Brand Archetypes: An Experiment with the "Demeter"

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Abstract

Branding possibilities driven by archetypes have not gained significant attention. Archetypes are the forms which the instincts assume to be constituting objects. These universal mental images set the patterns of behavior for our interaction with the world. The concept of archetypes can explain some of consumers' love for their favorite brands and distaste for certain others. The present study conducted in Iran, an emerging economy, explores if the archetype model could be used to build better brand image and bonding with consumers. A full-fledged brand is built around the Demeter archetype and the same is deployed by a real business enterprise.

Keywords: Archetypes, Demeter, Branding, Emerging economies, Implications, Iran.

Jel Classification: M37, M39

1. Introduction

The term archetype refers to pure forms which embody the fundamental characteristics of a thing. Archetypes are universally present, collectively shared in the individual psyches, and are the bases of our attitudes towards objects (Brown, 2013)). As we journey through life we embrace different archetypes - warrior, caretaker, lover, mother/father etc. Each archetype brings with it different worldviews and values. There seems to be an endless array of different archetypes – as many as the human spirit can come up with.

An archetype can be said to express the presence of a divine force within the human soul that manifests itself in all of the typically human patterns of thought, feeling, imagery, and behavior. Human instincts are its manifestations and the meanings about archetypes are best communicated via stories (Walshe and Brown, 2009). Thus, products could be introduced as stories reflecting the accumulation of experience and emotions towards them. If the stories about a product can touch upon the deeply held favorable archetypal imageries in the consumers, such a product is likely to be accepted more by them. In pre-technological cultures, the shaman, the witch doctor or the medicine man, did the same. However, there seems to be some confusion about how this could be implemented in contemporary marketing practice, observes Randazzo (2011).

In most marketing situations, product positioning/repositioning statements do incorporate what the brand image should be, but do not indicate how the image itself could be managed over time (Gardner, 1955). Instead, short-term market driven factors such as current consumer

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needs and competitors are used as a basis for managing the brand's image/position. This lacks vision or strategic orientation (Aaker, 1982).

We propose that archetype based branding is a solution to this problem. The present research opens up a new vision for companies to know their consumers better, get their deeply held archetypes, and thereby create brands based on consumers' intrinsically felt needs. In order to review the role of archetypes in building and sustaining deeply meaningful brand images for customers, we demonstrate how archetypes connect with the consumers.

2. Archetypes and Brand Perception

Walshe and Brown (2009) highlighted the bonding of consumer behavior and archetype. Knowing archetypes help us understand human behavior, how we are living, and leads us to an understanding of our needs as consumers.

Research by Dr. Paul Riedesel of Action Marketing Research unearths an interesting way to incorporate archetypes into brands. Rather than segmenting audiences according to demographics, he argues they can also be segmented according to archetypal personas: When consumers encounter advertising directed at archetypes rather than semi fictional segment averages, they will be more likely to recognize the objects of the advertising. Indeed, Riedesel even links us to a method for quantitatively measuring and comparing archetypes. The implication of this idea is a powerful one: With archetype segmentation, the goal should be to aim messages at what consumers want to be, not what they are (Blanchard, 2009)

Archetypes have traditionally been incorporated through visual advertising. A few years back, Olivier Blanchard of The Brand Builder argued that additional messaging isn't even important for strong brands that use archetypes: Does Apple need a tagline? The reality is that they don't. If the brand you create is powerful enough – inside and out – then messaging is barely frosting on the cake. That said, if appropriate archetypes can be infused into the messages like taglines and the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) slogans, the benefits could be multiple fold.

Brand personas now come alive and engage with us via the social media, brand advocates, and spokespeople. Here are some possible ways to fuse archetypes and messaging (Blanchard, 2009):

1. Focus on what consumers want to be. Most people have in mind and archetypal character that, on some level, they strive to become. Messaging can provide assurance of that goal.

2. Choose advocates that are embody an archetype that's in-line with your brand image. If you're brand is a "hero," then find yourself a modern-day Odysseus.

3. Use a brand persona that reflects your brand's archetype. If you have a persona constructed with archetypes in mind, archetypal messaging will naturally follow.

3. The Demeter Archetype in Context

Lee (2008) described completely the Ancient Gods and Goddess. He imaged Demeter as an archetype who represent the pure and the hope for rebirth and thus represents the light.

The Demeter archetype represent motherhood, it is an earth-mother goddess, becoming the goddess of vegetation and fruitfulness, especially corn. She represents the products of soils and seasons, and the generative forces that directed their abundance. Traditionally, the first loaf of bread of the season was sacrificed to Demeter. Demeter lived in the mountainous island of Sicily and was known as the protector of the fields. Demeter was also known as the fair

haired earth goddess who blesses all phases of the harvest. She walks the furrowed fields dressed in green and displays her moods with feast and famine. According to ancient stories this archetype had a very close bond with her daughter Persephone. And in this myth it mentioned how Demeter became depressed when Hades abducted Persephone.

Lee (2008) described this archetype as an altruistic, motivated by a desire to help others and protect them from harm. Personal examples include Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale and a caring mother or father. Johnson and Johnson, the healthcare company, evokes this archetype, as do private healthcare. Organizations such as BUPA. Doctors, nurses and social workers often evoke the Demeter. Cawthrone (2009) described Demeter archetype as one of the most powerful and positive archetypes, it is an altruist moved by compassion, generosity and a desire to help others. Its fear instability and difficulty not so much for herself but for her impact on people who are less fortunate or resilient. She mentioned all brands positioned based on Demeter archetype hold out the promise of innocence. Demeter is pure, natural and gentle. There is nothing harsh or aggressive about this archetype. It reflects the essentials qualities of the care giving relationship, empathy, communication, consistency and trust.

According to Rezaee (2010) Demeter archetype creates the most fundamental archetypal bond of all the mythic figures. This archetype is the kindest and the most caring one comparing to others. She is warm, nurturing source of life and a symbol of bounty of nature. She is the epitome of caring and an effective antidote to an increasingly mechanical and engineered world. The bond with this archetype is part of our universal instincts; it is something inside us as mother and child Love. Ward (2003) described the Demeter's character and its especial features. Demeter is relationship-oriented and it is dependent to others. He highlighted the most significant characteristic of this archetype which is her need for affiliation. She is the epitome of the maternal, an instinct fulfilled through pregnancy or through providing physical, psychological, or spiritual nourishment to others, the provider of food and spiritual substance, nurturing, it has Mother Nature in its core. The other characteristic of this archetype are dependable, fertile, long-suffering, unconcerned with status, envious or jealous only with respect to children, relied on women friends for emotional support (versus her husband), huggy, preferred breastfeeding to intercourse, and tried to be indispensable

Nancy (2011) made a complete view of different archetypes but as a woman she emphasized more on Demeter. She expressed this archetype as the one who always seeks attention and needs of her family members for help and nourishing. Her responsibility is not only giving birth and nurturing but something more, servicing to her family all the time as an angle for her family who is there to save their lives. a woman who is more than merely physical mothering, it is expressed in her instinctively obliging caring for any and all who are in need, particularly the young, needy and helpless.

4. The Personality of Demeter

From psychological aspect Demeter belongs to "Vulnerable" goddess. She was raped by Zeus. Her young daughter, Persephone, was abducted--taken from her to be Hades' consort. Demeter was powerless, initially, to bring about her daughter's return. Nanacy (2011) stated Demeter archetype in different stage of her lives, how she acts in childhood, as an adult woman.

As a child and adolescent:

- She likes to act exactly like her mother, as a young girl identifies with her mother. She likes playing with her dolls and nourishing them same as her mother. In childhood, Demeter types have a sweet and unassuming nature.
- When she grows up she likes to do babysit for relatives or neighbors.

- Young Demeter types are typically not motivated to experience sex for sex sake. She may want to marry early so as to begin creating her own family. If she chooses college she will most likely prepare herself for a helping profession.

As an adult woman:

- She has a main responsibility and that is giving birth.
- Saying 'no' is the most difficult word for her. She can't make other sad and disappointed.
- Most of the Demeter types are so generous and they are loyal to their families and friends. She is very warm, kind and mostly outer directed.
- This archetype is exactly the opposite side of "Aphrodite" who is living for love and is a flirting type of woman. Both of them are ruled by love but Demeter love is from her children, friends and the innocent love of her husband.
- If she learns something it is for servicing others and making others happy. She loves finding new recipes to cook for others. She does not enjoy cooking for herself, alone.
- In relation to her children she is endlessly resourceful, tolerant, and selfless. She love to have children if her financial circumstances let her but she doesn't like to sacrifices others children right."

5. The Study

Brand archetypes are part of brand personality. They help us define what a brand is, what it stands for, and the relationship it has with its consumers. Every brand has the germ of an archetype embedded within it. By locking onto that archetype, it begins to resonate with consumers. Its meaning and purpose are strengthened and it is clearly positioned in consumers' minds. Archetypes provide an intuitive, accessible language to describe and discuss a brand's essence. Effective marketing means linking the deepest motivations of consumers with product meaning. And this link comes from an understanding of archetypes. An archetypal product identity when created speaks directly to the psyche of the consumer sparking a meaning.

To test how it does work, a branding experiment was conducted around the Demeter archetype. The aim of the study is to examine how, with this archetype, the developed brand image can communicate with consumers and also to know if it can make a better emotional bonding with consumers. We designed an experimental brand name, logo, tagline, and packaging, all around the concept of the archetype of Demeter. We named the brand Demeter, too.

6. Sample and Method

The study adopted a two-stage mixed method design.

Qualitative research component:

- Consumer focus groups, four in number
- In-depth interview with managers

Quantitative research component:

- Survey administered among 700 mothers

Each interview with brand managers took approximately 45-60 minutes and focus groups around 2 hours and all were digitally recorded to make sure that participants' perspectives were captured accurately. The interviews took place in a departmental conference room.

The interview involved an informal, interactive process and utilized open-ended comments and questions. A general interview protocol listing main questions and issues that should be covered was used during interviews Although the researchers developed a series of questions aimed at evoking a comprehensive account of the participant's experience of the subject, these were varied, altered, or not used at all when the participant shared the full story of her experience. In quantitative research part, data was collected from random interviewees in selected shopping malls, hospitals, sport clubs and beauty salons by using the mentioned questionnaire.

7. Analysis and Findings

In the Iranian market, the main decision maker of baby items is mothers. They are who are worried about their baby's safety, immunity, health, as well as the convenience of the diaper. They are who get advice from a physician, their mother and friends in order to get the best for their babies. The Demeter brand we experiment with focuses on mothers who look for the best stuff for their babies.

Government statistics about the size of the diaper market is sparse. Based on existing industry data and the subjective estimates of industry experts, the market share for diapers in Iran is roughly as follows (*See* table 1):

Table 1. Baby Diaper Competition status in Iran

Brands	Target market	Product	Price	Placement	Promotion	Market share
Huggies	A,A+	High quality, good packaging	Too expensive	Niche market, some special places	Nothing	Less than 0.5% in 7 large cities
Pampers	A	High quality, not very attractive packaging to Iranian market	Expensive	In luxury drug stores and supermarkets	Some POS materials in drug stores	Less than 5% only in 7 large cities
Molfix	A,B	Good quality, not very attractive packaging	Affordable	In most supermarkets but not drugstores yet	TVC, Satellite, magazine and POSM	Less than 5% only in Tehran
EvyBaby	B,C1	Medium quality, attractive packaging	Good	In most supermarkets and drug stores	Satellite, magazine	~ 10% across Iran
My baby	B,C1,C2	Colorful packaging, medium quality	Good	In all supermarkets and drugstores and baby shops	TVC, magazine, POSM	More than 40% across Iran
Panberes	C1,C2	Weak quality, not attractive packaging	Low	In all supermarkets and some drugstores	Magazine, TVC	~ 7% across Iran

7.1 Qualitative Summary

Three groups of participants took part in our focus group discussions: The participants ranged from trendy, somehow traditional, and doubters. One of them was too optimistic, modern and ready to test all new things.

- Almost half of the female respondents had either full or part time jobs, with the rest being housewives. They did not have much leisure time for themselves and were mostly preoccupied with household chores and taking care of kids.

- Trendy consumers were modern in their life style and consumption patterns; this group was included in most consumer groups. Their hobbies showed more sophistication.

- Traditional respondents were those that mostly belonged in the age band of 35-40. This group is highly family oriented and not very sophisticated in its social connections; their general brand awareness on baby diaper categories was also limited compared to the other groups, even among educated ones.

- All groups believed in the important role of mothers in shopping for babies. They are sensitive to their babies stuff. They don't trust Iranian companies in general and they believe that recent sanctions forced Iranian manufactures to produce bad products with low quality. Buying diapers is a routine need, at least for 3 years, and they like to have a good trusted choice that's also affordable.

- All groups were surprised by the Demeter logo design and packaging. What was interesting to them was the presence of the Mother. They were surprised that a company finally appreciated the role of the mother as the main decision maker in this category.

7.2 Demeter Inspired Logo Design

In order to design the Demeter logo we should consider the hidden meaning of Demeter. More than 18 different logos and logotypes have been designed and they have filtered by 5 famous and reliable designers to 4 logos and following mentioned ones tested in research (Figure 1).
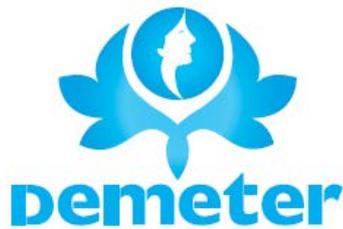
Logo # 1

Logo # 2

Logo # 3

Logo # 4

Figure 1. Demeter designed logos (four different designs)

7.3 Demeter Inspired Packaging Design

Before designing diapers packages, all competitors packages have been reviewed well which focused on babies not mothers as the main decision makers. Our main objective is transferring "Demeter positioning" to consumers, to communicate something new and affect them emotionally, not focusing on babies and using a lovely baby face, but showing the strong bonding of mother and baby. Again, so many different designs were created but we filtered them to 4 different designs (See figures 2 a-d).

The first theme was like the competitors', using babies in packaging design.

Figure 2a: Packaging design 1

The second theme was a visualization of "mother and baby" birds.

Figure 2b: Packaging design 2

The third theme was the real feeling of mother and baby. It will be developed in some more attractive colors, too. It had the highest rating in our research.
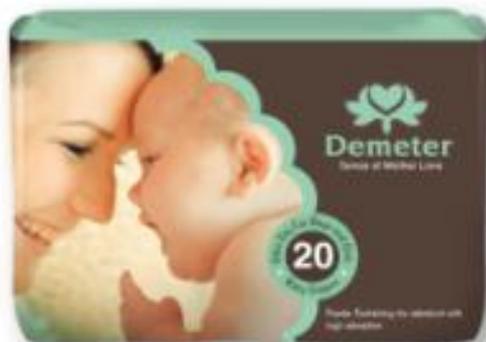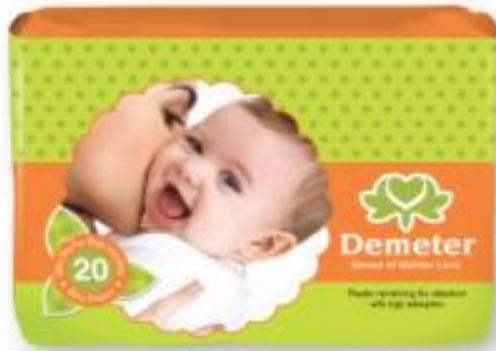

Figure 2c: Packaging design 3

Figure 2d: Packaging design 4

7.4 Demeter Inspired Website Design

Different designs for websites have been done but four of them have been short-listed for the analysis of consumer perceptions (See figures 3a-d).

Figure 3a. Website design 1

Figure 3b. Website design 2

Figure 3c. Website design 3

Figure 3d. Website design 4

In the survey, it showed clearly that the one which convey mother's love and the emotional bonding between mother and baby has got the highest fans. This proves that all respondents who were married and with at least one child could get the message of Demeter and could communicate greatly with this new brand. They got the message of motherhood and caring and in all communication tools they prefer to have a sign of mother and baby together. They were impressed and rejected other competitors' strategies that have foci on babies instead of mothers. Not only the majority of selected ladies could make a strong bonding with Demeter and all

developed contact points of the brand bust also they could easily grasp the message of this brand and they have impressed by Demeter brand image and positioning and finally two hypothesis have been tested successfully and it gives tiding of a reliable launch of this brand in Iran.

The result of this study generally agrees with Carl Jung beliefs that archetypal cues provide the missing link and generates an emotional connect with the audience in a psychologically compelling way; these act as potent tools to move beyond the conscious and rational into the subconscious. And in this study we see how people could personify Demeter and how it was persuasive to them. Demeter could share meaning and values across cultures which signify trust.

Mothers are the main decision makers in selecting baby diapers. Product quality and company support are the main reason to select a brand. More than 75% of women participated in the study were ready to try a new brand. They know meanings of Demeter like "Venus" which is the Goddess of beauty, Hero as the God of Power, and they know Demeter as the Goddess of kindness and caring. They selected "Sense of Mother Love" as a great slogan for the Demeter brand. They selected logo # 3 and packaging # 3 as the best design. They selected" Pampering you as well as your mother" for the baby diaper campaign. Design #3 has been selected as the best one among others for the website. There are not serious loyalties to existed brands. Pampers is the best one among the A and B groups, and Joyful, Molfix and Evybaby among new Turkish brands and Mybaby among Iranian brands. They don't rely on shopkeepers but prefer to have advice from their own doctors, mothers or sisters in order to choose a good diaper for their babies. They do not rely on advertising unless they check the diaper first and make sure of its quality. Quality and the brand strength are two main criteria to buy a baby diaper.

8. Conclusion

This research showed how it is possible to create a brand around the idea of archetypes. The archetype chosen for this study was "Demeter" which is the Goddess of motherhood and caring. We wanted to pose it as a new brand in the Iran market and further test marketing is progressing. Theoretically, however, brand building could be around any other appropriate archetypes as well.

The category of products on this brand portfolio should ideally be those reflecting mother's concern for their babies (it could be baby food, hygienic products, toys, etc). Baby diapers was selected as the first product under this brand umbrella and all related design of logo, packaging, slogan, creative campaign developed and have been tested to ensure if consumers can communicate with this new brand or not.

The designs for logo, packaging, and website have been tested to find out if these can easily transfer the motherhood caring. Most respondents who were married and with at least one child could get the message of Demeter and could communicate emotionally with this new brand. They got the message of motherhood and caring and in the brand related communication tools that we developed for testing. They preferred to have a sign of mother and baby together. It was also observed that people rejected strategies that focused only on babies instead of mother and babies.

Mothers are the main decision makers in selecting their baby's diapers. The quality and company supports are the main reason to select a brand. More than 75% of women are ready to try a new brand. They selected "Sense of Mother Love" as a great slogan for the Demeter brand. They selected logo # 3 and packaging # 3 as the best design. They selected" Pampering you as well as your mother" for the baby diaper campaign. Design #3 has been selected as the best one among others for the website.

Archetypes theory is pretty old, but new in marketing applications, especially in the context of developing countries. Before winding up this paper, it must be admitted this research project in its current form has certain limitations. The study and selected samples are Iranian women and it may differ in other geographical and cultural contexts. Motherhood and Maternity feelings are not necessarily the same feelings across the world. Mothers happily sacrifice themselves for their children in Iran but in different cultures it may differ. The emotional bonding between the mother and the child may be strong or weak in different nations. It would be better to replicate the present study in some other countries before considering it as a universal concept.

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