

**CITY IMAGE BRANDING:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON CITY IMAGE OF
COLOMBO FORT & PORT CITY DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT VIA STREETSCAPES**

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has given rise to a trend of competition among cities. It is distinguishably eminent in the South Asian region thus highlighting the importance of having strategies for city marketing, city branding and city image management in growing cities of this region. Port City Development Project which is the largest flagship project and the signature district currently under construction in Sri Lanka is interpreted as an instrument for branding Colombo. At the height of this green field development sprouting adjacent to the historic Colombo fort in another twenty years' time, adopting a plan to manage the overall city image and built environment with special reference to the Colombo Fort area is essential. Therefore, this study aims to explore the significance of city images and their coexistence to envision a branding strategy of the hybrid city. Accordingly, a qualitative research approach was adopted and multiple case studies were studied. Findings revealed eight qualities of streetscape that are in close relationship with city image while Colombo Fort and Port City Development Project exhibits significant differences in quality of the streetscape thus the City Image. These differences can be strategically used for future manipulations of City Image and ultimately for the branding of Colombo. Consequently, envisioning a city brand in combination with old and new City Images which enhances each other is the way forward to brand the future Colombo.

Keywords: City branding, City image, Streetscape, Colombo Fort, Port City Development Project

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