

Institutional Identity
-Reading in the Foundations and Components-

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Abstract :

The primary objective of studying institutional identity is to deconstruct this academic communication term, highlighting its components, foundation ,and theoretical underpinnings. Institutional identity is knowing as the face of the institution. This will be achieved by introducing the concept of institutional identity, exploring the challenges associated with defining and refining the term. differentiating between real and virtual identity, examining the characteristics and features of institutional identity, and delving into the dimensions and indicators that define it, enabling institutions to establish a unique and distinctive communication identity based on scientific principles.

The most significant findings of study is constructing on institutional identity emphasizes the harmony among all active stakeholders within the institution , starting from the communicator and employees, and extending to the institution's audiences. The institutions must focus on a coherent strategic approach that clearly outlines their vision, objectives, performance and image.

Keywords: Institutional identity, communication strategy, communication values and messages.

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1. Introduction

The contemporary business landscape is characterized by dynamic evolution driven by various factors such as market privatization and deregulation, decentralized organizational structures, globalization of products, and more. These factors have compelled institutions to intensify competition and raise the stakes in the economic and communication environment, particularly given the evolving desires of consumers who seek novelty, convenience, and sophistication simultaneously.

Institutional identity has evolved beyond being merely a logo or colour palette. It now encompasses the communication framework that institutions adopt in their interactions with the public, grounded in effective communication messages, shared values, and principles, and fostering a desired mental image among their customers. This, in turn, cultivates satisfaction between the institution and its surroundings, enabling institutions to reach a broader audience.

Through this study, we aim to deconstruct the term "institutional identity" and explore its foundations and components. This will involve providing a definition of institutional identity, examining the challenges associated with defining this term, differentiating between an institution's real and virtual identity, highlighting its characteristics and features, dimensions, and ultimately, the indicators represented by (mental image, communication strategy,

Institutional Identity-Reading in the Foundations and Components-communication methods and values) for building an effective institutional identity in a dynamic environment.

Consequently, we pose the following question: What is institutional identity, and what are the foundations and components upon which it is built in the communication environment?

Subsequent questions include:

2. - What is institutional identity?

- What are the foundations and components of institutional identity?

- What are the dimensions and constituents of institutional identity?

- What are the challenges associated with defining the concept of institutional identity?

Importance of the Study: The significance of this theoretical study on institutional identity lies in elucidating its concept and the foundations that enable institutions to build an effective and favorable identity in the eyes of their audience. Additionally, it will reveal the indicators – components – upon which an institution relies during the process of constructing its identity in a competitive economic and communication environment.

Objectives of the Study: Our objectives are to:

- Comprehend the foundations and components upon which institutional identity is built.

- Identify the challenges that institutions face during the process of building a successful institutional identity.

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- Understand the essential communication indicators for institutional identity (image, values, communication strategy).

2 .Definition of institutional communication identity:

The technological developments in the field of computers and machines, and the widespread use of the Internet and networks, have allowed those responsible for communicating with various institutions to prepare thinking about the status of communication identity. This inevitability has allowed many institutions to adopt virtual reality because it is the most widely used now, in order to ensure the establishment of a good institutional identity for its customers, competitors, and clients. In order for the institution to continue in this digital field, it must adapt its name and components to build a good visual identity for itself. institutional identity is defined by the **Oxford Dictionary(2018)** ' as the characteristics that define who or what a person or thing is . Including the comprehensive structure that allows covering all or most of the organizational and strategic aspects of the institution.(Amira,2023,p205)

In addition to defining institutional identity: it is also what the institution wants to disclose or say, in a other word it is linked to intentional and unintentional forms of communication. For example, if the institution in the real environment enjoys narrow and closed gains, it does not provide the appropriate atmosphere for dialogue between employees. But it uses various available digital media, and says about itself that it is an institution open to its internal audience (employees) and its external audience (customers). Here, it has necessarily

Institutional Identity-Reading in the Foundations and Components-presented a message about being a closed institution with no freedom of expression, which are represented in all the internal functions of the institution. (Fatima,2021,p179)

The communication identity is a charter for formulating administrative documents and editing information, reports, data and adopted values that the institution seeks to disseminate and promote. As well as consolidating its visual image represented in colours, logos and various publications across the institution's official platforms. The communication identity is considered a roadmap for institutions, especially with the technological revolution that focuses on a set of foundations for building and adopting it virtually ,institutional identity is the way an organization present itself to its audience through a set of symbols, ,communication, behaviour and image.(fueyo,2015,p49)

3. Difficulties in controlling the concept of institutional identity:

- According to the researcher Claude Robar, identity has two classifications, the first is the essential type, meaning that the term identity is related to belief in the essence of events and facts (things have a specific existence), and the second type is related to the name and this type carries two dimensions: differentiation and generalization. As for differentiation, it is based on the differences between things and what distinguishes one institution from another, while generalization is the generalization of something to all people, meaning there are characteristics that can be embodied in all institutions.(dubar ,2008,p35)
- Identity is a philosophical concept according to John Blumer, and the disciplines that talk about this concept overlap and multiply, in addition to the overlap of understanding and comprehension of the components of identity and the elements necessary for its management.(balmer ,2001,p253)

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- There is a debate about institutional identity and its relationship to some similar concepts such as institutional reputation, the institution's trademark, the institution's mental image, and organizational identity.
- The use of notifications, for example, is like taking characteristics or qualities specific to psychology and projecting them onto the institution without taking into account the differences between what is human and what is material.

4 . Characteristics and features of institutional identity:

- We find the word identity takes several names, institutional identity, organization identity , communication identity.
- institutional identity allows for a comprehensive framework for the communication process and makes it more strategic and harmonious.
- institutional identity has three dimensions, a material dimension which is the visual identity, a subjective dimension represented by institutional values, and a symbolic dimension represented by the cultural container.
- institutional identity includes the identity of the institution through its products, brands, workers, culture, image ...

5. The difference between real identity and virtual identity:

Through sociological analyses of the concept of identity, we find two types, the real or original of the institution depends on what we can prove to be characterized by, in an other word what are the

Institutional Identity-Reading in the Foundations and Components-information and characteristics that can be proven to be related to a specific institution or individual.(Goffman ,1975,p12)

For example, the date of establishment of the institution, the number of employees, its geographical location... This information is documented and is specific to one institution, meaning there is no similarity between it and another institution in this information and it is called the institution's fingerprint. In contrast, digital technology and the association of institutions with virtual reality have imposed the creation of what is called the virtual identity - digital identity of the institution - and the strength of the virtual identity increases on the one hand due to the characteristics and information that the institution formulates from communication messages, visual identity... and on the other hand it has a weak point for false information about the institution by its competitors, and the emergence of the digital identity is enhanced by evidence of the identity marks that can be used and displayed on the digital social network. (cardon, 2008,p122)

6 .Dimensions of the institutional identity: The institutional identity has dimensions so that researchers in its field can distinguish it and are represented by a group of researchers, which are as follows:

6.1 The material dimension: focuses on everything that is material, visible, tangible that can be seen with the naked eye, such as the institution's logo, its trademark, its name, its products, its administrative documents, the location of the institution, whether geographical or through the digital field, the clothing of employees, and its organizational structure.(Fatima,2021,p186)

6.2 Subjective dimension: It concerns everything related to the values of the institution, its messages, its behaviors, the services it provides or its products, the market or geographical area it seeks to cover, its goals for survival and continuity, its method of development, its responsibilities and obligations towards its internal and external audiences.

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6.3 Symbolic dimension: Both the material and subjective dimensions work within a container, this container is called the symbolic field in which the institution operates and is also called the cultural dimension, which gives the institution the ability to work within a specific framework that enables it to guide its decision-making to achieve its goals, which are within a symbolic cultural framework that defines its identity, experiences, and experiments.(Fatima,2021,p187)

7 . Indicators of institutional communication identity:

In order to be able to build a good communication identity about it in the traditional or digital environment, it must rely on a set of indicators, which are:

7.1 Communication strategy:

Before talking about the concept of communication strategy, we first address,

7.1.1The definition of strategy: It is the plan or path that the institution adopts to achieve its goals. The word strategy is derived from the Greek word strategos, which means the art of leadership, as this term first appeared in the military field. According to the **Oxford Dictionary**, it is the art used in mobilizing and moving military equipment.(Abd el hamid,1999,p18)

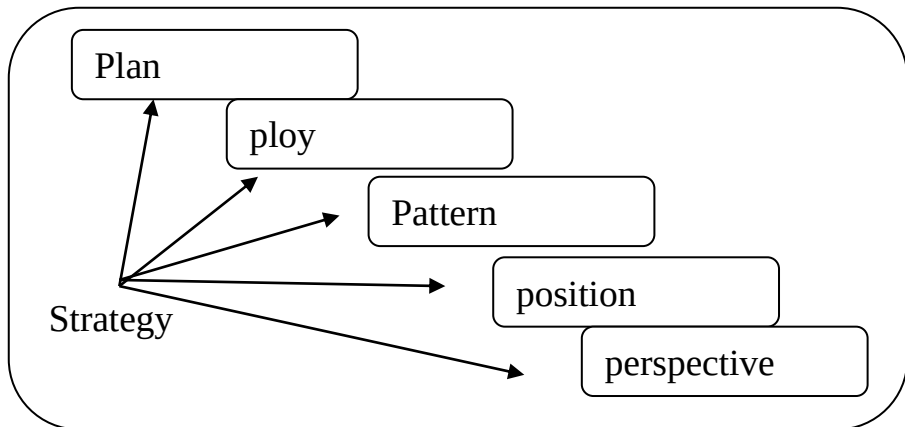
This concept was directed to the concept to the institution with the beginning of the sixties 1960 and the first book in this field ‘**strategy and structure**’ by the thinker” **Alfride Chandler**”. In it, he defined the strategy "testing the possibilities and activities and allocating the necessary resources to reach the desired results." The researcher **Henry Hintzberg** added that the formulation of the strategy includes five ps for strategy: (Alain,2000,p8)

- Plan: A specific described plan designed to achieve the goals.
- Poly: The rush of competitors and circumventing them.
- Pattern: A harmonious model of parts through deliberate or unintentional behaviour.

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- Position: The position of the stable situation is characterized by interaction and dynamism.
- Perspective: A perspective that gives the ability to see things according to their correct relationship.

Fig.1. Mintzberg model 5p



Source (AL-Hussaini ,2006,P15)

Thomas adds: Strategy is the long-term activities of the organization that ensure that its goals meet its messages, and that communication messages meet the surrounding environment in effective and efficient ways.(ghoul,2008,p181)

The strategy assumes three main variables:

- What? What will be accomplished by the organization.
- Where? The place or environment on which the organization focuses its planning.
- How? The way the organization gathers its resources and activities.(elbakri,2008,p35)

7.1.2 The concept of communication: It is the transfer of information, meanings, feelings, and ideas between one person and another to achieve a specific goal or purpose.

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The word communication is derived from the Latin root *comminus*, which means the common thing, and it is the process that triggers the stimulus and response in the system, as well as the processes by which information is transferred between individuals and institutions. (William, 1987, p563)

7.1.3 Communication strategy: According to the **dictionary of media and communication**, it is a pattern related to social interaction that aims to symbolically organize the environment. It is also an organized system based on a set of symbolic processes such as images and demonstrations that aim to make decisions.

Communication strategy is the art of exchanging ideas and opinions through specific messages and specific means to motivate the masses. (Patterson, 2009, p5)

7.2 communication message: The communication message is considered the essence of the communication process, as it links the sender of the message with its recipient, and the communicator formulates it and sends it to the other party represented by the recipient of the message - the audience - and it is either written or using symbols, and it is required that both parties share in the clarity of these symbols, and determining the type of message allows the sender to achieve the pre-planned goals. (koumaizi, 2012, p40)

7.2.1 Methods of building an effective communication message: There are two methods for building communication messages according to effective persuasive methods, and they require knowledge of the characteristics and nature of the target audience.

First. The scientific method in constructing the communication message: This method is based on a set of conditions:

- Clarity of objectives.
- Requires realistic information from reliable sources.
- Presentation of one aspect of the subject.
- Arranging evidence and persuasive proofs within the message.

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- Focus on the needs of the recipient.
- Repetition with diversification, like using attractive methods.
- Influencing the opinion of the majority. The more the message agrees with the opinion of the majority, the greater the likelihood of its acceptance. (boulbari,2023,p271)

Second . The unscientific method of constructing the communication message: It is the second type or pattern of methods of constructing the communication message and depends on the following:

- Bias in formulating the message and supporting a certain position or rejecting a certain position simply because of bias.
 - Generalization here is the institution relies on generalities in formulating the message, for example, if it is general, it will be diluted.
 - Quoting paragraphs or ideas without verifying their source or sending ideas that are not in line with the objectives of the message ,manipulating the use of words.
 - Exaggerating the temptation or intimidation.
- (boulbari,2023,p272)

7.3 Communication methods: These are the efforts made by the institution to transfer information between it and the employees (internally) and communicate with the public (externally). The institution uses all means and communication methods, either by using verbal methods, which is represented in informal communication in the institution, such as the manager communicating with the employees verbally or orally and providing information or orders, or in writing, which is through various communication techniques: (Amira,2023,p206)

7.3.1 Oral techniques: free association s, role-playing, conversation style (interview) – social management.

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7.3.2 Written techniques: presentation of the case, report, instruction, interest instruction.

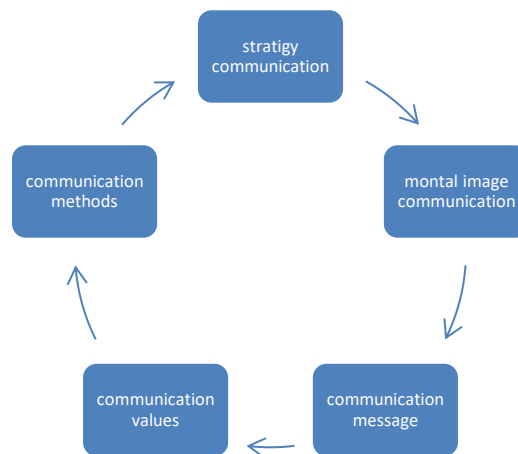
7.3.3 Audio-visual techniques: reportage, portrait, investigation.

7.4 Communication values: They are the values and beliefs that allow for building a good institutional image and reputation for it among its audience, and they are the convictions that the audience forms about the institution based on their experience in dealing with it through using its services or purchasing its products.(Philip,2008,p181)

7.5 Mental image: Each institution has a special imprint that distinguishes it from others and appears in the institution's logo and name, its packaging materials for products, and its dealings with its customers and audience.

The communication behaviors adopted by the institution have an impact on the quality of the relationship between the public and the reputation, and it must also verify the veracity of data and information before presenting them to the public to build a link that unites them, and from it the mental image of the institution is formed in the minds of its audiences and customers.(Amira,2023,p206)

Fig.2. Indicators of institutional communication identity



source Made by the researcher

8. Conclusion

Today, institutions must care about their institutional identity, as it is the compass that directs them towards achieving their goals and helps society to build a strong relationship with their audience.

Identity cannot be fixed, but must constantly evolve to keep pace with the changes that occur in the external and internal environment of the institution and to be in line with its strategic goals. When the identity is consistent and integrated, it helps build a strong corporate culture that enhances the spirit of belonging and increases customer loyalty. Corporate identity is a participatory act that takes into account the recipient's needs. It is not just a logo or a color, but rather it reflects the spirit of the institution, its values, strategies, and image. To build a strong corporate identity, institutions today require intensifying studies and research to learn about the impressions of their audiences about the desired and planned identity of the institution.

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