

# How Brand Personality Excitement Affects Customer Purchase Decision of Smartphone in Nairobi, Kenya

John N. Mutinda

Ph.D Student, School of Business  
Kenyatta University Kenya.

Hannah Bula

Ph.D Lecturer, School of Business  
Kenyatta University Kenya

Peter P. Wambua

Ph.D. Lecturer, School of Business  
Kenyatta University Kenya

**Abstract:- Effective product differentiation technique is a critical aspect in any business organization, in recent past, marketers have introduced intangible differentiation strategies like brand personality excitement which is a component of famous brand personality differentiation strategy. The aim of the study was to find out whether brand personality excitement affects customer purchase decision of Smartphone in Kenya. The study used both explanatory and descriptive research design. Master students from three selected public university campuses in Nairobi CBD, Kenya were used as target population. The three public university campuses were selected using purposive sampling, while master students from the three universities Campuses were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data which was used in the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data, while content analysis technique was used to analyze qualitative data. The findings of the study indicated that brand personality excitement have a positive and statistically significant effects on customer purchase decision of Smartphone, and this implied customer purchase decision of Smartphone can be affected by brand personality excitement dimension. The study recommended the usage of brand personality excitement as a technique of differentiating Smartphone and other related products. The study suggests that future researchers to do research on the effects of other brand personality variables on Smartphone and other related products.**

**Keywords:- Brand personality excitement; customer purchase decision; Smartphone.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Due to business dynamics and steep competition, most businesses are struggling to find the best methods of differentiating their products and services because the existing generic differentiation methods of prices and quality are not effective (Marin & Ruiz, 2007). Nowadays many businesses develop not only undifferentiated products but with the same quality and characteristics hence making the work of product differentiation a nightmare (van, Jacobs & Verlegh, 2006). Consumers are more informed about products quality, features and prices, hence marketers have no choice but to come up with unique technique for differentiating their products and service. In recent past, many organizations have identified

brand personality excitement as a modern intangible differentiation tool that can help them gain competitive advantage (Aaker, 1999; Freling & Forbes, 2005).

### A. Brand Personality Excitement

Brand personality excitement is marketing product differentiating techniques which associates products with human personality characteristics of extraversion or social aspects of human beings. Aaker (1997) measured brand personality excitement using variables of uniqueness, coolness, spirited, independent, young or fashionable. Customers especially youth feel good and excited especially if the products they purchase are associated with features coolness, young or fashionable. Brand personality excitement creates a unique image over organization's products which stimulate customer's buying interest and enhance their trust and loyalty (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Multinational companies use brand personality excitement to differentiate their products hence increasing their market share.

### B. Customer Purchase Decision

Customer purchase decision is a customer's thoughtful and evaluation process which leads to choosing or rejecting a certain product or service (Warsaw & Davis, 1985). When buying shopping or expensive products it is assumed that customers goes through a five-stage purchase decision-making process, however this is different when buying convenience or basic products since some of this steps are skipped, for example, someone who is buying a basic commodity as food would skip stages of information search and evaluation since the product is a basic necessity and less expensive, therefore decision making is faster as opposed to expensive shopping products which require much planning and consultation. (Jobber & David, 2001).

The essence of studying consumer behaviour is to try to understand factors or forces that influence customers' purchasing behaviour and then capitalize on them to stimulate the customer's buying decision. Consumer buying behaviour study is instrumental since it helps the organization not only to understand what customers' intends to purchase, but also helps to understand why they purchase that product and not the other (Kumar & Shah, 2004).

### C. Smartphone

Smartphone have become a necessity for many people throughout the world, it has greatly improved human communication not only in local small business but also global

multinational business. Smartphone communication have not only enhanced efficiency in doing business but minimized face to face interactions with stakeholders. The greatest challenge in the Smartphone market is how to distinguish different types of Smartphone from different manufacturers, many business organizations are working hard to find a new method of differentiating Smartphone since the existing traditional differentiation method of price and quality are no longer relevant in today's competitive business environment. Kenya dominates a market of Smartphone in Sub-Saharan Africa, based on the statistics, Kenya monthly sales of Smartphone is hundreds thousands (100,000) Smartphone. Smartphone sales lead the mobile phone sales in Kenya with 67%. The effective distribution methods and fair price network is associated to this remarkable trend. (Gicheru, 2014).

#### *D. Statement of the Problem*

Brand personality excitement influence on customers purchase decision is not fully defined especially in Smartphone industry in Kenya (Wahome & Gathungu, 2013). Local business organizations in Kenya have not utilized recent identified intangible differentiation strategy of brand personality excitement, because there is no local existing study which has stipulated the importance of this technique. The study conducted by Freling and Forbes (2005) reviewed that organization's product and services can be differentiated by usage of brand personality excitement. Both local and international research conducted in Kenya and other developed countries did not adequately explain whether brand personality excitement affects customer purchase decision of Smartphone (Mutinda 2011; Muya 2011; Bouhleb, zoughi, Hadiji, & Slimane 2011; Rubiyanti & Iqbal 2014). The local study conducted by Mutinda (2011) and Muya (2011) on brand personality cannot be generalized since they were case studies limited to one institution hence, there were methodological gap which this study sought to address.

#### *E. Study Objectives*

To establish the effects of brand personality excitement on customer purchase decision of Smartphone in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### *F. Hypotheses of the study*

H<sub>01</sub>: Brand personality excitement has no significant influence on customer purchase decision of Smartphone by in Nairobi, Kenya.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In endeavour to unearth whether brand personality affects consumers' brand trust and preferences of four products (Apple, Nike, Ikea and Mercedes Benz), Anja and Daniel (2011) conducted study on the effects on Brand personality on brand trust and Preferences. Convenient sampling was used to select 317 respondents from the two countries. The findings of the study revealed that brand trust could be explained properly by the dimension of sincerity and

competence while preference aspect could be explained perfectly by the dimension of excitement. The overall findings of the study showed that there is a relationship between brand personality variables and product trust, preference and identification. The conclusion of the study was consumers' preference and trust towards a certain brand could be affected by brand personality variables.

In attempt to ascertain whether brand personality affects consumer buying behaviour of consumers Products, Liang and Lee (2010) carried a study on Brand-personality of three categories of drinks products; Fizzy drink, Mineral water and Energy drink. The target population of the research was 393 university students from Australia. The research findings revealed that the customers' buying behaviour of the three brands could be influenced by brand personality, however, fizzy drink and energy drink was influenced more by brand personality excitement dimension while mineral water was influenced by brand personality sincerity dimension. The overall results showed that brand personality sincerity plays a critical role in terms of differentiating the three products. In terms of ranking based on sincerity of the three products, mineral water drinks were ranked first followed by Fizzy drinks and Energy drinks was ranked third. The respondents perceived mineral water drinks to be sophisticated than other two categories of drinks. They also stated that brand personality sincerity is only dimension which can be used to distinguish mineral water drinks. In terms of competence, fizzy drinks were ranked highly, followed by mineral water drinks, Energy drinks were ranked third. In conclusion, brand personality variables could be identifies with the three product categories.

In efforts to establish whether Brand Personality can influence Products with different involvement, Plavini (2011) carried a research study on effects of Brand Personality on Products with different involvement levels. The research findings revealed that brand personality aspect plays a fundamental role in terms of influencing product preference and eventual acquisition of the preferred product. Brand personality dimension plays a critical role in terms of influencing both high and low involvement products, however the high involvement products relate highly with brand personality than the one of low involvement. The research concluded that, brand personality aspect can be enhanced by unwavering support of brand especially if the product is of high involvement and minimal support for low involvement products.

In pursuit to ascertain the relationship between brand personality and customer personality, Mulyanegara and Tsarenko (2009), conducted a research to find out whether there is a relationship between brand personality and customer personality of fashion products. The research findings revealed a positive relationship between brand personality variables and customer personality of fashion products. The results also showed that male and female customers express brand personality in a different ways. In endeavor to establish

whether brand personality of retail products are different, Das (2014) carried a research to determine whether brand personality of retail is different for various retail brands and also establish whether male and female shoppers have different perception of retail brand personality. The findings of the study showed that retail brands have different brand personality. The study also revealed that male and female customers have different perception toward retail brand personality.

**III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

*A. Design of the Study*

To establish the effects of brand personality excitement on the customer purchase decision of Smartphone, the study used both descriptive and explanatory research design to explain how customer purchase decision of Smartphone is influenced by brand personality excitement. Based on argument of Sekaran and Bougie (2009) that there is no best research design, hence to achieve the best results as recommended by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), the study utilized the two research designs. Through the usage of descriptive research design, the researcher could handle both qualitative and quantitative data (Bickman & Rog, 1998).

*B. Empirical Model*

Logistic regression model was adopted for the study because the criterion variable was dichotomous. The Logistic regression is appropriate because is not subjected to the weaknesses of linear probability models (Liou, 2008). The following model was used to explain the relation between the predictor and criterion.

$$\text{Logit} \{ \ln (P_i / (1 - P_i)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{EXC} + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \}$$

Where

EXC=Excitement

ε= Error Term.

*C. Target Population*

The target population was university Masters Students from the three selected public university campuses in Nairobi Central Business District (CBD), Kenya.

*D. Sampling Design*

Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the sample size. The sample size was determined by use of Yamane (1967) formula. The formula is  $n = N / 1 + N (e)^2$ .

*E. Data Collection Instrument*

Semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary which was used in the study. Semi-structured questionnaire facilitated the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

**IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The results of descriptive statistics showed that brand personality sincerity aspect had an aggregate mean of 4.09 and standard deviation of 0.36, this implied that brand personality excitement is cable of influencing customer purchase decision of Smartphone.

*Logistic Regression Analysis Results*

The research sought to determine how customer purchase decision of Smartphone can be influenced by brand personality excitement aspect.

Variable	β	Wald's X <sup>2</sup>	Odd Ratio Exp (B)	P-Value
Excitement	1.123	7.489	3.073	0.006
Constant	-18.221	37.080	0.000	0.000

Table 1. Results of Logistic Regression Analysis. Source: Survey data (2016)

The results in Table 1 show that (β=1.123, Exp (B). =3.073 and P < 0.05). Based on this results, the null hypothesis was rejected at 95% confidence level since predictor variable (brand personality excitement) had a significance value of 0.006 which is less than 0.05 and odd ratio (exp (B) value of more than 1 (Kinnear and Gray, 2002). This implied that customer purchase decision of Smartphone can be influenced by brand personality excitement.

**V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

*A. Conclusions*

Brand personality excitements have a positive and significant influence on customer purchase decision of Smartphone, therefore the researcher concluded that customers' purchase decision of Smartphone can be influenced by brand personality excitement dimension.

*B. Recommendations*

Smartphone management needs to include brand personality excitement techniques in their marketing differentiation endeavor. In their planning, the management needs to develop clear rules and guidelines which will allow their organizations utilize this new differentiation strategy. The management needs also to fully support this initiative and employ experts to implement this new idea.

*C. Areas for Further Research*

Future researchers ought to validate these findings by conducting a longitudinal survey which is more appropriate when the time factor is not a constraint. The context of this study was shopping product, future researchers need to study the effects of brand personality excitement on other products especially convenient products.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Aaker, Jennifer L. (1997), "Dimensions of Brand Personality", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347-56.
- [2]. Aaker, J. L. (1999). *The Malleable Self: The Role of Self-Expression in Persuasion*. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(1), 43-57.
- [3]. Aaker, D. A. & Joachimsthaler, E. (2000). *Brand Leadership*. The Free Press.
- [4]. Anja, G., Gil and Daniel H., (2011) *Brand Personality: Impact on Brand Trust and Consumer Preferences; A comparative study of Germany and Sweden* (Unpublished Master Thesis)
- [5]. Bickman, L., & Rog, D. (Eds.). (1998). *Handbook of applied social research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- [6]. Bouhleh, O., Mzoughi, N., Hadiji, D., Slimane, I.B. (2011). *Brand Personality's Influence on the Purchase Intention: A Mobile Marketing Case*. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(9), 210-227.
- [7]. Das, G. (2014). *Does brand personality vary across retail brands and gender? An empirical check*. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, (ahead-of-print), 1-14.
- [8]. Freling, T.H. & Forbes, L. (2005). *An empirical analysis of the brand personality effect*. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 14(7), 404-413.
- [9]. Gicheru, M. (2014). *67% Of Mobile Phones Sold in Kenya are Smartphone*. *Africa's Technology News Leader*, April 10, 2014.
- [10]. Jobber & David (2001). *Principles and Practice of Marketing*. McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, England.
- [11]. Kinnear, P., & Gray, D. (2002). *SPSS for windows made simple*. Psychology Press, Sussex.
- [12]. Kumar, V. and D. Shah (2004), 'Building and sustaining profitable customer loyalty in the 21st century'. *Journal of Retailing* 80, 317–330.
- [13]. Liang, J., & Lee, W., (2010). *The brand-personality of three categories of drinks in Australia; Marketing Insights*, School of Marketing Working Paper Series: no. 2010008, Curtin University of Technology, School of Marketing.
- [14]. Louis, D., & Lombart, C. (2010). *Impact of brand personality on three major relational consequences (trust, attachment, and commitment to the brand)*. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 19(2), 114-130.
- [15]. Marin, L. and Ruiz, S. (2007). *I need you too! Corporate identity attractiveness for consumers and the role of social responsibility*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 71, 245-60.
- [16]. Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: African Centre for Technology Studies.
- [17]. Mulyanegara, R. C. and Tsarenko, Y. (2009). *Predicting brand preferences: an examination of the predictive power of consumer personality and values in the Australian fashion market*, *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 13(3), 358-371.
- [18]. Mutinda, J. K. (2011). *Brand personality influence on brand choice: the case of televisions in University of Nairobi*. Unpublished MBA Thesis 2011.
- [19]. Muya, S., M., (2011). *Influence of brand personality on Glaxosmithkline Products in Nairobi: the case of Aquafresh Toothpaste*. Unpublished MBA from University of Nairobi. November 2011.
- [20]. Plavini P., (2011). *How Brand Personality affects Products with different Involvement Levels*, *European Journal of Business and Management*, 3(2), 104-107.
- [21]. Rubiyanti N., & Iqbal, N., (2014). *Brand Personality Influence toward buying intention – the case of converse from students perception in Bandung*. *International Conference on Emerging Trends in Academic Research*, November 25- 26.
- [22]. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*, 5th ed. Harlow FT Prentice Hall Thornhill.
- [23]. Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2009). *Research methods for business*, 5th edition, Wiley publication.
- [24]. Van Rekom, J., Jacobs, G., & Verlegh, P. W. J. (2006). *Measuring and managing the essence of a brand personality*. *Marketing Letters*, 17(3), 181–192.
- [25]. Wahome E., W., & Gathungu J., J., W., (2013). *Brand Personality and the evolution of destination during the colonial period in Kenya*. *Thought and Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya New Series*, 5(1), 91-119.
- [26]. Warshaw, P. R., & Davis, F. D. (1985). *Disentangling behavioural intentions and behavioural expectations*. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 21, 213–228.
- [27]. Yamane, Taro. (1967). *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis*, 2nd Edition, New York: Harper and Row.