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An Investigation into the Determination of Brand Personality for a Telecommunications Company as Perceived by the Voice Services Customers: A Case Study of Powertel Communications

Bongani Ngwenya[*], Admire R. Nyagura

Department of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty of Business, Solusi University, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Email address:
nbongani@gmail.com (B. Ngwenya), sanyagura@gmail.com (A. R. Nyagura)
[*]Corresponding author

Abstract: This research empirically measured the brand personality for Powertel Communications by using the five-dimension Brand Personality Scale developed by Aaker as a framework. Results of this investigation were obtained through an online questionnaire directed to Powertel customers whose response yielded 166 responses from a population of 264 customers. Reliability analysis using Cronbach alpha coefficient of the measurement model and the structural model provided evidence that the 'sincerity' dimension proposed by Aaker was not reliable. The reliability and validity test of the questionnaire resulted in the omission of the "sincerity" dimension. The T-Test showed respondent's ideas about the personality of Powertel and they believed Powertel's personality dimensions are: "excitement", "competence" and "sophistication". The respondents however, were not agreeing on the "rugged" dimension which showed that Powertel is not a rugged brand. The personality dimension "competence" was the most dominant personality amongst the customers followed by "excitement". Some demographic effects on the personality perceptions were also analysed and found to be significant across all the dimensions except the rugged dimension. Finally, the hypothesis about the correlation between the customer traits and the customers' perception on the brand personality for Powertel was tested and the results showed that there was significant correlation to justify Aaker's model. The study makes the following recommendations: that Powertel envisages the philosophy of brand personality by modelling advertisements, marketing actions and price in a way that is congruent with the personalities of its target customers; that Powertel focusses more on innovations, value added services and promotions of its product portfolio. This is mainly because its customers largely perceive the company as competent and exciting as a result innovations and value added services will enhance the "competence" attribute whilst promotion will enhance the "exciting" attribute thus further strengthening the company's competitive advantage, and finally, that Powertel reposition itself in a personality which distinctively differentiate itself from other competitors. The basis for differentiation need may come from the fact that at least 30% of the customers according to the research regard Powertel services as similar to competitors and at least 50% of the customers who are particular about branded products consider quality when making purchase decisions.

Keywords: Brand Personality, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, Competitive Advantage

1. Introduction

People are known to have a natural proven tendency to the attribution of human characteristics to other things such as brands [19]. The personalities associated with these characteristics were further defined as 'the systematic description of human traits', where traits are 'relatively enduring distinguished styles of thinking, feeling, and acting'. According to reference [13], brand personality is generally considered as a phenomenon to answer questions to do with the

type of person the brand would be if it were human and what it would do and like. When consumers associate a brand with human characteristics, the brand is said to have a personality. For instance, there are some brands which have been found to have strong brand personalities such as Harley Davidson are associated with ruggedness and Nike with excitement [4]. A transfer effect of brand personality traits on the salience of specific consumer personality traits is thus expected. In addition, research on the brand personality by Reference [1] suggests a more fine-grained set of hypotheses based on conceptual similarities between brand personality dimensions and human related traits.

Researchers have discovered that brand personality may help a consumer to reveal his/herself or an ideal perception of oneself through use of a brand [16]. Brand personality traits may be formed through consumer experience and any direct or indirect contact between consumers and the brand. The brand personality that can be shaped by customer experiences or the corporate marketing activities may influence customer preferences. It is believed that consumers prefer those brands which, in addition to satisfying their functional needs and wants, also symbolize those personality aspects that they find most congruent with their own actual or desired personality associations [4]. Brand personality is perceived by consumers similarly as they perceive human characteristics and also function in a similar way [23]. It has also even been found by reference [11] that brands can be perceived in two personality dimensions as either feminine or masculine. Thus gender plays a significant role within brand personality. When we think of describing a person, first, of course, there are the obvious demographic descriptors e.g. gender (male or female), age (young or old). Similarly, a brand can often be thought of as masculine or feminine, modern or old-fashioned, and everyday blue collar or elegantly upper class. Such a characterisation is often made not just of particular brands but of certain product categories or segments of them. Reference [15] established that consumers change the purchase of goods and services with the passage of time. Consumer choices were also found to be also predicated on various economic circumstances. Recognizing the relationship between these circumstances and an individual's purchasing behaviour allows marketers to recognize and predict consumer choice trends.

In order to measure brand personality, reference [1] had established a 42-item scale by eliminating redundancy from trait list optioned from three sources - personality scales from psychologists, personality scales used by marketers (academics and practitioners), and original qualitative researches. Aaker's scale has been criticized for being based on a lose definition of personality and for including characteristics such as 'upper class' which confuse 'brand personality' with 'user profiles'. This confusion causes a construct validity problem [2] [9]. Another criticism of BPS scale regards the weak discriminatory power of its factor structure for within category analysis at the respondent level as well as at the brand-level, since the scale was developed from data aggregated across respondents for between brand comparisons only. Reference [2] argue that the dimensions developed by reference [1] does not exactly measure brand personality. The main problem they had was the definition of brand personality used by reference [1]. According to reference [2] the common definition is too broad and might measure several aspects of brand identity, not only brand personality. Reference [14] argues that Aaker's scale has limitations and problems with validity by referencing to what has been proposed by reference [2], among others. Reference [14] insists tried out a new approach of measuring brand personality by first looking at what personality traits managers want to associate with the brand in their marketing strategy, and then compare it with the consumers" perception of the brand. Despite some of these arguments, Aaker's findings remain the most popular amongst brand personality theories hence it was chosen as the basis for this research.

Powertel Communications recently embarked on rebranding strategy and as a result there is need for the company to determine whether the branding strategy achieved the desired personality objective. To ensure the success of the strategy the new brand personality should be in congruency with customer's personality traits. The promotion mix for example should communicate a personality which customers can identify and relate with. This research also went to investigate further the extent of the correlation between the human personalities and the perceived brand personalities through an empirical case study of Powertel Communications Company.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

A crucial problem for companies requiring the extension of their existing brands into new categories, is the determination of how they position themselves in line with targeted consumer dimensions. This predicament comes from the fact that companies put most of their efforts in coming up with branding strategies which portray desired brand personalities without taking into cognisance the congruency of this strategy with their customers' perceptions. This results in companies often failing to attract the targeted consumers because of a mismatch between their perceived brand personalities and the personalities of the consumers. It is thus important to determine the personalities of a targeted segment so that these desired traits "strike the right cord" in matching the consumer traits are achieved. Previous empirical research on the relationship between brand personality and satisfaction has largely neglected the issue of moderator variables. Previous studies have highlighted the lack of demographic variables importance as reference [13] points out that further investigation is needed in assessing personality characteristics capability of affecting purchasing decision. Most of these studies have also only targeted European countries and there has been very little research done for the African market and in particular the Zimbabwean market.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel Communications Company customers in terms of being?
   a) Vibrant
   b) Successful
   c) Upper class
   d) Tough
2. What is Powertel's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?
   a) Exciting
   b) Competent
   c) Sophisticated
   d) Rugged
3. To what extent do the customer personality traits correlate with Powertel's perceived brand personality in accordance with Aaker's personality dimensions' framework?

1.3. Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant correlation between the characteristics of personalities for the Powertel Communications Company customers and their brand personality perceptions in accordance with Aaker's brand personality dimensions' framework.

2. Theoretical Issues and Review of Empirical Literature

Personality Trait Theories-According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, personality traits are "enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts." Theorists generally assume that a) traits are relatively stable over time, b) traits differ among individuals, and c) traits influence behaviour. They consistently are used in order to help define people as a whole. Traits are relatively constant; they do not usually change. Traits are also bipolar; they vary along a continuum between one extreme and the other (e.g. friendly vs. unfriendly). All trait theories incorporate at least two dimensions, extraversion and neuroticism, which historically featured in Hippocrates' humeral theory [8]. Personality has been conceptualized from a variety of theoretical perspectives, and at various levels of abstraction or breadth [8]. Each of these levels has made unique contributions to our understanding of individual differences in behaviour and experience. However, the number of personality traits, and scales designed to measure them, escalated without an end in sight [8]. Researchers, as well as practitioners in the field of personality assessment, were faced with a bewildering array of personality scales from which to choose, with little guidance and no overall rationale at hand.

Human Personality-"Personality" is a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences their environment, cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behavioural science in various situations [7]. The word "personality" originates from the Latin persona, which means mask [6]. In making changes the theatre of the ancient Latin-speaking world, the mask was not used as a plot device to disguise the identity of a character, but instead was a convention employed to represent or typify that character. Personality also refers to the pattern of thoughts, feelings, social adjustments, and behaviours consistently exhibited over time that strongly influences one's expectations, self-perceptions, values, and attitudes [6].
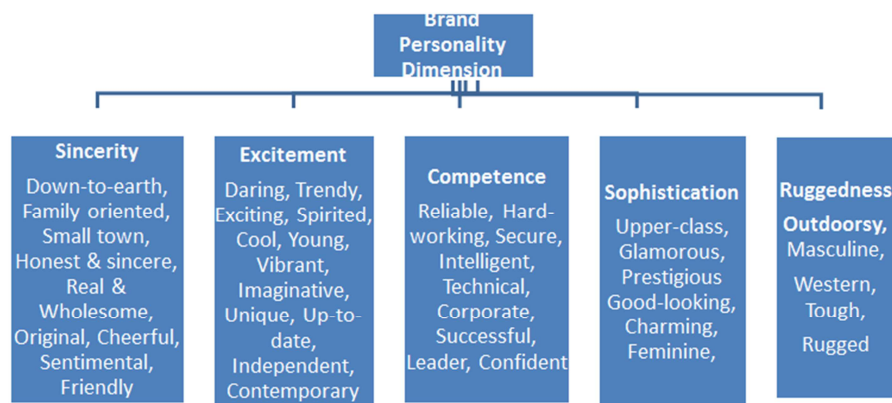
Brand Personality-As defined by reference [1], brand personality refers to the set of human characteristics associated with a brand. Aaker assumes that the brands are the same with the human personality or character, and the brand personality is created when a consumer attached his or her personality-like character to a specific brand. The intimate relationship between customers, on one hand and products, services or companies, on the other hand becomes even closer when the latter's' brands are given a set of human characteristics [6]. In other words, brand personality resides in the human characteristics or traits that could be attributed to a brand [17]. Brands can speak like human beings, they speak through the style tone of their advertising and like human speak, the audiences who are eager will listen [12]. Brand personality thus indicates the kind of relationship a customer has with the brand which also indicates that it provides means by which a customer communicates his own identity. Psychologists define the substance of personality as 'the systematic description of traits' [19], where traits are 'relatively enduring styles of thinking, feeling, and acting' [19]. According to reference [13], brand personality can be considered as "what type of person the brand would be if it were human and what it would do and like". Also, brand personality indirectly affiliates with the brand by product attributes, category associations, brand name, symbol or logo, advertisement, price, and distribution channel. Hence brand personality is created and maintained in the mind of the consumer.

Perceived quality also becomes one of element that takes the impact on the implementation of the personality of the brand. According to reference [13], perceived quality has been defined as customers' perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service relative to relevant alternatives and with respect to its intended purpose. Consumers are more likely to rate a brand with a stronger brand identity as having better quality. This has been proven by reference [3] where in their research, they have discovered that brand personality of a brand is correlated positively with quality rating. Reference [1] further suggests that brand personality is created in the perspective of brand as a person. It has the same concept with reference [13] where they assume that the brand to be a human and every human has his own personality. Beyond such expectations, consumers often invest brands' identities with human personality attributes, and this in turn leads to the symbolic use of the brand [13]. According to reference [1], by assuming the brand as a person, it can create a self-expressive benefit that becomes a vehicle for the customer to express his

or her own personality. For example, Apple notebook users might identify themselves as casual, young, anti-corporate and creative and brands such as Harley Davidson are perceived with (Ruggedness), Nike (Excitement), Hallmark (Sincerity), Wall Street Journal (Competence) and Tiffany (Sophistication). A strong, favourable Brand Personality provides emotional fulfilment and may lead to image enhancement, an increased willingness to continue using a given brand, trying a new brand or brand extension and to pay premium prices for a brand [10]. It is worth mentioning that brand personality also implies a significant emotional quotient. It is exactly this human characteristic that contributes to creating the customer's brand attachment. Matching the brand's personality with the customer' self (actual or ideal) constitutes probably the main way towards achieving such an attachment. In the long-run the attachment may evolve into a brand loyalty [10]. The use of brand personality in brand management strategies can help the whole company gaining satisfaction, loyalty, profitability [20] and an overall economic advantage over its competitors.

Dimensions of Brand Personality-Because consumers imagine the brands like human beings and give them personality characteristics, "the dimensions of brand personality can be defined by extending the dimensions of human personality to the domain of brands" [20]. In order to measure brand personality, reference [1] had established a 42-item scale by eliminating redundancy from trait list optioned from three sources - personality scales from psychologists, personality scales used by marketers (academics and practitioners), and original qualitative researches. Reference [1] proposed a Brand Personality Scale (BPS) to describe and measure the "personality" of a brand in five core dimensions; each of them is divided into a set of facets. Reference [1] indicates that her study, as the maiden attempt to develop a measurement scale, is "based on a representative sample of objects, a comprehensive lists of traits and a systematically chosen set of brands across product categories". The author added that this scale can be used "to compare personalities of brands across product categories thereby enabling researchers to identify benchmark personality brands". The author`s findings suggest that although the relationship between brand and human personality is not exactly symmetric, many consumers are likely to associate themselves with a product by closely matching the brand personality with their own. Aaker's brand personality scale was developed by creating a list of 309 personality traits taken from 'trait lists optioned from three sources: personality scales from psychology, personality scales used by marketers (academics and practitioners) and original qualitative research' [1]. Those 309 items were evaluated by 25 consumers, which reduced the number to 114 traits. The main study consisted in the evaluation of those 114 traits by 631 consumers on 37 brands, which were factor-analysed. The results show a five-dimension model composed of 42 items: Figure 1 below depicts Aaker`s Brand Personality Dimensions Framework.

Source: Adopted from reference [1].

Figure 1. *Aaker brand personality dimensions.*

Aaker's Personality Scale is widely used in many previous studies to determine brand personality. For example, reference [18] in their study has adapted Aaker's personality scale to measure a brand personality of consumers of a traditional casual brand in Korea, Beam Pole conducted a comparison between users and non-users of the brand. There are some authors who use brand image in the same way and with the same meaning as brand personality [9], or in some cases, brand personality is described as one element of brand image, which differentiate the brands from others and attach meaning to them [1]. Reference [2] refers to, brand personality as one part of brand identity. In addition, reference [22] states that brand personality and human personality are not necessarily corresponding to each other, because of the fact that brand personality depends on consumers" perception of the brand. Therefore, it is missing the objective part of personality that only humans possess. Furthermore, it is mentioned by reference [18] that brand personality is a concept developed within marketing and should therefore be treated accordingly. Due to the lack of research focusing on gender, there is little literature discussing whether a particular personality dimension can be seen as masculine or feminine for both consumers and brands

[11]. In selecting the brands to be at the basis of her personality framework, Aaker chose US ones only, thus limiting the framework's generalizability across product categories. This leads to the fact that Aaker's brand personality scale is not always suitable for all cultures. Below is a summary of some studies that have been conducted and applied the brand personality using Aaker's scales.

Table 1. Previous researches on Brand personalities using Aaker's scale.

Selected Reference	Scale Used	Number of Dimensions	Settings	Culture
Venable et al. (2005)	Aaker	4 dimensions	Non-profit organizations	Russia
Supphellen and Grønhaug (2009)	Aaker	5 dimensions	Commercial brands	United Kingdom
Rojas-Méndez, Erenchun-Podlech, and Silva-Olave (2004)	Aaker	4 dimensions	Automobile brands	Chile
Shintaro Okazaki (2006)	Aaker	5 dimensions	commercial brands	USA, UK, France, Spain
Fennis Bob M and Th. H. Pruyn (2007)	Aaker	5 dimensions	Commercial brands	Netherlands

3. Methodology and Data

Research Design: This study employed both qualitative and quantitative analysis. In the quantitative analysis, by applying the Brand Personality Scales model by Aaker for the chosen brand and underlying its dimensions. The determination of the causal links specified by the hypothesis resulted in the acceptance or rejection of the theoretical model. And by relying on analysis of statistical data, these dimensions were clear. In the qualitative analysis, by analysing the open question, other specific attributes that can be added to the model were also investigated. Therefore, the approach is to be considered iterative, which is the process of returning again and again to the research questions, theory, and data, which leads to new ideas, revisions and improvements.

The population consisted of non-corporate Powertel active subscribers for the voice services in Harare who are not employees of ZESA Holdings. There are currently 264 active subscribers according to the Powertel database. A non-probability sampling method by using a convenience sampling was adopted. Only clients whose email addresses were valid and available in Powertel database were used, that is, 166. The KMO test for sample adequacy confirmed that the data used was enough as shown in table 2 below by the KMO value or 0.788 which is > 0.6.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		788
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	887.313
	df	153
	Sig.	000

4. Data Presentation and Interpretation

Statistical data analysis using IBM SPSS 22.2.0 (2012) statistical package was used to analyse the statistical so as to determine the brand personality for Powertel. For every statistical analysis, the statistical significance of the data analysed was also tested using the software. In accordance with the conceptual framework, the effects of age, gender and level of income was also analysed separately and the statistical significance of the effect determined. The paired T-Tests were used to test the given hypothesis to determine whether the hypothesis is retained or rejected. The hypothesis test was done to test Aaker's brand personality theory which forms the basis of this research.

Research Questions 1: What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel Communications Company customers in terms of being?

The research question 1 has been split into sub-questions as follows:

Question 1a: Vibrant customer personality.

What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel Communications Company customers in terms of being?

a) Vibrant

Table 3. Descriptive statistics on vibrant personality.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, Error 0.188
Vibrant customer personality	4.11	4	4.0	.956	-1.453

The mean of 4.16 indicates that most respondents perceive themselves as having a strong vibrant personality. Given the range of 4 then, we can also deduce that a standard deviation of less than 1 reflects that most perceptions were not deviating far from the mean. This closeness also indicates a high reliability. The mode of 4 also points to a popular perception towards agreeing to the vibrant personality. A median of 4 also indicates that more than half the respondents either strongly agree or at least agree to be exhibiting the vibrant trait. The distribution is skewed towards the left, that is, negative values, hence -1.453.

Question 1b: Successful customer personality.

What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel customers in terms of being?

b) Successful

Table 4. Successful traits statistics.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, Error 0.188
Successful customer personality	3.95	4	4.0	977	-1.243

The mean of 3.95 indicates that most of the customers are agreeing to the exhibition of strong successful traits. The standard deviation of less than 1 against a range of 4 indicates that the views of the customers are not deviating much from the

trait exhibited. The mode and median of 4 is reflecting a popular perception in agreeing to possess the successful trait. More than 71% of the respondents either strongly agree or at least agree to the assertion. Reliability, intelligence, and success are the traits associated with customers who like competence brands [7].

Question 1c: Upper class customer personality.

What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel customers in terms of being?

c) Upper Class

Table 5. Upper-class descriptive.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, *Error 0.188*
Upper-class customer personality	3.30	3	3.0	1.070	-.026

The mean of 3, 3 reflects that the upper class trait is indicating a neutral popular view with slight bias towards agreeing. The standard deviation of greater than one indicates that customers have comparatively deviant views from the mean towards the upper class trait. The frequency distribution is close to be normal.

Question 1d: Tough customer personality.

What are the personality traits exhibited by Powertel customers in terms of being?

d) Tough

Table 6. Tough trait descriptive statistics.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, *Error 0.188*
Tough customer personality	3.68	4	4.0	1.123	-.720

An average of greater than 3 indicates than most of the Powertel customers are tough. A median and mode of 4 also reflects a popular trait towards agreeing to the possession of the trait. The standard deviation is however comparatively bigger than that of other traits indicating that the views are more deviant from the mean.

Research Question 2: What is Powertel Communications Company's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?

The research question 2 has been split into sub-questions as follows:

Question 2a: Exciting Powertel brand personality.

What is Powertel's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?

a) Exciting

Table 7. Exciting brand personality descriptive statistics.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, *Error 0.188*
Exciting Powertel personality	3.41	4	4.0	1.015	-.858

Customers generally agree to the perception of Powertel being an exciting brand. A mode and median of 4, supported by a mean of 3.41 indicates that at least half the responds either agree or strongly to the view. Their views are not very deviant from the mean as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.015. Brands with unique and exciting personality qualify more likely for the role of partner [21].

Question 2b: Competent Powertel brand personality:

What is Powertel's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?

b) Competent

Table 8. Competent Powertel brand personality.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, *Error 0.188*
Competent Powertel personality	3.68	4	4.0	1.056	-.923

The Powertel brand is strongly regarded as being competent. More than 80% indicated that they agree to this perception and only 14% do not agree to this view. This is also indicated by a mode and median of 4 which are above the mean of 3.68. Cool-oriented consumers prefer "competence". Reliability, intelligence, and success are the traits associated with these brands. Blue colour in a company's image is linked to competence, as it is associated with intelligence, communication, trust, efficiency, duty, and logic [7]; 70% of the respondents prefer the colour blue thus further confirming strong allegiance to the competent personality perception. Fifty-eight (58%) of all the respondents distinctively selected this personality trait which further confirms the dominance of this personality. Consumers are more likely to have positive emotions towards a brand they perceive as competent [21].

Question 2c: Sophisticated Powertel brand personality:

What is Powertel's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?

c) Sophisticated

Table 9. Sophisticated Powertel brand personality.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, *Error 0.188*
Sophisticated Powertel personality	3.20	4	3.0	1.010	-.587

Powertel Communications Company's customers generally perceived the company to be neutral in terms of the sophisticated personality. Statistics however reflect a slight bias towards agreeing but comparatively the assertion is not very strong. The median of 3 indicates than more than half are either neutral or do not agree to the perception of Powertel being a sophisticated brand. A brand that is sophisticated is viewed as charming, attractive and fit for the upper classes. Black colour in a company's image stands for sophistication and glamour [7]. Powertel does not use black in its image colours. A possible reason why the sophistication attribute was not very descriptive because of the definition of

sophistication. It could have been misinterpreted to mean a high degree of complexity instead of the intended meaning of involving a great deal of worldly experience and knowledge of fashion and culture.

Question 2d: Rugged Powertel brand personality:
What is Powertel's brand personality as perceived by the customers in terms of being?
d) Rugged

Table 10. Rugged Powertel brand personality.

N= 166, Range =4	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness, Error 0.188
Rugged Powertel personality	2.92	3	3.0	860	196

Only 20% of the customers agreed with the view of Powertel Communications Company possessing rugged traits. Twenty-six (26%) disagreed with the notion whilst the rest neither agreed nor disagreed with the perception. The mean of less than 3 indicates that generally Powertel does not exhibit strong rugged personality traits. The standard deviation of less than 1 indicates than the views are not very much deviant from the mean, meaning that they are very much centred on the mean. Brown in a company's brand image can be linked to ruggedness through associations of seriousness, nature, earthiness [5], and reliability, support [7]. Powertel does not have brown colours on its brand image.

Research Question 3: To what extent do the customer personality traits correlate with Powertel Communications Company's perceived brand personality in accordance with Aaker's personality dimensions' framework?

Table 11. Pearson Correlation.

Exciting vs. Vibrant trait	Competent vs. Successful trait	Sophisticated vs. Upper-class trait	Rugged vs. Tough trait
0.345	0.419	0.376	0.363

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation analysis was used by the researchers to clearly and easily see if there is a relationship between the variables in accordance with Aaker's dimensions. All the 4 facets show a moderately, significant positive correlation. According to reference [5], in some fields of study, (e.g. social or behavioural sciences), a correlation of r=0.3 or r=0.4 may be regarded as strong however it is generally considered as moderate. The successful trait comparatively shows a higher correlation with the successful trait.

Hypothesis Testing

H_o: There is no significant correlation between the characteristics of personalities for the customers and their brand personality perceptions for Powertel in accordance with reference [1] brand personality dimension framework.

Paired T- Test

The paired t-test is used when there is one measurement variable (personality on customers) and two nominal variables. (Brand personality and Human Personality). When the difference of each pair is small compared to the variation among pairs, a paired t–test can give you a lot more statistical power than a two-sample t–test. A paired t-test does not require both samples to have equal variance. By accounting for the variability caused by different items, subjects, or conditions, and thereby reducing experimental error. This can result in a more efficient design that requires less resources to detect a significant difference, if one exists.

Table 12. Paired Samples Test.

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	VIBRANT customer personality - EXCITING Powertel personality	.705	1.130	.088	.532	.878	8.039	165	.000
Pair 2	SUCCESSFULL customer personality - COMPETENT Powertel personality	.271	1.098	.085	.103	.439	3.182	165	.002
Pair 3	UPPERCLASS customer personality - SOPHISTICATED Powertel personality	.102	1.163	.090	-.076	.281	1.134	165	.258
Pair 4	TOUGH customer personality - RUGGED Powertel personality	.759	1.140	.088	.584	.934	8.580	165	.000

Vibrant against: Exciting hypothesis testing: The null hypothesis is rejected since the significance value, P < 0.001 at 0.05 significance level. This indicates that the correlation of these two variables is statistically significant with 95 % confidence.

Successful against competent hypothesis testing: The null hypothesis is rejected since the significance value, P < 0.001 at 0.05 significance level. This means that the correlation realised between the successful trait and the competent brand personality dimension is statistically significant with 95% confidence.

Upper-class against sophisticated hypothesis: The null hypothesis is retained since the significance value, P >0.05 at 0.05 significance level. This implies that the correlation

between the upper-class traits against the sophisticated brand personality dimension is not statistically significant within 95% confidence. The implication may mean that the differences are likely due to chance.

Tough against rugged hypothesis testing: The null hypothesis is rejected since the significance value, P < 0.001 at 0.05 significance level. This means that the correlation realised between the successful trait and the competent brand personality dimension is statistically significant with 95% confidence.

5. Discussion of Findings and Summary

The study empirically measured the brand personality for Powertel Communications Company by using the five-dimension Brand Personality Scales developed by reference [1] as a framework. Data was collected through an online questionnaire and an interview protocol directed to Powertel Communications Company customers whose responses yielded 166 responses from a population of 264 customers. Reliability analysis using Cronbach alpha of the measurement model and the structural model provided evidence that the 'sincerity' dimension proposed by reference [1] was not reliable. The reliability and validity test of the questionnaire resulted in the omission of the sincerity dimension. The T-Test performed showed respondent's ideas about the personality of Powertel Communications Company and they believed Powertel Communications Company's personality dimensions are: excitement, competence and sophistication. However, the respondents did not agree on the rugged dimension which showed that Powertel Communications Company is not a rugged brand. The personality dimension "competence" was the most dominant personality amongst the customers followed by "excitement". Some demographic effects on the personality perceptions were also analysed and found to be significant across all the dimensions except the rugged dimension. Finally, the hypothesis about the correlation between the customer traits and the customers' perception on the brand personality for Powertel Communications Company revealed some mixed feelings amongst the respondents. The results showed that there was significant correlation to justify reference [1]`s model.

The study revealed that all Powertel Communications Company customers prefer buying branded products especially when quality is important and that these customers predominantly perceive Powertel as a competent brand. The study also revealed that although consumers select those brands that have a brand personality that is congruent with their own self-concept. This was shown by the correlation of the customer's personality traits with that of the brand personality perceptions. The study also revealed that Powertel Communications Company is offering either value for money or better services than its competitors thus rendering the company generally competent.

The study concludes that consumers are likely to associate themselves with a product by closely matching the brand personality with their own. The implications of this is that by adapting and fine tuning the personality of a brand to the preferred target groups' personality, brand managers can achieve a stronger and longer lasting relationship between the brand and the client. The results of the study showed that "excitement" and "competence" are the most dominant personality dimensions perceived by Powertel Communications Company customers. Telecommunications brands that fail to convey congruent characteristics with their customers are likely to be perceived by consumers as less favourable to competing brands. This can further be substantiated by the study`s findings which indicated that most of the customers buy branded products especially when quality is to be considered.

Recommendation

After an analysis of the findings, the study strongly recommends that Powertel Communications Company envisages the philosophy of brand personality by modelling advertisements, marketing actions and price in a way that is congruent with the personalities of their target customers. This information will then effectively help measure the success of the branding exercise by finding if consumers have similar perceptions with the intention of brand strategy formulators. The study also recommends that Powertel Communications Company focusses more on innovations, value added services and promotions on their product portfolio. This is mainly because its customers largely perceive the company as competent and exciting. Innovations and value added services will enhance the "competence" attribute whilst promotion will enhance the "exciting" attribute thus further strengthening the company's competitive advantage. That Powertel Communications Company reposition itself in a personality which distinctively differentiate itself from other competitors. The basis for differentiation need may come from the fact that at least 30% of the customers according to the study regard Powertel Communications Company`s services as similar to competitors and at least 50% of the customers who are particular about branded products consider quality when making purchase decisions. This shows that, all things constant, an improvement in quality can distinguish the company from competition thus gaining substantive competitive advantage.

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