School of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology
Malardalen University Eskilstuna-Västerås

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Students Brand Preferences Between Apple and Samsung Smartphone

Master Thesis

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Maha Al-Azzawi & Mac Anthony
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1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction, purpose, and structure of this research study. The introduction gives a brief overview of brand equity, personality, identity and Smartphone. It also outlines to whom this research study would be of interest and benefit to.

Smartphone has revolutionized the way we do thing, the role Smartphone play in today’s society is phenomenal. Today’s Smartphone is taking the role of computer, making it possible to do a lot with this small hand held device. It has a broad use such as sharing information, paying for products, browsing, and shopping. Virtually every activity today has a Smartphone application for it. Mackenzie (2011).

According to Cassavoy (2012) Smartphone can be defined to be a device that enables the user to make telephone call and at the same time has some features that allow the user to do some activities that in the past was not possible unless using a computer or a personal digital assistant (PDA), such as sending and receiving e-mails, amending an office document. Nowadays brand plays a very vital role in consumer buying decision. While consumers usually go for a familiar brand, but the concept of brand transcend beyond a trademark or name. The concept of brand encompasses much more than trademark.

Further to Knapman (2012) consumers of Smartphone are strongly influence by brand when it comes to choosing Smartphone. According to Ahmed (1991, p.25) a strong and clear brand image can increase consumer confidence and convince consumers to purchase.

The brand name signified a level of quality and consistency consumers could trust. Thus, Quaker Oats, Ivory Soap, and Levi have instilled in consumers a degree of confidence that their unbranded competition did not, according to The Freeman Ideas on Liberty (2011). An increasing number of high –technology companies have undertaken brand-building initiatives under the premise that these initiatives can create an asset that generate long-term profit, e.g. Intel’s Intel inside campaign, which began in 1991.

Brand equity is the value associated with the marketing activities that enhanced the overall offering such that a premium could be earned over the same offering if it were unbranded. This indicates that customers see and interpret brands in different ways, giving brands meaning and validity. Davis (2010, p.51). Brand equity describes stakeholder response in the form of an
increase in customers, revenues, and margins than would otherwise be possible without marketing support to build awareness. Davis (2010, p.32)

Healey (2008, p. 82) describes brand personality, is a set of characters similar to a person’s personality and characteristics that customers can associate as if it would be true companion. Consumer defines brand personality in words such as “honest”, “inspiring”, “sympathetic”, “fun” and “supportive” to illustrate their preferred brands.

Brand identity is defined by Mallik (2009, p 37) to be “the audio-visual trade dress of the brand that expresses, and brings to artistic life”. The defined brand concepts are the keywords of this research study and it is vital to this research study.

The findings of this research study would be significant to Smartphone producers, in understanding the bases for student’s preferences between Apple and Samsung brands of Smartphone. An understanding of brand equity, personality and identity in Smartphone is crucial, it cannot be over emphasized. A profound knowledge or understanding would provide a clue as to student preferences of one brand over the other, the motive behind brand loyalty and how brand awareness is built. The benefit of brand knowledge is relevant for high tech companies such as, Apple and Samsung. If Smartphone producers could understand this, they would have edge over their competitors. It is also vital in comprehending the role that brand plays in consumer buying behavior, which would help Smartphone producers in building preference for their brand. The knowledge gained from this research would also provide Smartphone producers with the strategic ways they could build strong brand equity and identity that would lead to increasing their sales volume.

Further to Knapman (2012), this study would signify many prospects for Smartphone makers to take on new means with the consumers of Smartphone and to present brand utility-by understanding the basis for student brand first choice and identify the critical roles that brand play in Smartphone preference.

The benefit of this research extends beyond professional field to academic field. The reason why it was chosen to write about brand preference among students’ is because most student purchases Smartphone, they are enthusiastic about technology. In addition to that, another reason to write about student preference is that they can be accessed easily for interview and questionnaires.
This research study compares between two major Smartphone brands, Apple and Samsung, according to Singh (2012) these are the two largest Smartphone brands producers, who are constantly competing and challenging each other and in result of this competition they are providing consumers with best quality and cheaper products. Perez (2012) note that according Neil Mawston, Executive Director at Strategy Analytics, Samsung became the market leader for the yearly term, for the first time Samsung raked 20% global share for the year 2011 while Apple ranked 19%.

1.1 Purpose
This research is intended to describe and analyze student’s preference between Apple and Samsung brands of Smartphone. The prime objective of this report is to compare between Apple and Samsung Smartphone on the basis of their brand components and how different components of brand equity and identity influence students in choosing a particular brand of Smartphone. A good knowledge of students brand preference in Smartphone would help in understanding how brand shape students buying decision and preferences.

The conclusions will deal with student preference between Apple and Samsung Smartphone, how student are influenced by brand name, the role different component of brand equity and brand identity plays in student brand preference.

1.2 Structure
Chapter 1: Introduction
This chapter presents the introduction, and purpose of this research study. The introduction gives a brief overview of brand equity, personality, identity and Smartphone. It also outlines to whom this research study would be of interest and benefit to.

Chapter 2: Method
This chapter presents the methods used in collecting and analyzing data, using questionnaire. Validity and reliability are processes that were implemented in the gathering and analyzing of the data.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the concepts used in this research study, the conceptual models and how they are related. The definition of brand was given; brand equity, brand personality, brand identity and Smartphone definition were also presented. Given that Smartphone is one of the keyword of this research work, it definition were given in order to simplify the research work and make it more comprehensive to the reader. Defining all the keywords in the conceptual framework, such as Smartphone brand equity and brand identity aligns these keywords together in order to give apparent picture of the conceptual framework.

Chapter 4: Empirical Material and Analysis

In this chapter, the empirical data collected from the students through the questionnaire is presented showing the students’ preference score for Apple and Samsung brand. The empirical material gather were analysis with concept and theories in brand to arrive at conclusion.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion of this research study drawn from the analysis of the empirical data. The conclusion gives the result of the comparison between Apple and Samsung Smartphone. The comparison analysis between the Apple and Samsung reveals that Apple has high brand preference among students owing to the fact that it has stronger brand equity and identity than Samsung.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

This chapter presents the recommendations given based on the findings and the conclusion of this research study. The recommendation on this research that Samsung in order to match Apple brand should lay emphasis on building brand loyalty and perceive quality of it product.
2. Method

This chapter presents the methods used in collecting data, such as questionnaire and analyzing data. Validity and reliability are processes that were implemented in gathering and analyzing of the data.

2.1 Method Overview

This chapter describes the steps that were taken to collect data for this research study and also the reason for choosing the methods adopted in this research and the relevancy of each of the methods employed in this research study. It also mentions the sample size, the demography of the respondent, the validity and the reliability of this study.

The population study was chosen to be Mälardalen Högskolan students, and the sample size was 214 students from all the four schools in the university. The structured questionnaire were admitted to all program students of Mälardalen Högskolan.

The following steps were taken to conduct this research study: First, was deciding on the topic and area of interest and since brands in the Smartphone industry was a common area of interest, it was chosen. Second was establishing the information research string. The research string was formulated to be “Building brand equity, personality, identity in Smartphone”, which was used in searching and obtaining secondary data from different databases such Emerald, DIVA, E-bray, Google scholar, Google Books, Uppsatz.se and resources, such as, article, journal, books borrowed from the Mälardalen Högskolan library and website documents were used as well. The literature review concerning the string was conducted. The concepts were Chosen and Conceptual Framework, the concepts that were chosen are brand equity and identity. Later the questionnaire and the methodology were designed to reflect the concepts used in this research. After that, the primary data obtained from the questionnaire was gathered and analyzed using the empirical data. Finally the conclusion was drawn from the analysis and recommendation given.

The sample technique employed in this research is a nonprobability sample method given that questionnaire was distributed randomly, which gives a fair representation of the study population.

2.2 Methods to collect data

Both primary and secondary data were chosen to collect the data that were used in analyzing the research study. Given the nature of the research topic, it is most suitable to employ both primary and secondary data collection method. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires given
to respondents while the secondary data were gathered through journals, articles, internet and other published materials

2.2.1 Collection of primary Data
Structured questionnaires were distributed to Mälardalen Högskolan students through e-mails and the social media site; Face book. The choice of using pre-coded questionnaire is based on Fisher view on structured questionnaire. According to Fisher (2007, p.45) “If you want to quantify the research material, then it is best to use a pre-coded approach. He further note that if you want to compare the views and experiences of a great many people, then it is easiest if pre-coded approaches are used. Given that this research study is aimed to compare between Apple and Samsung Smartphone and as recommended by Fisher pre-coded questionnaire was adopted. A sample size of 214 students were chosen given that it is considered adequate and representative” for this research study. The aim is to obtain data that are representative sample of Smartphone users in MDH.

2.2.2 Collection of Secondary Data
Secondary data consist of data retrieved from Mäladalen Högskolan database, such as articles, journals, literatures in addition to books barrowed from MDH library or retrieve from Google Books and Google Scholar. These materials would facilitate this research study. In addition they would be critically interpreted with caution in order to avoid creating a false impression with the originators’ observation or view.

2.3. Questionnaire design
The conceptual models were the frame work used in designing the questionnaire. Hence the concepts were translated to questionnaire. Each of the questions in the questionnaire was based on the research tool used in the conceptual framework which are; brand identity and brand equity.

The design of the questionnaire encompass all the concepts employed in this research such as brand equity and brand identity in order to collect information that are relevant and pertains to the research study. The questionnaire is designed to be brief, simple, and clear, covering the relevant aspects of the models used. According to Fisher (2007, p.192) it is recommended to Keep the questionnaire as short as possible and give it a logical and sequential structure so that the respondent can easily see what the questionnaire is about and can follow its themes as they develop. Divide the questionnaire into parts that correspond to the various issues you are asking
questions about. Ask the easy questions first and the hard ones last. Keep any personal questions (as long as they are justified) until last.

2.3.1. Method Critique
One of the flaws in this work might be that the research covers only Mälardalen Högskolan student brand preference between Apple and Samsung which represents small portion of university students in the entire Sweden, so the findings of this research might not be the reflection of student brand preference for the whole Sweden given the scope of this research study. Also there might be an element of sentiment, since the two authors owns Apple Smartphone.

2.3.2. The Purpose of Questionnaire
The questionnaire is design to translate information needed into a set of specific question. In this research information regarding brand identity, brand awareness, brand association, brand personality, perceived qualities are translated into simple questions to obtain respondents view on the above concept. The concepts used in the research study are translated into simple and clear questions to obtain information from the respondent regarding these concepts.

2.3.3. Questionnaire Design Checklist
According to Malhotra (2007,p. 321): The very essence of the questionnaire check list is shown in careful and detailed sequential structures of the steps took in the questionnaire design to ensure that the research can be replicated by anyone to arrival at the same result.

Step 1 Specify the information needed: At this stage of the design process, the target population is defined. The target population is university students of Mälardalen Högskolan. Information about student preference regarding brand equity model, were translated in the questionnaire.

Step 2 Specify the type of interview method: Questionnaire was chosen as the method to obtain data given that it is more suitable for qualitative data collection according to Fisher (2007, p.45).

Step 3 Determine the content of individual question: As shown in appendix 2, questionnaire was designed to contain all aspect of brand building conceptual model in the research. Even though there are several questions for each of the concept, each one is deem relevant.
Step 4 Design the questions to overcome the respondent’s inability and unwillingness to answer: Even though the questionnaire was for university students, the respondents ability to articulate were taken into account in designing the questionnaire.

Step 5 Decide on the question structure: The questions in the questionnaire are arranged in logical sequence with general and easy questions on top. While the sensitive questions are at the bottom of the questionnaire. Similar questions are categorized under the subheading of the concept that they pertain to; for instance all question pertaining to brand identity are put together under one heading.

Step 6 Determine the question wording: The words in the questionnaire were chosen carefully, ambiguous words were avoided. The wordings in the questionnaire only reflect their denotative meaning only, in this way it makes the questions comprehensive.

Step 7 Arrange the question in proper order: Basic information was placed on top of the questionnaire, while sensitive information was placed at the bottom part of the questionnaire. The questions were made to be interesting to the respondent in order to hold their attention to complete the rest of the questionnaire.

Step 8 Identify the form and layout: Questions are divided into several concepts regarding the various concepts in the research; questions in each part were numbered serially.

Step 9 Reproduce the questionnaire: Questionnaire is graphically design to be attractive and professional.

2.4 Methods to analyze data

2.4.1. Data preparation

Raw data were collected, sorted and matched to lay the ground for analysis. Questionnaires were distributed with the sole purpose of obtaining data about consumer brand equity, brand identity. Data retrieve were sort and subsequently match in order to create platform for data analysis. Answers in the qualitative section help in providing information about brand preference through equity, and identity.
2.4.2. Data analysis

This research study is based on comparison between two big brands in Smartphones which are Samsung and Apple from student preference and perspective. The answers obtained from the survey disclosed the preference that consumers have for Apple or Samsung Smartphone over the other, the relationship between brand equity, and brand identity to student brand preference in Smartphone. The data obtained was analyzed by comparing Samsung and Apple Smartphone on all the brand equity dimension and brand identity.

2.5. Validity

This section provides the readers with the measurement of the data collection process implemented regarding the quality of research. It outlines the evaluation of the quality of both the primary and secondary data use in this research study. To ensure the validity of this study, each question in the questionnaire was designed to represent one of the concepts which were used in the conceptual framework of this research study, as seen in table 1, below: The matrix is incorporated in the report as a way to show the validity of the work.

Table 1: Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>The purpose of the question used.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filter Question</td>
<td>Have you ever owned an Apple or Samsung Smartphone?</td>
<td>This question is used to determine if the respondent should go through the survey or not.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Brand users</td>
<td>Which of the following brands do you own today (or the latest you own)? Apple or Samsung</td>
<td>This question is used to know which kind of Smartphone brand the respondent is using or have used.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you agree with the following statements, please consider: on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is the strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree the)</td>
<td>“Apple is a strong brand” “Samsung is a strong brand”</td>
<td>This question is used to measure the strength of the brand equity, as pointed out by Aaker (1996) strong brands are brands that have strong brand equity, where customers associate this brand to be strong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>“I would choose my current Smartphone brand even if the other brands has the same functionality as my current Smartphone” “I will switch to another brand when purchasing a new Smartphone” “I consider myself to be loyal to my Smartphone brand”</td>
<td>These questions were designed to measure the respondents loyalty towards the Smartphone brand that they are using. According to Keller (1998, p.54) brand loyalty is usually used to describe the often repeated purchase behavior of a customer towards certain brand. The brand loyalty is measured when customers purchase the product of a certain brand despite that other competitors brands have the same product with the same function.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Association</td>
<td>“Other people judge me by the kind of Smartphone I use”</td>
<td>This question is designed to ascertain how Smartphone are associated with brand, hence many people associate brand with certain kind of class or social group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Quality</td>
<td>The quality of my Smartphone is good” “My Smartphone brand is more than just a product for me”</td>
<td>This question is used to measure the level of student perceived quality of Smartphone brand, since customers are contented with a product when the product quality is good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>“My Smartphone is a good value for the money I paid”</td>
<td>This question is designed to measure the Smartphone value for money, if the customer thinks that the product is worth the money or price they paid for.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Awareness</td>
<td>Which of these images are familiar to you (Apple) Which of these images are familiar to you (Samsung)</td>
<td>This questions measure brand recognition, while strong brands have high awareness, and customers easily recognize the brand logo and symbols.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>“I would recommend my</td>
<td>Satisfaction is measured when</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smartphone brand to my friends</strong></td>
<td>customers are satisfied with the product to the extent that they recommended to their friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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**Brand Identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>“I associate Apple Smartphone’s with US culture”</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I associate Samsung Smartphone’s with Korean culture”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These question are designed to ascertain the extent that student associate brand with it country of origin.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Self-Image</th>
<th>“My Smartphone brand is more than just a product for me”</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This question is incorporated in the to ascertain the perceived image that students has of their Smartphone.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

3. **Brand Personality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sincerity</th>
<th>Further to Aaker’s (1991, p. 24), The Big Five Model, each one of these personality traits were incorporated in the matrix to measure the brand personality.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excitement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruggedness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

4. **Percentage Distribution of Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following program do you study?</th>
<th>This question is used to make sure there was no bias and to ensure equal representation of the student in various schools.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Health, Care and Social Welfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Education, Culture and Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Innovation, Design and Engineering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research is done to ensure validity by staying objective while interpreting the questionnaires. It is acknowledged that it is impossible to ensure a total objectivity. According to Fisher (2007, P295) Construct validity refers particularly to research that uses questionnaires or inventories to assess whether a person or an organization exhibits a particular characteristic. Given that
questionnaire were used in this research study, construct validity were taken into account to make sure that the questionnaire measures what it is intended to do. As suggested by Fisher (2007, p. 294) to achieve construct validity the concepts and terms use to analyze and describe this research fairly represents the research material. Each of the questions in the questionnaire represents the concepts used in this research study.

The validity and reliability of this research is incorporated in the questionnaire check list mention in the previous section of the research report. The multiple choices question used overcome many of the disadvantages of open-ended questions, because interview bias is reduced and these questions are administered quickly. Respondent’s cooperation is improved if the majority of the questions are structured.

The questionnaire was validated, the content of each respective question is thoroughly scrutinized and matched with the concepts used in the research study to ensure that the questions actually reflect the concept. Also the relationships of each concept employed were studied to ascertain their suitability.

The validity of the primary data was ascertained by using a validated questionnaire. According to Euro journal (2012). a validated questionnaire is one which has undergone a validation procedure to show that it accurately measures what it aims to do, regardless of who responds, when they respond, and to whom they respond or when self-administered.

2.6. Reliability

To ensure reliability of this research, the questionnaire was designed to measure the concept in a consistency manner; it implies that the research study can be conducted by anyone to arrive at the same findings. The reliability of research is ensured through transparency.

In conducting this research study, accuracy and robustness of the research findings were given top priority, as in accurate data would jeopardize the research work. Certain steps were taken to assess and ensure the validity and the reliability of the data collected. The questionnaires were made in English language. It was sent on the 11th of May 2012. To conduct the survey “Survey Monkey” was used, which is an internet survey tool that enables the user to design the questionnaire and upload it through a link. After designing the questionnaire in the Monkey Survey, 10 copies of the questionnaire were printed out and distributed to MDH students in R2-302 computer room at Mälardalen Högskolan on the 10th of May 2012 in order to pre-test the
questionnaire. While students were answering the questionnaire, they were closely observed and a close discussion was conducted to ensure that all questions were clearly understood and were easy to answer. Students were asked to point out any difficulty that they encounter while answering the questionnaire. The results of the pre-testing indicate no flaws in the questionnaire. The link was sent through MDH e-mail to all program students (242 students) (see appendix 3), all students e-mail addresses were taken from the MDH official website. The survey link was also posted on International Marketing Group site on the social website “Facebook” also on the 11th of May 2012 (see appendix 4). The survey was close on the 16th of May 2012 where responses from 217 students were collected.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011, P.41) reliability is concern with the question of whether the result of a study are repeatable. He further notes that validity, reliability, and replication of research are the most prominent criteria for evaluation of research work. Reliability and validity are related in the sense that validity presumes reliability. In line with the above definition, priority would be given to both reliability and validity, given that one cannot exist without the other.

While Matthias Baumgarten define reliability to be consistency of measurement of a concept, using an identical measurement, procedures and the replicable of the findings.

Priorities were given to reliability of the material. The assessment of the quality of the material were based on provenance, references, precision of the writing, analysis and the research evidence as recommended by Fisher (2007,P.92). The books or the literature used in this research were written by renounced authors in the field of marketing. Peer reviewed journals and articles were among the materials used in this research study, given that they are more reliable than non peer review articles as acknowledge by Fisher (2007, P.92). He further notes that thorough examination of the literature materials are essential prior to including it in the research work. The article used in this report is mostly from Emerald which are peer review. The prime purpose of using peer review article is to ensure that the data uses are reliable.
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the concepts pertaining to this research study, the conceptual models and how they relate. The definition of Smartphone and brand were given, brand equity brand personality, brand identity were also presented.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual framework is based on the theoretical framework of this research study. It defines how the models in this research study are related to each other and gives a bird–eye view of the framework which the conceptual model is based on. The comprehensive literature research and the research methods lead to a conceptual framework that includes aspects from Keller’s (1998, p.16) research about brand knowledge. The various concepts used in this research like brand equity measures loyalty, awareness, association, perceived quality are all used in the questionnaire. While the Brand identity measures personality, physique, relationship, culture. The measurement of the various aspects of brand identity and brand equity assess how each contributes to brand building. The brand identity and brand equity models are link together by brand building model.

Figure 1: A conceptual model for brands preference (Own source)
3.2 Smart Phone

According many writers such as Cassavoy (2012) Smartphone can be defined to be a device that enables the user to make telephone call and at the same time has some features that allow the user to do some activities that in the past was not possible unless using a computer or a personal digital assistant (PDA). Such as sending and receiving e-mails, amending an office document.

In order to have a better knowledge about Smartphone it is important to know its history, at the start there was only cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDA) while cell phone was only used for making phone calls, the PDA was an individual organizer where it was possible to save contact list, list to do, sync with the user computer. Ultimately the PDA grew to have wireless connectivity that made it possible to send and receive e-mails. At the same time cell phone grew to have messaging capabilities, than PDA added the cellular phone features and the cell phone added PDA or computer features and the consequence of these steps was Smartphone.

The most important thing that distinguished Smartphone from cell phones are the features, Operating system, the operating system is what allows the Smartphone to run its applications there are different operating system, such as iPhone runs IOS, BlackBerry runs The BlackBerry OS, other kind of handsets runs Google’s Android OS, HP’s web OS, and some other runs Microsoft’s Windows Phone.

Application: about all cell phones contain a number of software, most of them incorporate an address book or a contact manager but Smartphone can do extra, Smartphone allow the user to create, edit and view Microsoft Office document, in many cases it allows the user to download apps, apps such as business finance and personal managers, or many other apps. In many Smartphone it is also possible to view and edit photos, or get navigation direction through GPS service and create list of tunes.

Web Access: due to the 4G and 3G data network many Smartphone can get access to the web with a high speed, in addition to that connection, many Smartphone are supported with Wi-Fi, although not all Smartphone have high speed web access but all Smartphone have access.

QWERTY Keyboard: all Smartphone’s contains a QWERTY keyboard. This means that the keyboard is placed in the same way it is placed on a computer keyboard (not alphabetical order) this keyboard can be found in two different forms, first some Smartphone keyboards are hardware
(physical keys that the user touch and type on), second some Smartphone keyboard are software (the user touches the screen and types).

Messaging: cell phones as well as Smartphone can send and receive text messages, but what distinguishes Smartphone is the capability to send and receive e-mails, it can sync with the user private and business e-mail account in addition to having access to instant messaging service, such as AOL’s AIM and Yahoo Messenger.

Wolfe (2011) survey conducted in 2011 showed that Apple holds the first global position in brand survey; it is the most important brand worldwide. This brand holds the value of $153 billion.

As published by Times (2012) last year the world witnessed a violent struggle between Apple and Samsung because each company wanted to gain and secure their share from the Smartphone market, Apple launched I Phone 4S and Samsung Galaxy S2, 2012 is expected to be the same as 2011, Samsung is expected to release the Galaxy S3 and Apple I phone 5.

Further to Albanesius (2011) on the day that Apple announced that it sold more than 4 million I Phone 4S, Samsung announced that it global sales for Galaxy S and Galaxy SII devices have reached more than 30 million, this is considered to be an incredible sales success. After releasing the success that Samsung has achieved so far, the company filed suit against Samsung earlier in 2011 for “slavishly” copying the look and feel of the iPhone and iPad with it series of Galaxy smart phones and tablets.

### 3.3 Brand

Kapferer (2004) defines brand as a name that influences buyers. He further notes that brand command people’s attention because they have element of saliency, differentiability, intensity and trust. Successful brand conveys a consistent message and create an emotional bond with consumers.

Hammond (2008, p.14) defines brand by “ A brand is the total emotional experience a customer has with your company and its product or service” the author describes the brand to be an experience that’s implanted in the mind of customers that have experienced an interaction with a company or that got in contact with the company’s staff, product or service. In case the customer experience is different from what the company illustrate its brand. In that case the company is losing. However other parts of the brand such as “logos, advertising campaigns, mission statements, colors holds also great importance but they should always come after the customer, it is vital to put the customer and the company’s relationship with him/her in the first position and
think how to develop this relationship and then as a second stage a company can use all important tools like logo’s, color’s and advertising campaigns.

Hammond (2008, p.10) discusses the remarkable benefit that strong brand can bring to the company. Strong brand increases company’s sales volume, it create great awareness and introduces the product or the service that the company is offering, in addition to that it builds a long-lasting customers relationship and loyalty, and in some cases it give the chance for the company to offer their product and services with a premium pricing. Companies with powerful brands also enjoy having devoted employees who believe in the brand and are loyal to it. On the other hand having a powerful brand becomes worth huge amount of money added to the company’s balance sheet, for example Apple, IBM, Microsoft was worth around $80 million and above

3.4 Brand Equity

As pointed out by Aaker (1991, p.24) brand equity is among the few strategic assets available to the companies that provide a long-lasting competitive advantage to the company. Brand equity constitutes the assets and the liabilities that is link to a particular brand, like name, or logo. It comprises of brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association, brand assets, and perceived quality. Creating strong, favorable and unique brand association is a real challenge for markets but it is essential in building strong brand. Strong brands typically have firmly established strong, favorable and unique brand association with customer. Aaker (1991, p.25).

Aaker (1996, p.8) acknowledge that brand equity is a set of asset and legal responsibility connected to the brand’s name and figure that add to (or take away from) the value presented by the product or service to a company and/or that company’s customers, according to Aaker (1996,p.16) the main assets are grouped in the followings:

- Brand name awareness
- Brand Loyalty
- Perceived quality
- Brand associations

Aaker (1996, p 8) demonstrate in the below figure how brand equity generates value, through investment these assets can be created and improved. Each one of the five brand equity assets produces value in a diverse way; seventeen of these values are listed in the figure below. It is essential to be aware of the ways in which well-built brands forms value, in order to take important decisions about brand building activities.
Brand equity forms value for both the customer and the firm; however the brand equity should be expressed and linked by the name and symbol of the brand. Aaker (1991,p.15) define a brand as a distinguishing name or symbol intended to identify the goods or service of either one seller or group of seller and to differentiate those goods or service of product and protect both the customer and the producer and product from competitors.

Keller (1998, p.53) acknowledged that strong brand can command price premiums; on the other hand strong brand cannot command an excessive price premium. Keller (1998, p.64) view on brand equity suggest that brand equity occurs when consumer response to marketing activity differs when consumer know the brand from what they do not.

Mallik (2009, p.31) explain that “brand equity is the value built-up in a brand” it can be calculated by comparing the anticipated potential or future income from the branded product or service with the anticipated or future income from non-branded similar product or service. Brand equity can be positive or negative, positive brand equity is often when a company exceeds their costumer expectation. It formed by past efficient and successful advertising. Negative brand equity is created by usually bad management. Positive brand strategy usually is a strong barrier to entry for potential rival and competitor.

Aaker (1991, p.15.) notes that brand can be nurtured and maintained through advertisement. Kapferer (2004, p.95) comment that the more a brand is known, the more its advertisement are noticed and remembered. Brand equity can provide the company with a high potential of future growth.

Aaker (1991, p.23) Acknowledge that consumers are will to pay high price companies with brand. Brand equity such as brand awareness, image, trust, and reputation are painstakingly built up over many years. Kapferer (2004, p.95) also mention that branding requires a long term corporate involvement, a high level of resource and skills. Brand equity incorporates several advantages like, it ability to attract new customers, resist competitive activity, lower advertising /sale ratios, brand loyalty, trade leverage and premium pricing. Keller (1998, p.53).

Keller (1998, p.7) Brand allows consumers to lower search costs for product both internally (regarding how much they have to think) and externally (in terms of how much they have to search around).It also help consumers make assumption of the product base brand quality and
characteristics, thereby forming a reasonable expectation about what they do not know about the brand. It conveys a certain level of quality so that satisfied buyer can chose the product again.

Brand equities is said to be the most intangible assets that a company posses that is not reflected in the balance sheet, given that it provide competitive advantage for the company. Having a brand guarantees future earnings. Despite the fact that the corporate balance sheet display only assets of the company without mentions of the brand equity does not change the fact that it is precious assets to the company. While a competitor can copy a company’s product but its brand is unique.

Figure 2, Brand Equity Model (Aaker, 1991)
3.4.1 Brand Loyalty

According to Keller (1998, p.54) brand loyalty is often ascribe to a behavioral sense through the number of repeat purchases, it entails consumer sticking with the brand and reject the overture of competitors. Strong brand equity holds consumer loyalty because consumer values the brand on the basis of what it is and what it represents. Brand loyalty is attributed to brand image and brand equity. It is also worth noting that brand commitment is the substantial expression of brand preference and brand loyalty.

Aaker (1991,p.39) pointed out that brand loyalty ascertains that extent the customer is attached to a brand and speculate how likely the customer will switch to another brand, when the brand changes either in product price or features.

Brand loyalty of current customers represents a strategic assets, and when properly managed would provide the company with several values. Brand loyalty it associated more closely to the use experience, in the sense that it does not exist without prior purchase and use experience. Aaker (1991, p.41)

There are five different level of brand loyalty; each level poses different challenges and different assets to companies. The bottom loyalty level is the nonlocal buyers who have no preference for any brand. These groups of buyers place no value on the brand name and consider any brand as adequate. Brand does not play any role in the buyer purchase decision. . Aaker (1991, p.40)

The second level includes buyers who are satisfied with pleased with the product. These groups of buyer are vulnerable to a competitor who offers them a visible benefit to switch; hence they are classified as habitual buyers. Aaker (1991, p.40)

The third levels are class of buyers who are please with the brand, these buyer might switch brand if competitors overcome the switching cost by inducing the buyer to switch to their brand. . Aaker (1991, p.40)

The fourth levels of brand loyalty are the category of loyal customer that really likes the brand. Their preference for the brand is on the symbol, previous experiences or the logo of the company. Aaker (1991, p.40)
The top levels are category of buyers who are committed to the brand, because of the brand functionality or because the brand is the expression of whom they are. (Aaker 1991, p.40)

**Smartphone Brand Loyalty**

However Phones Review (2012) conducted voting hype for people to share their idea and what would they rather purchase an iPhone 5 or Samsung Galaxy S3, and by going through the comments that many people posted, we can note that Samsung has succeeded in building a strong brand loyalty and brand awareness, as many people were loyal to that brand and are willing to purchase it upgraded devices.

According to Cush (2010) Samsung had many happy customers in the U.S., Samsung closed 2009 as the No. 1 handset market share holder, further to the Strategic Analytics’ also no 1 in cell phone marker in 2010. Brand Keys Customer Loyalty Engagement Index, which measures clients favorite mobile devices design and performance according to identify brands that meet up or exceed consumers outlook. The Brand Key national survey for Smartphone and standard cell phone, showed that Apple ranked no.1 in the Smartphone categories, in second comes Samsung and then followed by Blackberry. As shown in Figure 3, Retention Rate, Rosati (2011) demonstrate that in the survey conducted by UBS in the August 2011 to 515 consumers to find out how many of them will continue in buying smart phones made by the same company which they bought their current device from and to determine how many of them would want to change to a different manufacture. As shown in Figure 3, 89% retention rate for Apple consumer, they said that they will buy their upgraded device from the same company (Apple) which puts Apple in No 1 position for customer loyalty and satisfaction. In the second position ranked HTC but still far away from the percentage the Apple had, 39% retention rate, RIM comes next with a percentage of 33%, Samsung had ranked in the fourth position with 28% retention rate. Behind comes Motorola with 25% and Nokia 24%. In addition to the above the study showed that 31% of the Android users were more likely to switch to buy an IPhone for their next device.
3.4.2 Brand Awareness

Aaker (1996, p.10) explains that awareness is the power and force of the brand’s presence in the consumer’s mind, and this awareness is measured by how consumer keeps in mind the brand and how they recall it, acknowledgment measures such as “Have you been exposed to the brand before?, What brands of the product class can you recall?, “top of mind” (the first brand recalled) or (the only brand recalled).

Aaker (1996, p.10) clarifies that Recognition of a brand is based on the knowledge added from earlier exposure, it is not essential to remember where the brand was seen or why it is diverse from other brands neither it needs to be remembered the class of the brand, remembering the earlier exposure is the most important thing. Economist explains that when customers recall being exposed to a brand this will be transmitted in their brain to be a “signal” of a good brand because they believe that companies don’t pay out large amount of money on bad product.

Aaker (1996, p.15) shows that the crucial part of brand awareness is the brand name dominance because when a recall test is made for customers, it illustrated that customers can remember one brand only, this becomes a risky factor if the brand name is not distinguished and is a common tag for products that are legally protected. This is why companies should start protecting at the beginning of its existence. When choosing a brand name firms should beware of descriptive names, such as Windows because this makes it harder for customers to differentiate from the generic product.
Due to the fact that customers are being exposed to more and more brands and messages, creating brand awareness is a big challenge. Aaker (1996, p.16) illuminate that there is two way to create the awareness:

First is by creating “healthy awareness levels” this wide trade base is typically an asset, but it is expensive and for small unit sales and for life measured in years and not in decades this can be impossible. This is why huge companies have an advantage in building the awareness. Multiple businesses sustain and back up the brand name.

Second in future companies will experts in working outer the usual media channels, by using occasion promotions, sponsorships, advertising and sampling, these companies will be the most successful companies in creating the brand awareness.

According to Aaker (1996, p.16) however, companies should always put in mind while managing the brand that it is necessary that brands are managed not for “general awareness” but for “strategic awareness” it is important that customers recall this brand for good reasons and not for bad ones.

**Smartphone Brand Awareness**

Further to Pomoni (2010) article, Apple is one of the brands that have strong brand awareness; nearly 90% of consumers are aware of it. Which gives the opportunity for Apple to present consumers with different products with an effective position, which increase’s Apple market shares because many consumers will choose Apple products over a similar product of different company because of the company high awareness. According to Fee logo Services (2006) one of Apple awareness tools is the logo the smart and simple design of the logo, made this logo the most recognized brand symbol all over the world, it has demonstrated that is effective and easy to remember.

Famous logos (2012) clarifies the phase that Apple gone through in creating its current logo, as shown in the below figure (figure 4) the design that Apple logos have now is after a long and deep thinking, a story is behind this logo evolution. Sir Isaac Newton, who created the law of gravity, was sitting under a tree and an Apple fell down which inspired him in finding this theory of law gravity. The logo of Apple is clearly connected to this Apple. At the beginning the logo was designed in having a rainbow color which represented the new creation of colors in the IT world. Some people believe that logo is also connected to Alan M. Turing, who is considered to be the
father of computer science, who gave end to his life by eating a poisoned apple. Now the logo of Apple is colored in polished silver adding a modern touch to the logo. This logo is only one of its kinds and holds an fascinating background and story. It is easy to understand and signifies the best quality of products.

![Apple logo evolution](image)

**Figure 4, Evolution of Apple logo**

Famous logos (2012) Samsung logo color, blue mean honesty, trust and reliability and dedication in service. As shown in the figure below (Figure 5).

![Samsung logo](image)

**Figure 5, Samsung logo**

Two character distinguish the Samsung logo from other companies logos, first is the figure is turn around ten degrees from the x-axis, which presents a sense of dynamic tension. The second character is the brand’s name “Samsung” which flashes out from the figure, this clearly dissect it and give the impression as if the out shape is a spotlight for the clearing and defining the brand name.

According to the report provided by Mike Luttrell Samsung aggressive brand recognition campaigns has earned them huge brand awareness among consumers. The research report conducted shows that 54% of prospective Smartphone buyer discloses that they would go for iPhone. Recently there has been 5% increase in consumers interested in Samsung Smartphone. Samsung embarked on sponsorship in order to create brand awareness. It sponsored Athens 2004 Olympic game which contributed positively to the brand awareness, giving it a boost from 57% to 62%. Also the sponsorship help it to build a good reputation and brand image. The awareness rise leaded to the sales surge.
3.5 Brand Identity

Kapferer (2004, p.107) postulated the brand Identity Prism. It is a hexagonal prism which comprises of six facets of brand identity namely Physique, personality, relationship, reflection, and self-image. The brand identity prism illustrates that these facets are all interrelated and form a well-structured entity. The significance of the brand prism is to help in understanding the essence of brand and retailer identities. Kapferer (2004, p.107) further notes that brand identity reflects the strength of the brand. The essence of brand identity is that they communicate. Brand is a physique. A physique deal with the physical aspect of the brand. It is a combination of the prominent objective features which comes to mind when the brands is mentioned. It represents the backbone and its tangible added value. The physical aspect of the brand is one of the things that define a brand. It also consists of brand’s photo type. Kapferer (2004, p.108)

Brand is a culture. In the sense that it has its own separate culture which is derive from products. A product embodies not only culture but also is a means of communication. Brand conveys culture and is driven by culture in the sense that they convey the culture of the society they originate from. Country of origin is the reservoirs for brands. One vital role of culture is that it link brand to the firm and play essential role in differentiating brand. Kapferer (2004, p.108)

Brand is a relationship: This facet of brand, has implication for the way the brand act, delivers service, or relate to its customer. Brand are sometimes the crux of transactions and exchange between people. Brand relate its name to a theme. E.g. Like Nike beer a Greek name that relate it to specific cultural values, to the Olympic games. Kapferer (2004, p. 107).

Brand has a personality. People usually ascribe brand with certain personality. The way in which it speaks of its product or service shows what kind of person it would be if it were human. It also pointed out that brand personality is described and measured by those human personality traits that are relevant for brands. Kapferer (2004, p. 108).

Brand is a customer reflection. Brand reflects the individual who use it. A brand always tends to reflect or build an image of the buyer or the user which it seems to be addressing. It does reflect the customer as he or she wishes to be seen as a result of using a brand. Consumers use brand to build their own identity. Customers want to be seen in certain way as a result of purchasing a given product. Kapferer (2004, p. 110).
Everything a brand does is communication. “It is impossible not to communicate.” The way the packs are designed, the words used, the way the phones are answered (or not), and the products the name is put to, the shops in which these are sold: all these can say powerful things about a brand. Clifton, Simmons, Ahmad & Allen (2003, p. 127) Brand speaks to our self-image. This facet of brand identity deals with our relationship the inner self-image that is built through our attitude towards certain brand. Kapferer (2004, p. 111).

![Brand Identity Model](image)

**Figure 6, Brand Identity Model (Kapferer, 2004)**

### 3.5.1 Brand Personalities

Aaker (1996, p. 141) defines the brand personalities to be “the set of human characteristics associated with a given brand”. Thus it includes such characteristic as gender, age, and socioeconomic class, as well as such classic human personality traits as warmth, concern, and sentimentality. Brand personalities are similar to human’s personalities; they are different and permanent or long lasting. Different responses were collected from qualitative and quantitative research studies on brand personalities based on the fact that it was collected from two groups first is users group and second is the nonuser group. People frequently have the habit to interact with brands in the same way as this brand was human, actions such as given nick names ad thinking that their possession should rest for a while to feel better.

As mentioned before by Aaker (1996, p. 142) brand personalities can be described by the following:

- Described by demographics such as: age, gender, social class and race.
- Described by life style such as: activities, interests and opinions.
• Described by human personality traits such as: extroversion, agreeableness and dependability.

Further to Aaker (1996, p. 143) Studies that tests the brand personality scale (BPS), has noticed that five personality factors were used while making a study to more than 1000 U.S. respondents, they were asked about the personality of 60 famous brands which have different characteristics. These five personality factors which were later called "The Big Five" appeared even after the respondents were divided into groups on age base and gender base. The Big Five as illustrated in figure 6, it shows personalities of brands, these Big Fives are separated to aspects in order to provide quality and vivid insight connected to the nature and structure of the factor.

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**Smartphone Brand Personalities**

CBC News (2008) noted that the online magazine brand channe.com, which is specialized in studying trends and brand awareness, conducted an online survey for around 2000 professionals and students from 107 country around the world, where they asked them which brand inspires them the most, 22% of the answers replied that Apple inspired them the most, this is why Apple ranked top marks. When people where asked about the importance of brands, by asking them “what brand would you most like to sit next to at a dinner party?” and “if you were to describe yourself as being a brand, what brand would you be?” Apple brand marked in the second position for that answer.
Marketing Minds (2012) noted “the Apple branding strategy focuses on the emotions and feelings, the brand personality is all about the lifestyle; imagination; liberty regained; innovation; passion; hopes, dreams and aspirations and power-to-the-people through technology. The Apple brand personality is also about simplicity and the removal of complexity from people’s lives; people-driven product design; and about being a really humanistic company with a heartfelt connection with its customers.” Apple has created a strong brand that represents stylish technology and high price products. Its core values embody innovation, stylishness in product design, and ease of use which attribute immensely to the image of the brand. Apple is a master creating strong brand that achieved incredible brand loyalty. Even though Apple is a technology company, Apple brand emerges into a lifestyle.
4. Empirical Data & Analysis

In this chapter, the empirical data collected from the students through the questionnaire were presented showing the students’ preference score for Apple and Samsung brand.

According to table 1 and 2, the empirical data obtained from research study reveals that the comparisons between the two leading brand in Smartphone (Samsung and Apple) indicate that Apple has 58.6% respondents while Samsung has 45.3% respondents, implying that Apple has more brand users than Samsung. An interesting observation made in this report is that a large number of Samsung users 42.6% agreed that Apple is a strong brand while 13% strongly agreed. The number of Samsung users who disagreed that Apple is a strong brand was only 14%. Below is the copy of the compiled empirical data of Apple and Samsung respondents.

Table 1: Apple users’ respondents (own resources)
4.1 Brand Equity Measures

Brand Loyalty: As shown in table 1, Apple commands a high brand loyalty. 38.7% of the respondent agreed and 32.8% strongly agreed that they would stick to Apple despite the fact that Samsung might have the same functionality as Apple. According to Aaker (1991, p. 87) these consumers are categorized on the fourth level of brand loyalty because the preference for the brand is based on the symbol, previous experience, or the logo of the company. They are not vulnerable to the competitors. As illustrated in table 2, 24.5% and 27.7% of Samsung users agreed and strongly agreed that they would not change Smartphone brand even if the other brands
has the same functionality as my current Smartphone. While the percentage of those who disagree and strongly disagree are 17.0%.

And 8.5% . The scores of Samsung is fairly high but not higher than Apple. The analysis of the empirical findings suggests that Apple Smartphone commands a price premium more than Samsung Smartphone. The theoretical significance of this implies that Apple Smartphone has higher customer loyalty and a strong brand value. Aaker (1991, p.48) notes that a measure of brand loyalty is reflected in the additional price that customers would be willing to pay to obtain their brand.

**Brand Awareness:** Further to table 1 and 2, in regards to this dimension, the scores obtained from the respondents reveals that Apple has very high brand awareness among its users than Samsung users. The record scores shows that 82.1 % of Samsung users strongly agreed that they think about iPhone when Smartphone is mentioned. This supports Kellers, (1998, P.91) view that one advantages of Brand awareness is that consumer think about the product when they think about the category.10.9% agreed the they can recall Apple brand logo easily while 9 % have no knowledge about Apple. The reason for high Apple brand awareness stem from the fact that respondent could easily remember the brand with it logo.

**Brand Association:** As seen in table 1 and 2, relative Prices is one of brand association component, in this aspect Samsung is relatively cheaper than Apple and is hence associated with low price Smartphone among students while Apple is associated with premium price Smartphone. Apple wants to be associated with high class brand of Smartphone, in line with that they charge high price for their Smartphone. According to Aaker price premium reinforce the perceived quality, meaning that high price signals high quality to the customers. In the aspect of personality which is one of brand association component, Apple user sees the product as a reflection of their personality. When the respondents were asked if others judge them by the kind of Smartphone they use the response were 19.8% of Apple respondents strongly agreed, 2.6 agreed, 27.6 neither agreed nor disagreed, 25.9 disagreed, 24.1 strongly agreed. The Apple scores are higher that the scores for Samsung. The significances of this is that Apple users see it that having it is a way of showing ones social status.

**Perceived Quality:** Regarding this dimension, both Apple and Samsung respondents were asked if the quality of their Smartphone is good in order to ascertain the perceived quality of their Smartphone. 44.6% of Samsung respondent strongly agreed, 35.9 % agreed, 12 % neither agree nor disagree 6.5 % disagree, while 1.1 strongly disagree. Apple score higher with 48.7% of the
respondent strongly agreeing, 36.1 % agree, 10.1 neither agree nor disagree, 3.4 disagree and only 1.7 strongly disagree. The scores disclose that Apple has a leading score when compare to Samsung regarding this dimension. Samsung also commands a high perceive quality among its customers but not as high as Apple. The perceived quality deals with the customer’s perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternative Aaker (1991, p. 85). The reason for high perceived quality of Apple over Samsung could be attributed to Apple differentiation/ position of it product. Apple is known for its innovativeness, giving the consumers reason to buy their product. The above statement supports Aaker (1991, p. 85) view on perceived quality, which acknowledge that perceived quality comprises of reason-to-buy, differentiation/ position, price channel member interest, and extension. Apéria & Back (2004, p. 47) notes that customer’s perceived quality drives profitability, there is a strong correlation between the perceived quality and economic results.

**Price:** When respondent were asked if their Smartphone is a good value for the money they paid, Apple Smartphone users respondents were (see table 1); 39.8% strongly agreed, 35.6 % agreed, 18.6% are indifferent, while 5.1% disagree and 0.81% strong disagree. Samsung score higher than Apple in this aspect (see table 2), 47.3% of the respondent strongly agree believe that the price they paid for their Smartphone is worth it, only 1.1 % strongly disagreed, 43% disagree, 12.9% are indifferent and 34.4% agree.

The comparison of the score of the two brands in table 1 and 2, shows that Samsung consumers are more satisfied with the price of their Smartphone with respect to the value of it. While Apple user fall below that score. One explanation for this phenomenon lies in the fact that Apple and Samsung has almost the same functionality but Apple charge a premium price as a result of its strong brand image.

**Satisfaction:** The findings from the empirical data exhibit that Apple Smartphone users are highly satisfied with the product and would recommend it to their friends (see table 1). Respondent were asked if they would recommend their Smartphone brand to their friends, 86.5% confirmed that they would (48.7% strongly agreed, 37.8% agreed) while 10.1% are Indifference and 3.3 % would not recommend it to their friends (2.5% disagreed, 0.8 strongly disagreed). For Samsung the score is slightly lower than Apple (see table 2) 85.1% of the respondent acknowledged that they would recommend it to their friends (43.6% strongly agreed, 41.5% agree), 7% are Indifferent and 7.5 disagree.
4.2 Brand Identity Measures

Self-Image: The result of the survey shows that majority of Apple Smartphone users believed that they are not judged by the type of Smartphone they used. 24.1% strongly disagreed to the statement that they are not judged by others for the type of Smartphone that they use. 25.9% disagreed, 27.6 neither agreed nor disagreed, while 19.8% agreed with that statement and 2.6% strongly agreed. Samsung respondent 21.7%, of them answered that they strongly disagreed, the number of students who disagreed is higher 28.3%, 27.2% neither agreed nor disagreed which is almost the same as Apple users, only 16.3% agreed, which is less than the Apple Smartphone users who agreed to the statement and 6.5% strongly agreed which is higher than the percentage of Apple users who strongly agreed. According to Apéria & Back (2004, p. 65) self-image is the consumer interial mirror and he also pointed out that consumer creates picture of themselves through the attitude to the brand they use.

Culture: 38.7% of Samsung users strongly disagreed that they associate Samsung Smartphone brand to Korean culture, 30.1 % disagreed, 22.6 % where Indifferent and 8.6% agreed (see table 2). 19.3% of Apple users associate Apple Smartphone with U.S culture, while 5.0 % strongly agreed that they associate U.S culture with Apple (see table 1). 27.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, 28.6% disagree while 19.3% strongly disagreed. The comparison of the empirical data on Samsung and Apple Smartphone disclosed that Apple has a stronger culture association to its country-of-origin.

The theoretical significance of this is that country-of-origin such as U.S. are known to have competitive advantage in computers, so consumer tend to associate computers and it related product ,produce in U.S. to be of a superior quality Kapferer (2004, p. 108) mention that product is a concrete representation of the culture of it country of origin, in this case Apple is a representation of California culture in the sense that this state will forever symbolize the new frontier as pointed out by Kapferer (2004, p. 108) “Major brands are certainly driven by a culture but in turn, they also convey the country of origin culture. Country-of-origin is great cultural reservoirs.”

Brand Personality: Further to figure 8 and 9 below, the empirical data obtained suggest that of all the five personality trait that are associated with the Apple Smartphone, competence has the highest score. 76% of the respondent ascribe competence personality trait to Apple Smartphone while 9.3% has the opposite view, 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. The significance of this score reflect how important brand personality is in Smartphone, that people choose brands that
reflect their self-image according to Aaker (1991, p. 142). Sophistication score second highest in the personality trait of Apple Smartphone with a score of 66.2% of respondent agreeing, while 16.9% disagreeing and 16.9% indifferent. Excitement score the third with 61.1% score of respondent agreeing while 15.3% are indifferent and 23.6% disagreeing. Empirical data obtained surprisingly shows that Samsung exhibits almost the same level of three personality traits as Apple namely, competence, sophistication and excitement.

![Figure 8 Apple Brand Personality Traits (own source)](image8)

![Figure 9 Samsung Brand Personality Traits (own source)](image9)

The Forensic examination of the empirical data obtained in this research report show that for Apple brand the most prominent or salient component of the brand concept employed in this research is the brand image and strength of all other brand concept such as brand association, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand identity, perceived value.

Brand loyalty and perceived value has a fairly high score after brand image. These results attest to the fact that Apple has strong brand equity. (Brand strength) as demonstrate in the high score of
brand loyalty because brand loyalty reflects brand strength. Supporting the above statement Apéria & Back (2004, p. 41). Pointed out that brand strength is estimated by its price premium. They further state that strong brand has the advantage of selling at a higher price than competing brand and they are less sensitive to price increase.

Apple users show a very high level of brand loyalty which stem from the fact that the users answer that they are satisfied with the quality of their Smartphone and would recommend it to their friend, which is an obvious indication of their loyalty.

**Percentage distribution of the respondent:**

In regards to the distribution of respondent among the student in the university as shown in figure 10, there was no bias because as shown in below table and figure 11, 23.5 % of the respondent where from the school of health, Care and Social Welfare. 19.4 % were from the school of Education, Culture and Communication, while 35.9% were from the school of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology and 21.2% were from the school of Innovation, Design and Engineering.

![Percentage Distributions of Respondents](figure10.png)

**Figure 10 Percentage Distributions of Respondents (own source)**

**Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents (own resource)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Health, Care and Social Welfare</td>
<td>23,5%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Education, Culture and Communication</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology</td>
<td>35,9%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Innovation, Design and Engineering</td>
<td>21,2%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Conclusions

This chapter presents the conclusion of this research study drawn from the analysis of the empirical data.

This research study explores brand equity and brand identity by comparing Apple and Samsung Smartphone brand, having analyze the empirical data obtained using the theories employed in this research study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Each of the brand equity and identity dimensions of Apple Smartphone when compared to Samsung brand equity and identity dimensions reveals that Apple has relatively high strong brand equity and brand identity than Samsung. According to Aaker (1991, p. 270) a strong brand build on the four component of brand equity and they provide value to the customer by enhancing satisfaction and confidence in purchase decision and also provide value to the firm by enhancing competitive advantage, price (margin).

Students of Mälardalen Högskolan choose Smartphone on the basis of its brand. The brand loyalty is high among Apple users; hence Apple has a strong brand preference over Samsung. Because Apple has built it various brand component resulting in a strong brand equity. When each of the brand component of Apple brand equity were compared with Samsung brand component (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality) and brand identity for each of this dimension Apple score consistently higher than Samsung.

Secondly comparison between Samsung and Apple Smartphone in the dimension of perceived quality scores Apple Smartphone higher than Samsung owing to the fact that Apple is innovative. The higher perceive quality among Apple Smartphone users is illustrated through the premium price that Apple Smartphone command more than Samsung Smartphone, the higher brand awareness and brand loyalty. The brand implication for high perceived quality for Apple Smartphone according to Aaker (1991, p. 46) is that strongest brands, the ones with extremely high quality, will have a large number of committed (loyal) customer. The scores obtained from the empirical data supports the above statement. The score for Apple perceive quality is higher than Samsung perceived quality and so is the score for loyalty.
Students chose brands that reflect their personality, hence their brand preference between Apple and Samsung are based on the Smartphone brand that reflect their personality. This shows how important brand personality is in Smartphone.

The finding also reveals that one of the prime reasons why Apple has higher brand equity and brand identity lies on the fact that, Apple builds it strong brand through reinforcing the various component of it brand equity and brand identity. Aaker (1991, p. 270) postulate the brand equity concept which comprise of brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, brand assets. It reinforces the brand equity and brand identity by delivering a high perceive quality product, creating high brand awareness, through celebrity endorsement, brand association, attracting loyal customers. Each component part of brand identity and brand equity played a crucial part in student brand preference.

As stated earlier in the research purpose, the purpose of the research is to compare student preference between Apple and Samsung brand equity and identity in Smartphone in other to ascertain how brand equity and identity influence students preference in buying Smartphone. Hence it can be said that the purpose of this research study is fulfilled.

In conclusion, brand equity and brand identity plays a vital in influencing student brand preference between Apple and Samsung Smart phones.
6. Recommendations

This chapter presents the recommendation of this research study based on the research findings and conclusion.

From the analysis and conclusions of this research study the following recommendation were drawn:

Samsung Smartphone producers should concentrate on brand loyalty and perceived quality. Students have high brand loyalty towards a brand if they are satisfied with the product delivered by it. This is why Samsung should focus their strategy to create or attract loyal customers which can be done through delivering a high quality products, this will result in establishing a long term commitment with loyal customers who will not switch easily to another brand, compared to non-loyal customer who can switch easily. This will lead in increasing the sales volume of Samsung and would give that brand the chance to present its Smartphone in the market with a premium price.

In the aspect of brand awareness, it is recommended that Samsung should embark on intensive campaign to create stronger brand awareness and brand image. An interesting observation made from this research study was that students are more influences by the brand image of the Smartphone. In order to build a strong customer brand loyalty, it has to create a higher customer perceived quality, given that brand loyalty and perceived quality are intertwined. Aaker (1991, p. 98) note that a relatively large satisfied customer has provides an image of the brand as an accepted, successful product which will be around and will be able to afford service back up and product improvement.

One of the advantages that Apple has over Samsung is that the country of origin is the USA, which is well known for it good high tech and electronic production. Country of origin represents brand identity. It is recommended that Apple should capitalize on this advantage in order to reinforce its brand identity, market positioning and increase their sales volume. This recommendation is not only for Apple and Samsung producers but also for other Smartphone producers.
Further Research:
This research could be expanded in the cultural dimension aspect of brand, further research would deal with the roles that culture play in affecting the consumer buying behavior, in the light of brand preference.
Reference List:


Apéria, T., & Back, R. (2004). *Brand Relations Management, Bridging the Gap Between Brand Promise and Brand Delivery*. Malmö: Daleke Grafiska AB.


**Figures List:**

Figure 1, A conceptual model for brands preference (own source).

Figure 2, Brand Equity Model, From Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name by David A. Aaker: Copyright © 1991 by David A. Aaker.


Figure 6, Brand Identity Model, Kapferer J.N (2004): The strategic Brand Management: Creating and sustaining brand equity Long Term, Kogan Page, London.

Figure 7, Big Five, Building Strong Brands by David A. Aaker: Copyright © 1996. New York: The Free Press, A Division of Simon & Schuster Inc.

Figure 8 Apple Brand Personality Traits (own source).

Figure 9 Samsung Brand Personality Traits (own source).

Figure 10 percentage distributions of respondents (own source).
Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Dear students,

We are students of International Marketing master program, and we are writing our thesis on students’ preference between Apple and Samsung Smartphone. Please help us by taking a few minutes of your time to answer our questionnaire about your personal experience with your Smartphone. Smartphone are mobile phones with voice service, e-mail and messages facilities, internet access and other features depending on the device, Smartphone usually have application that computer and personal digital assistant have. Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

*Have you ever owned an Apple or Samsung Smartphone?*

Yes (Please continue)

No (Thank you for your time)

The question will only take not more than 5 minutes. We kindly appreciate your time and effort to answering the questions.

Please answer the following questions by marking the relevant box.

1. Which of the following brands do you own today (or the latest you own)?

   [ ] Apple  [ ] Samsung

2. Do you agree with the following statements, please consider: on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is the strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree the) mark the suitable box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I would choose my current Smartphone brand even if the other brands has the same functionality as my current Smartphone”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Apple is a strong brand”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Samsung is a strong brand”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Other people judge me by the kind of your Smartphone you use”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The quality of my Smartphone is good”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My Smartphone is a good value for the money I paid”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I will switch to another brand when purchasing a new Smartphone”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I associate Apple Smartphone’s with US culture”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I associate Samsung Smartphone’s with Korean culture”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I would recommend my Smartphone brand to my friends”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I consider myself to be loyal to my Smartphone brand”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these images are familiar to you (Samsung)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these images are familiar to you (Apple)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My Smartphone brand is more than just a product for me”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Classify the characteristics of the brand of your Smartphone, please consider: on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest) mark the suitable box.

My Smartphone brand is characteristic by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sincerity</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Which of the following programs do you study? (mark the suitable box)

- School of Health, Care and Social Welfare
- School of Education, Culture and Communication
- School of Sustainable Development of Society and Technology
- School of Innovation, Design and Engineering
Appendix 2
Questionnaires E-mail

Hi,

We are students of International Marketing program, and we are currently writing our thesis on students’ preference between Apple and Samsung brand in Smartphone.

Please help us by answering our questionnaire. It will take less than 5 minutes of your time.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/37C-TXY

Thank you for your kind support.
Best regards,
Maha and Mar
Appendix 3

Questionnaire on Facebook