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An exploratory analysis of the corporate identity of selected national government departments in South Africa

ABSTRACT

A communication task team appointed by the Government of South Africa in 1996 suggested that there should be one corporate identity for the government. A problem resulting from this suggestion was what this unitary corporate identity should reflect and which elements it should include.

This article is based on a study into the viability of creating one corporate identity for all the South African government departments.

Background is given for a government decision to create one corporate identity. The view that corporate identity consists of the integration between visual identity and behavioural identity and its possible application on the government departments of South Africa is discussed.

The main finding of this study is that the current corporate identity of four selected government departments consists of corporate service and behaviour, dynamism and visual identity.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1996 the South African government appointed a communication task team to investigate all the communication-related aspects of the government. According to the task team's final report, *Communication 2000, a vision for government communications in South Africa (1996)*, one of the main recommendations was:

One of the aspects that arose during the Task Group's investigations is the failure of government to present a coherent corporate identity to the public. This is reflected in a diverse array of stationery, in the failure to identify public buildings outside or to supply adequate signage inside, the way government presents to the public telephonically and by letter, etc. this must form a critical part of dialogue government must develop with society. Government must be seen to be transparent, accessible and, indeed, part of the fabric of society.

Recommendation 53

It is proposed that all government buildings have recognisable corporate imaging and that documents and other products have a design or official logo that makes them easily identifiable and accessible.

This recommendation refers mainly to the visual elements of the corporate identity, but further reasons for the creation of one corporate identity for the government was given in the report: *Imaging Government – New Corporate Identity for Government (1999)* in which reference was made to the behavioural elements:

“A corporate identity programme will allow government to interrogate the values for which it stands and to develop a programme and message for how government staff treats the public for the following reasons:

- To educate the public in order to recognise and assimilate government information
- To sign post government as a visible, accessible environment
- To create a culture of service to the public – for government staff as ambassadors
- To show a government at work for a better life”

It is clear from this report that the reasons given for the implementation of the new corporate identity focused more on behavioural than visual elements. What has to be determined now is what are the elements that make up the current corporate identities of the different government departments and what elements should be reflected in the new corporate identity of the government.

The two extracts from the two government reports highlight the two focus areas of corporate identity, namely visual and behavioural elements, which are also the focus of this study.

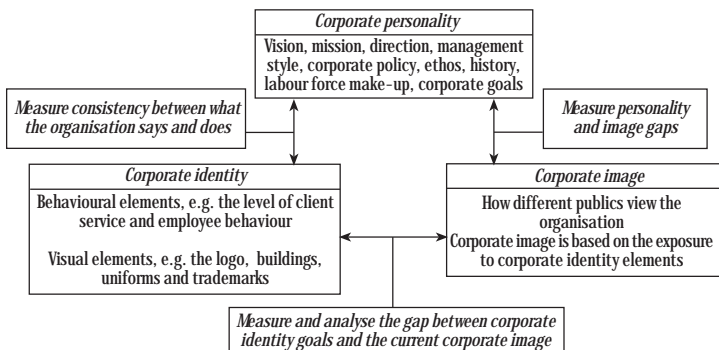
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Various studies have indicated that the corporate identity of an organisation is determined by both a visual and a behavioural component (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:12; Van Riel & Balmer, 1997:341; Van Heerden, Schreuder & Gouverneur, 2000:125; Christensen & Askegaard, 2001:305). Reference is also made to the fact that the corporate identity, referring to the logo, colours and corporate name, as well as the corporate personality of the organisation all work together to create a definite image of the organisation with the public when they see the logo (Schreuder & Gouverneur, 1998:2). Other authors refer to the organisation’s total personality as seen by its publics (Croft, 1989:65). Van Riel and Balmer (1997:341) state that “the understanding of corporate identity has gradually broadened and is now taken to indicate the way in which an organisation’s identity is revealed through behaviour, communications, as well as through symbolism to internal and external audiences”.

Sampson, in Croft (1989:65), argues that: “Corporate identity is the total personality of an organisation ...”. Van Heerden (1999:493) agrees with this by contending that the corporate image starts with the corporate personality and that the personality is reflected by the corporate identity. The following model reflects the corporate image process.

Figure 1: The corporate image process model



Based on: Van Heerden, CH (1999). Developing a Corporate Image Model. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 2(3):498.

This model illustrates the total corporate image process, of which corporate image, corporate personality and corporate identity are the three main concepts.

Corporate personality can be seen as a group of characteristics, behaviour and intellect that distinguish one organisation from another (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:12). Like people, organisations have unique personalities. Personalities can be described as characteristics – behavioural and intellectual – that differentiate one organisation from another (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:12). This is reflected through the organisational culture and therefore organisational culture determines an organisation's personality (Roth, 1998:8).

Corporate image is the result of the interaction of all the experiences, impressions, feelings and knowledge that people have about an organisation (Worcester in Lubbe & Puth, 1996:194). It is how different publics view the organisation based on the exposure to corporate identity elements (Van Heerden, 1999:498). Argenti (1998:74) refers to "a reflection of an organization's reality". According to Worcester (in Lubbe & Puth, 1994:94), a corporate image is the result of the interaction between all the experiences, impressions, feelings and knowledge that people have of an organisation. Jefkins (1997:321) summarises this by contending: "It is the impression of an organization based on knowledge and experience".

Corporate identity is the way in which an organisation presents itself – as a whole or as separate units that will influence the way in which the public will perceive the organisation. A combination of several aspects projected by the organisation, determines its identity (Selame, 1997:13). Love and Roberts (1997:56) define this as: "an interrelated and comprehensive network of customer perceptions and corporate management of visible and invisible elements". The visible elements refer to the visual elements and the invisible elements refer to the behavioural elements. Corporate identity therefore comprises much more than just a logo. It includes service quality, behavioural elements of the organisation, who the organisation is and what it stands for (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:12; Schreuder & Gouverneur, 1998:12). Van Riel and Balmer (1997:340) also clarify the concept of corporate identity as graphic design and organisational behaviour. The combination of various elements (visual and behavioural) that is projected by an organisation determines its *identity* (Selame 1997:15).

The main focus of this study is the contention that corporate identity consists of visual and behavioural elements.

2.2 The elements of a corporate identity

2.2.1 *Advantages of a strong corporate identity*

The management of any organisation should realise the value of the organisational identity as an asset. Corporate identity is also the cornerstone of all communication functions (Love & Roberts, 1997:58). According to Selame (1997:13) and Overton-De Klerk (in Lubbe & Puth, 1996:195), a strong corporate identity and image have the following advantages for an organisation:

- A strong corporate identity is important if the organisation is involved in a variety of communities and corporate social responsibility programmes. This contributes to the level of tolerance, support and goodwill towards the organisation.
- If the perceptions of the publics of the organisation differ from the reality, a strong corporate identity and image can contribute to transmitting the correct message to the publics.
- Another advantage of a strong corporate identity is that it contributes to uniformity. This will align the different activities of the organisation, which will result in coherent messages from the organisation to its stakeholders. According to Argenti (1998:79), the advantage of a coherent image and identity is that it attracts employees, clients, investors and communities – the four most important stakeholder groups – to the organisation.

It can therefore be concluded that a well-executed corporate identity programme can fulfil the following functions: (1) aligning the different departments of an organisation to form a united conglomerate; (2) symbolising the organisation's vision, mission and ethos; (3) and positioning the organisation in the market.

It must, however, be emphasised that corporate identity does not only consist of visual elements. Changing the logo will not change perceptions.

2.2.2 *Corporate identity and corporate behaviour*

Research conducted by Van Heerden and Puth (1995:16) found that the corporate behaviour of South African banking institutions (including client service, stability/credibility and the dynamism of the organisation) contributes more to the corporate identity of the organisation than visual symbols. They emphasised that a good visual identity cannot compensate for corporate deficiencies in corporate behaviour. McCoy (1998:27) refers to research findings in *Mintel's special report on Corporate Identity* (1998), which indicated that quality products and service form the core of corporate identity.

Collins (1997:43) warns that an organisation should not only focus its identity on products and services. The most important aspect is not what the organisations do, but how they do it; therefore, organisations are increasingly formulating their identity in terms of their behaviour. Riel and Balmer (1997:341) also emphasise this by stating, "... corporate identity refers to an organization's unique characteristics which are rooted in the behaviour of members of the organization".

It is also important for an organisation to define itself in terms of its values (what it stands for), rather than its products. A good understanding of what the organisation stands for, why it exists and what it strives towards will enable the organisation to evaluate its activities in terms of a broader vision. It will also enable the organisation to adapt quicker and easier to environmental change (Collins, 1997:44).

Even organisations that are known for a variety of products will create an umbrella identity to emphasise the corporate name. According to Asher (1997:79), it is important to associate an overarching and consistent message with the identity. Collins (1997:44) agrees with this when he recommends that a message must be associated with the overall corporate goal of the organisation, rather than its products.

2.2.3 Application of corporate identity elements to the government departments

This paper focuses on the corporate identity to establish whether the current corporate identities of the different government departments consist predominantly of visual or behavioural elements or an integration of visual and behavioural elements.

The government departments of South Africa as non-profit service-rendering organisations do not deliver tangible products, but they deliver a variety of services to the people of South Africa as their primary function. The government departments are committed to all communities in South Africa and must therefore maintain a high level of awareness in the communities. This ties in with the goals that are explained in: *Imaging Government – New Corporate Identity for Government* (1999), which mentions that the government and government services must be seen as a highly visible and accessible environment. A strong corporate identity will contribute to higher levels of awareness, tolerance, support and goodwill.

A strong corporate identity is necessary to create unity between the different government departments. This will ensure the transmission of a coherent image, identity and message. The government departments also need a strong corporate identity to create a clearly formulated, correct perception (which might not always be positive) in the minds of its publics.

In the government departments, it is important to establish an umbrella identity because there are so many departments operating on different levels of the community. Each of these departments has its own identity transmitting a specific message, but it is also important that the government as a whole sends out one coherent message reflecting its unified personality.

3. PROBLEMSTATEMENT AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

If one corporate identity must be created for all the government departments, the question that remains is what it should reflect and which elements it should include?

Primary research objective: To analyse the existing corporate identities of four South African national government departments to find possible criteria for the creation of one corporate identity for all the government departments of South Africa.

Secondary objective: To determine whether the corporate identities of four selected national government departments consist of more visual or more behavioural elements or an integration of visual and behavioural elements.

4. RESEARCH PROPOSITION

Previous research (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:12; Van Heerden, *et al.*, 2000:125) indicated that corporate identity consists of visual as well as behavioural elements and that the visual elements are usually perceived as the most important elements. In light of this, the following research proposition is suggested:

The current corporate identities of the different government departments reflect more visual than behavioural elements.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research design

In this exploratory study, a quantitative research methodology was followed and information was gathered by means of a structured questionnaire.

5.1.1 *Measuring instrument*

A structured questionnaire was designed by using a semantic differential scale for the collection of data.

In section A of this questionnaire, the semantic differential scale was used to test the respondent's attitude and perceptions of the corporate identity of the department where they were employed.

For this study, 25 sets of adjectives as bipolar items were used. These 25 sets of adjectives were collected by using certain bipolar items from previous researchers (Van Heerden & Puth, 1995:15; Van Heerden, *et al.*, 2000:130-131). The previous literature studies also served as guidelines for the choice of these bipolar items.

A five-point scale was used and figures were allocated on the continuum. It was felt that the respondents would better understand what was expected of them if figures were allocated on the continuum. The order of positive and negative adjectives was alternated from left to right to prevent response bias. Section B of the questionnaire requested the biographical details of the respondent.

5.1.2 *Pre-testing*

The questionnaire was submitted for pre-testing to individuals working on this project at Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS). After a thorough discussion of the questionnaire, it was approved for further testing.

Using a convenience sample, the questionnaire was submitted for completion to ten people working for the Department of Land Affairs. The Department of Land Affairs was used for the pre-testing because it was the biggest of the four departments that would participate in the study. No problems were identified and the questionnaire was then distributed further.

5.2 Sampling and data gathering

The target group for this study was the internal publics of the head offices of 32 government departments in Pretoria.

Sampling was done on the basis of a convenience sample. One disadvantage of a convenience sample is that the possibility of bias exists and that this could cause the sample not to be representative of the population (Du Plooy, 2001:113).

5.2.1 Choice of government departments

The choice of government departments to participate in this project was discussed with various people at the GCIS. Not all departments were willing to take part in this research project. Four departments declared their support for the project. Due to the time constraint, it was decided to use only these four departments.

It was also decided to use a minimum of 30 respondents per department, if the department employed fewer than 300 people. Where more than 300 people were employed, it was decided to use 10% of the total number of employees of the department as respondents. The following table indicates the departments, the number of employees and the number of respondents used:

Table 1: Sample of government departments

Government Departments	Number of Employees	Number of Respondents
Department of Land Affairs	600	60
Department of Sport and Recreation	150	30
Department of Public Service and Administration	300	30
Government Communication and Information Services	200	30

5.2.2 Distribution and gathering of questionnaires

Logistical reasons forced the researcher to use a convenience sample. The advantages of this strategy were that questionnaires could be collected personally from the respondents, ensuring a high response rate and that they were completed correctly.

5.3 Data analysis and results

After collecting the questionnaires, the data was logged into a MICROSOFT EXCEL 97 spreadsheet. A factor analysis was done through SAS software.

It was envisaged that a complex set of variables would constitute the corporate identity of the different government departments. The statistical purpose of factor analyses was therefore: “to determine linear combinations of variables that will aid the researcher in investigating interrelationships between variables” (Zikmund, 1991:731).

5.3.1 Results of factor analyses

A rotation factor pattern was established by using the “Varimax rotation method”. It was decided to include all items with a score of 0.5 and higher. This method identified three distinct factors.

Table 2: Item scores of the three factors

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Good service/ Bad service	0.743		
Growing fast/ Not growing	0.714		
Positive employees/Negative employees	0.707		
Successful/ Unsuccessful	0.700		
Strong/ Weak	0.684		
High quality/ Low quality	0.673		
Helpful/ Unhelpful	0.652		
Understandable/ Confusing	0.622		
Credible/ Not credible	0.598		
Modern/ Old-fashioned		0.700	
Dynamic/ Static		0.563	
Interesting/ Boring		0.526	
Liberal/ Conservative		0.525	
Likeable/ Unlikeable			0.730
Attractive/ Unattractive			0.669
Warm/ Cold			0.555
Eigen value	12.036	1.591	1.177
Cumulative % of variance explained	48.15%	54.51%	59.22%

The Eigen value of the different factors must be higher than 1.00 to be acceptable. Twenty-five factors were identified, only four factors of which had values higher than 1.00. The fourth factor was rejected although it had an Eigen value higher than 1.00 because scores on two of its items were less than 0.5. The remaining 21 factors were rejected because their Eigen values were below 1.00. The different factors will now be discussed in more detail.

Factor 1: Corporate service and behaviour

Finding a single descriptive term for this factor was difficult. There were several variables indicating behaviour, but three variables could clearly be considered applicable to service rendering. These were: *Good service/Bad service*, *High quality/Low quality* and *Helpful/Unhelpful*. It could also be contended that these variables were applicable to the core business – the rendering of services – of the organisation (in this case, the government departments).

The other six variables describe the behaviour of the corporate identity of an organisation. However, it was felt that service rendering and behaviour could be combined, as good service will create an image of good behaviour, which contributes to a positive image of the organisation in the eyes of its publics.

Factor 2: Dynamism

A modern, dynamic and liberal organisation is perceived to possess dynamism. Such an organisation will remain updated with the latest developments, be able to adapt to circumstances and be open to accept changes. This variable can also contribute to corporate behaviour and the image that is formed by its publics.

Factor 3: Visual identity

The last factor was the easiest to describe because all the variables gave a clear indication of the visual identity of the organisation. When looking at the logo of the organisation, it is easy to decide whether one likes the logo or not, and whether it creates a feeling of warmth towards the organisation. The visual identity perceived by the publics also contributed towards the general perception of the organisation.

Although the visual input contributes largely to the corporate identity of an organisation, it is important that one should be able to deduce from the first two factors that behavioural elements make a bigger contribution to the corporate identity of the organisation than the visual elements. An attractive visual identity will therefore not make up for corporate behavioural shortcomings, for instance, in service rendering, quality, reliability and dynamism.

The mean and standard deviations of the individual items of the entire group of respondents and of the various departments were calculated. The f- and p-values were also determined to determine whether a marked difference existed between the different departments.

To determine the general impressions of the corporate service and behaviour, dynamism and visual identity of the four departments, a combined mean was determined for each item in the three factors. The following conclusions can be drawn from table 2:

- The items with the highest mean scores were *Boring/Interesting* (3.66) and *Bad service/Good service* (3.606).
- The items with the lowest mean scores were *Liberal/Conservative* (3.166) and *Growing fast/Not growing* (3.286).
- In the combined mean, visual identity had the highest score (4.465), corporate behaviour and service had a slightly lower score (4.43), while dynamism had the lowest combined mean score (3.373).

Table 3: The mean and standard deviation of individual items per factor

Item		Mean	Standard deviation
Corporate service and behaviour			
Bad service/Good service		3.606	1.009
Growing fast/Not growing		3.286	1.076
Negative employees/Positive employees		3.313	1.118
Successful/Unsuccessful		3.453	1.027
Weak /Strong		3.413	1.087
Low quality/High quality		3.540	1.090
Helpful/Unhelpful		3.473	1.059
Confusing/Understandable		3.440	1.132
Credible/Not credible		3.346	0.851
Combined mean		3.43	
Dynamic			
Old-fashioned/Modern		3.366	1.271
Static/Dynamic		3.326	1.108
Boring/Interesting		3.633	1.125
Liberal/Conservative		3.166	1.077
Combined mean		3.373	
Visual identity			
Likeable/Unlikeable		3.496	1.004
Attractive/Unattractive		3.526	1.162
Warm/Cold		3.373	1.167
Combined mean		3.465	

Table 4: The mean, F-values and P-values of the factors per department

Category	Land Affairs	Sport and Recreation	Public Service and Administration	GCIS	F-value	P-value
Corporate service & behaviour						
Good service/Bad service	3.483	3.600	3.800	3.666	0.70	0.5553
Growing fast/Not growing	3.150	3.066	3.433	3.633	2.00	0.1163
Positive employees/Negative employees	3.416	3.100	3.400	3.233	0.64	0.5895
Successful/Unsuccessful	3.500	3.333	3.400	3.533	0.26	0.8530
Strong/Weak	3.400	3.200	3.500	3.566	0.64	0.5874
High quality/Low quality	3.416	3.566	3.533	3.766	0.69	0.5598
Helpful/Unhelpful	3.366	3.400	3.533	3.700	0.74	0.5322
Understandable/Confusing	3.316	3.533	3.333	3.700	0.92	0.4328
Credible/Not credible	3.250	3.300	3.466	3.466	0.68	0.5650
Combined mean	3.366	3.344	3.489	3.585		
Dynamism						
Modern/Old-fashioned	3.066	3.333	3.566	3.800	2.61	0.0536
Dynamic/Static	3.216	3.300	3.333	3.566	0.67	0.5732
Interesting/Boring	3.633	3.466	3.633	3.800	0.43	0.7294
Liberal/Conservative	2.933	3.300	2.933	3.733	4.65	0.0039
Combined mean	3.212	3.35	3.366	3.725		
Visual identity						
Likeable/Unlikeable	3.333	3.733	3.466	3.620	1.44	0.2338
Attractive/Unattractive	3.350	3.700	3.533	3.700	0.90	0.4404
Warm/Cold	3.150	3.433	3.366	3.766	1.93	0.1274
Combined mean	3.278	3.622	3.455	3.695		

To indicate the differences in perceptions of the four departments, ANOVA was used to calculate the significant differences. All the responses with a p-value of less than 0.05 indicated a significant difference in the perception.

From table 3 it can be concluded that most of the paired items did not show a significant difference. Most of the paired items had p-values higher than 0.05. The only item showing a significant difference was *Liberal/Conservative* (0.0039). The only other item that could also be considered to show a difference was *Modern/Old-fashioned* (0.0536).

By comparing the combined mean of the different items and the mean of the items per department, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The score of the Department of Land Affairs on three items was significantly lower than the general mean. These items are *Good service/Bad service*, *High quality/Low quality* and *Modern/Old-fashioned*. Its combined mean of corporate service and behaviour was the second lowest of the four departments. It was also lower than the general mean score of the four departments. For dynamism and visual identity its combined mean was the lowest of the four departments and lower than the general mean.
- The score of the Department of Sport and Recreation on four items was significantly lower than the general mean. These items were *Growing fast/Not growing*, *Positive employees/Negative employees*, *Successful/Unsuccessful* and *Strong/Weak*. However, on two of the items, *Likeable/Unlikeable* and *Attractive/Unattractive*, both of which included items of the visual identity factor, the mean score was higher than the general mean. This department had the lowest combined mean for corporate service and behaviour, and it was lower than the general mean. The combined mean for dynamism was the second lowest of the four departments and lower than the general mean. The combined mean of visual identity was the second highest of the four departments and significantly higher than the general mean.
- The Department of Public Service and Administration indicated no important scores that were lower than the general mean. Two items indicated significantly higher scores than the general mean. These items were *Good service/Bad service* and *Growing fast/Not growing*. For corporate service and behaviour and dynamism its combined mean was the second highest of the four departments. Its combined mean for visual identity was the second lowest of the four departments and lower than the combined mean of all four departments.
- Government Communication and Information Services had only one score lower than the general mean, namely the score for *Positive employees/Negative employees*. Most of the items showed significantly higher scores than the general mean. These items were *Growing fast/Not growing*, *High quality/Low quality*, *Helpful/Unhelpful*, *Understandable/Confusing*, *Modern/Old-fashioned*, *Dynamic/Static*, *Interesting/Boring*, *Likeable/Unlikeable*, *Attractive/Unattractive* and *Warm/Cold*. This department also had the highest combined mean for corporate service and behaviour, dynamism and visual identity. Its combined mean score for these categories was significantly higher than the general mean.

5.3.2 Reliability analysis

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the data collection instrument. According to Cooper and Emory (1995:155), the alpha coefficient will equal one if all the items are reliable and measure the same score. The closer the Cronbach Alpha value is to one, the more reliable the data.

The alpha coefficient of the first item was 0.932. Therefore, it can be concluded that the items of the first factor were reliable. The alpha coefficient of the second item was 0.795 – the lowest of all three factors. The four items of this factor were, however, individually strong. If one of these items were to be left out, the alpha coefficient score would fall to between 0.639 – 0.560. The alpha coefficient of the third item was 0.845, indicating a reasonable degree of reliability.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations for the government departments combined and for the individual departments can be made from the factor analysis:

6.1 The four departments combined

Conclusions

The visual identity factor showed the highest mean of the three factors. This confirms the research proposition, namely that the corporate identity of the government departments consists mainly of visual elements rather than behavioural elements. The mean scores of the other two factors, corporate service and behaviour and dynamism, which represent the behavioural elements, were not significantly lower than the visual mean score. This seems to indicate that behavioural elements are present in the corporate identity.

Recommendations

It is recommended that in developing a new corporate identity for the government, attention should be given to behavioural elements. Firstly, corporate service and the behaviour and dynamism of the government should be upgraded to engender a more positive perception with its publics. Then, a visually attractive logo should be created that could be considered representative of the corporate service and behaviour, and the dynamism of the government. It is therefore important that the corporate identity programme of the government be connected directly to the *Batho Pele* project, which is working towards the transformation of the government to a service-rendering, quality institution.

6.2 Department of Land Affairs

Conclusions

Corporate service and behaviour had the highest mean score of the three factors, although it was lower than the general mean. The visual identity mean was the second highest with dynamism having the lowest mean. It can therefore be concluded that the corporate identity of the department's distribution of visual and behavioural elements is fairly even, but that neither is strongly represented in the corporate identity.

Recommendations

This department will have to make some strategic decisions about its corporate identity. The visual identity, the corporate service and behaviour as well as dynamism will have to receive attention. On the positive side, it was observed that there is a clear indication of behavioural elements in the corporate identity. The corporate service and behaviour, dynamism and the visual identity are, however, not very strong. It is recommended that the effectiveness of the corporate identity should be investigated further.

6.3 Department of Sport and Recreation

Conclusions

The visual identity of this department is considered much higher than its behavioural elements. It can therefore be concluded that the department has a strong visual corporate identity, but that its behavioural elements – which should be the most important part of corporate identity – are insufficient. The corporate service and behaviour mean score was the lowest of all four departments. This was also the only department that showed a visual identity that was much stronger than the behavioural elements. Another notable aspect was the low score of the *Positive employees/Negative employees* item.

Recommendations

This department showed a big gap between the visual and the behavioural elements of the corporate identity. It is important that the department should give urgent attention to corporate service and behaviour, and dynamism. The negative attitude of the employees should be of concern to the department. Further investigation into the reasons for this negativity is recommended.

6.4 Department of Public Service and Administration

Conclusions

The corporate service and behaviour of this department has the highest combined mean score, with its visual identity also very strong. The corporate service and behaviour mean score was also higher than the general mean. The department's corporate service and behaviour is reflected very well in its corporate identity. The mean scores for dynamism, which also forms part of the behavioural elements, was lower than the general mean. This should be developed to contribute to even stronger behavioural elements. The combined mean of the visual identity of the department was slightly lower than the general mean and could also receive attention to improve the effectiveness of the corporate identity.

Recommendations

The dynamism of this department should receive attention. Action plans must be instituted to communicate to the internal stakeholders that the department is modern, dynamic, interesting and liberal. The mean score of the visual identity of this department was lower than the general mean score and should therefore receive attention.

6.5 Government Communication and Information services

Conclusions

This department had the highest mean for the three factors and all its mean scores were above the average. Dynamism showed the highest mean score with visual identity in the second place. The low mean score of the corporate service and behaviour could indicate that these factors of the corporate identity may not be on a standard as high as the other factors. The high mean score of dynamism indicates that some behavioural elements are reflected in the corporate identity. The visual identity also had the highest score of the four departments and it can be said that the respondents feel very positive regarding the visual elements of the corporate identity. An important issue that emerged from the scores was the low score on the Positive employees/Negative employees item.

Recommendations

This department should attend to the corporate service and behaviour of the department, as it has the lowest mean of the three factors. The negative feelings among employees should be investigated further. The visual identity of this department is very strong, but behavioural elements should be brought in line with this.

7. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This study was an exploration and a descriptive investigation into the factors of the corporate identity of four government departments. The following research limitations must be highlighted:

- The sample size of this study was not big enough to apply the results to the government as a whole.
- The set of bipolar items of the semantic difference scale might be incomplete and the possibility exists that some important items might inadvertently have been omitted. The use of the bipolar items might have encouraged bias in the interpretation of the measuring instrument since the respondents as different individuals might interpret words differently.
- The three factors identified to contribute to corporate identity might be applicable only to the four departments used in this study.

8. RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

- A larger and more scientific sample must be taken from the government to test the government's new corporate identity.
- More empirical research should be done to determine whether these or other factors contribute to the government's new corporate identity.

9. CONCLUSION

The perception of the corporate identity of an organisation is formed in the minds of the different publics by the behaviour of the organisation and its visual identity. This perception – whether positive or negative – contributes to the relationship the organisation builds with its publics.

This statement is borne out by this research report, which found that corporate identity comprises more than only visual elements. The conclusion can be reached that corporate service and behaviour, dynamism and visual identity may play a significant role in the creation of the corporate identity of the government departments included in this study.

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