

URBAN ART AND NEIGHBOURHOOD-BRAND IDENTITY The Case of Lavapiés and its Representation on Instagram

ÍÑIGO URQUÍA URIAGUERCA
Universidad Francisco de Vitoria, Spain

KEYWORDS

Place branding
Neighbourhood branding
Urban art
Urban identity
Instagram
User-generated content (UGC)
Lavapiés

ABSTRACT

The present study examines the manner in which urban art, facilitated by user-generated content (UGC) on Instagram, contributes to the establishment of a neighbourhood's place brand identity. The present study focuses on the Lavapiés neighbourhood in Madrid (Spain), for which a content analysis was conducted on social media posts tagged with the #Lavapiés hashtag. The results of the study indicate that urban art is the most prevalent theme in the posts, thereby underscoring its predominant association with the gastronomy and the social fabric of the neighbourhood. However, a significant disconnection between urban art and political or civic participation is observed, suggesting an integration of this type of art into everyday life, distancing it from its potentially subversive nature. The study concludes with a reflection on the underestimated role of institutions in shaping the place brand.

Received: 20 / 04 / 2025

Accepted: 21 / 07 / 2025

1. Introduction

The present study investigates the manner in which urban art, through user-generated content on Instagram, contributes to the shaping of the brand-place identity of a neighbourhood. The specific case of Lavapiés in Madrid (Spain), a neighbourhood that has undergone significant revitalisation, is analysed in detail. The present work aligns with the methodologies established by Acuti et al. (2018) and Sukiman (2023) in the analysis of the projected image of the city through social networks. It innovates by focusing on the neighbourhood as an entity with its own identity.

In an era where metropolises are exhibiting increasing homogeneity (Lemoine-Rodriguez et al., 2020), neighbourhoods undergoing decline are pursuing distinct identities through regeneration and revitalisation processes (Hwang, 2014). In a manner analogous to the development of place-branding plans by cities (see Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009), neighbourhoods too have their own place-branding strategies. In many regions worldwide, cities and neighbourhoods utilise three primary instruments in the realm of local brand planning, employing diverse combinations of these tools. These elements encompass personality association, the attribution of traits of a famous personality to a place, the buildings and appearance of its streets, and the events held (Ashworth, 2009).

The allusion to branding in this area is not without controversy. It is evident that planned branding strategies, particularly in relation to specific neighbourhoods, can be considered as a contributing factor to the phenomenon of tourist gentrification and the denaturalisation of communal spaces (Masuda & Bookman, 2018). However, an alternative perspective posits that the emergence of neighbourhood branding can be attributed to the close relationship between inhabitants and social actors, with a concomitant positive influence on their social, economic and cultural life (Sadeque et al., 2020).

It is during periods of urban regeneration that concerns for the identity and image of a place emerge. The potential of art and culture in the revitalisation of urban centres has been a subject of interest in academic discourse (García, 2004). The role of cultural institutions in fostering community cohesion within urban neighbourhoods has also been a focal point of research (Hudson, 1980; Grodach, 2011; Stern & Seifert, 2010). The influence of culture on the revitalisation of a neighbourhood is exemplified by the case of Lavapiés in Madrid (Spain). The neighbourhood is home to a wide range of ethnic restaurants, small shops, cultural and neighbourhood associations, and it is characterised by a rich cultural life. The city is home to a diverse population, comprising both long-term and recent residents, with a notable proportion of immigrants. In addition to the aforementioned description of the neighbourhood, it is imperative to consider the prevailing political tensions between public institutions and the police, juxtaposed against the emergence of social movements centred on the issue of immigration (Bonfigli, 2014).

In this context, user-generated content (UGC), encompassing both residents and visitors, manifests as photographs disseminated through social media, thereby serving as a conduit between geographical locations and their respective audiences (Narangajavana et al., 2017). This phenomenon has been identified as a predominant catalyst for the formation of projected identities, particularly in the context of nations and cities (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016).

1.1. City Brand - Neighbourhood Brand

The concept of place branding entails the application of branding and marketing theory into geographical entities (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). The concept may be referred to as transnational strategies that exert influence on the international political landscape, as evidenced by the European Union's endeavours to project a specific image (Van Ham, 2008). However, the majority of scientific research has centred on the branding of major metropolitan areas. However, the field of place-branding for smaller units, such as neighbourhoods, is still in its infancy (Eshuis et al., 2014; Willer, 2022; Urquia, 2025). The definition of a neighbourhood as a geographical and social unit poses a number of problems because there are many dimensions along which it can be delimited (Chaskin, 1998). Its boundaries are flexible and imperfect, and physically, in general, they represent a continuum in relation to the rest of the city in which they are inserted. Nevertheless, to a certain extent, they can be identified and possess a defined social structure (Chaskin, 1997).

In the context of the objective of our work, it is imperative to acknowledge the tensions that are frequently engendered by the concept of neighbourhood regeneration and revitalisation. This is

particularly evident in the context of the role of art and culture in this process. As has been previously observed, cultural practices can be exploited by political and economic elites to legitimise urban regeneration processes. These processes often encourage residential gentrification and control over the use of public spaces. These branding processes frequently favour middle-class users, investors and tourists, thus disadvantageous to more popular sectors. However, they can also be executed in an inclusive and participatory manner by local cultural creators and actors (Rius Ulldemolins, 2014). It has been posited that, for branding in urban regeneration to be respectful of its social reality, collaboration among its agents is necessary, and that it must be aligned with the reality of the neighbourhood and the shared vision of development (Collins, 2021; Eshuis & Edelenbos, 2009). Finally, the role played by the integration of immigration in the revitalisation of many neighbourhoods in the West should be highlighted as a pre-eminent element in the shaping of neighbourhood identity (Rabii, 2023).

The revitalisation of neighbourhoods that have experienced periods of decline can be achieved through a number of strategies. Firstly, the attraction of new homeowners from a variety of income levels is essential (DeGiovanni & Paulson, 1984). Secondly, the attraction of middle-class immigrants to inner-city areas is crucial (Hudson, 1980). Thirdly, the promotion of trade and retail activity is necessary (Martin & Pentel, 2002). Finally, the provision of safety in areas that were previously considered dangerous is essential (Sutton, 2010). Conversely, rising house prices or speculation (DeGiovanni, 1983) and, more recently, the consequences of temporary rentals, such as gentrification and neighbourhood dispossession (Cócola-Gant, 2016; Cocola-Gant et al., 2021; Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018), have been identified as undesired effects.

1.2. Urban Art

Urban art, also referred to as street art, encompasses the creation of images, characters and forms that are produced autonomously and applied to surfaces in urban space with the intention of communicating with a broader audience. Its execution is characterised by a performative dimension, intrinsically linked to a particular locale, and is often ephemeral and participatory (Blanché, 2015). The classification of types of urban art is a complex undertaking, primarily due to the indistinct boundaries that characterise the transition between different styles. Its definition can be delineated by various factors, including the employed technique, the medium used (e.g. graffiti, writing, stencil, mural, pochoir, yarn bombing, pasting, sticker, tagging, etc.), the degree of originality, the level of involvement by residents, the state of conservation, and the legal status of the work. This can be either a commissioned piece or a spontaneous initiative (Luque Rodrigo & Moral Ruiz, 2022). A common trait presupposed to urban art actions is their disruptive character due to their counterposition, in origin, to normative and institutionalised art (Austin, 2010). Among its objectives are to challenge the passer-by, turning them into a spectator (Whybrow, 2011) and to promote an alternative aesthetic to the hegemonic one (Christensen & Thor, 2017). In the context of urban regeneration, it has been posited that this process can assist in defining a city's unique identity, thereby preserving the aesthetic quality of public spaces without replicating the prevailing forms and modes (Miles, 1995).

In the context of urban studies, the notion of a "mental image" of a city or neighbourhood is a concept of particular interest. According to Gilboa et al. (2015), this mental image is comprised of various dimensions, with history and heritage occupying the primary position, and culture and art assuming a secondary role. In the context of urban revitalisation, the aesthetic dimension of urban art, which is frequently regarded as both heritage and art, has assumed a central role. This artistic practice has become increasingly prevalent in the cultural initiatives of public institutions. Contrary to the prevalent perception of art as vandalism, public bodies have increasingly adopted and promoted such actions (Vázquez et al., 2017).

1.3. User Generated Content

A considerable proportion of the identity and image of locations – whether they be countries, cities or neighbourhoods – is derived from the photographs and content shared by users on their social networking platforms. UGC is defined as any type of text, data or action performed by users of online digital systems, published and disseminated by the user themselves through independent channels, which produces an expressive or communicative effect, either individually or in combination with other contributions from the same or other sources (Santos, 2021). The influence of spontaneous content from

individual users on the perceived image of these places is more significant than that of planned marketing actions undertaken by public bodies (Skinner, 2018). For instance, in the context of trip planning and the identification of tourist experiences, Instagram emerges as a predominant source of information for travellers (Zhou & Xue, 2022), surpassing conventional media (Ana & Istudor, 2013) and content disseminated through marketing campaigns or DMOs (Destination Management Organisations) (Baumann et al., 2018). A salient characteristic of this content type is its impartiality, which is attributable to the spontaneous nature of its generation (Wacker & Groth, 2020). This quality renders it the preferred medium of the millennial generation (Nur'afifah & Prihantoro, 2021). In this manner, social media platforms such as Instagram have been demonstrated to influence the collective imagination surrounding geographical locations, including streets, neighbourhoods and cities (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2022). Moreover, in relation to the objectives of our research, there is a close link between this platform and urban art, especially graffiti, to the extent that it surpasses specialised magazines in terms of the reach and visibility of this artistic expression (Hannerz, 2016).

2. Research objectives

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of urban art, as manifested through user posts on Instagram, on the development of a neighbourhood's brand identity. Specifically, the Lavapiés neighbourhood in Madrid (Spain) is employed as a case study, serving as an exemplar of a revitalised neighbourhood. The present study builds on the approaches of Acuti et al. (2018) and Sukiman (2023) by exploring the projected image of the city through social networks. However, the present study innovates by focusing on the neighbourhood as an entity with its own identity and by exploring urban art as a key element in its configuration. In order to achieve the proposed objective, the work poses four research questions:

RQ1: In what ways do social networks influence the perception of neighbourhoods undergoing revitalisation processes?

RQ2: What role does urban art play in the context of image association with a neighbourhood in social networks?

RQ3: In what ways can urban art be considered in relation to other aspects of place branding?

RI4: What role is played by citizens, commercial brands and institutions in shaping the place brand of a neighbourhood?

3. Methodology

The platform chosen for this study was Instagram. Visual social networks allow researchers to obtain a large amount of data and metadata from user-generated content, and this methodology has been applied in various fields, including the study of cities (Hochman & Manovich, 2013). Instagram users offer us personal moments through their content, generally with little prior planning—unlike professional photographers—and with a high degree of authenticity with regard to the place photographed (Thelander & Cassinger, 2017). A content analysis of users' Instagram posts was carried out. This technique is based on the “set of interpretative procedures of communicative products (messages, texts or discourses) (...)” (Piñuel, 2002, p.2). Its characteristics are “being objective, systematic, quantitative, about the manifest content and with the aim of interpreting it” (Sierra, 2001, p.287).

The scope of the study has a defined territorial unit: the Lavapiés neighbourhood, located in Madrid, the capital of Spain. Madrid is a city with a long tradition of urban artistic interventions (Meléndez Táboas, 2013). As we have indicated, although the management of urban art is a task yet to be defined by public bodies (Luque-Rodrigo, 2020), the Spanish capital is home to numerous public and private initiatives of this type. The Lavapiés neighbourhood, for example, has been hosting the CALLE urban art festival since 2013, in which local shops, bars and restaurants are involved in interventions by artists. Another initiative linked to the same neighbourhood is MUROS TABACALERA, a meeting point for artists, government officials, managers and street art enthusiasts (González-Díez & Bengoa, 2018). The study was limited to the period in which the CALLE 24 urban art festival was held in 2024, from 8 April to 5 May. These types of festivals are an ideal opportunity for users to create a brand for a place based on the graphic documentation they post on social media (Kádár & Klaniczay, 2022).

The hashtag #Lavapiés was used to track content. Hashtags are words preceded by the symbol # on social media, used to categorise and search for related content. They make it easier to follow topics and participate in online conversations, increasing the visibility of posts. Although their meaning can vary, hashtags reflect common practices on social media and are useful for narrowing down research. On Instagram, they are essential for searching for topics and contributing to community discussions through specific tags (Gon, 2021).

In order to analyse the main associations made about the neighbourhood, a visual and textual content analysis was carried out. A total of 2,400 photographs were downloaded for analysis using the *software* 4K stogram. After discarding posts unrelated to the neighbourhood in question and grouping the photographs by unique posts, the final sample consisted of 842 posts. Data collection consisted of coding each post based on a series of elements: the date it was posted, the URL, the associated hashtags, the user's identity and the classification of the content based on a series of brand-place association categories. Following the recommendations of Acuti et al. (2018), the categories proposed by Choi et al. (2007) were adapted to the purposes of this study and the nature of the place analysed. Urban art could be categorised as “artistic heritage” or “culture in general” (Nomeikaite, 2017). For this reason, we have separated it from the rest in our categorisation. The categories finally used were as follows: 1) Buildings and heritage; 2) Urban art; 3) Culture and artistic installations (exhibitions, theatre, music, etc.); 4) Commerce; 5) Panoramic or landscape views; 6) Gastronomy and hospitality; 7) Sports; 8) People (visitors, residents, etc.); 9) Politics and citizen action.

The content collected and analysed for the study was that shared on public accounts. Posts made on private accounts were not taken into account.

Each photograph was classified into a maximum of three categories so that relationships between them could be established. The posts were also classified according to the identity of the user, whether they were individuals, commercial brands (companies, establishments, etc.) or non-profit organisations (associations, platforms, etc.). With regard to textual analysis, a content analysis of the hashtags associated with the posts was carried out.

4. Results

4.1. Visual Information Analysis

The 842 publications related to the hashtag #Lavapiés were coded according to the classification explained in the methodological section. The results indicate that the majority of the photographs pertain to urban art, constituting 23.07% of the total (Fig. 1). Secondly, the most frequent theme identified is that of photographs showing people, including both residents and visitors, accounting for 20.67% of the total. In this area, photographic initiatives of a social nature aimed at promoting neighbourhood ties through portraits of residents are particularly noteworthy, as evidenced by the account @aquivivimos_enlavapiés (Fig. 1).

Image 1



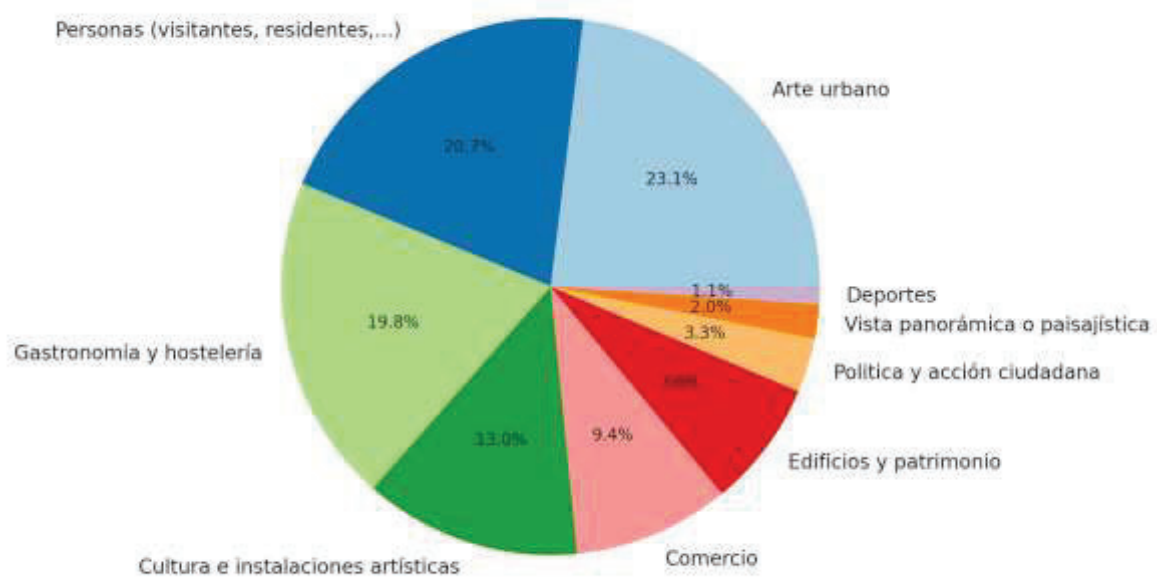
Source: @aquivivimos_enlavapiés (https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_b6dYCPJf/)

The visual documentation of culinary activities in Lavapiés is a prominent feature of the photographs, with images of food and hospitality accounting for 19.8% of the total. The remaining categories comprise culture and art installations (13%), commerce (9.4%), and buildings and heritage (7.6%).

The categories least represented included politics and civic action, panoramic or landscape views, and sports.

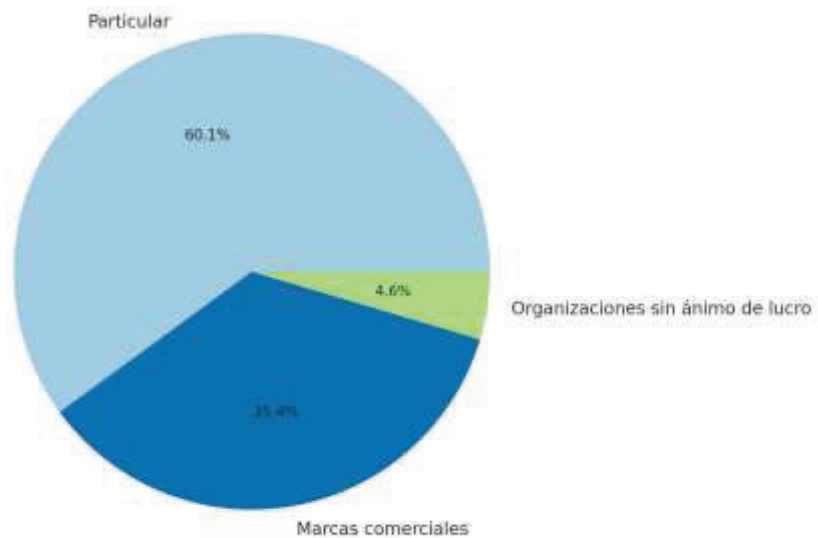
The paucity of these last two elements appears to be justified by the strictly urban environment. However, the absence of any political or activist content is striking, given that one would expect social media to be a space for the promotion of such activities. In summary, the data demonstrate that the most prominent elements in the visual identity of Lavapiés as expressed on Instagram are urban art, people and gastronomy.

Figure 1. Distribution of publications by category.



Source: Own elaboration. 2004.

With respect to user identity, the majority of posts are attributable to individuals (60.05%), while the remainder are predominantly attributable to brands (35.35%) and, to a lesser extent, to institutions and non-profit organisations (4.60%) (Fig. 2). As illustrated in Figure 1, urban art is the most prevalent topic among the publications shared by individuals, accounting for 22.32% of the total. This underscores the pivotal role of residents and visitors in the propagation and appreciation of this cultural element, thereby solidifying urban art as a distinctive feature of the visual identity of Lavapiés. At this juncture, it is imperative to underscore the significance of accounts that, while belonging to private individuals and not to commercial entities, are instrumental in elucidating the quotidian life of neighbourhoods and cities. In such cases, the contributions of users such as @apasitospormadrid are worthy of particular note. Furthermore, it is notable that publications by individuals also include content related to people (21.83%) and gastronomy and hospitality (18.45%).

Figure 2. Distribution of users by identity.

Source: Own elaboration. 2004.

In terms of brand focus, gastronomy and hospitality (31.31%), commerce (21.55%) and urban art (14.55%) are the primary drivers, with Instagram serving as the primary promotional platform. In some cases, as illustrated by the percentage related to urban art, brands employ visually appealing elements of the neighbourhood to appeal to consumers. Institutions and organisations, although less prevalent, primarily disseminate content pertaining to urban art (23.68%), cultural and artistic installations (18.42%), and individuals (18.42%).

Despite the importance of institutions, including neighbourhood associations, platforms and public institutions in shaping the neighbourhood's identity, their presence in our sample is remarkably low (4.60%). This could be indicative of a missed opportunity to encourage activism and citizen participation through this platform. Indeed, the category of politics and citizen action, which these institutions are better placed to represent, accounts for a mere 3.28% of their posts. This underrepresentation indicates a potential for institutions to enhance their efforts in promoting and raising awareness of activism and citizen participation in Lavapiés.

In order to identify relationships between categories, particularly between the urban art categories and the others, a cross-contingency table (Table 1) was developed using the first two classification columns.

Table 1. Cross tabulation of frequency of categories.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1		11,8			7,9	14,3	6,8		0,7
2	0,4				0,4		3,6	0,4	
3						0,7	6,4	1,1	
4							1,4		
5	2,1	1,1	0,7				3,2	0,4	3,2
6	1,1		0,4				7,5	0,4	
7	1,4	1,1	1,8	2,1	1,4	10,0		2,5	1,1
8	0,4					0,4	1,4		
9							0,7		

Urban art 2. Commerce 3. Culture and artistic facilities 4. Sports 5. Buildings and heritage 6. People 8.

Politics and citizen action 9. Panoramic or landscape view Source: Own elaboration. 2004.

As demonstrated in the accompanying table, the distribution of urban art exhibits remarkable variance across multiple categories. A substantial presence of street art is evident in categories such as people (visitors and residents), gastronomy and hospitality, and commerce. The prevailing relationship

between categories is evident between street art and gastronomy, as well as hospitality. A significant number of bars and restaurants utilise street art as a strategy to attract custom and differentiate themselves from their competitors (Figure 2).

Image 2. *Bodegas lo máximo* façade



Source: @apasitospormadrid (<https://www.instagram.com/p/C6IYG-Yo9QN/>)

The subsequent close affiliation of urban art is with commerce. As with the hospitality industry, shops also benefit from urban art, using its works as decorative elements on façades, shutters, or windows. Thirdly, the concept of urban art is intrinsically linked to the context of buildings and heritage. This suggests that the works, rather than constituting an act of vandalism, are regarded as an additional element contributing to the aesthetic landscape of the neighbourhood (Image 3). Finally, a notable correlation has been identified between publications concerning urban art and those featuring people, suggesting that visitors assimilate these artistic creations into the visual memories they subsequently document on social media platforms. It is important to note the minimal or non-existent relationship between urban art and the category of politics and citizen action, which appears to dispel the notion of urban art as a form of protest. Excluding the domain of urban art, the most prevalent relationship pertains to the interactions between individuals and the hospitality industry, thereby underscoring the pivotal role of the latter in shaping the neighbourhood's identity.

Image 3



Source: @fernandogdelaserna (<https://www.instagram.com/p/C5oTYDytFaa/>)

4.2. An Analysis of Textual Information

Regarding the analysis of the textual information provided by the publications, a word frequency list has been developed. This list is based on the hashtags accompanying the photographs, and it identifies the 50 most frequent hashtags in the overall data set and in each specific category.

Table 2 presents the top five from each list. The utilisation of hashtags by users serves to illustrate the manner in which content is categorised. These hashtags are employed by users to denote themes on Instagram, thereby enhancing the visibility of their posts categorised by theme.

A study of the 50 most frequently used hashtags in Instagram posts about Lavapiés revealed that 18% were related to art. The prevalence of hashtags such as #mural, #streetart, #grafiti, #arteurbano and #art underscores the significance of art in shaping the perception and representation of the neighbourhood. As illustrated in the sample table, three of the top five categories (#mural, #streetart, #grafiti) are associated with urban art.

Table 3. Most frequent hashtags related to #Lavapiés

	Hashtag 1	Hashtag 2	Hashtag 3	Hashtag 4	Hashtag 5
Urban art	madrid	mural	streetart	grafiti	arteurbano
Trade	madrid	tartaspersonaliz adas	flashtattoo	intercambio	manicura
Culture	madrid	OliviaSessions	lanochebocaarrib a	madreflaca	plazasvivas
Sports	dragonesdelavapi es	football	Viva	dragones	retiro
Buildings and heritage	madrid	spain	teatro	comprarcasa	peopleonthestree t
Gastronomy and hospitality	vegan	madrid	cocktails	restaurantesmad rid	yoka
Persons	madrid	LaCuevaDelOso	aquivivimos	dragonesdelavapi es	lapianolabar
Politics and citizen action	desahucio	soslavapiés	sosmadrid	fondosbuitres	alquiler
Panoramic view	madrid	callesdemadrid	paseandopormadr id	madridcity	porlascallesdema drid
Total	madrid	mural	vegan	streetart	grafiti

Source: Own elaboration. 2004.

In order to observe how hashtags related to urban art are linked, the following procedure was followed. Specific hashtags were defined: #streetart, #arteurbano and #grafiti. The sample of the 50 most frequent hashtags was filtered by category to identify the presence of these hashtags in each category and calculate their frequency. Then, the percentage of each of these hashtags was calculated in relation to the total number of hashtags within each category. The percentage table (Table 4) shows how hashtags related to urban art relate to the different categories to facilitate interpretation and analysis.

Table 4. Distribution of urban art hashtags by category

	#streetart	#urbanart	#graffiti
Urban art	5.0%	2.2%	2.9%
Trade	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%
Culture	1.3%	0.4%	0.4%
Sports	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Buildings and heritage	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%
Gastronomy and hospitality	0.9%	0.3%	0.3%
Persons	1.1%	0.4%	0.4%
Policy and action...	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Panoramic view	0.9%	0.4%	0.4%

Source: Own elaboration. 2004.

The analysis demonstrates, as anticipated, that these hashtags exhibit a substantial presence within the Urban Art category. However, upon examination of the remaining categories, it becomes evident that relevant aspects previously identified through visual analysis are indeed substantiated. In the domain of Food and Hospitality, these hashtags also demonstrate a notable presence, thereby suggesting that urban art contributes to the visual and cultural appeal of gastronomic establishments. In the People category, the presence of these hashtags indicates that both residents and visitors interact with and appreciate urban art. Finally, it is imperative to reiterate the conspicuous absence of these hashtags in subjects pertaining to Politics and Citizen Action. As was highlighted in the visual analysis, the data indicates that urban art is not associated with political discourse or activism in social media posts concerning Lavapiés, contradicting conventional expectations.

4. Conclusions

The present study has investigated the manner in which urban art, as manifested in user posts on the social media platform Instagram, contributes to the creation of the brand-place identity of a neighbourhood undergoing revitalisation. The study utilised the case study of Lavapiés in Madrid. In light of the research questions that were put forward, the following conclusions have been drawn.

Firstly, with regard to the contribution of social media to shaping the image of neighbourhoods undergoing revitalisation (PI1), the results confirm that social media, and Instagram in particular, are decisive in constructing the visual identity of Lavapiés. It is evident that users do not merely reflect, but actively shape, the image of the neighbourhood, highlighting certain elements over others.

Secondly, in relation to the role of urban art as an element of image association with a neighbourhood on social media (PI2), this emerges as a central and differentiating element in the visual identity of Lavapiés. This particular intervention is the most prevalent theme in the posts under consideration and is intricately interwoven with other elements of the cityscape, including buildings and commercial establishments. Urban art has emerged as a significant visual attraction, shaping the experience and perception of the neighbourhood for both residents and visitors. This finding is at odds with the long-standing view of urban art as a form of expression that is disruptive and rebellious by nature (Austin, 2010). It appears that urban art has been assimilated into and has become an integral part of the social and commercial life of this type of neighbourhood, thereby greatly diluting its subversive character.

Thirdly, with regard to the relationship between urban art and other components of the place brand (PI3), the results indicate that the connection between urban art and hospitality is of paramount importance. Hospitality establishments utilise urban art as a means of enhancing their visibility and distinguishing themselves within the competitive market. This phenomenon underscores the manner in which urban art has been co-opted as a marketing instrument, aligning itself with the commercial and tourist imperatives of the locale, rather than functioning as a conduit for social critique. This is particularly significant given the absence of any discernible connection between urban art in Lavapiés and political or citizen participation. This absence could be indicative of a disconnection between artistic practices and the dynamics of social activism in this particular context. This outcome is in stark contrast with the prevailing notion of urban art as a medium for political expression (Rius Ulldemolins, 2014), suggesting that within this specific milieu, urban art has been divested of its potential for subversion and assimilated into the quotidian life of the community.

Finally, with regard to the role of citizens, brands and institutions in shaping the place brand of a neighbourhood (PI4), it is concluded that citizens, through their publications, are the primary agents in the dissemination and reinforcement of the identity of the place brand. In the hospitality sector, brands assume a particularly salient role, albeit with a more pronounced commercial focus. However, the participation of institutions such as neighbourhood associations remains negligible, representing a significant opportunity to enhance the cultural and social fabric of the neighbourhood through enhanced institutional engagement on digital platforms.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study, which are primarily associated with the researcher's access to images shared by users. As previously stated, the analysis was based exclusively on photographs posted on public Instagram accounts, excluding users with private accounts. Consequently, the public's perception of a locale, as shaped by Instagram content, could be enhanced by an increased number of images.

In summary, the study confirms that urban art, disseminated through social networks such as Instagram, is not only a crucial component but also essential in the construction and perception of the neighbourhood's brand identity. The interaction between urban art and the hospitality industry is the strongest and most significant relationship, positioning urban art as a central pillar in the revitalisation and differentiation of this neighbourhood. However, the role of institutions remains limited, suggesting a need for greater involvement to harness the cultural potential of the neighbourhood and better reflect its richness. Moreover, the disconnection between urban art and political participation in Lavapiés prompts inquiries into the function of art in cultivating environments conducive to authentic civic engagement and activism. This facet merits further investigation through rigorous academic research.

References

- Acuti, D., Mazzoli, V., Donvito, R., & Chan, P. (2018). An instagram content analysis for city branding in London and Florence. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 9(3), 185-204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2018.1463859>
- Ana, M.-I., & Istudor, L.-G. (2013). The Role of Social Media and User-Generated-Content in Millennials' Travel Behavior. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy*, 7(1), 87-104. <https://doi.org/10.25019/MDKE/7.1.05>
- Ashworth, G. J. (2009). The Instruments of Place Branding: How is it Done? *European Spatial Research and Policy*, 16(1), 9-22. <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10105-009-0001-9>
- Ashworth, G., & Kavaratzis, M. (2009). Beyond the logo: Brand management for cities. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(8), 520-531. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550133>
- Austin, J. (2010). More to see than a canvas in a white cube: For an art in the streets. *City*, 14(1-2), 33-47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810903529142>
- Baumann, F., Lopes, M. S., & Lourenço, P. (2018). Destination image through digital photography. Instagram as a data collector for UGC analysis. *E-Review of Tourism Research*, 9. <https://ertr-ojs-tamu.tdl.org/ertr/article/view/117>
- Blanché, U. (2015). Street Art and related terms. *SAUC - Street Art & Urban Creativity Scientific Journal*, 1(1), 32-39. <https://doi.org/10.25765/SAUC.V1I1.14>
- Bonfigli, F. (2014). Lavapiés: Seguridad urbana, activismo politico y inmigracion en el corazon de Madrid. *Sortuz: Oñati Journal of Emergent Socio-Legal Studies*, 6(2), 61-77. <https://opo.ijsj.net/index.php/sortuz/article/view/547>
- Chaskin, R. J. (1997). Perspectives on Neighborhood and Community: A Review of the Literature. *Social Service Review*, 71(4), 521-547. <https://doi.org/10.1086/604277>
- Chaskin, R. J. (1998). Neighborhood as a Unit of Planning and Action: A Heuristic Approach. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 13(1), 11-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088541229801300102>
- Christensen, M., & Thor, T. (2017). The reciprocal city: Performing solidarity—Mediating space through street art and graffiti. *International Communication Gazette*, 79(6-7), 584-612. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048517727183>
- Cócola-Gant, A. (2016). Holiday Rentals: The New Gentrification Battlefront. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(3), 112-120. <https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.4071>
- Cocola-Gant, A., Hof, A., Smigiel, C., & Yrigoy, I. (2021). Short-term rentals as a new urban frontier – evidence from European cities. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 53(7), 1601-1608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X211042634>
- Collins, B. (2021). Place Branding and Its Discontents: The Politics and Management of Neighborhood Governance Systems. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 44(2) 0739456X2199844. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X21998448>
- DeGiovanni, F. F. (1983). Patterns of Change in Housing Market Activity in Revitalizing Neighborhoods. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 49(1), 22-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944368308976193>
- DeGiovanni, F. F., & Paulson, N. A. (1984). Household Diversity in Revitalizing Neighborhoods. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 20(2), 211-232. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004208168402000206>
- Eshuis, J., & Edelenbos, J. (2009). Branding in urban regeneration. *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, 2(3), 272-282. <https://doi.org/10.69554/NUYS8388>
- Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H., & Braun, E. (2014). Place marketing and citizen participation: Branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(1), 151-171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852313513872>
- García, B. (2004). URBAN REGENERATION, ARTS PROGRAMMING AND MAJOR EVENTS: Glasgow 1990, Sydney 2000 and Barcelona 2004. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 10(1), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1028663042000212355>
- Gilboa, S., Jaffe, E. D., Vianelli, D., Pastore, A., & Herstein, R. (2015). A summated rating scale for measuring city image. *Cities*, 44, 50-59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2015.01.002>

- Gon, M. (2021). Local experiences on Instagram: Social media data as source of evidence for experience design. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 19, 100435. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100435>
- González-Díez, L., & Bengoa, M. T. (2018). La intervención artística en el espacio urbano: Acción y reflexión de "Muros Tabacalera". *Arquetipo*, 17, 49-61.
- Grodach, C. (2011). Art Spaces in Community and Economic Development: Connections to Neighborhoods, Artists, and the Cultural Economy. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 31(1), 74-85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X10391668>
- Hanna, S., & Rowley, J. (2008). An analysis of terminology use in place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(1), 61-75. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pb.6000084>
- Hannerz, E. (2016). Scrolling down the line. *SAUC - Street Art and Urban Creativity*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.25765/sauc.v2i2.50>
- Hochman, N., & Manovich, L. (2013). Zooming into an Instagram City: Reading the local through social media. *First Monday*, 18(7). <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v18i7.4711>
- Hudson, J. R. (1980). Revitalization of Inner-City Neighborhoods: An Ecological Approach. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 15(4), 397-408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107808748001500403>
- Hwang, K. H. (2014). Finding Urban Identity through Culture-led Urban Regeneration. *Journal of Urban Management*, 3(1-2), 67-85. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2226-5856\(18\)30084-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2226-5856(18)30084-0)
- Kádár, B., & Klaniczay, J. (2022). Branding Built Heritage through Cultural Urban Festivals: An Instagram Analysis Related to Sustainable Co-Creation, in Budapest. *Sustainability*, 14(9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14095020>
- Kusumowidagdo, A., Ujang, N., Rahadiyanti, M., & Ramli, N. A. (2022). Exploring the sense of place of traditional shopping streets through Instagram's visual images and narratives. *Open House International*, 48(1), 2-22. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OHI-01-2022-0009>
- Lemoine-Rodríguez, R., Inostroza, L., & Zepp, H. (2020). The global homogenization of urban form. An assessment of 194 cities across time. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 204, 103949. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2020.103949>
- Luque Rodrigo, L., & Moral Ruiz, C. (2022). The complex task of cataloguing street and public art. *CAP - Public Art Journal*, 3(1), 36-49. <https://doi.org/10.48619/CAP.V3I1.468>
- Luque-Rodrigo, L. (2020). La gestión del arte urbano, ¿una cuestión pendiente? *La Colmena*, 81. <https://doi.org/10.36677/lacolmena.v0i106.13191>
- Martin, J. A., & Pentel, P. R. (2002). What the Neighbors Want: *The Neighborhood Revitalization Program's First Decade*. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 68(4), 435-449. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944360208976284>
- Masuda, J. R., & Bookman, S. (2018). Neighbourhood branding and the right to the city. *Progress in Human Geography*, 42(2), 165-182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516671822>
- Meléndez Táboas, A. (2013). Ilustradores de pared en Madrid. *Arte y Ciudad: Revista de Investigación*, 3(1), 569-586.
- Miles, M. (1995). Art and urban regeneration. *Urban History*, 22(2), 238-252. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S096392680000050X>
- Narangajavana, Y., Callarisa Fiol, L. J., Moliner Tena, M. Á., Rodríguez Artola, R. M., & Sánchez García, J. (2017). The influence of social media in creating expectations. An empirical study for a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65, 60-70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2017.05.002>
- Nomeikaite, L. (2017). Street art, heritage and embodiment. *SAUC - Street Art and Urban Creativity*, 3(1), 43-53. <https://doi.org/10.25765/sauc.v3i1.62>
- Nur'afifah, O., & Prihantoro, E. (2021). The Influence of Social Media on Millennial Generation about Travel Decision-Making. *Jurnal The Messenger*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.26623/themessenger.v13i3.2328>
- Piñuel, J. L. (2002). Epistemología, metodología y técnicas del análisis de contenido. *Estudios de Sociolingüística*, 3(1), 1-42.
- Rabii, W. (2023). Global Appeal: Colorblindness, Neoliberalism, and Neighborhood Branding. *Critical Sociology*, 49(7-8), 1211-1230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205221146268>
- Rius Ulldemolins, J. (2014). Culture and authenticity in urban regeneration processes: Place branding in central Barcelona. *Urban Studies*, 51(14), 3026-3045. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098013515762>

- Sadeque, S., Roy, S. K., Swapan, M. S. H., Chen, C.-H., & Ashikuzzaman, M. (2020). An integrated model of city and neighborhood identities: A tale of two cities. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 780-790. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.06.040>
- Santos, M. L. B. dos. (2021). The “so-called” UGC: An updated definition of user-generated content in the age of social media. *Online Information Review*, 46(1), 95-113. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-06-2020-0258>
- Schivinski, B., & Dabrowski, D. (2016). The effect of social media communication on consumer perceptions of brands. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 22(2), 189-214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2013.871323>
- Sierra, R. (2001). *Técnicas de investigación social: teoría y ejercicios* (14a. ed.). Paraninfo: Thomson Learning.
- Skinner, H. (2018). Who really creates the place brand? Considering the role of user generated content in creating and communicating a place identity. *Communication & Society*, 31(4), 9-25. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.31.4.9-24>
- Stern, M. J., & Seifert, S. C. (2010). Cultural Clusters: The Implications of Cultural Assets Agglomeration for Neighborhood Revitalization. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 29(3), 262-279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X09358555>
- Sukiman, M. A. (2023). *Exploring the impact of user-generated content on place branding: A study of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Malaysia on Instagram*.
- Sutton, S. A. (2010). Rethinking Commercial Revitalization: A Neighborhood Small Business Perspective. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 24(4), 352-371. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891242410370679>
- Terttunen, A. (2017). *The influence of Instagram on consumers' travel planning and destination choice* [fi=AMK-opinnäytetyö|sv=YH-examensarbete|en=Bachelor's thesis]. Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulu. <http://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/129932>
- Thelander, Å., & Cassinger, C. (2017). Brand New Images? Implications of Instagram Photography for Place Branding. *Media and Communication*, 5(4), 6-14. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v5i4.1053>
- Urquia, I. (2025). Identidad y branding de barrio: retos y tendencias para la marca-lugar. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 16(2), e28430. <https://doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM.28430>
- Van Ham, P. (2008). Place Branding: The State of the Art. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 126-149. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207312274>
- Vázquez, M. G., Martín, M. C., Vázquez, M. G., & Martín, M. C. (2017). La ciudad como soporte: El auge de los festivales de arte urbano en España. *VIII Congreso Internacional sobre la Imagen y la Red de Investigación sobre la Imagen = Eighth International Conference on The Image: Venice International University*, 31 October - 1 November. <https://produccioncientifica.ucm.es/documentos/63b5f6637109c1657f644861>
- Wachsmuth, D., & Weisler, A. (2018). Airbnb and the rent gap: Gentrification through the sharing economy. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 50(6), 1147-1170. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X18778038>
- Wacker, A., & Groth, A. (2020). Projected and Perceived Destination Image of Tyrol on Instagram. En J. Neidhardt & W. Wörndl (Eds.), *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2020* (pp. 103-114). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36737-4_9
- Whybrow, N. (2011). *Art and the City*. I.B.Tauris. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755604081>
- Willer, C. J. (2022). Rebranding place “to build community”: Neighborhood branding in Buffalo, NY. *Urban Geography*, 43(9), 1350-1371. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2021.1927323>
- Zhou, L., & Xue, F. (2022). Effects of Instagram User-Generated Content on Travel Inspiration and Planning: An Extended Model of Technology Acceptance. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 28(3), 239-260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2021.1989537>