Original Paper

Corporate Branding in Botswana: A Content Analysis of

Visual Brand Elements

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Abstract

The topic of corporate branding has stimulated immense academic attention. However, as the thrust of research on corporate branding concentrates on the West, little remains known about how firms in developing nations in Sub Sahara Africa deal with the challenge to communicate a sustainable image through branding. Therefore, the current study investigates specific corporate brand visual elements utilised by firms in Botswana as tools for communication, identification and differentiation. A sample of about 350 brands from different industries was collected from the local print media and content analysed. Overall findings demonstrate that a majority of firms in Botswana utilize a combination of full names, colour, logos and taglines in their corporate brands. Most frequently used being the full names that represent the background of the firm, blue or black colours that correspond to national colours, symbolic logos and taglines that emphasize the personality traits of competence and sincerity as well as the industry in which the firm operates. The significant use of a combination of visual elements signifies the importance that local firms attach to corporate branding. However, there is a need to improve on the use of taglines and consistency in the use of visual elements to exploit the advantages of corporate identity.

Keywords

corporate branding, corporate brand identity, Botswana, colour, visual-elements

1. Introduction

Competing products on the market are usually almost the same both in benefits and features. However, they do not all receive the same level of adoption, mainly due to the power of the corporate brand and everything it exudes and represents (Laforet, 2010). A corporate brand is a valuable resource; one that provides an organization with a sustainable and competitive advantage (Merrilees & Miller, 2008; Keller & Richey, 2006; Balmer & Gray, 2003). Corporate branding is not limited to a specific mark or name only; it incorporates multiple key elements such as logo, colour, tagline, packaging and customer service (Hatch & Schultz, 2008; Henderson, Cote, Leong, & Schmitt, 2003; Madden, Hewett, & Roth,

2000; Kotler, 1991).

From a customer perspective, name, pictures, colours, typography, slogans, logo and other symbols are the widely used elements for brand identification as they communicate and provide instant recognition of the brand (Henderson, & Cote, 1998; Schechter, 1993). The role of visual elements in enhancing corporate brand identity may be even more important in developing countries. For example, Indian brand symbols were found to overcome issues of literacy, pronunciation and language (Ekuan, Francey, van Niekerk, & Butler, 2001). Visual elements also played a bigger role in consumer decision making in China than in the United States (Han & Schmitt, 1997). Logos and colours are a more efficient management tool to elicit the desired response from customers (van Riel & van den Ban, 2001). Consequently, firms spend substantial sums of money and time on visual elements of corporate brands every year (Henderson, & Cote, 1998; Colman, Wober, & Norris, 1995). For instance, in 1994, more than 3000 new companies in the USA were responsible for spending an estimated 120 million US dollars to create and implement new Corporate Visual Identities (CVIs) (Anson, 1998).

In spite of the significance of corporate branding, the perceptions that consumers form about a specific brand depend largely on the ability of the company to communicate the brand clearly and effectively. Customers buy brands that are effectively positioned in that they buy into not only the product but also the corporate themselves (Melewar & Saunders, 2000). To achieve brand coherence, the brand concept must be viewed as context independent (de Chernatony, 2002), thus the concept of the corporate brand name is the same as the concept of the product or services brand. Successful corporate branding often stems from a strong coherence between the company's strategic vision, organizational culture and company image (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). For example, in 2010, the University of Botswana changed its CVI in order to convey a new image (Makgosa & Molefhi, 2012). However, there have been firm calls from the employees through the University media to revert back to the old logo and colours as the change was perceived as threatening to established brand associations. Similarly, at the Lagos University in Nigeria, students poured out on to the streets in protest of the school's renaming and change of logo and owing to the resistance by students and staff, the president of Nigeria reversed the decision (Adeyemo, 2013).

Corporate branding remains a strategic issue for companies in Botswana. As the Botswana market is awash with numerous corporate brands, the key challenge for brand managers is to communicate the image that is sustainable. However, to the best of our knowledge not much has been studied about how firms in Botswana use the key elements of their brands to remain relevant and memorable. As cautioned by Anson (1998), firms invest significant amounts of money and time in promoting and changing visual elements, however, there has been little systematic research on their effect on brand evaluation and preference. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to investigate specific brand's visual elements utilised by firms in Botswana and their use as tools for communication, identification and differentiation. Specifically, the current study seeks to:

1) Identify the most widely used visual element of corporate brands in Botswana.

2) Analyse the specific properties of the visual elements mostly used in corporate brands in Botswana.

3) Examine industry and sector based differences in the use of visual elements of corporate brands and their specific properties in Botswana.

4) Make suggestions on how the visual elements of corporate brands in Botswana facilitate communication, identification and differentiation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Corporate Branding

Corporate branding refers to those elements which make a firm distinct and allows it to be known, and through which people can describe, remember and relate to it (van Rekom, 1997). There are however, varied definitions of corporate branding (Jun & Lee, 2007), especially between academics and practitioners. While practitioners define corporate branding as a visual arrangement of elements such as corporate name, logo and tagline, scholars view it as a higher level of abstraction consisting of corporate strategy, corporate culture and communication (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002; Alessandri, 2001; Balmer, 1998). In spite of these varied definitions, corporate branding, has received increasing attention from both scholars and practitioners alike (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002; Alessandri, 2001; Melewar & Saunders, 2000).

Corporate branding has become increasingly profound particularly in today's marketing environment and henceforth there has been a commensurate increase in the volume of empirical and theoretical studies that explore ways in which corporate branding enhances both brand recognition and the growth of the organization (Jun & Lee, 2007; Melewar & Jenkins, 2002; Alessandri, 2001; Michell, King, & Reast, 2001; Melewar & Saunders, 2000). For instance, brand name recognition has been cited as one of the most influential features of successful brands particularly where decision making relies on the customer's previous experience (Michell, King, & Reast, 2001). In addition, on two independent studies by Shipley & Howard (1993) and Michell et al (2001), firms were found to have positive views on the beneficial effects of brand names, and company chief executives rated corporate identity, value to marketing success, and branding as major corporate assets.

Despite the evident consistency in the general views of corporate branding, there has been a distinct shift in the literature from focusing attention on brand image to brand identity (Harris & Chernatony, 2001, Balmer, 1995).While brand image focuses on consumers' perceptions of brand differentiation, corporate brand identity is more concerned with how managers and employees make a brand unique. Therefore internally, managers need to define a brand's values and then ensure that employees' values and behaviours are consistent with them. Externally, they need to examine their brand's reputation among stakeholders to ensure that the brand's identity is communicated successfully and valued outcomes are consistently delivered. In the international context however, it might be important for managers to understand the local values and symbols, and accordingly adapt their corporate brand identity elements to suit the local cultural context (Ekuan, Francey, van Niekerk, & Butler, 2001). In

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order to broaden current knowledge, this study investigatescorporate brand identity in a unique, African cultural set-up that has been rarely investigated. This would provide insight on how local values and symbols are used by firms to communicate their brand identity.

2.2 Corporate Brand Identity

Being more complicated than "just design", corporate brand identity embraces all the facets of a firm that influence the way people see, think, and feel about the firm. Corporate communications project the elements of a firm's corporate brand identity to produce a corporate brand image that people should have of the firm. In that regard, firms choose to use corporate brands to signal a specific identity and personality to the target market, communicate a unique image to differentiate themselves from other competing firms, as well as creation of a corporate visual identity (CVI) and culture (Cornelissen, Haslam, & Balmer, 2007; Schultz, Hatch, & Larsen, 2000).

At its best, CVI provides the graphic language and discipline for a clear, consistent projection of a firm's visual identity (Melewar & Saunders, 2000). Corporate identity literature has without doubt made a profound contribution to the general understanding of firms' identity. Similarly, focus of the literature portrays the logo, name, slogan/tagline, and colour as the most commonly cited visual elements, as delineated in Table 1.The key visual elements identify and differentiate the firm in the market (van Riel & van den Ban, 2001; Melewar & Saunders, 2000). It is part of the firm's deeper corporate identity or an outer sign of the inward commitment. Not surprisingly, Percy & Rossiter (1983) noted thatvisual elements in advertising function independently of verbal elements, media belief, attitude, and intention responses towards a brand. This corroborates the study by Sherpard (1967) which suggested that visual memory always occurs in response to visual stimuli. In an experiment where subjects studied magazine adverts at their leisure, Sherpard (1967) found that it required four months for the recognition level to fall from 98.5% to 50%. This underlines the importance of corporate visual identity in brand recognition and firm growth.

Table 1. Key Visual Elements as Focused in Literature

Selected Sources		Logo	Name	Picture	Slogan	Type font	Colour	Characters	Packaging	Jingles
		Visual Elements Identified/discussed								
1	Farhana (2012)	√	√		√			√	√	√
2	Walsh, Winterich, & Mittal (2010)	√								
3	Keller (2008)	√	√		√			√	√	√
4	Jun & Lee (2007)	√			√					
5	Annette, et al (2005)	√	√		√	√	√			
6	Stuart & Muzellec (2004)	√	√		√					

7	Alessandri (2001)	√		√		√
8	van Riel & van den Ban (2001)	√				
9	Melewar & Saunders (2000)	√	√	√	√	√
10	Baker & Balmer (1997)	√	√		√	√
11	Keller (1993)	√	√			
12	Lambert (1989)	√	√			√

Source: Authors

Although visual elements of corporate brands have long attracted the interest of marketing researchers, much of the literature concentrated on corporate brands in the West (Walsh, Winterich, & Mittal, 2010; van Riel & van den Ban, 2001; Melewar & Saunders 2000) and little research addresses corporate brands in Sub Sahara Africa and Botswana in particular. Nevertheless, cultural identity plays a significant role in explaining corporate brand identity (Balmer, 2008). According to Wendt (1994) and Balmer, (2008) there is a relationship between national and ethnic identity and corporate identity. They argue that corporations are likely to use elements that reflect their own national 'culture' and home country identity, corroborating with Holt (2003) who argues on the role that socio-cultural activities play in influencing branding symbols used.

This study therefore, brings to light the understanding of how firms in a Sub-Saharan African cultural context, Botswana in particular, employ cultural values to communicate their brand identities. The traditional African value systems have been observed to be collectivist rather than individualist in nature. The collectivist concept encompasses ideas of respect/humbleness, mutual help, and cooperation. These ideologies are prevalent in the interpretation of symbols, use of words, particularly naming (Guma, 2001)and colour.Hence, cultural differences between countries may be the primary obstacle to developing internationally accepted brands and communicating with global consumers, especially those who live in developing countries with more traditional cultural values (Jun & Lee, 2007). A firm becomes global through branding and communications, among other factors. It is thus necessary for firms to understand cultural values and then carefully reflect on them when using visual elements and developing more effective communication tools (Gurhan-Candi & Maheswaran, 2000). Therefore, in order to contribute to the intricacies of corporate identity, the current study focuses on how selected visual elements are used by firms within a context that has some unique traditions and cultural values.

2.3 Selected Brand Visual Elements

Selected visual elements in corporate branding that have been commonly cited in previous studies (See, Table 1) including name, logo, tagline, and colour are discussed in detail in this section.

2.3.1 Name

From a consumer's perspective, a brand name is one of the extrinsic signals of product quality (Bristow, Schneider, & Schuler, 2002) and central to all brand elements [a traditional definition of a brand is *'the*

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name, associated with one or two items in the product line…' (Kotler, 2000)] as most of the world's greatest brands are corporate names (Melewar & Saunders, 2000). To achieve brand coherence, the brand concept must be viewed as context independent (de Chernatony, 2002), thus the concept of the corporate brand name is the same as the concept of the product or services brand. A brand name should be easily remembered, highly suggestive, interesting, and compact (Keller, 2008). It should have the least response time of all informational elements. At the same time it should contain all the factors of a proper brand element such as ease of pronunciation and spelling. A balance is necessary between familiarity which helps to tap existing knowledge structures into a concrete or abstract meaning, differentiation or uniqueness. Simplicity is one of the desirable brand name characteristic as it is related to memorability. Companies tend to have simple full names. Francis, Lam, & Walls, (2002), found that a majority of brand names they studied consisted of full names using either one word (75.1%) or two words (16.4%), while an insignificant 2.6% were abbreviations.

2.3.2 Logo

A logo is a visual icon providing two basic, yet necessary, functions for brands: identification and differentiation (Farhana, 2012). According to Van den Bosch, de Jong & Elving (2005) a corporate logo represents current results and future ambitions of the company. It is an identifiable sign which helps in categorizing the background of the organization and guides consumers in identifying the corporate brand. Scholarly research has been on the added value that corporate logos bring to a firm's reputation (Perfect & Heatherley, 1997; Haase & Theios, 1996). A corporate logo adds value for a company because it is one of the consistent elements in the corporate identity mix and it simplifies the identification of the employees with their company. It also provides a tool for external audiences to recognise and appreciate the firm (Maathuis, 1999).

There are many types of logos, ranging from corporate names, written in distinctive form, to entirely abstract logos, which may be completely unrelated to the corporate name or activities (Farhana, 2012). Logos can be Non-word marks such as the Nike symbol, pictorial in nature such as Playboy bunny or an element of the firm such as the MacDonald's golden arches (Keller, 2008). The graphics system dictates the number and type of logos in use, the design style of the firm's literature, signs and stationery (Gray & Balmer, 1998). The graphic design therefore involves coordinating the style of the typeface, photography, illustrations, layout and colouring in the entire firm's graphics, in order to assist customers in brand identification and the graphic elements in brand recognition.

2.3.3 Colour

Although the importance of colour in CVI has received little academic attention (Hynes, 2009), there is substantial research outside the marketing field which shows the importance of colour in recall and eliciting different emotional responses (Baker & Balmer, 1997). Colour is commonly expected to provide an additional subjective benefit by making display work more pleasant (Pelet & Papadopoulou, 2011). However, available experimental results are inconclusive. For instance, some studies (Chang & Lin, 2010; Boudreaux & Palmer, 2007; Matthews, 1987; Radl, 1982) found that inappropriate use of

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colour in a specific cultural context can result in poor performance and a higher incidence of visual discomfort thus resulting in low brand identification. In particular, the combination of red and blue was perceived to be inappropriate in the American culture (Matthews 1987). There are also reports that colours have a direct, physiological effect. For example, red was found to have the potential to raise blood pressure and appetite (Riezebos, 2003). Although other studies have found that colours such as blue and white share similar meanings across countries (Madden et al, 2000) colours as black and red have considerably different meanings and associations (Madden, Hewett, & Roth, 2000).

2.3.4 Taglines

Tagline is a brief phrase that can help the corporation to be well known in its industry for years, as it captures the essence of a brand (Farhana, 2012). The main purpose of taglines is to help the organization market its products or services to a particular target market. It also briefly states what the organization's goals are, help the consumer discern the meaning of a brand in terms of its positioning, and condense the theme of advertisements (Keller, 2008; Kohli & Leuthesser, 2001). The tagline can help consolidate the brand's desired point of difference and as such must be long enough to be something meaningful but short enough to be memorable (Keller, 2008; Farhana, 2012).

3. Research Method

To collect data for this study a content analysis approach was utilized. Content analysis is a method of analysing communication messages using a systematic technique of counting items with established categories (Sayre, 1992). This approach is commonly used in marketing communication because it provides the opportunity to collect print, verbal or electronic data using both qualitative and quantitative procedures (Opoku, Abratt, & Bendixe, 2007; Huhmann & Brotherton, 1997). Content analysis has been commonly applied in corporate branding (Jun & Lee, 2007; Pitt, Opoku, Hultman, Abratt, & Spyropoulou, 2007) and these studies tend to collect the content on corporate brands from company or social media websites and print magazines. Although the media for communication are evolving and there is a significant trend to analyse effective communication strategy through social media or company websites, the use of local newspapers for advertising purposes appear to be a common approach in Botswana (U.S Commercial Services, 2012).

Thus, in this study local print newspapers were targeted for extracting a sample of corporate brands because of wider readership and the ability to attract advertisements portraying corporate brands from both the private and public sector. The current study focussed on a sample of corporate brands that were published in advertisements published in issues of *Sunday Standard* between year 2000 and 2012. This local newspaper was selected because during the pilot test procedure it emerged as one with the highest circulation and popularity based on the number of print advertisements from both the private and public sector. For ease of access data collection was done through the University Library where regular issues of the print local newspapers are available for free. A total sample of 354 corporate brands was achieved from the targeted local newspaper.

In order to collect data, a detailed coding scheme was systematically designed based on the literature and was subjected to a series of pilot tests. The coding scheme was designed to capture information about (1) the year the newspaper issue was published, (2) the company's name (3) industry (4) sector (5) the availability of any of the four visual elements of corporate brands in a newspaper advertisement, (6) specifically which visual elements appear on the newspaper advertisement, (7) where applicable, whether the company's name is in full or acronym (8) where applicable the most predominant colour used, (9) Other types of colours used together with the predominant colour; (10) where applicable, whether the logo is a design, picture, symbol or none; (10) whether the logo has a specific shape such triangle, square, tower, and oval (11) Whether the logo was symbol, abstract or none, (12) where applicable type of picture on the logo; (13) tagline message and (14) type of advertisement. The content analysis method, the sample required, and the specific coding process were explained to the research assistants who participated in data collection. Before the data was analysed, the researchers rechecked and ensured that all the required information was appropriately captured.

Frequency tabulations and simple correspondence analyses were utilized as the main analytic techniques. The frequency tabulations were used to analyse the characteristics of the advertisements, the background information of the companies, the commonly used visual elements and their key properties. Correspondence analysis was used to provide further insight into whether the use of visual elements and their properties vary according to the company background as represented by the industry and sector. Correspondence analysis is a useful exploratory technique for categorical data which is used to convert frequency tables into graphical displays in which rows and columns are portrayed as points (Kaynak & Kucukemiroglu, 2001).

4. Findings

4.1 Background of the Sampled Corporate Brands

Table 2 shows that a proportional number of corporate brands originate from advertisements appearing in all the years except for 2009. Three types of advertisements including commercial, job vacancies and public notice were identified, and commercial advertisements are the mostly featured in this study at 44%. Of the 354 corporate brands that were surveyed, a majority of 68% are from the private sector, which is followed by parastatals (22%). Corporate brands of companies in the Insurance and Finance industry are highly notable in the sample at 19%, followed by Wholesale and Retail as well as Transport, Technology, Media and Communication at 13% each.

Table 2. Background of the Sampled Corporate Brands (n = 354)

	Frequency	Percent
Date of Publication		
2005	75	21
2008	68	19
2009	27	8
2010	54	15
2011	63	18
2012	67	19
Type of Advertisement		
Commercial	154	44
Job Vacancies	90	25
Public Notice	110	31
Sector		
Government	21	6
Parastatal	79	22
Private	242	68
Non-Governmental	12	3
Industry		
Manufacturing	12	3
Wholesale & Retail Trade	47	13
Construction	12	3
Mining	23	7
Water & Electricity	7	2
Health & Social Work	38	11
Education	30	9
Real Estate & Housing	10	3
Public Administration	44	12
Transport, Media, Technology & Communication	47	13
Tourism, Hotels & Restaurants	18	5
Insurance & Finance	66	19

*4.2 Commonly Used Visual Elements of Corporate Brands in Botswana*

The results in Table 3 indicate that the use of a combination of visual elements is very common in Botswana. In particular, name and colour appear in all the sampled corporate brands. Additionally, a

combination of name, colour, logo and tagline (45%) or name colour and logo (40%) are mostly utilised in the sampled corporate brands. However, it is rare for companies to use a combination of name, colour and tagline without the logo (5%). Logos are depicted in 85% (n = 300) of the corporate brands compared to only 50% of taglines (n = 177).

Table 3. Commonly Used Corporate Brands' Visual Elements

	Frequency	Percent
Name, Colour, & Tagline	17	5
Name & Colour	37	11
Name, Colour & Logo	140	40
Name, Colour, Logo &Tagline	160	45
Total	354	100

A further examination based on Correspondence analysis depicted that the use of visual elements does not vary according to sector (X^2 = 22.34; p = .98, df = 21) and industry (X^2 = 53.19; p =.98; df = 77). The various sectors and industry use different combinations of name, colour, logo and taglines in the same extent. The sector and industry contributed relatively low percentages of total variance explained of 6.3% and 15% respectively. Thus, it was not necessary to interpret the graphical display representing the structure of the data presented in Figure 1.

Row and Column Points

Symmetrical Normalization
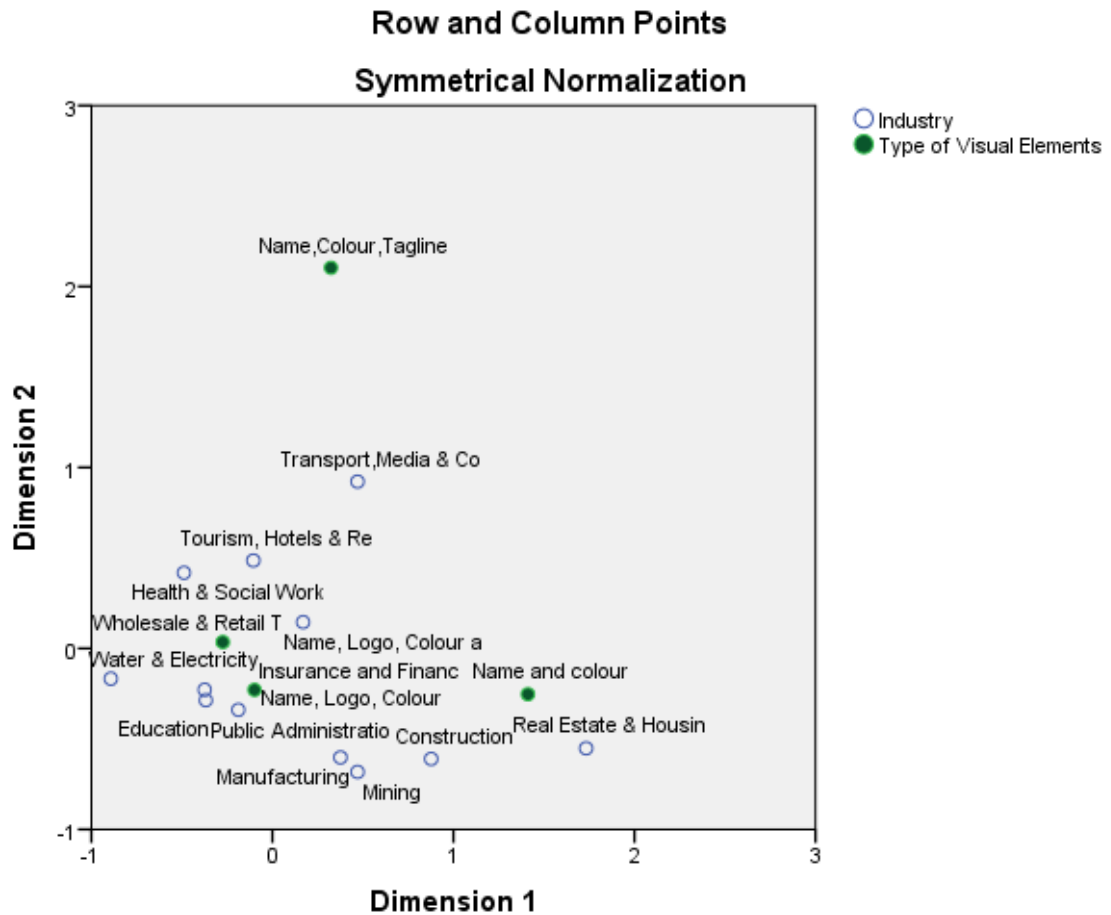
Figure 1. Industry and Type of Visual Elements

4.3 Specific Properties of the Key Visual Elements Used in Corporate Brands in Botswana

Results focussing on the properties of visual elements mostly used in corporate brands are presented in Table 4. An examination of the table shows that companies in Botswana utilize a full name, acronym or a combination and the use of a full name is most prominent (71%). Most corporate names represented the industry in which the firm operates. Numerous types of colours are also employed by companies in Botswana namely; blue (34%), black (20%), red (15%) and green (11%). A further analysis of the qualitative data reveals that companies rarely use a single colour. For instance, of the 120 that use different shades of blue 36% (n =43) apply it as the only colour. The remaining 64% (n = 77) use blue in combination with black, white and red. Similarly, of the 69 that use black 27% (n = 21) adopt it as the sole colour. The remaining 69% (n= 48) use black in combination with white and red. Additionally, the colour red is often combined with yellow, white and green while green is used together with white and yellow.

The design graphical representation of logos emerged as the most commonly used (76%) and about 34% are circular in shape. A majority of the logos (56%) are also symbolic. The qualitative data

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analyses identified four key themes representing what the logos symbolize including a description of (1) products, (2) target markets, (3) company background and (4) personality of the brand. It was further noted that symbolic logos specifying the industry and the personality of the brand are numerous while those signifying products and markets were relatively few. However, abstract logos (44%) with no clear cut meaning are very common in Botswana.

Table 4. Specific Properties of Corporate Brands' Visual Elements

Name (n = 354)	Frequency	Percent
Acronym	35	10
Full Name	251	71
Acronym & Full name	68	19
Predominant Colour (n = 354)		
Black	69	20
Blue	120	34
Purple	15	4
Brown	20	6
Red	52	15
Green	40	11
Gold	5	1
Orange	8	2
Yellow	10	3
White	8	2
Grey	7	2
Type of Logo (n = 354)		
Picture	20	6
Design	271	77
Symbol	9	3
No Logo	54	15
Type of Shape (n = 300)		
Triangle	19	5
Tower	11	4
Rectangle	44	15
Square	54	18
Pillars	14	5
Circle	103	34
Cross	3	1

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Oval	9	3
Diamond	8	3
Picture	20	6
Design not interpretable	16	5
Type of Logo based on Meaning (n =300)		
Symbolic	168	56
Abstract	132	44

Additional insights from correspondence analysis reveal that the types of name used differ according to sector (X^2 = 65.93; p = .002; df = 6) and industry (X^2 = 40.90; p = .008; df = 22). The sector and industry explain 12% and 19% of the total variance in the use of types of name respectively. As shown in Figure 2, full names are commonly adopted by companies in Tourism, Hotels and Restaurants, Mining, Wholesale and Retail and Transport, Media and Communication. A combination of full name and acronym is used mostly by those in Education while Water and Electricity utilise acronyms. However, those in the Health and Social Work, Insurance and Finance, Public administration, Manufacturing, Construction do not appear to conform to any particular type of name. Moreover, the private sector employs full names while a combination of acronym and full name is usually applied by parastatal institutions. However, non-governmental and governmental organizations are not linked to a particular type of name and the use of acronym is not unique for any particular sector.

Row and Column Points

Symmetrical Normalization
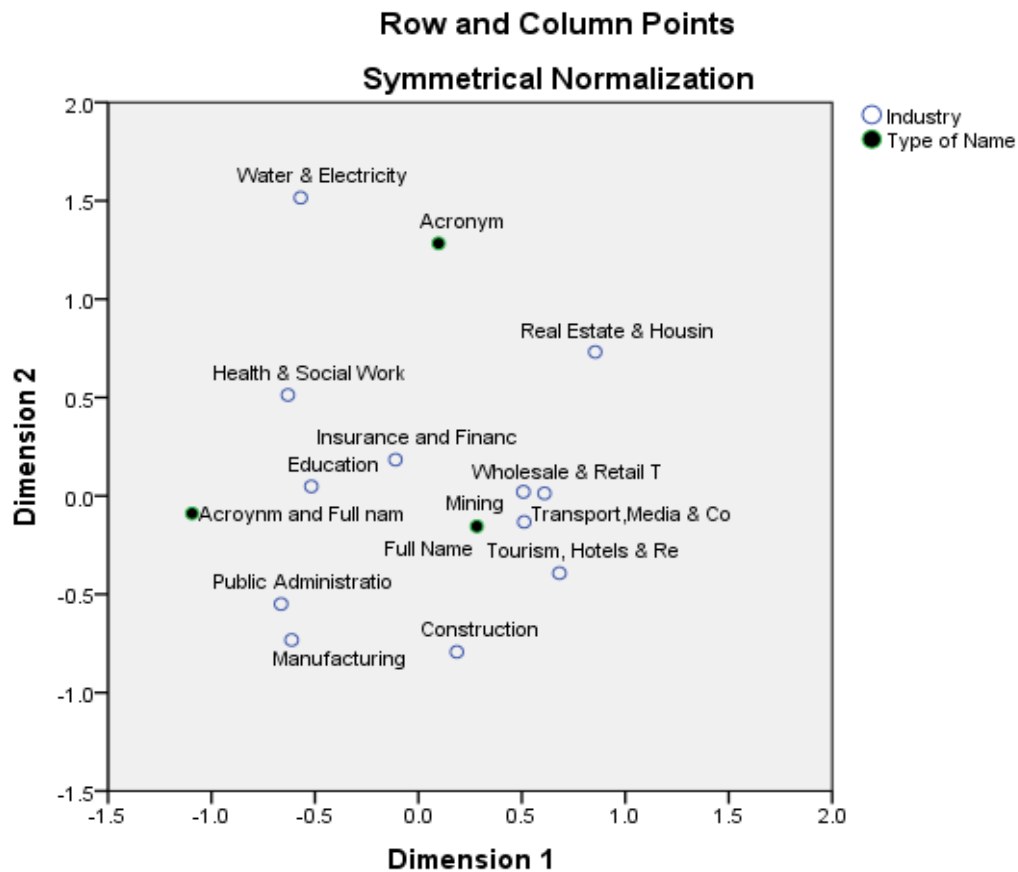
Figure 2. Name and Industry

Type of colour also varies significantly according to the industry ($X^2 = 160.40$; p = .001; df = 110), but does not differ significantly by sector ($X^2 = 37.03$; p = .18; df = 9). The industry explains 47% of the variation in the type of colour. According to Figure 3, companies in Manufacturing as well as Insurance and Finance tend to utilize either grey or blue, orange is widely used by those in Health and Social work, white is common for those in Education and Real estate and Housing while yellow is mostly employed by Wholesale and Retail. Tourism, Hotels and Restaurants tend to use brown and Mining and Construction are more likely to use black.

Row and Column Points

Symmetrical Normalization
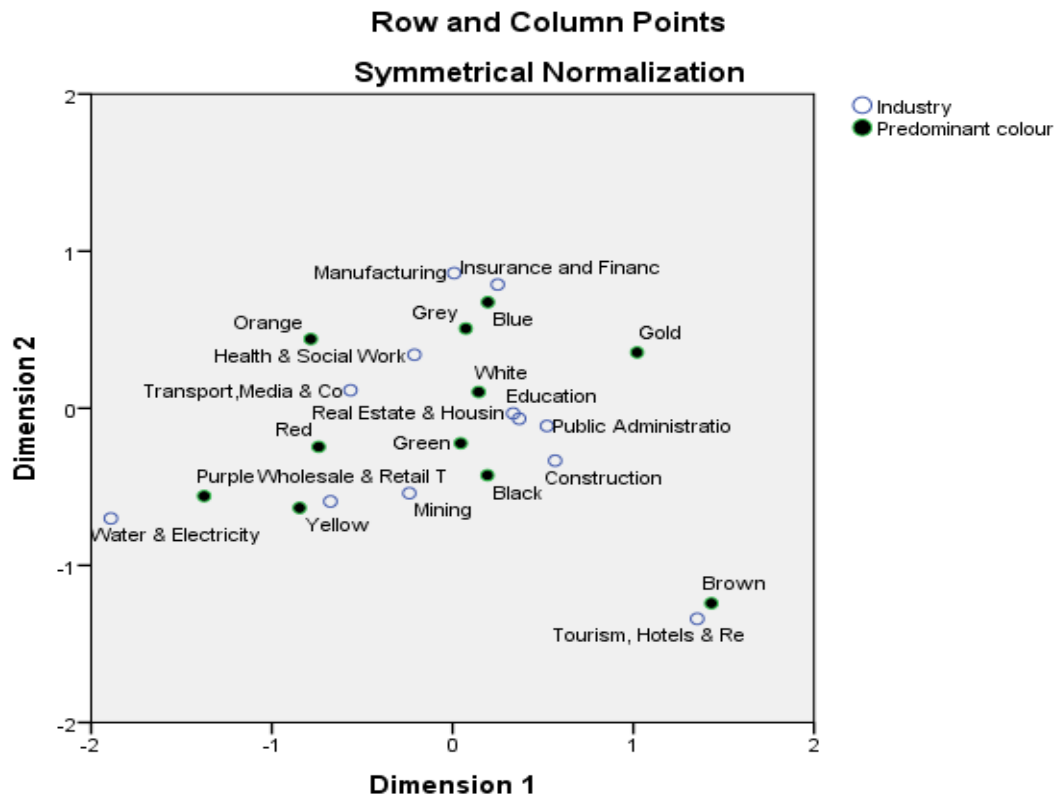
Figure 3. Industry and Colour

Industry (X^2= 57.59; p = .005; df = 33) and sector (X^2= 22.86; p = .007; df = 9) also explain differences in type of logo. The sector only explains 6% of the variation while industry explains 16%. The graphical display of the data in Figure 4 depict that companies in Manufacturing tend to utilise symbols, the Tourism, Hotels and Restaurants industry uses pictures, while numerous industries such as Insurance and Finance, Wholesale and Retail, Health and Social work, Education, Water and Electricity, Public administration and mining employ designs. However, Construction and Transport, Media and Communication industries do not appear to use a particular graphical representation. Results relating to the sector indicate that government and non-governmental institutions tend to use pictures, while the private and parastatal institutions use designs. Further analysis reflects that the diamond shaped logos are applied in the Mining, cross shaped logos and pillars are employed by the Health and Social work while towers and pictures are common in Real estate and Housing as well as Tourism, Hotels and Restaurants. Companies in Manufacturing tend to use ovals while Water and Electricity and Construction industries use rectangular shapes. The type of logo based on meaning varies significantly by industry (X^2= 46.04, p = .002, df = 22) and sector (X^2= 35.51, p = .001, df = 6). The industry and sector explain 13% and 10% of the total variances respectively. Abstract logos are more common in Education as well as Insurance and Finance while Health and Social work, Manufacturing as well as Public administration mostly exploit symbolic logos. Additional results show that abstract logos are

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prominent for private and parastatals while non-governmental and governmental institutions tend to use symbolic logos.
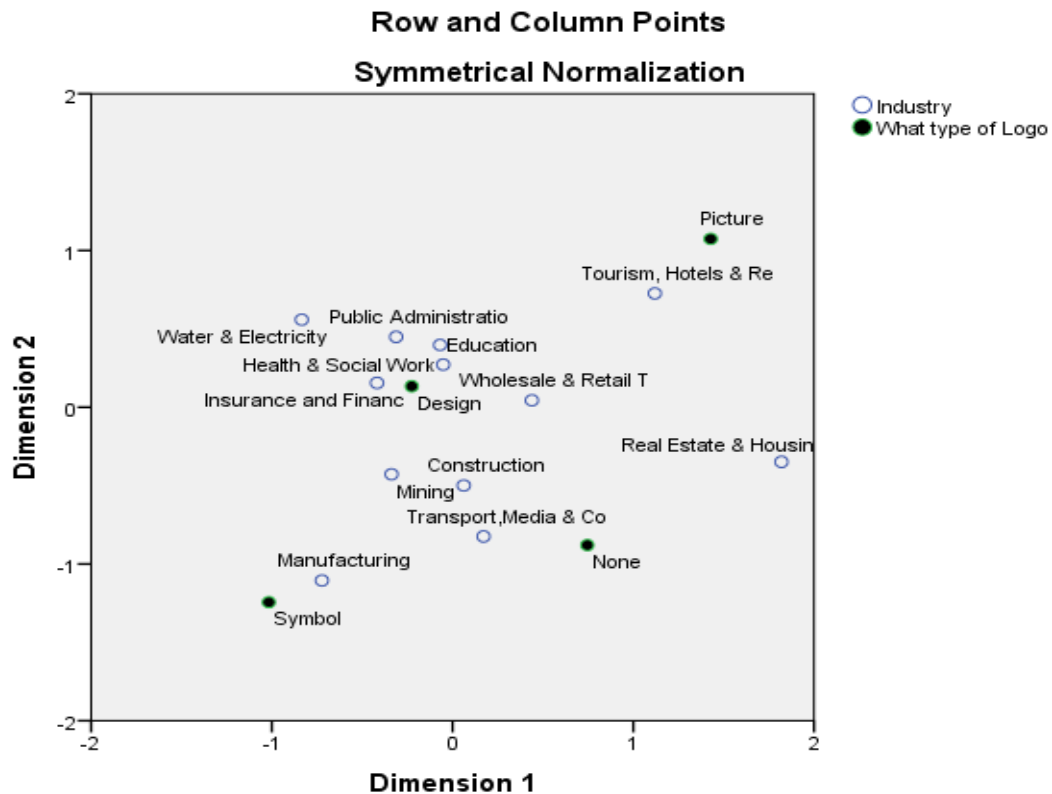

Figure 4. Industry and Logo

An in-depth qualitative analysis of the taglines identified five themes such as (1) brand personality, (2) competitive orientation, (3) customer orientation (4) product orientation and (5) industry orientation. A remarkable proportion of taglines communicated various dimensions of the brand personality. As shown in Figure 5, four dimensions of brand personality traits emerged from the data including sincerity, competence, excitement and ruggedness. Sincerity is described by taglines emphasising unity, peace, cooperation security, safety, trust, and caring. Competence is captured in taglines communicating reliability, durability, consistency, hard work, development, diversification, growth, wealth, prosperity, and success. Excitement is associated with taglines highlighting innovation, change, creativity, pride, versatility, and a new beginning. Taglines giving emphasis to strength, determination, power are linked to ruggedness. Taglines communicating competence are used commonly in corporate brands in Botswana. This is followed by a proportional use of excitement and sincerity. Additionally, a relatively sizeable proportion of taglines identified the industry that the companies are in such as education, agriculture, energy, humanity, spirituality, recreation, health, entrepreneurship, entertainment, defence, justice.

The remaining taglines on customer orientation emphasize the delivery of customer value and customer

service as well as the maximization of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customer value is stressed by taglines highlighting lower prices relative to competitors and more benefits to be derived relative to costs to be incurred. Overall customer service, customer satisfaction and loyalty are commonly used to differentiate companies in the taglines. Furthermore, a few taglines communicating a competitive orientation adopt either market leader or follower positions. Taglines communicating leadership differentiated the company as number one, as occupying a clearly mapped out territory or clearly as leaders while followers expressed that they try harder. Similarly, an insignificant proportion of taglines alluded to a product orientation by focussing on product quality, range, and assortment.
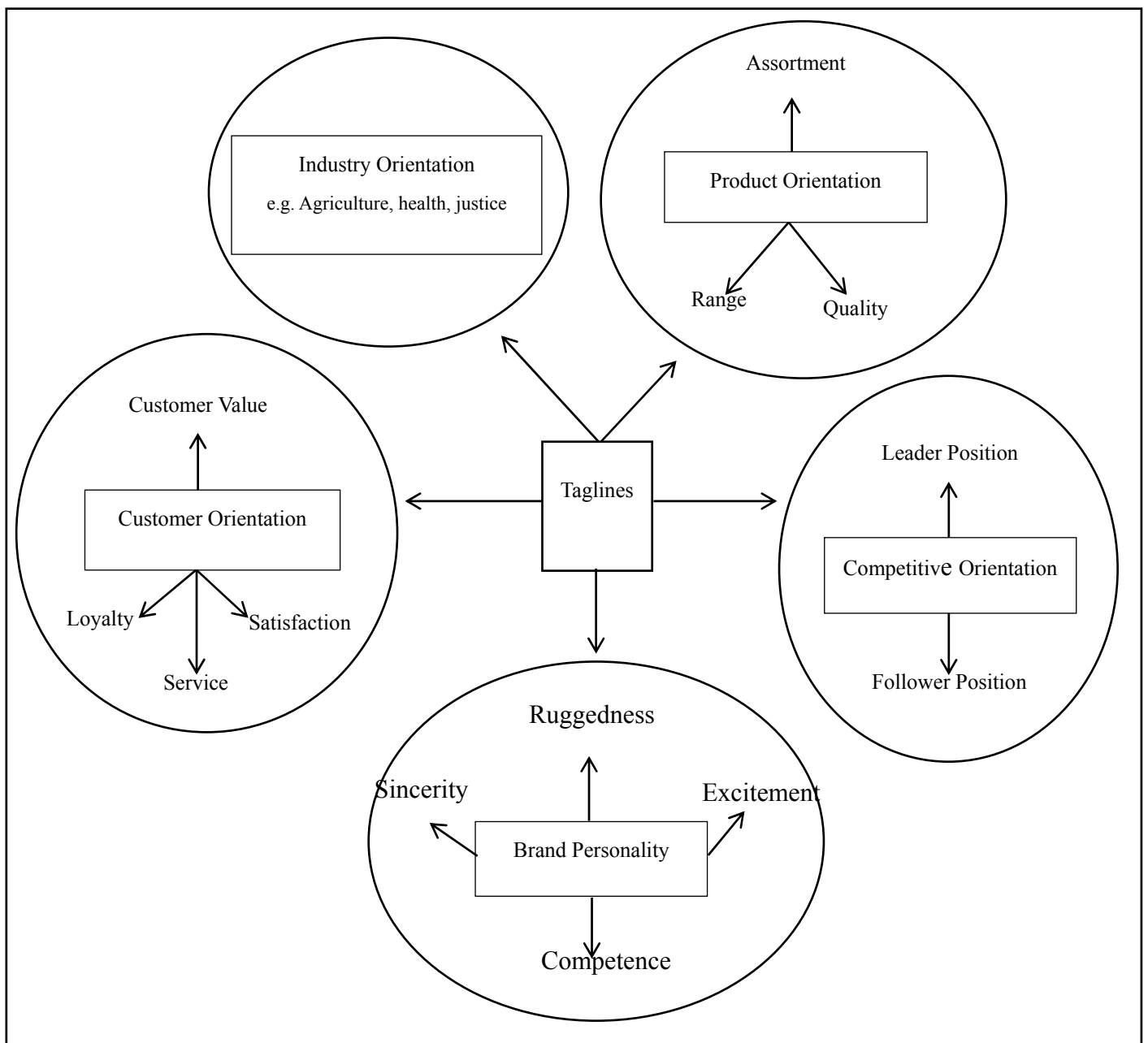
Figure 5. Taglines and Key Themes

The study indicates that a combination of name, colour, logo and taglines are very visible in most of the corporate brands analysed. This corresponds to previous studies that have demonstrated that logo, name, colour and tagline are the mostly used visual elements (Farhana, 2012; Walsh, Winterich, & Mittal, 2010; Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). The results also showed that most companies in Botswana make use of full name projecting their industry more than acronyms. This is not surprising because according to Francis, Lam and Walls (2002), most firms use full names emphasising either one or two words. In addition, in Africa, names have meaning, represent or denote the character of the bearer (Guma, 2001). Findings signify that blue and black are the mostly used colours by organizations in Botswana which are also the national colours. The use of these colours denotes the central importance of adopting the national culture in corporate branding as noted by Balmer (2008). These national colours are used by industries that seem to target the government as the major customer such as construction, mining, manufacturing and insurance and finance. This is in line with the view expressed by Holt (2003) who argued that in every country brand symbols are influenced by socio-cultural activities. The logos adopted by the organisations were symbolic in nature stressing the brand personality traits of sincerity and competence. However, abstract logos are still significantly utilized by organizations in Botswana. This shows that as in previous studies (Farhana, 2012; Keller, 2008), in Botswana different types of logos are employed. However we also noted that there is a divergence, when looking at the government corporation which seemed to be less adoptive of any particular type of logos. The possible explanation could be that public administration is diverse comprising multiple ministries, agencies and departments. Taglines are used to identify the uniqueness of the organisation as well as communicate the organisational business. However, about half of the sampled corporate brands do not use taglines. Those that use taglines stressed the personality traits of competence and sincerity. From the positive view point, the emphasis on competence and sincerity may mean that organizations will be capable of delivering as they promise. Nevertheless, as most organisations do not use taglines and those that do apply similar themes which means the ability to differentiate the company from competitors is minimized. We also noted some inconsistencies with some companies changing taglines and logos over the years. This has a potential to negate gains as consistency is one of the requirement for achieving brand image (van Riel & van den Ban, 2001). On the other hand, corporations are forced to change some visual elements in order to update their image to keep abreast with the ever changing marketing environment (Makgosa and Molefhi, 2012).

Our study also offers some recommendation for the management of corporate brands. We noted that most of the organisations in Botswana used a combination of all the visual elements of corporate brands to facilitate communication, identification and differentiation. This is a positive step in the right direction of deriving the significant benefits of corporate brand identity. There is also a significant use of black or blue, which are also national colours; this reflects that brand managers take advantage of national culture when deciding on visual elements. However, this could also highlight the challenges that local brand managers may face especially when they intend to expand globally. Considering that

there is significant proportion of organizations that use abstract logos, it is important for local brand managers to realize that the task of making abstract logos to be easily noticeable in the market is not always achievable. More so that this requires a significant amount of financial resources for promotion and most organizations in developing countries do not have them. Finally, the minimal use of taglines is adversely affecting the ability of local brand managers to communicate their brand image as well as differentiate themselves from competitors. In particular, by not incorporating taglines in their corporate brands, clearly local brand managers need to be aware that they forgo the opportunity to communicate their distinctive image. Thus, our recommendation is that firms need to make use of taglines for effective positioning, which can save them excessive advertisements costs.

This study has some limitations that serve as useful avenues for future research. For instance, while content analysis is useful for collecting qualitative and quantitative data, the quality of the data collection has some degree of subjectivity and does not address the 'why' questions. Data collection depends on the quality of the text being analysed and reliable interpretation by researchers. Thus, in future in order to understand why certain visual elements for instance full names, blue or black colours, symbolic logos and taglines specifying the industry and the personality of the brand are mostly used a survey research design with brand managers will be employed. It would have been also interesting to assess whether there is some specific trends occurring in the use of visual elements over years. Although the original plan was to collect samples of corporate brands from advertisements published between 2005 and 2012; copies of the targeted newspaper between 2006 and 2007 were unavailable from the University library. Further research could also assess a comprehensive list of corporate visual identities rather than just focusing on names, colour logos, and taglines which will transcend into an investigation of consumer attitudes with regard to corporate brands in Botswana. Further research is also needed in assessing the degree and consequences of corporate rebranding in Botswana.

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