

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Evaluating the Influence of the Sportswear Brand Personality on Generation Y's Customer Preference in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Y generation is an important target market in fashion products such as sportswear. Due to the big market potential, many of brand owners created various brand personality to attract the interest of this generation. This study attempts to explain whether there is a positive effect of brand personality on Gen Y's preference in choosing a sportswear brand. A purposive sampling was conducted by taking 300 Gen Y people distributed in the area of Central Malaysia. Using quantitative methods and multiple regression and t-test analysis, it was found that brand personality such as sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness have a positive influence on Gen Y's preference in determining sportswear brand choices, while the personalities of excitement components are not proven to have significant influence. Marketer in sportswear industry should, however, carefully evaluate the nature of brand personality regarding any other variables that are not included in this research that should be addressed to the future research.

Keywords: Brand personality, Gen Y, Sportswear, Customer preference

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1. Introduction

Brand personality is a set of human characteristics that are attributed to a brand name (Aacker 1977) Understanding the influence of brand personality to consumer behaviour can be beneficial to a company.). Aaker developed brand personality scale and identified five distinct personality dimensions that are associated with brands, which are excitement, sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Consumers often choose and use brands that have a brand personality consistent with their own-concept (Lucia Malar et al.2011)

Based on definition supplied by the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, sportswear is "a product purchased with the intent that it will be used in active sport" (Newbery, 2009). As the trend of healthy and active living is growing, the sport wear market is also growing rapidly (Ponsignon et al. 2015). Globally this market is highly competitive and is one of the most heavily branded segment in the global apparel market (Tong & Su 2014).

Considering not so many studies have been done to specifically identify the personalities of sportswear brands, this research takes a Gen Y perspective to examine the personalities associated with sportswear brands and tests the applicability of Aaker's brand personality framework in the context of sportswear brands.

Gen Y refers to the specific generation born between the 1980's to the early 1990's (Muda et al. 2016). Gen Ys in Malaysia make up the largest population of consumers, have a high level of spending power and make informed decisions on their purchases (Asian Institute of Finance 2015). So Gen Y is a big potential consumer group targeted by marketer (Asian Institute of Finance 2015).

A studied focus on Gen Y perspective was conducted to provide an insight for sportswear industry. Therefore, marketing practitioners have become increasingly aware of the importance of building a clear and distinctive brand personality (Das et al., 2012; Keller and Richey, 2006) as a central driver of consumer preference (Toldos-Romero & Orozco-Gómez 2015).

1.1 Problem Statement

Aaker (1997) had conducted researches on brand personality. The conceptual and operational definitions of brand personality vary from study to study. Although all business player especially in sportswear know about the potential market for Gen Y, but not many of them understand that brand personality can direct this generation in how they choose their brand preference. Therefore it is needed to conduct more research for a better understanding in brand personality. Besides that, most of the studies conducted on brand personality are mainly done in western countries instead of Malaysia.

Hence, it is an opportunity to conduct the research in Malaysia to investigate brand personality in this multi-cultural country.

Previously, there was few researcher conducted study regarding brand personality of sportswear in western countries. Very few studies explore the impact of brand personality of sportswear among Gen Y especially in Malaysia. Thus, this research is going to examine impact of brand personality on customer preference among Gen Y in Malaysia. Furthermore, the rapid growths of Malaysia economy induce the competitiveness of sportswear market, the researcher would like to look into Gen Y customer’s preference which could assist a company to sustain or improve their market position.

1.2 Research Questions and Objectives

Refer to the all of components brand personality; this research will investigate the influence of them to the customer preference among Gen Y in Malaysia. In more detail these research questions can be formulated as follows:

What are the implications of understanding of excitement, sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness as components of brand personality toward sportswear brand customer preference among Gen Y in Malaysia?

To find out the answers to the above questions, some research objectives are set up as follow:

1. To investigate the implication of excitement personality on brand customer preference
2. To find out the implication of sincerity personality on brand customer preference
3. To determine the implication of competence personality on brand customer preference
4. To evaluate the implication of sophistication personality on brand customer preference
5. To evaluate the implication of ruggedness personality on brand customer preference.

All of brand customer preferences here are in the context of sportswear brands among Gen Y customers.

2. Literature Review

Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.(Kotler ,2000). Nowadays a brand is a valuable asset and branding means the creation of the asset.(Vazifehdoost 2016). Brands serve several valuable functions.

First for customers, brands can simplify choice, promise a particular quality level, reduce risk, and engender trust. Brands reflect the complete experience that customers have with products. (Su & Tong 2015) Second, brand play an important role in determining the effectiveness of marketing efforts such as advertising and channel placement. Furthermore, brand is legal

protection proof of ownership and quality signals (De Chernatony and McDonald, 2003).

Successful brands as the associated elements that cannot be copied by competitors, enhancing consumer preferences over competing brands. (Ebrahim 2013)The branding challenge is to develop a deep set of positive associations for the brand. (Kotler, 2000, pg.188). Strengthen of brand able to win consumer preferences and construct long-lasting relationships (Kay, 2006).

2.1 Brand Personality

There are many published marketing literature of brand personality were described different concepts from researcher, marketers and customers perceptions. Table: 1 stated brand personality cognizance of several academicians and researchers. These definitions are collected and combined from various published studies. This study regards brand personality as a set of human like characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker 1997).

Table 1: Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives of Researchers

No.	Author & Year of Publication	Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives
		Researchers
1	(Aaker 1997)	Brand personality, which refers to the set of human characteristics associated with a brand
1	(Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003)	Brand personality is the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands.

Table 2: Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives of Practitioners / Marketers

No.	Author & Year of Publication	Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives
		Practitioners / Marketers
1	(D’Astous et al. 2006)	Creating distinct images in consumers’ mind in order to differentiate their offerings from those of competitors.
2	(Demangeot & Broderick 2010)	Brand personality is a popular metaphor in marketing to investigate consumers’ brand perceptions and describe brands as if they were human beings

Table 3: Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives of Consumers

No.	Author & Year of Publication	Brand Personality Definitions and Perspectives
		Consumers
1	(Beldona & Wysong, 2012)	When consumers view a brand as having human characteristics, the brand is said to have a personality

2	(Anon n.d. 2014)	People express themselves through the brands they consume to the extent that these brands serve as an extension of the self.
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In short it is can be said that a brand could have a personality such as the human being while this personality is quite important for marketers to understand consumer perception on describing a brand.

2.2 Function and Benefit of Brand Personality

Brand personality has been identified as both relevant and influential for consumers and thereby as providing many benefits to firms (Demangeot & Broderick, 2010). The functional benefits of a brand become much more persuasive when they are expressed by the brand’s personality. Brand personality is not easy to copy. (Aaker, 2014) According to researchers brand personality is a key component of brand equity, high brand equity levels are known to lead to higher consumer preferences. (Aaker, 2014) Other than that it could build brand loyalty (Su & Tong, 2015b)

The concept of brand personality offers a major managerial advantage. (Ahmad & Thyagaraj 2015) Brand personality can be an important tool in differentiating their brand from the competition. (Tong & Li 2013, Vazifehdoost 2016) and a central driver of consumer preference, usage and purchase intention (Keller, 2003). As the “soul” of the brand, brand personality is an essential promotional tool appealing to targeted audiences for the development of an overall brand image (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Moreover it could improve effectiveness of marketing communication with target customers through right marketing strategies for creating favourable attitudes and behaviours toward the brand.(Su & Tong, 2015b) .Furthermore, it provide better understanding on the development and maintaining of relations between brands and consumers (J. Gouteron, 2008). Personality is an appropriate metaphor for brands develops attraction features for brands which are having personality similar to human personality based on customer preference. (M. N. Koebel & R. Ladwein, 1999).

Consumer tends to choose a brand that is associated with the group he or she wishes to belong to, accepting the brand’s identity as a part of their own. It tends to serve as a symbolic or self- expressive function (Huang et al.2012) and also serves as a vehicle for representing and indicating product-related utilitarian benefits and brand attributes.(Aaker, 2014). Personality is an important factor in the consumer’s choices of brands. The brands chosen by consumers are generally in congruence with their own personalities.(A. Ahmad & Thyagaraj, 2015).

Previous studies indicate brand personality has emerged as an important means of brand differentiation and thus of increasing consumer preference.(Demangeot & Broderick, 2010) . For instance, a brand’s personality can increase consumer preference for and usage of that brand, foster feelings of comfort and confidence in the minds of consumers, enhance levels of loyalty and trust and provide a basis for brand differentiation among the

myriad brands in the market. (Keller, 2003; Wang et al., 2009) Consumers may hold more positive product evaluations toward a strong and positive brand personality’s product. (Tong & Li, 2013).

Brand personality was conceptualized as one type of brand association in consumer memory that may be accessed as the need or desire for a particular product arises, and that may influence consumer preferences.(Freling & Forbes, 2005). As a result; the higher the congruency between both personalities, the higher is the consumer’s preference and purchase intention for the respective brand.(A. Ahmad & Thyagaraj, 2015)

2.3 Dimension of Brand Personality

There are five dimensions that uniquely applied to consumers’ brand characterization (Aaker, 2014). Aaker also developed a theoretical framework as seen on Figure: 1 of the brand personality construct by determining the number and nature of dimensions of brand personality traits. In addition, Aaker (2014) developed a measurement scale called the brand personality scale, which consisted of 42 traits. Even when the sample was divided by age or sex, or when subgroupings of brands were used, five personality dimensions emerged. These five brand personality dimensions desired by many companies for their products are sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness.

The impact of this model has been so profound that since 1997 most academic publications about brand personality are based on Aaker’s methodology. This model has been adapted in other countries as scale of studied different brands and products.

According the results of previous research (Aaker, 1997; Freling & Forbes, 2005; Demageot & Broderick, 2010; Beldona & Wysong, 2012; and Su & Tong, 2015a), majority researcher adapts “Big Five” brand personality scale: 1) sincerity 2) competence3) excitement 4) sophistication 5) ruggedness as measurement of customer’s preferable brand personality dimension. Competence is highest ranking dimension among customers whereas ruggedness is the lowest ranking among all dimensions.

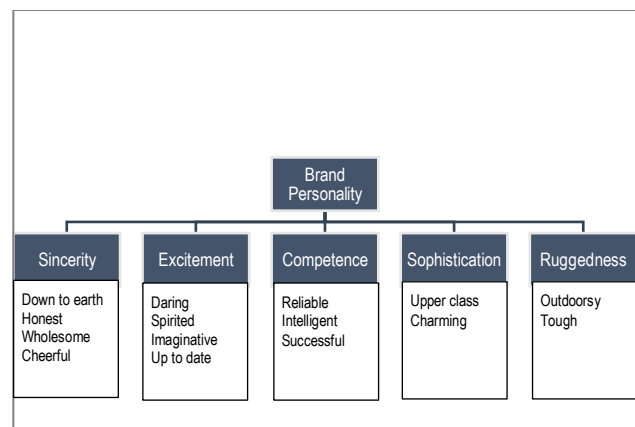


Figure 1: A Brand Personality framework

2.4 Customer Preference

Consumer preferences for brands reflect three responses: cognitive, affective and conative or behavioural. (Silva & Alwi, 2006) The cognitive components encompass the utilitarian beliefs of brand elements (Grimm, 2005). The affective responses refer to the degree of liking or favouring that reflects consumer feelings towards the brand (Grimm, 2005; Hsee et al., 2009). The conative or behavioural tendencies define as consumers' predicted or approached act towards the object. Chernev et al., (2011) assumes that the association of behavioural outcome, such as willingness to pay and brand preference.

Consumer preferences are one of the most important information that a company must possess. Consumer preferences can be effectively measured and their research may provide a deeper understanding of the choices that consumers (Voicu, 2013). A deeper understanding of such preference dynamics can help marketing managers' better design marketing program and associate the brand with a symbol and perceive it as having high quality (Voicu, 2013) which could build a long term relationship with consumers. (Nawi, 2011).

2.5 Gen Y and Sportswear Preference

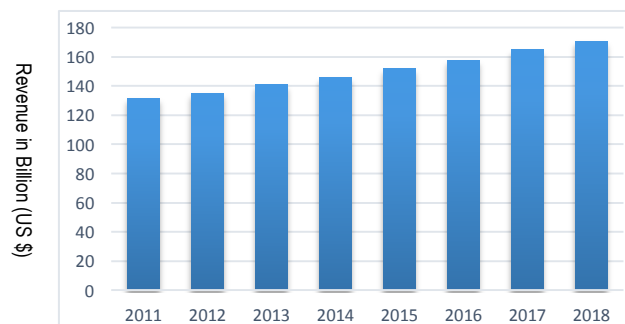
Generation Y are known by many names: the millennials; the iPod generation; the me firsts; the internet generation; the echo boomers; the Nintendo generation; the digital generation (Schofield & Honoré, 2010). Table 4 indicates the global generation overview.

Malaysia is having 31.7 million of population, median age of Malaysian is 28 years old (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016). Generation Y born between 1977 and 1994, is revitalizing the American economy (Linda. P, 2002 ,Engebretson, 2004). Therefore Gen Y is customer's age groups from 22-39 years old in 2016.

Gen Ys in Malaysia make up the largest population of consumers, have a high level of spending power and make informed decisions on their purchases. Gen Ys will increasingly be taking over more senior positions and will form the largest consumer segment. (Asian Institute of Finance, 2015).

According to the definition of Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA) (2008), the sportswear market comprises three segments which are active sports clothing which are designed and specifically purchased for use in active sports, sports clothing which are fitness-oriented apparel bought for general lifestyle usage, and licensed sports clothing which are lifestyle apparel bearing team or league logos. In recent decades, acceptability of casual dress on more occasions has paved the way for sportswear to move from a product line solely aimed at small and unique markets into a mainstream apparel market. (Campaign 2004).

Young people take Sportswear as a general and popular category because it is identified by them with a greater flexibility, comfort and more relaxed lifestyle. Manufacturers such as Adidas and Nike started expanding their business in the Asia to achieve higher sales volume for their products. (Deb, 2015). Based on the sources of (The Statistic Portal, 2016), total revenue of the global sports apparel market is continuously increasing from 2011 to 2018 as shown in Figure: 2. Sportswear is a booming industry that is benefiting hugely from the growing preoccupation with fitness and health (Anon n.d., 2014)



Source: The Statistics Portal (2016)

Figure: 2 Total revenue of Sportswear

The world most valuable sportswear brand evaluated by Forbes is Nike which has a brand value of (\$15 B). The top 5 sportswear brand which earned highest profits in 2015 are Nike (\$30.083 B), Adidas (\$15.853 B), Puma (\$4.1 B), Asics (\$3.5 B) and New Balance (\$2.5 B). (mba.skol.com).

Today's sportswear industry is booming in Malaysia. Sportswear items became a common and popular category of consumer goods as it gives young people a more relaxed lifestyle and greater comfort. (K. Ahmad, Islam, & Ahmed, 2012.) In Malaysia, sportswear brands such as Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Puma, Umbro and Fila are popular among sportswear consumers. Nike and Adidas to start expanding their business particularly in Asia as it has the potential to give them higher volume of sales for their products. (Habib & Aslam, 2014).

As Generation Y graduates from college and enters the work force, their earning potential will make them even more important as a powerful consumer group. (Taylor & Cosenza, 2002). Gen Y also have larger

Table 4: Global Generation Overview

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
China		Post 50s generation	Post 60s generation	Post 70s generation	Post 80s generation	Post 90s generation
India	Traditional generation			Non-traditional generation	Gen Y	
South Korea		475 generation	386 generation	Gen X and Gen Y		
Japan	1 st Boomer	Danso generation	Shinjinrui generation	2 nd Boomer	Post bubble	Shinjinrui junior Yutori
Russia	Baby boomers		Gen X		Gen Y (Gen "Pu")	
Bulgaria	Post war generation		Communist generation		Democracy generation	
Czech Republic	Baby boomers		Gen X – Husak's children generation		Gen Y	
South Africa	Baby boomers		Gen X		Gen Y	
Brazil	Baby boomers		Gen X		Gen Y	
US	Baby boomers		Gen X		Gen Y	

Source: Ordun, 2015

disposable income with limited or very less liability.(Kumar & Jena, 2016). Members of Gen Y have been described as individualistic, well-educated, technologically savvy, sophisticated, mature, and structured (Syrett and Lammiman, 2003). They are group-oriented and consider themselves to be “cool”, with a strong sense of identity. (Pesquera, 2005; Peterson, 2004) Generation Y desires distinctive brands with traits of their own that will serve as a form of self-expression. (Gupta et al., 2010)

In apparel sector, sportswear is especially made for the active people especially youth. Gen Y used sportswear for workout and casual evening outings. (Kumar & Jena, 2016) Brand name, services and quality are the main attributes of Gen Y consider on choices of clothing. (Taylor & Cosenza, 2002). Values tend to guide consumers’ product selection and evaluation based on an individual’s beliefs and the importance of that product relative to a consumer’s self. Generation Y consumers are self-respect, security, warm relationships with others, sense of accomplishment, sense of belonging, being well respected, and fun and enjoyment in life (Kim,2005)

Gen Y found great confidence and trust in the brand names of their choice.(Noble, Haytko, & Phillips, 2009) Products which fit self-image become preference products of Gen Y. They are selecting and consuming products that help them define who they are, what is important to them and what they value in life. Moreover, Gen Y prefer invest in products which good price and quality. (Noble et al., 2009) Generation Y consumers use technology to price compare and find the best deals possible when shopping (O'Donnell, 2011).

3. Methodology

A quantitative methodology was used for this research while it was designed by using descriptive research since most of the discussion on findings is based on established and well-known theory. Research is focused to investigate the implication of brand personality on Gen Y preference of Sportswear brand.

Table: 3 Measurement of brand personality dimension

Independent Variable	Dimension
Sincerity	Down-to-earth, honest, Wholesome ,Cheerful
Competence	Reliable, Intelligent, Successful
Excitement	Daring ,Spirited, Imaginative, Up-to-date
Sophistication	Upper class, Charming
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy, Tough

Research instrument used I this research was questionnaire which variables were set up based on five brand personality dimensions and personality traits according Aaker Brand personality scale framework

(Aaker, 1997). These variables and dimension are as seen in Table 3 and 4.

Table: 4 In-depth study of brand personality dimension

Independent Variable	Dimension
Sincerity The relationship might be similar to one that exists with a well-liked and respected member of family. If an individual feels the brand to be like a member of family, he/she will be committed to the relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down-to-earth Both feet firmly planted on the ground, family-oriented and narrow-minded • Honest Sincere, honest , real • Wholesome Original (not fake) • Cheerful Sensitive and friendly
Competence It manifests the expertise power of the individuals’ personality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable Hard-working , secure • Intelligent Content-driven and social • Successful Leadership and confident
Excitement If an individual feels himself/ herself having a spirited, young, up-to-date, and outgoing personality, he/she would like to associate with such brand that provides these personality characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daring Trendy and exciting • Spirited Cool, spirited and young • Imaginative Unique, remarkable and special • Up-to-date Independent and contemporary
Sophistication Having a good knowledge of culture and fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper class Glamorous, good-looking, attractive • Charming Feminine , smooth, soft
Ruggedness This personality dimension manifests in an individual who can withstand any situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoorsy Masculine ,manly, wild • Tough Rugged, rough

3.1 Sampling Design

Non-probability purposive sampling technique was conducted for this study due to the target of this study is only Gen Y of 22-39 years old. Other than that, sampling was selected according region of central and southern Malaysia because central and southern is big cities which have larger population of Gen Y. Regarding to the approximately total Gen Y population in Malaysia and based on Krejcie & Morgan table, about 300 respondents were chosen. Likert scale with the range 1-5 was applied in the questionnaire in order respondents can make assessment in every question they answer.

3.2 Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

There were five variables that predicted to have implication toward customer preference. These variables were set up as independent variables which consist of components of band personality such as sincerity, excitement. Competence, sophistication and ruggedness. All of these variables referred to the theory from Aaker. By adopting this, theoretical framework and hypothesis of this research can be constructed as seen in the Figure: 3

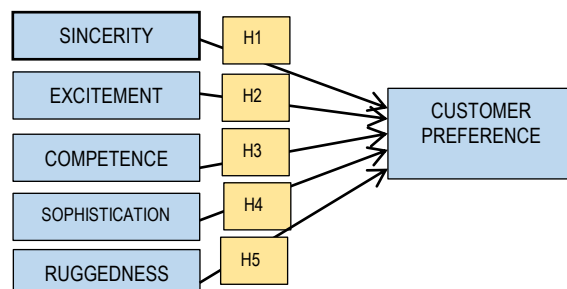


Figure 3: Research Theoretical Framework

- H1: Excitement has a positive relationship towards Customer's preference among Gen Y in Malaysia.
- H2: Sincerity has a positive relationship towards customer's preference among Gen Y in Malaysia.
- H3: Competence has a positive relationship towards customer's preference among Gen Y in Malaysia.
- H4: Sophistication has a positive relationship towards customer's preference among Gen Y in Malaysia.
- H5: Ruggedness has a positive relationship with customer's preference among Gen Y in Malaysia.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Gender of respondent as seen in Figure 4 is more to male (55 % males, 45% females) and descriptively, the characteristic on brand preference of Gen Ys based on the top five brands chosen in the market can be seen as result from cross tabulation brand versus gender and brand versus education as indicated in Figure: 5 and 6.

From these figures, it is can be concluded that either by gender or by education, Nike and Adidas are the top brands chosen by respondents followed by New Balance, Puma and Asics. No significant difference between male and female in choosing sportswear brand. They tend to choose Nike and Adidas as the first and the second top brand. Even based on education level, this trend is also similar; Nike and Adidas are still the top brands they choose.

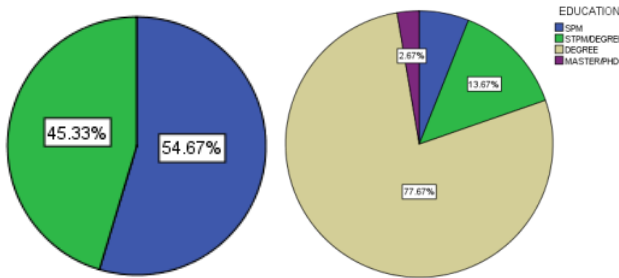


Figure 4: Demographic of respondents

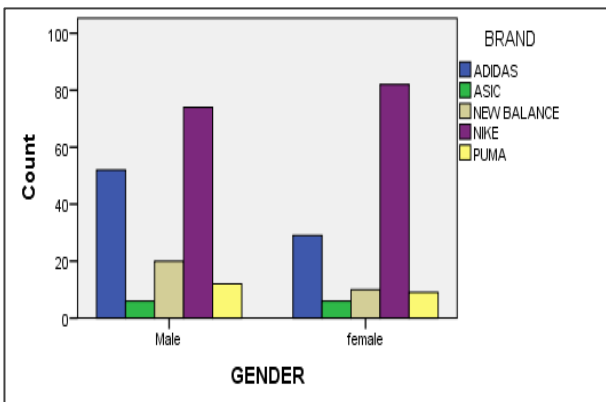


Figure: 5 cross tabulation gender vs brands

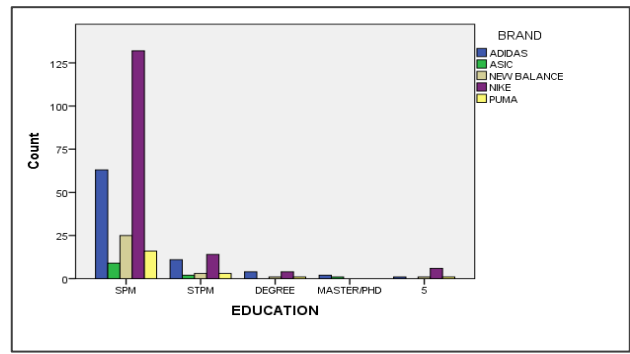


Figure: 6 Cross Tabulation Education vs Brands

4.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 5 indicates the relationship between dependent variable to all of its independent variables. From the value of alpha Pearson, the higher the value the stronger relationship between dependent variable to independent variables.

Table 5. Correlations all of Predictors

		SINCERITY	COMPETENCE	EXCITEMENT	SOPHISTICATEDNESS	RUGGEDNESS	CP
SINCERITY (SIN)	Pearson Correlation	1	.673**	.529**	.475**	.576**	.620**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
COMPETENCE (COM)	Pearson Correlation	.673**	1	.701**	.643**	.655**	.642**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
EXCITEMENT (E)	Pearson Correlation	.529**	.701**	1	.717**	.735**	.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
SOPHISTICATEDNESS (SOP)	Pearson Correlation	.475**	.643**	.717**	1	.673**	.541**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
RUGGEDNESS (R)	Pearson Correlation	.576**	.655**	.735**	.673**	1	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300
CUSTOMER PREFERENCE (CP)	Pearson Correlation	.620**	.642**	.511**	.541**	.628**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	300	300	300	300	300	300

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

Considered that all of alpha Pearson values are more than 0.5090, so that all of independent variables (sincerity, competence, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness) have strong positive relationship with their dependent variable (Customer brand preference). This correlation ship is significant at the level 0.01 (two tails). In the next regression analysis, this need to be checked whether these values are still valid if margin error is decreased to 0.05 (two tails).

Refer to the first frame work, the correlation ship level between dependent and its independent variables can be expressed as follow:

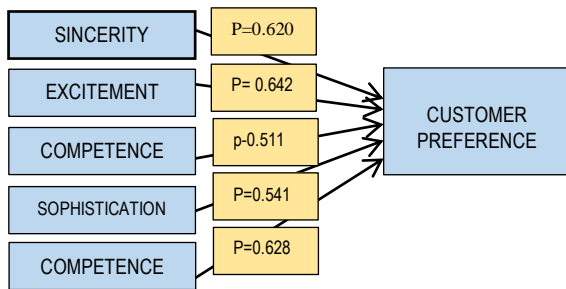


Figure 6: Pearson correlation between independent dependent variables

This indicates that excitement, ruggedness, sincerity, sophistication and competence personality characters, respectively with their strength, have positive relationship to customer brand preference refer to their p Pearson values. Ruggedness, excitement and sincerity are the top there character chosen by respondents because these characters mostly also reflect the Gen Y’s characters.

In ruggedness character, they tend to choose the brand that are tough (rugged and rough) while in excitement character they are more likely to be daring (trendy and exciting), spirited (cool and young), imaginative (unique, remarkable and special) and up-to-date (independent and contemporary). Other than that they prefer the character of sincerity, meaning the brand should be also down to earth (family oriented and narrow minded).

Although the other personalities are lower than the top three, but in this analysis they also have relationship with brand customer preference. How exactly the relationship model between all of them to the dependent variable will be explained in more detail in regression analysis.

4.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 6 shows that R value was 0.732, which means that there was a strong relationship between the dependent and the set of predictors (independent variables) as a whole. The derived multiple coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.536 which indicates that 53.6% the variations in the dependent variable can be explained by its set of independent variables. The overall regression model was significant even at the 0.01 level ($p=0.000$) as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.732 ^a	.536	.528	.54273

Table 7: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	100.062	5	20.012	67.941	.000 ^b
Residual	86.600	294	.295		
Total	186.662	299			

In this anova table, residual degree of freedom is 294 in this number will be used in the next analysis for hypothesis test.

4.3 Regression Model

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between independent variables of Sincerity (SIN), Competence (COM), Excitement (E), Sophistication (SOP), Ruggedness (R) and customer preference (CP). Table 8 shows the parameter estimates of regression which represent the regression coefficient or slope of each independent variable. The t statistics indicate the significance of the constant and each of the parameter estimates.

Table 8 shows the regression model has a constant of 1.155 all parameters estimates were significant at the 0.05 which are sincerity, competence, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness with each p values of 0.280, 0.256, -0.134, 0.107 and 0.253 respectively.

Table 8: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.155	.151		7.672	.000
	SINCERITY	.280	.057	.271	4.903	.000
	COMPETENCE	.256	.062	.275	4.135	.000
	EXCITEMENT	-.134	.062	-.149	-2.166	.031
	SOPHISTICATIO N	.107	.049	.132	2.159	.032
	RUGGEDNESS	.253	.052	.313	4.829	.000

Using the results from Table 8, the regression model for temporary can be written as follow.

$$Y_{cp} = 0.280X_1 + 0.256X_2 - 0.134X_3 + 0.107X_4 + 0.253X_5$$

Where,

Y_{cp} = Customer preference

X_1 = Sincerity

X_2 = Competence

X_3 = Excitement

X_4 = Sophistication

X_5 =Ruggedness

4.4 Hypothesis Test

To make generalization of this study to all population, we need to conduct the hypothesis test with the statement stated as below.

- H₁: Sincerity has positive relationship on customer preference among Gen Y.
- H₂: Competence has positive relationship on customer preference among Gen Y.
- H₃: Excitement has positive relationship on customer preference among Gen Y.
- H₄: Sophistication has positive relationship on customer preference among Gen Y.
- H₅: Ruggedness has positive relationship on customer preference among Gen Y.

By comparing t-value (calculated by SPSS) and t-value (from t-table) using the known degree of freedom and significant number from ANOVA table (Table 4.5.2). Based on reference if value of t-calculation bigger than value of t-table, then reject H₀ and accept H₁. Table 9 shows the hypothesis test result for the independent variables. The hypothesis for each independent variables included SIN, COM, SOP and R was accepted and only E was rejected.

Table 9: Result of Hypothesis Testing

Independent Variable	Sig	df	t-calc'e d	T-table	Summary	Result
SIN	.000	294	4.903	1.9695	t-cal>t-tab	H ₁ is accepted
COM	.000		4.135		t-cal>t-tab	H ₂ is accepted
E	.031		-2.166		t-cal<t-tab	H ₃ is rejected
SOP	.032		2.159		t-cal>t-tab	H ₄ is accepted
R	.000		4.829		t-cal>t-tab	H ₅ is accepted

With the result of the table above, all rejected variables were omitted and the final regression model can be re-written as below.

$$Y_{cp} = 1.115 + 0.280X_1 + 0.256X_2 + 0.107X_4 + 0.253X_5$$

Or in very complete expression, this model can be written as follow:

$$CP = 1.115 + 0.280 SIN + 0.256COM + 0.107SOP + 0.253 RUG$$

Based on the above model, it is clear that customer brand preference positively will be determined by changes of its

brand personalities of sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness linearly with their coefficient regressions.

5. Conclusion

The tendency of male and female respondents in defining brand preference for the sportswear product is almost similar. The brand personality is something that they need to be considered before choosing the brand as their preference.

Results from correlation analysis indicated that all dimensions of brand personality such as sincerity, competence, excitement, sophistication and ruggedness have strong relationship toward brand customer preference, but under generalization, by doing the hypothesis test, it was proven that only four from five of this personality have the positive relationship to customer brand preference which is sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Some overlap understanding between excitement and sophistication from the respondents, could be one of the reason why this excitement personality was not so significant.

From the final regression model, it can be suggested to the industry that to win in the very competitive market such as this kind of sportswear business, focusing on how to improve the customer brand preference is very important. This can be done by improving their brand personality of their products and brands so that customer can choose what the suitable character of the brand with their own personality. Regarding to the model the most important brand personality are sincerity, competence and ruggedness respectively followed by sophistication.

This research was not the first in this field but in term of contribution to the academic, mostly for Malaysia researchers, it can be as a challenge to study more in some category of products by adding new variables to be investigated.

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