

## Tourism and the Bogotá Brand: An Associative Study Based on the Perception of Foreign Visitors

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### KEYWORDS

*City brand  
Bogota brand  
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### ABSTRACT

*The development of a city brand is structured through a synergistic process that involves and promotes socio-economic, creative, local and national factors. In addition, they must be the basis for positioning both among residents and potential visitors as tourists or investors. The present study aimed to identify the perceptions of the city of Bogotá by foreign visitors and possible relationships with age and gender, in line with the concept of city brand. A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive and associative study was conducted by interviewing 500 foreigners who visited the city of Bogotá in 2023. General perceptions and significant associations were observed between demographics and factors related to the elements that make up the concept of city brand. The results are discussed, and recommendations are made, specifying limitations and considerations for future studies on the city brand.*

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## 1. Introduction

The city has become the engine of human activity. It is the common space in which all policies are generated and implemented, to be extrapolated to the rest of the territory of each country. Thus, the creation of a brand associated with the concept of the city places it on the national and international scene and is the seed of the incentives needed to attract tourists, companies, businesses and human talent, according to Dinnie (2004). These factors have an impact on the satisfaction of the citizens who make up the city (Zenker et al., 2009), which benefits coexistence and improves the economy of the area. The creation of a brand in a city is articulated, among other things, around the management of cultural, sporting and social events, linked to cultural, social and economic policies that allow foreign citizens to be integrated into the themes of everyday life in these cities. Therefore, the creation of a brand is a strategic process that involves, among other variables, essential communication aspects in the consolidation of an integrative project of human relations (Durán et al., 2021). Similarly, the concept of city branding revolves around the creation of a distinctive identity that positions a city as a desirable destination for visitors, investors and new residents alike (Arboleda Castro et al., 2021; Pasquinelli et al., 2022; Uskokovic, 2020). This means that cities need to define what kind of brand they want to be and develop the mental, psychological and emotional processes necessary to create a distinctive identity. Likewise, the city brand is integrated into a holistic approach that takes into account economic, social and territorial aspects, such as welfare, education, infrastructure and the environment (Martínez Puche et al., 2009). For this reason, the city brand becomes its trademark, around which its own symbols are configured, highlighting visual images, metaphors and the cultural heritage that the brand possesses (Durán Alfaro et al., 2021).

On the other hand, it is essential to highlight and promote the physical characteristics that differentiate and strengthen the city as a brand, since this concept is a crucial component in the agendas of local and departmental governments, which must promote improvements in transport (Marroquín-Ciendúa et al., 2025; Medina-Labrador et al., 2024), communication and information technologies. The creation of the city brand is therefore the result of processes that promote economic, social and territorial aspects in order to improve its global position. This should be linked to modernity through the strengthening of quality of life, physical infrastructure and international presence (Alperytė & Išoraitė, 2019; Uskokovic, 2020), in addition to the consolidation of strategies that combine technology, cultural identity and social sustainability (Marroquín-Ciendúa et al., 2024; Ondiviela, 2020). In this sense, building a city brand should involve all stakeholders, including government, citizens and businesses. Based on this central idea, it is necessary to build its organisation by attributing a permanent and easily identifiable profile that transcends the moment (Kotler & Gertner, 2004).

In line with the above, the concept of city branding emerges to meet the needs of local businesses and residents by strengthening the external image of the city through images, symbols, logos, graphic design and emotional associations that identify it to tourists, investors, students or residents (Baker, 2012). This emphasises the emotional and psychological management of the relationship with the city through marketing interventions that encompass landscape, infrastructure, organisation, behaviour, promotion and image (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2007), as well as the reflection of culture, heritage and identity, without limiting itself to the creation of advertising related aspects such as logos and slogans, seeking better experiences that connect (Vila et al., 2016; Mogollón et al., 2020). Likewise, in the modern era, the sustainability of cities depends on their ability to compete, and the role of city branding in this competitiveness is fundamental (Sidorenko & Garrido, 2021; Silva et al., 2022). Through urban development practices at the national, regional and local levels, state policies and strategies that integrate city branding into multi-level governance must be linked (Ye & Björner, 2018).

Similarly, the construction of a positive perception of the city linked to the quality of life associated with more urban green spaces and ecological resources must be included, as these not only beautify the city, but also significantly improve the quality of life of residents, attract investment and strengthen urban sustainability (Fok & Law, 2018). This necessarily includes

waste management and the reinvention of industrial infrastructures to integrate them harmoniously into the urban landscape (Paleologos et al., 2016). Thus, urban livability should be managed from a multidisciplinary perspective, with the aim of improving the quality of life through economic decisions that seek coordinated development, minimising environmental impacts and, in turn, promoting social and cultural environments that support sustainable and productive urban coexistence (Chan, 2022; Piehler et al., 2021; Silva et al., 2022). All of this is supported by communication strategies that integrate different advertising alternatives according to specific objectives and scopes. This is because it has been shown that effective promotion, accompanied by actions at events, national and international festivals and meetings of all kinds (cultural, trade union, sporting, among others), can significantly improve the perception and attractiveness of a city for both residents and potential visitors, positioning it favourably in the global tourism market (Chan, 2022; Kim & Jun, 2016). Here, the cultural experience of visitors is also important, as contact with locals significantly influences the overall impression that a tourist takes away from the city (Chan et al., 2021). The participation of residents in the branding process is fundamental to enhance the authenticity, identity and solidity of a place (Casais & Monteiro, 2019; Li et al., 2020).

In terms of communication and city branding, differentiated marketing strategies are needed to improve the image. This condition needs to be addressed in communication strategies to improve negative perceptions around factors such as safety, which are linked to the city imaginary (Piehler et al., 2021; Tarman et al., 2019). In this sense, the inclusion of different population groups and the analysis of the negative and positive effects of advertising are crucial. These should consider different advertising formats that aim to influence people's attitudes by studying their personality, loyalty to the destination and the location's own brand (Kumar, 2016). Here, the construction of a city brand that encompasses all stakeholders is desirable to ensure congruence between identity and image. Consequently, the process should include investors as well as residents, who are responsible for creating positive experiences for tourists, as they may not only be looking for entertainment, but also for their stay to be in line with their social and ethical values (Gunta & Birthe, 2016; Uskokovic, 2020). In fact, cities must strive to recreate their cultural and physical identity, taking advantage of different media opportunities, where the use of digital platforms is necessarily mandatory, in order to highlight their differentiating values (Ávila Campoverde & Ugalde, 2020; Chan et al., 2021; Pasquinelli et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2022). Furthermore, as the successful implementation of city branding requires the collaboration of politicians, local authorities and tourism organisations, it must also strive for a continuous flow of effective communication with the media and internal audiences (Anholt, 2010; Piehler et al., 2021).

As a result, the concept of city branding has evolved from a purely territorial dimension to the image of the city as a product and service, where added value, originality and beauty prevail in order to promote factors such as tourism, thus generating multiplier effects for both residents and visitors. In this respect, for example, the construction of the city brand also aims to improve the quality of life of local residents and to ensure that this is perceived by visitors, who also want to experience local life in terms of services, well-being, friendliness, education and cultural offerings. Here, residents become brand ambassadors, promoting and branding the city through positive visitor experiences (Calvento & Colombo, 2009; Tarman et al., 2019; Yu & Kim, 2020). Another example is the case of urban mobility, which is a key indicator of a modern and efficient city, and poor experiences in this area can directly affect tourist satisfaction and recommendations and referrals to future visitors (Chan et al., 2021). Here, city branding and communication processes play a crucial role in highlighting advances in safety, transport, sustainability and environmental responsibility that enhance the visitor experience (Carrillo-Sánchez & García-Calderón, 2019; Piehler et al., 2021; Yu & Kim, 2020; Zhang & Lai, 2023). Indeed, modernity and innovation are essential attributes for cities that wish to position themselves as global references, especially in emerging economies (Anholt, 2010).

Finally, and as a specific case, in the city of Bogotá the attempts to establish a city brand have varied. Thus, since 1990, each administration has created slogans and brands to attract tourists

and improve the internal and external perception of the city. Notable examples include “Bogotá: 2,600 metres closer to the stars”, “Bogotá Positiva (+)” (Amaya, 2016; Duque, 2011), and currently “Bogotá, mi ciudad, mi casa” (Bogotá City Council, 2024). Similarly, Bogotá has also sought to position itself internationally with sporting and cultural events, promoting an image of a creative city, of business and tourism (Vargas Olarte, 2012). This is backed up by communication tools and strategies that support the projects of the Bogotá brand marketing strategy using symbols and graphics visible in different environments (Invest in Bogotá, 2024). These efforts to create a city brand for Bogotá have undoubtedly helped position the city as one of the most visited in the country and a highly desirable tourist destination internationally (Bogotá City Council, 2024; District Institute of Tourism, 2024). However, this status has presented crucial challenges for the actors involved, who must maintain and strengthen the achievements made, promoting the development necessary to ensure the sustained prosperity of the tourism industry.

Indeed, the new opportunities arising in government policies demand the implementation of advanced logistics to serve all types of tourists and to foster community entrepreneurship, through cutting-edge technological strategies that take full advantage of the benefits of globalisation. In this sense, Bogotá, with its well-established characteristics, can continue to develop its city brand, in line with a unique landscape that serves as a distinctive reference for its visitors and residents. This perception of Bogotá's image can be divided into a constant dimension, which reflects its past history, and a dynamic supported by current government policies, which increase marketing activities focused on increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of Bogotá as a tourist destination.

Consequently, and bearing in mind that one way of demonstrating the success of city branding is the expansion and increase in tourism to the city, the objective of this study is to observe and analyse the perceptions that foreign tourists have of the city of Bogotá, as an essential input in the process of building its brand, and likewise to complement the empirical collection of data on the subject of city branding.

## 2. Methodology

The present study was structured according to a quantitative methodology, with a descriptive and relational design. Building on extant empirical documentation, an instrument was constructed in the form of a structured survey with the objective of analysing the perceptions of foreign tourists who visited Bogotá from June to October 2023 about the city of Bogotá. The instrument solicited information regarding demographic variables such as age, gender, and place of origin, in addition to categorical variables designed to assess perceptions of specific attributes of the city (see Table 1). The measurement of these variables was conducted using five-point Likert scales, ranging from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree. Furthermore, open-ended questions were posed to ascertain the general perception and international recognition of Bogotá. These responses were then subjected to textual data analysis to determine the frequency of terms. The instrument was validated by expert judgement, with an internal reliability of 0.79 (Cronbach's alpha). The following table illustrates the categories and variables that were used to construct and administer the structured survey in person.

**Table 1. Categories and variables**

Categories	#	Variables
<b>Demographics</b>	1	Age
	2	Gender
	3	Place of origin
<b>Perception of Bogotá in relation to the city brand</b>	4	Perceptions of the following: development, safety, physical infrastructure, public transport, quality of life, environmental sustainability and well-being, hospitality, culture, civic values
	5	General perception of Bogotá (open question)

Categories	#	Variables
	6	Perception of international recognition (open question)

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

## 2.1. Participants

The sample for the study was selected according to the population of foreign tourists visiting the city of Bogotá during the period from June to October 2023. To ensure a sample that is representative of the population, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, 500 foreign tourists were surveyed. A convenience and subject-type sampling method was employed (Creswell, 2013; Hernández-Sampieri y Mendoza, 2018; Ritchey, 2008; Sucasaire Pilco, 2022). The composition of the sample is delineated in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Profile of the participants

Demographic variables		% share		
Age (age ranges)		27,0%	41-45	9,0%
		14,8%	46-50	7,2%
	31-35	17,0%	51-55	2,4%
	36-40	17,8%	56-80	4,
Gender	Men	50,4%		
	Women	49,64%		
Most representative places of origin	USA. USA.	13,01%	Brazil	5,61%
	France	12,22%	Germany	4,00%
	Mexico	11,02%	Peru	3,20%
	Argentina	9,61%	Ecuador	3,21%
	Spain	6,21%	Chile	2,40%
	Venezuela	6,05%	Costa Rica	2,10%

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

## 2.2. Analysis Techniques

Descriptive and significant association analyses were carried out between the demographic variables "age" and "gender" and perceptions of Bogotá. Conversely, the open-ended questions concerning general perception and international recognition were analysed using the textual data analysis technique (TDA) with SPAD and Voyant-Tools software. The descriptive and association analyses between the variables were carried out by applying the Chi2 test, using SPSS version 25 software.

## 3. Analysis and Results

The objective of this research was to observe and analyse the perception that foreign tourists have of the city of Bogotá, through the report of agreements and disagreements, with respect to the following categories: "modern, safe, large, with good mobility, with good road infrastructure, with good climate, friendly, polite, altruistic".

### 3.1. Descriptive Studies on Perceptions of Bogota

The descriptive results are displayed in Table 3, which presents the favourable and the less favourable perceptions of the different factors.

**Table 3.** Descriptive descriptions of perceptions of Bogotá

<b>Perception of Bogotá</b>	<b>Agreed Total agreement</b>	<b>Disagreement Total disagreement</b>
<b>It is developed</b>	68,8%	11,8%
<b>It's Safe</b>	70,8%	9,0%
<b>It has good physical infrastructure</b>	58,4%	36,0%
<b>Good public transport</b>	72,4%	13,6%
<b>Reflects good quality of life</b>	62,2%	21,8%
<b>It is sustainable and environmentally sound.</b>	62,0%	20,8%
<b>It is hospitable</b>	57,6%	36,2%
<b>Preserves its culture</b>	60,6%	30,6%
<b>Shows civic values</b>	54,4%	34,6%

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

**Development:** The results of the survey indicate that 68.8% of respondents concur that Bogotá is a developed city, while 11.8% disagree. These results indicate that the majority of visitors perceive the city as developed and modern. However, the data also reveals a minority of visitors who consider the city to fall short of the standards expected of a good city in this respect.

**Safety:** Although 70.8% of respondents had a positive perception of safety, 9.0% disagreed, which could indicate that although the majority perceive a general sense of safety, there is a minority who have negative feelings or emotions about the problems in Bogotá. This phenomenon may be attributed to the dissemination of negative portrayals of the city via various media channels or the exposure to isolated incidents of insecurity within specific localities.

**Physical infrastructure:** 58.4% of respondents expressed agreement with the statement that Bogotá boasts adequate physical infrastructure. However, the results also indicate that a significant proportion of visitors surveyed (36.0%) do not perceive the city in the same way. This discrepancy in perceptions may be attributable to comparisons with other major cities globally, which potentially exhibit superior conditions in terms of architectural planning, civil infrastructure, and mass transportation.

**Public transport:** In terms of public transport and mobility, 72.4% of visitors surveyed expressed satisfaction with the public transport system. However, 13.6% of visitors expressed less confidence in the quality of public transport. This finding suggests that while the majority of visitors recognise the efficiency of the transport system, a significant proportion of foreign visitors may encounter difficulties or congestion while travelling.

**Quality of life:** The data indicates that 62.2% of respondents hold a positive perception of quality of life in Bogotá, while 21.8% express a divergent viewpoint, suggesting that a significant proportion of foreign visitors may not fully align with the perception of a high quality of life in the city. This suggests that, while a substantial majority of foreign visitors perceive the city's overall conditions to be favourable in comparison to other cities, almost a quarter of respondents may

believe that there are issues that could potentially diminish the quality of life for its inhabitants. These concerns pertain to fundamental services, safety, recreational opportunities, transportation, green spaces, and cultural amenities, among other domains.

**Sustainability and environmental wellbeing:** The majority of respondents expressed a positive perception of the city's sustainability and environmental well-being (62.0%). Nevertheless, a significant proportion of foreign respondents expressed a less favourable opinion of their own environmental situation in the city of Bogotá. This is particularly evident in areas where waste management is inadequate, and there is congestion and weather variability, with frequent changes in temperature and humidity. It can be hypothesised that weather conditions may be a contributing factor to this discrepancy in opinions.

**Hospitality:** 57.6% of respondents perceive Bogotá as a hospitable and friendly city. However, a significant proportion of 36.2% do not concur with this assessment. This observation may be indicative of a negative interaction between visitors and the local population. This phenomenon may be indicative of a discrepancy between the demographic diversity of the city and the lifestyle expectations associated with a capital city.

**Culture:** In terms of cultural offerings and attractions, 60.6% of respondents expressed satisfaction. While this finding suggests a predominantly favourable perception of cultural offerings, it is noteworthy that 30.6% expressed reservations regarding the quality of education.

**Civic mindedness:** The data demonstrate that civic values are perceived positively by 54.4% of respondents. However, similar to the evidence for "culture", a considerable 34.6% disagree with this statement. This finding indicates that, while just over half of foreign visitors perceive civic values to be favourable in the city, a significant proportion do not observe a satisfactory level of civic values among Bogotá's residents.

### 3.2. Relationship Between Age and Perception of Bogotá

The present study also sought to analyse the possible statistically significant relationships between the age of foreign tourists and their perception of the city of Bogotá. To this end, the Chi-squared test was applied, resulting in the following associations between age ranges and disagreements about the perception of Bogotá, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Significant relationship between age and perceptions of Bogotá**

Characteristic of Bogotá	Age ranges	Disagreement Total disagreement	Significance
<b>It is developed</b>	18-25 years	23,0%	$X^2 (28, N=500) = 137.60$ , $p=0.00$
<b>It is safe</b>	36-40 years old	13,5%	$X^2 (28, N=500) = 103.42$ , $p=0.00$
	41 -45 years	20,0%	
<b>It has good physical infrastructure</b>	36- 40 years	27,0%	$X^2 (28, N=500) = 108.59$ , $p=0.00$
<b>Reflects good quality of life</b>	36- 40 years	30,4%	$X^2 (28, N=500) = 139.91$ , $p=0.00$
<b>It is hospitable</b>	18-25 years	45.9%	$X^2 (28, N=500) = 139.95$ , $p=0.00$
	36-40 years	52.8%	
<b>Shows civic values</b>	18-25 years	48.9%	$X^2 (25, N=500) = 135.48$ , $p=0.00$
	36-40 years	48.3%	

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

As illustrated in Table 4, a clear and statistically significant relationship is evident between negative perceptions of Bogotá, as indicated by disagreement and total disagreement, and the age

ranges of foreign visitors surveyed. With regard to the perceived degree of development of the city of Bogotá, the data show a significant level of disagreement among respondents aged 18-25, with 23.0% disagreement ( $X^2$  (28, N=500) = 137.60,  $p=0.00$ ). This finding suggests that young adults in this age group may hold a more negative perception of the city's development and modernity. A similar pattern emerges with regard to safety, where the perception of Bogotá as a safe city is subject to significant disagreement ( $X^2$  (28, N=500) = 103.42,  $p=0.00$ ) among respondents in the 36-40 and 41-45 age groups, with 13.5% and 20.0% disagreement, respectively. This finding indicates that individuals in these age ranges exhibit a more pronounced negative perception of security.

Conversely, the 36-40 age group expressed a more unfavourable view of the city's physical infrastructure, with a disagreement rate of 27.0% ( $X^2$  (28, N=500) = 108.59,  $p=0.00$ ). This substantial figure mirrors a pronounced inclination among this demographic to perceive Bogotá's infrastructure as a salient negative attribute. A similar observation can be made in the context of the quality of life in Bogotá, where a disagreement of 30.4% ( $X^2$  (28, N=500) = 139.91,  $p=0.00$ ) was noted among respondents in the 36-40 age group. This finding suggests that this particular age group holds a notably unfavourable perception of the factors contributing to the quality of life in the city.

With respect to the perception of hospitality in Bogotá, foreign visitors in the 18-25 (45.9%) and 36-40 (52.8%) age ranges expressed disagreement with the perception that the city is hospitable and friendly ( $X^2$  (28, N=500) = 139.95,  $p=0.00$ ). This observation may be indicative of dissatisfaction among these foreign nationals with the hospitality levels experienced in Bogotá. The results related to civic values demonstrate a comparable trend. Indeed, the civic values reflected in Bogotá show significantly related levels of disagreement ( $X^2$  (25, N=500) = 135.48,  $p=0.00$ ) with visitor groups aged 18-25 (48.9%) and 36-40 (48.3%), suggesting that these age groups do not consider civic values to be a prominent feature of the city.

### 3.3. Relationship Between Gender and Perceptions of Bogotá

As demonstrated in Table 5, a clear correlation emerges between respondents' perceptions of Bogotá and their gender, measured in terms of both percentage agreement and total agreement, as well as percentage disagreement and total disagreement. In this regard, with respect to the development of the city, the data demonstrate that, in general, there is a favourable perception of the city in this domain. However, a significant relationship was identified ( $X^2$  (4, N=500) = 21.56,  $p=0.000$ ), indicating that women may hold a more critical perception of Bogotá as a developed city, as evidenced by 11.1% of disagreement among men compared to 12.5% among women. With regard to the perception of security, both men and women expressed agreement with security in Bogotá. However, a more nuanced perspective emerges at the significant relationship level, as evidenced by the observation of a substantial relationship ( $X^2$  (4, N=500) = 19.67,  $p=0.001$ ). This finding suggests that men may harbour a more unfavourable perception of Bogotá's security landscape, as evidenced by a higher percentage of disagreement (9.90%) compared to women (8.00%).

**Table 5.** Significant relationship between gender and the perception of Bogotá

Characteristic of Bogotá	Gender	Disagreement total disagreement	Agreed total agreement	Significance
<b>It is developed</b>	Man	11,1%	77,0%	$X^2$ (4, N=500) =21.56 $p=0.000$
	Woman	12,5%	60,5%	
<b>Segura</b>	Man	9,90%	65,5%	$X^2$ (4, N=500) =19.67 $p=0.001$
	Woman	8,00%	76,2%	

<b>It has good physical infrastructure</b>	Man	29,8%	63.9%	$X^2 (4, N=500) = 13,041, p=0.01$
	Woman	42.3%	52.8%	
<b>Reflects good quality of life</b>	Man	15,1%	71.4%	$X^2 (4, N=500) = 28.77, p=0.000$
	Woman	28,7%	52,8%	
<b>She is hospitable</b>	Man	31.4%	63.9%	$X^2 (4, N=500) = 14.07, p=0.007$
	Woman	41.1%	51,2%	
<b>Shows civic values</b>	Man	28,2%	60.7%	$X^2 (4, N=500) = 11.86, p=0.00$
	Woman	42.1%	48,0%	

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

With regard to the perception of Bogotá's physical infrastructure and size, both men and women exhibit significant levels of disagreement (29.8% and 42.3%, respectively). However, the results observed for the male demographic indicate a stronger tendency towards agreement that Bogotá possesses a satisfactory physical infrastructure. This observation may be associated with the size of the city, with 63.9% of males versus 52.8% of females expressing this perception. This observation is indicative of a statistically significant relationship ( $X^2 (4, N=500) = 13.041, p=0.01$ ).

In contrast, the results demonstrate a significant discrepancy in the perception of quality of life between men and women. The former demonstrated a relatively high level of agreement with the quality of life reflected in Bogotá (71.4%), while the latter expressed 52.8% agreement and 28.7% disagreement. The Chi<sup>2</sup> test ( $X^2(4, N=500) = 28.77, p=0.000$ ) confirms that this difference in perception is statistically significant, indicating that women are considerably more critical of the perceived quality of life in Bogotá.

With regard to the hospitality exhibited by the inhabitants of Bogotá, male tourists surveyed expressed a higher level of agreement (63.9%) compared to women (51.2%), demonstrating analogous proportions in terms of disagreement regarding this appreciation of perceived hospitality in the city of Bogotá (31.4% for men vs. 41.1% for women). This significant relationship ( $X^2(4, N=500) = 14.07, p=0.007$ ) suggests that men perceive greater hospitality and possible friendliness among city residents.

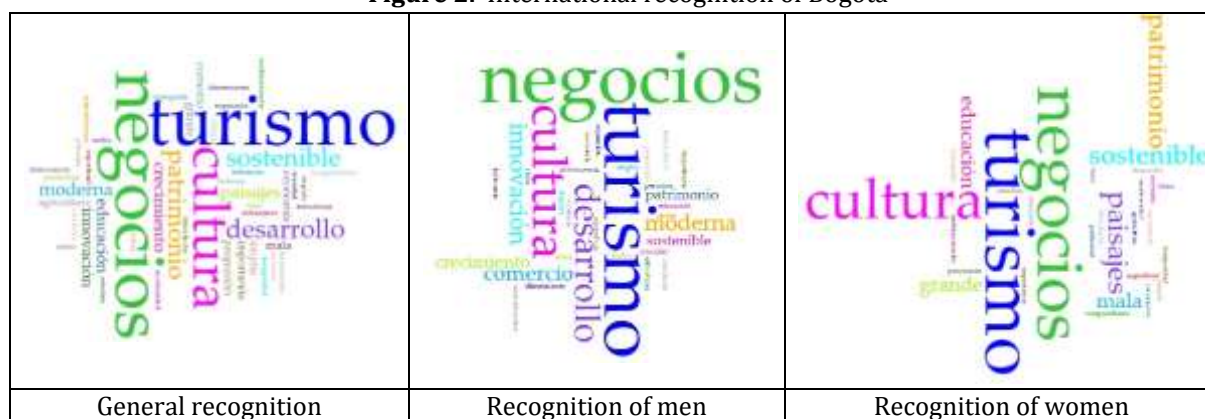
Finally, with regard to civic-mindedness or civic values in Bogotá, the results reflect a perception significantly related to gender ( $X^2(4, N=500) = 11.86, p=0.000$ ). The findings indicate that men expressed higher levels of agreement (60.7%) with the presence of this characteristic in the city, compared to women, who demonstrated a lower level of agreement (42.1%). This statistically significant difference ( $X^2(4, N=500) = 11.86, p=0.00$ ) suggests that men have a more positive perception of civility in the city.

### 3.4. Textual Results of the General Perception of Bogotá

In turn, this study aimed to examine the perception of the city of Bogotá held by foreign tourists, using open-ended questions that were textually analysed based on the frequency of terms expressed by the respondents. The open-ended questions explored: a) Perception of Bogotá. b) International recognition of Bogotá. The results of the textual analysis, broken down by gender, are visualised through word clouds and can be observed in Figure 1.



Figure 2. International recognition of Bogota



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

It is evident that the most prominent positive aspects, including the terms 'tourism' and 'business', indicate that Bogotá is recognised and perceived as a tourist destination in conjunction with a significant business centre. Undoubtedly, the pre-eminence of these terms in the respondents' discourse signifies the city's paramount significance on both the national and international stage with respect to tourism and its function as an administrative nexus. The terms 'culture' and 'development' also stand out in the frequencies, indicating that, according to the tourists surveyed, the city of Bogotá places a high value on its local culture and the degree of development evident in the city. The city is perceived as a culturally rich and diverse destination, characterised by a physical infrastructure that attracts significant attention from visitors.

The analysis of the word cloud reveals the presence of terms such as "heritage", "modern", "innovation" and "education", which underscore the city's historical heritage and urban growth as contributing factors to its appeal. The city's value is recognised not only for its modernisation, but also for the preservation of its historic past and its projection into the future. However, there were some mentions of "insecurity", which reflect negative perceptions of safety in the city by some foreign tourists and possibly also among residents. These factors have the potential to influence the tourist experience and the general perception of Bogotá.

A comparative analysis of the use of specific terms by male and female foreign tourists revealed that both genders predominantly used the terms "tourism" and "business," suggesting a shared perception of the city's international importance as a tourist destination with a strong business sector. However, a closer analysis reveals significant disparities in the terms' usage between the two genders. Specifically, female respondents highlighted additional facets of Bogotá's international appeal, including its "culture," "landscape," "sustainability," and "heritage." Conversely, from a male perspective, Bogotá is recognised on the global stage for its "development," "innovation" and modernity. These observations are indicative of the potential influence of gender on the perception and expectations of tourists.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusions

The results of this study on foreign visitors' perception of Bogotá reveal findings immersed in the construction of the city brand concept and its relationship with tourism. Indeed, under the concept of city branding (Arboleda-Castro et al., 2021; Pasquinelli et al., 2022; Uskokovic, 2020), the perception of visitors is fundamental to consolidate a positive brand and, therefore, attract tourism and economic development to cities. In this regard, the findings concerning the development and perceived modernity of Bogotá by foreign visitors are noteworthy. A significant proportion of these visitors (68.8%) perceive the city as modern. This finding serves to reinforce one of the most significant pillars for the establishment of an internationally competitive city brand. This is due to the fact that development, modernity and innovation are considered to be essential attributes for cities that wish to position themselves as global references, especially in emerging countries (Anholt, 2010). In this context, the concept of city branding is associated with

a city's capacity to present itself as a modern and appealing destination, which also entails the enhancement of physical infrastructure and international presence (Uskokovic, 2020), as well as the reflection of citizens' aspirations towards a more inclusive and innovative city model (Arboleda-Castro et al., 2021). In this dynamic, residents and visitors can emotionally relate to the city through the different elements that enhance the perception of modernity and development (Yu & Kim, 2020).

Similarly, in terms of Bogotá's perceived safety and security, which are critical components of the visitor experience, the data shows that the vast majority of respondents perceive Bogotá as safe (70.8%). Nevertheless, evidence of visitor dissatisfaction (9.0%) is also present, indicating potential challenges in this domain. Indeed, security is a pivotal component in the development of a successful city brand, and any perception of insecurity can have a detrimental effect on the city's reputation as a tourist destination. This is a pivotal aspect for visitors' intrinsic perception of the city's image and identity (Chan et al., 2021; Zenker & Martin, 2011), a condition that should be addressed in brand communication strategies to improve negative perceptions around safety and city imaginary (Piehler et al., 2021; Tarman et al., 2019). In relation to public transport, 72.4% of respondents expressed a positive opinion, while 13.6% expressed disagreement, suggesting issues of congestion and deficiencies in public transport, which clearly affect visitors' perceptions. Urban mobility is a pivotal indicator of a modern and efficient city, and a substandard experience in this domain can directly impact tourist satisfaction, as well as their inclination to recommend the city to future tourists (Chan et al., 2021). In this context, city branding plays a pivotal role in accentuating safety and transport advancements that enrich the visitor experience (Carrillo-Sánchez & García-Calderón, 2019; Yu & Kim, 2020; Zhang & Lai, 2023).

In a similar fashion, the perception of quality of life is also an aspect that influences city branding (Tarman et al., 2019). In the present study, 62.2% of visitors perceived a good quality of life, a finding that is pertinent to tourists seeking not only to visit, but also to experience local life in terms of services, wellbeing and cultural offerings (Tarman et al., 2019). Quality of life is directly related to a city's ability to provide long-term satisfying experiences (Yu & Kim, 2020) and attract repeat visitors, one of the most important goals in the sustainability of the tourism sector. The establishment of an authentic urban identity has been demonstrated to engender heightened levels of satisfaction amongst both residents and visitors (Chan, 2022). Consequently, this enhances the quality of life within the city, thereby attracting increased investment, promoting sustainable tourism, and reinforcing the city brand (Alperytė & Izšoraitė, 2019; Silva et al., 2022).

In this same perspective, the cultural and hospitality variables of citizens are crucial elements in the formation of a positive city brand. In this regard, residents should act as brand ambassadors, promoting their city through positive experiences and recommending it to future visitors (Yu & Kim, 2020). Indeed, 57.6% of tourists surveyed consider Bogotá to be a hospitable city. However, the findings also indicate that a significant proportion of 36.2% of respondents expressed disagreement with this perception. It is therefore vital to acknowledge that hospitality is a pivotal factor in tourist satisfaction, and a negative perception can have deleterious effects on the city's overall image as a welcoming destination. This satisfaction is also linked to the visitor's cultural experience, as contact and interaction with locals significantly influences a tourist's overall impression and identity of the city (Chan et al., 2021). A similar observation can be made with civic values, which, according to the findings, reflect 54.4% agreement and 34.6% disagreement. This outcome may be indicative of deficiencies in solidarity and social cooperation within the city, possibly attributable to unfavourable resident attitudes. It is crucial to acknowledge that, in contrast to these outcomes, residents' attitudes should be aligned with the capacity to generate positive experiences for visitors, as a pivotal factor in city brand development (Uskokovic, 2020). Consequently, tourists may increasingly seek destinations that offer entertainment in alignment with social and ethical values. In this regard, it is imperative for cities to concentrate their endeavours on the recreation of their cultural identity, emphasising the values and characteristics that set them apart (Pasquinelli et al., 2022). These distinguishing attributes may prove to be pivotal in attracting visitors and investors (Silva et al., 2022).

Concurrently, favourable perceptions of environmental and natural factors can contribute to the positive image of cities (Tarman et al., 2019). Consequently, the data obtained in the present study reflected a 62.0% positive perception of sustainability and environmental well-being in Bogotá, a condition that can be used to the advantage of managing the city's image. However, it is important to note that certain areas, which reflect poor actions in waste management or the climate variability that characterises Bogotá, may be related to the 20.8% disagreement with respect to finding sustainability and environmental well-being in the city. This finding, in conjunction with other uncontrollable factors, necessitates the strategic management of the city's image through effective communication of its positive attributes in line with tourists' expectations (Chan, 2022; Tarman et al., 2019). Furthermore, sustainable tourism and associated campaigns can serve as viable alternatives, integrating the climate factor and positioning the city as a destination that promotes and balances healthy lifestyles, environmental wellbeing, connection with nature and sustainability (Govers et al., 2015; Sidorenko & Garrido, 2021). In addition, effective communication of a city's environmental and climate attributes has been demonstrated to increase resident engagement and improve tourist attraction (Piehler et al., 2021).

In line with the aforementioned findings, the results obtained from the statistically significant relationships between the perception of Bogotá and the age and gender demographics of foreign tourists reveal differences in several key aspects. According to the data observed in the study, negative perceptions of Bogotá's development are found among a significant number of young people between the ages of 18 and 25 (23.0%). Consequently, the promotion of a unified and coherent brand identity should be a central tenet of any efforts to enhance the perceptions of residents, particularly among the younger demographic, who often have elevated expectations for technological infrastructure and urban development (Piehler et al., 2021). This demographic seeks cities that project an innovative and modern identity, which necessitates that city branding strategies emphasise not only the physical infrastructure, but also the cultural values that align with the aspirations of young people (Arboleda-Castro et al., 2021). Conversely, with respect to the perception of quality of life and sustainability, the findings indicate that within the 36-40 age group, there is a notable divergence in perceptions regarding the quality of life experienced in the city (30.4%). This finding suggests that promotional strategies aimed at disseminating and promoting high quality urban life may not be reaching this demographic effectively. Cities, and in this case Bogotá, should seek to integrate sustainability and quality of life strategies into their city brand in order to improve the overall perception of both residents and tourists (Govers et al., 2015).

Furthermore, in relation to the perceived level of hospitality in respondents aged 18-25 and 36-40, it was found that these perceptions were negative for a statistically significant percentage of foreign visitors surveyed (45.9% and 52.8% respectively). In line with these findings, research posits that cultural branding and experiential marketing actions are pivotal in enhancing the perception of hospitality and friendliness among residents, by forging emotionally positive connections between visitors and the city (Carbache-Mora et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2022). A similar observation can be made with regard to civility. This characteristic of the city is also not highly rated among the aforementioned age groups. In this case, 48.9% of 18-25 year olds disagree that Bogotá is perceived as a city with civic values. A similar pattern is observed among adults aged 36-40, with 48.3% of this group also expressing disagreement. In this regard, as argued by Sidorenko and Garrido (2021), the implementation of city branding actions and strategies that emphasise sustainability and the promotion of civic community values hold potential to effect a transformation in this perception. Indeed, Bogotá could benefit from highlighting its community initiatives and sustainability projects that promote collective wellbeing, using different communication channels including digital platforms to communicate these initiatives, inviting youth and adults to participate, and thus improve this perception among both residents and domestic and foreign visitors.

In accordance with the aforementioned points and with regard to the gender of tourists, the results demonstrate discrepancies between men and women in several key domains, including the development of the city, safety, quality of life, physical infrastructure, hospitality and civility.

In this regard, the substantial disparities observed between male and female tourists' perceptions of Bogotá underscore the necessity to enhance brand communication as a pivotal strategy to mitigate these differences and foster a more robust relationship between citizens and the city (Arboleda Castro et al., 2021; Piehler et al., 2021). This approach should be complemented by a nuanced understanding of the distinct expectations held by male and female tourists of a city. In this regard, it is imperative to enhance the concept of city branding through comprehensive communication, leveraging a diverse array of digital and traditional media channels. This approach is further bolstered by government policies aimed at enhancing perceptions of safety (Zhang & Lai, 2023), quality of life and sustainability (Silva et al., 2022), physical infrastructure (Govers et al., 2015), and cultural image (Carbache-Mora et al., 2020).

Conversely, an examination of textual analysis reveals that foreign tourists perceive and recognise the city of Bogotá through a combination of positive attributes, including pleasant, developed, extensive, modern, hospitable, green, sustainable, beautiful, architecture, dynamic, friendly, business, tourism and innovation. These characteristics can contribute to the development of the city as an attractive tourist product, based on its authenticity and uniqueness (Riza et al., 2012). In a similar vein, the concept of city branding is intrinsically linked to the endeavour to distinguish a city within a highly competitive global context. In this regard, cities must not only compete to attract tourists but also to attract talent through a robust brand strategy that integrates technology, cultural identity and social sustainability (Ondiviela, 2020). As evidenced by the text analysis demonstrating perceptions of Bogotá, the city can sustain its positioning as a preeminent tourism and business destination, showcasing a robust cultural identity that is captivating and pertinent, particularly with regard to sustainability (Marroquín-Ciendúa et al., 2025) and hospitality. This reinforces its attractiveness by generating dynamics and synergies that most likely reinforce its potential 'magnetism' (Ondiviela, 2020). Furthermore, the physical, cultural and relational identity of a city contributes to creating a coherent and attractive image for visitors (Chan et al., 2021; Özder, 2022). In Bogotá, tourists' perceptions highlight aspects of its architecture, heritage and culture. This authentic cultural identity can be further strengthened, potentially achieving a level comparable to that of other cities that have focused their efforts on projecting a clear and differentiated identity. It is imperative to acknowledge the disparities between the genders of visitors, aligning with the expectations of what both women and men seek from the city.

Complementing the above, it is advisable here to relate these gender differences directly to tourism promotion strategies that use social networks and digital marketing to reinforce the image of cities as attractive tourist destinations. In this regard, research has underscored the pivotal role of social networks, particularly Instagram, in disseminating the image of cities as tourist destinations (Ávila-Campoverde & Ugalde, 2020). Indeed, as Ávila-Campoverde and Ugalde (2020) demonstrate, the gastronomy, culture and landscapes of Bogotá, identified in the textual analyses, can be enhanced through the use of visual platforms such as Instagram. These platforms allow tourist destinations to project emotions and values through visual content, with the possibility of being particularised according to the demands of a specific genre. Consequently, the strategic implementation of Instagram, with meticulous planning of brand communication, has the potential to enhance the level of interaction and engagement among tourists (Ávila-Campoverde & Ugalde, 2020). These media (Instagram and Facebook) enable destinations to project their distinctive characteristics effectively to a global audience, allowing tourists to share their experiences, as it generates user-created content that is essential for the formation of a self-generated and authentic brand perception (Tran & Rudolf, 2022), reinforcing the international recognition that the city currently enjoys.

Additionally, it is reiterated the significance of collaboration among local entities in fostering the development of a robust regional identity is reiterated (Li et al., 2020). In the case of Bogotá, attributes such as culture, architecture, business, gastronomy and innovation, which are highlighted in the textual analysis, should be coordinated not only by municipal authorities but also by local actors such as restaurants, museums and businesses, in line with observations in other successful cities. This collaborative approach fosters a heightened sense of authenticity

among tourists, enhancing their experience and increasing the probability of them recommending the destination to others. A similar focus on natural landscapes and environments can be consistent with sustainability within the meaning of city branding (Zha & Song, 2019). In this regard, the findings of this study explicitly underscore environmental or sustainable aspects in Bogotá, signifying this factor as a pivotal asset to incorporate into future green brand-building strategies. The incorporation of these factors has the potential to align Bogotá's brand with the growing expectations of tourists regarding more sustainable and eco-friendly destinations.

From this standpoint, the significance of engaging residents in the branding process to bolster the authenticity and identity of a locale is apparent (Casais & Monteiro, 2019). As highlighted in the textual analysis, aspects such as the culture, friendliness and hospitality of the local population are emphasised, suggesting that Bogotá could benefit from actively incorporating its residents in branding strategies. The incorporation of citizens in the branding of their city fosters a sense of engagement and serves as a conduit for the promotion of the city's authentic image and emotional connection (Casais & Monteiro, 2019). In addition, the textual analysis emphasises the importance of sustainability as a fundamental strategy for city branding (Taecharungroj et al., 2019). The textual analysis reveals that Bogotá is recognised as a sustainable city, as it is associated with landscapes, green spaces, and sustainability. Indeed, these are aspects that should be highlighted in future branding strategies, as current tourists generally tend to value destinations that implement sustainable practices more highly. This reinforces the need to seek to strengthen Bogotá's positioning locally, nationally and internationally as a sustainable, friendly and environmentally conscious city (Marroquín-Ciendúa et al., 2025; Taecharungroj et al., 2019).

Finally, as a limitation of this study, it is pertinent to continue structuring studies on the construction of the city brand on issues related to city marketing, residents, government and the socio-economic impact of the city brand (Duque et al., 2022), and in accordance with longitudinal or experimental methodologies, which also include comparisons between different cultural, social and geographical contexts. Empirical approaches should consider a range of designs, including qualitative and quantitative methods, and should take into account the various actors that influence the construction of a city's image.

In addition to the disparities between age demographics and gender, the influence that governmental, productive and educational entities can exert on the urban imaginary should serve as a foundational support and complement to the strategies and operations undertaken to enhance it. Indeed, studies that possess the quantitative and transversal characteristics of the present study do not take into account the strategies and changes that may arise in the immediate present and in relation to macroeconomic, social, geopolitical and communicative changes, which undeniably affect all activity within cities and the imaginary of the city brand in residents as well as national and foreign visitors.

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