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Investigating Service Responsiveness in Customer Perception of the Corporate Logo

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Abstract

Notwithstanding the vast scholarly contributions to the field of corporate identity and in extension, corporate visual identity, attempts to conceptualize the relationship between corporate logo-as an element of the corporate identity mix-and customer perception in a wholly service context, remains absent in the literature. This led the researchers to carry out a review of the existing literature in the areas of corporate identity and service quality with the aim of identifying a strong conceptual background for an emerging model defining this relationship. While the service quality literature revealed that "service responsiveness" is a critical variable for quality in service contexts, the corporate identity literature revealed five key models which formed the basis for choosing the constituting elements of the corporate logo construct. The emerging model was further scrutinized for theoretical soundness located on the principles of activity theory as its theoretical foundation. The model proposes that service responsiveness mediates the relationship between corporate logo and customer perception of the brand itself. Finally, the authors recommend that future research could also explore empirical validation of the conceptual model as a requirement for providing strategic direction to corporate organizations.

Keywords: corporate logo, corporate identity, corporate visual identity, service responsiveness, service quality, activity theory

1. Introduction

The primacy of the concept of logo has attracted the attention of academic scholars and practitioners for some time. This is evident in the increase in the number of papers contributing to this discipline especially in the last two decades (Boulding, 1956; Harris, 1958; French, 1981; Anspach, 1983; Hamilton, 1983; Kotler, 1983; Bernstein, 1984; Chajet, 1984; Couretas, 1984; Keller, 1985; Dielenbach, 1986; Gray, 1986; Yarmeil, 1986; Schechter, 1995; Aaker, 1996; Stuart, 1997; van Rekom, 1997; Hendersen & Cote, 1998; Brachel, 1999; van Riel & van den Ban, 2001; de Chernatony, 2002; van den Bosch, 2006).

Beyond the continued increase in academic and practitioner contribution to the concept, the review of literature indicates that works on the concept of corporate logo have focused primarily on the planning, management and design of corporate logos (Aaker, 1996; Brachel, 1999; Henderson, Giese & Cote, 2004; Janiszewski & Meyvis, 2001; Perfect & Heatherley, 1997; Schechter, 1995; Stuart, 1997; van Rekom, 1997; van Riel & Balmer, 1997).

In spite of the interest in this subject, very limited work has been done to examine the relationship between the concept of corporate logo and other aspects of marketing, especially customer perception and how service quality (service responsiveness) mediates this relationship. This dearth of research is surprising. Given the limitation of research efforts in this regard, the core objective of this study will be to conceptually examine the relationship which subsists between corporate logo and perception and how service responsiveness governs this relationship. In essence the overall question being interrogated in this study is "how does corporate logo influence customer perception through service responsiveness". Such an understanding would contribute to deepening the depth of literature as it leaves the periphery of the concept of service quality and borders on the constituent issue of 'service responsiveness' (see Berry, Zeithaml & Parasuraman, 1985; Avkiran, 1994; Johnston, 1995).

2. Corporate Identity

Balmer (2001) states that "an organization's identity, is the summation of those tangible and intangible elements that make any entity distinct. It is shaped by the actions of the corporate founders and leaders, by tradition and the environment. At the core is the mix of employees' values which are expressed in terms of their affinities to corporate, professional, national and other identities. It is multidisciplinary in scope and is a melding of strategy, structure, communication, and culture. It is manifested through multifarious communications channels encapsulating product and organizational performance, employee communication and behavior, controlled communication and stakeholder network discourse". Balmer (1995a, b) further posits that organizations are recognized across the world because of their single and strong identity. It is an aspect of communication that extends beyond the normal system of advertising and ways by which products and services are marketed to that body of corporate identity, and corporate visual identity that are now being used to position such organizations.

For a long time, corporate identity has been seen and studied as an aspect of strategic marketing. It is what can be referred to as an organization's personality geared towards achieving the organization's goals and objectives. Over the years, researchers (e.g. Abratt, 1989; Balmer & Soenen, 1999; Balmer, 1998) have shown that there now exists a distinction and disconnection between corporate identity (what an organization is), and corporate image (what an organization is perceived to be). Corporate identity therefore, according to Kiriakidou & Millward (2000) and Balmer (2001), refers to the way an organization goes about carrying out its business, its relationship and communicational role with its external stakeholders through its employees.

On the other hand, an organization's corporate visual identity is what Abratt (1989) refers to as "outer sign of the inward commitment". Corporate visual identity as put forward by Melewar & Saunders (1998) "is the domain of designers while corporate identity is the domain of organizational theorists". An organization's corporate visual identity also plays a significant role in the way an organization is perceived by both internal and external stakeholders. It contributes to how an organization intends to create brand recognition in the eyes of the public. Wheeler (2003) went further to add that "every organization, seeks to creatively make use of symbolic representation of its brands using particular patterns peculiar to the organization."

According to van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving, (2005), corporate identity "is a beginning to creating a corporate reputation and has a definite impact on a company's performance. It is a planned image that is a key tangible asset for a company." Melewar & Saunders (1998) put forward that an organization's corporate visual identity is the outward appearance of the organization which consists of: the name, symbol and/or logotype, typography, color, and slogan.

Melewar & Jenkins (2002) defined corporate visual identity to be a significant part of the communication process of any organization and also an essential part of the organization's visual identity. Melewar, Basset & Simoes (2006) provided a framework and reputation model to examine the relationship between corporate visual identity, and corporate reputation. The framework and reputation model consists of five distinct areas: visibility, distinctiveness, authenticity, transparency, and consistency. Within this framework, the authors give the following elements of communication and visual identity: corporate communications, uncontrollable communication, architecture and location, and corporate visual identity. This has been illustrated in their model below (see Figure 1).

Researchers like Melewar & Saunders (2000), van Riel and van den Ban (2001) put forward the elements of corporate visual identity to be: name, symbol, typography, logo, color, slogan, and other graphical elements of a brand. Dowling (1994), and Olins (1986), also identified five elements of corporate visual identity to be: name, symbol and/or logotype, typography, color, slogan. These elements according to van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving (2005), are necessary in expressing the fundamental nature of an organization. In 2006, van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving (2006) identified architecture to also be an important element of an organization's corporate visual identity-the reason why most organizations with many branches have just one construction for their buildings irrespective of the location.

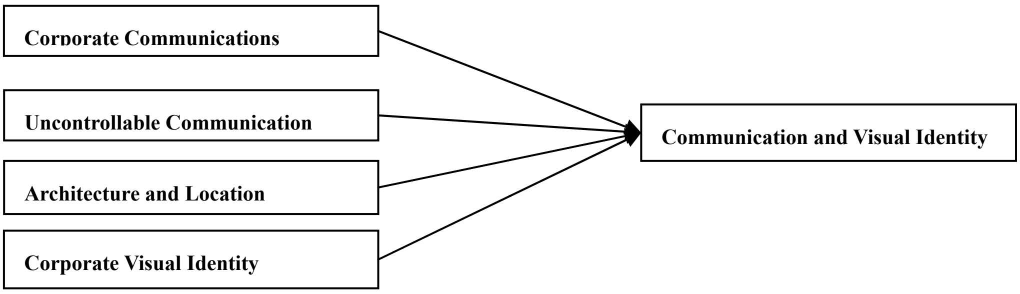

Figure 1. Communication and corporate identity (Melewar, Basset & Simoes, 2006)

These elements without any iota of doubt are used by organizations to communicate to their internal and external stakeholders. They are used on the organization's promotional materials such as flyers, letterheads, envelopes, business cards, websites, pens, jotters, buildings, corporate vehicles, and most especially the organization's corporate clothing. Thus, the provision for what Balmer & Gray (2000) refer to as recognizability.

Apart from the above, consistent corporate visual identity elements, helps organizations to achieve a consistent image which leads to increase in sales and increase in customer base. Buzzell (1968), and Sorenson & Wiechmann (1975), also conclude that consistent and visible corporate visual identity elements make customers relate well with the organization's products and services. It also leads to familiarization with the company, its products and services which in turn lead to the creation of a reputable image. These therefore, make customers become aware of the organization's product and service diversity as well as competitive distinction (Downey, 1986).

3. Corporate Logo

Logos are the first element customers identify with, and familiarize themselves with. Logos create lasting impressions in the minds of both internal and external stakeholders. The logo according to Henderson & Cote (1998) is the most visual image used by organizations. They went further to add that logos are essential communicational tools necessary in promoting the organization's images; more or less like an organization's signature created towards ensuring and sustaining a reputable image. It serves the same function as an individual's signature.

In a study carried out by Byrom & Lehman (2007), logo was identified as the key element which can represent the organization to both internal and external stakeholders. Logos are highly effective at helping business organizations deliver strategic messages about who they are; they communicate an organization's identity to customers. An organization's logo is the identifying symbol of that organization, and it is responsible for transmitting a plethora of information to customers.

Logos, according to Hagtvedt (2011), "are ubiquitous in the marketplace, and the average consumer encounters a multitude of them on any given day". Organizations cannot do without having a corporate logo. These logos (as elements of corporate visual identity), constitute the indispensable assets organizations devote time and resources to promote. Logos according to Henderson & Cote (1998) are organizations' form of permanent advertising and marketing technique-which serves as a form of permanent media.

The corporate logo adds value to companies, and also serves as a medium through which the external audiences recognize and appreciate an organization. In marketing communication, logos are seen as a systematic graphic dimension of corporate identity, and more specifically one of the elements of corporate visual identity (CVI). Renowned researchers Selame & Selame (1975) gave the definition of a corporate logo to be "the firm's visual statement to the world of who and what the company is-of how the company views itself-and therefore has a great deal to do with how the world views the company". According to van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving (2005), "the corporate logo represents both current results and future ambitions of the company. It helps consumers make purchase decisions and also aids consumers in identifying process"-thus leading to brand recognition and brand recall. The logo identifies and distinguishes a company from another company. Often times people see a corporate logo and they immediately know the organization the logo represents. Logos most often reveal an organization's identity and tell the public what the organization stands for.

A logo communicates to the audience the company's corporate identity (Van Riel & Balmer, 1997) and the information about what the organization is (Van Rekom, 1997). According to Aaker (1996), a strong logo can provide cohesion and structure to the identity of the company. Logos are a fundamental part of every company's identity (Henderson & Cote, 1996a) and reflect the company's potential power (Aaker, 1996).

According to Melewar & Karaosmanoglu (2006), "visual identity has two fundamental purposes. Firstly, it represents the organization's values and philosophy. Secondly, it supports corporate communication. The organization's visual identity can influence many of the stakeholders including employees and investors as well as consumers. It is the most frequently discussed aspect of corporate identity and in consequence, one of the most commonly used methods to indicate a transition in identity by organizations in a name change, often along with alterations to the corporate image".

In a business world where organizations are seeking for ways to retain and acquire more customers, there are a whole lot of flyers, signboards, and other promotional materials around seeking people's attention. This has thus paved a way for competitors and has served as a key advantage. Van Riel & Van Den Ban (2001) argue that corporate logos are one of the main tools for communicating the company's image and are also valuable in gaining attention and speeding the recognition of the product or company. The corporate logo or a symbol tends to be perceived and processed faster when it is familiar looking.

As Clow (2007) argues that the corporate logo is one aspect of the corporation's image since the logo identifies the company by being a symbol for the corporate image as a whole. Gray & Balmer (1998) recognized further that a logo specifically describes an organization. It is there to symbolize an organization's reason for existence; thus the need for it to be communicated in an effective manner. They went further to posit that "the logo is the key feature of a corporate graphic design system, which is unlike the name." Thus, according to van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving (2005) the key feature logos must serve as an instrument for creating differentiation must be appealing and attractive to customers in a recognized way. This will lead to its functioning as a communicational instrument alongside an instrument for recognition.

According to Chevalier & Mazzalovo (2004), "the logo plays roles in social relations for two complementary reasons; on the one hand for the informational content it communicates to the consumer before the purchase, on the other, for the perception it will create for this same customer after the purchase, when he or she will be associated with the logo".

4. Service Responsiveness

In recent years, the thrust on providing effective and efficient customer service has received accolades in the services sector for various reasons part of which sees increase in competition, and growing customer sophistication as the most important. Customers in recent years have grown to be more sophisticated in their demand and are now in pursuit of higher standards of service. To customers, service means being satisfied, delighted, urgently and properly attended to, and having a cordial relationship with the employees.

A number of researchers (Albrecht & Zemke, 1985; Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Armistead, 1990; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992, 1994; Crosby 1979; Grönroos, 1990; Oliver, 1993; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988; Taylor, 1993; Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1993) have over the years examined the field of service quality. This field grew out of the concern of these researchers in response to increasing competition and also to provide ways by which customer expectations can be met. As a concept, service quality is an important field necessary for every industry, thus the need for researchers to come up with an array of factors or determinants which make up or contribute to service quality.

In the service quality scale development discourse, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1985) establish through their conceptual study that the service quality construct consists of ten determinants (reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding and tangibles). However, further empirical research by the same authors in 1988 condensed the service quality determinants to five factors namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy-described by Berry, Zeithaml & Parasuraman (1985) as "a total of five consolidated dimensions". In further consolidating the veracity of the factors, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1988) and Berry, Zeithaml & Parasuraman (1985) agree that notwithstanding that service quality determinants would vary among service contexts, practically all of such contexts would have these pertinent determiners. Furthermore, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1988) report that, regardless of the service being studied, 'reliability' was the most critical dimension, followed by responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The tangibles were of least concern to service customers. On the contrary, Berry, Zeithaml & Parasuraman (1985), and Johnston (1995) identified 'responsiveness' as the vital service quality factor. Bitner, Booms & Tetreault (1990), identified 'employees' willingness' to respond to a problem and employees' 'responsiveness' to customer needs as key factors in service quality.

Service quality as a field of study has been widely used in various industries by various researchers; e.g. in tyre retailing by Carman (1990); car servicing by Bouman & Van Der Wiele (1992); hospitality by Johns (1993); hospitals by Babakus & Mangold (1992); banking by Kwon & Lee (1994). Although the literature clearly shows some division on what service quality dimension/factor is of most importance, ‘responsiveness’ appears to have the highest level of occurrence. Therefore, this present study will rely on the conceptualization that ‘responsiveness’ is an important factor/determiner of service quality as identified by service quality scholars (e.g., Berry, Zeithaml & Parasuraman, 1985; Johnston, 1995), and by extension of logic, mediates the relationship between the influence of corporate logo and customer perception. In so doing, it will be important to know if customers are more concerned about the service quality of the bank more than its corporate logo, and to examine the relationship that exists among these three variables.

5. Five Key Corporate Visual Identity Models

The literature is replete with several models within the field of corporate visual identity and corporate identity, put forward to provide greater insight into the concept of corporate logo. However, for the purpose of this research five models, which have over the years dominated literature, will be examined. These include: the “operational model for managing corporate reputation and image” (Gray & Balmer, 1998); “corporate identity management process” (Stuart, 1999); “model of corporate identity” (Melewar & Wooldridge, 2001); “corporate identity model” (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002); “a new model of the corporate identity-corporate communication process” (Balmer & Gray, 2000).

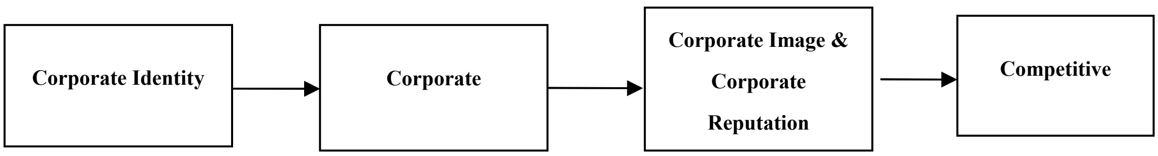

Figure 2. The operational model for managing corporate reputation and image (Gray & Balmer, 1998)

This model (Gray & Balmer, 1988) accounts for the fact that building a corporate image is essential for every organization. A corporate image helps in the growth of the organization and also increases the customer-base especially in a competitive industry such as the financial services industry. According to Van Den Bosch, De Jong & Elving (2005), corporate identity “is a beginning to creating a corporate reputation and has a definite impact on a company’s performance.” Thus, the first thing to consider in order in developing the corporate image is the corporate identity. The key elements of corporate identity are essential in building a reputable image and they also assist in “supporting the company’s status”. Thus, corporate identity helps in creating the corporate image and corporate reputation which will in turn lead to competitive advantage.

Stuart (1999) on the other hand, proposes a corporate identity management process model which shows the complexity as well as the importance of corporate identity especially its management process. This model shows three ways by which an organization can manage its corporate image; through corporate personality, corporate strategy, and corporate identity-two of these stages have corporate identity included in their structure; i.e. corporate strategy has the corporate identity structure, while corporate identity has symbolism in its structure. The corporate identity structure and symbolism constitutes the corporate visual identity. These lead to the development of an identity and also an image-image precedes reputation (e.g., the way organizations are perceived). These in turn lead to an interface between the organization and its stakeholders. This interface leads to a complete exhibition of the image which is necessary in building corporate reputation, to enhance organizational performance and also to ensure business survival. Therefore, Stuart (1999), through this model, posits that in building corporate identity, the corporate personality must be formed, the strategy must be developed, and the identity built. Based on this conceptualization, we see the relevance of corporate visual identity within the three stages of the management process.

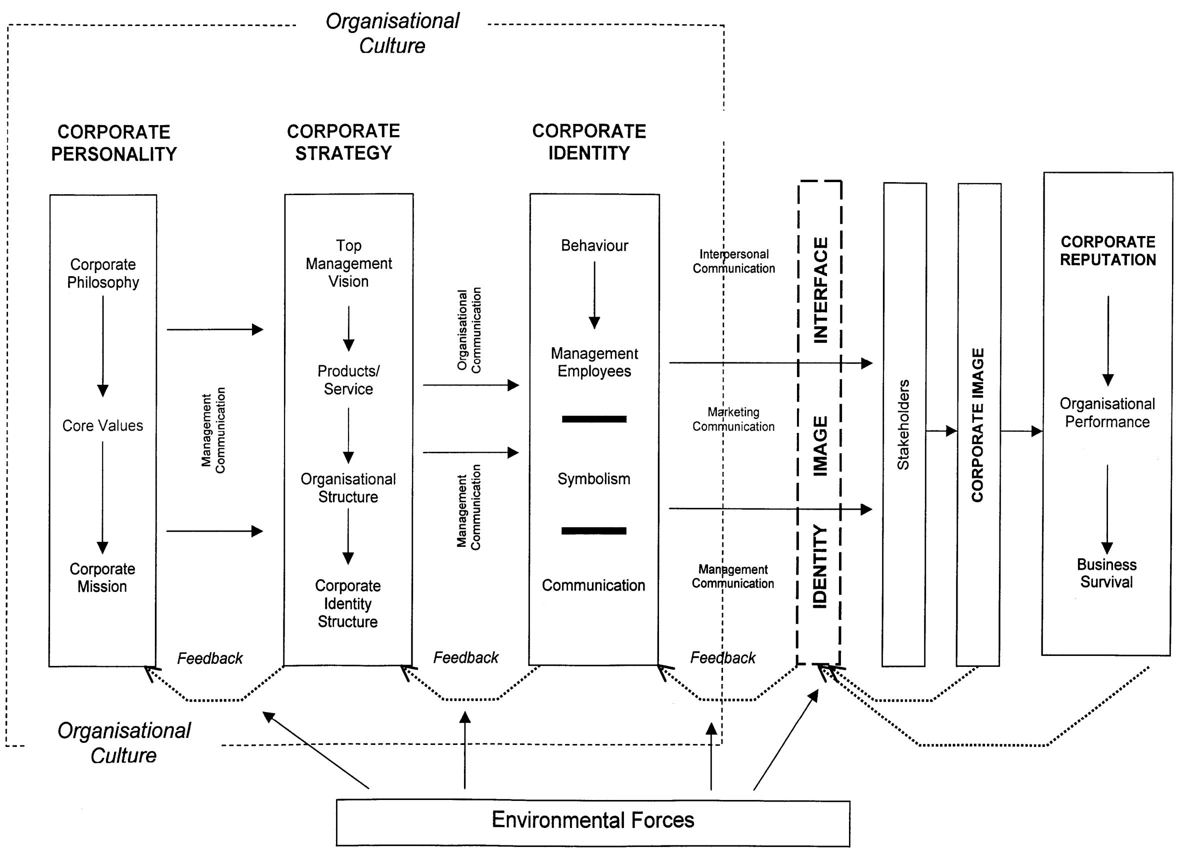

Figure 3. Corporate identity management process (Stuart, 1999)

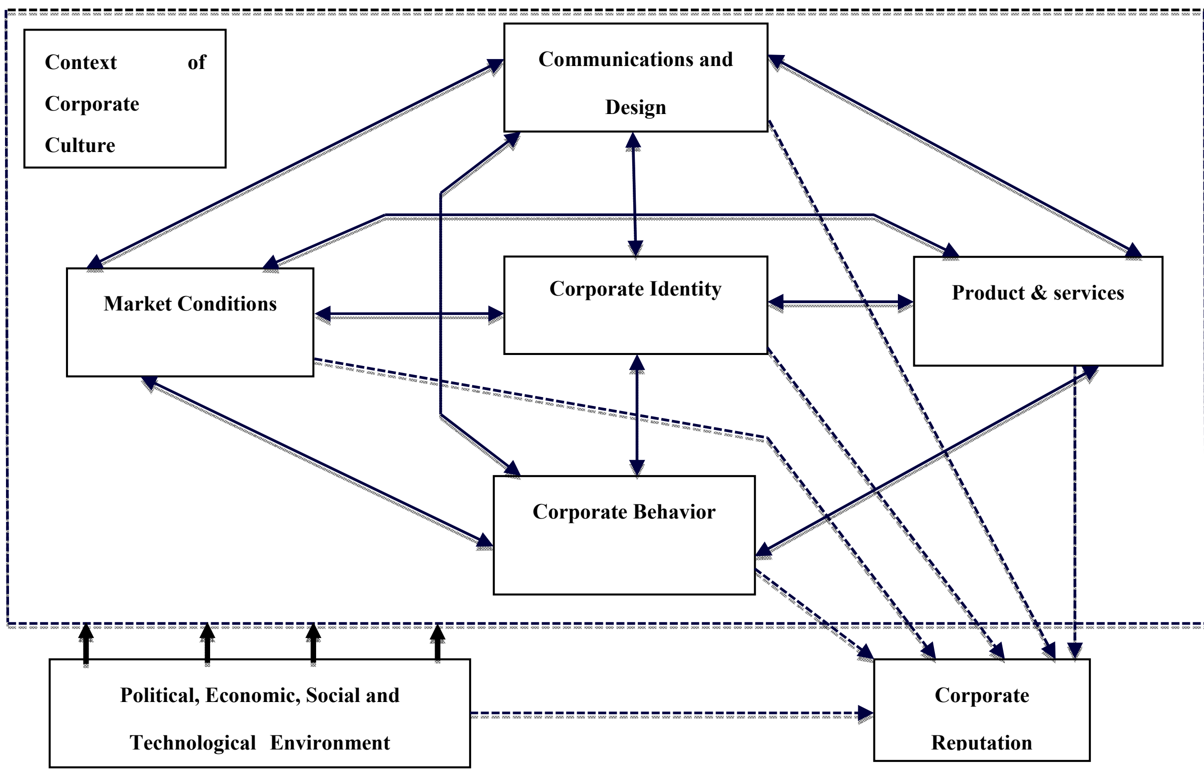

Figure 4. Model of corporate identity (Melewar & Wooldridge, 2001)

Melewar & Woolridge's (2001) model in Figure 4 creates a conceptual framework for understanding the determinants of corporate identity. It examines what forms or leads to an organization's corporate identity. This model shows how effective an organization communicates via its design (a constituent part of which is the logo). The authors integrated the concept of corporate identity from the perspective of its communication, design, market conditions, product/services and corporate behavior. Amidst this, communications come to play alongside the design. The design comprises the visual elements. This model stresses the importance of designs and its communicational value. Furthermore, there is an inseparable link among all the determinants. This can be noticed from the model being that the first determinant links all determinants together to form a corporate identity which in turn leads to corporate reputation. Thus, it shows that communication and design-as a determinant-is pivotal to the formation of corporate identity. Indeed, communication is inherent in the design and not the other way round.

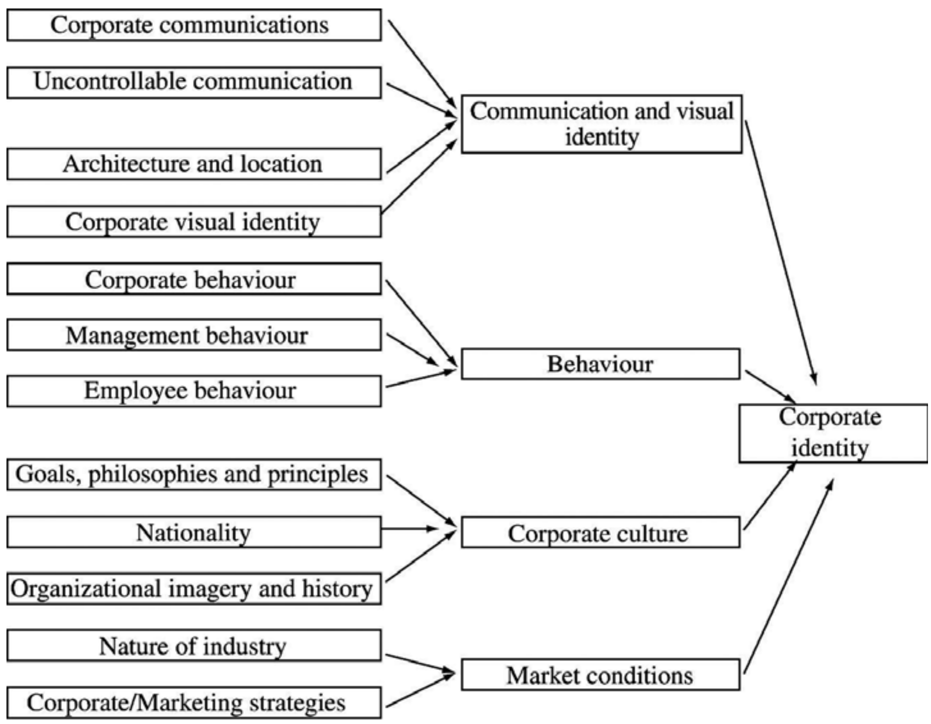

Figure 5. Corporate identity model (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002)

Melewar & Jenkins' (2002) model illustrates again the relevance of an organisation's corporate identity but from a univeristy context. This model was put forward because of the necessity of distinguishing one university from another. At the time this model was developed, there was a gap that needed to be filled. There was a need to create a model (within the framework of a univeristy) to address the strategic role of corporate identity as a platform to develop competitive advantage. Thus, Melewar & Jenkins (2002) illustrates what makes up and forms that identity which they grouped into four components: 1) communication and visual identity; 2) behaviour; 3) corporate culture, and 4) market conditions. Although, this model, was built upon the foundation of Melewar & Woolridge's (2001) model of corporate identity, the point of divergence can be seen where Melewar & Jenkins (2002) subjected the initial four groups to further scrutiny to reveal 12 constituting elements. Thus, we see 12 elements making up the four elements; out of which the four elements make up "communication" and "visual identity". This depicts that an organisation's communication and its visual identity have essential roles to play in construction of its corporate identity.

Balmer & Gray's (2000) model in Figure 6 below, appears to be an extension and update of their earlier model (Gray & Balmer, 1998). The authors propose that an organization communicates through its identity. An organisation's corporate identity serves as a communicational platform through which it showcases itself to the world and by extension, its stakeholders. The communication is intended to be percevied by both internal and external stakeholders in order to create a strong image and corporate reputation which can lead to a competitive advantage. The corporate identity consists of the values, strategies, organisational culture, and also the organisaitional structure of the organisation. As postulated by Balmer & Gray (2000) in this model, the communication occurs in the primary, secondary, and tertiary level; i.e it can be divided into primary, secondary, and tertiary communication.

Having traced the development of the debate in the literature-from the literature on corporate visual identity to the service quality literature; to develop the releance of service responsiveness to the present study-it is important to establish the points of consonance and the gap evident in the said literatures. The review of the the five key corporate identity models is quite indicative of the scholarly agreement that the critical factor organizations should consider in building a reputable image for competitive advantege is to ensure that its designs are clearly communicated to its stakeholders. As much as possible, their meanings should be clear, delivered effectively-free from misconstruing and ambiguity. Melewar & Woolridge (2001) for instance, go further to conceptualize factors that influence corporate identity formation. On the other hand, however, all the models have failed to examine the relationship between corporate visual identity and/or any of its components vis-à-vis any one of its key stakeholders through service responsiveness. This is especially useful in service contexts such as the financial services sector which is replete both with strong visual identities and a high dependence of human interaction for patronage and loyalty. As a result, this study will attempt to conceptualize this relationship by drawing on the tenets of activity theory as a enabling theoretical framework.

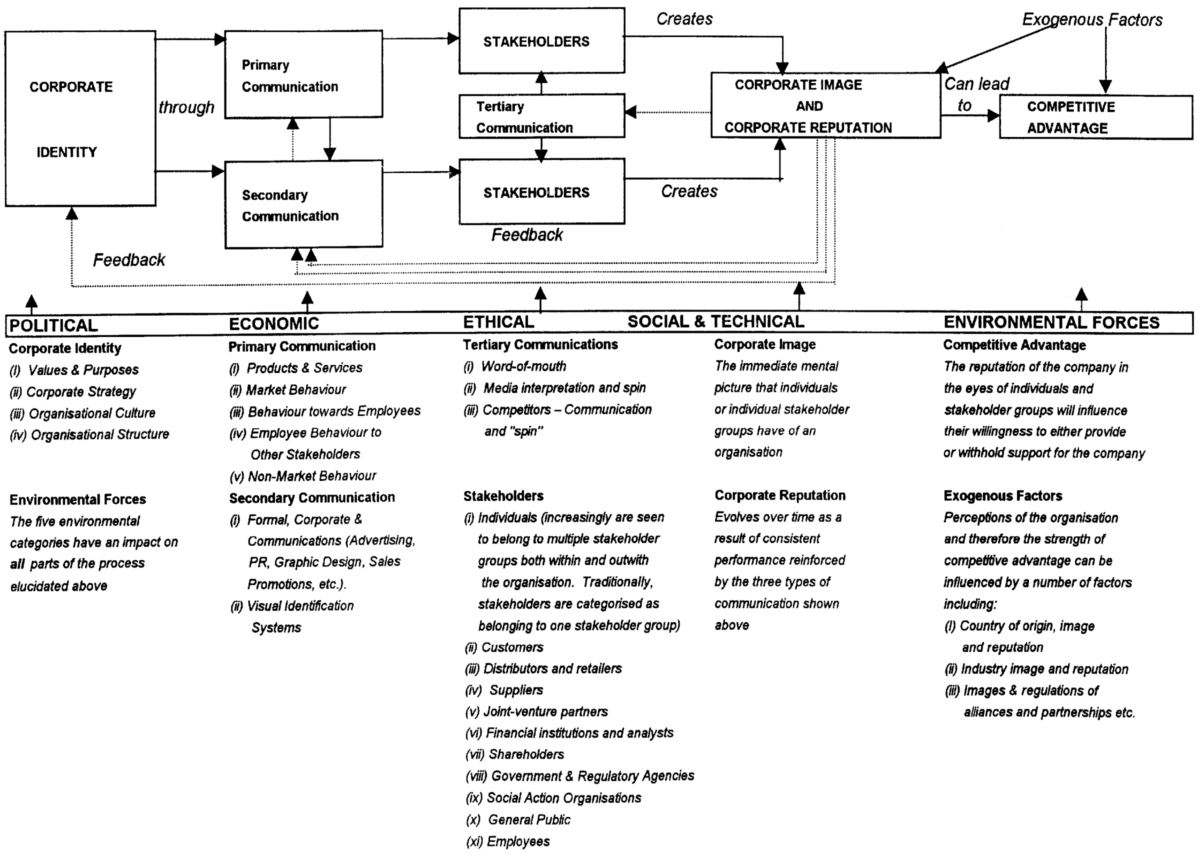

Figure 6. A new model of corporate identity-corporate communication process (Balmer & Gray, 2000)

6. Theoretical Foundation: Activity Theory

Activity theory has been traced to the socio-cultural tradition in Russian psychology in the 1920's and 1930's. Nardi (1996) posits that "activity theory is concerned with the historical development of activity and the mediating role of artefacts. As the name 'activity' implies, it involves a deliberate and determined interaction between two variables which comes in the form of "subjects" and the "objects". An activity is composed of a subject, and an object, mediated by a tool. The "objects" most times can either be tangible or intangible; while the "subjects" most times are the human beings engaging in the activity. After the interaction, both the "objects" and the “subjects” are eventually transformed. Thus, according to Rubinshtein, (1986), “subjects do not only express themselves in their activities. In a very real sense, they are produced by the “activities”. “Objects” can also be said to shape the way human beings interact with reality.

Activity theory sees human beings (subjects) residing in an environment, as surrounded by series of images (objects). Therefore, In order to understand the perception of human beings with regards the objects they are surrounded with, it is important to carry out an analysis of the objects. All human perception is shaped by the “objects” they are exposed to; thus perceptions are created by the “objects”. The relationship the “subject” has with the “object” gives it a specific direction and brings out the desired perception. Consequently, activity theory highlights that the activities human beings engage in are mediated by tools in a broad sense. Tools are created and transformed during the development of the activity itself and carry with them a particular culture-i.e. the historical remains from their development.

Therefore, the use of the tools is an accumulation and transmission of social knowledge. Tools influence the perception of human beings. The activity theory also describes the way individuals participate in an environment using objects-i.e. either consciously or by been controlled-which is most often geared towards creating a desired perception. Activity theory can also be said to be based on the fact that the intentions of individuals and their perceptions grow out of the meaning they derive from the objects. To put it definitively, activities are series of operations, and processes of actions consisting of chains of events and actions which have an immediate and defined goal.

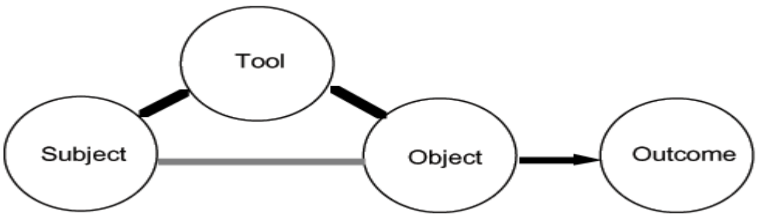

Figure 7. Structure of an individual, mediated action (Kuutti, 1994, p. 54)

Activity theory has been of high importance in various fields like education, management and information systems, most especially in fields that deal with human interaction, relationship and perceptions. Researchers (e.g. Kuutti, 1996; Liaw, Huang & Chen, 2007), have come to realise that the activity theory is relevant and needed in understanding human beings within an intricate and dynamic enviroment.

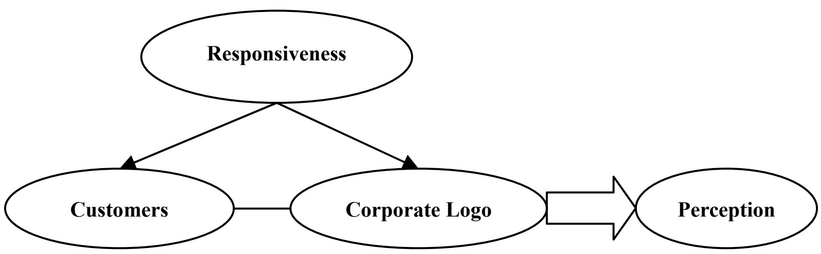

Figure 8. Proposed serevice responsiveness-corporate logo model representing activity theory

Hence in this study, activity theory provides a framework to analyze and understand service responsiveness as a mediating variable in the interaction between corporate logo and customer perception. It tries to make a sense of the interactions customers have with the corporate logos and how this relationship is shaped through responsiveness. Furthermore, activity theory and the proposed model in Figure 9 below serve as a means to provide insight into the relationship between corporate visual identity and perception. In Figure 7, the “subject” represents the customers of the bank while the “object” here is the corporate logo; the outcome of the “subject” interacting with the “object” in a specified environment. It is important to reiterate that the “tool” in activity theory as used within the context of this research is “responsiveness”; i.e. responsiveness serves as the mediating the relationship between the “subjects” and the “objects”.

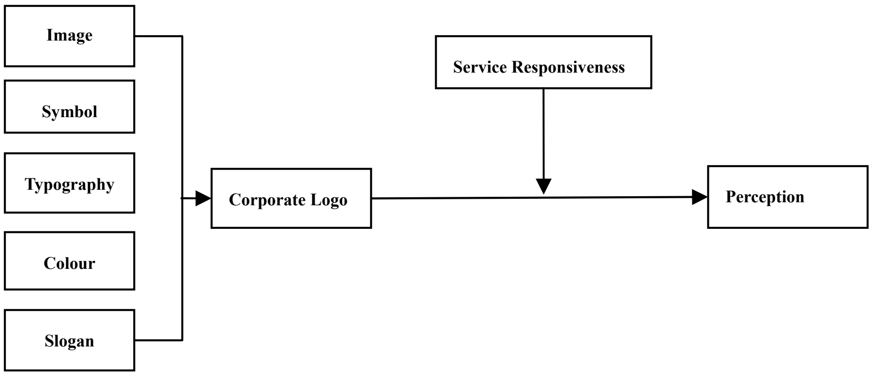

Figure 9. A proposed model: corporate logo-customer perception relationship model

Based on this foundation of activity theory as well as the gaps found in the existing literature, the above model (Figure 9) is hereby proposed as the basis for further empirical study. The model shows corporate logo as an element of corporate visual identity and also identifies three elements of corporate logo as put forward in the review of the literature in Section 3 above, from researchers (e.g., Dowling, 1994; Olins, 1986) which are: name, symbol, typography, color, and slogan.

7. Summary

This paper tried to focus on identifying how best the relationship between corporate logo and customer perception can be conceptualized. From the corporate identity literature, five models were reviewed: "the operational model for managing corporate reputation and image (Gray & Balmer, 1998); "corporate identity management process model" (Stuart, 1999); "model of corporate identity" (Melewar & Wooldridge, 2001); "corporate identity model" (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002), and "a new model of corporate identity – corporate communication process (Balmer & Gray, 2000). These models clearly illustrate the concept of corporate identity and the corporate visual identity construct. They also illustrate the determinants of corporate visual identiy and the phases leading to building, maintaining and managing an organisation's corporate visual identity. Finally, the gap in the models was identified as a basis for conceptualizing the proposed model (see Figure 9).

Corporate visual identity, most especially the corporate logo remains an important strategic element in an organisation's identity. Using activity theory as a theoretical framework, the model borders on the relationship that exists between the concept of corporate visual identity on the one hand, and the notion of customer perception on the other through service responsiveness. In the context of a financial services firm, for instance, other factors could be responsible for the firm's quality of service. This model further highlights the above stated relationship. The customers are the "subjects" who are exposed to "objects" such as the corporate logo (through its component elements). This exposure is mediated by another factor (responsiveness), which thus leads to an "outcome"-conceptualized in this case, as the perception customers have of the brand.

The weaknesses in the five key models highlights the need for the creation of an emerging model which will serve as a new conceptual framwork used to clearly examine the relationship between the concept of corporate visual identity on the one hand, and customer perception on the other while also examining the role responsiveness plays in this relationship. Notwithstanding the identification of "service responsiveness" as a mediating variable in this relationship, the possibility of other factors mediating this relationship is hereby acknowledged. Furthermore, by taking a cue from the service quality literature, contextual variations may also occur. Nonetheless, service responsiveness appears to be a relevant contribution to the literature as a mediating variable in this relationship. As such, there is the need for further research in terms of empirical validation of the theoretical finding within specified business contexts.

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