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The Impact of Multiple Dimensions of Brand Personality on Attitude toward Brand of Smart Phone in Thailand

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of brand personality of iPhone on attitude toward brand. The hypothesis were constructed from the conceptual framework to understand the effect between dependent variable and independent variable.

Five hypotheses were developed. Descriptive research was used, applying the survey techniques and under accidental sampling methods. A total of 300 questionnaires were collected from people on Silom commercial area in Bangkok. In 50.3 percent were 151 females, the age between 31-40 years old were 78 respondents in 26 percent, the education level at bachelor degree level in 179 respondents in 59.7 percent. Using the five point rating scale for the brand personality dimensions and attitude towards brand. In this research used SPSS software for the statistical treatment of data by applying descriptive analysis and inferential analysis which included the analysis of simple linear regression and multiple linear regression.

The result of this study indicated that the dimensions of competence and Sophistication have positive significant effect on attitude toward brand. The findings of this research can be used by the academics and market research to understand the effect of brand personality dimension on attitude towards brand.

Keywords: Brand personality, Attitude toward brand, Smart Phone

INTRODUCTION

The Apple brand has got the world number 1 most valuable brand in 2016(www.forbes.com) in the technology sector. In highly competitive market, a brand name of a product becomes one of the most imperative factors in gaining competitive advantage among competitors. Moreover base on the empirical researches they mainly focused on determining critical factors which help understand the way in which the product owner can stimulate purchase intention of customer, particularly in the brand name product. Farnsworth and Austrin, 2010 started how smartphone has transformed from being an object of

“conspicuous consumption”. For example iPhone have better and higher resolution screens and offer consumers a more variety extensive of features, as well as mobile web browsing, hundreds and hundreds of apps, social media, video and audio playback, GPS, games, a video camera, picture and video editing, and much more (Ajax and Irfan, 2012). Its first generation of iPhone was sold in six countries like Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria and the USA. Currently iPhone are sold in 70 countries including ASEAN countries. These are the top 5 of world’s most valuable brand, the number 1 is Apple that has got brand value of \$154.1 billion, number 2 is Google had \$82.5 billion of brand value, and number 3 is Microsoft had \$75.2 billion of brand value , number 4 is Coca-Cola had brand value of \$58.5 billion, number 5 is Facebook had brand value of \$ 52.6 billion.

The fast growing of mobile phone user and in the total of active mobile internet users is 3.448 billion in 2017 report from *www.wearesocial.com*. It is immense market and high competition. Varnali, K., & Toker, A. (2010) due to recent developments in the mobile technology, increased mobile user and features and appearances of the mobile devices, which enables mobile user has more access to mobile technology anytime, anywhere. The mobile phone have practically get into every aspect of people’s lives. Therefore from this aspect to understand the consumer behavior of how they represent of iPhone in human traits. In personality psychology play a big role in describing a person. User’s imagery can have effect on the brand’s personality; it is a “set of human characteristics related to the brand’s typical user” (Aaker, 1997, p. 348). This research to investigate how consumer personalize the brand and the effect on the attitude towards brand. This study investigate how brand personality dimension effect the attitude towards brand. The respondents of the study are the consumers in silom area, group of people that aware of iPhone brand. Therefore, this paper aims to demine the effect of five brand personality dimension are the most susceptible to maintain strong relationship with it and to attitude towards brand.

This research investigates the effect of multiple dimensions of brand personality on brand attitude as the research framework was conceptualized as follows:

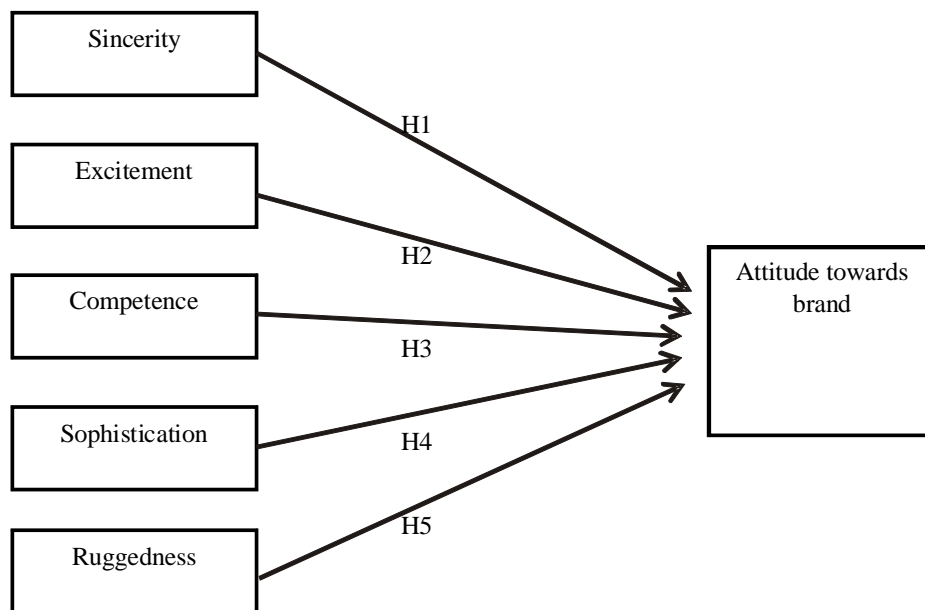


Figure 1: Research Framework

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Sincerity dimension of brand personality has positive effect on attitude toward brand
- H2: Excitement dimension of brand personality has positive effect on attitude toward brand
- H3: Competence dimension of brand personality has positive effect on attitude toward brand
- H4: Sophistication dimension of brand personality has positive effect on attitude toward brand
- H5: Ruggedness dimension of brand personality has positive effect on attitude toward brand

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Personality

In the past fifteen years, amount of studies had been done with the aims to define, measure and to understand the strong brands forming antecedents and consequences (D. Aaker & Biel, 1993). Since the intensified competition and the similar products and services choices in the market within different branches and sectors, branding has increasingly seen as the element of differentiation in which the consumers evaluate beyond the aspect of functional and rational.

The brand personality scales had been purposed by Aaker (1997) to explain and measure the brand's "personality" on five core dimensions; each of them was separated into a set of facets. It was shown from the results that though the brand and human personality relationship is not truly asymmetric where many consumers may associate themselves closely to the product and their own brand's personality matching. Figure 1 gives the personality dimension by Aaker, (1997) summary and its facets.

The brand management has been approached by this research as a natural product expansion or the need of understanding on the brand's facets representation is seen by product portfolio management or aim to impose on consumers (Aaker, D. 1996). Among the brand identity forming facets (such as relationship with the consumer, physical features, and reflected cultures), brand personality is one of the intangible attributes in the competitive environment with the differentiation potential.

Brand personality refers to "a human characteristics set related to the brand" (Aaker J., 1997, p. 347), and this is a crucial aspect in advertising (Plummer, 1984). Consumers consider brands regarding their human personality traits. Advertising strategies that apply the fact like personification and user imagery creation can offer the personality to the brand since human personalities can be different and lasting. Human personality traits result from the basis of person's behavior, attitudes, beliefs, physical attributes, and demographic characteristics (Aaker J., 1997). Brand personality traits are generated via any kind of communication between consumer and the brand. Usually, there is nothing intrinsic to a brand that makes it, for instance, exciting, young, or traditional; instead these qualities are generated via customer contact with brand either direct or indirect, including the product-user image (Aaker J., 1997; Plummer, J, T, 1985). Aaker J. (1996) stated that if assuming a brand as a person, self-expressive benefit can be formed to be a customer's vehicle to express the personality of his or her own.

This study seeks to research further into brand personality to identify its key dimensions in Thailand and to validate the scale of measurement and results comparison with the Aaker J. (1997) proposed scale in the United States and other contexts.

The five dimensions and fifteen facets (Aaker J. 1997). These five dimensions emerge from different sets of product categories, thus suggesting the scale generalizability.

The first dimension is sincerity dimension has got 4 facets. The attributes represented are Down-to-Earth, Honesty, Wholesomeness, Cheerful. Followed by second dimension is excitement dimension has got 4 facets. The attributes represented are Daring, Spirited, Imaginative, up-to-date. The third dimension is competence dimension has got 3 facets. The attributes represented are Reliability, Intelligence, Success. The fourth dimension is sophistication dimension has got 2 facets. The attributes represented are Upper Class, Charming. And the fifth dimension is ruggedness dimension has got 2 facets. The attributes represented Outdoorsy, Toughness.

Trott, S. (2011) conducted the research on the influence of brand personality evidence from India on Nokia. The conclusion that some dimension of brand personality have a remarkable impact on perceived quality of Nokia. Brand personality in the competence dimension that had affects the perceived quality of Nokia mobile users to the highest degree follow by sophistication. Ruggedness, on contrary, has a negative correlation to perceived quality.

Akin, M. (2011) predicting consumers' behavioral intentions with perceptions of brand personality: a study in mobile phone markets. In his study, it is examined whether the perceptions of customer about brand personality of mobile phone affect their behavioral intention, or not. The study shows that the dimension of competency and excitement have higher impact on behavioral intention than the dimensions of traditionalist and androgen.

Attitude towards brands

Attitude is an object internal evaluation of individual for instance on the branded product. It is the crucial concept for the marketing research since 1960s. Attitude is defined by Hoyer and MacInnis (1997) as the "relatively global and enduring object, issue, person, or action evaluation". For this long-term interest, there are two main reasons, firstly like to the definition provided by Hoyer and MacInnis, attitudes are normally seen as relatively stable and are enduring predisposition for the particular actions of consumer (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define attitudes as "learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object". The definition presumed that attitude can be learned or acquired. This definition clarifies that the learned or acquired attitude neither in one's own nature nor an inborn character so it can be influenced by marketing informations and activities. Attitude can be associated with one object (a brand) or the whole group.

Ambroise, *et al.* (2005) study the measurement of brand personality then apply the brand personality scale to competing brands in two product categories. Therefore it shows that brand personality profiles are different for competing brands. Then finally test the impact of brand personality on consumers' attitude and commitment towards the brand. Consumers' involvement in the product categories is introduced as a moderating variable. According to her finding the results confirm that attitude is a strong determinant of commitment. The model test a relationship between personality and commitment only, there is a significant structural relationship from personality to commitment for the sportswear brands. Then they add the relationship between personality and attitude to the model, they find a strong structural relationship between personality and attitude for both product categories.

They uncovered as well that the structural both between personality and attitude was equal for the two involvement group. This is more surprising as we did expect a greater influence of personality on attitude for highly involved consumers. Hence, personality highly influences attitude.

Freling and Forbes, (2013) Their studied indicated the personality trait most reflected in the information presented in the stimulus material indicated specific brand personality dimensions were successfully manipulated. These results suggest that subjects exposed to stimulus materials containing information about the brand's personality regardless of the dimension had significantly more favorable brand attitudes

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

In this research the population is from Silom commercial area, age 18 years and above who are familiar with iPhone. The data was collected between February – May, 2560. The researcher calculated number of sample size referring by Taro Yamane Significant level at 0.5 sampling 300 subjects.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire is divided into five parts as follows:

Part 1: The first part gathers demographic information of the respondents such as age, gender, education level, personal income and marital status.

Part 2: Brand Personality: The questionnaire of Aaker (1997) included 15 items of question on Brand Personality have five dimensions, including sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, ruggedness. It was divided into five dimensions of investigation each of which comprised five question items: Each item was scored on a 5-point scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” were used. The questionnaire are from brand personality five dimension, (Aaker, Jennifer L. (1997).

Part 3: Attitude Toward Brand : The questionnaire of Bagozzi (1982) included 5 items of questions on Attitude Toward Brand. It was divided into five dimensions of investigation each of which comprised five question items: Each item was scored on a 5-point scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” were used.

Pilot Test

The pilot test was done in order to test the effect brand personality and self-brand connection on attitude toward brand and purchase intention in Bangkok, Thailand. There were 30 questionnaires distributed to population. The respondents were people in Silom area, Thailand. In the questionnaire, the researcher has referred to the previous questionnaires used by many researchers such as Aaker (1997), Bagozzi, Richard P. (1982) Since the questionnaire was originally written in English, the researcher has thus employed an English academician to translate it into Thai and to do a back translation in order to check for its correction. A tool for data analysis was SPSS software (version 21.0) while statistics used were mean, standard deviation, and t- test value. In addition, the pilot test was also examined for its reliability, and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was also used.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is a measurement that could let the researcher to examine the reliability of the properties of measurement scales and the items providing information about the relationships between individual items in the scale. Garver and Mentzer (1999) recommended computing cronbach's alpha coefficients to determine the scale reliability. If the value of alpha is greater than or equal to 0.70, it implies sufficiency of reliability.

Cronbach's alpha = .844, The researcher collected data by distributing questionnaires. The data analysis used frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, by Multiple Regression

RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the data analysis are summarized as follows.

1. The majority of respondents were 151 females in 50.3 percent, the age are between 31-40 years old and 78 respondents in 26 percent. The education level at bachelor degree level in 179 respondents in 59.7 percent. The monthly income 128 or 42.6 percent less than or at 20,000 baht.

Table 2
Mean SD and Result of Brand Personality

<i>Dimension of Brand Personality</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Sincerity	3.74	.73
Excitement	3.89	.70
Competence	4.04	.67
Sophistication	4.07	.75
Ruggedness	3.53	.85
average	3.85	.74

From Table 2 the respondents has an opinion of brand personality, found that the dimension of Sophistication has mean 4.07, competence has mean 4.04 and excitement has mean 3.89

Hypothesis Testing

Table 3 the results of the Multiple Regression analysis are as follows.

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
1 (Constant)	1.620	.228		7.100	.000
Sincerity	-.027	.058	-.035	-4.66	.641
Excitement	.112	.058	.138	1.918	.056
Competence	.259	.051	.304	5.101	.000***
Sophistication	.126	.045	.165	2.770	.006**
Ruggedness	-.002	.041	-.030	-.493	.623

a. Dependent Variable: v3 * p-value < .05 ** p-value < .01 *** p-value < .001

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict attitude towards brand based on their sincerity, excitement, competent, sophistication and ruggedness. A significant regress equation was found ($F, 249 = 14.543, P < .000$), with an R^2 of .198. Participant's predicted attitude towards brand is equal to $1.620 - 0.027$ (sincerity) $+ 0.112$ (excitement) $+ 0.259$ (competence) $+ 0.126$ (sophistication) $- 0.020$ (ruggedness), where all independent variable measured as five likert scale. Object of measurement increased by -0.027 for each unit of sincerity, increased by $.112$ for each unit of excitement, increased by $.259$ for each unit of competence, increased by $.126$ for each unit of sophistication, increased by -0.020 for each unit of ruggedness. The competence and sophistication were significant.

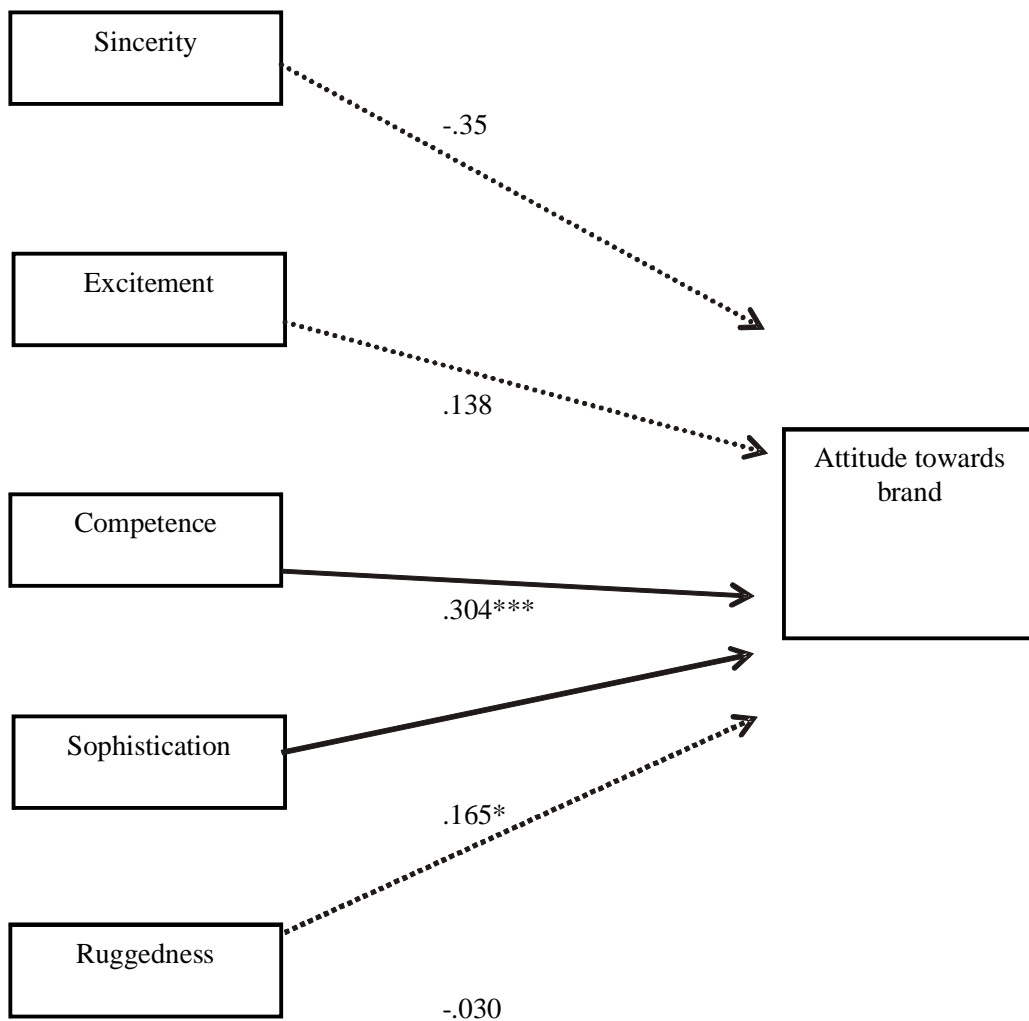


Figure 2: Hypothesis Testing

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this research the dimension of competence significantly effect on attitude toward brand consistent to Ambroise *et al.* (2005) study prove the strong impact of brand personality-competence on attitude toward brand. When the relationship between attitude and personality is added into the model, it is found that a

strong structural relationship between attitude and personality to both categories of product. In this study show that Thai consumers feel iPhone is more reliable, intelligence, success. It can be that the iPhone have many programs. And also the applications are user friendly.

The Sophistication significantly effect on attitude towards brand consistent to Freling & Forbes (2005) study found sophistication has significantly effect on attitudes toward brand. The result show that Thai consumers find iPhone is prestigious, charming, more modern and attractive.

The result show that the Competence and the Sophistication are significantly consistent to Ardestani, A. S., & Afshar, M. (2015) found that the result indicates that brand personality has a significant effect on attitude toward brand. Kim and Chang, 2005 cite by Ardestani, A. S., & Afshar, M. A successful brand can be the most valuable source for the company. In fact, brand is a tool for determining design, quality, credibility and value. Today, products with brand have replaced goods. This will shorten the decision making process of purchase.

LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this study result may not generalizable to all other products and brand. The datas were collected from people in Silom commercial area in Bangkok. And also among wide range of age and income. Therefore, it is recommended to study further in other big cities, specific age groups. In this study the test product is the high-value unit therefore it should include the low-value unit also.

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