

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND PERSONALITY,
BRAND ATTITUDE AND CUSTOMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION
TOWARDS FACIAL SKINCARE PRODUCTS: IN THE CASE OF
KOTA KINABALU, SABAH.**

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UMS

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2012**

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JUDUL: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND PERSONALITY, BRAND ATTITUDE AND CUSTOMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS FACIAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS: IN THE CASE OF KOTA KINABALU, SABAH.

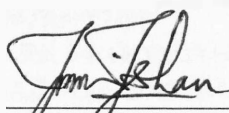
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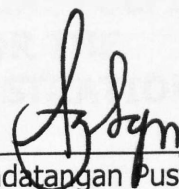
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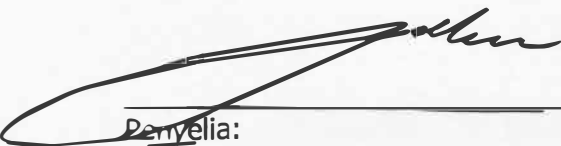
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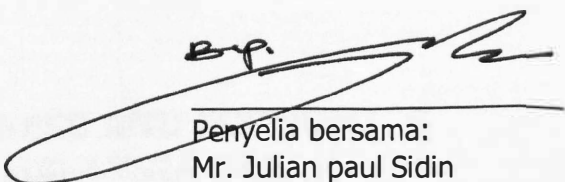
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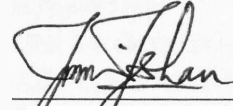


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I hereby declare that this dissertation is based on my original work except for citations and quotations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that no part of this dissertation has been previously or concurrently submitted for a degree at this or any other university.



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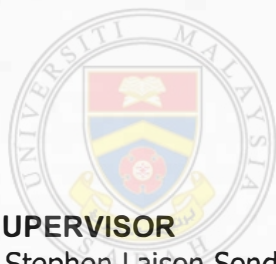


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A wise man once told me *"If you have faith, you have hope, and when you have hope you always see a way. When you see a way, you never give up. Only you, yourself can determine your own direction, and if you trust your own compass, you will always remain on your path."* I therefore would like to express my utmost gratitude to the following important people for their encouragements and supports throughout my MBA study in UMS for they have given me faith, hope and trust for me to believe in my own 'compass'. They are my most important source of motivation in completing this study and without them, I could not have completed my Master Degree and this dissertation would not have been completed.

First and foremost, I thank to God for His blessings of knowledge that enables me to complete my dissertation, for answering my prayers and giving me the strength to hold on despite my constitution wanting to give up and admit defeat, thank you so much Dear Lord. My loving family especially my parents for their relentless support, I am indeed blessed to have parents like you whom were always willing to understand and assist me in every single way.

I would also like to convey my gratitude to both of my supervisors Dr. Stephen Sondoh Jr. @ Jude and Mr. Julian Paul Sidin of School of Business and Economics, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, for their support and patience as well as their splendid supervision to ensure my dissertation is complete. They were abundantly helpful and offered invaluable assistance with their knowledge and expertise. I sincerely appreciate their unconditional support. Dr. Stephen Sondoh Jr. @ Jude, for his unselfish and unfailing support as my dissertation advisor, also for his patience and constant encouragement for me to complete this dissertation. Mr. Julian Paul Sidin, whose sincerity and encouragement I will never forget, you have been my inspiration as I hurdle all the obstacles in the completion of this dissertation.

Having to divide my precious time for family and work, I have had tough times pursuing my MBA study. However, the experience gained throughout completing my MBA has been very valuable. For me, this dissertation is not merely as a requirement to complete my MBA but I had hoped that this dissertation would be considered as one of the sources of reference one can refer to for the improvements of purchase intentions through brand personality. Last but not least, to all my special friends who in one way or another assist me during the progress of my dissertation, thank you very much dear friends.

ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND PERSONALITY, BRAND ATTITUDE AND CUSTOMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS FACIAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS: IN THE CASE OF KOTA KINABALU, SABAH.

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between brand personality, brand attitude and purchase intention towards facial skin care products in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Brand Personality is the independent variable, brand attitude acts as the mediator and purchase intention is the dependent variable. This study adapted Aaker's (1997) brand personality dimension which consist of 1) Sincerity, 2) Excitement, 3) Competence, 4) Sophistication and 5) Ruggedness. Data were collected from 280 female respondents in prominent spots such as shopping mall and Starbucks around Kota Kinabalu area who used and purchased facial skin care products and were 18 years old and above. SPSS 19 was used to analyze 280 respondents' data and factor analysis on brand personality produced four factors: 1) Excitement, 2) Competence, 3) Sophistication and 4) Ruggedness. The dimension sincerity was removed from Aaker's (1997) original brand personality dimension. Multiple linear regression results implied that there are significant relationships between brand personality, brand attitude and purchase intention. Brand attitude as the mediator revealed that there is significant mediation effect between the relationship of brand personality and purchase intention. Brand attitude has full mediation effect on the relationship between competence and purchase intention while on the relationships between ruggedness and purchase intention, brand attitude act as a partial mediator. Through these tests, the results apparently revealed that brand personality's dimension of competence and ruggedness had positive significant impact on both purchase intention and brand attitude. Thus, marketers should emphasize on these traits to be applied to their brands especially in the facial skin care product market background to appear favourable to consumers. Limitations of the study are also noted. Further study is recommended by examining one type of facial skin care product category; for example, facial wash, moisturizers or facial masks because each of these product categories has distinctive characteristics.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan hubungan antara personaliti jenama, sikap jenama dan niat pembelian terhadap produk penjagaan kulit muka di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Personaliti Jenama adalah pembolehubah bebas, sikap jenama bertindak sebagai pengantara dan niat pembelian adalah pembolehubah bersandar. Kajian ini disesuaikan dengan dimensi personaliti jenama oleh Aaker (1997) yang terdiri daripada 1) Keikhlasan, 2) Keghairahan, 3) Keupayaan, 4) Kecanggihan dan 5) Ketahanan lasak. Data telah dikumpulkan daripada 280 responden wanita di kawasan-kawasan penting seperti pusat membeli-belah dan Starbucks di sekitar kawasan Kota Kinabalu yang menggunakan dan membeli produk penjagaan kulit muka dan berumur 18 tahun ke atas. SPSS 19 telah digunakan untuk menganalisis 280 data responden dan analisis faktor kepada personaliti jenama menghasilkan empat faktor: 1) Keghairahan, 2) Keupayaan, 3) Kecanggihan dan 4) Ketahanan lasak. Dimensi keikhlasan telah dibuang dari dimensi personaliti jenama yang asal oleh Aaker (1997). Keputusan regresi linear menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara personaliti jenama, sikap jenama dan niat pembelian. Sikap Jenama sebagai pengantara menunjukkan bahawa terdapat kesan pengantaraan yang signifikan antara hubungan personaliti jenama dan niat pembelian. Melalui ujian ini, keputusan nampaknya menunjukkan bahawa dimensi personaliti jenama keupayaan dan ketahanan lasak mempunyai kesan positif yang signifikan pada kedua-dua niat pembelian dan sikap jenama. Oleh itu, pemasar perlu menekankan ciri-ciri tersebut pada jenama mereka dalam pasaran penjagaan kulit muka agar dapat menarik hati pembeli. Had kajian juga diperhatikan. Kajian lanjut adalah disyorkan dengan memeriksa satu jenis kategori produk penjagaan kulit muka, sebagai contoh, pencuci muka, pelembap atau masker muka kerana setiap kategori produk ini mempunyai ciri-ciri yang tersendiri.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

First and foremost, chapter one provides the overview of this study, identifies the problem statement, recognizes the questions and objective of the research, clarifies the scope of the study, to spell out the significance of the study, and finally defines the key terms used. These shall form the basis of this precise study.

1.2 Background of The Study

Whether it is for physiological or sociological needs, youths naturally tend to place more interest in maintaining their self-images where in this present day, it is becoming a trend to use cosmetics in our daily lives as it brings attractiveness (Mansor, Ali and Yaacob, 2010). Previous research suggest that cosmetics are anything that beautifies men and women from head to toe in which that cosmetics are comprises of color cosmetics, skin care products, toiletries and fragrances and hair care products (Othman and Chong, 1999).

According to Mansor et. al. (2010), since cosmetics bring attractiveness to human, it has become a trend to use cosmetic in our everyday life regardless our age. "The skin care market consists of the retail sale of facial care, body care, sun care, hand care, depilatories and make-up remover products" (Datamonitor, 2011, p.6).

In 2010, the global skin care market grew by 4.5% to reach a value of US\$78,131 million (Datamonitor, 2011, see Table 1.1) where Asia-Pacific comprises of Australia, Japan, China, India, Singapore, South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Pakistan and Taiwan accounts for 44% of the global skin care market value (Datamonitor,

2011, see Table 1.2) and is expected to rise to 7.1 billion units in terms of its market volume by the end of 2015. For the global skin care market in 2010, facial care sales proved to be the most lucrative generating total revenues of US\$50.1 billion which is equivalent to 64.1% of the market's overall value. Correspondingly, the most lucrative sales in Asia-Pacific in the skin care market are the facial skin care segment which generates total revenue of US\$24.8 billion which is equivalent to 72.1% of the overall value of the market (Datamonitor, 2011, see Table 1.3).

In Malaysia, its skin care market specifically for facial skin care segment accumulates US\$161.80 million of demand (Parker, 2009). Likewise, Euromonitor (2011), reported that Malaysia in 2010, its facial skin care segment has the highest sales which totaled RM1,156.6 million compared to body care and hand care which has been increasing since 2005 (See Table 1.4). In terms of market share, L'Oreal S.A. is reported to be the leading player in the global skin care market whereas Kao Corporation is reported to be the leading player in the Asia-Pacific skin care market (Datamonitor, 2011).

Table 1.1 Global skincare market value: \$ million, 2006-10.

Year	\$million	% Growth
2006	65,428.9	-
2007	68,724.0	5.0%
2008	71,810.0	4.5%
2009	74,784.4	4.1%
2010	78,131.0	4.5%

Source: Datamonitor Plc. 2011. Skincare Industry Profile: Global.

In today's highly aggressive and globalized environment, the conception and maintenance of brands is becoming more and more important (Adapa, 2008). Increasing globalization has contributed to the evolving of numerous brands competing in the marketplace where for the purpose of differentiations due to aggressive competition, firms are keen in developing new products (Akin, 2011) hence, the creation and maintenance of brands are crucial (Sondoh, 2009).

Table 1.2 Global Skincare market segmentation: % share, by value, 2010.

Category	% Share
Asia-Pacific	44.0%
Europe	33.7%
Americas	20.4%
Africa and Middle East	1.8%
Total	100%

Source: Datamonitor Plc. 2011. Skincare Industry Profile: Global.

Table 1.3 Asia-Pacific Skin care market segmentation: % share, by value, 2010.

Category	% Share
Facial care	72.1%
Body care	13.1%
Hand care	7.3%
Sun care	6.0%
Depilatories	1.0%
Make-up remover	0.5%
Total	100%

Source: Datamonitor Plc, 2011. Skincare Industry Profile: Asia-Pacific.

Table 1.4 Sales of skin care by category: Value 2005-2010.

RM million	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Body care	124.6	135.8	145.7	1547.3	166.4	172.4
Facial care	766.0	842.2	928.5	1,011.9	1,091.0	1,156.6
Hand care	13.5	14.0	14.5	15.2	16.0	16.8
Total	904.2	992.1	1,088.7	1,184.3	1,273.4	1,345.8

Source: Euromonitor International: 2011, Skincare Malaysia.

In Malaysia, local manufacturing firms are vastly pressured by the presence of global brands where the Malaysian consumer market nowadays are consist of numerous number of global and local brand entrants since its emergence as a newly industrialized country (NIC) has paved way for these brands (Adapa, 2008). Therefore, apart from having an effective strategy, companies need to reorganize their marketing organizations to get the most out of today's opportunities as the challenges and opportunities are different from industry to industry and companies should understand those differences when crafting their strategies and reorganize their organizations in this digital age (Sayre, Rastogi, Zwillenberg, Visser and Sheerin, 2012).

For companies, brands are important fundamentals of the economic (Fischer, Volckner and Sattler, 2010). For example, a strong brand such as Apple enables them to charge a significant premium price to the consumers. Brand also serves as an important criterion in consumers' buying decision which provides important functions along the purchase decision and consumption process (Fischer, et al., 2010).

However, today's consumers are more powerful, influential and selective than before (Sayre et. al., 2012). Therefore, to get consumers attach to a certain brand, a company must match their brand's personality with the consumer's self (Malar, Krohmer, Hoyer and Nyffenegger, 2011). Likewise, Purkayastha (2009) affirmed that since it is difficult for managers to differentiate between brands, this is where it is important to provide a brand with a distinct and functional brand personality. Brand personality is defined as a set of human characteristics or traits that consumers associate with a brand (Aaker, 1997).

This view is supported by Lin (2010) that "brands have their own particular personalities, which consumers may treat brands as real human beings" (p. 4). Apart from satisfying functional needs and wants, it was claimed by Batra, Lenk and Wedel (2006) that a brand which symbolizes their personality aspect and similar with their actual or desired personality are most preferred by the consumers.

In a study by Chan-Olmsted and Cha (2008), they found that brand personality does leads to positive and favourable attitude towards a brand. Past research in 1981 by Mitchell and Olson defined attitude as an internal evaluation by an individual of an object for instance, a branded product and affirmed that attitudes are useful as a predictor of the behavior of the consumers towards a product or service. In addition, Fischer et al. (2010) mentioned in their study that brand name which develops a confidence in the consumers' minds affect the purchase intention and develops brand loyalty.

The aforementioned point of views by various researchers demonstrate that when a brand has a distinct personality from other brands and similar to a consumer's actual or desired personality, it leads to the creation of attitude of the consumers towards a particular brand and finally affect the consumers' behavior or intention towards a brand as Akin (2011) mentioned that, there are various factors that affect attitude and intention of the consumer and personality is the most important.

1.3 Problem Statement

The skincare product segment is chosen for this study due to the fact that a total of 44% of the global skincare market value is in Asia-Pacific. With the increase in market value forecast for 2015 of the Asia-Pacific skincare market by 23.8% since 2010 (Datamonitor, 2011), this shows that the skin care market is lucrative in Asia-Pacific which includes Malaysia. Moreover, Malaysian women have recognized the importance of skin care especially in the anti-ageing product segment which became a popular driving force (Euromonitor, 2011). In addition, according to Mansor et al. (2010), they mentioned that youths tend to put more interest in maintaining their self-images where cosmetics appeared to be linked with female.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to provide a theoretical basis of the relationship between brand personality, brand attitude and customers' purchase intention towards facial skin care products in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of brand in purchase intention (e.g. Mansor et al., 2010; Akin, 2011; Bouhlel, Mzoughi, Hadiji and

Slimane, 2011). However, globalization and the increasing number of products and brands makes it hard for marketers to position and differentiate their brands (Purkayastha, 2009).

Correspondingly as mentioned by Du (2009, p.1), "nowadays companies are pressured with the challenge to attract consumers' attention, altering consumers' brand attitude and purchase intention towards brand". To address this issue, developing brand personality is important for the success of a specific brand as it assists marketers to differentiate their brands from others and apart from that, brand personality allows companies to effectively and efficiently communicate to their customers about a particular brand (Purkayastha, 2009) thus, helps firms improve consumers' preference, loyalty and trust as well as purchase intention (Akin, 2011).

1.4 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are as listed below:

1. To examine the relationship between brand personality on purchase intention.
2. To examine the relationship between brand personality on brand attitude.
3. To examine the relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention.
4. To examine the role of brand attitude as a mediating factor in the relationship between brand personality and purchase intention.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions in this study have the following corresponding questions with the research objectives as follow:

1. Does brand personality have a positive relationship with customers' purchase intention?

2. Does brand personality have a positive relationship with brand attitude?
3. Does brand attitude have a positive relationship with customers' purchase intention?
4. To what extent is the relationship between brand personality and customers' purchase intention is mediated by brand attitude?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The result of this research provides an in-depth understanding of the relationships between brand personality, brand attitude and customers' purchase intentions in the facial skin care product market environment to academicians and practitioners. On the other side of the coin, this study will also contribute to the purchase intention literature with its empirical evidence to strongly support the relationship between brand personality, brand attitude and purchase intention in the context of skin care products in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

In addition, this study hypothesize brand personality as a multidimensional construct that provides a unique view of a brand which would provide ample understanding on how consumers perceives or responds towards a particular brand whether they favour the brand or do not favour the brand at all. This particular study also in a way contributes to the literature of brand attitude in understanding the mediating role of brand attitude in the relationship between brand personality and purchase intention. Moreover, in terms of managerial implications, the results or finding of this study will benefit those marketing practitioners favorably in the facial skin care market.

This study would also assist marketing managers to increase their knowledge in customers' purchase intention and identify the important dimensions of brand personality that affect a consumer's brand attitude and eventually prompt consumers' purchase intention towards a particular facial skin care brands in kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Lastly, the result of this study shall provide a foundation to construct a beneficial proposition to marketers in aligning their brand personality


to meet the needs of consumers which then alters consumers' brand attitude and their purchase intentions towards facial skin care products in kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

1.7 Scope of Study

Malaysia in 2009 accumulates for \$161.80 million of the demand of skin care products (Parker, 2009). Euromonitor (2011) reported that, the sales of facial skin care products in Malaysia has reached RM 1,271.1 million in the year 2011 which has been increasing since 2006. This study will focus on women's facial skin care products. Facial skin care products are such as masks, moisturizers, cleansers, scrubs, toners, astringents, fresheners and those products designed uniquely for use on the face (Parker, 2009).

1.8 Definition of Terms

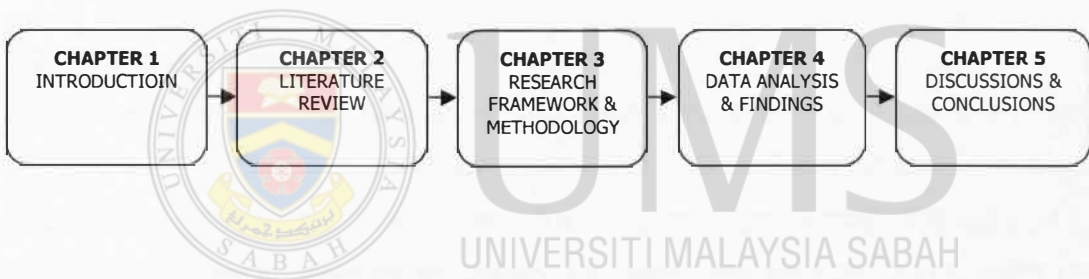
For the ease of understanding, the definitions and description of terminologies are described as below.

- 
- a) **Personality** is defined as "all distinctive and unique behaviours of individual." (Akin, 2011, p. 194)
 - b) **Brand Personality** is defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand." (Aaker, 1997, p.347).
 - c) **Attitude** in the past marketing research defined attitude as "A person's attitude is a function of his salient beliefs at a given point in time." (Mitchell and Olson, 1981, p. 318).
 - d) **Brand attitude** as according Grace and O'Cass (2005), brand attitude is defined as "the consumer's overall evaluation of a brand whether good or bad".
 - e) **Purchase Intention** is defined as "the probability of purchase of a product or a given brand." (Bouhleb et al., 2011, p.214).

1.9 Organization of Thesis

This dissertation is constructed in a five chapter format. Chapter 1 in this study presents the background of the study, problem statements, the research objectives, and the significance of the study, the contributions and scope of the study and definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 includes a thorough literature review about brand personality, brand attitude and purchase intention. Chapter 3 of this study provides an insightful research methodology consist of the theoretical framework, research design, population and sampling, research instruments, pretest study, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures used. In chapter 4, the data analysis and findings are presented and lastly in chapter 5, discussions and conclusions are defined. The flow of each chapter is depicted as follow (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Flow of each chapter



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This specific chapter provides a detailed literature review concerning to the objectives of this research. First and foremost, the initial part begins with an analysis of the literature that is related to the brand personality concepts. Next, the discussion on the literature review related to customers' brand attitude concepts and its relation between brand personality and customers' purchase intentions are presented.

2.2 Brand Personality

To distinguish a particular product from a competitor, a product is given a brand name to achieve that purpose (Mishra and Datta, 2011). The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers". Some consumers develop emotional relationship to a specific brand when they become too involved with it (Bouhleb et al., 2011).

In a study by Mishra and Datta (2011), whom studied the impact of brand name on other brand elements, the results of the study shows that brand name has positive impacts on the consumer based brand equity (CBBE) of a brand, brand personality, brand awareness, brand association, brand communication, brand image, perceived brand quality and brand loyalty. Mishra and Datta (2011) also pointed out that a good brand name enhances the value of a brand in which that its impacts are critical for the basis of a strong brand. For the purpose of this study, the concept of brand personality is therefore discussed comprehensively in this chapter. To understand how a consumer perceives a brand image and to

develop a unique characteristic, brand personality is viewed as a feasible metaphor for brands to become distinctive (Ayed, Addelhak and Mzoughi, 2012). Brand does have personality or character that is similar to a human being (Hassan and Rahman, 2012) in which that a diverse brand personality plays an important role in the success of a brand (Govers and Schoormans, 2005).

Brand personality stimulates moods and behavior which is described through a list of characteristics (Bouhleb et al., 2009) where Lin (2010), also mentioned that personality is a useful element when choosing a brand. For instance, because "macho cowboys" are the brand image built up by Marlboro, it is seen that Marlboro cigarette brand are more suitable for men. Mercedes cars on the other hand show an image of high quality for higher social classes.

Self-congruity is when one compares his or her self with other objects and stimuli (Liu, Li, Mizerski and Soh, 2012). According to Govers and Schoormans (2005), self-congruence is a factor where it directs consumer preference and that consumers tend to select products and brands consistent with their self-concept. In other words, a specific product or brand is preferred by some people because they see themselves as the types of people that are thought to be using that certain product.

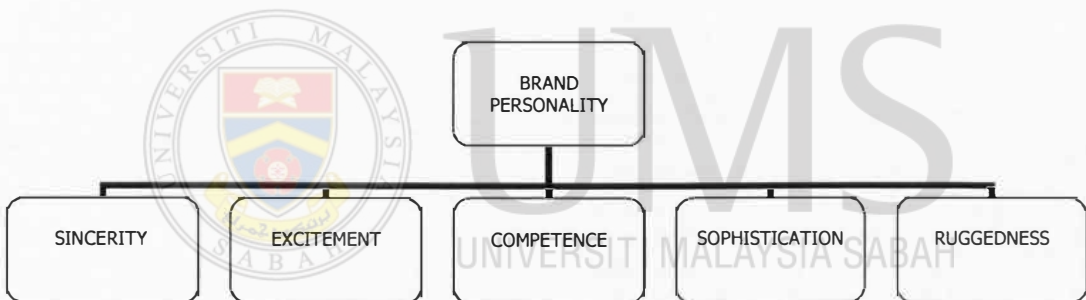
Correspondingly, Aaker (1997) stressed that a brand which has the same personality characteristics as the consumer is found to be more favorable. This view is supported by Lin (2010) that the brands chosen by consumers are frequently in congruence with their own traits. Moreover, in psychology, it is known that positive influence on attraction exist when there are similarities of personality (Govers and Schoormans, 2005).

"Brand personality has become a widely discussed issue in recent years" (Lin, 2010, p. 5). It has emerged as an essential marketing concept as it influences brand attitude and behaviours (Ayed et al., 2012). The literatures about Aaker's article of the brand personality since then have been growing and became the standard reference in this specific study. According to Aaker (1997), the term

'brand personality' is described as those human characteristics which are associated with brands by the consumers. Aaker, carried out a number of investigations to determine the extent to which a brand can be described by certain human characteristics and to examine how the relationship between brand and human personality could be the main driver of consumers' preference and found that consumers identify that brands have five diverse personality dimensions.

From the origin of personality scales in psychology, personality scales in marketing and a various brand's personality traits, Aaker constructed a brand personality scale. Therefore, in her seminal article of the dimensions of brand personality, Aaker defined five dimensions of brand personality (See Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Brand Personality dimensions



Source: Aaker (1997)

According to Aaker (1997), the five dimensions of brand personality are described by a list of characteristics (See table 2.1). Bouhleb et al. (2011) also argues that brand personality gives "soul" to a brand that is crucial in the construction of the image of a brand. Consequently, in their study which aims to estimate the interest of the brand personality on the Tunisian's customer purchase decision shows the result that a brand that is attached with personalities are more desirable to consumers because it evokes the trust, attachment and also commitment. For instance, when consumer perceives the brand as being sincere or competent, he or she will trust the brand hence, develops the consumer's attachment and commitment.