

6 Discussion and Conclusion

The main objective of the current research was to explore the effect of archetypal ads on the customer’s affective and cognitive responses leading to attitude formation and brand trustworthiness. To help study the same, key research questions were asked. Reflecting back on these questions, the above findings have helped us to explore the consumer mind and how he perceives the brand through ads.

1. Archetypal ads have led to the viewers’ strongly identifying with the ad.

The current research finds that archetypal ads lead to stronger self-image congruence than non-archetypal ads (Refer Table 5.8-1)

Past consumer behavior literature has emphasized on the importance of self-image congruence. (Ericksen 1996; Graeff 1996; Mehta 1999; Sirgy et al. 1997, 1991; Zinkhan, & Hong, 1991; Sirgy 1982; 1986) and has suggested that one’s perception of the congruence of one’s self image to the environment is what really dictates consumer behavior (Rogers, 1956). Due to this, creating brand images that are congruent to the target customer’s self-image has always been a prime focus for brand managers (Zinkham and Hong 1991; Jamal & Al-Marri, 2007). Large investments, in terms of money, effort and time are made to ensure creation of brand images that resonate with the customer’s self-image.

Archetypal ads create such brand images leading to high self-image congruence. This has been corroborated by both qualitative and the quantitative research in this doctoral thesis.

On analyzing the focus group discussion, statements under the theme ‘Superimposition of self-image’ such as “I saw myself in the ad”, “I am that kind of a guy”, “I feel that yes, this is me” helped validate that archetypal ads lead to high self-image congruence (Refer Chapter 5)

Measuring the mean of self-image congruence for archetypal ads and non-archetypal ads revalidated the same (Refer Table 5.8-1). This clearly shows that archetypal ads lead to higher self-image congruence than non-archetypal ads.

The above is in line with previous research claims that a customer would have high self-image congruence when he comes in contact with stories/images that hold particular symbolic meanings, such as archetypal stories (Elliot and Wattanasuan, 1998; Sirgy et al., 1997).
Hence understanding that archetypes can be used as a tool to build brand imagery that would lead to high congruence with the viewer’s self-image is a significant finding.

2. High self-image congruence leads to strong emotions and ad comprehension for archetypal ads. Also, the effect of self-image congruence on emotion of arousal is stronger for archetypal ads than non-archetypal ads.

The current research finds that higher the self-image congruence, stronger the emotions elicited and better the ad comprehension for both archetypal and non-archetypal ads. It has been found, however, that archetypal ads lead to higher self-image congruence than non-archetypal ads, thus leading to stronger emotions and better ad comprehension (refer Table 5.8-1).

a. This revalidates the findings of previous research, which found a positive impact of archetypal images and media on the affective reactions of the recipient (Randazzo, 2006; Maso-Fleischman, 1997; Klein et al., 2006; Faber and Mayer, 2009; García-García, et al., 2011)

Stern (1990) explained how superimposing a surface story on a positively valued core story, such as an archetypal story, encourages consumers to draw on feelings relating to the core and transfer them to the present experience. The same was revalidated through intensive focus group discussions with the target group to find that the viewers when viewing the ad, recalled similar archetypal experiences of the past and also recalled the emotions they had experienced at that time and admitted to feeling the same intensity of experience when viewing the archetypal ad.

Statements such as “I remembered the time when I felt so energized and pumped up when I was viewing my brother play a football match and he was about to hit a goal. I felt that same kind of energy when viewing this ad” show that the archetypal ad brought to memory past similar archetypal experiences which led to transfer of feeling felt at that time to the current time. (Refer Chapter 4).

Statements such as “I feel driven”, “Definitely feels good”, “my eyes only got wider and wider”, “feeling nostalgic”, etc. were cited by majority of the participants of the focus group which shows the strong role archetypal ads play in eliciting emotional response (Refer Chapter 4).

The current study thus re-validated both qualitatively and quantitatively that archetypal ads led to strong emotional response.
A strong emotional response is desired by brand managers in order to achieve a strong emotional connect with the brand. It is only this intangible that differentiates a brand in today’s world (Spink & Levy, 2002). The speed up of advertising messages today compels the viewer to pay attention to the message by employing imagery that demands a more visceral response than the traditional “narrative and rational response” (Jhally, 1990). Hence marketing tools that lead to strong visceral responses are highly desired. Archetypes could be one of the tools used to create a strong visceral response.

b. Variance in Strength of relationship between SIC and arousal

Comparing the relationship of self-image congruence on emotion of arousal, it has been found that the relationship is stronger in the model for archetypal ads than non-archetypal ads. (Refer Table: 5.7-2). This shows that self-image congruence is a better predictor for emotion of arousal for archetypal ads vs. non-archetypal ads.

c. High self image congruence also lead to higher comprehension.

This is in line with past research which claim that when subjects have a higher self image congruence with the product-user image, they are expected to devote considerably more attention capacity to the message contents and to process that information at a deeper level than they would when they do not find the message information personally relevant (Mitchell, 1979; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984; Celsi, Richard L. and Olson, 1988; Kalnova, 2011; Xue, 2005).

The archetypes provide an operating structure for conscious thought (Lawson, 2008). An archetypal message speaks directly to the deep psychic imprint within the consumer, where he sees congruence with his own self-image, sparking a sense of recognition and of meaning leading to higher cognitive intention to process the ad message (Kalnova, 2011).

3. Archetypal Ads are easy to understand

The current research finds that archetypal ads lead to stronger comprehension than non-archetypal ads.

Message comprehension is said to be a prerequisite to attitude formation or change, memory, intentions, and behavior (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991; McQuarrie and Mick 1992). Greenwald & Leavitt (1984) found that comprehension was a pre-requisite to ad elaboration.
The current research finds that archetypal ads help achieve high comprehension of the ad message. This is because an archetypal message speaks directly to the deep psychic imprint within the customer, sparking a sense of recognition and of meaning.

The above was validated through analysis of the focus group transcripts where on viewing the archetypal ads, the viewers used statements such as “I get the real idea of what it really wants to say”, “It doesn’t confuse me in any way”, “and it’s not confusing at all. It’s easy to understand”, and “it’s easy to comprehend” (Refer Chapter 4).

Quantitative analysis also showed a high mean for ad comprehension for archetypal ads (see Table 5.8-1) that revalidated the above finding. This finding is in line with previous research claims that archetypes are one way to communicate meaning deeply and quickly and achieve high comprehension, since they are readily accessible and understandable (Goodman, J., Duke, L. & Sutherland, J., 2002). Archetypal images are by definition universally recognized and easy to comprehend (Jung, 1959, 1965).

Hence, archetypal advertising can be used in order to achieve high ad comprehension.

4. Strong Ad Comprehension leads to strong cognitive response (ad credibility) for archetypal advertising

Ad Comprehension for both archetypal and non-archetypal ads has a significant impact on the cognitive response, i.e. ad credibility. As seen above, archetypal ads are easy to understand; hence they form more positive cognitive response.

This is because message complexity is said to influence the cognitive response by deciding the level of cognitive resources that recipients devote to process the advertisement (Chaiken, Liberman, and Eagly, 1989; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Petty and Cacioppo,1986).

The above finding is inline with previous research that find that comprehension leads to cognitive response (Greenwald & Leavitt, 1984; Craig, Srinivas, 2013; Petty, Cacioppo, 1979; 1986; Hovland, Janis, and Kellers, 1953; Wright, 1973, 1974; Mick, 1992; Chaiken, Liberman, and Eagly, 1989; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Meyers-Levy & Malaviya, 1999).
5. Emotions play an important role in archetypal advertising.

i. The current research finds a negative relationship between emotions and comprehension when viewing archetypal ads.

Research has shown that occurrence of an emotional response affects various reactions to advertising in different ways. This shows that higher the emotional connect with the ad, lower is the viewer’s ability to rationally evaluate the ad. The utilitarian dimensions of the brand get filtered by the viewer’s emotions. This is in line with the previous findings that higher affective response would interfere with the comprehension (Morris, Woo, Singh, 2005; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a; Batra & Stayman, 1990; Bless, Bohner, Schwarz, & Strack, 1990; Mackie, Asuncion, & Rosselli, 1992; Mackie & Worth, 1991; Murray, Surjan, Hirt, & Surjan, 1990; Schwarz, 1990; Schwarz et al., 1991; Sinclair, 1988; Sinclair & Mark, 1992; Worth & Mackie, 1987).

However, for non-archetypal ads, pleasure does not have any impact on the ad comprehension. The ad message is comprehended irrespective of the emotion of pleasure elicited by the ad. This is contradictory to the previous findings and could be due to the fact that the non-archetypal ads, being rational in nature, would require the viewer’s mind to cognitively process the incoming information irrespective of the emotions, felt by him. The current research thus shows that emotions of pleasure and arousal affect information processing negatively for archetypal ads while pleasure, in response to non-archetypal ads, is not strong enough to interfere with the information processing.

ii. The present study finds that the emotion of pleasure has a direct relationship with the cognitive response (ad credibility) to an archetypal ad.

This talks about the strong role that emotion plays in forming cognitive response towards an ad. This is in line with past research which talks about the inter-twined nature of affective and cognitive response (Edell and Burke 1987; Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch 1983; Stephens and Russo1987; Frijda, 1989: 330-331; Tan, 1991; Gardner 1985; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984; Tsai, 1985; Morris et al., 1997; Stout et. al, 1993; Clore, Schwarz, & Conway, 1994; Fiedler, 1988, 2000; Forgas, 1995; Martin, 2000; Rusting, 1998; Schwarz & Bless, 1991; Schwarz, Bless, & Bohner, 1991; Homer et al. 1992; Meyers-Levy & Malaviya, 1999; MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989; Homer, Yoon, Sun-gil, 2013).
However, for non-archetypal ads, emotions do not have any effect on cognitive response (ad credibility) towards the ad. The cognitive response is a function of the ad comprehension and cognitive processing.

iii. Emotions have also been found to have a direct positive relationship with attitude towards the ad for archetypal ads.

This revalidates past research wherein emotion plays an important predictor for attitude towards ad (Stayman and Aaker, 1987; Edell and Burke, 1987; Thorson & Friestad, 1989; Batra and Ray 1986; Aaker et al. 1986; Stout and Leckenby 1988; Holbrook and Batra, 1987; Edell and Burke, 1987; Machleit et al. 1988; Homer and Yoon, 1992; Faseur et al. 2006; Olney et al. 1991; Faseur & Geuens, 2006; Shapiro, Maclnnis, and Park 2002; Kamins, Marks, and Skinner 1991; Goldberg and Gorn 1987; Yi 1990; Steenkamp et al. 1996; Mundorf et al. 1991).

Cognitive response is also found to have an impact on attitude formation for archetypal ads. This shows that emotions both directly, and indirectly through cognitive response, lead to attitude formation for archetypal ads.

While for non-archetypal ads, the only role emotion plays in affecting attitude formation is a direct one as the cognitive response is independent of the emotions. This highlights the dual-strength of emotions when it comes to archetypal advertising.

iv. Emotions has a direct positive relationship with brand trustworthiness for archetypal ads

Marketing efforts’ final purpose is mainly to produce a strong bond between the consumer and the brand, and the foundation of this bond is trust (Hiscock, 2001), which is a quality of utmost importance for a brand to own (Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman, & Yagiie-Guillent, 2003). As mentioned in literature, trustworthiness precedes trust and is a critical factor in a determination of an initial decision to trust (Serva et al. 2005). Hence the current research aims to find the antecedents of brand trustworthiness for brands using archetypal advertising to build strong images.

The current research finds that the emotion of pleasure elicited when viewing an archetypal ad has a significant direct and positive relationship with brand trustworthiness. This re-emphasizes
the strong role that the emotion of pleasure plays in forming beliefs about brand trustworthiness for brands using archetypal advertising.

This is in line with previous research has shown that emotions have a positive direct or indirect relationship with Brand Beliefs (Stayman and Aaker 1987; Stephens and Russo 1987; Homer et al., 1992; Edell and Burke, 1987; 1989; Morris et al., 1997) especially at low levels of exposures (Stayman and Aaker 1988).

The cognitive response and attitude towards the ad partially mediate the effect of emotion (pleasure) on brand trustworthiness. Hence it can be concluded that emotions not only directly impact brand trustworthiness, but also indirectly impact brand trustworthiness through cognitive response and attitude towards the ad for archetypal advertising (refer Table 5.9-6 and Table 5.9-3).

The above is not true, however, for non-archetypal ads. The impact of emotions on brand trustworthiness is fully mediated by attitude towards the ad (refer Table 5.9-8 and Table 5.9-9). Hence emotions only have an indirect impact through attitude towards the ad on brand trustworthiness when it comes to non-archetypal advertising. Brand trustworthiness is a function of cognitive response (which is independent of the emotion) and attitude towards the ad for non archetypal ads.

Hence from the above, we can see the strong role that emotions play when it comes to archetypal ads.

6. *The role of Cognitive Response (ad credibility) on Attitude towards ad and Brand Trustworthiness and cognitive response as mediator to the effect of emotions*

The current study finds that cognitive response (ad credibility) has a significant positive relationship to attitude towards ad and also brand trustworthiness. More positive the cognitive response to the ad, i.e. more credible one finds the ad, more positive would be one’s attitude towards the ad and brand trustworthiness.

As seen in the literature section, the strong role of cognitive response has been emphasized upon in the works of a number of past researchers of attitude and persuasion (e.g. Hovland, Janis and Kelly, 1953; Kelman, 1953; Janis and Terwilliger, 1962; and Festinger and Maccoby, 1964)
The current study revalidates the effect of cognitive response on the attitude towards the ad as found by previous studies (MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch, 1986; Edell and Burke, 1989; Homer and Yoon, 1992; Mick, 1992). The effect of cognitive response on the Brand Beliefs has been studied in the past (Edell and Burke, 1987; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Jain and Posavac, 2004; Chang, 2009). This research further corroborates these findings.

The current research also finds that in response to archetypal ads, cognitive response (ad credibility) partially mediates the effect of pleasure on attitude towards ad and brand trustworthiness (refer Table 5.9-5 and Table 5.9-6). For non-archetypal ads however, the condition for mediation is not met, since emotions do not have a significant relationship with cognitive response. This suggests that independent paths are taken by the affect and cognitive routes in response to non-archetypal advertising vis-à-vis the intertwined nature of the routes in response to archetypal advertising.

7. **Attitude Towards ad as mediator for emotions and cognitive response (ad credibility) on Brand Trustworthiness**

i. The current research finds a direct effect of the emotion of pleasure on brand trustworthiness for archetypal ads and also an indirect effect through attitude towards the ad, which partially mediates the relationship (refer Table 5.9-3). This shows that pleasure not only works indirectly through attitude towards ad form notions about brand trustworthiness, but also directly when it comes to archetypal ads. This is unlike the non-archetypal ads where the attitude towards ad fully mediates the relation between emotion of pleasure and brand trustworthiness.

The effect of the emotion of arousal on brand trustworthiness is completely mediated by attitude towards the ad for both archetypal and non-archetypal ads.

Previous research has shown that emotions have a positive direct or indirect relationship with Brand Beliefs (Stayman and Aaker 1987; Stephens and Russo 1987; Homer et al., 1992; Edell and Burke, 1987; 1989; Morris et al., 1997) especially at low levels of exposures (Stayman and Aaker 1988). A direct relationship has also been found between Attitude towards ad and brand beliefs (Mittal, 1990; Edell and Burke, 1989; MacKenzie, et al. 1986; Homer, 1990; Heath and Gaeth 1994; Ketelaar et. al, 2010). The role of Attitude towards the ad as a mediator in the
relationship of emotions and brand beliefs has been explained before (Homer, Pamela M, 1990; Aaker, 1988; Burke & Edell, 1987).

Hence the current research revalidates the above by finding that Attitude towards the ad mediates the relationship of emotions and brand beliefs.

ii. The current research finds a direct effect of cognitive response (ad credibility) on brand trustworthiness and also an indirect one through attitude towards ad.

As seen above, a direct relationship has been found between cognitive response and attitude towards ad (e.g. Hovland, Janis and Kelly, 1953; Kelman, 1953; Janis and Terwilliger, 1962; and Festinger and Maccoby, 1964) which in turn is found to have a positive relationship with brand beliefs (Mittal, 1990; Edell and Burke, 1989; MacKenzie, et al. 1986; Homer, 1990; Heath and Gaeth 1994; Ketelaar et. al, 2010). Cognitive response has also been found to have a direct effect on the Brand Beliefs formed (Edell and Burke, 1987; MacInnis and Jaworski, 1989; Jain and Posavac, 2004; Chang, 2009).

The current research revalidates the above studies by finding that the effect of cognitive response on brand trustworthiness is partially mediated by attitude towards the ad for both archetypal and non-archetypal ads (refer Table 5.9-4 and Table 5.9-10). This shows that cognitive response not only indirectly impact brand trustworthiness through attitude towards ad, but does so directly too.

8. Effect of Product Involvement on Emotions and Cognitive Response (ad credibility)

Product involvement is an important construct in consumer behavior. One’s involvement in a product category, helps decide the predominance of affective vs. cognitive processing.

i. The current research finds that product involvement has a significant effect on emotions for archetypal ads.

This means that viewers who are highly involved with the particular product category, when seeing its archetypal ad will have stronger emotional reactions than people who are not too involved with the product category.
A similar finding has been found by Clayton (2009), who found that, in already positive situations, emotions were higher for highly involved people.

Coming in contact with archetypes in the ads achieves strong emotional response through achieving high self-image congruence. In such a scenario where the situation is already positive, highly involved individuals have higher emotional response.

ii. Relationship of Product involvement and Cognitive Response (ad credibility) is mediated by emotions for archetypal ads.

As seen above, the highly involved individuals will respond with very strong emotional response to archetypal ads. The archetypal ad follows a visceral route of processing as seen above. According to affect as information theory (Clore et. al., 2001) when the emotional response is strong, the brain receives signals to not process the information further. That is, higher affective response would interfere with the cognitive processing (Morris, Woo, Singh, 2005; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986a). Hence the cognitive response formed is more a function of the emotional response. I.e. irrespective of the product involvement, the high emotions elicited on viewing the archetypal ads would help form strong cognitive response.

The tests for mediation show that the emotions of pleasure and arousal fully mediate the relationship between product involvement and cognitive response (refer Table 5.9-1 and Table 5.9-2). Hence the cognitive response is a function of emotions rather than product involvement for archetypal ads.

iii. For non-archetypal ads, however, product involvement has a significant relationship with cognitive response (ad credibility) but no significant relationship with emotions.

This is explained by understanding that since non-archetypal ads work more through cognition rather than affect, higher product involvement leads to more cognitive processing, hence forming strong cognitive response. This is in line with previous research that studied the direct positive effect of product involvement on cognitive response (Celsi and Olson 1988; Greenwald and Leavitt 1984; Petty et al. 1983)

9. Individuals Archetype Dominance (IAD) affects perception to archetypes

The effect of individual differences on the acceptance of archetypes is important to understand.
i. The current research finds that the Individuals archetype dominance has a significant positive relationship with self-image congruence for archetypal ads.

This shows that when an individual’s archetype (warrior in this case) is dominant, he finds more congruity with the warrior image seen in the ad since he strongly identifies with that archetype.

This revalidates Lawson’s claims (2008) that when a viewer comes across any image, if it is not corresponding to the dominant archetypes of the individual, it simply passes through, and those images corresponding to the activated archetypes stick on. Faber and Mayer (2009) also found that one’s archetype dominance dictated ones character preference. This shows that one identifies with those archetypes more which are dominant within him.

Hence an important learning for practitioners and branding researchers is to first identify the prevalent archetype of their target consumer, and based on that try and develop a branding strategy using the prevalent archetype to achieve high self image congruence with the brand.

ii. It is also seen that Individuals archetype dominance does not have a direct effect on ad comprehension but only an indirect one through self-image congruence. Hence, if one’s warrior archetype is dominant, they will understand the warrior ad more easily because of high congruence of self with the product-user image.

**Conclusion**

From the above we can see that archetypal ads lead to high self-image congruence, which in turn lead to high emotions and comprehension. However, the extent of this congruence is determined by the dominance of the archetype within the individual viewing the ad. Higher dominance leads to higher self-image congruence when viewing a warrior ad.

It is also seen that even more positive emotions are formed when one is highly involved in the product category.

It is important to note the strong role that emotion plays in forming perceptions about the brand trustworthiness for brands using archetypes to form brand images. Emotions not only have an indirect effect on brand trustworthiness through cognitive response and attitude towards the ad, but the emotion of pleasure also has a significant direct effect on brand trustworthiness.
Studying the squared multiple correlation of the latent variables in the model for archetypal (a) and non-archetypal (na) ads, it can be seen that the latent variables are better explained in the model for archetypal ads. To measure the effectiveness of an ad, outcome variables of attitude, emotions, cognitive responses and brand trustworthiness are very important. Hence the proportion of variation in the latent variables are better explained for archetypal ads than non-archetypal ads which show that archetypal ads can produce more desired result than non-archetypal ads thus proving their effectiveness. These outcomes are much higher in archetypal ads than non-archetypal ads (Refer Tables 5.5-3 and 5.6-3).

Also, comparing the construct means across archetypal and non-archetypal ads, we can see that the means for the archetypal ads are significantly higher than the means of the non-archetypal ads (Refer Table 5.8-1).

Studying the structural invariance model, squared multiple correlations of the constructs and comparing the means, we can see that archetypal ads are more effective than the non-archetypal ads.