element of Anholt's model in GFF social media content by measuring the frequency of each element across the festival official Instagram platform.

- (3) To analyze the format and thematic content of GFF social media posts to assess their contribution to promoting Egypt's nation branding.

Literature Review

Over the years, countries around the world have started to use different methods to brand themselves, and several studies have been conducted regarding the concept of nation branding.

In this research, literature review will cover a number of studies that have been conducted regarding the concept of nation branding, nation branding in Egypt, events and its relation to nation branding, the relation between film festivals and nation branding, the use of social media as an effective mediator to reach the public and promote the country and finally country's Image as Brand Value.

The concept of nation branding

According to (Al Fahadi, 2020) There has been quite a lot of discussion in academic literature about the definition of nation branding and how it is important to make distinctions between the concepts that are related to it.

The same opinion was adopted long ago by (Fan, 2010) “Branding the Nation: Towards a Better Understanding” aimed to clarify some misunderstandings about nation branding. To illustrate the origins and different interpretations of the nation branding concept. He claims nation branding is just tourism branding, merely export branding, or destination branding, with none of them branding at the nation level. Therefore, Fan appears to be implying that nation branding is a difficult concept because how those responsible for nation branding define and interpret it determines how a nation can be branded

While (Yalkin, 2018) interpreted the Nation branding is a powerful strategy to communicate to the global public audience, states, and the media, which comes as an umbrella for containing the concepts and activities of soft power and nation branding both the trade of popular culture products and the management of nation brands within it, remain at the problematic epicenter of studies on cultural industry, nation branding, diplomacy, international relations, and geopolitics, all of which focus on themes of globalization, transnationalism, and imperial tensions.

(Baalbaki & Zizka, 2023) while studying the effectiveness of strategies to alter one destination’s image suggested an integrated strategy toolkit for extended destination brand image governance grounded in diversification, collaboration, communication, and consistency. After collecting and analyzing 3 types of content (1) press interviews and releases by Egyptian authorities, (2) Marketing campaigns launched by DMOs, and (3) Marketing actions and initiatives. Integrated strategy toolkit includes Source strategy, sources like Beautiful Destinations, Expedia, Ministers, People to People’ video campaign with Beautiful Destinations, Audience Strategy (1) considering Gulf nations as a similar target audience due to proximity, region, culture, and language. (2) communicating a positive brand image to audiences neglected in the past like Asia and eastern Europe, specifically China and Ukraine to intensify the reach of untapped source markets and Message strategies by sending a ‘back to business’ message by hosting international sports events, such as the African Cup of Nations and events like ‘The Pyramids Marathon’. Hosting events is not meant to increase tourism, but to shift the media narrative to positive.

(Avraham & Ketter, 2017) in his paper examined the strategies that countries around the world have used to deal with negative perceptions and stereotypes; by analyzing the content of 70 videos and printed ads published by various countries and he has adopted two more strategies to deal with the challenge of maintaining

a sustainable nation branding. Stereotypes of countries and image repair strategies used, the main reason for attempting to change a negative image was attracting tourists, followed by bringing investments and industries and Audience-focused strategies to improve a country's image by reaching out to certain target audiences directly, with similar values, cultural symbols and geography.

According to (Kavoura, 2014) there are 2 types of key people responsible of image building and branding of nations. **The first type** is the shareholders include public sector and governments, such as National Tourism Organizations, residents, tourism industry sector, destination management organization and other groups-such as the most important categories which may influence and determine the management and marketing (Kavaratzis, 2012). **Second type** are visitors (customers) Understanding how customers acquire information is important for marketing management decisions. A person may attach to a place even if he/ she has never been there and visited it, thus, having formed a sense of place prior to his/ her first visit, based on stories from friends and family or mass media with exposure to advertising and marketing communications.

The notion of “nation branding” is now widely accepted, although the interpretations of nation branding are still debatable. The nation's branding image/slogan is now more important than has ever been. Therefore, many countries place a huge emphasis on creating a country logo so the nation brand can be easily recognized by the intended target audience. Nation logos are tangible identifiers of the nation's brands or a visual representation of national identity. (Fakhry, 2022)

Studies related to the nation branding in Egypt:

Branding must be approached as a comprehensive effort. You can't tackle tourism alone or culture alone and ignore the rest. (Anholt, 2006) According to Anholt 2006 nation brand model Nation brand consists of a unique and multidimensional mixture of elements specific to the country according to its cultural background and what distinguishes it from others, as well as its suitability for the target groups. (Figure 1)

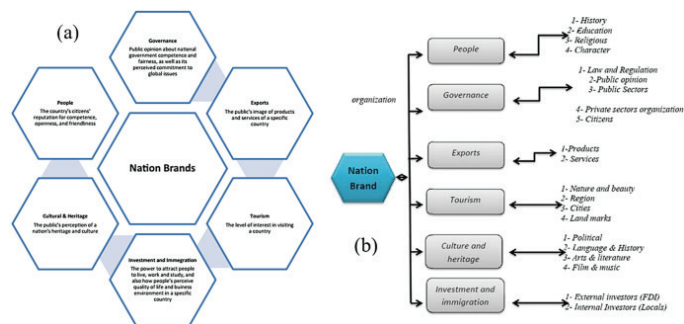


Figure 1. Anholt nation brand model and its unique and multidimensional mixture of elements

(Al-Abdulrazak, 2018) investigates the phenomenon of rating nations through competitive indexes and the effect of this phenomenon on the unification of nation branding promise and practice. It reflects on a country case and changes resulting from branding programs with reference to data published in nation/country brand and perception indexes. He concluded that the ideal promise of helping nations redistribute the world's wealth more fairly by **branding the nation** is **unreliable**, and that branding the nation to achieve the nation's interest in the long run **proves to be naïve in some cases**. Studying the Egyptian branding he interpreted that Egypt's international image is a result of more than one branding program. In addition to Egypt's history, Egypt developed its brand as a producer mainly upon one high quality product: cotton. Egypt has been focused on developing its image as a destination for over a decade. Furthermore, Egypt established a program to brand the country as a business destination. However, despite these efforts and the long-term brand communications in tourism, culture and lately business and Egypt's rich cultural heritage, in 2009 Anholt-GfK NBISM, the placement of Greece in comparison with Egypt located across the Mediterranean to the north shows the biases towards Greece. Although Egypt ranked first in history and third in art and culture, Greece fourth in history and fifth in culture, Egypt's overall ranking was far below Greece, which achieved 9th place as a brand. Egypt ranking became even more problematic after the uprising in Egypt following Arab Spring in 2011. The political unrest shackled the countries ranking and in 2012, Country Brand Index ranked Egypt 58 out of 112 countries. More dramatically, Syria was described as a state in decline and was ranked 111, while the stable UAE came 23rd. Egypt kept a leading position in heritage and culture in 2014 Future Brand's CBI (6 out of 75 countries) but was identified as an experience country -similar to Greece- rather than a brand where its status in business for example was weak. Oppositely, the UAE was six in the 'good for business' status and overall was ranked 19, the only Arab country that was considered a brand.

On the contrary (Fakhry, 2022) claimed that the touristic element in Egypt plays a major role in the economy of countries, contributing to development and its development, and expressing its capabilities and history, supporting human and cultural relations and communication and rapprochement of peoples, which contribute to drawing a positive image of countries societies. And places have meaning, identities and images so it can be used to create value for nation brand and enhance its position and image, especially that nation brand has become a key factor and important of tourists' choice of tourist places.

From another point of view related to culture and heritage (Amara, 2017) suggested that cultural events are the key marketing tool and that they present an opportunity for destinations marketers to help position their destination amongst its competitors. A field survey based on qualitative approach was conducted through interviews with the key industry stakeholders, in addition to the observational descriptive research, investigating the interaction of both cultural events and destination branding attributes on tourists' intention to visit the destination. The study introduces the contribution and the effects of selected examples of 'cultural events'; El-Moez Street festival and Abu Simbel Sun festival. These events were selected according to latest tourist online reviews, which are so identified with the spirit or ethos of the place or the destination, gaining widespread recognition, enhancing awareness, and thus having a potential to be particularly effective in promoting, regenerating, and branding Egypt as destination.

Egypt's soft power has retreated in recent years due to political and economic challenges, meaning that the country should now rebrand and re-rank itself among other countries. The Egypt 2030 (website) underlines this by saying that as part of the 2030 Strategy, "Egypt will possess a competitive, balanced, and diversified economy. It will depend on innovation and knowledge, based on justice, social integrity, and participation, to improve the Egyptian quality of life." Since the early 2000s, many countries worldwide have exerted tremendous efforts to align their developmental agenda with first the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and then the SDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals, which replaced them in 2015. The Egyptian government's strategy is based on youth participation, women and equality, social justice, knowledge and innovation, economic development, and the environment and how these things can be put forward as part of a re-branding strategy through the media and international diplomacy.

Events and nation branding

Many scholars have found it difficult to define special events concepts, and this may be due to the unlimited number of activities that fall under the name of the special event, as well as the flexible nature of the word special, what is special for some may not be special for others.

Researchers have made some efforts to reach a proper definition of special events.

including the following:

- A celebration of a unique moment or certain ceremonies or rituals are held to meet the needs and desires of the participants.
- Temporary organized events that occur outside the daily routine of participants and seek to satisfy specific goals of activities and celebrations.

The definition of a traditional tourist is the one who goes to a different place other than his place of residence to attend unique and distinguished events for a specific purpose.

The special events characteristics are different. Special events are characterized by the possibility of merging more than one goal, such as: social, cultural, sports, artistic....) and more than one organization (Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture...). Amusing, special events can create a sense of amusement and belonging, interaction, and participation among the audience of this style. They Satisfy basic and human needs and desires of the participants in the activities of these celebrations. Uniqueness, special events in different areas are considered to its attendees as a unique, authentic event relating to their beliefs. Special events organizers are always very welcoming to their participates and they always make sure that each participant is enjoying the whole event experience to ensure the good mental image is taken and to be kept.

Almost all researchers agreed that all types of Special events are considered as part of attraction for a specific destination and become a very significant component of nation branding. Noting that many countries have developed events portfolios as a tool to attract tourists and make profit and reinforce their brands.

Film festivals and nation branding

In a broader level, the film festival increases the vibrancy of the city by hosting events. The festival enhances the image of a place that is happening. A well-established and famous film festival –like Cannes, Venice increases the profile of the city through media exposure.

For a place brand to be successful, it must be supported by the various stakeholders. Although studies have shown how place brands fail because of the lack of consultation with stakeholders, building up consensus among stakeholders is easier said than done (Ooi & Pedersen, 2009). The organizers of the film festival and promoters of the city or country have different agendas and this may result in conflict of interest between stakeholders and prevent the main goal which is branding achievement.

Film festivals are viewed as promoters of tourism and city branding, attracting even capital investment.

Branding the city and branding the festival go hand in hand: the festival is seen as fundamental for the city profile, and vice versa, festivals and their host cities are linked by a symbolic relationship. (European Arts Festivals 52-53).

Others, like (Loist & De Valck, 2010) consider that the connection in film festivals between the content and regional distinctiveness of its location is

less obvious. Most programs have a strong international character and attract cosmopolitan visitors that want to celebrate and consume world/art cinema.

Film festivals are nevertheless “inherently linked to societal and cultural concerns”. He brings into discussion a broader audience in cinema, but mainly in relation to the post national concept and the films without reference to place or region or nation or history.

Nation branding could be perceived in terms of discovering/ rediscovering of identity. Nevertheless, the economic factor cannot be neglected in the festival – city – festival exchange. The impact of the local film industry, the promotion of national films, as well as the influence of the context are important factors. (Sălcudean, 2017)

Social media and its role in nation branding

The executive part in a nation branding project is to implement the campaign by way of communicating its core message to relevant audiences. To communicate the brand messages, the branding organization (or country) needs to use a medium of communication. By medium, we here refer to technologies of communication used to deliver the desired messages.

In a recent review of the role of ‘the media’ in previous nation branding analysis, (Bolin & Ståhlberg, 2015) found that, (1) much of the previous research on nation branding deals with case studies of single countries and their branding efforts and, (2) that most studies treat the media as neutral platforms for political and commercial agencies.

On the other hand, little reviews gave attention to the role of the media as organizations with their own agendas, or as technologies with specific expenses when it comes to reception of communicated messages. (Kaneva, 2017)

An understanding of the media as organizations needs to acknowledge the political economy of communication (Mosco, 1996) that any media organization has an agenda, and an understanding of ‘the media’ as a set of technologies would analyze branding projects from the preferences of what the media can and cannot do.

In the world we live in today broadcast media has become somehow old fashioned when it comes to nation branding. On the other hand, exposure to social media as a source and medium of information gives the possibility for people to express their ideas and opinions and allows them to be engaged in intense political and non-political discussions.

The online environment increases divergence since social media allows people to discuss, and these kinds of digital platforms show like-minded information to users, reinforcing their own beliefs, and being exposed to biased content. (Duhaime & Apfelbaum, 2017)

Furthermore, nowadays people have many windows to explore reality, these windows are specifically social media where individuals think that a tweet is enough to get themselves informed, and in that way people are no longer interested in knowing more about a topic, or to explore whether some content is real or not, and in that dynamic people start conversations pushing back other people arguments.

Applied studies on the relation between social media and Egyptian nation branding are also limited. This may be due to a combination of factors like (1) limited availability of data, (2) lack of research fundings, (3) political instability and limited academic interest.

Country's Image as Brand Value

The concept of the country's image has been far off attention in academic research for a long time, and the focus has been more on investigating country of origin image for a specific product. But in this paper, we need to know more about the concept of "country image"

Historically, there have been large differences in the country's image between **developing** or **emerging countries** and the **most developed countries**. Consumers have generally viewed wealthy developed countries more favorably, which leads to the perception that products made in those countries are of superior quality (Schooler, 1971). Based on consumers experiences, "consumers recognize that the production of high-quality technical products requires a highly trained and educated workforce. Hence, they perceive that such products are of better quality when produced in developed countries" (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1999).

According to (Roth & Romeo, 1992) the country's image is the overall perception of the product or service from a given country based on the previous perception of the country's production and its strength and weakness in marketing.

While (Martin & Eroglu, 1993) argue that country image is the complete set of descriptive, inferential, and informational beliefs about that country.

They suggest that country images are the sum of people's beliefs, ideas, and impressions about a certain country.

Recent research looked to new approaches and consider country image related to country branding and use the concept of "country value" in a similar way to "brand value".

In more recent interpretations of country image by (Verlegh, 2001) define country image as a mental network of effective and cognitive associations connected to the country.

As per (Jenes, 2005) a country's image comprises many elements: national symbols, colors, closing, typical buildings, customs, historical heritage and more.

However, branding is a much bigger concept. There is a spontaneous image to each country, which can be turned into a consciously shaped image to be positioned and valued in the market. This process is called country image building, or country branding or country rebranding.

Country images contain two main aspects: (1) **Macro country image**, is a country aspect that includes total beliefs about a particular country, while (2) **Micro country image** is a product-based aspect that includes perceptions of a specific product category originating from a specific country.

In this research we are more concerned about the macro country image and its relationship with the country branding or rebranding in emerging countries like Egypt.

Theoretical Framework

This study framework will examine the theoretical underpinnings of nation branding, including its definition, objectives, and key components. It will also explore the role of Gouna film festivals in promoting nation branding in Egypt, including their ability to showcase a country's cultural identity and heritage, attract international visitors and investment, and enhance its soft power and global influence. Additionally, the framework will examine the various strategies and tactics employed by the festival in leveraging nation branding, including the organization of the event, and the use of social media and other communication channels. Finally, the framework will analyze the challenges and opportunities that exist for Egypt in this context, including the need to balance traditional cultural values with modern trends, the importance of effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders, and the potential impact of political and economic factors on nation branding efforts. Overall, this theoretical framework aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Gouna film festivals in promoting nation branding in Egypt, and to offer insights and recommendations for future research and practice in this area.

Nation Brand:

Anholt model of nation branding 2006 is a widely recognized framework for understanding and measuring a country's global image and reputation. Developed by Simon Anholt, the model is based on the premise that a nation's brand is shaped by its overall performance in six key elements, which are commonly referred to as the "six pillars" of nation branding. These pillars are:

- **Governance:** This pillar refers to a country's political stability, effectiveness of its government, and the rule of law.

- **People:** This pillar focuses on a country's cultural heritage, friendliness of its people, and the quality of its human resources.
- **Culture:** This pillar encompasses a country's artistic and cultural offerings, including its music, literature, and visual arts.
- **Tourism:** This pillar relates to a country's natural and man-made attractions, including its landscapes, historic sites, and entertainment options.
- **Investment and Immigration:** This pillar refers to a country's economic opportunities, including its business environment, infrastructure, and labor force.
- **Export:** This pillar relates to a country's reputation for producing high-quality products and services, including its brands, technology, and intellectual property.

According to the Anholt model, a country's overall brand strength is determined by its performance in these six pillars, which are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. A strong performance in one area can positively impact a country's performance in other areas, leading to an overall positive perception of the country's brand. Conversely, a weak performance in one area can negatively impact a country's overall brand strength.

The Anholt model is widely used by governments, businesses, and other organizations to assess and improve a country's global image and reputation. By focusing on the six pillars of nation branding, the model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the factors that shape a country's brand, and for identifying areas of strength and weakness that can be leveraged or addressed to enhance its global image.

Country Image:

According to literature, country image might be considered a special type of image which covers the country's products, brands, companies and much more. Country image is formed based on experience and opinions about the nation or country and on, primarily, information received through the various channels. Possible channels are politics (internal affairs and foreign policy), telecommunication, entertainment (movies) and rumors. Country image comprises many elements: national symbols, colors, clothing, typical buildings, objects, tunes, pieces of literature, specialties of the political system, customs, historical heritage and many more (Jenes, 2005).

Film Festivals:

Film festivals can be studied in relation to many aspects of social, political, cultural and economic life. In other words, this study understands film festivals as a collective activity and an on-going process in which a multiplicity of participants and historical dynamics have a powerful impact on promoting a country brand and creating a sustainable relationship with the international world.

Media in Nation Branding:

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool in the field of nation branding, enabling countries to reach and engage with global audiences in new and innovative ways. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube offer a range of opportunities for countries to showcase their culture, promote their tourism offerings, and communicate their values and messages to a global audience.

One of the key advantages of social media in nation branding is its ability to reach a large and diverse audience at a low cost. By leveraging social media platforms, countries can connect with millions of people around the world, including potential tourists, investors, and business partners. Social media also allows countries to target specific audiences based on their interests, demographics, and location, enabling them to tailor their messages and campaigns to specific groups.

Another advantage of social media in nation branding is its ability to facilitate two-way communication between countries and their audiences. Social media platforms enable countries to listen to feedback and respond to questions and concerns in real-time, providing a more personalized and engaging experience for their audiences. This can help to build trust and credibility and increase a sense of community and connection between countries and their global audiences.

Social media can also be used to showcase a country's culture and heritage in a dynamic and interactive way. Countries can use social media to share photos, videos, and stories that showcase their unique cultural offerings, such as festivals, art, music, and cuisine. This can help to create a sense of curiosity and interest among global audiences and encourage them to visit and experience the country's culture firsthand.

However, social media also presents some challenges in nation branding. One of the key challenges is the need to maintain a consistent and authentic brand image across multiple platforms and channels. Countries must ensure that their messages and content are aligned with their overall brand strategy, and that they are communicating a clear and compelling message that resonates with their target audiences. Additionally, social media requires ongoing monitoring and management to ensure that comments and feedback are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner.

Theoretical Model

Attention to nation brand has increased in the last few years, the whole area is still in its infancy (Fetscherin, 2010). The focus of academic literature has

been on conceptual or descriptive research citing specific cases (Gertner, 2011), while practitioners have examined strategic implementation, It seems that “place branding has been more accidental than a continuous and deliberate planned action” (Endziņa & Luņeva, 2004).

A brand is defined as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitor” (Hanby, 1999). From this definition any brand aims to identify and differentiate itself from competitors. Over time, the concept of brand has developed in response to changes in the business environment (Knox & Bickerton, 2003) thus deepening and widening the brand domain through the application of branding to activities other than manufacturing (Hankinson, 2010).

The world has been witnessing numerous and significant efforts made by countries from all latitudes to position themselves in a positive way to their different stakeholders starting from the creation of the expression “**nation brand**” by **Anholt** in 1996, and his model which defines the six main derivatives of a nation brand. (Figure 2)



Source: Adapted from Anholt (2006, p. 186)

(Figure 2) Anholt Nation Branding Model

By discussing tools of nation branding in this paper, especially those related to culture and tourism and investments we can narrow down our discussion to special events and more specifically film festivals events.

The film industry has long been recognized as a powerful tool for promoting national identity and branding. Film festivals have become increasingly popular in recent years as a means of showcasing a country's cultural heritage and artistic achievements to a global audience. In Egypt, film festivals have played an important role in promoting the country's rich cultural heritage and diverse artistic traditions.

However, most of the research were concerned to promote Egypt nation branding from a tourist perspective, focusing on historical place and ancient pharaonic treasures and monuments. which has branded Egypt as an excellent destination to visit in a trip or vacations.

While the other elements of Nation branding were neglected and out of focus in almost all researches which give us the opportunity and the space in this paper to examine more the effectiveness of other elements - specially like investments and cultural and people - how they can be used through international events like GFF to change the country image for non-Egyptians and promote the country brand in a broader concept and a bigger image.

Using the Anholt Model this research aims to study and investigate the effect of film festivals on promoting nation branding in Egypt and answer the research questions.

To achieve this objective, a mixed-methods research design will be adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. The study will conduct a social media content analysis and will use a purposive sampling strategy to select film festivals organizers in Egypt. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed.

Methodological Framework

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How mega events such GFF can be used as a tool for nation branding in emerging countries like Egypt?
2. How did the organizers of GFF used the elements of Anholt's model to enhance Egypt's nation branding through the festival?
3. How social media via official Instagram Platform in the festival is used to promote nation branding of Egypt?

4. Which element of the six elements of the Anholt model was frequently shown in the media content?
5. What are the dominant formats and thematic contents of GFF Instagram posts, and how do they contribute to promoting Egypt's nation branding?

Research Method

To examine and identify the exact role of GFF via social media on Egypt nation branding in six Anholt model aspects. This research is based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis and will rely on 2 tools of data analysis:

(1) In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation. For example, we might ask participants, staff, and others associated with a program about their experiences and expectations related to the program, the thoughts they have concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes, and about any changes they perceive in themselves because of their involvement in the program (Boyce & Neale, 2006). In this research in depth interviews will be held with the GFF 2023 edition top management and organizers to know more about how they organize the festival and adopted strategies used by the festival and if they understand what is nation branding and its tools and implications and if they consider Egypt image while organizing the festival or they just focus on the festival image.

(2) Content Analysis is a qualitative research technique "An interpretive and naturalistic approach. It is both observational and narrative in nature and relies less on the experimental elements normally associated with scientific research (reliability, validity, and generalizability) (from Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry, 1994-2012). In this research content analysis is applied on the Official profile on Instagram platform through the previous odd years of the festivals 2017, 2019, 2021 and the last upcoming edition 2023 will be followed in a supplementary study. Units of analysis will cover the type of posts whether they are pictures or videos or hashtags and captions and the personalities found in posts, frequency of posts whether they are before or during or after each edition as well as posts interactions (likes and comments).

Society

The society of this research will be the Gouna Film Festival previous editions, where the simple will be chosen on purpose. The research simple will be divided into 2 main simples:

First: Top management and organizers at GFF, who will be interviewed personally in an in-depth interview.

Second: official profile on Instagram platform posts for odd years 2017, 2019, 2021. (Table 1)

Table1. Content Analysis Sample Characteristics

Year	Count of posts
2017	175
2019	290
2021	222
Total	687

Test of validity and reliability

To evaluate the validity of this research instrument, content validity will be assessed by ensuring that the items included in the instrument adequately represent measured variables. This will be achieved by conducting a thorough literature review and consulting with experts in the field to ensure that all relevant dimensions of the variables are included.

To evaluate the reliability of the research instrument, internal consistency reliability will be assessed by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each scale or subscale within the instrument. This to indicate the extent to which the items within each scale are measured in the same underlying construct. (Table 2)

Overall, the assessment of validity and reliability in this research study will provide confidence in the accuracy and consistency of the research instrument's measurements, ensuring that the findings obtained are meaningful and trustworthy.

Table2. Test of validity and reliability by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Scale	Number of units	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items
Year 2017		
Governance	5	0.700
People	5	0.819
Tourism	5	0.784
Export	5	0.847
Culture	5	0.729
Investment	5	0.740
Total of units	30	0.769
Year 2019		
Governance	5	0.794

People	5	0.833
Tourism	5	0.855
Export	5	0.893
Culture	5	0.754
Investment	5	0.704
Total of units	30	0.805
Year 2021		
Governance	5	0.705
People	5	0.820
Tourism	5	0.831
Export	5	0.782
Culture	5	0.724
Investment	5	0.729
Total of units	30	0.765

From the previous table we conclude that the total Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items in year 2017 is 0.769, year 2019 is 0.805 and year 2021 is 0.765. These values show the high reliability of the content analysis.

The researchers used some of the statistical analysis, after collecting the studies sample of content analysis, data coding has been done and computerized and analyzed to get statistical results using the SPSS (statistical package for social science) software. There was a variety of measures between scale and ordinal and nominal measures. Using some statistical tests and treatments like standard deviations, means, percentages, and frequencies.

Operational Definition and Method

This study is based on Anholt’s model of Nation Branding, which indicates that there are **6 independent variables** that affect the formation of the nation branding: People, Culture, Investment, Tourism, Exports and Governance.

The study would use the **official social media coverage via Instagram platform** of El Gouna Festival 2023 edition to measure the impact of this coverage on the formation or changing or modifying the nation branding.

Accordingly, Through the study, a number of scales will be developed that are intended to measure the 6 independent variables to identify their impact on the dependent variable of the study and identify which of these 6 variables has the most impact, in addition to evaluating the coverage of the official social media page of the El Gouna Festival and its effectiveness in influencing the Egypt nation branding.

The content of the official Instagram page of the festival will be analyzed for 1 month period as follows: 10 days before GFF, 10 days during GFF and finally 10 days after GFF to figure out content performance before and during and after the festival and evaluate which variables of the Anholt model are emphasized in the coverage the most. As well as a sentiment analysis will be conducted to study subjective information in opinions, emotions or attitudes towards posts in social media content and to be classified into negative or positive or neutral attitude.

At the same time, the respondents will be asked about the level of their exposure to the official page and its role in forming the branding of Egypt.

Variable	Measured Scales through media content
Governance	Analyze social media coverage of the festival's organization and management. Look for posts that discuss the government's role in hosting the festival and related hashtags . (ministry of tourism – ministry of health – red-sea governor – ministry of culture – civil (defense forces – Egyptian Flags – minister's logos
People	Evaluate social media content that focuses on the Egyptian people during the festival. Look for social media posts that highlight the hospitality, friendliness, or cultural contributions and related hashtags of the nation's citizens. Founders of Gouna and the .GFF, high ranked personalities, organizing committee, Egyptian celebrities, and actors Conduct in depth interviews with participants and ask about their perception of Egyptian people (Peace supporter – who we are? – magic in its people)
Export	Analyze social media content related to the festival to identify any mentions of the nation's products or services. Look for posts that discuss the Egyptian products or services and related hashtags that can be considered as an Egyptian trademark and their international recognition . (Film industry – talented film makers – Egyptian cinema – Egyptian movies participating in international festivals – film lovers – cinematic (scene – awards – panels – workshops – masterclasses – key experts in film industry
Investment	Look for social media coverage that highlights any foreign direct investment (FDI) or business partnerships and related hashtags resulting from the festival. Measure the quantity and quality of these mentions to assess the festival's impact on investment. ((modern high-end resort – Orascom development – tawela resorts – hotel and resorts
Tourism	Monitor social media coverage of the festival to identify any increase or decrease in tourism-related content. Look for social media posts that discuss the festival as a tourism attraction and related hashtags . Analyze the reach and engagement of these posts to determine if the festival has positively influenced tourism. (honeypot destination – vacation destination – best destination – pictures for touristic places - #thisisegypt - #gounahasitall – spectacular (- nights – experience Egypt – discover – islands and lagoons and sandy beaches
Culture & Heritage	Analyze social media content to assess the level of familiarity of the target audience with the nation's brand before and after the festival. Look for posts that mention the Egyptian culture, history, and values and related hashtags . Measure the frequency and tone of these mentions to indicate familiarity. (importance of arts and culture – cinematic history – merchant culture – storied history & brilliant present – Gouna conference and culture center – new waves of cultural awareness – old Egyptian movies and (celebrities – Eid congratulations and death condolences

In Addition, to the social media content analysis, in-depth interviews will be held with those responsible for organizing the festival to know their evaluation of the festival’s role in shaping the Egypt nation branding and how such festivals can be useful based on their experience.

Research Results

Content Analysis Results

In this research content analysis is applied on the Official profile on Instagram platform through the previous odd years of the festivals 2017, 2019, 2021 and the last upcoming edition 2023 will be followed in a supplementary study. Units of analysis will cover the type of posts whether they are pictures or videos or hashtags and captions and the personalities found in posts, frequency of posts whether they are before or during or after each edition as well as posts interactions (likes and comments).

The researchers used some of the statistical analysis, after collecting the studies sample of content analysis, data coding has been done and computerized and analyzed to get statistical results using the SPSS (statistical package for social science) software. There was a variety of measures between scale and ordinal and nominal measures. Using some statistical tests and treatments like standard deviations, means, percentages, and frequencies.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviations for year 2017

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Governance	175	0114.	10660.
People	175	1.7943	1.37422
Tourism	175	9943.	54136.
Export	175	3.4400	76233.
Culture	175	1200.	51684.
Investment	175	0686.	27519.
(Valid N (listwise	175		

Based on a total sample size of 175 (Table 3), the mean and standard deviation values for variables are as follows:

1. Governance: The mean value of 0.0114 with a standard deviation of 0.10660 suggests that the data points for governance have a relatively low average value and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the governance aspect may not be a strong factor within the dataset.

2. People: The mean value of 1.7943 with a standard deviation of 1.37422 indicates that the data points for people have a higher average value and a greater spread or variability around the mean. This suggests that the people aspect has a wider range of values and may have a more significant impact within the dataset.

3. Tourism: The mean value of 0.9943 with a standard deviation of 0.54136 suggests that the data points for tourism have a relatively high average value and a moderate spread around the mean. This indicates that the tourism aspect may be a significant factor within the dataset.

4. Export: The mean value of 3.4400 with a standard deviation of 0.76233 indicates that the data points for export have a relatively high average value and a moderate spread around the mean. This suggests that the export aspect may have a significant impact within the dataset.

5. Culture: The mean value of 0.1200 with a standard deviation of 0.51684 suggests that the data points for culture have a relatively low average value and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the culture aspect may not be a strong factor within the dataset.

6. Investment: The mean value of 0.686 with a standard deviation of 0.27519 suggests that the data points for investment have a moderate average value and a relatively low spread around the mean. This indicates that the investment aspect may have a moderate impact within the dataset.

Table 4 . Mean and standard deviations for the year 2019

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Governance	290	.2379	.75922
People	290	1.5724	1.28200
Tourism	290	.9862	.59393
Export	290	3.1138	1.03108
Culture	290	.1931	.67886
Investment	290	.6860	.48763
(Valid N (listwise	290		

Based on a total sample size of 290 (Table 4), the mean and standard deviation values for different variables are as follows:

1. Governance: The mean value of 0.2379 with a standard deviation of 0.75922 suggests that the data points for governance have a **moderate average**

value and a moderate spread or variability around the mean. This indicates that the governance aspect may have a **moderate impact** within the dataset.

2. People: The mean value of 1.5724 with a standard deviation of 1.28200 indicates that the data points for people have a relatively **high average value** and a greater spread or variability around the mean. This suggests that the people aspect has a wider range of values and may have a **significant impact** within the dataset.

3. Tourism: The mean value of 0.9862 with a standard deviation of 0.59393 suggests that the data points for tourism have a relatively **high average value** and a moderate spread around the mean. This indicates that the tourism aspect may be a **significant factor** within the dataset.

4. Export: The mean value of 3.1138 with a standard deviation of 1.03108 indicates that the data points for export have a relatively **high average value** and a moderate spread around the mean. This suggests that the export aspect may have a **significant impact** within the dataset.

5. Culture: The mean value of 0.1931 with a standard deviation of 0.67886 suggests that the data points for culture have a relatively **low average value** and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the culture aspect may **not be a strong factor** within the dataset.

6. Investment: The mean value of 0.1690 with a standard deviation of 0.48763 suggests that the data points for investment have a relatively **low average value** and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the investment aspect may **not be a strong factor** within the dataset.

Table 5. Mean and standard deviations for year 2021

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Governance	222	.0901	.33090
People	222	2.0495	.86787
Tourism	222	1.1216	.63000
Export	222	3.2883	.82810
Culture	222	.1892	.63835
Investment	222	.2568	.46781
(Valid N (listwise	222		

Based on a total sample size of 222 (Table 5), the mean and standard deviation values for different variables are as follows:

1. Governance: The mean value of 0.0901 with a standard deviation of 0.33090 indicates that the data points for governance have a relatively **low average value** and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the governance aspect may **not be a strong factor** within the dataset.

2. People: The mean value of 2.0495 with a standard deviation of 0.86787 indicates that the data points for people have a relatively **high average value** and a moderate spread or variability around the mean. This suggests that the people aspect has a wider range of values and may have a **significant impact** within the dataset.

3. Tourism: The mean value of 1.1216 with a standard deviation of 0.63000 suggests that the data points for tourism have a relatively **high average value** and a moderate spread around the mean. This indicates that the tourism aspect may be a **significant factor** within the dataset.

4. Export: The mean value of 3.2883 with a standard deviation of 0.82810 indicates that the data points for export have a relatively **high average value** and a moderate spread around the mean. This suggests that the export aspect may have a **significant impact** within the dataset.

5. Culture: The mean value of 0.1892 with a standard deviation of 0.63835 suggests that the data points for culture have a relatively **low average value** and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the culture aspect may **not be a strong factor** within the dataset.

6. Investment: The mean value of 0.2568 with a standard deviation of 0.46781 suggests that the data points for investment have a relatively **low average value** and some variability around this mean. This indicates that the investment aspect may **not be a strong factor** within the dataset.

Post frequencies:

Measuring the frequency of posts on Instagram by dates was conducted to understand the posting behavior on Instagram within a specific time period. The methodology involved collecting data on the number of posts made on each date and analyzing the data to determine the posting frequency.

To measure the posting attitude of GFF on Instagram platform, the researchers coded the date for each post on Instagram for the year 2017, 2019 and 2021 to measure the frequencies of posts and to determine whether the Instagram profile is active all along the year or in the time of the event only.

Year 2017 (Festival period from 22 September to 29 September)

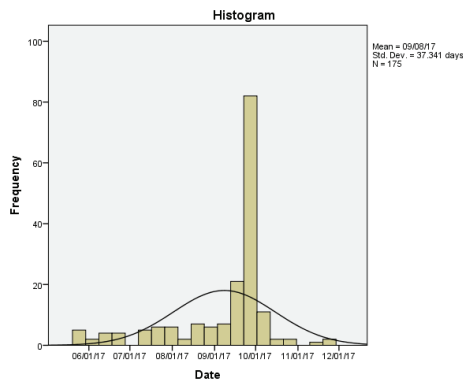


Figure 3. Year 2017 Frequency

The graph above (Figure 3) shows that the days with higher number of posts are between 24/9/2017 and 2/10/2017 which means that the posting was very active only during the event and three days after the event.

Year 2019 (Festival period from 20 September to 27 September)

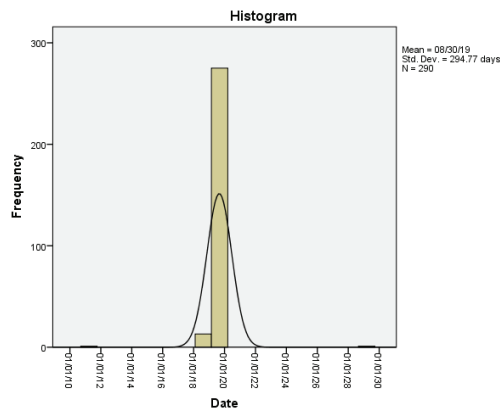


Figure 4. Year 2019 Frequency

The graph above (Figure 4) shows that the days with higher number of posts are on day 26/8/2019 and between 19/9/2019 and 29/10/2019 which means that the posting was very active only during the event and three days after the event and slightly before the event.

Year 2021 (Festival period from 14 October to 22 October)

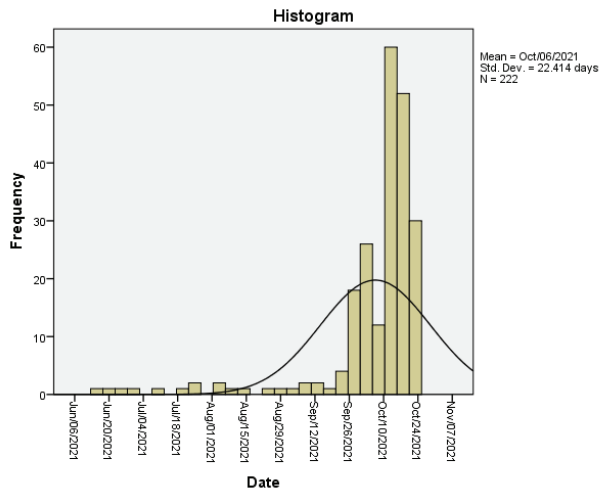


Figure 5. Year 2021 Frequency

The graph above (Figure 5) shows that the days with higher number of posts are starting from a month before the festival and between 02/10/2021 and 22/10/2021 which means that the posting was relatively active in proximity month before the festival and very active during the festival.

Content analysis Conclusion

After the analysis on the content of official Instagram profile of the Gouna film festival for the odd years 2017, 2019 and 2021. The researchers noted that in the first year (2017) the content mainly focuses on the film industry and tourism while a lower attention was given to people and investments, and it totally neglect the culture and governance, frequency of posting behavior was focused on the period of the festival only. In the second year (2019) the content was slightly wider as it took governance into consideration besides people and of course film industry and tourism and dropped culture and investment. The frequency of posting behavior was focused slightly before the festival and the period of the festival only. The third year (2021) content focused on film industry and tourism and people while neglecting the governance and culture and investments. the frequency of posting behavior was wider as it covered a month before the festival and the period of the festival of course.

From these results we can conclude that there is no specific strategy to guide the social media content of Gouna Film Festival on Instagram and the posting behavior only depends on commercial ends. While there is an improvement in the frequency of posts as it gets larger every year.

In-Depth interviews results

In this research in depth interviews will be held with the GFF 2023 edition top management and organizers to know more about how they organize the festival and adopted strategies used by the festival and if they understand what nation branding and its tools and implications, and if they consider Egypt image while organizing the festival or they just focus on the festival image.

The researcher has conducted in-depth interviews with 7 top management and key people responsible for organizing the Gouna film festivals. Choosing the interviewee was intended to ensure that we cover all departments and have different types of points of view regarding our research questions. These interviews were held personally and face to face at the Gouna film festival office in Cairo. The interviewee data are as follows:

S/N	Name	Title	Years of Experience at GFF	Date of interview
1	Mr. Amir Sameh	Head of guest relations of GFF	year 2	21/8/2023
2	Ms. Nour El Malt	Head of third Parties	years 4	6/8/2023
3	Ms. Zeina Younis	Head of Film Makers	years 3	2/8/2023
4	Ms. Aya ElSelim	CineGouna platform guest manager at GFF	years 6	14/8/2023
5	Mr. Sherif Oraby	Database Manager at GFF	years 3	14/8/2023
6	Nivine Zarif	Human Resources Manager	Years 3	21/8/2023
7	Abeer Shoura	Broadcast Media Relation Manager	Years 5	2/8/2023

Interview questions count 11 questions, focusing on the GFF, Egypt’s image as well as nation branding and social media role in both promoting to the festival and promoting to the Egyptian nation branding. And the questions were as follows:

1	Have you organized any festivals before?
2	What encouraged you to participate in organizing the El Gouna Festival this year?
3	What difference did you notice in organizing the festival this year and how it differs from previous years?
4	Do you think this festival adds value to Egypt or not? And if yes, do you think it will add value to Egypt in any direction?
5	Do you think that social networking sites have an impact on the success of the festival?
6	Do you think that the festival's social media have an impact on Egypt's image in front of the world?
7	In your opinion, what are the festival's most influential social media platforms?
8	What is the promotional plan adopted by the festival this year to promote on social media?
9	In your opinion, the promotional plan for the festival relies on social media to promote the festival only, or to promote the image of Egypt as well.
10	Do you think that the promotion strategy on social media has differed from the first edition of the festival until now?
11	What are the most important themes that should be mentioned in promoting Egypt on social media during the festival (tourism - governance - film industry - culture and traditions – investments - dealing with Egyptians)?

In depth interview results

By asking the interviewees about what encourage them to participate in the organization of GFF this year they all agreed about the good management of this edition, the new structure with new goals they want to achieve, and also the festival message is different this year they have to focus more on the industry part rather than the commercial part, they want to spot light on cinegouna platform and expand the activities regarding bridge and springboard as well as extending the number of guests. The festival is having a shift in how it is operating, there are brand-new strategies, they also said that GFF this year is having a shift in how it is operating, there are brand-new strategies and brand-new ways of operations. They also think that the festival is taking a much more serious approach towards the industry itself, towards the film makers, towards the people involved in the industry, not just the celebrities, not just the glam, which is a basic part of the industry as well. But for the very first time, the festival is trying to speak to every sector and department and every branch within the industry itself.

The festival certainly has so many differences from previous year but that main difference that all participants agreed upon is the new perspective and message of the festival. The focus is on people behind the camera more. Of course, there will be celebrities. But thinking outside this scope of just celebrities, there is something being cooked. Like if the language changes, the festival is going to speak more films, more content, more production, more industry, more of workshops, more panels, more discussions, more of networking then more trends and fashion and glam and red carpets. The theme which is taking place this year is so much networking which is needed even for younger generation to inspire younger generation and to create networks between producers and talents and everything. So, there is a different language being created in this edition. Then just let's discuss who's going to be stepping on the red carpet.

The added value of the festival this year is the vision of taking the film industry into a new level considering the new structure ways merging with the new cultures and fields like technology like music like branding and marketing, not only cinema and actors. This year the focus is more on trying to produce the films in new environmental ways cutting up costs and also introducing new ways of thinking towards the industry and also it adds value to the cop27 that was held in Egypt because now the festival is considering the environmentally friendly aspects in cinema not only the normal industry production.

Gouna Film Festival always has been contributing on how the world see Egypt. it shows people how much Egypt is culturally rich, how much Egypt has artistic integrity, how much Egypt has an artistic community beyond anything anyone

can imagine, and it really stands out, a community that has something to say and a message to deliver and a vision to dream about.

Concerning social media of GFF this year they don't want to focus on social media in only a commercial way but they want to focus on the young film makers and how they face so many challenges in order to improve themselves and new developed ideas. Social media has to cover all aspects, not only celebrities and important figures. It has to focus more on the new blood generations of filmmakers and how they can explain new networking connections and add this to their own experience for developing the film industry. They believe that social media reflects Egypt's image because the festival hosts national guests, as well as regional and international guests. and they get to mingle with each-others from so many different film festivals, from so many different industry generations. So the social media is trying to cover all these mixture together and prove that it is all about connections and networking that make the festival special and by default reflect a glowing image about Egypt. They all agreed that the worldwide top medium used in media now is social media, so you can't speak media without speaking social media. It has to be the first and the strongest weapon to reach anyone in the world.

All interviewees agreed that the Instagram platform is the most powerful social media platform used by the GFF to promote it-self, but the way this promotion is done had different point of views among our participants. Some of them think that it covers most of the event starting from hiring, film submissions, the event itself, sponsors, winners.. almost everything. Others said that Instagram is the most used social media platform from the target audience the festival is trying to approach and the audience that already exist, also the content created by companies like ElTayara and all of this related to TikTok videos with celebrities and actors they go viral and these reels and videos state that there is a fact of a great festival taking place in the middle east specially in Egypt. While others said that Facebook becomes a little wider. You write an entertaining post, so you explain more things in it, you post news, you post a picture as well, like a video with each other, you make a YouTube link, so it becomes wider than Instagram.

There is a fact that the promotion of the festival goes hand in hand with the promotion to Egypt whether there is an intention or not. This become clear when promotions prove that Egypt is taking new steps in motivating the new generation in using cinema as a strong tool and make Egypt looks better and make the Egyptian culture as an added value to the cinema not only for Egyptian audience but to international audience too trying to market the specialty of Egypt to the whole world. Whether we like it or not what the country has been through the past ten years left an impression to the world that Egypt is not safe, there is

conflicts and the country is not stable and it is not safe to be around, but having a film festival like GFF, in which worldwide celebrities come and attend and they are all having good time and they are all celebrating and participating in a film industry related event and knowing that this amount of celebrities are in one place a safe this can be a big statement to the world on social media. This is the trick is to stay in people minds, so many times and to remind people that there is an event coming, moments and shares and posts like this keeps the title of Gouna film festival in your mind anytime and keep stating that Egypt is a safe place to go. The more social media makes a hot topic the more people will consider it as a hot topic. Strategic ways adopted by social media can make a huge difference in the way people perceive the festival and also perceive Egypt.

Through the GFF promotion and marketing plans on social media some themes about Egypt are showed and covered. As per our interviews the most highlighted themes are those related to the industry of films and tourism. Considering that the festival is a film industry related, and the hosted city is Gouna which is a touristic beautiful coastal place in Egypt. No one can deny that Gouna has now a huge amount of investment but this is not shown or taking into consideration in the festival promotion plan, as well as culture, in culture exposure is the main key, the more you expose about your culture the more you will know different sides about your own and the most important thing that you will correct what you do wrong and the wrong impressions taken about your country this is not just through tourism or film industry but in all aspects. For example when Concrete “an Egyptian closing brand” makes great suites for celebrities Egyptian and international celebrities this is a great statement that Egypt is a part of world fashion and other celebrities regional and international stand on the red carpet and state that they wear an Egyptian designer or Egyptian cotton, this is a statement as well that this festival is used for so much more then films and industry and social media is made to cover all these details with the propre strategies to the world.

In depth interview Conclusion:

After holding these in-depth interviews with top management and organizers at GFF, the researchers conclude that Gouna Film Festival has always been a festival dedicated for film industry, and since its beginning in 2017 the festival management every year try to improve it to fulfill its main goal of spreading film industry talents and producers and film making. In addition to this main goal the festival also shed the lights on Egypt from some main related perspectives as the Egyptians talents in film industry and Egyptian tourism and a part of Egyptian culture gained from the history of movies and film production in Egypt, acknowledging that Egypt has always been a leader in the film industry at least on a regional level.

The tool used to show and shed light on these aspects is social media because it became the most powerful medium in our days, and specially Instagram platform when it comes to Gouna Film Festival. Instagram is used by the festival usually to announce the edition dates, the hiring, the film submission, the awards and so on and let's not forget about the red carpet and the pictures and reels of celebrities and actors. In the upcoming GFF edition they work in a whole new promoting strategy which will focus more on the industry and the image of Egypt and less on commercial. Because as far as we are the social media of the festival focuses only on industry and tourism and a little bit of culture.

From that the researchers concluded that the management of GFF must consider modifying their promotional strategies on social media to cover more areas and get the maximum benefits they can in promoting to the festival and the Egyptian brand as well.

Research Conclusion and recommendations:

In conclusion, this research study has successfully achieved its primary objective of investigating the effectiveness of the role of Gouna Film Festival (GFF) in promoting nation branding of Egypt, the researchers concluded that the Gouna Film Festival has an important role in nation branding of Egypt, even though the festival is not focusing on this part of promotion in a proper way. The festival mainly works on its promotion and marketing plans which by default include some Egyptian branding but focusing on only 2 perspectives out of six in Anholt model which are the export (in our research it is the film industry) and the tourism.

The study has successfully achieved its secondary objective, and the researchers analyzed the social media posts content of the Gouna Film Festival Official Account on Instagram to evaluate how this content is affecting nation branding of Egypt. The researchers concluded that there is no specific pattern that guide the posting behavior on the Instagram platform and there is no specific promotional plan concerned with Egypt nation branding. Content tends to be more commercials, this kind of content that shows celebrities outfits, the glam of red carpet, the funny talk shows with Actors. Of course, in this content you can see a part of Egypt related to film industry and Tourism and People, but it is not shown in a proper way to achieve the desired level of nation branding. Meanwhile the investment and governance and culture part are being neglected.

The Study has answered the research questions posed. Through accurate and precise data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and has gained valuable insights and knowledge about the Impact of Social Media coverage of Gouna Film Festival on Promoting Nation Branding in Egypt. The findings of this study

provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic and contribute to the existing body of literature. Thus, this research has fulfilled its goal of furthering knowledge and addressing the research questions in a meaningful way.

The researchers suggest future researches and studies to define suitable strategies and patterns that lead to maximum benefits from film festivals in general, and GFF specially to have a real and effective influence on promoting Egypt nation branding.

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