

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF PROTON BRAND  
PERSONALITY AND PURCHASE  
INTENTION WITH BRAND  
ATTITUDE AS MEDIATOR,  
KOTA KINABALU  
CONSUMERS'  
PERSPECTIVE**

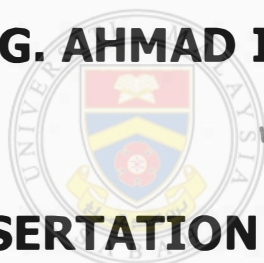
**AG. AHMAD ISKANDAR BIN ABU BAKAR**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION**

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND  
ACCOUNTANCY  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH  
2014**

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**2014**

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JUDUL KAJIAN: THE RELATIONSHIP OF PROTON BRAND PERSONALITY AND PURCHASE INTENTION WITH BRAND ATTITUDE AS MEDIATOR, KK CONSUMERS' PERSPECTIVE

IJAZAH: MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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I hereby declare that the material in this thesis is my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledge.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP OF PROTON BRAND PERSONALITY AND PURCHASE INTENTION WITH BRAND ATTITUDE AS MEDIATOR, KOTA KINABALU CONSUMERS' PERSPECTIVE**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of brand personality and brand attitude towards purchase intention in the context of purchasing Proton brand which is leading Malaysian car manufacturer. In addition, the mediating effect of brand attitude on the relationship between brand personality and purchase intention, was investigated. The current study has proven no relationship was found between brand personality and purchase intention. However, this study discovered a new dimension identified as "eastern value" which was found based on the behavioral reaction of the respondents in Kota Kinabalu. The data was collected at Proton service center in Kota Kinabalu. The SPSS statistical software was employed in the data analysis. Surprising, the five generic dimensions proposed by Aaker (1997) which are comprise of sincerity, excitement, competence, ruggedness and sophistication were inapplicable in Kota Kinabalu market setting which is established in the current findings. Discussion, limitations and recommendations for future researchers are also presented in this study.



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## **ABSTRAK**

*Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh personaliti jenama dan sikap jenama terhadap niat pembelian dalam konteks membeli jenama Proton yang merupakan pengeluar utama kereta Malaysia . Di samping itu, hubungan dan kesan pengantara iaitu sikap jenama antara personaliti jenama dan niat pembelian , telah dikaji. Kajian semasa telah membuktikan tiada kaitan didapati antara personaliti jenama dan niat pembelian. Walau bagaimanapun , kajian ini menemui dimensi baru yang dikenal pasti sebagai "nilai ketimuran " yang ditemukan berdasarkan tindak balas tingkah laku responden di Kota Kinabalu. Data yang dikumpulkan di pusat perkhidmatan Proton di Kota Kinabalu. SPSS iaitu perisian statistik telah digunakan dalam analisis data. Menghairankan, lima dimensi generik yang dicadangkan oleh Aaker (1997 ) yang terdiri daripada keikhlasan , kegembiraan , kecekapan , kelasakan dan kecanggihan adalah tidak mendatangkan kesan di suasana pasaran Kota Kinabalu yang ditubuhkan di dalam penemuan kajian semasa. Perbincangan , had dan cadangan kepada penyelidik akan datang juga dikemukakan dalam kajian ini.*



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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

In this part "introduction" has been divided into six sections. The first is introduction and followed by significance of the study, problem statement, research question, research objective, and lastly definition of terms.

#### **1.1 Overview**

Building the reputation in the brand has inspired global automotives manufacturers around the world to position the brands in highly competitive market not only in the aspect of technological advancement but also in marketing strategy. In the early development of the study, the Dimensions of Brand Personality theory (Aaker 1997) found the relationship between human personality which are openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism using Big Five Model (Goldberg 1990) and the reflections of the brand towards the customers (Belk 1988), and dimensional indicator of the brand to an identity (Klein and Kernan 1993).

From the Dimensions of Brand Personality, Aaker constructed a wide study of brands ranging from food, clothes, cars, computers, tv channels and telecommunication companies. Then Aaker developed a general and manageable of 42 items to measure brands personality dimensions which is the Brand Personality Scale (BPS) that has lead to five generic personality dimensions which are excitement, sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness, (Aaker, 1997).

sales, this study will find out whether Brand Personality significantly contribute to the Purchase Intention for the Malaysian automobile market .

Then, the find out of this personality will lead to the intention to purchase by consumers. Despite of the past empirical research on the relationship between brand personality of automobiles in local automobile market and the intention to purchase few has been studied. One of the factors that might influence the purchase intention is brand personality, (Li, Wang and Yang, 2010).

This study is useful to find the way to communicate through the brand personality that attach in the brand with the consumers' individual personality that is reachable to consumers. The mediating effect which is attitude towards the brand will also be used to determine how Brand Personality may contribute to Purchase Intention to promote sales.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

The Brand Personality Scale that proven by Aaker still needs further study to be proven in a specific brand within a specific industry such as automobile, (Ranjbar 2010). This study will be conducted by testing Brand Personality Scale for a specific brand which is Proton in a specific industry which is Malaysian automobile industry as the scale needs to be retested in cross cultural and different market setting is also an area that will be discovered in this study.

The brand requires serious attention if it is to continue playing a central role in realizing Malaysia's dream of becoming a major economy on the global stage (Media News 2010). This theory of Brand Personality emphasizing on communication because brand acts as direct result of the strategy and market segmentation and product differentiation (Sheena and Naresh 2012) that can be use as the marketing tool that will deliver the message and reaches the consumer without misleading into wrong



interpretation by consumers that connects both the personalities of the brand and consumers.

Purchase intentions are measured in different levels of product specificity and can predict sales (Morwitz, 2007). By using the right message in advertisement, marketers can allocate the right message that relates the personality of the brands and personality of consumers to increase purchase intention. This is useful for marketers to enhance sales with the right marketing strategy approach.

Then, this study provides more information for researchers to test the reliability of Brand Personality Scale to the other types of products and brands in multinational level across the demographic differences (Aaker, 1997). From a consumer point of view, brand personality is a way for them to express their personalities and define their lifestyles through the material possessions.

From a company's point of view brand personality is a method of communicating the benefits associated with your product, in terms of its attributes or of its connotations of status. Companies also use brand personality to distinguish the brand from competitors which is essential in today's saturated domestic markets; brand personality can also be used to create loyal customers by encouraging them to buy your brand through positive associations with the consumers' personality which can be either inspirational or actual. (Rojas-Mendez, 2004)

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Brand Personality Scale will be use in automobile products for Malaysian automobile market specifically in Kota Kinabalu. The Brand Personality that was developed by Aaker was conducted in the US market. Plus the Brand Personality Scale was said to be general and this has called this study to find how will the scale can be used in Malaysian market and will determine how Brand Personality can influence the Purchase

Intention of Proton, from the branding aspect by consumers' perceptions using Proton Saga Flx as the measurement model for Kota Kinabalu market specifically.

Proton's brand itself has only few been studied in Kota Kinabalu thus provide this area to be discovered in finding the consistency of Brand Personality and personality dimension that lies in the brand that might be the connector between the brand and consumers. Then, the outcome of the brand personality dimensions of Proton will study as the cause and effect towards the purchase intention.

**Table 1.3.1: Domestic Car Sales and the Market Share of National Carmakers, 1985-2009**

	<b>Total (units)</b>	<b>Share of national cars</b>		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Proton</b>	<b>Perodua</b>
1985	63857	12.0	12	
1990	80420	64.2	64.2	
1995	224991	80.2	62.5	17.7
2000	282103	92.7	63.4	29.2
2005	416692	81.9	40.3	34.9
2006	366738	73.8	32.2	41.6
2007	442885	74.7	30.3	42.4
2008	497459	72.3	29.2	43.1
2009	486342	---	---	---
2010	543594	---	---	---
2011	535113	59.6	26.4	33.2
2012	552189	52.6	22.5	30.1

--- Data not available.

Source: 1985-2000: Tham (2003); 2001-09: Malaysian Motor Traders Association

The fluctuate sales from the year 2005-2012 shown above is in the second place in sales after Perodua. Year 2005 marked the decreasing number sales by 40300 units sold compare to the year 2000 which is 63400 units were sold. As

compare to Perodua, the number of sales from the year 1995 to 2008, which 17700 and increasing to 43100 units sold respectively.

Brand Personality may be the tool for marketers to market Proton's products with a personality attachment within Proton to the personality of consumers that might increase the sales. Then, the development of Brand Personality Scale can be build tested to fit the study especially for market outside US for the theoretical contribution.

Thus, the study will give a new insight into the relationship between brand personality that is considered as an important marketing tool and intention to purchase by examining the mediating effects of brand attitude. Lack of study found in the Malaysian study to prove brand personality has a significantly direct relationship to intention to purchase that will try to be discovered in this study. Then, the brand attitude as the **intervening** variable will be used to find the significance relationship between brand personality and intention to purchase as very few evidence found in the Malaysian study particularly in Kota Kinabalu market.

To be specific, the relationship between brand personality and intention to purchase in the context of Proton will be studied, also the intervening influence of brand attitude on this relationship will be investigated.

## **1.4 Research Question**

This study attempted to find the answer of the following research questions:

1. Does the brand personality of Proton significantly related to purchase intention?
2. Does brand personality have a significant relationship to brand attitude?
3. Does brand attitude has a significant relationship to purchase intention?
4. Does the brand attitude mediate the relationship between brand personality and intention to purchase?

## **1.5 Research Objective**

The research objectives of this study are as followed:

1. To conceptualize Brand Attitude as marketing tool to influence Purchase Intention
2. To review and analyze existing theories and literature about Brand Personality, Purchase Intention and Brand Attitude.
3. To develop a research model for examining the mechanism of Brand Personality towards Purchase Intention with Brand Attitude as mediator.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

**Brand Personality:** A set of human characteristics associated with brands. (Aaker, 1997)

**Brand Attitude:** Consumers, overall evaluation of a brand. (Chang and Brodowsky, 2007)

**Purchase Intention:** The probability of purchase of a product or a given brand. (Lacoeuilhe, 1997)

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to review of brand, then brand personality dimension literature from different dimensions, the relationship of brand personality dimension and purchase intention, and the variable of brand attitude as the mediator and its relationship.

#### 2.1 Brand

To justify the importance of brand in order to create the value within it, "Any company's output and its reputation with shareholders' interest and customers' needs connected to its product's brand" (Ulrich, 2007). This shows how brand can be mutually important among firms, shareholders, customers of a certain product.

In 1960, according to the American Marketing Association, brand is a name, sign, symbol, term, **design** or a combination of them to build the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers' identity to differentiate them from other competitors. This definition later was criticized because of too product-oriented and later suggested by (Wood L, 2000) brand must have the intangible features like image as the differentiation mechanism for competitive advantage.

Then, the definitions were later emphasized the other concepts of the brand by researchers but each researcher has focused on one concept compared to the others. The concepts varied from the added value (De Chernatony, 1998), brand equity (Keller 1993 and Aaker 1996), brand personality (Aaker, 1997) as the examples of the concept of the brand with different views.

Wood (2000) suggests that different companies with their own competitive advantages will provide different definition, "Competitive advantage for firms may be



determined in terms of revenue, profit, added value or market share. Benefits the consumer purchase may be real or illusory, rational or emotional, tangible or intangible”, (Wood L., 2000). The emotional and intangible values are both can be managed and modified as the added value tool to strengthen the brand to compete with the other rival in branding strategies.


Due to this overlap in definition, De Chernatory (1998) in his research suggest the categorized of literature for brand in 12 themes:

- 1. Legal instrument
- 2. Logo
- 3. Company
- 4. Shorthand
- 5. Risk Reducer
- 6. Identity System
- 7. Image in consumer's mind
- 8. Value system
- 9. Personality
- 10. Relationship
- 11. Adding values
- 12. Evolving entity

**Table 2.1.1: Antecedents and Consequences to the brand construct adapted from de Chernatony & Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998.**

Brand definitions	Antecedents	Consequences
Legal instrument	Mark of ownership, name, logo, design and trademark.	Prosecute infringers.
Logo	Name, term, symbol, design, product	Identidy, differentiate through visual. Identify

	characteristics	and name quality assurance.
Company	Recognizable corporate name and image. Culture, people, programs of organization defines corporate personality. CEO is brand manager.	Evaluate over long time horizon. Product lines benefit corporate personality. Convey consistent message to stakeholder. Differentiation proposition, relationship.
Shorthand	Firms stresses quality not quantity information.	Rapidly recognize brand association. Facilitate information processing speed decisions.
Risk Reducer	Confidence that expectation being fulfilled.	Brand as construct.
Identity System	More than just a name. Holistic, structure with six integrated facets, including brand's personality.	Clarify direction, meaning, strategic positioning, and protective barrier. Communicate essence to stakeholders.
Image	Consumer centered, image in consumer's mind is brand "reality"	Firm's input activities managed using feedback of image to change identity. Market research important. Manage brand concept over time.

Value System	Consumer relevant values imbue the brand	Brand values match relevant consumers value.
Personality	Psychological values, communication through advertising and packaging define brand's personality.	Differentiation from symbolism human values projected. Stress added values beyond functional
Relationship	Consumer has attitude to brand. Brand as person has attitude to consumers	Recognition and respect for personality. Develop relationship.
 Adding values	Non functional extras. Value satisfier. Consumers imbue brand with subjective meaning they to buy. Aesthetics. Enhanced through design, manufacturing, and distribution.	Differentiate through layers of meaning. Charge price premium. Consumer experience. Perception of users. Belief in performance.
Evolving entity	Change by stage of development.	

Based from the table 2.1.1, one of four brand themes which are company, relates that brand personality brings also the personality of the corporation through its product lines for differentiation message to stakeholders, (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). Another theme which is Identity system shows brand is more than just a name as it also brings personality, culture, self-projection, physique, reflection and relationship, (Kapferer, 1992) as the facets and personality can become the strategic positioning into the market. The third brand theme is personality as consumer choose the brand to project their personality that fit with the products personality and one of the way of companies to communicate with consumers. As for