

**BRAND PERSONALITY, STRATEGIC MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS,  
ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE  
DELIVERY OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**


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## DECLARATION

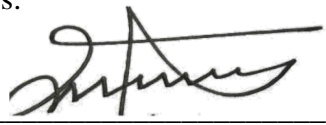
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my lovely father, Mr Johnson Ongoto Mogesa, and my late mother, Mrs Agnes Mosomi Ongoto. Your wisdom, knowledge, and inspiration cannot be expressed in words but will remain a remarkable experience that guides my social and academic life.

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## ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to establish the relationship between brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. Four specific objectives were adopted in this study. The first specific objective was to examine the link between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. The second and third objectives were to establish the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery and the fourth objective was to examine the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. This study utilized positivist research philosophy as well descriptive cross-sectional research design. The total targeted population of students from all 31 public universities was 84,931. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the 15 public universities which formed the sample frame that constituted 61,541 fourth-year undergraduate students. A stratified random sampling technique was utilized in selecting the respondents. A sample size of 398 fourth-year undergraduate students was determined using Israel scientific formula. Primary data was obtained from fourth-year undergraduate students using a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using mixed-effect descriptive analysis, factor analysis and correlation analysis method. Further, hypotheses testing was conducted using mixed-effect models fitted based on Restricted Maximum Likelihood estimation models. The results of the study disclosed a positive and significant relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery (Wald Chi-square = 0.706,  $p = 0.000$ ). This relationship was positively and significantly moderated by strategic marketing partnership (Wald Chi-square = 18.246,  $p = 0.000$ ). However, only the coefficient of strategic marketing partnerships in the random component of the model was insignificant (Wald Chi-square = 0.091,  $p = 0.082$ ). This is an indicator of Simpson's paradox which calls for further research. Consequently, organizational demographics was significant (Wald Chi-square = 15.022,  $p = 0.000$ ). Equally, the joint effect results were statistically significant (Wald Chi-square = 192.00,  $p = 0.000$ ). These results are supported by findings of the previous empirical studies concerning the positive link between brand personality and customer service delivery. The study contributes to the brand personality and customer service delivery body of knowledge by adding two variables; strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics. Precisely, the study adds to the theory of the joint effect relationship. Similarly, the results contribute to policy and marketing management practices. Policies embedded in the three predictor variables of this study will contribute to enhanced customer service delivery in the university setting as well as university managers would appreciate the role of brand personality in promoting customer service delivery. The study recommends several areas of focus for future studies, including the use of a longitudinal research design to assess the long-term variations of brand personality in evaluating customer service delivery in the universities. Focusing on both public and private universities in Kenya could yield different results. Involving different categories of the respondents such as third and fourth-year undergraduate students could unfold different results as opposed to the findings of this study.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AJBUMA	African Journal of Business and Management
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVE	Average Variance
BIC	Bayesian Information Criterion
BP	Brand Personality
CBVBP	Consumer-based Virtual Brand Personality
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CHE	Commission for Higher Education
CSD	Customer Service Delivery
CUE	Commission for University Education
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
FIV	Variance Inflation Factor
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
ISO	International Standards Organization
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East Africa
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KIPPRA	Kenya Institute of Public Policy for Research and Analysis
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KUCCPS	Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service
LME	Linear Mixed Effect
MoE	Ministry of Education

OD	Organizational Demographics
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
REML	Restricted Maximum Likelihood Estimation
SERVQUAL	Service Quality
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SMP	Strategic Marketing Partnerships
UoN	University of Nairobi
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMDG	United Nations Millenium Development Goals
USA	United States of America
VIFs	Variance Inflation Factors



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In the modern marketplace characterized by a change in technology, increased needs, and wants for quality education services and the influence of globalization, organizations, and more specifically universities cannot manage to undermine brand personality (Giovanni & Daniela, 2018). Customer service delivery is conceptualized as a function of brand personality (Gary, José, Susan, Melisaa & Theresa, 2018). Banahene (2017) and Chin (2016) generally acknowledge that brands with favoured personality traits can positively influence customer service delivery and vice versa.

Organizations that embrace more than one marketing strategy are likely to improve customer service delivery, unlike organizations that adopt a single strategy (Nashwan, 2015). Strategic marketing partnerships can positively enhance customer service delivery (Giovanni & Daniela, 2018). Partnerships established by firms can facilitate brand performance if effectively managed (Fateh & Boualem, 2014). Waithaka (2014) on the other hand asserts that organizational demographics can help organizations improve customer loyalty if managed effectively.

The period of years an organization has operated can as well influence service delivery positively and vice versa (Dauda, Akingbade & Akinlabi, 2010). The overarching theory in this study was the brand personality model and supported by relationship marketing theory, brand equity theory, and the SERVQUAL model. The brand personality model holds that investment in brand personality dimensions can enhance organizational competitiveness (Aaker, 1997).

Relationship marketing theory explains how organizations can capitalize on strategic networks or partnerships to enhance customer value (Berry, 1995). Whilst, brand equity theory propounded by Aaker (1980) emphasized how organizations can utilize tangible and intangible assets to enhance customer perceived value. The SERVQUAL model also is used to evaluate the quality of service provided by organizations (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). These theories were considered to provide a basis for examining how variables of the current study were applied to explain service delivery in the university setting in an integrated manner.

Universities like any other entity in the service sector are expected to adopt brand personality as the alternative marketing strategy of enhancing university stakeholder value. Considering that there is increased demand for higher education service in Kenya, and universities are using conventional marketing methods in a turbulent marketing environment (Magutu, Mbeche, Nyaoga, Ongeru, & Ombati, 2010). Brand personality can enhance university stakeholder satisfaction thereby contributing to the improved global competitiveness of the universities in the higher education service sector (Wahome & Gathungu, 2013).

Considering the vital role played by the institutions of higher learning and more specifically public universities, an empirically integrated model is yet to be developed by researchers to provide an explicit explanation on how brand personality strategy can be used to improve service delivery in higher institutions of learning and more specifically in the universities. The current study was motivated on the premise that customer service delivery in the university context can be effectively explained if brand personality is complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics.

### **1.1.1 Brand Personality**

Brand personality involves human qualities such as sophistication, competence, ruggedness, sincerity, and excitement attributed to a product or service (Aaker, 1997). Keller (2010) regards brand personality as human qualities associated with brands such as; humility, outgoing, creativity and courtesy. It involves subjective thoughts held by consumers and associated with human characteristics when making purchase decisions (Kotler, 2010; Habibollah & Zahra, 2013). The current study was informed by five perspectives of brand personality as provided by Aaker (1997).

The first perspective is brand sophistication which is the extent to which customers view a product or service as honest, down to earth, cheerful, and wholesome. The second perspective is brand competence which is the ability of workers to serve customers with due diligence by displaying a high level of professionalism, courtesy, friendliness, and proficiency in service delivery (Kotler, 2010). The third perspective is brand sincerity which is the ability of workers in any organization to fulfil customer promises by displaying favourable human features such as honesty, cheerfulness, and wholesomeness (Chin, 2016).

The fourth dimension is brand excitement which is the level to which a brand conforms or exceeds customer needs and wants (Homburg, Kuester & Krohmer, 2009). The favoured human qualities of the brand excitement dimension suggested by Aaker (1997) involve darling, imaginative, unique, and modernism while the fifth perspective is brand ruggedness which is the strength or superiority of the brand. The ruggedness of a brand can be explained using human traits such as toughness, masculinity, and authority (Doyle & Stern, 2010).

### **1.1.2 Strategic Marketing Partnerships**

A strategic marketing partnership is a formal alliance intentionally developed between two organizations whereby key resources are shared to achieve common objectives (Bhakar, Sher, Shailja & Shilpa, 2012). Nashwan (2015) regards a strategic marketing partnership as an arrangement between two parties to work together to accomplish a common goal more efficiently and effectively. Similarly, Giovanni and Daniela (2018) describe a strategic marketing partnership as an arrangement where more than two firms have a common plan of working towards a common goal for mutual gain.

With increased consumer demands, firms operating in a competitive market environment are embarking on strategic marketing partnerships to enhance stakeholder value (Fateh & Boualem, 2014). A strategic marketing partnership is viewed as a practice where companies combine efforts in marketing an existing or novel brand (Doyle & Stern, 2010). The selected strategic marketing partnership metrics that were conceptualized to influence customer service delivery involve co-distribution, co-branding, and co-research.

Co-distribution is an arrangement where organizations jointly avail their products to the right target audience at the right time and form. Organizational can use direct and indirect distribution channels for enhanced customer satisfaction (Doyle & Stern, 2010). Co-branding is regarded by Aaker (1997) as an arrangement where multiple brand names are jointly used on a single product or service. Further, co-research is defined as a process where multiple firms jointly collect, analyze, and interpret customer information for strategic marketing decision making (Kapferer, 2010).

### **1.1.3 Organizational Demographics**

Organizational demographics are described by Hall (1992) as tangible and non-intangible assets that can be utilized to influence customer service delivery. Organizational demographics constructs adopted in this study are age, size, and location. Organizational age is the years that an organization has been producing goods and services to the target audience (Mcshane & Von, 2012). Kapferer (2010) observes that the number of years an organization operates can directly influence customer service delivery because of experience in new product development, consumer research, and technology integration in service delivery processes.

Doyle and Stern (2010) assert that organizational size is determined by the number of workers, customers, operational branches, and a variety of businesses or products an entity manages. Robbins et al. (2010) consider the organizational location to be the ideal place of an enterprise that is considered to be convenient to the customer. The strategic location of an organization makes potential customers access products and services more conveniently, and in return, increase the volume of sales.

Keller (2010) argues that the task of the organizational demographics such as history and ownership can enhance customer perceived service quality if effectively managed. Organizational location to some extent is associated with the quality of service delivery by potential customers (Matti et al., 2015). Kotler (2010) observes that the ability of the organization to have alternative channels of distributing its products in local and foreign markets can enhance its competitiveness. Uma (2011) adds that physical and virtual locations of organizations can enhance customer loyalty if effectively managed.

#### **1.1.4 Customer Service Delivery**

Service delivery is regarded as the general experience of customers concerning products or services produced by organizations (Birori, 2014). Conversely, Robbins et al. (2010) argue that service delivery is the overall process organizations adopt to ensure that services produced conform or exceed customer expectations as well as enhance overall customer loyalty. Service delivery can be measured using the technical dimension and functional dimension (Kotler, 2010). The author argues that the technical dimension involves the actual performance of the service while the functional dimension involves the interaction between the customer and the organization.

According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), service delivery is evaluated based on five perspectives namely; responsiveness, reliability, tangibility, assurance, and empathy. Service reliability is described by Kotler (2010) as the extent to which an organization performs the promised service to customers dependably and accurately. Service responsiveness is the commitment of service providers to exceed customer expectations (Jayasundara et al., 2010). Service tangibility is the degree to which a service is attributed to tangible features premise outlook, employee appearance, and equipment (Keller, 2010).

Service assurance is the extent to which employees have knowledge and courtesy to instil trust and confidence among customers (Robbins et al., 2010) and empathy is the personalized attention customers are given by employees in an organization (Kapferer, 2010). Based on the subjective view of measuring service quality among consumers, dimensions of the SERVQUAL model have been applied differently both in the product and service sector (Owino, 2013; Saghier & Nathan, 2013; Chinomona et al., 2014; & Nganyi et al., 2014). Constructs of the SERVQUAL model were operationalized in the measurement of customer service delivery in the university environment.

### **1.1.5 Public Universities in Kenya**

Public universities are established under the Universities Act of Kenya of 1986 and revised in 2012. The major objective of public universities in Kenya is to offer education, training, and research services. Since 1963, public universities have been recording a tremendous increase in student enrolment in various academic programs thus resulting in the expansion of university facilities to accommodate the students (Inter-University Council for East Africa, 2014).

The government initiative to upgrade private and public technical colleges were as a result of the increased demand for student enrolment in public universities. Repealing of the university Act was intended to improve the accessibility of higher education services to all Kenyans. The 7-4-2-3 education system that existed since independence was replaced with the 8-4-4 system of education thus leading to increased demand for university education (Commission for University Education, 2016).

Despite efforts of the government to maintain high standards in service delivery by establishing the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) which was later replaced by the Commission for University Education (CUE) (Nganyi et al., 2014), little has been achieved. Currently, there exist 31 public universities and 21 private chartered universities (CUE, 2018). To promote human resource development in Kenya, university education is considered to be a catalyst for Vision 2030 social pillar that emphasizes sustainable economic growth and development based on the educated populace (UNESCO, 2010).

Federation of Kenya Employers (2018) indicates that there is a mismatch between the knowledge possessed by graduates and skills searched by potential employers among job applicants. The survey revealed that employers were incurring high training costs for engaging new graduates from Kenyan universities due to a mismatch in skills.

Another survey by KIPPRA (2018) indicated that mass unemployment among Kenyans and the slow pace of economic growth in Kenya was indirectly attributed to the inability of universities to produce competent graduates with relevant skills to fit in the globalized economy. If this current situation continues to persist in public universities, the slow pace of economic growth is unavoidable. The economy of any country is driven by the level of investment in education; it is against this logic that this study sought to examine how public universities can utilize brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics to enhance customer service delivery.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

In the modern higher education service sector characterized by competition, and changing consumer needs and wants, universities are rethinking alternative marketing strategies to enhance customer service delivery. Universities are embarking on brand personality strategy which if managed effectively may positively influence customer service delivery. Favoured human qualities such as brand sophistication, competence, excitement, sincerity and ruggedness can facilitate customer service delivery if embraced effectively in an organization (Amel, Ayman, Mohamed & Alaa, 2018). Customer service delivery is also influenced by strategic marketing partnerships such as co-branding, co-research and co-distribution (Matokho & Anyieni, 2018).

Similarly, Waithaka (2014) asserts that organizational demographics such as age size and location can help organizations enhance customer service delivery if effectively managed. To unfold the conceptualization and operationalization constraints concerning the link between the variables studied, there is the need for further studies to be carried in the university context using an integrated framework. Further, despite the vital role of the concepts of this study in marketing management literature, their impact on marketing higher education services has not received adequate research attention.



Investment in higher education by any country is key in facilitating industrialization and globalization of the economy (Wahome, & Gathungu, 2013). Despite this view, little is understood on how universities can use brand personality strategy to enhance services. Efforts of the public universities in Kenya to enhance customer service delivery has been undermined by numerous challenges such as reduced funding, increased number of student registration and periodical strikes (CUE, 2018).

Furthermore, issues of customer service delivery in public universities in Kenya has also been attributed to the inability of graduates to secure formal jobs as well as high retraining costs incurred by employers after recruiting fresh university graduates (World Bank, 2016, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2017 & Federation for Kenya Employers, 2018). Extant studies have revealed variations in magnitude, concepts, and direction on the relationship between variables of the current study.

Globally, Khian et al. (2017) revealed a significant and positive link between brand personality and brand loyalty among bank customers in Malaysia. Rutter, Lettice and Nadeau (2017) in the United Kingdom also revealed a significant influence on university communication channels. A positive and significant link was revealed between brand personality and brand loyalty among automobile brand (Akin, 2017). On the other hand, insignificant relationships have been disclosed between brand personality and brand performance (Abdulsattar, 2019; Richard, Fiona & John, 2017).

Some empirical studies have examined the direct link between variables of the current study partially and in isolation thus revealing both significant and insignificant relationships between the variables. A study by Russo and Cesarani (2017) in Italy, Fateh, and Boualem (2014) in France established a positive link between strategic marketing partnerships and customer service delivery.

Further, other scholars have identified a significant relationship between organizational demographics and customer service delivery (Raghavan & Ganesh, 2015). Consequently, other scholars have revealed differences in the relationship between organizational demographics and customer service delivery (Jin & Tong, 2015; Hong, 2016; Tho, Trang & Olsen, 2016 & Gary et al., 2018).

Despite the vital role of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics in marketing management literature, their role in influencing service delivery in the university setting is either directly or indirectly has not received adequate research attention. Regionally, Ali, Fariddeddin, Farnaz and Mohammad (2013) conducted a study that examined the relationship between the personality traits of students and the brand personality of universities using a Structural Equation Modelling approach and a positive link was disclosed.

Amel et al. (2018) in Egypt found a positive association between branding on service delivery in educational institutions. Banahene (2017) in Ghana revealed a significant link between brand sophistication, competence and excitement and brand engagement among students of private universities while brand sincerity and ruggedness dimensions were insignificant on brand engagement. Locally, Mutinda (2016) focused on the moderating role of product involvement on the relationship between brand personality and purchase intentions of smartphones by university students in Kenya. Using the regression model, it was revealed that product involvement had a positive and significant moderating role in the association between brand personality and customer purchase intentions among university students in Kenya.

Consequently, brand performance was found to be positively influenced by corporate identity management practices and at the same time was moderated by organizational demographics and mediated by corporate image (Waithaka, 2014). Student satisfaction among the universities in Kenya was positively influenced by service delivery (Owino, 2013), as well as the relationship was positively moderated by corporate image. Despite this position, it was equally revealed that there existed differences both in private and public universities. In the tourism industry in Kenya, it was revealed that brand personality was positively associated with tourist destination (Wahome & Gathungu, 2013).

Considering the absence of an integrated framework depicting the relationship between the constructs of this study, it was pertinent for a study to be conducted in the university context to unfold the conceptual knowledge gaps. Based on the inconclusive findings from the previous empirical studies on the relationship between the key variables of this study, there was the need to investigate both the direct and indirect association between the constructs of this study.

Furthermore, most of the empirical studies tested direct relationships without evaluating the influence of the moderators in the relationship. Studies conducted globally, regionally and locally have been skewed towards tangible products with little focus on educational services. Some studies have provided partial explanations on the link between variables of the current study. Furthermore, a single approach of analyzing data was adopted by previous empirical studies contrary to the multi-level approach which was adopted by the current study.

The current study departed from the previous empirical studies illustrating strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics as moderating variables on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. The current study sought to answer the question: What is the relationship between brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The broad objective of this study was to assess the relationship between brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- (i) Determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.
- (ii) Determine the effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.
- (iii) Establish the effect of organization demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.
- (iv) Examine the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

### **1.4 Value of the Study**

The results of this study would be of significant value to theory, policy formulation, and managerial practice. The integrated framework of the current study would help in validating the already existing theories in marketing literature. Brand personality theory, relationship marketing theory, brand equity theory and SERVQUAL model were applied in this study.

The theories and model would provide new insights on how managers can enhance service delivery in the university context using brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics. The results of this study would be beneficial to university staff working in the quality assurance department, marketing, and as well as in the managerial level appreciate the role of applying a multidisciplinary framework to enhance service delivery in the university setting. Managers of universities would recognize that brand personality complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics can strongly influence the customer service of public universities.

Employees in the quality assurance and marketing department would also develop new insights by identifying other factors that complement service delivery in the university setting other than co-branding, co-distribution, co-research, university age, size, and location. These insights would make universities review their marketing communication strategies thus improved service delivery. Policy makers in the higher education service sector such as the Ministry of Education (MOE), Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), and Commission for University Education (CUE) would use the information to formulate and implement policies that contribute to enhanced service delivery in the university setting.

The CUE would formulate and implement policies that determine the criteria of admitting students into various academic programs based on university infrastructural facilities and human capacity. The policies would discourage universities from over-expansion without a clear plan of maintaining service standards. The policies would discourage universities from offering less competitive degree programs but invest in academic programs that equip graduates with diverse skills to fit in the globalized economy.

The Ministry of Education in Kenya may use this information to develop service delivery policies that would serve as benchmarks for evaluating university performance in the local, regional, and global context. Other development partners in the education sector such as UNESCO would use the information of this study to review service delivery guidelines in the higher education service sector.

The information of this study would help marketing management practitioners to appreciate that service delivery in the university setting would only be achieved by the application of an integrated framework rather than a linear framework. Academicians and researchers would have identified new research gaps to be addressed if the study is replicated in different contexts. The information of this study would enrich the body of brand personality knowledge about service delivery in the university setting.

### **1.5 Organization of the Thesis**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides the background of the study which discusses the key variables of the study. Brand personality is the dependent variable, strategic marketing partnerships, and organizational demographics are the moderating variables while customer service delivery is the dependent variable. The chapter provides an overview of public universities in Kenya. It discusses the research problem and highlights the research objectives, and finally, the description of the value of the study.

Chapter two discusses theories that informed the key variables of the current study. A summary of the knowledge gaps is identified from selected existing studies. A conceptual model is illustrated depicting the objectives and research hypotheses. The research methodology is discussed in chapter three. The philosophical and research design approaches are described as well as the population, sampling technique, and sample size.

Further, methods of collecting data as well as techniques of testing the research instrument are discussed. The data analysis method is outlined and subsequently, diagnostic tests are explained as well as illustrations are provided showing operationalization and analytical interpretation of the variables. In chapter four, analysis of data, findings, and discussions are provided. Tables and figures comprising statistical values are presented. Finally, chapter five provides a synopsis of the results concerning the objectives studied. The conclusions and recommendations are made in line with the research objectives. The contributions of the study to knowledge are discussed and the suggestions for future research opportunities are described.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents theories that informed the study. It discussed empirical studies conducted globally, regionally and locally concerning the objectives of this study. Knowledge gaps from selected studies are summarized and provided in form of a Table. A conceptual framework is provided showing the association between variables of the study. Finally, hypotheses derived from the research objectives are highlighted.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Foundations**

The overarching theory that informed this study was the brand personality model. It was, however, supported by relationship marketing theory, brand equity theory and the SERVQUAL model.

##### **2.2.1 Brand Personality Model**

The brand personality model was pioneered by Aaker (1997). The model demonstrates that brand personality is measured using five dimensions and 42 metrics. The model suggests that organizations that effectively embrace favoured human qualities such as competence, excitement, sincerity, sophistication, and ruggedness can positively influence customer service delivery. Customers are more likely to identify themselves as well as develop strong connections with brands that embrace favoured human qualities that create self-expressive benefits (Vjollca & Shyle, 2015).

The brand personality model suggests that managers in any customer-oriented organizations should be in a position to identify and implement the most favoured human traits to attract and retain customers. The model posts that as customers continuously change their perceptions and attitudes towards brands, firms must enhance customer service delivery by embracing brand personality strategies (Aaker, 1997).



Moreover, in the view of the brand personality model, customer service delivery in an organization can be enhanced if managers are in a position to adopt strategic marketing partnerships such as co-branding (Fateh & Boualem, 2014). Equally, organizational demographic factors such as heritage can enhance brand performance if effectively managed (Waithaka,2014). In this study, brand personality strategy was explained using five dimensions namely; brand sophistication, sincerity, excitement, competence and ruggedness.

Strategic marketing partnerships were described using co-research, co-branding and co-distribution dimensions, and organizational demographics were attributed with age, size and location. Despite the extensive application of brand personality model in the marketing management literature (Ali & Marjan, 2012; Yasin et al., 2013; Charraz et al., 2014; Isaid & Faisal, 2015; Mutinda, 2016), it is noted that the researchers adopted it in the product category using sensory confirmation and disregarded customer psychometric perspectives.

Further, the replicability of the metrics of the model results in subjective judgements of service delivery rather than objective judgements. Due to cross-cultural differences, this model cannot be generalized in Western and non-Western cultures to measure customer service delivery. Consequently, the model is also questioned by scholars such as Stukalina (2012), Anantha, and Abdul (2012) due to a lack of specific definitions of its constructs. Based on the deficiencies in evidence to validate existing claims associated with the brand personality model both in the product and service sector, there was the need for further empirical studies to provide a clearer explanation of the model.

### **2.2.2 Relationship Marketing Theory**

Relationship marketing theory asserts that to attract and retain customers, companies should create mutual networks, partnerships or interactions that enhance customer or stakeholder value (Berry,1995). To maintain a long-term relationship with customers, co-development of products, co-research, co-distribution is viewed as levers of customer service delivery. The theory advocates that with changing consumer needs and wants, organizations should consider shifting from transaction-based marketing models to relationship marketing models which focus on customer-centric culture (Doyle & Stern, 2010).

The theory postulates that for organizations that strive to maintain customer service delivery in the changing business environment, investment in co-branding, co-product development, co-distribution and co-research is key (Berry,1995). The theory holds that for enhanced customer loyalty with services provided by organizations, managers should appreciate the role of strategic marketing partnerships. Conversely, Homburg, Kuester and Krohmer (2009) argue that organizations that seek to maximize profits and increase the volume of sales should appreciate the role of strategic partnerships.

Furthermore, the authors also suggest that organizations that embrace strategic linkages can stimulate creativity and innovation among the workers. Strategic marketing partnerships not only improve customer experience positively but also make organizations assure customers about the quality of the services provided (McShane & Von, 2012). Despite the popularity of the theory in the marketing management literature (Fateh & Boualem, 2014; Kulecho & Anyieni, 2018; Giovanni & Daniela, 2018), it is observed there is no specific dimension of the theory and its application in both the product and service sector has been largely criticized by scholars.

### **2.2.3 Brand Equity Theory**

This theory suggests that organizations can use both tangible and intangible resources to enhance customer service delivery (Aaker, 1991). According to brand equity theory, organizations can enhance customer service delivery by positioning their services using perspectives of organizational age, size and location (Waithaka, 2014). The theory emphasizes that customer lifetime value can be enhanced if managers in the organization are committed to customer service delivery as the organization ages.

Further, the organization transforms the customer service delivery experience by strategically providing services to the customer at the right time, place and form. Poor location of the organization not only makes the organization attract and retain few customers but also makes customers switch to competitor brands (Mcshane & Von, 2012). The theory argues that organizations with many customers can maximize profits which, in turn, results in positive word of mouth about the brand as well as an increased number of referrals (Uma, 2011).

The five tenets demonstrated by the theory which are associated with organizational demographic features which are visualized to enhance customer service delivery in this study are brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived product quality, brand association, and proprietary assets. The first tenet is brand loyalty which is the commitment customers have towards the product or service. Brand loyalty is evaluated using metrics such as minimal wastage, trade leverage, attraction and retention of customers and integration of technology in service delivery (Habibollah & Zahra, 2013). The second dimension is brand awareness. This is the degree to which consumers can easily access information about existing and new products in the market. It is measured using metrics such as association, customer familiarity and attachment with the brand.

The third perspective is perceived product quality which involves subjective views held by consumers concerning products and services (Aaker, 1991). It is measured using metrics such as product quality, positioning, price and product availability in the market. The fourth perspective is brand associations which is the degree to which consumers can connect or associate products and services with objectives, animals or human beings (Vjollca & Shyle, 2015). Customer ability to recall the brand, attitude development and perceptions towards brands are aspects that can be used to measure brand association.

The fifth tenet is proprietary assets which are tangible and intangible resources that distinguish one organization from another in a given industry (Nima et al., 2012). It is measured through the inability of competitors to imitate the product or service (Homburg et al., 2009). Kotler (2010) asserts that brand equity can be enhanced by developing new products and integrating technology in service delivery processes. Period of operation, number of workers, facilities, technology, employee knowledge, number of customers and strategic location are factors attributed to brand equity (Kapferer, 2010).

Many scholars have adopted brand equity theory in their studies (Vjollca & Shyle, 2015, Yasin et al., 2013; Nima et al., 2012; Habibollah & Zahra, 2013). However, it is observed that there exist complexities when the theory is applied in both the product and service sector. Further, based on the perceptual and attitudinal consumer thoughts, the theory is viewed to be subjective from one context to another thus the need for further studies to determine the explanatory power of the theory in the university setting.

#### **2.2.4 SERVQUAL Model**

The SERVQUAL model was pioneered by Parasuraman et al. (1985). The model is founded on five dimensions namely; reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility. Service reliability is viewed to be the ability of the organization to perform the service as promised to customers at the right time and manner.

Service responsiveness is described as the willingness of organizations to give maximum support to internal and external clients (Saghier & Nathan, 2013). Service assurance is also viewed as the level at which organizations communicate and give accurate information to customers. Furthermore, service empathy is conceptualized as the ability of organizations to customize individual needs and wants. Finally, service tangibility is described by Nganyi et al. (2014) as the level to which service organization enhance the service experience using tangible features such as employee appearance, physical facilities, marketing materials, office layout and equipment.

Although the model has been used in marketing management literature by many scholars (Chinomona et al., 2014; Nganyi et al., 2014; Owino, 2013; Saghier & Nathan 2013), operationalization of its constructs is questionable both in the product and service sector. The heterogeneity of the services makes the validity and reliability of the SERVQUAL scale uncertain due to its psychometric approach of service evaluation. Based on these constraints, there was the need for further investigations to provide an explicit explanation on how this model can be used to evaluate customer service delivery in the university context.

### **2.3 Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

A growing body of empirical evidence has revealed a positive association between brand personality and customer service delivery (Ali & Marjan, 2012; Teimouri et al. 2016 & Mutinda, 2016; Banahene, 2017, Akin, 2017; Ewa & Wawrzyniec, 2019). Despite the significant link which has been disclosed in the previous empirical studies aforementioned, an insignificant link has been equally revealed by other scholars (Hsu, 2014 & Sun et al., 2014; Thongthip & Polyorat, 2015) between individual dimensions of brand personality and brand performance.

Based on these contradicting results, it is evident that there is a need for further studies to be carried out and more specifically in the university setting to provide a robust understanding of the association between these constructs. The study of brand personality has been split into two perspectives. On the one hand are scholars who consider brand personality to be effectively measured using tangible products (Perepelkin & Zhang, 2011; Jin & Xiao, 2015; Mutinda, 2016 & Teimouri et al., 2016). On the other hand, are those who consider brand personality to be effectively evaluated using pure services (Khian et al. 2017; Banahene, 2017 & Amel et al. 2018).

Based on the constrained understanding of the constructs of the brand personality model both in the product and service sector, there is a need for further studies to fill the theoretical gaps and more specifically in the university setting. Customer service delivery in any organization is conceptualized as a function of brand personality both in the product and service sector (Aaker, 1997). Organizations that embrace favoured brand personality features can positively influence customer service delivery (Banahene, 2017). Many scholars have revealed significant as well as insignificant relationships between brand personality and customer service delivery in different contexts.

Banahene (2017) revealed a significant link between brand sophistication, competence and excitement as well as the insignificant link that was disclosed between brand sincerity, ruggedness and brand engagement among students of private universities in Ghana. The study also revealed a positive moderating role of self-concept on that the link between brand personality and brand engagement. A study by Akin (2017) found that organizations that effectively embrace brand personality strategy can positively influence brand loyalty. Despite the popularity of the brand personality model (Aaker, 1997) in marketing literature, it was observed that constraints of operationalizing its dimensions in different contexts are still an issue of concern that requires further investigations

A similar position is also supported by some scholars (Bouhlel, et al., 2011; Teimouri et al. 2016 & Mutinda, 2016) who argue that due to subjective judgment of the dimensions of brand personality model when measuring both products and services, it is vital for future studies to retest this model to confirm convergence or divergence of the results. Hsu (2014) and Sun et al. (2014) affirm that despite brand personality dimensions are applied across the service and product sectors, not all the dimensions can explicitly explain brand performance.

Moreover, the authors argue that the brand ruggedness dimension can effectively explain product performance as opposed to service performance. On the other hand, some scholars examined brand personality in measuring consumer behaviours in higher education but examined variables of the current study in a disjointed manner (Rauschnabel et al., 2016). Abdulsattar (2019) noted that organizations that personify their brand in the marketplace can experience differences due to constraints of the human element in service delivery. The study concluded that user imagery, logo and advertisement style were not influenced by brand personality thus the need for further studies to examine the impact of brand personality on marketing higher education services.

In a comparative survey conducted by Ewa and Wawrzyniec (2019) in Poland and Ukraine on city brand personality projected by municipalities, variations were reported between brand personality and customer perceived value. The combined dimensions of brand personality were found to have a strong significant impact on brand equity rather than individual dimensions (Jin, & Xiao, 2015). Considering the inconclusive findings from the previous empirical studies concerning the measurement of brand personality construct, it is pertinent for further studies to be conducted to unravel its conceptual constraints.

Similarly, Abdulsattar (2019) measured the performance of Nike products using the brand personality model as well as Ewa and Wawrzyniec (2019) measured customer perceived value of municipalities using the brand personality model (Aaker,1997), thus deficiencies in the evidence to support brand personality research in the universities. Considering the psychometric nature of services, organizations that effectively embrace favoured human qualities such as sophistication, competence, sincerity, ruggedness and excitement can significantly improve customer service delivery (Bouhlel, et al., 2011 & Bijuna et al., 2016).

Customer service delivery in any organization can effectively measure using the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al. 1985). Nevertheless, the validity of the model has been questioned both in the product and service sector due to its multi-dimensionality (Rahman et al., 2012; Hultman, Dionysis & Oghazi, 2015), thus the need for further research to unravel how the model can be used to measure customer service delivery in the university context. Many scholars have established a positive and significant impact of brand personality on brand performance (Yasin et al., 2013; Charraz et al., 2014; Charraz & Muhammad, 2014; Nashwan, 2015; Chin, 2016; Bijuna et al., 2016). Though, an insignificant link cannot be ruled out if a similar study is replicated in other product and service sectors.

Most of the existing empirical studies have used a single approach of data analysis which assumed independence among observations (Jayasundara et al., 2010; Habibollah & Zahra, 2013; Chinomona et al., 2014; Matti et al., 2015; Thongthip & Polyorat, 2015; Malechwanzu & Mbeke, 2016; Rutter, Lettice & Nadeau, 2017; Amel et al., 2018 & Eldegwy et al., 2018). Consequently, the methodological research gaps from these empirical studies were addressed by the current study adopting a multi-level approach of data analysis that does not assume independence among observations.



Although existing scholars have made strides in examining the association between brand personality and customer service delivery, conflicting results have been disclosed both in the product and service sector, thus the need for further studies and more specifically in the higher education service sector.

#### **2.4 Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Customer Service Delivery**

Organizations that adopt strategic marketing partnerships effectively can positively influence customer service delivery (Bhakar & Shailja, & Shilpa, 2012; Fateh & Boualem, 2014; Matata & Oduor, 2014; Matti, et al. 2015; Matokho & Anyieni, 2018; Kulecho & Anyieni, 2018). Despite the positive link between strategic marketing partnerships and brand performance, differences have been found in the relationship (Bhakar et al, 2012; Giovanni & Daniela, 2018), thus deficiencies in evidence to generalize the findings. Besides the vital role of strategic marketing partnerships in marketing literature, there is a constrained understanding of its dimensions and application both in the product and service sectors (Matokho, & Anyieni, 2018; Giovanni & Daniela, 2018).

Strategic marketing partnerships formed by the organization can result in significant improvement of customer service delivery (Kulecho & Anyieni, 2018). The authors' ability of the firm to identify a strategic partner with valuable resources, cutting-edge technology, equipment and proprietary can directly or indirectly boost customer service delivery in multiple sectors. Consequently, this position of the study is supported by Fateh and Boualem (2014) who established that strategic marketing partnership can help organizations to maintain sustainable customer relations, maximize profits and minimize costs of operations.

Matti et al. (2015) opine that strategic marketing partnership is the driver that enhances customer service delivery. Despite findings of extant empirical studies (Bhakar et al., 2012; Fateh & Boualem, 2014; Kulecho & Anyieni 2018; Giovanni, Daniela, 2018), it can be deduced that few studies evaluated the association between constructs of the current study in a combined manner. Identification of strategic marketing partners with unique tangible and intangible capabilities such as technology, physical facilities, knowledge, experience, staff, innovative products and services do not only contribute to enhanced customer loyalty but also increased profits, volume sales and expanded market share (Khian et al., 2017).

Russo and Cesarani (2017) in Italy established that the success of any strategic marketing alliance among firms was determined by the level of commitment and type of management. Owino et al. (2014), on the other hand, contends that for enhanced customer service delivery, younger firms should re-evaluate partnership arrangements before entering into any agreement with well-established firms. An organization that embrace strategic marketing partnerships are likely to benefit from shared knowledge, technology, equipment and information which in turn lead to enhanced customer service delivery (Muraguri, 2014 & Mohamud et al., 2015). However, the findings of these studies were non-generalizable in the current study because the studies were skewed to strategic management discipline thus the need for further studies skewed towards marketing discipline.

Further, the variables of the studies were operationalized using resource-based theory and dynamic capability theory thus theoretical constraints were addressed by the current study using relationship marketing theory. Using a direct relationship and a single approach of data analysis, Fateh and Boualem (2014) in France revealed that organizational performance was a function of strategic partnerships.

The organizational performance was measured using antecedents such as profits, number of customers, new product development and effective change implementation. Consequently, Matokho and Anyieni (2018) contend that the ability of organizations to thrive in the turbulent business environment can be characterized by the change of technology and a shift in consumer demands. Vannie (2012), on the other hand, affirmed that universities dedicated to providing market-driven academic programs and foster promoting student welfare are always inclined towards strategic marketing partnerships.

Giovanni and Daniela (2018) contend that organizations not only partner to outsmart their competitors but also to develop unique products and services which in the long run attract and retain more customers. Organizations which form networks of distributing their products and share information technology are more likely to excel in any local or international market. For any firm to enhance customer service delivery, recognition of strategic marketing partnership is key (Fateh & Boualem, 2014). While many scholars have put more attention on strategic marketing partnership research and disclosed different findings, a few studies have examined the association between constructs of this study in a combined way.

Further, the lack of universally accepted dimensions of strategic marketing partnerships justifies the reason for further studies (Rutter & 2013 & Matti et al., 2015). To clear contradictions in findings from previous empirical studies, strategic marketing partnerships was treated as the moderator in this study. Many scholars have operationalized strategic marketing partnerships differently both in the product and service sector thereby constraints of generalizing the findings both in the product and service sector (Bhakar et al., 2012; Nganyi et al., 2014 & Vannie, 2012; Masinge & Sandada, 2014; Matata & Oduor, 2014).

However, it was noted that these studies were skewed towards the general strategic management partnerships indicators such as co-research, co-technology and co-leadership. The current study addressed this gap by examining the direct and indirect impact of strategic marketing partnerships in measuring customer service delivery in the university setting.

## **2.5 Brand Personality, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery**

Organizations that utilize their intangible resources such as location, age and size can positively enhance brand performance (Rutter, 2013; Waithaka, 2014 & Rashwan et al., 2018). Nevertheless, differences have been revealed between organizational demographics and brand performance (Rogers & Smith, 2011). Besides the vital role of organizational demographics in marketing literature, there is a constrained understanding of its dimensions and application both in the product and service sector (Rutter, 2013 & Rashwan et al., 2018).

Researchers have examined the moderating effect of organizational demographics with a combination of different variables not examined in the current study. For instance, a study by Waithaka (2014) concluded that organizational characteristics complemented with corporate identity management practices and corporate image can positively influence the brand performance of Kenyan universities. Furthermore, the study acknowledged that the number of years, as well as the number of customers' organizations serve, can enhance customer service delivery. Whilst, other scholars have demonstrated that intangible attributes namely; organizational history and ownership can directly influence customer satisfaction (Rashwan et al., 2018).

Despite the findings of the previous studies (Waithaka, 2014 & Rashwan et al., 2018), it was noted that a single approach was used to analyse data thus the need for further studies to adopt a multi-level approach of data analysis that disobeys Ordinary Least Square statistical assumptions. Organizational age, history and size can positively promote corporate image and customer satisfaction (Dauda et al., 2010). The study noted that due to the heterogeneity of services from one context to another, not all aspects of organizational demographics can influence organizational performance.

The study acknowledged that regardless of the age of the organizations, service delivery was measured using the level of product innovation and customer perceptions. The study also observed that younger organizations can provide distinct customer services regardless of their heritage and size. Nonetheless, the study by Dauda et al. (2010) focused on small business enterprise in Nigeria thus contextual constraints that were addressed by the current study. It was observed that the study was skewed towards strategic management discipline and examined corporate performance as the dependent variable and measured service delivery using different metrics. Many scholars have revealed differences between organizational attributes and brand performance (Hong, 2016; Jin & Tong, 2015).

Metrics used by these studies to measure organizational demographic variable were operationalized differently. Nima et al. (2012) noted that the identity of customers with university brand was not only influenced by organizational demographics but also the ability of the university to consistently embrace service quality by using multiple marketing strategies. Subsequently, Tho, Trang and Olsen (2016) in Vietnam revealed that organizational demographics such as age, size and history had little to do with organizational performance. Based on the heterogeneity of services, customers can have different perceptions of any service encounter from one context to another.

Naidoo, Vannie and Mutinda (2014) established that universities that had operated for many years in South Africa to some extent were attributed with unsatisfactory customer service delivery. The study disregarded examining variables of the current study in a combined manner. Respondents of the study were employees and students. Despite the popularity of organizational demographic research in the management literature (Waithaka, 2014), limited marketing management research has been conducted in the universities to measure the impact of organizational demographics on customer service delivery.

Moreover, Pradhan, Duraipandian and Sethi (2016) in a study conducted in Taiwan found that given the changing nature of customer demands from one context to another, maintaining customer loyalty in any service sector was dependent on a sole factor but complemented by multiple factors such as strategic alliances, brand innovativeness and corporate governance. Lack of common consensus among scholars on specific definitions of organizational demographic metrics formed the basis of this study. The failure of universities in Malaysia to attract and retain customers was attributed to the inability of the universities to consistently maintain brand heritage (Raghavan & Ganesh, 2015).

Waithaka (2014) also ascertained that institutions of higher learning which were established a long time ago were incapable of consistently maintaining service quality standards due to system inertia and less emphasis on strategic marketing by the management of public universities. The study observed that younger or smaller universities were in a position to surpass customer expectation levels in service delivery. Considering that service quality is a multidimensional facet that is measured by individual judgements, it is difficult for any organization to rely on organizational demographics construct as the sole factor of influencing consumer attitudes, perceptions, motives and beliefs towards services or products produced by companies (Tho et al., 2016).

Some researchers operationalized brand personality in the product sector (Mutinda, 2014) while others have partially examined the effect of organizational demographics concerning service delivery. Rogers and Smith (2011) found that the older organizations are inertia, bureaucratic and rigid to change as compared to younger organizations. Despite conflicting findings on the relationship between variables of the current study, it is observed by Oluoch et al. (2015) that corporate ownership; human capital, physical facilities, institutional and heritage can assist the organization to satisfy customer needs and wants more efficiently and effectively. Despite the popularity of organizational demographics research, it is noted that little is understood on how organizational demographic factors such as location, age and size can directly or indirectly explain customer service delivery in the universities.

## **2.6 Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery**

Researchers have rarely investigated the association between brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics, and customer service delivery in a combined manner. This leads to a constrained understanding of the complex associations among the constructs thus the need for further studies to unearth the conceptual constraints of brand personality (Ali & Marjan, 2012; Akin, 2017 & Teimouri et al., 2016). Further, researchers have recommended future studies to focus on the impact of strategic marketing partnerships (Shailja, & Shilpa, 2012; Matata & Oduor, 2014; Matti, et al., 2015; Matokho, & Anyieni, 2018; Kulecho & Anyieni, 2018).

Further, other scholars have recommended organizational demographics research (Rutter, 2013; Waithaka, 2014 & Rashwan et al., 2018) to measure its direct and indirect role in enhancing brand performance. Brand personality can help organizations to attract and retain the customer as well as overcome sale objections (Perepelkin & Zhang, 2011).

Adoption of brand personality strategy by organizations in the product or service sector can positively enhance customer service delivery (Nima et al., 2012; Jani & Han, 2014; Jin & Xiao, 2015). Despite different positions of these studies, contextual constraints were addressed by the current study focusing on the universities for collaboration of the results. Brand personality is appraised as the strategic enhancer of customer service delivery in competitive organizations (Amir et al., 2012; Hossein et al., 2012; Brandi & William, 2013; Su & Tong, 2016 & Cristela et al., 2018).

Despite the position of these studies, an explicit model explaining the link between the studied variables of the current study is yet to be developed in the marketing management literature. Many scholars have used the brand personality model to explain the relationship between brand personality and brand performance (Ali & Marjan, 2012; Teimouri et al. 2016 & Mutinda, 2016; Banahene, 2017, Akin, 2017; Ewa & Wawrzyniec, 2019). However, the findings of these studies are inconclusive due to subjective judgement of the dimensions of the model in both the product and service sector. The model was retested in the current study to provide an explicit explanation about customer service delivery in the university context.

Subsequently, some scholars have disclosed a positive link between brand personality and brand performance (Ewa and Wawrzyniec, 2019; Banahene, 2017, Akin, 2017; Ali & Marjan, 2012; Teimouri et al. 2016 & Mutinda, 2016). Moreover, other scholars have revealed an insignificant link between the relationship (Hsu, 2014 & Sun et al., 2014; Thongthip & Polyorat, 2015). Based on these contradicting results, there was a need for further study in the university context to unravel the controversial positions of the previous studies. Some researchers have argued that brand personality can be effectively evaluated using tangible products (Perepelkin & Zhang, 2011) while others have evaluated it using pure services (Khian et al. 2017; Banahene, 2017; Amel et al., 2018).



To have a clearer understanding of the measurement of brand personality both in the product and service sector, there was the need for the model to be retested in measuring customer service delivery in the university context to confirm these contradictory claims. Most studies have tested a direct association between strategic marketing partnerships and brand performance. Some studies have demonstrated a significant link on the relationship (Bhakar & Shailja, & Shilpa, 2012; Fateh & Boualem, 2014; Matata & Oduor, 2014; Matti, et al. 2015; Matokho, & Anyieni, 2018; Kulecho & Anyieni, 2018) while others have disclosed insignificant relationships (Bhakar et al, 2012 & Giovanni & Daniela, 2018).

The current study addressed the research gaps by operationalizing strategic marketing partnership construct to measure service delivery in the universities. Further, in some studies both significant (Waithaka,2014), and insignificant (Rogers & Smith, 2011) results have been obtained on the direct link between organizational demographics and brand performance. Scholars have tested the association between brand personality and brand performance by using different moderating and mediating variables. For instance, a significant mediating effect of marketing factors, cognitive and experiential was found on the association between brand personality and brand equity.

The brand personality model (Aaker,1997) was used to measure brand personality in the university setting. Relationship marketing theory (Berry, 1995) was used to evaluate strategic marketing partnerships. The brand equity model (Aaker,1991) was used to evaluate organizational demographics. SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1985) was used to measure customer service delivery. In this study, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics variables were tested as the moderators in the relationship.

To clear theoretical constraints, it was pertinent for a study in the higher education service sector to re-examine the validity of the model and theories used in the current study. Despite efforts by scholars to unearth the association between the constructs of this study both in the product and service sector, still there exist contradictory findings attributed to conceptual, theoretical, contextual and methodological constraints. Further, it is noted that brand personality research complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics research in the higher education service sector is underrepresented. The current study departed from the traditional approach of extant empirical studies by examining the joint association among the variables using an integrated framework.

### **2.7 Summary of Knowledge Gaps**

Extant literature reviewed in this study revealed mixed findings concerning the relationship between variables as summarized in Table 2.1. A number of the research gaps pointed out in this section emanated from an examination of the variables of the current study partially and in isolation while others operationalized variables using theories that did not seek to assess relationships. Further, some studies focused on different contexts and adopted different methodologies of data analysis. A summary of these research gaps is provided in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Summary of Knowledge Gaps**

<b>Researchers</b>	<b>The focus of the Study</b>	<b>Methodology and Findings</b>	<b>Knowledge Gaps</b>	<b>Focus on the Current Study</b>
Amel et al. (2018)	Branding on educational performance	Using regression and structural equation modelling, branding was found to influence university performance positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A direct relationship between branding and performance of private universities in Egypt.</li> <li>- Did not assesses brand personality holistically which is part of branding</li> <li>- A single approach was used in data analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tested the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on the link between brand personality and customer service delivery</li> <li>- Mixed effect regression models were used for data analysis</li> </ul>
Banahene (2017)	Brand Personality and Students' Self-Concept on Brand Engagement	Brand personality and students' self-concept positively influence brand engagement Sincerity and ruggedness dimensions were insignificant on brand engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did not tests the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on the relationship</li> <li>- Focused on private universities in Ghana</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The dependent variable was customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya</li> </ul>
Khian et al. (2017)	Brand personality and brand loyalty	Using hierarchical regression method, varied significant relationships were disclosed between individual dimensions of brand personality on brand loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand personality and SERVQUAL models explained banking services in Malaysia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand personality and SERVQUAL models explained higher education services</li> </ul>

Source: Current Researcher

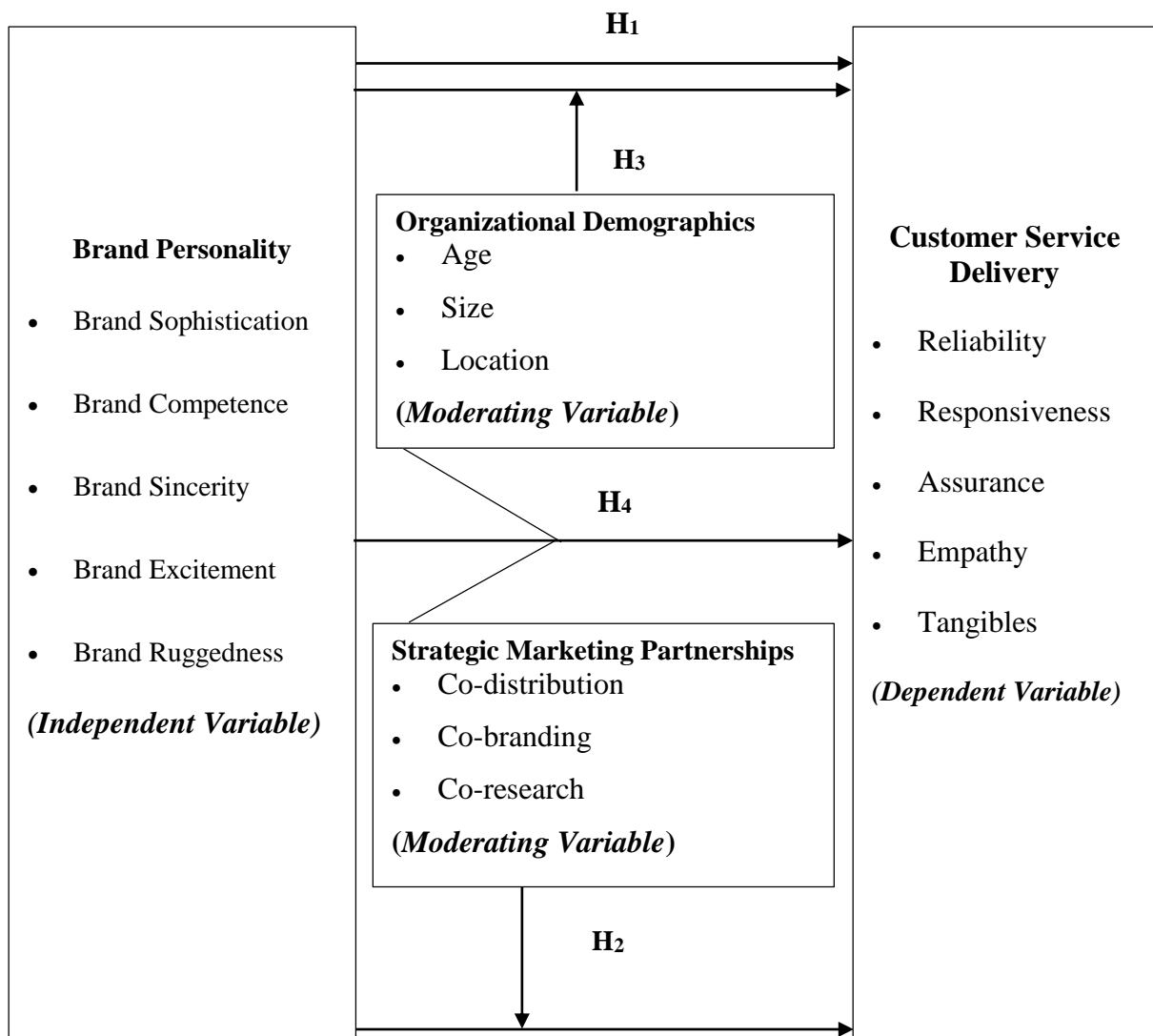
**Table 2.1: Summary of Knowledge Gaps (Cont'd)**

Rutter et al. (2017)	Brand personality in higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most universities used the brand sincerity dimension to promote services while differences were disclosed among the universities for brand sophistication, competence, excitement and ruggedness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The study did not test a relationship between variables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tested a direct and indirect relationship between the variables</li> </ul>
Mutinda (2016)	Brand personality and product involvement on customer purchase decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using explanatory research design and hierarchical multiple regression method, a significant moderating effect of product involvement was found between brand personality and purchase behaviour of smartphones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand personality model measured purchase intentions of tangible products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand personality model measured university services</li> </ul>
Waithaka (2014)	Corporate identity management practices organizational characteristics, corporate image and brand performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strong significant joint effect was found among corporate identity management practices organizational characteristics, corporate image and brand performance</li> <li>- Organizational characteristics and corporate image positively moderated and mediated brand performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondents were university staff</li> <li>- The study has one mediating variable and moderating variable</li> <li>- Both financial and non-financial metrics were used</li> <li>- A census approach was adopted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondents were fourth-year undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya</li> <li>- The study used non-financial metrics to measure customer service delivery in the university context.</li> <li>- This study collected data across a range of public universities</li> </ul>

Source: Current Researcher

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

Four theories were used to inform the current study. The independent variable (brand personality) was informed by the brand personality model (Aaker,1997). The moderating variables (strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics) were guided by relationship marketing theory (Berry, 1995), and brand equity theory (Aaker, 1991). The dependent variable (customer service delivery) was informed by the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1985).



**Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Current Researcher

As demonstrated in Figure 2.2, the brand personality variable was measured by a sub-set of five dimensions namely; brand sophistication, competence, excitement, sincerity and ruggedness. The strategic marketing partnerships variable was measured using three facets namely; co-distribution, co-branding and co-research. Organizational demographics were evaluated using three antecedents namely; age, size and location and the customer service delivery variable was measured using five metrics namely; reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. This study established that brand personality complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics can strongly influence customer service delivery in the universities.

## **2.9 Conceptual Hypotheses**

The following were the research hypotheses that were advanced from the research objectives:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided the theoretical foundation of the study by explaining theories that informed this study. It presents the empirical literature by discussing previous studies conducted concerning the variables of this study. A summary of knowledge gaps is provided from selected previous empirical studies conducted globally, regionally and locally. A conceptual framework is provided and hypotheses that guided this study are stated. The subsequent chapter provides the methodology that guides this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section discussed the philosophical philosophy that guided the current study. The research design, as well as the population and sample design, are explained. Approaches used to test research instrument validity and reliability and described. Furthermore, the chapter discusses data analysis methods used thereby explaining diagnostic tests that were carried out. Finally, a summary of how the variables of this study were operationalized and analytically interpreted is presented in a Table.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy is described by Byrne, (2017) as the development of knowledge by the use of scientific methods to confirm the reality and nature of that knowledge. This study adopted a positivist paradigm. This philosophy advocates that authenticity of knowledge is based on an actual sense of experience, neutrality, objectivity measurement and precision of the research results. The Positivist paradigm helped the researcher to analyse data quantitatively as well as making objective conclusions and recommendations. It facilitated the testing of hypotheses to determine facts that can be generalized to a given population.

It also provides an opportunity for the researcher to make independent decisions concerning the problem under investigation as well as facilitates the discovery of new knowledge which in turn results in prediction and control of the problem. Principles of existing theories were used to assess the association between constructs of the current study in a combined way. On the same note, this paradigm was preferred because it provided an opportunity for verification of the results of the current study using principles of the existing theories (Novikov & Novikov, 2013).



### **3.3 Research Design**

A research design is regarded as the general framework developed; outlining how data will be collected, analysed and interpreted based on scientific principles (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

A cross-sectional research design was utilized by this study. The design was considered appropriate because it facilitated quantitative analysis of data, provided an opportunity to obtain data from a sizeable population at a given point in time, and aided in hypotheses testing quantitatively.

Consequently, Black (2020) acknowledges that cross-sectional research design is preferred in scientific studies because it facilitates the generation of new knowledge thus forecasting and controlling the phenomenon. The design provides the opportunity to test the effect of moderators between different variables and it provides the opportunity of confirming convergence or divergence of the results based on the principles of a causal effect. A similar design has been adopted by Waithaka (2014), Owino (2013), Wahome and Gathungu (2013).

### **3.4 Target Population**

The target population of this study consisted of 84,931 fourth-year students drawn from 31 public universities in Kenya (CUE, 2018) as shown in Appendix (6). These universities were expected to live up to their expectation of providing satisfactory services to students. The fourth-year undergraduate students who pursued various undergraduate programs were the units of analysis in this study.

These students were considered to be the immediate customer of the university with adequate experience and knowledge concerning services provided by their respective universities. The students from these universities were expected to provide their general views concerning the level to which their respective universities embraced brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics to improve customer service delivery.

### 3.5 Sample Design

Considering the size and complexity of the targeted population, a multistage sampling technique was adopted in this study. Out of the total population of 31 public universities targeted as depicted in Appendix (6), a sampling frame of the 15 public universities was determined using multistage sampling technique where the respondents of this study were drawn from as recommended by Collis and Hussey (2014). The first stage involved dividing the population into strata (universities). The second stage involved grouping respondents into schools. The third stage involved selecting respondents using a random sampling technique from specific schools.

For the adequate representation of the desired sample size from each university, a proportionate sampling technique was used as recommended by Cooper and Schindler (2010). A stratified random sampling technique was utilized to pick the respondents from each university as depicted in Table 3. The 15 randomly sampled public universities as shown in Appendix (6) were considered a sufficient representative number of the targeted population. According to the assumptions of Israel (2009) approach in sample size determination, the population was finite and normally distributed. In this regard, the assumptions were consistent with the current study that drew its sample size of 398 fourth-year undergraduate students from a sample frame of 61, 541 respondents as provided in Table 3.1.

Israel (2009) formula was used to determine the appropriate sample size. The formula was of the form:  $n = N (1 + N (e)^2)$ , where;  $n$  denotes the sample size,  $N$  denotes the target population, and  $e$  denotes the error term (0.05). Using a target population ( $N$ ) of 61, 541 respondents, the appropriate sample size ( $n$ ) was 398 fourth-year undergraduate students who were in session and residents of the 15 selected public universities.

The 398 respondents were the representative sample that proportionately represented the entire population of the study as depicted in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Summary of Sample Design**

S/N	University/ Stratum	Population	Percentage (%)	Sample Size
1.	University of Nairobi	7134	12	47
2.	Kenyatta University	5961	10	39
3.	Egerton University	6783	11	44
4.	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	4317	07	28
5.	Chuka University	6982	11	46
6.	Dedan Kimathi University of Technology	5429	09	36
7.	Technical University of Kenya	4289	07	28
8.	University of Embu	3753	06	25
9.	Multimedia University of Kenya	3127	05	20
10.	South Eastern Kenya University	3145	05	21
11.	Karatina University	1821	03	18
12.	Kirinyaga University	1678	03	11
13.	Machakos University	2134	03	14
14.	Murang'a University of Technology	3165	05	21
15.	The Co-operative University of Kenya	1823	03	12
	Total	61, 541	100	398

Source: Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) (2016)

### 3.6 Operationalization of Study Variables

Table 3.2 depicts operational indicators that were used to measure the four variables of the study. Further, the measurement scale is provided as well as supporting literature.

**Table 3.2: Operationalization of Study Variables**

Variable	Variable Name	Indicators	Rating Measures	Supporting Literature	Questionnaire Items
Independent Variable	Brand Personality	- Brand Sincerity - Brand Ruggedness - Brand Excitement - Brand Sophistication - Brand Competence	5-point Likert-type scale	Aaker (1997), Keller (2010) & Khian et al. (2017).	Section A 7a-7j, 7b-7i 7c-7j, 7d-7k and 7e-7l
Moderating Variables	Strategic Marketing Partnerships	- Co-distribution - Co-branding - Co-research	5-point Likert-type scale	Muraguri & Thuo (2014) & Moogan (2011).	Section B 8a-8d, 8b-8d and 8c-8d
	Organizational Demographics	- Age - Size - Location	5-point Likert-type scale	Waithaka (2014), Rogers & Smith (2011)	Section C 8d-8d, 8e-8d and 8f-8d
Dependent Variable	Customer Service Delivery	- Reliability - Responsiveness - Assurance - Empathy and - Tangibles	5-point Likert-type scale	Parasuraman et al. (1985).	Section D 9a-9z

Source: Developed by Researcher from Literature

### **3.7 Data Collection**

Both primary and secondary data was utilized by the current study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Both open and closed-ended questions were used (Appendix 4) to collect the primary data. Fourth-year undergraduate students of public universities were considered to be the most appropriate informants to provide accurate information concerning the variables of the current study.

The questionnaire was divided into five different sections. The first section sought to address questions concerning population demographics. The second section addressed the question concerning brand personality. The third section comprised questions concerning strategic marketing partnerships. The fourth section contained questions concerning organizational demographics and finally, the last section sought to address questions concerning the measurement of customer service delivery in the university setting.

A Likert scale type of measurement was used to evaluate items of the questionnaires, where; 5 represents Strongly Agree (SA) and 1 denotes Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaires were administered during normal class hours. Trained research assistants were used to administer questionnaires to students in selected universities. Specifically, the questionnaires were administered to fourth-year undergraduate students who were in session. Each respondent was given approximately 20 minutes to answer the questionnaire and return it thereafter.

A secondary checklist form (Appendix 4) was used to confirm the extent to which universities were committed to customer service delivery and complied with the Commission for University Education (CUE) guidelines. The specific information sought involved; lecturer evaluations, student registration and performance records, number of full-time teaching staff and their qualifications, number of lecture halls and residential rooms.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability Tests of the Research Instrument**

#### **3.8.1 Reliability Test**

Reliability is the consistency of measurement under a range of conditions (Byrne, 2017). To evaluate the strength of the research instrument developed, a pilot test was conducted. To measure the internal consistency of the research instrument was a pilot test was carried out by administering the instrument to conveniently selected respondents from five randomly selected public universities. Specifically, the Cronbach Alpha formula was adopted to confirm the consistency of the research instrument.

Guest (2010) argues that for variables in any study to be defined as reliable for further data analysis, Alpha values should be larger than 0.7. The author suggests that any variable that ranges below 0.5 is unacceptable, 0.6 is questionable, 0.7 is acceptable and values above 0.8 are good. As shown in Table 4.1, the findings disclosed that all the constructs of the study had high scores of reliability coefficients above 0.8 thus disclosed a high degree of reliability.

#### **3.8.2 Validity Test**

Byrne (2017) regards validity as the degree to which the data obtained accurately captures and measure what it purports to measure. The five forms of validity that were tested in this study were: face, content and construct, convergent and discriminant. Face validity is described by Guest (2010) as the level to which an instrument evaluates what is purported to measure while content sometimes called logical or rational is an estimate of how much a measure can represent every single construct and construct validity is the level to which a construct reflects principles of extant theories. Conversely, convergent validity is termed by Byrne (2017) as the ability of the items measuring the construct to be highly correlated to each other as opposed to discriminant validity.

Face validity was tested using 2 undergraduate fourth-year students while content validity was measured using 4 scholars at the University of Nairobi to evaluate if the wordings of the items used to measure a concept truly reflected that concept. The feedback obtained from fourth-year undergraduate students and university scholars were used to remove vague questions from the research instrument. Finally, construct validity (convergent and discriminant validity) were tested based on Factor analysis (CFA).

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Considering the structure of the population and the multi-stage sampling technique adopted, the data collected was expected to have a multi-level structure of students nested in the universities. Level-1 represented student perception within the universities concerning service delivery while level-2 student perception across the universities. Data collected was assessed and processed for accuracy, consistency and completeness. The computer software (Stata version 13) was used to analyse data quantitatively.

For a basic description of data, descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviations and coefficients of variation were adopted to summary data. The descriptive statistics of the indicators were analyzed to capture the overall variation of the variable. Level-1 explained student perceptions of service delivery within the universities while level-2 explains student perceptions between universities. Frequency distribution tables and graphs were used to present descriptive statistics.

The factor analysis method was used for dimension reduction and identify indicators that explained each latent construct of the study based on the prior conceptual model. Pearson product-moment correlation ( $r$ ) analysis was adopted to determine the association between variables studied. Pairwise correlation coefficients were generated to determine the level of strength and path of the relationships between any of the studied variables.

Statistical significance of the variables was determined at a 95% confidence level. The regression analysis method was adopted to determine the statistical effect between the variables of the study. The models fitted formed the basis of hypotheses testing and were used to conclude the objectives of the study. Given that the current study adopted a multi-structure of data, mixed effect models were used thus facilitating observations within and between the groups.

The multi-structure of data aimed at determining the effects of model exogenous variables as individual or group level predictors of customer service delivery (Harrison, 2015). The linear mixed effect (LME) models were therefore used in the current study to test the hypotheses and to make inferences on the study objectives. Linear mixed-effect models also referred to as multi-level linear models are part of a class of linear regression models where data has a structure in which elementary level units (level-1) are nested (clustered) in a second level (level-2) and higher levels of units of analysis (Brewer, Butler, & Cooksley, 2016).

In this study, the analysis was considered up to 2 levels. The level-1 analysis represented perceptions held by students within the university concerning the variables studied while level-2 represented perceptions between the students of the universities. Fixed effect models used in the study represented perceptions of students within the universities, random effect models represented perceptions of students between the universities and mixed effect models comprised students perceptions within and between the public universities in Kenya. For testing the first objective which sought to establish the direct link between brand personality and customer service delivery, the following linear regression model was adopted as shown in equation 1:

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (1a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (1b)}$$

As depicted in equation 1,  $Y_{ij}$  represents the Customer Service Delivery (dependent variable) as perceived by a student  $i$  from university  $j$ ,  $X_{ij}$  represents the independent variable which is brand personality as perceived by a student  $i$  from university  $j$ ,  $\gamma_{0j}$  is the fixed intercept,  $\beta_1$  is the fixed effect regression coefficient of brand personality which is the change induced in customer service delivery (CSD) due to a unit change in brand personality (BP) at the students level of analysis.  $\beta_{0j}$  represented random intercept,  $\mu_{1j}$  denotes the random slope of brand personality which is the change in customer service delivery due to a unit change in brand personality across the universities,  $\epsilon$  denoted the level-1 error term and  $\mu_{0j}$  the level-2 error terms.

For testing the second objective to determine the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality (BP) and customer service delivery (Y), a stepwise hierarchical moderated multiple regression analysis was undertaken. For this, the model was in 2 steps where step one was the direct effects of brand personality (X) and strategic marketing partnerships ( $Z_1$ ) were assessed at both levels. Step 2 involved an introduction of the interaction terms between brand personality and strategic marketing partnerships in the levels. The hypothesised models for assessing the interaction is as shown in the equations below:

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (2a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (2b)}$$

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \beta_3 X_{ij} * Z_{1ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (3a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{3j} X_{ij} * Z_{1ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (3b)}$$

Stepwise hierarchical moderated multiple regression analysis (MMR) was conducted using equations 4 and 5 as shown in the models. Further, for testing the third objective to determine how organizational demographics moderated the link between brand personality and customer service delivery (CSD), stepwise hierarchical moderated multiple regression analysis was undertaken.



Step one was to assess the direct effects of brand personality (X) and organizational demographics (Z<sub>2</sub>) on the customer service delivery at both levels. Step 2 involved an introduction of the interaction terms between brand personality and organizational demographics in the levels where the effect of both variables was found to be significant. The hypothesised models for assessing the interaction is as shown in the equations below:

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{2ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (4a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation(4b)}$$

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{2ij} + \beta_3 X_{ij} * Z_{2ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (5a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{3j} X_{ij} * Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (5b)}$$

Furthermore, testing the fourth objective which was the joint effect of brand personality (X), strategic marketing partnerships (Z<sub>1</sub>) and organizational demographics (Z<sub>2</sub>) concerning customer service delivery (Y), a fitted joint effect regression model consisting of the three variables as predictors were assessed at both level-1 and level-2 as depicted in the equations below.

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \beta_3 Z_{2ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (5a)}$$

$$\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{3j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j} \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation (5b)}$$

### 3.10 Diagnostic Tests

The linear mixed-effects models fitted were grounded on the Restricted Maximum Likelihood estimation (REML) technique. The models fitted were diagnosed to assess and confirm that the models fitted met the assumptions of linear models. The assumptions of homogeneity of the model residuals and normality of the model were therefore assessed. Considering the multi-level approach and mixed effect models fitted, diagnosis of the model residuals was based on a variety of exploratory graphical techniques. The study used the techniques proposed by Loy et al (2017) of different assessments for level-1 residuals and level-2 residuals.

According to Brewer, Butler and Cooksley (2016), there should be much care taken when assessing the assumptions in mixed-effect models. The tests that are normally carried out easily as in Ordinary Least Squares OLS can only be applicable on level-1. However, exploratory analysis using graphical plots is preferred as the modelling techniques include residuals due to the second level (grouping level) (Harrison, 2015). Further, the assumptions of non-multicollinearity were also carried out for the joint effect model which involved three predictors that were assumed not to have multicollinearity. Variance inflation factors (VIF) were also generated where multicollinearity was associated with VIFs greater than 5 and vice versa as recommended by Collis and Hussey (2014).

### 3.11 Analytical Interpretation of Data

Table 3.3 presents the hypotheses of the study as well as the analytical model used to test each hypothesis. Finally, the analysis techniques used to test each hypothesis are provided and interpretation criteria for each hypothesis are provided.

**Table 3.3: Analytical Interpretation of Data**

Objective	Hypothesis	Analytical Model	Interpretation
<p><i>Objective1:</i> Determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p>H01: Brand personality has no significant effect on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p><math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> .....Eqn (1a) fixed effects <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{0j}</math> .....Eqn (1b) random effects Where: Y denotes Customer Service Delivery, X denotes Brand Personality, <math>\gamma</math> denotes the fixed Intercept, <math>\beta_1</math> denotes fixed effect coefficient of X and <math>\varepsilon</math> denotes the fixed effect error term <math>\mu_{0j}</math> and <math>\mu_{1j}</math></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wald Chi-square to assess the overall significance of the fixed component of the model</li> <li>• Z-tests to determine the significance of brand personality at level-1</li> <li>• LR test to assess the significance of brand personality as at level-2 random covariate (random slope)</li> <li>• The null hypothesis was rejected if brand personality had either a significant fixed effect (<math>Z &gt; 1.96/p &lt; 0.05</math>) or significant random slopes (LR, <math>p &lt; 0.05</math>)</li> </ul>
<p><i>Objective2:</i> Determine the effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.</p>	<p>H02: There is no significant moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.</p>	<p><math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> .....Eqn (2a) fixed effects <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{0j}</math> .....Eqn (2b) random effects <math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \beta_3 X_{ij} * Z_{1ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> .....Eqn (3a) fixed effects <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{3j} X_{ij} * Z_{1ij} + \mu_{0j}</math> .....Eqn (3b) random effects Where; <math>Z_1</math> denotes Strategic Marketing Partnerships which is the moderating variable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wald Chi-square to assess the overall significance of the fixed component of the model</li> <li>• Z-tests to determine the significance of brand personality and SMP at level-1</li> <li>• LR test to assess the significance of brand personality and SMP as at level-2 random covariate (random slope)</li> <li>• LR test to assess the significance of the interaction terms.</li> <li>• A significant change in LR after the introduction of the interaction term <math>Z_1</math> confirms a moderating effect</li> <li>• The null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value of the Likelihood ratio test was less than 0.05.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.3: Analytical Interpretation of Data (Cont'd)**

<p><i>Objective 3:</i> Establish the effect of organization demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.</p>	<p>H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.</p>	<p><math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{2ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> .....Eqn (4a) fixed effects  <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j}</math>.....Eqn (4b) random effects  <math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{2ij} + \beta_3 X_{ij} * Z_{2ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> .....Eqn (5a) fixed effects  <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{3j} X_{ij} * Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j}</math>.....Eqn (5b) random effects                  Where; <math>Z_2</math> denotes Organizational Demographics, which is the moderating variable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wald Chi-square to assess the overall significance of the fixed component of the model</li> <li>• Z-tests to determine the significance of brand personality and OD at level-1</li> <li>• LR test to assess the significance of brand personality and OD as at level-2 random covariate (random slope)</li> <li>• LR test to assess the significance of the interaction terms.</li> <li>• A significant change in LR after the introduction of the interaction term <math>Z_2</math> confirms a moderating effect</li> <li>• The null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value of the Likelihood ratio test was less than 0.05.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Objective 4:</i> Examine the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p>H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p><math>Y_{ij} = \gamma_{0j} + \beta_1 X_{ij} + \beta_2 Z_{1ij} + \beta_3 Z_{2ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}</math> ....Eqn (6a) fixed effects  <math>\gamma_{0j} = \beta_{0j} + \mu_{1j} X_{1ij} + \mu_{2j} Z_{1ij} + \mu_{3j} Z_{2ij} + \mu_{0j}</math>....Eqn (6b) random effects                  Where; Y denotes Customer Service delivery                  X denotes Brand Personality                  Z<sub>1</sub> denotes Strategic Marketing Partnerships and                  Z<sub>2</sub> denotes Organizational Demographics  <math>\beta_0</math> denotes Intercept, <math>\beta_1</math>- <math>\beta_3</math> denotes regression coefficients and <math>\varepsilon</math> denotes error term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wald Chi-square to assess the overall significance of the fixed component of the model The null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value of the Wald chi-square was less than 0.05</li> </ul>

Source: Current Researcher

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the research methodology which described the research philosophy, research design, population and sampling design. The data collection procedure and ways of testing the validity and reliability of the research instrument as well as data analysis methods are described. Operationalization of the study variables as well as analytical interpretation of data is finally illustrated in form of Tables. The subsequent chapter discusses the analysis of data, findings and discussion of the results concerning findings of the previous studies.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The broad aim of this study was to assess the direct relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. The second and third objectives were to determine the moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics in the relationship while the fourth objective was to examine the joint effect between the four variables of the current study.

The chapter provides an analysis of data collected from the field and the study findings. Data were prepared, analyzed and reported as recommended by Byrne (2017). Before data analysis, questionnaires were reviewed and data were edited, coded, transcribed and cleaned. Analysis of data was facilitated by Stata version 13. Mixed descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken to explain the general trend of data concerning variables studied.

Descriptive statistics were used in presenting data. The coefficient of variation shows the dispersion (standard deviation) relative to the mean scores of the variables. The measures of dispersion were calculated to reflect the overall variation across-sectional data set of 314 students nested in 12 universities and the variation between (across) the 12 universities and variation within the universities due to different students' perceptions of service delivery.

Factors analysis was adopted and reduced the overlapping metrics of the variables studied. Correlation and regression analysis was conducted to establish the existence of a statistical link between the variables of the study. The correlation data analysis method was undertaken to ascertain the statistical association between variables. The linear regression mixed-effect method was used to ascertain hypothetical variations of service delivery within and between students of public universities in Kenya.

## **4.2 Descriptive Statistics**

### **4.2.1 Response Rate**

The population of this study comprised fourth-year undergraduate students who pursued a different course in public universities in Kenya. The population consisted of 84,931 fourth-year students across 31 universities. However, a sample of 15 universities was drawn and a total of 398 students sampled across the 15 sampled universities. 398 questionnaires were therefore administered to students across the 15 universities from which 314 questionnaires were returned from 12 of the universities.

This translated to a response rate of 79.889% (314 out of 398) which was considered to be adequate and consistent with Byrne (2017). The author postulates that a response rate of below 60% is considered poor while between 60% and 80% is adequate. Some (20%) of the questionnaires were incomplete thus missing entries in the retained dataset. Multiple imputations were adopted to clean the missing cases (Appendix 8) before the data could be used for analysis. However, the response of more than 50% is considered adequate for social research (Guest, 2010).

### **4.2.2 Reliability Tests**

For evaluation of the quality of the research instrument used in an investigation, internal consistency was determined. Cronbach Alpha values greater than 0.7 were considered appropriate for this study as recommended by Black (2010). As summarized in 4.1, Alpha coefficients above 0.9 were considered excellently reliable.

**Table 4.1: Summary of Cronbach Reliability Coefficients**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Variable Name</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Independent Variable	Brand Personality	- Brand Sincerity	61	0.953
		- Brand Sophistication		
		- Brand Competence		
		- Brand Ruggedness		
		- Brand Excitement		
Moderating Variables	Strategic Marketing Partnerships	- Co-distribution - Co-branding - Co-research	21	0.920
	Organizational Demographics	- Age - Size - Location	29	0.932
	Dependent Variable	Customer Service Delivery	- Reliability - Responsiveness - Assurance - Empathy and - Tangibles	18

Source: Primary Data

As depicted in Table 4.1, brand personality was measured using 61 items across the five dimensions. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.953. The construct of brand personality had the greatest Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.953 and followed by organizational demographics with an alpha coefficient of 0.932. When all the 29 items were included, strategic marketing partnerships was third with an alpha coefficient of 0.920 when all the 21 items were included.

Customer service delivery was the fourth item with an Alpha coefficient of 0.916 when all the 18 items were included. Charraz and Muhammad (2014), Chin (2016), and Chinomona (2014) acknowledged that Alpha values greater than 0.8 were considered reliable in any scientific inquiry. Mutinda (2014) and Waithaka (2014) also noted that an instrument with Alpha coefficients of more than 0.7 was considered reliable.



### 4.2.3 Validity Tests

Validity is regarded by Black (2010) as the capability of the research instrument to accurately measure data collected to fulfil the intended objective. Face validity was tested using the fourth-year undergraduate students of public universities while content validity was measured using the university of Nairobi scholars. Construct, convergent as well as discriminant validity were measured using the factor analysis method.

The factor analysis method was used to reduce a large dimension of observed indicators or variables to a few latent factors or constructs. Specifically, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) technique was conducted to evaluate the uni-dimensionality of each construct as theoretically and empirically hypothesized to be measured by the unique set of indicators (Guest, 2010). The CFA technique is an unrestricted model structure where all the latent factors are set to explain the variation from as many items as possible from the set of observed variables indicators (Fisher, 2010).

For the statistical test of individual-variable validity, the CFA technique was used. Indicators that loaded the constructs with factor loadings above 0.4 were said to belong to that construct implying the validity of that construct. Further, the Average Variances Extracted (AVE) for each construct from its purported measurement. The indicators were said to validly measure the construct if the AVE of the construct was above 0.05 as recommended by Byrne (2017).

As shown in table 4.2, all the squared multiple correlations were found to be less than the relative AVEs for each construct to imply discriminant validity. Convergent and discriminant validity for all the study constructs were met, implying the uni-dimensionality of each construct. The AVE of each construct as compared to the maximum of the squared correlations between the variable and other constructs in the research instrument is demonstrated in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Construct Validity Results**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Squared Multiple Correlations</b>
X Brand Personality	0.562	0.533
Z1 Strategic Marketing Partnerships	0.623	0.490
Z2 Organizational Demographics	0.597	0.576
Y Customer Service Delivery	0.647	0.533

Source: Primary Data.

Table 4.2 shows that all the constructs had AVEs greater than 0.5, implying convergent validity as the items measuring each construct is highly related to each other. Given that AVEs of all the constructs studied were greater than 0.5, convergent validity was met as recommended by (Hair et al., 2015). Using the Fornell-Larcker approach which compared AVEs to the squared multiple correlations with other constructs, discriminant validity was also met for all the variables studied at a 95% confidence level (Appendix 13).

### **4.3 Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Descriptive statistics was adopted to evaluate respondent demographics. The gender of respondents, age, residential place, mode of study, means of sponsorship and status were assessed and the results are depicted in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

<b>Gender of respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Male	215.0	68.5
Female	99.0	31.5
Total	314.0	100.0
<b>Age of the respondents</b>		
Below 20 years	73.0	23.2
21-25 years	230.0	73.2
26-30 Years	7.0	2.2
More than 30 years	4.0	1.3
Total	314.0	100.0

**Table 4.3: Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Cont'd)**

<b>Residence</b>			
	University Hostel	135.0	43.0
	Rented Hostel	179.0	57.0
	Total	314.0	100.0
<b>Mode of Study</b>			
	Full-time	298.0	94.9
	Part-time	16.0	5.1
	Total	314.0	100.0
<b>Means of Sponsorship</b>			
	Government	247.0	78.7
	Self-sponsored	67.0	21.3
	Total	314.0	100.0
<b>Student Status</b>			
	Local Student	295.0	93.9
	International student	19.0	6.1
	Total	314.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

As represented in Table 4.3, the majority (68%) were male respondents while 32% were female. These findings indicate the existence of gender disparity among public universities regarding access to higher education. These findings also indicate that, despite attempts of the ministry of education in Kenya to promote gender equality in higher education, still gender disparity in accessing higher education is an unresolved issue in public universities in Kenya.

Age distribution showed that most (73%) of the respondents were aged between 21-25, some (23%) were aged below 20 years, while 2% were aged between 26-30 years and 1% were aged above 30 years. These results imply that regular fourth-year undergraduate students who were sponsored by the government to pursue their studies in different lines of specialization in different universities after attaining the required Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. A few respondents who aged above 26 years were either on self-sponsorship or deferred but resumed to complete their respective academic programs.

For the residence of students, the results indicated that a larger number (57%) of the students were operating from rented hostels while 43% of them said that they were operating from the university hostels. These results show that a larger number of the students were operating from rented hostels as opposed to hostels that were provided by the university at subsidized rates. Further, it was also noted that even though there were adequate hostels to accommodate students in some universities, most of the fourth year students preferred to operate from rented hostels.

Security and availability of water and other services such as accessibility to the internet were aspects that were more appealing as compared to subsidized university hostels. For student status, the majority (95%) of the students were regular while (5%) accounted for part-time students. This explains that most of the participant of this study had adequate experience, exposure and knowledge concerning services provided by their respective universities. The fourth-year undergraduate students were considered appropriate due to their accumulated service experience for all that period.

For sponsorship status, the majority (79%) were students who were sponsored by the government while some (21%) accounted for self-sponsored. This was a clear reflection that most of the students were under government sponsorship as compared to self-sponsored. Most of the students were in a position to access Higher Education Loans as it is a government initiative to subsidize higher education services to encourage more students to pursue higher education thus the achievement of the social pillar of Kenya's Vision 2030. A few students who were under the self-sponsorship program were either employed or came from financially stable backgrounds.

For student status, most (94%) of the respondents were local students while a few (6%) accounted for international students. These results reflect a relatively low number of international student enrolments in public universities as compared to local students. This might have been directly or indirectly caused by university history, type of academic program, ranking indices and age of the university.

#### **4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Brand Personality**

This study was informed by a cross-sectional design with a multi-level population. The units of analysis which considered multiple sampling techniques to select respondents were students of public universities. The data collected therefore yielded a multi-level dataset which required analyses at both levels of analysis to bring out the implication of variations at both units of analysis.

Level-1 shows variations of brand personality perception by students about service delivery within the universities while level-2 demonstrates variations of brand personality perception by students between the universities. This study assumed homogeneity of brand personality perception by students within the university and heterogeneity of brand personality perception by students between the universities.

The items of the study variable examined were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale type; where 5 denoted strongly agree (SA) and 1 represented strongly disagree (SD). For a basic description of data, mean scores, coefficients of variations and standard deviations were used. The mean score is defined as the calculated central value used to explain the average number in a data set. The Standard deviation (SD) is used to show the degree of variability of a dataset relative to its mean. The Coefficient of variation (Cv) is a statistical value used to compare the degree of variation from one dataset to another.

Internal consistency of variability in a dataset is termed to be statistically adequate if it is below 50% (0.5) (Nunnally, 1978). As observed from the literature, consistent application of brand personality can help organizations to improve customer service delivery. In this study, brand personality was the independent variable hypothesized to influence customer service delivery in the university setting. The variable was measured using 61 indicators of 5 different decision variables namely; brand sophistication, competence, sincerity, excitement and ruggedness.

#### 4.4.1. Brand Sophistication

Brand sophistication is the level to which consumers perceive a product or service to be modern or consistent with their changing norms and values (Aaker,1997). According to marketing literature, brand sophistication is a function of service delivery. The respondents were requested to evaluate the degree of adoption of brand sophistication in public universities concerning service delivery. The pertinent results are summarized in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Sophistication**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
I can access the internet at my university at any time	314	Overall	3.277	1.187	36.2
		Between		0.517	15.8
		Within		1.086	33.2
Newly enrolled students are trained on how to interact with the university website	314	Overall	3.892	1.033	26.6
		Between		0.485	12.5
		Within		0.917	23.6
There is an ICT office in my university that provide student support	314	Overall	4.006	1.039	25.9
		Between		0.421	10.5
		Within		0.958	23.9
University library services are computerized	314	Overall	3.640	1.178	32.4
		Between		0.523	14.4
		Within		1.062	29.2

**Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Sophistication (Cont'd)**

I evaluate lecturers of my university through the online system	314	Overall	3.134	1.496	47.7
		Between		0.729	23.3
		Within		1.311	41.8
I confirm my fee balance through the online system	314	Overall	4.433	0.948	21.4
		Between		0.229	5.2
		Within		0.913	20.6
I book rooms through the online system	314	Overall	3.669	1.438	39.2
		Between		0.623	17.0
		Within		1.324	36.1
I register my units through an online system every semester	314	Overall	4.280	1.206	28.2
		Between		0.834	19.5
		Within		0.887	20.7
My university website is user friendly	314	Overall	4.003	1.047	26.1
		Between		0.298	7.5
		Within		1.009	25.2
My university has installed surveillance cameras in the hostels	314	Overall	2.318	1.371	59.1
		Between		0.691	29.8
		Within		1.199	51.7
My university has installed surveillance cameras in the lecture halls	314	Overall	2.328	1.339	57.5
		Between		0.567	24.3
		Within		1.231	52.9
My university has installed surveillance cameras at the main gates	314	Overall	3.185	1.436	45.1
		Between		0.694	21.8
		Within		1.250	39.3
Lecturers in my university always use ICT tools such as laptops and projectors to facilitate lectures	314	Overall	3.704	1.057	28.5
		Between		0.260	7.0
		Within		1.024	27.6
Degree programs offered by my university are appealing to students	314	Overall	3.882	0.977	25.2
		Between		0.338	8.7
		Within		0.918	23.6
I can access the course outline through the university website	314	Overall	3.226	1.381	42.8
		Between		0.527	16.3
		Within		1.286	39.9
I can access my class timetable through the university website	314	Overall	2.889	1.431	49.5
		Between		0.618	21.4
		Within		1.292	44.7
My university has a biometric system of monitoring student class attendance	314	Overall	2.191	1.309	59.8
		Between		0.525	23.9
		Within		1.214	55.4
I access course materials such as class notes through the online system	314	Overall	2.959	1.376	46.5
		Between		0.466	15.8
		Within		1.298	43.9

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.4 demonstrates respondents' scores on the brand sophistication dimension. The scores were categorized into two levels. The results of 13 of the 18 items of brand sophistication dimension reveal an aggregate mean score above 3.00. It indicates that brand sophistication initiatives are adopted to a moderate extent within and between the universities with the statement 'I confirm my fee balance through the online system' being highly rated with an overall mean score of 4.43 (Std. Dev = 0.948,  $C_v = 21.4\%$ ).

The statements which scored a mean of above 4.00 reveal that to a larger extent, universities have adopted brand sophistication. This is attributed to the availability of an ICT office for student support, student confirmation of fee balances and registration through online platforms as well as a user-friendly university website. All the statements that scored an overall mean above 3.00 imply that universities have to a moderate extent adopted brand sophistication.

This is attributed to the reliability of the internet students, orientation of new students on accessing the internet, accessibility, of course, outlines through online platforms, and computerized library services. Further, brand sophistication in the university was attributed to the appealing of degree programs to students, usage of ICT tools by lecturers, availability of surveillance cameras at main gates, evaluation of lecturers and room booking through online systems.

The findings of 5 of the 18 statements of brand personality items indicate a general mean score of 2.00. It shows that brand sophistication initiatives are not adopted within and between the universities with the statement 'my university has a biometric system of monitoring student class attendance' scored the least overall mean of 2.191 (Std. Dev = 1.309,  $C_v = 59.9\%$ ). All the statements that scored an aggregate mean of less than 2.00 demonstrate that brand sophistication initiatives are not adopted in the universities.



The inability of the universities to embrace brand sophistication was characterized by a lack of surveillance cameras in hostels and lecture halls as well as the inability of students to access class timetable and class notes through online systems. Generally, these findings imply that within the university setting, most of the variations observed were attributed to the similarity of student views towards brand sophistication as opposed to different feeling of students between the universities.

#### 4.4.2 Brand Competence

Brand competence is the ability of workers in an organization to embrace a high level of professionalism, knowledge, skills and experience when serving customers (Kotler, 2010). Literature reveals that brand competence can enhance organizations improve customer confidence and trust. The respondents were required to evaluate the degree of adoption of brand competence in their respective universities concerning service delivery. The results are summarized as depicted in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Competence**

Variable	N		Mean Score	Std. Dev.	C.V (%)
I am given comprehensive class notes by my lecturers	314	Overall	3.863	0.896	23.2
		Between		0.303	7.8
		Within		0.845	21.9
Multiple methods such as assignments and sit-in continuous assessment tests are used by my lecturers in evaluating students' academic performance	314	Overall	4.274	0.873	20.4
		Between		0.206	4.8
		Within		0.850	19.9
My university offer degree programs that attract bright students	314	Overall	3.901	0.979	25.1
		Between		0.276	7.1
		Within		0.944	24.2
I am satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers	314	Overall	3.538	1.064	30.1
		Between		0.416	11.8
		Within		0.981	27.7
There are good relations between lecturers of my university and students	314	Overall	3.783	0.988	26.1
		Between		0.341	9.0
		Within		0.925	24.5

**Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Competence (Cont'd)**

Lecturers of my university have a high level of professionalism	314	Overall	3.866	0.926	24.0
		Between		0.322	8.3
		Within		0.873	22.6
The non-teaching staff in my university offer excellent services to students	314	Overall	3.646	1.084	29.7
		Between		0.298	8.2
		Within		1.035	28.4
The non-teaching staff in my university are always punctual	314	Overall	3.691	1.056	28.6
		Between		0.332	9.0
		Within		1.007	27.3
Lecturers of my university always cover the syllabus on time	314	Overall	3.401	1.057	31.1
		Between		0.402	11.8
		Within		0.984	28.9
I receive prompt information on any enquiry	314	Overall	3.108	1.173	37.7
		Between		0.421	13.6
		Within		1.092	35.1

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.5 depicts the scores of respondents on brand competence. The results of 10 items of brand competence dimension reveal an overall mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. It shows that brand competence initiatives are adopted to a moderate extent within and between the universities with the statement 'multiple methods such as assignments and sit-in continuous assessment tests are used by my lecturers in evaluating students' academic performance' being highly rated with a general mean score of 4.274 (Std. Dev = 0.873,  $C_V = 20.4\%$ ) while the least scoring statement being 'I receive prompt information on any enquiry' had a mean score of 3.108 (Std. Dev = 1.173,  $C_V = 37.7\%$ ).

All the statements that scored a mean above 3.00 indicate that universities to a moderate extent have adopted brand competence. This is attributed to the comprehensiveness of class notes, attractiveness of degree programs, and student satisfaction with teaching methodologies. In addition, interpersonal relations between students and lecturers, timely coverage of the syllabus by lecturers, provision of timely information, the professionalism of lecturers and punctuality by non-teaching staff.

The variations observed within students of the universities concerning brand competence dimension were slightly higher as compared to those between students across the universities. These variations were attributed to services heterogeneity from one university to another due to individual judgements of brand personality by students.

#### 4.4.3 Brand Sincerity

Brand sincerity is the extent to which employees in any organization fulfil their promises to customers. The honest and cheerfulness of service providers can significantly improve customer service delivery (Ying et al., 2017). Table 4.6 provides the results of descriptive statistics on brand sincerity. The respondents were required to measure the extent of adoption of brand sincerity in their respective universities concerning service delivery. A summary of the resulted is depicted in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Sincerity**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
My university engages student leadership in decision making	314	Overall	3.369	1.232	36.6
		Between		0.538	16.0
		Within		1.131	33.6
University leadership is always committed to addressing student concerns	314	Overall	3.191	1.167	36.6
		Between		0.414	13.0
		Within		1.104	34.6
Information provided by the non-teaching staff in my university is reliable	314	Overall	3.309	1.032	31.2
		Between		0.235	7.1
		Within		1.004	30.3
Information provided by the teaching staff in my university is reliable	314	Overall	3.723	0.974	26.2
		Between		0.237	6.4
		Within		0.945	25.4
Services offered by my university always exceed my expectations	314	Overall	3.025	1.099	36.3
		Between		0.395	13.1
		Within		1.034	34.2
I enrolled in this university because of its good reputation	314	Overall	3.634	1.165	32.1
		Between		0.250	6.9
		Within		1.141	31.4
I always make enquiries about my fee balance, book a room and print provisional transcripts without difficulties	314	Overall	3.513	1.210	34.5
		Between		0.338	9.6
		Within		1.172	33.4

**Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Sincerity (Cont'd)**

I am updated about new developments through the university website	314	Overall	3.283	1.269	38.6
		Between		0.378	11.5
		Within		1.213	36.9
I can access my exam results on a timely basis through my online student portal account	314	Overall	3.331	1.418	42.6
		Between		0.691	20.8
		Within		1.249	37.5
My university has special facilities for students with disabilities such as hostels	314	Overall	3.032	1.432	47.2
		Between		0.753	24.8
		Within		1.244	41.0
Lecturers in my university always adhere to the teaching timetable	314	Overall	3.296	1.152	35.0
		Between		0.267	8.1
		Within		1.116	33.9

Source: Primary Data

As indicated in Table 4.6, the results of all the 11 items of brand sincerity dimension indicate an aggregate mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. These results show that universities, to a moderated extent have adopted brand sincerity with a statement 'information provided by the teaching staff in my university is reliable' being rated the highest with an overall mean score of 3.723 (Std. Dev = 0.974,  $C_V = 26.2\%$ ) while the lowest-scoring statement being 'services offered by my university always exceed my expectations' had an overall mean score of 3.025 (Std. Dev = 1.099,  $C_V = 36.3\%$ ).

All the statements that scored a mean score above 3.00 imply that universities have adopted brand sincerity to a moderate extent. This is associated with university engagement of student leadership in decision making, the commitment of university leadership to student concerns, reliability of the information provided by teaching and non-teaching staff, satisfactory services that exceed student expectations, good reputation of the university and promptness of feedback on enquiries.

Further, attributes of brand sincerity in the university setting are updates of students on new developments and access of exam results through online platforms, availability of special facilities for disabled students and adherence of lecturers to teaching timetable. The variations observed within students of the universities concerning brand sincerity dimension were slightly higher as compared to those between students of universities due to different views of brand sincerity by students within and between the universities.

#### 4.4.4 Brand Excitement

Brand excitement is the ability of the brand to fulfil customer needs and wants thus enhanced customer delight (Hsu, 2014). Literature observes that service delivery in any organization can be enhanced by the adoption of brand excitement. Organizations that embrace favoured human traits such as creativity, darling, uniqueness and modernism can create a significant impact on customer loyalty (Aaker, 1997). The respondents were required to evaluate the extent to which brand excitement was embraced in their respective universities concerning service delivery. A summary of descriptive statistics is provided in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Excitement**

Variable	N		Mean Score	Std. Dev.	C.V (%)
I am excited about services in my university	314	Overall	4.080	0.987	24.2
		Between		0.295	7.2
		Within		0.945	23.2
My university is the best in the region	314	Overall	3.924	1.125	28.7
		Between		0.291	7.4
		Within		1.091	27.8
Library services in my university are exciting	314	Overall	3.694	1.049	28.4
		Between		0.388	10.5
		Within		0.981	26.5
Security services in my university are exciting	314	Overall	3.490	1.097	31.4
		Between		0.305	8.7
		Within		1.056	30.3

**Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Excitement (Cont'd)**

Services of non-teaching staff in my university are appealing	314	Overall	3.599	1.092	30.4
		Between		0.297	8.2
		Within		1.056	29.3
Leadership initiatives in my university are appealing	314	Overall	3.283	1.155	35.2
		Between		0.408	12.4
		Within		1.087	33.1
My lecturers are always punctual in class	314	Overall	3.322	1.079	32.5
		Between		0.248	7.5
		Within		1.052	31.7
Sports activities and student clubs are supported by the university	314	Overall	3.490	1.145	32.8
		Between		0.214	6.1
		Within		1.127	32.3
I am always satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers	314	Overall	3.557	1.060	29.8
		Between		0.301	8.5
		Within		1.019	28.6
My university has a student entertainment centre	314	Overall	3.127	1.327	42.4
		Between		0.563	18.0
		Within		1.214	38.8
My university rewards students of distinguished performance	314	Overall	3.051	1.280	42.0
		Between		0.356	11.7
		Within		1.236	40.5
Students of distinguished performance in my university are assured of international scholarships after graduation	314	Overall	2.987	1.328	44.5
		Between		0.376	12.6
		Within		1.283	42.9

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.7 illustrates the respondents' scores on the brand excitement dimension. The results of 11 of the 12 statements reveal an overall mean score of 3.00. These results depict that universities have adopted brand excitement to a moderate extent. The statement 'I am pleased to be linked with my university' had the highest overall mean score of 4.080 (Std. Dev = 0.987,  $C_V = 24.2\%$ ) while the lowest-scoring statement being 'students of distinguished performance in my university are assured of international scholarships after graduation' had a general mean score of 2.987 (Std. Dev = 1.328,  $C_V = 44.5\%$ ).

All statements that scored a mean score above 3.00 reflect that universities have adopted brand excitement to a moderate extent. This is linked to students' happiness to university brand, consideration of the university to be the best in the region, the satisfaction of students with library services, students assurance to security, the happiness of students to services provided by non-teaching staff, good leadership initiatives and punctuality of lecturers in class. Moreover, brand excitement was associated with students participating in sports activities, students satisfaction with methodologies of teaching, availability of entertainment services, the reward of hardworking students and assurance of international scholarships to the student after graduation.

Further, 1 of the 12 statements being of brand excitement dimension scored an overall mean score of less than 2.00 (Std. Dev = 1.328,  $C_v = 44.5\%$ ), indicating that students were not assured of international scholarships despite their distinguished performance. The variations concerning brand excitement within and between students of the universities infer that brand excitement was evaluated differently by the students. Given that each university had different programs, management styles and service delivery models, students had different views.

#### **4.4.5 Brand Ruggedness**

Brand ruggedness is the capability of the brand to be attributed to human qualities such as toughness, authoritative and masculinity (Aaker,1997). Hong and Ha (2016) Willems and Swinnen (2011) and Bhakar et al (2012) postulate that physical assets, a variety of products and patent protection can help organizations enhance customer loyalty. To assess the level to which universities adopted brand ruggedness concerning service delivery, the following results were obtained as depicted in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for Brand Ruggedness**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
Lecture halls of my university are well ventilated and spacious	314	Overall	3.850	1.093	28.4
		Between		0.367	9.5
		Within		1.041	27.0
Lecture halls of my university are installed with projectors	314	Overall	3.006	1.220	40.6
		Between		0.504	16.8
		Within		1.125	37.4
My university has well-furnished residential hostels	314	Overall	2.987	1.228	41.1
		Between		0.369	12.4
		Within		1.164	39.0
My university has employees with a professional outlook	314	Overall	3.366	1.115	33.1
		Between		0.324	9.6
		Within		1.065	31.6
My university is fenced with an electric wall	314	Overall	2.156	1.313	60.9
		Between		0.322	14.9
		Within		1.278	59.3
I am assured of securing a good job in a reputable organization after graduating	314	Overall	3.392	1.252	36.9
		Between		0.411	12.1
		Within		1.193	35.2
My university has degree programs that attract brilliant students	314	Overall	3.946	1.055	26.7
		Between		0.404	10.2
		Within		0.988	25.0
My university has unique courses that attract both local and international students	314	Overall	3.710	1.100	29.6
		Between		0.489	13.2
		Within		1.009	27.2
The environment in which my university is located is conducive for learning	314	Overall	3.981	1.069	26.9
		Between		0.418	10.5
		Within		0.985	24.7
Services provided in my university are appealing to local and international students	314	Overall	3.621	1.142	31.5
		Between		0.323	8.9
		Within		1.102	30.4

Source: Primary Data.

Table 4.8 illustrates the scores of respondents on brand ruggedness. The 8 of the 10 statements reveal an overall mean score of 3.00 within and between the universities. It shows that universities have adopted brand ruggedness to a moderate extent. The statement 'the environment in which my university is located is conducive for learning' had the highest mean score of 3.981 (Std. Dev = 1.069, C<sub>V</sub> = 26.9%).



The other statement 'my university is fenced with an electric wall' had a mean score of 2.156 (Std. Dev = 1.313,  $C_v = 60.9\%$ ). All the statements that scored an aggregate mean score above 3.00 suggest that universities have adopted brand ruggedness to a moderate extent. This is attributed to lecture halls and with adequate space and ventilation, equipped lecture halls with ICT instructional devices such as projectors, well-furnished residential hostels, the professional outlook of workers and availability of electric walls.

Further, brand ruggedness was attributed to student assurance of a good job after graduating, the attractiveness of degree programs to brilliant students, uniqueness of university courses to local and international students and attractiveness of university services were all aspects of brand ruggedness viewed to influence customer service delivery. The variations about brand ruggedness within and between students of the universities infer that the brand ruggedness dimension was viewed differently by individual students.

These findings suggest that most of the students within the university had similar perceptions towards brand ruggedness as opposed to perceptions held by students between universities. The overall mean scores of 2 of the 8 statements of brand ruggedness dimension were less than 2.00 indicating that the universities did not embrace brand ruggedness. This was attributed to poorly-furnished residential hostels 2.987 (Std. Dev = 1.228,  $C_v = 41.1\%$ ) and non-existence of electric fences around university premises with an overall mean score of 2.156 (Std. Dev = 1.313,  $C_v = 60.9\%$ ). The variations observed about brand ruggedness were due to the different feeling of students within and between the universities.

## 4.5 Strategic Marketing Partnerships

Strategic marketing partnerships are an arrangement where firms jointly market their brands (Nashwan, 2015). Literature reveals strategic marketing partnership can help firms enhance customer service delivery if effectively embraced. The three strategic marketing partnership decisional variables considered to influence customer service delivery in the university setting were: co-distribution, co-branding and co-research.

### 4.5.1 Co-Distribution

Co-distribution is the joint marketing of products and service by more than one firm (Kapferer, 2010). Giovanni and Daniela (2018) acknowledge that co-distribution can help firms improve brand performance. Respondents were required to evaluate the extent to which co-distribution was embraced by their respective universities. The results are summarized in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics for Co-Distribution**

Variable	N		Mean Score	Std. Dev.	C.V (%)
Students in my university are sponsored to attend exchange programs in international universities	314	Overall	3.032	1.266	41.8
		Between		0.401	13.2
		Within		1.199	39.5
Students from international universities are sponsored to attend exchange programs in my university	314	Overall	2.927	1.198	40.9
		Between		0.414	14.2
		Within		1.126	38.5
International students are allowed to elect their representatives	314	Overall	2.812	1.318	46.9
		Between		0.588	20.9
		Within		1.198	42.6
I am a member of inter-university clubs	314	Overall	2.720	1.422	52.3
		Between		0.679	25.0
		Within		1.264	46.5
I am encouraged to apply for postgraduate scholarships offered by international universities after graduating	314	Overall	3.223	1.264	39.2
		Between		0.545	16.9
		Within		1.158	35.9
Students from international universities have a special department that addresses their issues of concern	314	Overall	2.729	1.279	46.9
		Between		0.532	19.5
		Within		1.185	43.4

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.9 depicts the scores of respondents on co-distribution. The 4 of the 6 statements had a general mean score less than 2.00 while 1 statement had an aggregate mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. These results reveal that universities have not adopted co-distribution to a larger extent. The statement 'students in my university are sponsored to attend exchange programs in international universities' had the highest general mean score 3.850 (Std. Dev = 1.093,  $C_V = 28.4\%$ ) while the lowest-scoring statement 'I am a member of inter-university clubs' had an overall mean score of 2.720 (Std. Dev = 1.422,  $C_V = 52.3\%$ ).

All the statements that scored an overall mean of less than 2.00 indicate that universities are not embracing co-distribution. This is attributed to the inability of the universities to sponsor international students to attend exchange programs, the inability of the universities to allow international students to elect their representatives, the inability of the university students to be members of inter-university clubs and the non-existence of a special department to address issues raised by international students.

However, the overall mean score for 2 of the 6 statements is above 3.00, implying that co-distribution was embraced to a moderate extent in the universities. The statement 'ability of the universities to sponsor students to attend exchange programs in international universities after graduating' had a mean score of 3.032 (Std. Dev = 1.266,  $C_V = 41.8\%$ ), and that of 'encouragement of graduates to apply for postgraduate scholarships offered by international universities' had a mean score of 3.223 (Std. Dev = 1.264,  $C_V = 39.2\%$ ). The variations noted concerning co-distribution was due to different views held by students within and across the universities.

## 4.5.2 Co-Branding

Co-branding is described as an arrangement where more than two firms jointly use their logos, trademarks and slogans to market their products and services in the marketplace (Kapferer, 2010). Joint branding can lead to extended brand identity and enhanced customer experience if effectively managed. To determine the level to which universities adopted co-branding, the scores from respondents are depicted as summarized in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics for Co-Branding**

Variable	N		Mean Score	Std. Dev.	C.V (%)
My university is affiliated with world-class universities	314	Overall	3.395	1.211	35.7
		Between		0.500	14.7
		Within		1.118	32.9
Academic forums organized by this university in partnership with international universities are appealing	314	Overall	3.331	1.124	33.7
		Between		0.480	14.4
		Within		1.025	30.8
Degree programs offered by international affiliate universities are appealing	314	Overall	3.366	1.094	32.5
		Between		0.342	10.1
		Within		1.046	31.1
International universities affiliated with my university are appealing	314	Overall	3.175	1.155	36.4
		Between		0.414	13.0
		Within		1.086	34.2
I am attracted by international student clubs	314	Overall	3.019	1.228	40.7
		Between		0.352	11.6
		Within		1.182	39.1
I am pleased by events sponsored by affiliate international universities	314	Overall	3.089	1.196	38.7
		Between		0.381	12.3
		Within		1.143	37.0
Periodical inter-university events such as sports are appealing	314	Overall	3.306	1.205	36.5
		Between		0.382	11.5
		Within		1.149	34.7
Branded materials such as T-shirts of other universities are appealing	314	Overall	3.150	1.271	40.4
		Between		0.414	13.2
		Within		1.207	38.3

Source: Primary Data.

Table 4.10 shows respondents scores on co-branding. All the statements disclose an overall mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. The results indicate that universities have adopted co-branding to a moderate extent. The statement 'my university is affiliated with world-class universities' had the highest overall mean score 3.395 (Std. Dev = 1.211,  $C_v = 35.7\%$ ) while the least rated statement 'I am attracted by international student clubs' had a mean score of 3.019 (Std. Dev = 1.228,  $C_v = 40.7\%$ ). However, this is attributed to university affiliation with world-class universities, organization of academic forums in partnership with international universities and degree programs offered by international affiliate universities.

Moreover, co-branding was linked to the formation of international student clubs and sponsorship of events by affiliate international universities were said to influence customer service delivery, periodical inter-university events such as sports and provision of branded materials such as T-shirts of other universities to students. The variation observed concerning co-branding within and between students of universities was due to different views held by students about co-branding.

### **4.5.3 Co-Research**

Co-research is viewed as the degree to which more than two organizations jointly conducts research concerning their products to enhance service delivery (Keller, 2010). Jayasundara et al. (2010) assert that co-research initiatives among firms not only enhance customer loyalty but also promote brand image. To establish the level to which universities adopted co-research, the scores from respondents are illustrated as summarized in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics for Co-Research**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
My university considers student exchange programs to be the source of new knowledge	314	Overall	3.605	1.089	30.2
		Between		0.352	9.8
		Within		1.039	28.8
Some students in my university are beneficiaries of international university scholarships	314	Overall	3.252	1.174	36.1
		Between		0.394	12.1
		Within		1.119	34.4
I study with international students at my university	314	Overall	3.105	1.342	43.2
		Between		0.564	18.2
		Within		1.230	39.6
My university is always willing to sponsor student academic trips	314	Overall	3.169	1.225	38.7
		Between		0.328	10.4
		Within		1.187	37.4
I am taught by lecturers from international universities in some subjects	314	Overall	2.771	1.365	49.3
		Between		0.629	22.7
		Within		1.210	43.7
My university has an open access inter-university platform where students exchange academic ideas	314	Overall	2.879	1.261	43.8
		Between		0.349	12.1
		Within		1.219	42.3
Periodical academic forums organized by my university are appealing	314	Overall	3.232	1.153	35.7
		Between		0.316	9.8
		Within		1.118	34.6

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.11 indicates respondents scores on co-research. The 5 of the 7 statements disclose an aggregate mean score above 3.00. These results indicate that universities have adopted co-research to a moderate extent. The statement 'my university considers student exchange programs to be the source of new knowledge' had the highest overall mean score of 3.605 (Std. Dev = 1.089, C<sub>v</sub> = 30.2%). This is associated with the consideration of student exchange programs as a source of knowledge and provision of international scholarships to local students, provision of opportunity to local students to study with international students, organization of periodical academic forums by universities and student sponsorship to academic trips.

The overall mean score for 2 of the 7 statement was less than 3.00 suggesting that universities have not adopted co-research. This is linked to the inability of students to be taught by more than one lecturer in some subjects with an overall mean score of 2.771 (Std. Dev = 1.365,  $C_V = 49.3\%$ ), and the failure of the universities to have an open access inter-university platform where students can exchange academic ideas scoring a general mean of 2.879 (Std. Dev = 1.261,  $C_V = 43.8\%$ ). The variations observed concerning co-research indicator were due to different views held by students within and between the universities.

#### **4.6 Organizational Demographics**

Organizational demographics are intangible and tangible assets that can influence customer service delivery directly or indirectly in an organization (Waithaka, 2014). Literature reveals that organizational demographics can help the organization attract and retain customer if effectively managed. The decisional metrics that were used to measure organizational demographics variable in the university setting involved age, size and location.

##### **4.6.1 Organizational Age**

Organizational size is regarded as the period an organization has been in operation (Waithaka, 2014). The literature demonstrates that organizational age can create a significant impact on service delivery if effectively managed. To assess the extent to which universities embraced organizational age, a summary of the results is provided in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Descriptive Statistics for Age of the University**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
A variety of degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students	314	Overall	3.930	1.037	26.4
		Between		0.313	8.0
		Within		0.997	25.4
Practices of my university are emulated by other universities	314	Overall	3.787	1.109	29.3
		Between		0.412	10.9
		Within		1.040	27.5
My university has an effective fee payment system	314	Overall	3.688	1.118	30.3
		Between		0.364	9.9
		Within		1.063	28.8
My university has an effective result transmission system	314	Overall	3.411	1.256	36.8
		Between		0.412	12.1
		Within		1.191	34.9
My university has adequate student hostels	314	Overall	2.605	1.381	53.0
		Between		0.657	25.2
		Within		1.238	47.5
My university has well-equipped computer labs to accommodate all students	314	Overall	3.000	1.254	41.8
		Between		0.417	13.9
		Within		1.192	39.7
Individual lecturers have private offices for academic consultation	314	Overall	3.287	1.210	36.8
		Between		0.367	11.2
		Within		1.167	35.5
The non-teaching staff have private offices	314	Overall	2.987	1.177	39.4
		Between		0.350	11.7
		Within		1.127	37.7
My university has a well-equipped health facility	314	Overall	3.207	1.107	34.5
		Between		0.371	11.6
		Within		1.044	32.6
My university has adequate playgrounds for various games	314	Overall	3.178	1.318	41.5
		Between		0.623	19.6
		Within		1.181	37.2
Non-teaching staff are fully committed to addressing student issues	314	Overall	3.121	1.158	37.1
		Between		0.362	11.6
		Within		1.109	35.5

Source: Primary Data

As illustrated in Table 4.12, 8 of the 11 statements of the age of the university indicator had a general mean score of more than 3.00. These results reflect that universities have adopted age about customer service delivery to a moderate extent. The statement 'a variety of degree programs offered in my university is appealing to local and international students had the highest aggregate mean score of 3.930 (Std. Dev = 1.037, C<sub>v</sub> = 26.4%).



The lowest-scoring statement 'my university has adequate student hostels' had an overall mean of 2.605 (Std. Dev = 1.381,  $C_v = 53.0\%$ ). All the statements that scored an aggregate mean score above 3.00 imply that universities have adopted age as a way of enhancing customer service delivery. University age was linked to the attractiveness of degree programs offered by the universities, the university being on the lead against other universities, effectiveness of fee payment and result transmission systems. Moreover, it is attributed to well-equipped computer labs, availability of private offices for lecturers, well-equipped health facility, well-maintained playgrounds for various sports games and commitment of non-teaching staff to student issues.

However, 2 of the 10 statements had a general mean score less than 2.00 implying that universities have not embraced age as a way of enhancing service delivery. This is associated to inadequate hostels to students with a general mean score of 2.605 (Std. Dev = 1.381,  $C_v = 53.0\%$ ), and non-existence of private offices for non-teaching staff with an overall mean score of 2.987 (Std. Dev = 1.177,  $C_v = 39.4\%$ ). The variation observed concerning university age is due to different view held by individual students within and between the universities.

#### **4.6.2 Organizational Size**

Organizational size is measured using the number of assets, employees, customers and operational branches an organization can have at a particular point in time (Waithaka, 2014). Organizational size can positively or negatively influence customer service delivery. Saghier and Nathan (2013) suggest that the size of the firm can have a direct or an indirect impact on organizational performance if effectively managed. To assess the level of agreement among respondents concerning the adoption of organizational size in the universities, a summary of the relevant results is provided in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Descriptive Statistics for Size of the University**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
There are adequate hostels in my university	314	Overall	2.669	1.425	53.4
		Between		0.682	25.6
		Within		1.280	48.0
There are adequate lecturer halls in my university	314	Overall	3.306	1.242	37.6
		Between		0.444	13.4
		Within		1.167	35.3
Multiple degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students	314	Overall	3.535	1.111	31.4
		Between		0.324	9.2
		Within		1.071	30.3
I am taught by more than one lecturer in one unit every semester	314	Overall	2.822	1.380	48.9
		Between		0.371	13.2
		Within		1.338	47.4
There are various religious buildings of worship in my university	314	Overall	3.363	1.350	40.1
		Between		0.425	12.6
		Within		1.286	38.2
My university has satellite campuses	314	Overall	3.191	1.408	44.1
		Between		0.762	23.9
		Within		1.195	37.4
My university has adequate playgrounds	314	Overall	3.252	1.386	42.6
		Between		0.697	21.4
		Within		1.217	37.4
My university has a well-equipped library	314	Overall	3.503	1.239	35.4
		Between		0.547	15.6
		Within		1.120	32.0
My university owns more than one bus	314	Overall	4.169	1.099	26.4
		Between		0.382	9.2
		Within		1.036	24.8

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.13 demonstrated that 7 of the 9 statements disclose an aggregate mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. The results suggest that the universities have adopted size to enhance service delivery. The statement 'my university owns more than one bus' had the highest overall mean score of 4.169 (Std. Dev = 1.099, Cv = 26.4%). The results infer that universities have adopted size to a larger extent to influence customer service delivery. Further, 6 of the 9 statements had an overall mean score of 3.00.

This is associate with adequate hostels, lecture halls, playgrounds, a variety of degree programs, availability of religious worshipping structures, and the existence of satellite campuses. Further, the university-age is associated with a well-equipped library and the availability of university buses. Moreover, 2 of the 9 statements of the size of the university indicator had an overall mean score of less than 2.00 indicating that universities have not embraced size to enhance service delivery.

The result is attributed to inadequate hostels to accommodate students with a general mean score of 2.669 (Std. Dev = 1.425,  $C_v = 1.425\%$ ). Further, the inability of students to be taught by more than one lecturer in one unit in every semester had an aggregate mean score of 2.822 (Std. Dev = 1.380,  $C_v = 48.9\%$ ). The dissimilarity witnessed concerning the size of the university is attributed to the diverse thoughts of individual students within and between the universities.

#### **4.6.3 Organizational Location**

Organization location is the ideal or preferred place of an enterprise by customer (Waithaka, 2014). From the literature, organization location is directly correlated with customer service delivery (Kotler, 2010). Yasin et al. (2013) concur that strategic location is directly correlated to customer satisfaction. The respondents had been asked to evaluate the degree of adoption of university location about customer service delivery in their respective universities. The relevant results are provided in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics for Location of the University**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>		<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>C.V (%)</b>
My university is in a strategic location	314	Overall	4.172	0.996	23.9
		Between		0.331	7.9
		Within		0.938	22.5
My hostels are convenient to lecture halls	314	Overall	3.532	1.228	34.8
		Between		0.474	13.4
		Within		1.140	32.3
I can easily access the university library at any time	314	Overall	3.541	1.096	30.9
		Between		0.359	10.1
		Within		1.047	29.6
I am assured of security while at the university compound	314	Overall	3.780	1.066	28.2
		Between		0.308	8.2
		Within		1.017	26.9
I always attend class sessions on time	314	Overall	3.978	1.034	26.0
		Between		0.311	7.8
		Within		0.988	24.8
I can access my university at any time	314	Overall	3.920	1.019	26.0
		Between		0.318	8.1
		Within		0.973	24.8
I can easily access commercial services such as printing and photocopying while at the university	314	Overall	3.844	1.077	28.0
		Between		0.305	7.9
		Within		1.040	27.1
Road networks to my university are in good condition	314	Overall	3.685	1.207	32.7
		Between		0.407	11.0
		Within		1.139	30.9
When it rains I can access my university without difficulty	314	Overall	3.408	1.230	36.1
		Between		0.422	12.4
		Within		1.164	34.1

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.13 depicts that all 9 statements unveil a collective mean score above 3.00 within and between the universities. These results indicate that universities have implemented size to enhance service delivery. The statement 'the location of my university is appropriate' had the highest mean score of 4.172 (Std. Dev = 0.996, C<sub>v</sub> = 23.9%). This shows that to larger extent universities have adopted location as a way of enhancing customer service delivery.

As shown in Table 4.13, 8 of the 9 statements had a general mean score above 3.00. These results infer that universities have adopted location to a moderate extent. This is linked to the appropriateness of the university location, the convenience of hostels to lecture halls and ease of accessing the university library. Further, student assurance of security, timely attendance of class sessions, ease of accessing services at any time, and well-maintained road networks were all aspects that were attributed to the location of the university. Variations observed were associated with different perceptions held by students within and between universities concerning the location of the university.

#### 4.7 Customer Service Delivery

Service delivery is the overall experience customers have towards products or services provided by an entity (Parasuraman et al. 1985). Perepelkin and Zhang (2011) acknowledge that organizations operating in multiple sectors can enhance customer service delivery by the adoption of brand personality. Table 4.15 illustrates the pertinent results concerning the extent to which customer service delivery was measured in the university setting by the adoption of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics. A summary of relevant findings is depicted in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics for Customer Service Delivery**

Variable	N		Mean Score	Std. Dev.	C.V (%)
I receive prompt services in my university	314	Overall	3.494	0.993	28.4
		Between		0.318	9.1
		Within		0.945	27.0
I am always given personalized attention by my lecturers	314	Overall	3.150	1.051	33.4
		Between		0.399	12.7
		Within		0.979	31.1
Lecturers of my university have a high level of professionalism	314	Overall	3.866	0.926	24.0
		Between		0.322	8.3
		Within		0.873	22.6

**Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics for Customer Service Delivery (Cont'd)**

The non-teaching staff in my university offer excellent services to students	314	Overall	3.646	1.084	29.7
		Between		0.298	8.2
		Within		1.035	28.4
Provisional results produced by my university have no errors	314	Overall	3.010	1.126	37.4
		Between		0.299	9.9
		Within		1.091	36.2
Lectures always start lessons at the exact time as indicated in the timetable	314	Overall	3.086	1.091	35.4
		Between		0.388	12.6
		Within		1.024	33.2
I am set to complete my course within the specified timeframe	314	Overall	3.564	1.203	33.8
		Between		0.393	11.0
		Within		1.135	31.9
University examinations always start at the right time and invigilated effectively	314	Overall	3.834	1.041	27.2
		Between		0.226	5.9
		Within		1.017	26.5
I access my results through the student portal at the right time	314	Overall	3.290	1.348	41.0
		Between		0.627	19.1
		Within		1.207	36.7
My university always responds appropriately to student grievances	314	Overall	3.010	1.192	39.6
		Between		0.515	17.1
		Within		1.091	36.2
I am allowed to evaluate my lecturer at the end of every semester	314	Overall	3.494	1.186	34.0
		Between		0.341	9.8
		Within		1.138	32.6
Feedback provided by the non-teaching staff on student enquiries is reliable	314	Overall	3.334	1.005	30.1
		Between		0.263	7.9
		Within		0.967	29.0
I am set to graduate within the recommended timeframe by the university	314	Overall	3.608	1.165	32.3
		Between		0.383	10.6
		Within		1.092	30.3
I relate well with lecturers of my university	314	Overall	3.675	1.009	27.5
		Between		0.288	7.8
		Within		0.970	26.4
I relate well with the non-teaching staff of my university	314	Overall	3.478	1.099	31.6
		Between		0.375	10.8
		Within		1.030	29.6

**Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics for Customer Service Delivery (Cont'd)**

My lecturers are always available for consultation after lecture sessions	314	Overall	3.439	1.112	32.3
		Between		0.345	10.0
		Within		1.066	31.0
I can recommend this university to other students	314	Overall	3.841	1.145	29.8
		Between		0.335	8.7
		Within		1.099	28.6
I am willing to pursue my postgraduate studies at this university	314	Overall	3.299	1.340	40.6
		Between		0.527	16.0
		Within		1.239	38.6

Source: Primary Data

As depicted in Table 4.15, all the 18 statements of customer service delivery dimension had an overall mean score of more than 3.00. These results show that universities, to a larger extent as noted in all the 18 decisional metrics are used to measure customer service delivery. The statement 'I can recommend this university to other students' had the highest overall mean score of 3.8414 (Std. Dev = 1.145,  $C_V = 29.8\%$ ) while the statement 'provisional results produced by my university have no errors and my university always responds appropriately to student grievances' had the lowest mean score of 3.010 (Std. Dev = 1.126,  $C_V = 37.4\%$ ).

All the statements that scored an overall mean score of above 3.00 imply that universities adopted the aforementioned metrics to a moderate extent. This is linked to the promptness of service delivery to students, personalized attention by lecturers to students, the fulfilment of promises by university teaching, and non-teaching staff influenced customer service delivery. Furthermore, customer service delivery was attributed to the non-existence of errors in the results produced, the start of lecture lessons as scheduled in the timetable, students preparedness to complete their studies within the specified duration and the start of the university examination at the right time with effective invigilation.

Additionally, customer service delivery is associated with the accessibility of results by students through online student portals, the timely response of the university management to student grievances, the opportunity of students to evaluate lectures at the end of every semester, timely feedback provided by non-teaching staff to students, and student preparedness to graduate within the recommended timeframe is also aspects students attributed to customer service delivery.

Good relations between students, lecturers and non-teaching staff, availability of lecturers for student consultation, student referrals and student willingness to pursue postgraduate studies in their respective universities were as well aspects that were associated with customer service delivery. Generally, these findings imply that strong variations of service delivery were high within students of universities as compared to that of students between universities. This was due to different perceptions of service delivery held by individual students. The uniqueness of service delivery was limited to individual universities rather than generalizing student perceptions between universities.

#### **4.8 Tests for Statistical Assumptions**

Statistical tests are necessary for scientific studies for assurance that data does not fail the assumptions (Collis & Hussey, 2014). For assurance, that data is free from outliers that may distort significance tests and associations between variables, normality, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity tests should be conducted. However, depending on the nature of data being analysed, the Ordinary Least Squares assumptions are applicable if a single-level approach is adopted when analysing data but opposed when the multi-level approach is used to analyse data (Loy et al., 2017, Brewer, Butler & Cooksley, 2016).



Harrison (2015) acknowledges that due to the complexity of the linear mixed effect (LME) models, conventional diagnostic tests are considered less effective. However, exploratory analysis using graphical plots is preferred as the modelling techniques including residuals due to the second level. By fitting the models, data can be analysed at multiple levels within or between groups. The models are also preferred because they facilitate the visualization of data patterns using residual plots. Based on the multi-level approach of data analysis, Ordinary Least Square (OLS) assumptions were disobeyed and the linear mixed-effects models were used to determine diagnostic statistics using graphical facilities. In this case, Q-Q plots and scatter plots were used.

In this study, normality was tested using q-q plots of the level-1 and 2 model residuals. As shown in the Q-Q plots (Appendix 9), data plots were concentrated along the line of Best fit implying normal distribution of data. Conversely, using hanging rootograms (Appendix 10), at 95% confidence level, most of the hanging roots were concentrated along the line of Best fit, thus implying a normal distribution of data. Further, using q-q plots as shown in Appendix 11, data plots were concentrated along the line of Best fit, confirming the normality of data within the universities.

Equally, to test the normality of data at level-2, q-q plots were used. As shown (Appendix 12), data plots were confirmed to concentrate along the normal distribution line, indicating data was normally distributed. Using rootograms (Appendix 13), at a 95% confidence level, hanging roots were along the line of Best fit, thus confirming the normality of data. Subsequently, to confirm normality of data distribution both at level-1 and level-2 (Appendix 14), all the residual sets were confirmed not to deviating from normality. The p-values for the three residual sets were less than 0.05 indicating the normality of the data.

This study tested homoscedasticity using residual plots of both level-1 and 2 residuals against predicted values as shown in Appendix 15. The pattern of data plots showed no notable increase or decrease, thus, implying homogeneity of variance of level-1 residuals. To assess the homogeneity of variance for the model fitted using a line-up of residuals scatter plots by groups for level-1 residuals (Appendix 16), homogeneity of data was confirmed since data plots were randomly distributed thus implying that element of heterogeneity in the residuals was non-existent. Further, scatter plots were used to assess the level-2 residuals of the random effects due to both the random covariates and random intercepts (Appendix 17). The level-2 residuals were randomly distributed, confirming homogeneity of variance.

This study tested multi-collinearity using Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs). As shown in (Appendix 18), the VIFs for the three predictor variable of the study (brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics) were less than 2 and an average VIF of 1.45 (Loy & Hofmann, 2017). The results implied that the variables did not exhibit multicollinearity. At level-1 and level-2, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was confirmed and the heteroscedasticity assumption was disregarded.

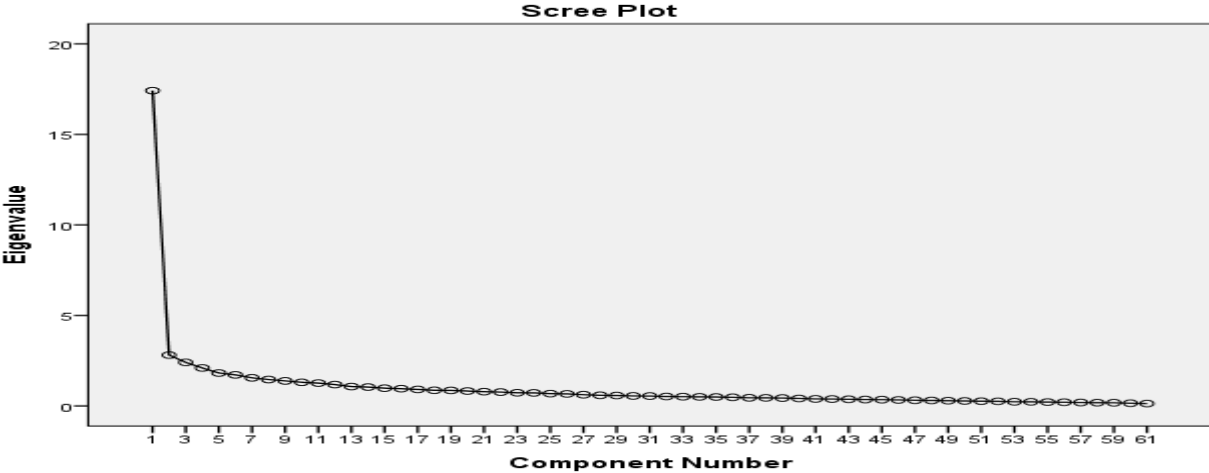
#### **4.9 Factor Analysis of the Study Variables**

To eliminate items that were overlapping in the five variables examined by the current study, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used. The specific factors for each construct were statistically determined using Scree plots. Scree plots displaying eigenvalues were used. Indicators that loaded the constructs with factor loadings above 0.4 were said to belong to that construct implying its validity as recommended by Black (2010). KMO and Bartlett's tests were utilized to determine the adequacy of data for factor analysis.

As suggested by Brewer et al. (2016), the p-value of Bartlett's Chi-square for the study variables was less than 0.05 implied the existence of significant relationships between variables. To determine whether the items from each construct had a relationship and can be used for factor analysis, a correlation matrix was used. A rotated component matrix was conducted to extract indicators that were statistically considered to measure the study constructs. Indicators were extracted using the Principal component analysis method. In this regard, Latent constructs with Eigenvalues above 1 were extracted (Black, 2010)

**4.9.1 Factor Analysis for Brand Personality**

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis method was used to measure the five decisional metrics of brand personality (brand sophistication, competence, sincerity, ruggedness and excitement). Factor loading above 0.4 as recommended by Loy et al (2017) were considered to belong to the construct thus implying its validity. The results of this indicator are summarized as shown in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1: Scree Plot for the Brand Personality**

Source: Primary Data

As shown in Figure 4.1, all the five decisional variables of brand personality (brand sophistication, competence, sincerity and ruggedness excitement) were found to be valid by displaying an Eigenvalue above 0.4.

The factor explains much variance from the indicators. In this screen plots, the first component (factor) has a large Eigenvalue compared to the others suggesting that much of the variance from the 61 indicators of brand personality can be explained by one factor. Factor loading above 0.4 was considered to explain much variance from the indicators thus implying validity of that construct as recommended by Black (2010).

**Table 4.16: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Brand Personality**

<b>Test</b>		<b>Results</b>
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.913
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	9406.315
	Df	1830
	Sig.	.000

Source: Primary Data

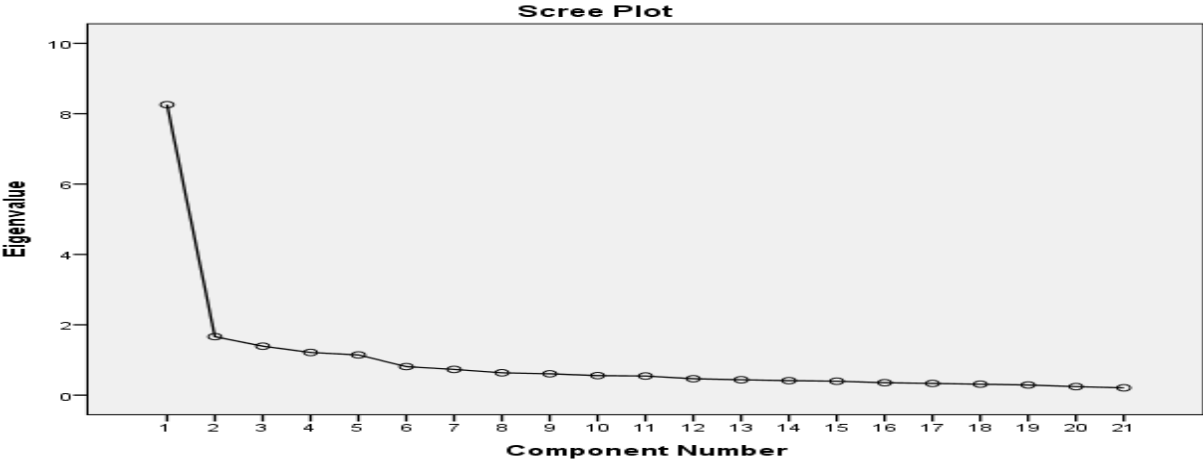
Table 4.16 indicate statistics on the adequacy of data for data analysis by using KMO as well as Bartlett's Test. The results reveal that KMO values for all the study variables are 0.913 which inclined towards 1 thus implying the validity of the variable as recommended by Novikov and Novikov (2013). The p-value of Bartlett's Chi-square for all the study variables were less than 0.05 implying the existence of a significant link between decisional variables of customer service delivery.

Using the correlation matrix containing items measured, the significant Chi-square (Bartlett's test) confirmed the non-existence of the identity matrix, thus confirming that some links and can, therefore, be used for factor analysis. As depicted in Appendix 20, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) technique was adopted to extract factors from 61 observed brand personality indicators. Total variances of the 61 items used to measure and explained by latent factors generated from factor analysis. The 14 latent factors had Eigenvalues more than 1 thus were retained and explained up to 63.12% of the variance from the 61 observed indicators of brand personality construct.

All the 61 items were restricted to one latent factor (brand personality) without considering possible sub-dimensions. Factor loadings were therefore extracted for only one latent factor. Only 8 of the 61 indicators loaded the brand personality construct less than 0.4 and were expunged from further analysis in the study. According to Byrne (2017) preposition of factor retention and item loadings, only observed variables that load the latent construct with more than 0.4 variances (factor loadings) are to be retained. In this study, only 8 of the 61 indicators of brand personality were expunged as shown in Appendix (20).

**4.9.2 Factor Analysis for Strategic Marketing Partnerships**

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for strategic marketing construct (co-distribution, co-branding and co-research) was conducted as displayed in the scree plot. This construct was measured using 21 constructs and the results are summarized as illustrated in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Scree Plot for Strategic Marketing Partnerships**

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4.2 indicates that the first component (factor) has a large Eigenvalue as compared to the others implying that much of the variance from the 21 indicators of strategic marketing partnerships can be explained by one factor.

**Table 4.17: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Strategic Marketing Partnerships**

<b>Test</b>		<b>Results</b>
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.913
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3152.387
	Df	210
	Sig.	.000

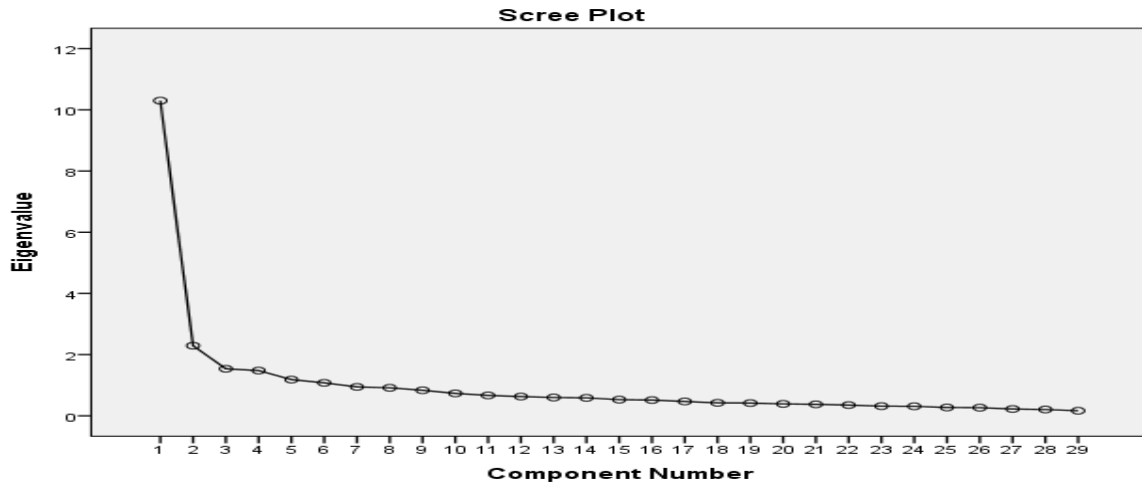
Source: Primary Data

Table 4.17 indicates the results obtained to explore the adequacy of the data for factor analysis for strategic marketing partnerships dimensions. KMO values for this study variable is 0.913 which is inclined towards 1 thus implying the validity of the variable. These results were confirmed as adequate since the KMO value is higher than 0.6 which is considered by Harrison (2015) to be adequate. Further, the significance value of Bartlett's Chi-square is less than 0.05, reflecting the existence of a significant positive association between indicators of strategic marketing partnerships (co-distribution, co-branding and co-research) as recommended by Loy and Hofmann (2014).

This result confirms the non-existence of the identity matrix in the correlation matrix and thus some items have relationships and can, therefore, be used for factor analysis. Appendix 21 shows the total variances of the 21 items used to measure and explained by latent factors of strategic marketing partnerships generated from factor analysis. All the 21 items were restricted to one latent factor (strategic marketing partnerships) without considering possible sub-dimensions. Validity for all the 21 items loaded the construct was confirmed by factor loading above 0.4 thus implying the non-existence of identity matrix in the correlation matrix.

### 4.9.3 Factor Analysis for Organizational Demographics

To reduce factors that measured organizational demographics variable, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was adopted. The construct was measured using three decisional variables (age, size and location). The 29 observed indicators were obtained and relevant results are summarized in Figure4.3.



**Figure 4.3: Scree Plot for Organizational Demographics**

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4.3 depicts the first component (factor) has a large Eigenvalue compared to the others implying that much of the variance from the 29 indicators of organizational demographics can be explained by one factor.

**Table 4.18: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Organizational Demographics**

Test	Statistics
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.911
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	df
	Sig.
	4512.822
	406
	.000

Source: Primary Data

As depicted in Table 4.18 the results reflect that KMO values for this organizational demographics variable are 0.911 which is inclined towards 1 thus implying the validity of the variable.

The KMO values were higher than 0.6 as recommended by Mertler and Vannatta (2010). The p-value of Bartlett's Chi-square was less than 0.05 thus implying the existence of significant relationships between the indicators of organizational demographics. The significant Chi-square (Bartlett's test) reveals the non-existence of an identity matrix, thus some items have relationships and therefore can be used for factor analysis.

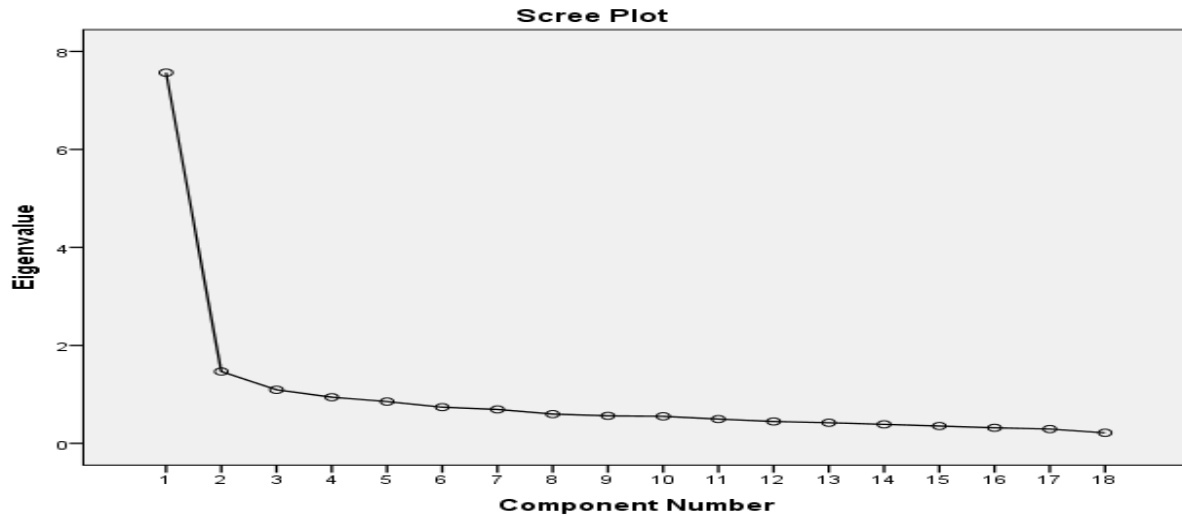
Appendix 22 illustrates the total variances of the 29 items used to measure and explained by latent factors of organizational demographics generated from factor analysis. It is shown that for this construct it is possible to get 6 latent factors that had Eigenvalues greater than 1 as suggested by Saunders et al. (2015). All the 29 items were restricted to one latent factor (organizational demographics) without considering possible sub-dimensions.

The factor loadings of the indicators of organizational demographics as shown in Appendix 22 indicates that only one of the observed indicators of organizational demographics was expunged which loaded the construct with factor loadings less than 0.4. The question of whether the students are taught by more than one lecturer in one unit for every semester had a factor loading of 0.372 while all the other observed indicators loaded the construct above 0.4 and were thus retained in further analyses.

#### **4.9.4 Factor Analysis for Customer Service Delivery**

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for customer service delivery construct that consisted of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles metrics was conducted as displayed in the scree plot. This construct was measured using 18 observed indicators and the findings are summarized in Figure 4.4.





**Figure 4.4: Scree Plot for Customer Service Delivery**

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4.4 shows the scree plot results of the first component (factor) has a large Eigenvalue compared to the others implying that much of the variance from the 18 indicators of customer service delivery can be explained by one factor.

**Table 4.19: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Customer Service Delivery**

Test	Statistics
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.915
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	df
	Sig.
	2552.796
	153
	.000

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.19 indicates statistics to explore the adequacy of data using KMO as well as Bartlett's statistics. 18 indicators of customer service delivery used were found to be valid. KMO value was 0.915 inclined towards 1 as recommended by Hair et al. (2015) while the P-value for Bartlett's Chi-square was less than 0.05 implying the existence of significant relationships between the indicators of customer service delivery.

As depicted in Appendix 23, total variances of the 18 items used to measure and explained by latent factors of customer service delivery were generated from factor analysis. It is shown that for this construct, it is possible to get 3 latent factors that had Eigenvalues greater than 1 based on the Kaiser Factor retention proposition for EFA (Guest, 2014). All the 18 items were restricted to one latent factor (customer service delivery) without considering possible sub-dimensions. Since all the constructs of the customer service delivery variable had factor loading above 0.4, all the constructs were retained for further analyses as recommended by Novikov and Novikov (2013).

**4.10 Correlation Analysis**

To ascertain whether there existed an association between predictor variables on the dependent variable, latent variables generated from factor analysis were used. Table 4.20 illustrates the strength between the variables was determined using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients.

**Table 4.20: Correlation Matrix**

Brand Personality	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	314			
Strategic Marketing Partnerships	Pearson Correlation	.613**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	314	314		
Organizational Demographics	Pearson Correlation	.759**	.700**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	—	
	N	314	314	314	
Customer Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.730**	.526**	.673**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	314	314	314	314

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

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.20 shows that the p-values of the three predictor variables on the dependent variable were all less than 0.05, implying a significant positive link between the three predictors on the dependent variable. Brand personality was significant ( $r= 0.730$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), followed by organizational demographics ( $r= 0.673$ ,  $p<0.000$ ) and finally, strategic marketing partnerships ( $r= 0.526$ ,  $p<0.000$ ).

#### **4.11 Statistical Modelling**

The regression models were fitted to evaluate the effect between the three predictor variables on the dependent variable. Because data for this study was at two levels, complex mixed effect structural models were adopted to determine variations that existed within and between a given dataset without any bias as recommended by Barker and Link (2015). Due to the multi-level structure of the data, linear mixed effect models were fitted to capture the brand personality perception held by students about service delivery in the university setting. Level-1 represented student perception of brand personality perception about service delivery within the university while level-2 was student perceptions between the universities.

Fixed effect models were used to facilitate observations concerning student perception of brand personality within the University. Random effect models were used to facilitate observation concerning student perception of brand personality between the universities. Further, mixed effect models are a combination of both fixed and random effect model comparing student perceptions across the universities. Restricted Maximum Likelihood (REML) models were fitted to linear mixed effect models to determine the moderating effect of moderators on the relationship. Further, graphical plots were used to help in the visualization of data using the normal theoretical distribution line thus helping to determine the existence of a link between variables of the study.

Harrison (2015) affirms that graphical plots are appropriate because they help to determine the concentration of data points along the normal theoretical distribution line. Similarly, Loy et al. (2017) hold that linear mixed effect models are preferred in scientific studies when analysing a multi-level structure of data. For the production of unbiased estimates of variance and covariance, REML is the most appropriate method (Harrison, 2015).

#### 4.12 Null Model

Table 4.21 illustrates a null model fitted based on the REML mixed effect model estimation technique to evaluate the implication of random intercepts. The null model does not include the predictor variables main effects but only considers the intercepts (constant terms) at both levels. Barker and Link (2015) recommend that null models are considered appropriate in scientific studies when there is no existence of statistical significance in a given set of observations. Harrison (2015) also proposes that null models are preferred in scientific studies because they facilitate the generation of random samples of a particular distribution when other elements are held constant and others are allowed to vary stochastically.

**Table 4.21: Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
				Number of groups	=	12
				Wald chi2(1)	=	.
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -437.164				Prob > chi2	=	.
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
_cons	0.045	0.111	0.410	0.682	-0.172	0.262
Random-effects Parameters		<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>		
University						
Var (_cons)	0.111	0.062		0.037	0.329	
Var (Residual)	0.893	0.073		0.762	1.048	
LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2 (01) = 19.68 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.000						
Level	<b>ICC</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>			
University	0.110	0.055	0.039	0.273		

Source: Primary Data

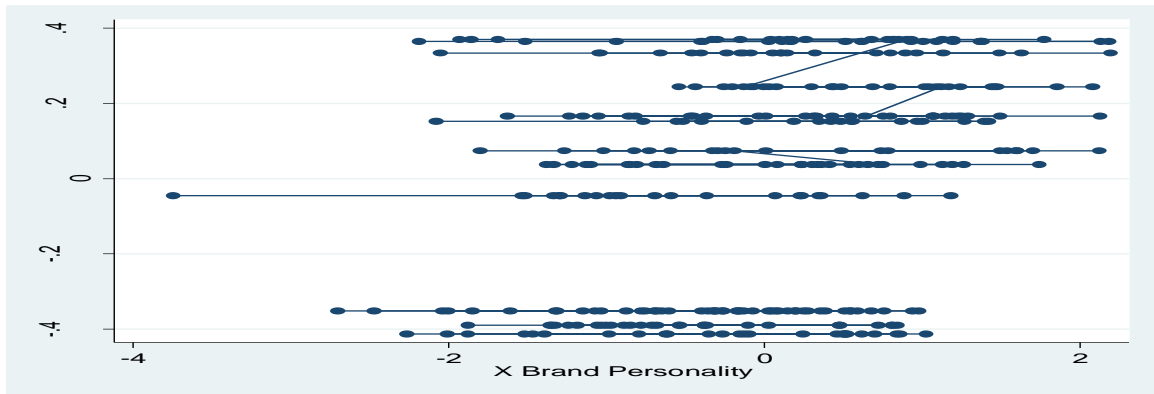
The fixed effect component model results disclose an insignificant constant term as illustrated in Table 4.21. The p-value of the constant term was found to be 0.682 and is greater than 0.05 which is insignificant and that of customer service delivery is conditional on certain fixed factors at the students' level of observation.

At level-2 (between the universities), the random effect component of the null reflect significant random intercepts for the universities. This suggests that the variation in the level of customer service delivery to the students is significantly explained by the random differences across the universities. The significant random effects (random intercepts) is depicted by the intra-class correlation (ICC) due to different customer service delivery perceptions between the universities which are 11%.

The random effect component model was found to be significant. The Likelihood Ratio chi-square statistic p-value was 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thereby confirming a significant random effect component of the model. The random intercept implies that the students' views of customer service delivery is heterogeneous and vary across the universities and cannot be generalized to be equal across the universities. Students from some universities perceived service delivery differently as compared to other universities. A university can, therefore, assess the unique elements that affect its customers (students) and make changes for improvement.

#### **4.12.1 Null Model Visualization**

Figure 4.5 depicts the null model equation of the changes in the null model prediction of customer service delivery against brand personality.



**Figure 4.5: Null Model Visualization**

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4.5 illustrates the level-2 random intercepts due to the different universities by horizontal lines at different levels of customer service delivery. Based on the null model, customer service delivery is depicted as individual/ respondent invariant as all students or respondents within a university tend to have the same view of customer service delivery.

#### **4.13 Tests of Hypotheses**

This study was founded on the premise that there is a relationship between brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics and customer service delivery. The mixed-effect models fitted to Restricted Maximum Likelihood models were conducted at a 95% confidence level to establish the statistical significance of the hypotheses. Based on the multi-level structure of data, analysis was conducted at two levels. Level-1 represented student perception within the universities while level-2 represented perception held by the students across the universities.

##### **4.13.1 Brand Personality on Customer Service Delivery**

The first objective was to determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. Literature analysis, theoretical logic and industry observation it is conceptualized that brand personality is attributed to customer service delivery.

The five indicators derived from literature and were used to measure brand personality included brand competence, sophistication, sincerity, excitement and ruggedness. Furthermore, the literature suggests that brand personality can positively influence customer service delivery if effectively embraced. Therefore, it was predicted that brand personality would have a significant and positive influence on customer service delivery in the universities. In this regard, the following hypothesis was tested:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Brand personality has no significant influence on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

The linear mixed effect models fitted with Restricted Maximum Likelihood (REML) models were used to test the statistical hypothetical effect of the relationship. The pertinent results are provided in Table 4.22.

**Table 4.22: Fixed and Random Effects of Brand Personality on Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression			Number of obs	=	314	
Group variable: university			Number of groups	=	12	
			Wald chi2(1)	=	332.60	
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -326.435			Prob > chi2	=	0.000	
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality X	0.721	0.040	18.240	0.000	0.644 0.799	
_cons	0.017	0.063	0.280	0.783	-0.107 0.142	
<b>Random-effects Parameters</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>			<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Identity						
Var (_cons)	0.031	0.021		0.008	0.117	
Var (Residual)	0.441	0.036		0.376	0.518	
LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar 2(01) = 7.23 Prob >= Chibar2 = 0.0036						
<b>Level</b>	<b>ICC</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>			<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
University	0.065	0.042		0.018	0.213	
Likelihood-Ratio Test			LR chi2 (1)	=	6.31	
(Assumption: M1 nested in M2)			Prob > chi2	=	0.012	
Akaike's Information Criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion						
<b>Model</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>ll(Null)</b>	<b>ll(Model)</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>
M1 – me no random slopes	314	.	-326.435	4	660.871	675.868
M2 – me random slopes	314	.	-323.280	5	656.560	675.307

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.22 results shows that both the fixed component (chi-square= 332.60, P = 0.000) and random component (ICC = 0.065, LR =7.23, P =0.036) of the model are significant. At level-1, Brand Personality has a significant fixed effect on Customer Service Delivery ( $\beta =0.721$ ,  $Z= 18.240$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). A Likelihood Ratio test on the random slopes of brand personality on customer service delivery shows that brand personality has significant random effects on customer service delivery that vary across universities (LR = 6.31, P = 0.012).

The BIC value for Model 2 = 675.868 is less than that of Model 1 = 675.307 implying that Model 2 is a better model due to the inclusion of random slopes. This thus shows that brand personality has both a significant fixed effect and significant random effects across the universities.

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = 0 + 0.721X_{ij}$$

$$\alpha_0 = 0.031\alpha_{0j}$$

Where;

$\hat{Y}_{ij}$  is the estimated level of customer service delivery as perceived by a student i for university j

$X_{ij}$  is the level of brand personality as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$\gamma_0$  is the level 2 intercept equation of customer service delivery across the universities

$X_{0j}$  is the level of brand personality of university j (level-2)

Further, to determine the significance of brand personality on customer service delivery both at random intercepts and random slopes, Likelihood Ratio Tests were carried out as shown in Table 4.23.



**Table 4.23: Mixed Effects of Brand Personality on Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -323.279				Number of groups	=	12
				Wald chi2(1)	=	134.25
				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality_X	0.706	0.061	11.590	0.000	0.586	0.825
_cons	0.012	0.065	0.180	0.858	-0.116	0.140
<b>Random-effects Parameters</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>			<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Identity						
Var (Brand Personality_X)	0.026	0.019		0.006	0.106	
Var (_cons)	0.033	0.022		0.009	0.124	
Var (Residual)	0.418	0.035		0.355	0.492	
LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar2 (01) = 13.54 Prob >= Chibar 2 = 0.0011						
<b>Level</b>	<b>ICC</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>			<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
University	0.072	0.047		0.020	0.234	

Source: Primary Data.

The results in Table 4.23 indicate that the fixed effect model was found to be significant (chi-square statistic =134.25, P= 0.000). Brand personality statistically influenced customer service delivery positively as shown by the significant coefficient estimate ( $\beta = 0.706$ ,  $Z=11.590$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The random-effect model was also significant at level-2, (ICC = 7.2%, LR =13.54, P =0.0011). A Likelihood Ratio Test was carried out revealed that the significance of both random intercepts and random slopes of brand personality on customer service delivery vary across the universities (LR chi2(1) = 6.31, P=0.012). Considering the significant fixed effect of brand personality on customer service delivery and the significance of the random slopes of brand personality on customer service delivery across the universities, ( $p < 0.05$ ), the aforementioned null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the following equation was developed from the model:

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = 0 + 0.706X_{ij}$$

$$\alpha_0 = 0.033\alpha_{0j} + 0.026X_{0j}$$

Where;

$\hat{Y}_{ij}$  is the estimated level of customer service delivery as perceived by a student i for university j

$X_{ij}$  is the level of brand personality as perceived by a student  $i$  for university  $j$  (level-1)

$\gamma_0$  is the level 2 intercept equation of customer service delivery across the universities

$X_{0j}$  is the level of brand personality of university  $j$  (level-2).

#### **4.13.2 The Moderating Effect of Strategic Marketing Partnerships on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

The second objective of the study was to establish the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. Indicators derived from extant literature and were used to measure strategic marketing partnerships were co-branding, co-distribution and co-research. Theoretical logic as well as literature analysis, both positive and negative evidence was revealed which culminates in the belief that strategic marketing partnerships can help explain customer service delivery.

Proponents of negative relationship argue that strategic marketing partnerships can make an organization lose its market share at the expense of the other due to brand perception (Giovanni & Daniela, 2018 & Bhakar et al, 2012). Consequently, those who support that strategic marketing partnerships can positively influence customer service delivery attest that it enhances customer loyalty as well brand lifetime value (Matokho, & Anyieni, 2018). Due to conflicting views of the influence of strategic marketing partnerships on customer service delivery, this study sought to examine the moderating role of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. Consequently, the following hypothesis was developed and tested:

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of customers of public universities in Kenya.

The Hierarchical Mixed effect model fitted with the REML model was used to test the statistical hypothetical moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship. The relevant results are provided in Table 4.24.

**Table 4.24: Mixed Effects of Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Brand Personality on Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Group variable: university				Number of groups	=	12
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -318.219				Wald chi2(1)	=	159.65
				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality	0.587	0.066	8.900	0.000	0.457	0.716
Strategic marketing partnerships_Z1	0.192	0.049	3.890	0.000	0.095	0.289
_cons	0.024	0.075	0.320	0.751	-0.123	0.170
<b>Random-effects Parameters</b>		<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>		
Identity						
Var (Brand Personality_X)	0.023	0.017		0.006	0.095	
Var (_cons)	0.049	0.029		0.015	0.158	
Var (Residual)	0.397	0.033		0.337	0.467	
LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar2 (01) = 21.37 Prob >= Chibar 2 = 0.000						
<b>Level</b>	<b>ICC</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>			
University	0.110	0.059	0.037	0.288		
Likelihood-Ratio Test				LR chi2(1)	=	0.85
(Assumption: M1 nested in M2)				Prob > chi2	=	0.355
Akaike's Information Criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)						
<b>Model</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>ll (null)</b>	<b>ll (model)</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>
M1 – me no random slopes of Z1	314	.	-318.219	6	648.439	670.935
M2 – me random slopes	314	.	-317.793	7	649.585	675.831
Likelihood-Ratio Test				LR chi2(1)	=	18.246
(Assumption: M1 nested in M3)				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Akaike's information criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)						
<b>Model</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>ll (null)</b>	<b>ll (model)</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>
M1 – No interactions	314	.	-318.219	6	648.439	670.935
M3 – Including interaction	314	.	-309.096	7	632.193	658.439

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.24 results shows that both the fixed component (chi-square= 159.65, P = 0.000) and random component (ICC = 1.1%, LR =21.37, P =0.000) of the model are significant. At level-1, there are significant fixed effects on customer service delivery by both strategic marketing partnerships ( $\beta$  =0.192, Z= 3.890, P = 0.000).

Further, brand personality was also found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.587$ ,  $Z = 8.900$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Even though the random component of the model is significant, there were no significant random slopes of strategic marketing partnerships on customer service delivery ( $LR = 0.85$ ,  $P = 0.355$ ). This result indicates a Simpson's paradox which calls for further research. According to Loy and Hofmann (2017), constraints associated with the appearance and disappearance of data when groups are combined can only be solved by conducting further studies to unfold the paradox.

The BIC value for Model 1 = 670.935 which is less than that of Model 2 = 675.831 implies that Model 1 without random slopes of strategic marketing partnerships is a better model than with the random slopes. Consequently, to determine the interaction term between strategic marketing partnerships and brand personality, the Likelihood Ratio Test was conducted and a significant link was revealed ( $LR = 18.246$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The BIC value of Model 3 = 658.439 is less than that of Model 1 = 670.935 implying that that Model 3 is a better model than Model 1 due to the addition of the interaction terms. Subsequently, to determine the interaction effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the association between brand personality and customer service delivery at Level-1 and Level-2, a Likelihood Ratio Test was conducted and pertinent results are provided in Table 4.25.

**Table 4.25: Mixed Moderating Effect of Strategic Marketing Partnerships on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Group variable: University				Number of groups	=	12
				Wald chi2(1)	=	218.20
Log restricted-likelihood = -309.096				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand personality, X	0.609	0.059	10.300	0.000	0.493	0.725
Strategic Marketing Partnerships_Z1	0.180	0.049	3.690	0.000	0.085	0.276
X#Z1	0.084	0.032	2.670	0.008	0.022	0.146
_cons	-0.025	0.071	-0.350	0.728	-0.164	0.115

**Table 4.25: Mixed Moderating Effect of Strategic Marketing Partnerships on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery (Cont'd)**

Random-effects Parameters	Estimate	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Identity				
Var (Brand PersonalityX)	0.013	0.012	0.002	0.076
Var (_cons)	0.040	0.024	0.012	0.130
Var (Residual)	0.390	0.032	0.332	0.459

LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar2(01) = 14.81 Prob >= Chibar2 = 0.0006

Level	ICC	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]
University	0.093	0.052	0.030 0.254

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 4.25 shows that the fixed effect component of the model is significant (Chi-square = 218.20, P = 0.000). The interaction terms between strategic marketing partnerships and brand personality have a positive significant fixed coefficient estimate ( $\beta = 0.084$ ,  $Z = 2.670$ ,  $P = 0.008$ ). The random component of the model is significant (ICC = 0.093, LR = 14.81, P = 0.0006) with only random intercepts and random slopes of brand personality. Based on the significance of the interaction terms, the aforementioned null hypothesis was rejected. The following equation was advanced from the model:

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = \gamma_0 + 0.609X_{ij} + 0.180Z_{1,ij} + 0.084X\#Z_{1,ij}$$

$$\gamma_0 = 0.040\alpha_{0j} + 0.013X_{0j}$$

Where;

$\hat{Y}_{ij}$  is the estimated level of customer service delivery as perceived by a student i for university j

$X_{ij}$  is the level of brand personality as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$Z_{1,ij}$  is the level of strategic marketing partnership as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$X\#Z_{1,ij}$  is the interaction between brand personality and strategic marketing partnership at level-1

$\gamma_0$  is the level 2 intercept equation of customer service delivery across the universities

$X_{0j}$  is the level of brand personality of university j (level-2).

#### **4.13.3 The Moderating Effect of Organizational Demographics on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

The third objective of this study was to establish the moderating role of organizational demographics on the link between brand personality and customer service delivery. Antecedents that were derived from existing literature to evaluate organizational demographics were: age, size and location. Based on the theoretical reasoning, literature assessment and industry observations, both positive and negative findings were revealed resulting in the acknowledgement that organizational demographics can directly or indirectly influence the association between brand personality and customer service delivery.

Supporters of a positive relationship between organizational demographics and customer service delivery contend that organizations can enhance customer perceived value towards the brand by positioning themselves based on heritage, market share and strategic location (Waithaka, 2014; Rutter, 2013 & Rashwan et al., 2018). Further, those proponents of the contrary opinion contend that organizational age sometimes cannot influence customer service delivery due to system rigidity (Rogers & Smith, 2011).

Considering the controversial findings from marketing management literature on organizational demographics research, this study sought to investigate the moderating role of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery in the university setting. Consequently, the following research hypothesis was developed and tested:

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.

To test the statistical hypothetical moderating effect of organizational demographics on the aforementioned relationship, the Hierarchical Mixed effect model fitted with the REML model were used and the results are presented in Table 4.28.

**Table 4.26: Mixed Effects of Organizational Demographics and Brand Personality on Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Group variable: university				Number of groups	=	12
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -309.224				Wald chi2(1)	=	169.34
				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality_X	0.455	0.074	6.160	0.000	0.310	0.600
Organization Demographics_Z2	0.331	0.057	5.840	0.000	0.220	0.442
_cons	0.016	0.073	0.230	0.821	-0.126	0.158
<b>Random-effects Parameters</b>		<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>		
Identity						
Var (Brand Personality_X)	0.027	0.018		0.007	0.101	
Var (_cons)	0.046	0.027		0.015	0.148	
Var (Residual)	0.373	0.031		0.317	0.439	
LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar2 (01) = 22.49 Prob >= Chibar2 = 0.000						
<b>Level</b>	<b>ICC</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>			
University	0.111	0.059	0.037		0.288	
Likelihood-Ratio Test				LR chi2(1)	=	0.000
(Assumption: M1 nested in M2)				Prob > chi2	=	1
Akaike's Information Criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)						
<b>Model</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>ll (null)</b>	<b>ll (model)</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>
M1 – me no Random Slopes	314	.	-309.224	6	630.448	652.945
M2 – me Random Slopes	314	.	-309.224	7	632.448	658.694
Likelihood-Ratio Test				LR chi2 (1)	=	15.022
(Assumption: M1 nested in M3)				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Akaike's Information Criterion and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)						
<b>Model</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>ll(null)</b>	<b>ll(Model)</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>
M1 – No interactions	314	.	-309.224	6	630.448	652.945
M3 – Including interaction	314	.	-301.713	7	617.427	643.672

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.26 results shows that both the fixed component (chi-square= 169.34, P = 0.000) and random component (ICC = 1.11%, LR =22.49, P=0.000) of the model are significant.

At level-1, there are significant fixed effects on customer service delivery by both organizational demographics ( $\beta = 0.331$ ,  $Z = 5.840$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ) and brand personality was also significant ( $\beta = 0.455$ ,  $Z = 6.160$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Likelihood Ratio Test on the random slopes of organizational demographics on customer service delivery shows that organizational demographics have significant random effects on customer service delivery that vary across the universities ( $LR = 22.49$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The BIC value for Model 1 = 652.945 which is less than that of Model 2 = 658.694 implies that Model 1 without random slopes of organizational demographics is a better model than that with the random slopes.

Further, using the Likelihood Ratio Test, a significant interaction effect was revealed between organizational demographics and brand personality ( $LR = 15.022$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ).

The BIC value of Model 3 = 643.672 is less than that of Model 1 = 652.945 implying that Model 3 is a better model than Model 1 due to the addition of the interaction terms.

Further, to ascertain the interaction effect of organizational demographics on the relationship at Level-1 and Level-2, a Likelihood Ratio Test was conducted and pertinent results are provided in Table 4.27.

**Table 4.27: Mixed Moderating Effect of Organizational Demographics on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Group variable: university				Number of groups	=	12
				Wald chi2(1)	=	193.29
				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Log Restricted-likelihood = -301.713						
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality_X	0.471	0.071	6.650	0.000	0.332	0.609
Organization Demographics_Z2	0.327	0.056	5.830	0.000	0.217	0.437
X#Z2	0.063	0.032	1.970	0.049	0.000	0.126
_cons	-0.025	0.071	-0.360	0.719	-0.164	0.113



**Table 4.27: Mixed Moderating Effect of Organizational Demographics on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery (Cont'd)**

Random-effects Parameters	Estimate	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Identity				
Var (Brand Personality X)	0.022	0.015	0.006	0.085
Var (_cons)	0.038	0.023	0.012	0.123
Var (Residual)	0.369	0.031	0.313	0.434

LR test vs. Linear Regression: Chibar2 (01) = 18.83 Prob >= Chibar 2 = 0.0003

Level	ICC	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]
University	0.094	0.052	0.030 0.255

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 4.27 shows that the fixed effect component of the model is significant (Chi-square = 193.29, P = 0.000). The interaction terms between organizational demographics and brand personality has a positive significant fixed coefficient estimate ( $\beta = 0.063$ ,  $Z = 1.970$ ,  $P = 0.049$ ). The random component of the model is significant (ICC =0.94, LR = 18.83, P = 0.0003) with only random intercepts and random slopes of brand personality. Based on the significance of the interaction terms, the aforementioned null hypothesis was rejected. Consequently, the following equation was formulated from the model:

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = \gamma_0 + 0.471X_{ij} + 0.327Z_{2,ij} + 0.063X\#Z_{2,ij}$$

$$\gamma_0 = 0.03\alpha_{0j} + 0.022X_{0j}$$

Where;

$\hat{Y}_{ij}$  is the estimated level of customer service delivery as perceived by a student i for university j

$X_{ij}$  is the level of brand personality as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$Z_{2,ij}$  is the level of organizational demographics as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$X\#Z_{2,ij}$  is the interaction between brand personality and organizational demographics at level-1

$\gamma_0$  is the level 2 intercept equation of customer service delivery across the universities

$X_{0j}$  is the level of brand personality of university j (level-2)

#### 4.13.4 The Joint Effect of Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Organizational Demographics on Customer Service Delivery

The fourth objective sought to determine the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery. Theoretical logic and literature review led to the belief that the joint effect of the four constructs studied is statistically significant. Subsequently, the following hypothesis was developed and tested:

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

As shown in Table 4.28., a mixed-effect model fitted to REML estimation models were used to assess the joint effects of the four variables studied. The three variables were treated as predictor variables in the mixed effect model. Likelihood Ratio Tests were used to assess the effect of each predictor variable in the joint fixed effects at level-1. However, brand personality was the only predictor found to have a significant random slope and was included as both level- 1 and level-2 predictor. The findings are presented in Table 4.28.

**Table 4.28: Joint Effect of Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Organizational Demographics on Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya**

Mixed-effects REML regression				Number of obs	=	314
Group variable: university				Number of groups	=	12
				Wald chi2(1)	=	192.00
Log Restricted-Likelihood = -302.170				Prob > chi2	=	0.000
Customer Service Delivery	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt;z</b>	<b>[95% Conf. Interval]</b>	
Brand Personality X	0.434	0.072	6.050	0.000	0.293	0.574
Strategic marketing partnerships_Z1	0.091	0.052	1.740	0.082	-0.012	0.194
Organization demographics_Z2	0.287	0.062	4.630	0.000	0.165	0.408
_cons	0.021	0.073	0.290	0.769	-0.122	0.165

**Table 4.28: Joint Effect of Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Organizational Demographics on Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya (Cont'd)**

Random-effects Parameters	Estimate	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Identity				
Var (Brand Personality X)	0.022	0.015	0.006	0.085
Var (_cons)	0.048	0.027	0.016	0.145
Var (Residual)	0.367	0.030	0.312	0.432
LR test vs. linear regression: Chibar2(01) = 23.02 Prob >= Chibar2 = 0.0003				
Level	ICC	Std. Err.	[95% Conf.	Interval]
University	0.115	0.059	0.040	0.287

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 4.28 reveal that at Level-1, there was a statistically significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery (Chi-square =192.00, P = 0.000). The results indicate that all the predictors studied jointly influence customer service delivery positively. Brand personality was significant ( $\beta = 0.434$ ,  $Z = 6.050$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ), organizational demographics was significant ( $\beta = 0.287$ ,  $Z = 4.630$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ).

Similarly, strategic marketing partnerships was significant in the Fixed effect component model (Chi-square =192.00, P = 0.000), but insignificant slopes of strategic marketing partnerships on customer service delivery were disclosed ( $\beta = 0.091$ ,  $Z = 1.740$ ,  $P = 0.082$ ), implying a Simpson's paradox which calls for further research. A significant random effect was revealed in the joint effect model (ICC =11.5%, LR = 23.02, p-value =0.000). Despite this observation in the Fixed effect component of the model, it was generally concluded that brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics had a statistical significant joint effect on customer service delivery (Chi-square =192.00, P = 0.000).

Based on these results, the aforementioned null hypothesis was rejected and the subsequent joint effect equation was developed:

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = \gamma_0 + 0.434X_{ij} + 0.091Z_{1,ij} + 0.287Z_{2,ij}$$

$$\gamma_0 = 0.048\alpha_{0j} + 0.022X_{0j}$$

Where;

$\hat{Y}_{ij}$  is the level of customer service delivery as perceived by a student i for university j

$X_{ij}$  is the level of brand personality as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$Z_{1,ij}$  is the level of strategic marketing partnership as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$Z_{2,ij}$  is the level of organizational demographics as perceived by a student i for university j (level-1)

$\gamma_0$  is the level 2 intercept equation of customer service delivery across the universities

$X_{0j}$  is the level of brand personality of university j (level-2).

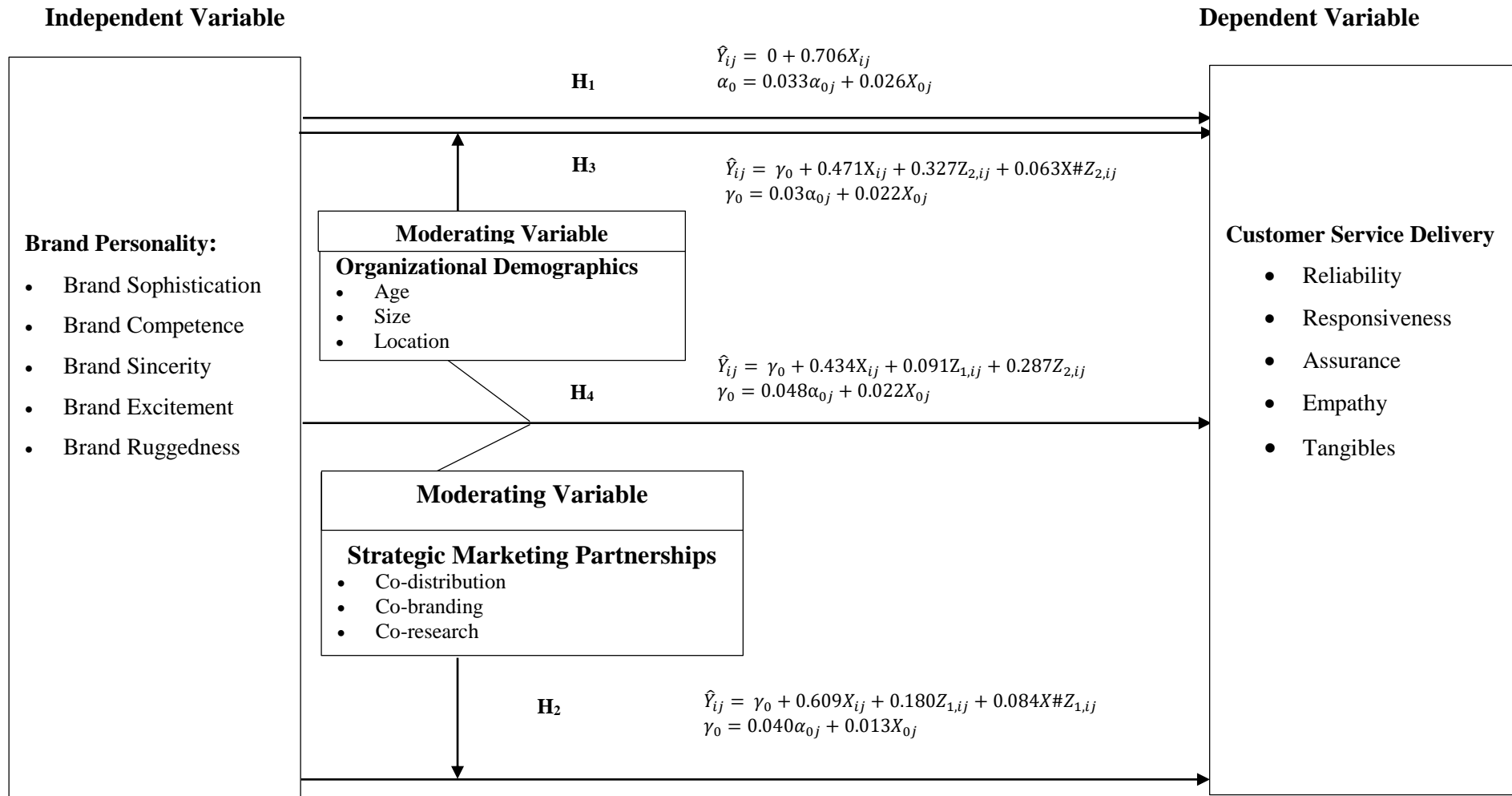
**Table 4.29: Summary of Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Conclusions**

Objective	Hypothesis	Test Criteria	Statistic	P-value	Conclusion
Determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	H <sub>01</sub> Brand personality has no significant influence on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	Reject H <sub>0</sub> if the P-value of the coefficients is less than 0.05	Fixed effect parameter =0.706  Random effect L.R $\chi^2= 6.31$	0.000  0.012	H <sub>01</sub> was rejected and a conclusion drawn that brand personality had a significant influence on customer service delivery in of public universities in Kenya.
Determine the effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.	H <sub>02</sub> Strategic marketing partnerships have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	Reject H <sub>0</sub> if the P-value of LR statistic is less than 0.05	L.R $\chi^2=18.246$	0.000	H <sub>02</sub> was rejected and a conclusion is drawn that strategic marketing partnerships had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

**Table 4.29: Summary of Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Conclusions (Cont'd)**

Establish the effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.	H <sub>03</sub> Organizational demographics have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	Reject H <sub>0</sub> if the P-value of LR statistic is less than 0.05	L.R $\chi^2=15.022$	0.000	H <sub>03</sub> was rejected and a conclusion is drawn that organizational demographics had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.
Examine the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	H <sub>04</sub> There is no significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.	Reject H <sub>0</sub> if the P-value of Wald Chi-square statistic is less than 0.05	Fixed effect chi-square = 192.00	0.000	H <sub>04</sub> was rejected and a conclusion drawn that there is a significant joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

Source: Primary Data



**Figure 4.6: Empirical (Revised) Model of Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery**

Source: Current Researcher

#### **4.15 Discussion of Results**

The results of this study are discussed based on the research objectives and hypotheses formulated. The hypotheses of this study were anchored on existing literature, theoretical logic as well as industry observations. To determine the statistical hypothetical interaction between the constructs of the study as the conceptual framework demonstrated, linear mixed effect models were used. Further, to determine the effect of the moderating variables in the relationship, Restricted Maximum Likelihood (REML) estimation models were also used. Brand personality variable was treated as the independent variable concerning customer service delivery (dependent variable) while moderating variables were strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics.

Based on the multi-level structure of data, mixed effect models fitted to REML models were used to determine the student perceptions within the universities (Level-1) and perceptions across the universities (Level-2). For the confirmation of convergence or divergence of the results of this study, the findings were discussed and contrasts were made about results of previous empirical studies. After data analysis, the results disclosed a significant positive link between brand personality and customer service delivery. Strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics were found to positively moderate the relationship and finally, a significant joint effect was disclosed among the four variables studied.

##### **4.15.1 Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities. The decisional variables that measured brand personality variable involved brand sophistication, competence, excitement, ruggedness and sincerity. This study used only a subjective measure of customer service delivery namely, reliability, empathy, assurance, tangibles and responsiveness.

Parasuraman et al. (1985) acknowledge the non-existence of a universal measure of service delivery and recommend reconfiguration of SERVQUAL model dimensions to suit multiple sectors. Marketing management literature demonstrates a positive link between combined brand personality dimensions and customer service delivery. Based on this notion, a positive and significant link between brand personality and customer service delivery was disclosed within and across the universities (Fixed Statistic = 0.706, P-value = 0.000; Random Statistic = 6.31, P-value = 0.012).

The findings of the current study validate the brand personality model by explaining how universities can improve customer service delivery by effectively embracing brand sophistication, competence, sincerity, excitement and ruggedness (Aaker,1997). The results of this study are in line with the research works of Chinomona et al. (2014), Nganyi et al. (2014), Owino (2013), Saghier and Nathan (2013) who found that brand personality was positively associated with brand performance regardless of statistical variations of individual brand personality dimensions on brand performance.

Consequently, Sanjay (2015), Vjollca and Shyle (2015) established that brand personality can positively influence brand performance if effectively managed and vice versa. Furthermore, this position is supported by other scholars (Ali and Marjan, 2012 & Nathan, 2013). The position of this study is also supported by Agyapong, (2011) in Egypt and Mutinda (2016) in Kenya who affirmed a strong significant impact of consolidated brand personality dimensions on brand performance as opposed to the effect of individual dimensions. Considering that this study used perceptual indicators to measure brand personality to customer service delivery, it was noted that there are no universally accepted measures of brand personality and customer service delivery.



Due to their multi-dimensionality, researchers can modify them to suit their areas of study (Bijuna et al., 2016; Charraz & Muhammad, 2014). Brand sophistication aspects established to positively influence service delivery in the university setting involved internet accessibility, installation of surveillance of cameras in hostels and lecture halls, the existence of online systems of evaluating lecturers and biometric systems to track student class attendance were all aspects revealed significantly influenced customer service delivery.

This position is supported by (Hsu, 2014) who established a positive link between online systems and brand performance. Brand competence aspects such as employee professionalism, punctuality, knowledge and experience were also found to positively influence customer service delivery. The position of this study was also held by Eldegwy et al. (2018) who disclosed a positive association between employee knowledge and customer loyalty. Despite differences in consumer perception and heterogeneity of services, brand excitement had a significant positive influence on service delivery in the universities.

A similar position was held by Perepelkin and Zhang (2011) and Rashwan et al. (2018) who found a strong significant relationship between brand excitement and customer loyalty. Thongthip and Polyorat (2015) in Thailand, Vjollca and Shyle (2015) in Albania established a strong significant and positive association between consolidated brand personality dimensions and organization performance. Brand ruggedness positively explains customer service delivery in the university context in Kenya. The same position was held by Teimouri et al. (2018) in the USA, Raghavan and Ganesh (2015) in Malaysia.

Naidoo et al. (2014) in South Africa, Wahome and Gathungu (2013) in Kenya also concluded that brand performance was a function of brand personality dimensions. Remarkably, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Thongthip and Polyorat (2015) who found differences between brand personality and firm performance.

The study revealed that, based on the perceptual measurement of service delivery from one organization to another, an assumption was made that consolidated brand personality dimensions could positively influence the firm performance is questionable.

Subsequently, the same position was held by Banahene (2017) who found that personality dimensions such as brand sincerity and ruggedness had no influence on brand image and perceived quality of universities in Ghana. Besides, Nana et al. (2019) established differences between brand personality and perceived service quality and value. Despite the contrary views revealed from some previous empirical studies discussed in this study, it is generally noted by the current and majority of the previous empirical studies that brand personality cannot be undermined by organizations committed to customer service delivery.

Investment in brand personality by organizations is considered to be a significant step towards customer loyalty. Based on existing literature and theoretical reasoning, brand personality is seen as a driver attributed to increased profits, improved market share, customer loyalty and new product development (Habibollah & Zahra, 2013; Malechwani & Mbeke, 2016). Based on the findings, the aforementioned null hypothesis of the current study was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

#### **4.15.2 Moderating Effect of Strategic Marketing Partnerships on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

The second objective of this study was to establish the moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand performance and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. The decisional variables that were adopted to measure strategic marketing partnerships variable included co-distribution, co-branding and co-research. Extant marketing literature demonstrates that strategic marketing partnerships combined with other factors can help organizations to improve service delivery.

A statistically significant relationship was disclosed between strategic marketing partnerships and customer service delivery (LR=18.246, p-value=0.000). The results of this study add to relationship marketing theory by effectively explaining how strategic marketing partnerships can be used in the university setting to improve customer service delivery. The findings of this study confirmed that co-branding, co-distribution and co-research positively complement customer service delivery in the universities in Kenya. This position is consistent with that of Rutter (2013) and Mohamud et al. (2015) who also concluded that strategic marketing partnerships can positively facilitate brand performance.

Despite the popularity of strategic marketing partnership research, little effort has been directed towards establishing its moderating role between constructs in the marketing management literature (Bhakar et al., 2012, Mohamud et al., 2015, Fateh & Boualem, 2014). Beyond the ordinary link, a positive and significant moderating effect has been disclosed in the current study. Fateh and Boualem (2014) in Malaysia supported this position by establishing that service delivery can directly or indirectly be influenced by strategic marketing partnerships.

In the USA, it was disclosed that strategic partnerships can help organizations increase profits and promote customer loyalty (Melchorita, 2013). Russo and Cesarani (2017) in Italy also acknowledge that the formation of strategic alliances had a significant impact on organizational performance. Fateh and Boualem (2014) in France indicated that organizational performance was a function of strategic partnerships if effectively embraced. Notably, the results of this study contradict that of Giovanni and Daniela (2018) in Italy who noted that strategic marketing partnership was of less value if the parties have no confidence and trust.

Similarly, a study in India by Bhakar et al (2012) revealed the difference between strategic marketing partnerships and organizational performance. Nevertheless, based on the contradictions in results from previous empirical studies, replication of this study in higher education was inevitable. Remarkably, it was noted that the majority of the studies conducted, tested a direct relationship between strategic marketing partnerships on organizational performance (Fateh and Boualem, 2014, Melchorita, 2013, Russo & Cesarani, 2017), thus constraints of generalizing the findings in the current study. The current study concludes that; strategic marketing partnerships should be recognized as a complement of brand personality which in turn results in improvement of customer service delivery in the university setting.

Despite the contrary findings noted from some previous empirical studies discussed, it is generally viewed from most of the studies that, emphasizing strategic marketing partnerships can help universities enhance service delivery. In this regard, universities in the competitive business environment should ignore it at their peril. For the sustainable global competitiveness of universities, strategic marketing partnerships cannot be undermined from one context to another. Based on the results, the aforementioned null hypothesis of the current study was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

#### **4.15.3 Moderating Effect of Organizational Demographics on the Relationship between Brand Personality and Customer Service Delivery**

The third objective was to establish the moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery of public universities. The decisional variables that were adopted to measure organizational demographics variable included age, size and location. Literature reveals that organizational demographics can help organizations to enhance customer satisfaction. The study findings disclosed a statistically significant moderating effect of organizational demographic on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery in the university setting (LR=15.022, P-value=0.000).

This finding supports the brand equity theory that emphasizes that organizations can use both tangible and intangible resources to improve customer service delivery (Waithaka, 2014). These results are supported by studies that noted a positive and significant moderating effect of organizational demographics on the various relationship (Kinoti, 2012, Thuo, 2010 and Waithaka, 2014). Kinoti (2012) disclosed a positive moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship between corporate image and performance of ISO 9000 and 14000 certified firms in Kenya.

Similarly, in a study by Waithaka (2014) on the relationship between corporate identity management practices and brand performance, organizational demographics were found to be positively moderating the relationship as well as mediated by corporate image. Contrary to the findings of previous studies, the insignificant moderating effect of organisational demographics was revealed by Thuo (2010) on the link between customer relationship and marketing productivity of commercial banks in Kenya. Conversely, scholars have revealed differences between organizational demographics and organizational performance.

Rutter (2013) in the UK concluded that organizational size was not correlated to organizational performance. A study by Petruzzellis and Romanazzi (2010) in Italy also concluded that organizational age was not correlated to service delivery while Rogers and Smith (2011) acknowledged that older organization were inflexible to changes as compared to the younger organization which were flexible to changing consumer needs. Younger organizations were more likely to satisfy customers as compared to older organizations which maintained the status quo in service delivery (Waithaka, 2014).

Despite the contrary opinions of previous studies, it is viewed from the literature that to a larger extent, universities should appreciate the role of organizational demographics as a significant complement of service delivery in the university setting. Implementation of the three decisional variables of organizational demographics; age, size and location, universities are likely to attract and retain customers. However, conceptual, and theoretical contradictions in findings from the previous studies can be cleared by replicating this study in other service sectors as well as adopt a different approach to data analysis. The aforementioned null hypothesis of the current study was rejected the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

#### **4.15.4 Joint effect of Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Organizational Demographics on Customer Service Delivery**

Results of the current study reveal a statistically joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery. The study established that all three explanatory variables (brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics) had a significant joint effect on customer service delivery (Chi-square =192.00, P = 0.000).

Even though there exist complexities in the measurement of the dimensions of the SERVQUAL model both in the product and service sector, the findings of this study validate the SERVQUAL model by providing an explicit explanation on measures of customer service delivery in the university set-up. Considering the heterogeneity and subjective perspectives of services, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles and empathy antecedents were found to provide a clearer explanation of customer service delivery in the universities.

The results of the current study contribute significantly to the brand personality model (Aaker, 1997) by demonstrating that service delivery in the university setting can be explained using a direct path of brand personality as well as complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics. Even though existing empirical studies partially supported the model of the current study in different contexts (Khian et al., 2017; Ali & Marjan, 2012; Bijuna & Sequeira, 2016; Chinomona et al., 2014; Agyapong, 2011; Mutinda, 2016; Waithaka, 2014; Vahdati et al., 2016; Saghier & Nathan, 2013), it is revealed that universities cannot use only a linear model to explain customer service delivery but it can be effectively explained with an integrated model.

The current study contributed to knowledge by identifying that brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics positively influenced customer service delivery. New insights were revealed by the adoption of mixed-effect regression models on the association of the variables of the current study which would have not been revealed by the adoption of a single approach of data analysis. Given the psychometric approach of service evaluation by individual customers, mixed-effect regression models were considered appropriate for facilitating observations within and between the students of the universities (Loy et al, 2017 & Brewer et al., 2016).

This study revealed that customer service delivery in the university setting was effectively explained by the joint effect among the three independent variables studied. In this regard, the aforementioned null hypothesis of the current study was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was acknowledged.

#### **4.16 Chapter Summary**

Chapter four discussed how data was analyzed and findings presented concerning the four hypotheses formulated. The descriptive statistical analysis method was used for the basic description of data. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were used. The factor analysis method was used to reduce overlapping indicators of the key variables of the study.

The correlation analysis method was used to establish the association between the variables. Linear regression mixed-effect models were used to test the hypotheses of the study. The first hypothesis was tested using a linear regression model. The second and third hypotheses were tested using a stepwise hierarchical moderated multiple regression model while the fourth hypothesis was tested using a fitted joint regression model.

Restricted Maximum Likelihood models were used to test the effect of the moderators on the relationship. The results of the four hypotheses were supported by empirical evidence except for the insignificant moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the composite joint effect. Based on the findings of the study, discussions were made concerning findings of previous empirical studies to establish whether there existed convergence or divergence of the results. The subsequent chapter provides a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This section presents a summary of the research objectives, conclusions as well as recommendations. It discusses contributions of the results to theory, policy and marketing management practitioners. Further, limitations of the study are described and at the same time suggestions for further studies are made.

#### 5.2 Summary

The general objective of this study was to determine the direct and indirect link among the brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics and customer service delivery. Four major objectives were developed and hypotheses tests were carried out. The first objective was to determine the effect of brand personality on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya.

A statistical and significant link was established to the relationship. It was revealed that effective adoption of brand personality strategy in the university context is attributed to student and employee satisfaction, increased number of student referrals, emotional connectedness as well as the identity of students with the university brand. Even though brand personality is used to explain service delivery, it was noted that some universities were not embracing brand sophistication practices.

It was reported that there was no internet accessibility by students within and between universities and biometric systems to track student class attendance were non-existent. Moreover, it was also reported that students with distinguished academic performances were not awarded international scholarships. Hostels of some universities were neither effectively furnished nor fenced with the electric wall.

The second objective was to examine the moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. The current study disclosed a statistical and significant moderating effect of strategic marketing partnership on the relationship. However, it was also revealed that there were no significant slopes of strategic marketing partnerships on customer service delivery, an indicator of Simpson's paradox which calls for further research.

The study disclosed that strategic marketing partnerships such as co-production and branding can effectively explain customer service delivery. Although strategic marketing partnerships were found to influence customer service delivery, some universities were not sponsoring students to attend exchange programs. International students were not allowed to elect their representatives nor have a special department to address their concerns. The non-existence of an open-access inter-university platform for the exchange of academic ideas and students being taught by more than one lecturer in a unit were aspects that compromised service delivery.

The third objective was to determine the moderating effect of organization demographics on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. The results of this study revealed a statistical and significant moderating effect of organizational demographics on the relationship. Factors that include size, history and age of an organization were found to influence positively customer service delivery. Even though organizational demographics were found to explain service delivery in the universities, it was noted that there were inadequate hostels in universities and non-teaching staffs did not have private offices.

The fourth objective was to assess the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya. A statistical and significant joint effect was established among the four variables studied thus culminating in a conclusion that customer service delivery in the university setting was statistically and strongly influenced by the joint effect of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics as opposed to explanatory and predictive power to the effect of the individual predictors. Brand personality had the strongest contribution to customer service delivery, followed by organizational demographics and finally, by strategic marketing partnerships.

Using a fixed-effect model, these findings implied that all the variables had a statistical impact and contribution on service delivery in the university setting. In this regard, all hypotheses developed were statistically supported based on the premise that the significance values of all the predictor variables were less than the critical value of 0.05. Consequently, the results of this study add to the theory by providing an explicit explanation that brand personality model, relationship marketing theory, brand equity theory can provide an explicit and predictive power on customer service delivery in the university set-up.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

A conceptual model was tested in this study grounded on brand management theories. Primary data was collected from fourth-year undergraduate students in public universities in Kenya and conceptual hypotheses were empirically tested based on secondary sources. The results attained indicate that brand personality has a significant direct effect on customer service delivery. Subsequently, it was concluded that brand personality is a significant predictor of customer service delivery in the university context.

Strategic marketing partnership was found to positively moderate the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery in the university setting thus resulting in a conclusion that strategic marketing partnerships have a full moderation effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery. Similarly, a positive and significant moderating effect of organizational demographics was revealed on the relationship. As a result, a conclusion was made that organizational demographics have a full moderation effect on the relationship. Consequently, this study disclosed findings that have pertinent theoretical significance to managers and scholars in the university context.

Finally, considering the fixed effect component of the model was significant, it was concluded that there existed a significant joint effect between the four variables studied. Based on the results of the joint effect relationship, a general conclusion was made that customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya can explicitly be explained using brand personality but complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics.

Although there exist other factors that influence customer service delivery in the university setting but were not reflected in this study, the current study concludes that brand personality but complemented with strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics can result in enhanced customer service delivery if effectively managed. Therefore, in the dynamic marketing environment, it is concluded that university management should appreciate that customer service delivery is effectively explained by brand personality as well as complemented by strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics.

Generally, it can be concluded that this study revealed results that have imperative theoretical value to university managers as well as scholars in the higher education sector. It was empirically demonstrated that brand personality, independently had a significant positive effect on customer service delivery, followed by strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics which both had a significant indirect effect on the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery.

#### **5.4 Contributions to the Study**

The current study established the association between brand personality and customer service delivery in the university setting as well as examined the moderating effect of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics on the relationship. The results of the study provided theoretical, policy as well as marketing management contributions.

##### **5.4.1 Contributions to Theory**

This is one of the very limited studies that have demonstrated that different dimensions of brand personality have varying degrees of effect on customer service delivery in the university setting. Rather than testing the effect of brand personality dimensions independently on customer service delivery, the study has demonstrated that the combined influence of different dimensions of brand personality can have a superior influence on customer service delivery in the university setting.

Further, the study departs from the traditional approach of examining the direct relationship between variables of the current study and examined the indirect and direct effect of among the variables. For the first time, it was revealed that strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics can positively moderate the relationship between brand personality and customer service delivery in universities.

The findings imply that customer service delivery in universities is strongly influenced by brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics.

#### **5.4.2 Contributions to Policy**

Service delivery in any organization is viewed as a matter guided by policies formulated, implemented and evaluated. In this study, the researcher finds it necessary to suggest policy recommendations based on the results of the study. Considering that the crucial role played by the universities in any country, industrialization and globalization of the economy are dependent on maintaining customer service standards in public universities. This can only be realized if university managers appreciate the role of strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics as complements of brand personality concerning customer service delivery.

Public universities in Kenya are considered to embrace quality education, training and research to fulfil initiatives of Vision 2030. Transformation of Kenya's economy from the third world level status to an industrialized and globalized economy, knowledge and skills acquired by learners from the higher institutions of learning is key among policymakers. Commission for University Education (CUE) and agencies in the education sector shall use the information to formulate and implement policies that would enhance the global competitiveness of the Kenyan university.

The regulatory authorities are likely to formulate and implement policies that would enable the management of the public universities to improve and expand physical infrastructures such as ultra-modern libraries, lecture halls and hostels to accommodate the increased number of students enrolled. Financial budgets would be increased to facilitate the employment of staff. Management of the universities would appreciate the need for integrating modern technologies in enhancing student overall experience in service delivery.

This study recommends that CUE needs to consider discouraging public universities from opening new branches without a well-thought-out framework on how service delivery will be sustained. Universities should be discouraged by the CUE from offering academic programs which are less competitive in the labour market. CUE should encourage policies that make it mandatory for universities to infuse technologies in service delivery thereby resulting in the replacement of "hard copy records" with "digital records". Introduction of biometric services, installation of surveillance cameras, automation of library services and transition from face-to-face teaching approaches to digital learning platforms can enhance customer service delivery.

For the globalization of university education, public university managers should consistently embrace an integrated service delivery approach that recognizes strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics. Similarly, university managers would use this information to formulate and implement policies that would make universities in Kenya benchmark with world-class universities in embracing quality education, training and research.

The study identified that strategic marketing partnerships initiatives such as co-distribution, co-branding and co-research positively influenced customer service delivery. It is recommended that CUE should formulate and implement policies that emphasize service standardization among public universities, rather than unhealthy competition based on the commercialization of higher education services. More emphasis should be put on service quality rather than focusing on the number of students enrolled. If these policies are effectively implemented, universities in Kenya would be research-oriented hubs that produce competent graduates to fit in a globalized economy. Organizational demographic had a statistical and significant impact on customer service delivery in the university setting.

This study recommends that CUE should formulate policies that would make public universities admit students based on the capacity of physical facilities such as, branches, lecture halls, hostels and human capacity. Policies which facilitate public universities to adhere to International Standard guidelines in providing differentiated services to university stakeholders are likely to be completed by co-branding, co-research and co-distribution.

Further, this study recommends that CUE should formulate and implement policies that would make universities prioritize developing new academic programs, integrate technology in service delivery, and invest in capacity development. Formation of strategic partnerships and use of organizational demographics attributes such as age, location and size were found to positively explain customer service delivery when combined with brand personality in the public university setting. Rather than putting more emphasis on physical structures such as building and less emphasis on quality education, training and research, management of public universities should recognize and appreciate that service delivery in the university setting is facilitated by multiple factors.

#### **5.4.3 Contributions to Marketing Management Practice**

This study revealed new knowledge by explaining how service delivery in the university context is effectively explained by brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics. The results of this study reveal that universities should invest in brand personality to enhance customer service delivery. The information provides new insights to marketers in the university setting to recognize the role of co-research, co-branding and co-distribution as well as university age, size and location in enhancing university competitiveness. The overall mix of brand personality construct in the university context should be appreciated as a strong precursor of customer service delivery.



Universities perceived as dedicated to customer service delivery are seen to attract a larger number of students. For enhanced customer loyalty, universities should prioritize providing reliable internet to students, develop systems that facilitate online services such as fee payment, room booking and evaluation of staff. This study suggests that managers of universities should embrace brand competence initiatives through employee professionalism, experience, knowledge and time management during service delivery.

Managers of universities should create an enabling environment that promotes a customer service delivery culture. Conversely, they should emphasize brand sincerity by encouraging teaching and non-teaching staff to provide timely and accurate information to students. Customer service delivery can be enhanced through brand excitement which is reflected by positive word-of-mouth. Service differentiation can make students develop strong connectedness and identity with the university brand. Universities can enhance customer loyalty by emphasizing brand ruggedness initiatives. The ruggedness of a university brand can be characterized by the ability of the university to be more appealing to local and international students.

The provision of market-driven courses and investment in modern physical facilities and embracing modern technologies in service delivery would also enhance university global competitiveness. Universities should appreciate that brand personality is a critical alternative marketing strategy in a highly competitive higher education service sector. Students are more likely to be attracted to universities that have favourable personality traits. Universities that invest in modern technologies, train and employ adequate workers can significantly and positively influence customer loyalty. University investment in ultra-modern facilities such as libraries, labs and lecture hall technologies would as well result in enhanced customer loyalty.

This study observed that despite the existence of CUE guidelines in the universities, university staff should recognise the essence of brand personality in enhancing customers service delivery. The willingness of employees to maintain a high level of commitment to service delivery could influence the performance of the university in terms of student enrolment. Employees in the marketing department in public universities should appreciate that without consistent application of brand personality initiatives, achieving university goals and at the same time adhering to CUE guidelines would be a difficult task.

Quality assurance department employees should appreciate the need for information management. Effective management of information can help the university to evaluate its weaknesses and strengths thus make informed customer decisions. Managers in the university context should shift from relying on general industry models of measuring service quality but rather refine the existing models in customer loyalty. The study findings indicated that customer service quality was positively moderated by strategic marketing partnerships.

This study suggests that managers of public universities should seek to think beyond the conventional marketing approaches in enhancing customer loyalty but should evaluate the benefits of any strategic partnership involved. Managers should seek to form partnerships with competitive universities in the world thereby extending their operations into foreign countries. The formation of functional strategic marketing partnerships would not only promote the image of universities in Kenya but would also result in global competitiveness. Co-branding and co-research would, directly and indirectly, contribute to quality education, research, and training among institutions of higher learning.

Appreciation of strategic marketing partnerships by managers of public universities could be considered to be one of the factors that create more avenues for universities to orient their graduates to employment opportunities in the job market. Strategic marketing partnerships would make universities offer courses tailored to industry-changing needs thus social-economic developments in Kenya.

Education sponsorships, periodical inter-university events such as sports, student exchange programs, student participation in international forums could positively influence student delight. Organizational demographics were found to statistically and significantly moderating the association between brand personality and customer service delivery in the universities. For enhanced service delivery, university managers should appreciate the role of organizational demographics to be more appealing to students.

Variety of degree programs offered in public universities, adequacy of student lecture halls and hostels, quality health services and automated service delivery systems had a positive influence on customer service delivery. Organizations that effectively position their services in the market using organizational attributes such as heritage, physical assets and strategic location can influence student attitudes, perceptions, motives and beliefs.

The age of the university not only enhances customer confidence but also enhances brand image. The age of the university is considered to help management minimize marketing costs but also provide a platform for university competitiveness. The number of teaching and non-teaching staff, a variety of degree programs offered in universities can positively influence customer service delivery. Organizational age, size and history can enhance student confidence and trust if effectively managed.

Student assurance of security while in the university, the convenience of lecture halls and hostels, well-maintained playgrounds and well-equipped libraries can positively enhance the student experience. The ability of the university to engage highly qualified, experienced and knowledgeable teaching and non-teaching staff would positively influence student loyalty. Reliability of information provided by teaching and non-teaching as well as sincerity of the university to address the needs of special students is considered to enhance customer satisfaction.

Involvement of student in decision making by the management of the university, rewarding hardworking students, support of student clubs and assurance of security could influence student loyalty. A university that offers a variety of labour-market driven academic programs can easily attract and retain students. Further, universities with an adequate number of staff, lecture halls, hostels and playgrounds can as well attract and retain students. Availability of market-driven academic programs and a serene environment free from noise and adequate information and communication tools such as computers and supportive learning materials can positively influence student satisfaction in the university context.

This study observed that, even though the concept of brand personality was highly embraced in enhancing customer service delivery, it was not the case in the higher institutions of learning and more specifically in the university context in Kenya. Despite brand personality research in the university context is limited as compared to other product sectors (Richard, Fiona & John, 2017). Adoption of an integrated marketing framework by the management of public universities would facilitate student satisfaction. This study disclosed that measurement of student service delivery in the university setting is attributed to prompt student services and the fulfilment of student promises.

Moreover, the ability of students to complete their academic programs within the specified duration, timely coverage of course syllabus, timely feedback on student grievances were some of the aspects that improved customer service delivery. The good relationship between students and university staff, the recommendation of the university by existing students to others, availability of lecturers for consultation and willingness of students to pursue postgraduate studies in the same university after completion of their undergraduate studies are all aspects that influence customer service delivery.

### **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

The results of the current study provide novel contributions to using an integrated framework to explain customer service delivery. It provides an explicit understanding of the value of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics in explaining customer service delivery in the university setting. According to Black (2010), most of the research designs and techniques employed in empirical studies are attributed to validity errors thus making it impossible to generalize the results in different contexts. To maximize the generalizability of the findings, a positivist paradigm was used in the current study as well as a cross-sectional design.

Due to validity errors attributed to research philosophies and research design of previous studies, a positivist research philosophy was adopted in the current study to maximize the generalization of the findings. A cross-sectional research design that facilitated the collection of data from a sizeable population was used. Considering that the study sought to measure student perception concerning service delivered by their respective universities, an interview guide would have produced in-depth information that captures individual feelings. The study was limited to public universities and skewed towards fourth-year undergraduate students. The results from previous empirical studies cannot be generalized beyond the context due to conceptual and contextual constraints.

Nevertheless, different results would have been generated if data was to be collected from both private and public universities as well as represent the views of students from both public and private universities. Even though the objective of this study was achieved, it was noted that some limitations could not be controlled empirically by using this approach. Considering that some questions and more specifically open-ended within the questionnaires were not answered by respondents due to limited time constraint from the respondent perspective, this limitation was managed by the researcher emphasizing closed questions which were considered to be more objective, unlike open-ended subjective questions.

The skewed inflated perspectives of the study variables were attributed to the over-reliance of only fourth-year undergraduate students. This may have influenced the study findings to be biased in one way or the other. The causal relationship between variables was facilitated by the adoption of a positivist paradigm and cross-sectional research design. The use of quantitative data alongside qualitative and structured interview guides to some extent could have enriched the research design used and the findings. Considering the subjective measure of the variables and replicability of some items of the variables studied. The factor analysis method was adopted and overlapping items were eliminated and the retained items were used for further data analysis.

Based on the multi-level structure of data, mixed effect models were used to facilitate observations within and between the universities. It was impossible to adopt a census approach to collect data due to geographical distance that required research assistants to spend a lot of time and money to collect data from universities located in remote areas with poor road networks and unpredictable weather conditions. However, a multistage sampling technique was used to narrow down the universities in half without any discrimination.

## **5.6 Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on the limitations of this study, future studies can be geared towards unfolding conceptual, theoretical, contextual and methodological research gaps. Future studies should seek to examine individual dimensions of brand personality using similar moderating variables to evaluate whether there exists divergence or convergence of the results. The direct and joint effect between the variables can as well be tested to confirm the consistency of the results.

Besides, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics variables which are treated as the moderators in this study can be treated as independent variables to assess their direct effect on customer service delivery. Conversely, mediating variables such as customer perceptions and attitudes can be introduced to determine the strength of the relationship. Considering that the strategic marketing partnership variable was insignificant when examined jointly with brand personality and organizational demographics with customer service delivery, future studies should treat it as the mediating variable to assess the replicability of the results in the university setting. Comparative studies are recommended between private and public universities in Kenya to unravel new knowledge.

Researchers can replicate this study in countries such as Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda to assess whether similar results can hold in the universities. Obtaining data from both public and private universities in Kenya contributed to more insights thus strengthening the research findings. The aspect of generalization of the results of this study not only pose the credibility questions but conforms with Fisher (2010) who disregards the generalization of marketing concepts from one context to another due to the absence of universally accepted marketing concepts.

Further, future studies should seek to manage operationalization constraints by reconfiguring the constructs of the theories to suit different contexts. Confining this study to undergraduate fourth-year students of public universities as the main respondents was a limitation. Future studies could focus on the postgraduate students as respondents due to perceptual differences about services provided in the public universities. This study adopted the brand personality model, relationship marketing theory, self-congruity theory, brand equity theory and SERVQUAL model which were all attributed with constraints of construct operationalization.

For the explicit understanding of the theory or model, future researchers should seek to refine the constructs of each theory for precision and realism purposes. Future studies should seek to explore "inductive approaches" as opposed to "deductive approaches" which rely on the principles of the existing theories which may be irrelevant from one context to another. This study was skewed towards a quantitative approach of data analysis which disregarded the qualitative approach to a larger extent. Future studies should also seek to ascertain the extent of "adoption" of brand personality, strategic marketing partnerships and organizational demographics in the universities as opposed to "use" thus unfolding qualitative insights which can be effectively measured using interview schedules.

Scholars should consider using a census approach to rule out any other bias associated with the multistage sampling technique. This study was skewed towards fourth-year undergraduate students of public universities thus directly or indirectly resulting in biased results. This study recommends that future studies should involve all university students regardless of the year of study for collaboration of results. Moreover, incorporating teaching and non-teaching staff of public universities for future studies would result in enhanced conclusions and recommendation.



Comparative studies could seek to include fourth-year undergraduate students from both private and public universities for comparison of the results. A cross-sectional research design was adopted in the current study. Longitudinal research design may be adopted by future studies to assess the long-term view of the three predictor variables to service delivery in the university context. Empirical studies are recommended in these areas to advance statistical generalizability, conceptual and situational replicability (Black, 2010).

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Introductory Letter



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**P.O. Box 30197 – 00100 NAIROBI**

**Dear Participant,**

**RE: PhD RESEARCH STUDY**

My name is **Henry Kegoro Ongoto**, a Doctoral student at the University of Nairobi conducting an academic research study entitled: **“Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya”**. The researcher will use the information obtained from your institution for academic purposes only.

The target respondents for this study will be fourth-year undergraduate students who will be in session and residents. The respondents will be selected randomly. Respondents are expected to answer the questionnaire by taking approximately 20 minutes and thereafter return the questionnaire to the researcher. In case of any clarification about the study, you can contact me through my mobile phone number **0725-682359** or by email: **hongoto@yahoo.com**. Thank you.

**Kind Regards**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Ongoto', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Henry Kegoro Ongoto**

**PhD Candidate**

**D80/97534/2015**

**Telephone: +254 -0725682359**

**Email: hongoto@yahoo.com**

## **Appendix 2: Institutional Letter**

**C/O**

Henry Kegoro Ongoto  
PhD. Candidate  
D80/97534/2015  
University of Nairobi  
P.O.BOX 30197, 00100  
Nairobi.  
Tel. 0725-682359  
[hongoto@yahoo.com](mailto:hongoto@yahoo.com)

**The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)**

**Dear Prof/Dr**

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT ACADEMIC RESEARCH DATA**

My name is **Henry Kegoro Ongoto**, a Doctoral student at the University of Nairobi conducting an academic research study entitled: **“Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya”**. The researcher will use the information obtained from your institution for academic purposes only.

Your university is one of the randomly selected in Kenya, the fourth-year undergraduate students from your university are considered to have the relevant knowledge and experience to contribute to this study. Questionnaires will be administered to respondents during normal class hours without interfering with student learning schedules. The information collected will solely be used for this study. Confidentiality of information collected is guaranteed. The final report will be prepared and submitted to your institution on request. In this regard, please find my attached testimonials for your consideration to authorize me to collect data from your institutions at the right time when students are in session.

Yours faithfully,



**Henry K. Ongoto**  
**PhD. Candidate**  
**D80/97534/2015**  
**University of Nairobi**  
**Email: [hongoto@yahoo.com](mailto:hongoto@yahoo.com)**  
**Mobile: 0725682359**

### **Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form**

Dear Contributor,

I am **Henry Kegoro Ongoto**, a university of Nairobi student pursuing a doctoral degree and carrying out an academic research study entitled: **“Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya”**. The researcher will use the information obtained from your institution for academic purposes only.

The enclosed questionnaires have been designed to collect data from fourth-year undergraduate students from 15 randomly chosen public universities operating in Kenya. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Contribution to this study is voluntary. You are expected to be objective when answering the questions for the precision of the results. Confidentiality for information provided is assured. Please if in agreement to participate in this study, you are requested to spend approximately 20 minutes to answer the questionnaire and thereafter return the questionnaires to the respondent. For any clarity, you are free to contact the Investigator: **Henry Kegoro Ongoto: 0725-682359. Email: [hongoto@yahoo.com](mailto:hongoto@yahoo.com)**. or the Principal Supervisor: **Prof. Justus Munyoki. Email: [jmmunyoki2@gmail.com](mailto:jmmunyoki2@gmail.com)**.

Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavour.

#### **CONSENT**

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the information in this research instrument and my role as a participant in this study is based on free consent.

Contributor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4: A Questionnaire Targeting Fourth Year Undergraduate Students in Public Universities of Kenya**

**SECTION A: POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

Please tick (√) where appropriate

1. **My Current University of Study** \_\_\_\_\_
  2. **My School of Study** \_\_\_\_\_
  3. **My current program of Study** \_\_\_\_\_
  4. **My Gender**
    - a) Male
    - b) Female
  5. **My Age**
    - a) Up to 20 years
    - b) 21-25 years
    - c) 26-30 years
    - d) More than 30 years
  6. **My Current Residence**
    - a) University hostel
    - b) Rented hostel
  7. **My Mode of Study**
    - a) Full-time mode
    - b) Part-time mode
    - c) Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  8. **Means of Sponsorship**
    - a) Government
    - b) Self-Sponsored
    - c) Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Student Status**
- a) Local student
  - b) International student

**SECTION B: BRAND PERSONALITY**

Brand Personality refers to human traits associated with brand names. You are expected to measure brand personality concerning service delivery in your respective university using five perspectives namely, brand competence, sincerity, excitement, ruggedness and sophistication. Please indicate (by ticking only one box for each statement) the extent to which your university applies each of the following factors by using a 5-point Likert-type scale of measurement where; 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 =Disagree (D) and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

10 (a) **Brand Sophistication** (The extent to which the university embrace technology in service delivery).

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	I access the internet in my university all the time					
b)	Newly enrolled students are trained on how to interact with the university website					
c)	There is an ICT office in my university that provides student support					
d)	University library services are computerized					



e)	I evaluate lecturers of my university through the online system					
f)	I confirm my fee balance through the online system					
g)	I book rooms through the online system					
h)	I register my units through an online system every semester					
i)	My university website is user friendly					
j)	My university has installed surveillance cameras in the hostels					
k)	My university has installed surveillance cameras in the lecture halls					
l)	My university has installed surveillance cameras at the main gates					
m)	Lecturers in my university always use ICT tools such as laptops and projectors to facilitate lectures					
n)	Degree programs offered by my university are appealing to students					
o)	I can access the course outline through the university website					
p)	I can access my class timetable through the university website					
q)	My university has a biometric system of monitoring student class attendance					
r)	I access course materials such as class notes through the online system					

s) How else does brand sophistication influence student service delivery in your university?

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10 (b) **Brand Competence** (The extent to which the university exhibit experience in service delivery)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	Lecturers of my university have comprehensive class notes					
b)	Multiple methods such as assignments and sit-in continuous assessment tests are used by my lecturers in evaluating students' academic performance					
c)	My university offer degree programs that attract bright students					
d)	I am satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers					
e)	There are good relations between lecturers of my university and students					

f)	Lecturers in university have a high level of professionalism					
g)	The non-teaching staff in my university offer excellent services to students					
h)	The non-teaching staff in my university are always punctual					
i)	Lecturers of my university always cover the syllabus on time					
j)	I receive prompt information on any enquiry					

k) How else does brand competence influence student service delivery in your university?

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10 (c) **Brand Sincerity** (The extent of the university to fulfil its promises to customers)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	My university engages student leadership in decision making					
b)	University leadership is always committed to addressing student concerns					
c)	Information provided by the non-teaching staff in my university is reliable					
d)	Information provided by the teaching staff in my university is reliable					
e)	Services offered by my university always exceed my expectations					
f)	I enrolled in this university because of its good reputation					
g)	I always make enquiries about my fee balance, book a room and print provisional transcripts without difficulties					
h)	I am updated about new developments through the university website					
i)	I can access my exam results on a timely basis through my online student portal account					
j)	My university has special facilities for students with disabilities such as hostels					
k)	Lecturers in my university always adhere to the teaching timetable					

l) How else does brand sincerity influence student service delivery in your university?

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10 (d) **Brand Excitement** (The degree to which services provided by the university delight customers)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	I am excited about the services in my university					
b)	My university is the best in the region					
c)	Library services in my university are exciting					
d)	Security services in my university are exciting					
e)	Services of non-teaching staff in my university are appealing					
f)	Leadership initiatives in my university are appealing					
g)	My lecturers are always punctual in class					
h)	Sports activities and student clubs are supported by the university					
i)	I am always satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers					
j)	My university has a student entertainment centre					
k)	My university rewards students of distinguished performance					
l)	Students of distinguished performance in my university are assured of international scholarships after graduation					

m) How else does brand excitement influence student service delivery in your university?

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10 (e) **Brand Ruggedness** (The level to which the university demonstrates its superiority)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	Lecture halls of my university are well ventilated and spacious					
b)	Lecture halls of my university are installed with projectors					
c)	My university has well-furnished residential hostels					
d)	My university has employees with a professional outlook					
e)	My university is fenced with an electric wall					
f)	I am assured of securing a good job in a reputable organization after graduating					
g)	My university has degree programs that attract brilliant students					
h)	My university has unique courses that attract both local and international students					
i)	The environment in which my university is located is conducive for learning					
j)	Services provided in my university are attractive to local and international students					

k) How else does brand ruggedness influence student service delivery in your university?

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## SECTION B: STRATEGIC MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS

**Strategic marketing partnerships** refer to a set of arrangements among firms to jointly market their products to the target audience. Strategic marketing practices that guided this study were: co-distribution, co-branding and co-research. Kindly indicate (by ticking only one box for each statement) the level to which each of the statement below match strategic marketing partnerships by using a 5-point Likert-type scale of measurement where; 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 = Disagree (D) and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

11 (a) **Co-distribution** (An arrangement where universities jointly avail their education services to the target audience)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	Students in my university are sponsored to attend exchange programs in international universities					
b)	Students from international universities are sponsored to attend exchange programs in my university					
c)	International students are allowed to elect their representatives					
d)	I am a member of inter-university clubs					
e)	I am encouraged to apply for postgraduate scholarships offered by international universities after graduating					
f)	Students from international universities have a special department that addresses their issues of concern					

g) How else does brand co-distribution influence student service delivery in your university?

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11 (b) **Co-Branding** (An arrangement where universities jointly promote education services)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	My university is affiliated with world-class universities					
b)	Academic forums organized by this university in partnership with international universities are appealing					
c)	Degree programs offered by international affiliate universities are appealing					
d)	International universities affiliated with my university are appealing					
e)	I am attracted by international student clubs					
f)	I am pleased by events sponsored by affiliate international universities					
g)	Periodical inter-university events such as sports are appealing					

h)	Branded materials such as T-shirts of other universities are appealing					
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i) How else does co-branding influence student service delivery in your university?

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11 (c) **Co-Research** (Universities jointly gather, analyze and interpret data for marketing decisions)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	My university considers student exchange programs to be the source of new knowledge					
b)	Some students in my university are beneficiaries of international university scholarships					
c)	I study with international students at my university					
d)	My university is always willing to sponsor student academic trips					
e)	I am taught by lecturers from international universities in some subjects					
f)	My university has an open access inter-university platform where students exchange academic ideas					
g)	Periodical academic forums organized by my university are appealing					

h) How else does co-research influence student service delivery in your university?

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### SECTION C: ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

**Organizational demographics** refer to tangible and intangible capabilities firms can use to customer service delivery. Organizational demographics that guided this study were: university age, size and location. Kindly indicate (by ticking only one box for each statement) the level to which each of the statement below match organizational demographics by using a 5-point Likert-type scale of measurement where; 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 =Disagree (D) and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

11 (d) **Age of the University** (Is the number of years the university has been operating)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	A variety of degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students					
b)	Practices of my university are emulated by other universities					
c)	My university has an effective fee payment system					

d)	My university has an effective result transmission system					
e)	My university has adequate student hostels					
f)	My university has well-equipped computer labs to accommodate all students					
g)	Individual lecturers have private offices for academic consultation					
h)	The non-teaching staff have private offices					
i)	My university has a well-equipped health facility					
j)	My university has adequate playgrounds for various games					
k)	Non-teaching staff are fully committed to addressing student issues					

i) How else does the age of the university influence student service delivery in your university?

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11 (e) **Size of the University** (Is the scope of measuring the university in terms of the number of students, workers, branches, physical facilities and the number of academic programs)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	There are adequate hostels in my university					
b)	There are adequate lecturer halls in my university					
c)	Multiple degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students					
d)	I am taught by more than one lecturer in one unit every semester					
e)	There are various religious buildings of worship in my university					
f)	My university has satellite campuses					
g)	My university has adequate playgrounds					
h)	My university has a well-equipped library					
i)	My university owns more than one bus					

j) How else does the size of the university influence student service delivery in your university?

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11 (f) **Location of the University** (Is the place of the university which can be considered as appropriate or inappropriate)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	My university is in a strategic location					
b)	My hostels are convenient to lecture halls					
c)	I can easily access the university library at any time					
d)	I am assured of security while at the university compound					
e)	I always attend class sessions on time					
f)	I can access my university at any time					
g)	I can easily access commercial services such as printing and photocopying while at the university					
h)	Road networks to my university are in good condition					
i)	When it rains I can access my university without difficulty					

j) How else does the location of the university influence student service delivery in your university?

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#### **SECTION D: MEASUREMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY**

**Service delivery** is termed as the overall experience held by customers concerning services and products produced by organizations. In this study, service delivery is measured using indicators such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. Kindly indicate (by ticking only one box for each statement) the degree to which each of the statement below match service delivery by using a 5-point Likert-type scale of measurement where; 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Moderate (M), 2 =Disagree (D) and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
a)	I receive prompt services in my university					
b)	I am always given personalized attention by my lecturers					
c)	Fulfilment of promises is a priority by the non-teaching staff					
d)	Fulfilment of promises is a priority by the teaching staff					
e)	Provisional results produced by my university have no errors					
f)	Lectures always start lessons at the exact time as indicated in the timetable					
g)	I am set to complete my course within the specified timeframe					
h)	University examinations always start at the right time and invigilated effectively					

i)	I access my results through the student portal at the right time					
j)	My university always responds appropriately to student grievances					
k)	I am allowed to evaluate my lecturer at the end of every semester					
l)	Feedback provided by the non-teaching staff on student enquiries is reliable					
m)	I am set to graduate within the recommended timeframe by the university					
n)	I relate well with lecturers of my university					
o)	I relate well with the non-teaching staff of my university					
p)	My lecturers are always available for consultation after lecture sessions					
q)	I can recommend this university to other students					
r)	I am willing to pursue my postgraduate studies at this university					

s) What are other performance parameters you can use to measure student service delivery in your university?

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Thanks for Your Time and Cooperation



## Appendix 5: Secondary Data Collection Checklist

Description	Rating Scale	
	1=Available	2=Unavailable
The university has standard evaluation reports for non-teaching staff		
The university has standard evaluation reports for teaching staff		
The university has student academic performance reports		
The university has a record of full time and part-time teaching staff		
The university has a record of international students		
The university has standard course outlines		
The university has a standard student class attendance record		
The university has lecturer class attendance records		
The university has a current record of the status of lecturer halls and hostels		
The university has a record of full-time and self-sponsored students		
The university has a record of students who access online materials		
The university has a record of ICT tools such as computers and projectors		
The university has a record of students and staff on academic sponsorship		
The university has a record of employee qualifications and experience		
The university has a standard curriculum with current programs		
The university has a record of students policy manuals		
The university has a good record in research conducted by lecturers		
The university has a calendar of academic activities		
The university has a strategic marketing plan		
The university has a service charter		
The university has safety guidelines and manuals for staff and students		
The university has Commission for University Education manuals		
The university has a record of full-time and part-time lecturers		
The university has a record of satellite campuses and student numbers		

### Appendix 5: Secondary Data Collection Checklist (Cont'd)

The university has a functional health facility with adequate drugs and staff		
The university has surveillance cameras installed in strategic locations		
The university has a record containing student enquiries		
The university has an adequate number of computers in the library		
The university has modern and functional computers in the library		
The university has signposts indicating the direction of offices and lecture rooms		
The university is faced with a perimeter wall		
The university has students pathways to lecture rooms and hostels		
The university has security lights along the pathways		
The university has well-maintained playgrounds		
The university has a student entertainment or social centre		

Source: University Quality Assurance Records (2019)

**Appendix 6: List of Public Chartered Universities in Kenya**

<b>N/S</b>	<b>Universities</b>	<b>Year Of Establishment</b>	<b>Year of Award of Charter</b>
1.	Moi University	1984	2013
2.	Kenyatta University	1985	2013
3.	Egerton University	1987	2013
4.	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	1994	2013
5.	Maseno University	2001	2013
6.	Chuka University	2007	2013
7.	Dedan Kimathi University of Technology	2007	2012
8.	Kisii University	2007	2013
9.	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology	2007	2013
10.	Pwani University	2007	2013
11.	Technical University of Kenya	2007	2013
12.	Technical University of Mombasa	2007	2013
13.	Maasai Mara University	2008	2013
14.	Meru University of Science and Technology	2008	2013
15.	Multimedia University of Kenya	2008	2013
16.	South Eastern Kenya University	2008	2013
17.	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	2009	2013
18.	Laikipia University	2009	2013
19.	University of Kabianga	2009	2013
20.	Karatina University	2010	2013
21.	University of Eldoret	2010	2013
22.	Kibabii University	2011	2015
23.	Kirinyaga University	2011	2016
24.	Machakos University	2011	2016
25.	Murang'a University of Technology	2011	2016
26.	Rongo University	2011	2016
27.	Taita Taveta University	2011	2016
28.	The Co-operative University of Kenya	2011	2016
29.	University of Embu	2011	2016
30.	Garissa University	2011	2017

Source: Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) (2016)

## Appendix 7: Question Codes

A1	My Current University of Study
A2	My School of Study
A3	My current program of Study
A4	My Gender
A5	My Age
A6	My Current Residence
A7	My Mode of Study
A8	Means of Sponsorship
A9	Student Status
B_I1	I access internet in my university all the time
B_I2	Newly enrolled students are trained on how to interact with the university website
B_I3	There is an ICT office in my university that provide student support
B_I4	University library services are computerized
B_I5	I evaluate lecturers of my university through the online system
B_I6	I confirm my fee balance through the online system
B_I7	I book rooms through the online system
B_I8	I register my units through an online system every semester
B_I9	My university website is user friendly
B_I10	My university has installed surveillance cameras in the hostels
B_I11	My university has installed surveillance cameras in the lecture halls
B_I12	My university has installed surveillance cameras at the main gates
B_I13	Multiple methods such as assignments and sit-in continuous assessment tests are used by my lecturers in evaluating students' academic performance
B_I14	Degree programs offered by my university are appealing to students
B_I15	I can access the course outline through the university website
B_I16	I can access my class timetable through the university website
B_I17	My university has a biometric system of monitoring student class attendance
B_I18	I access course materials such as class notes through the online system
B_I19	How else does brand sophistication influence student service delivery in your university?
B_II1	Lecturers of my university have comprehensive class notes
B_II2	My lecturers use a combination of methods to evaluate students such as; sit-in continuous assessment tests, individual and group assignments
B_II3	My university offer degree programs that attract bright students
B_II4	I am satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers
B_II5	There are good relations between lecturers of my university and students
B_II6	Lecturers in university have a high level of professionalism
B_II7	The non-teaching staff in my university offer excellent services to students
B_II8	The non-teaching staff in my university are always punctual
B_II9	Lecturers of my university always cover the syllabus on time
B_II10	I receive prompt information on any enquiry
B_II11	How else does brand competence influence student service delivery in your university

## Appendix 7: Question Codes (Cont'd)

B_III1	My university engages student leadership in decision making
B_III2	University leadership is always committed to addressing student concerns
B_III3	Information provided by the non-teaching staff in my university is reliable
B_III4	Information provided by the teaching staff in my university is reliable
B_III5	Services offered by my university always exceed my expectations
B_III6	I enrolled in this university because of its good reputation
B_III7	I always make enquiries about my fee balance, book a room and print provisional transcripts without difficulties
B_III8	I am updated about new developments through the university website
B_III9	I can access my exam results on a timely basis through my online student portal account
B_III10	My university has special facilities for students with disabilities such as hostels
B_III11	Lecturers in my university always adhere to the teaching timetable
B_III12	How else does brand sincerity influence student service delivery in your university?
B_IV1	I am excited about the services of my university
B_IV2	My university is the best in the region
B_IV3	Library services in my university are exciting
B_IV4	Security services in my university are exciting
B_IV5	Services of non-teaching staff in my university are appealing
B_IV6	Leadership initiatives in my university are appealing
B_IV7	My lecturers are always punctual in class
B_IV8	Sports activities and student clubs are supported by the university
B_IV9	I am always satisfied with the teaching methodologies used by my lecturers
B_IV10	My university has a student entertainment centre
B_IV11	My university rewards students of distinguished performance
B_IV12	Students of distinguished performance in my university are assured of international scholarships after graduation
B_IV13	How else does brand excitement influence student service delivery in your university?
B_V1	Lecture halls of my university are well ventilated and spacious
B_V2	Lecture halls of my university are installed with projectors
B_V3	My university has well-furnished residential hostels
B_V4	My university has employees with a professional outlook
B_V5	My university is fenced with an electric wall
B_V6	I am assured of securing a good job in a reputable organization after graduating
B_V7	My university has degree programs that attract brilliant students
B_V8	My university has unique courses that attract both local and international students
B_V9	The environment in which my university is located is conducive for learning
B_V10	Services provided in my university are attractive to local and international students
B_V11	How else does brand ruggedness influence student service delivery in your university?

## Appendix 7: Question Codes (Cont'd)

C_I1	Students in my university are sponsored to attend exchange programs in international universities
C_I2	Students from international universities are sponsored to attend exchange programs in my university
C_I3	International students are allowed to elect their representatives
C_I4	I am a member of inter-university clubs
C_I5	I am encouraged to apply for postgraduate scholarships offered by international universities after graduating
C_I6	Students from international universities have a special department that addresses their issues of concern
C_I7	How else does brand co-distribution influence student service delivery in your university?
C_II1	My university is affiliated with world-class universities
C_II2	Academic forums organized by this university in partnership with international universities are appealing
C_II3	Degree programs offered by international affiliate universities are appealing
C_II4	International universities affiliated with my university are appealing
C_II5	I am attracted by international student clubs
C_II6	I am pleased by events sponsored by affiliate international universities
C_II7	Periodical inter-university events such as sports are appealing
C_II8	Branded materials such as T-shirts of other universities are appealing
C_II9	How else does co-branding influence student service delivery in your university?
C_III1	My university considers student exchange programs to be the source of new knowledge
C_III2	Some students in my university are beneficiaries of international university scholarships
C_III3	I study with international students at my university
C_III4	My university is always willing to sponsor student academic trips
C_III5	I am taught by lecturers from international universities in some subjects
C_III6	My university has an open access inter-university platform where students exchange academic ideas
C_III7	Periodical academic forums organized by my university are appealing
C_III8	How else does co-research influence student service delivery in your university?
D_I1	A variety of degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students
D_I2	Practices of my university are emulated by other universities
D_I3	My university has an effective fee payment system
D_I4	My university has an effective result transmission system
D_I5	My university has adequate student hostels
D_I6	My university has well-equipped computer labs to accommodate all students
D_I7	Individual lecturers have private offices for academic consultation
D_I8	The non-teaching staff have private offices
D_I9	My university has a well-equipped health facility

## Appendix 7: Question Codes (Cont'd)

D_II0	My university has adequate playgrounds for various games
D_II1	Non-teaching staff are fully committed to addressing student issues
D_II2	How else does the age of the university influence student service delivery in your university?
D_III1	There are adequate hostels in my university
D_II2	There are adequate lecturer halls in my university
D_II3	Multiple degree programs offered in my university are appealing to local and international students
D_II4	I am taught by more than one lecturer in one unit every semester
D_II5	There are various religious buildings of worship in my university
D_II6	My university has satellite campuses
D_II7	My university has adequate playgrounds
D_II8	My university has a well-equipped library
D_II9	My university owns more than one bus
D_III0	How else does the size of the university influence student service delivery in your university?
D_III1	My university is in a strategic location
D_III2	My hostels are convenient to lecture halls
D_III3	I can easily access the university library at any time
D_III4	I am assured of security while at the university compound
D_III5	I always attend class sessions on time
D_III6	I can access my university at any time
D_III7	I can easily access commercial services such as printing and photocopying while at the university
D_III8	Road networks to my university are in good condition
D_III9	When it rains I can access my university without difficulty
D_III10	How else does the location of the university influence student service delivery in your university?
E1	I receive prompt services in my university
E2	I am always given personalized attention by my lecturers
E3	Fulfilment of promises is a priority by the non-teaching staff
E4	Fulfilment of promises is a priority by the teaching staff
E5	Provisional results produced by my university have no errors
E6	Lectures always start lessons at the exact time as indicated in the timetable
E7	I am set to complete my course within the specified timeframe
E8	University examinations always start at the right time and invigilated effectively
E9	I access my results through the student portal at the right time
E10	My university always responds appropriately to student grievances
E11	I am allowed to evaluate my lecturer at the end of every semester

## Appendix 7: Question Codes (Cont'd)

E12	Feedback provided by the non-teaching staff on student enquiries is reliable
E13	I am set to graduate within the recommended timeframe by the university
E14	I relate well with lecturers of my university
E15	I relate well with the non-teaching staff of my university
E16	My lecturers are always available for consultation after lecture sessions
E17	I can recommend this university to other students
E18	I am willing to pursue my postgraduate studies at this university
E19	What are other performance parameters you can use to measure student service delivery in your university?

Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 8: Missing Data by Variable

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missing		Min	Max
				Count	Percent		
B_I1	317	3.2744	1.18418	1	.3	1	5
B_I2	317	3.8991	1.03234	1	.3	1	5
B_I3	317	4.0095	1.03876	1	.3	1	5
B_I4	313	3.6581	1.16358	5	1.6	1	5
B_I5	315	3.1333	1.49777	3	.9	1	5
B_I6	315	4.4381	.95026	3	.9	1	5
B_I7	316	3.6646	1.44798	2	.6	1	5
B_I8	316	4.2753	1.20981	2	.6	1	5
B_I9	317	4.0032	1.04487	1	.3	1	5
B_I10	308	2.3117	1.36984	10	3.1	1	5
B_I11	310	2.3258	1.33426	8	2.5	1	5
B_I12	308	3.1948	1.44420	10	3.1	1	5
B_I13	312	3.7019	1.06279	6	1.9	1	5
B_I14	314	3.8885	.97427	4	1.3	1	5
B_I15	312	3.2212	1.37938	6	1.9	1	5
B_I16	311	2.8939	1.44300	7	2.2	1	5
B_I17	313	2.2141	1.32609	5	1.6	1	5
B_I18	315	2.9651	1.37842	3	.9	1	5
B_II1	312	3.8590	.88901	6	1.9	1	5
B_II2	317	4.2744	.86990	1	.3	1	5
B_II3	316	3.9051	.97777	2	.6	1	5
B_II4	308	3.5714	1.05767	10	3.1	1	5
B_II5	314	3.7866	.98989	4	1.3	1	5
B_II6	317	3.8707	.92725	1	.3	1	5
B_II7	315	3.6540	1.08446	3	.9	1	5
B_II8	314	3.7006	1.04509	4	1.3	1	5



**Appendix 8: Missing Data by Variable (Cont'd)**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missing		Min	Max
				Count	Percent		
B_II9	318	3.4119	1.05829	0	.0	1	5
B_III10	318	3.1164	1.18174	0	.0	1	5
B_III1	317	3.3659	1.24213	1	.3	1	5
B_III2	317	3.1956	1.16363	1	.3	1	5
B_III3	317	3.3123	1.02821	1	.3	1	5
B_III4	316	3.7437	.94992	2	.6	1	5
B_III5	315	3.0222	1.10420	3	.9	1	5
B_III6	304	3.6579	1.14670	14	4.4	1	5
B_III7	315	3.5016	1.21397	3	.9	1	5
B_III8	312	3.3077	1.27360	6	1.9	1	5
B_III9	318	3.3302	1.41903	0	.0	1	5
B_III10	317	3.0410	1.42809	1	.3	1	5
B_III11	318	3.3019	1.16063	0	.0	1	5
B_IV1	311	4.0707	1.00393	7	2.2	1	5
B_IV2	314	3.9140	1.13706	4	1.3	1	5
B_IV3	316	3.6962	1.04932	2	.6	1	5
B_IV4	315	3.4921	1.09534	3	.9	1	5
B_IV5	315	3.6190	1.08886	3	.9	1	5
B_IV6	312	3.2917	1.16550	6	1.9	1	5
B_IV7	316	3.3228	1.07656	2	.6	1	5
B_IV8	308	3.5032	1.14288	10	3.1	1	5
B_IV9	316	3.5601	1.06586	2	.6	1	5
B_IV10	314	3.1338	1.32605	4	1.3	1	5
B_IV11	308	3.0584	1.28503	10	3.1	1	5
B_IV12	315	2.9937	1.32587	3	.9	1	5
B_V1	314	3.8439	1.09216	4	1.3	1	5
B_V2	318	3.0094	1.22148	0	.0	1	5
B_V3	317	2.9968	1.23375	1	.3	1	5
B_V4	315	3.3683	1.11344	3	.9	1	5
B_V5	315	2.1746	1.32275	3	.9	1	5
B_V6	317	3.3912	1.24968	1	.3	1	5
B_V7	315	3.9429	1.05422	3	.9	1	5
B_V8	316	3.7184	1.10113	2	.6	1	5
B_V9	317	3.9811	1.06421	1	.3	1	5
B_V10	316	3.6329	1.12887	2	.6	1	5
C_I1	318	3.0440	1.26514	0	.0	1	5
C_I2	317	2.9464	1.19874	1	.3	1	5
C_I3	314	2.8344	1.32485	4	1.3	1	5
C_I4	313	2.7316	1.43609	5	1.6	1	5
C_I5	317	3.2397	1.26263	1	.3	1	5
C_I6	316	2.7468	1.29191	2	.6	1	5

**Appendix 8: Missing Data by Variable (Cont'd)**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missing		Min	Max
				Count	Percent		
C_II1	314	3.4140	1.20989	4	1.3	1	5
C_II2	317	3.3344	1.12023	1	.3	1	5
C_II3	314	3.3790	1.09297	4	1.3	1	5
C_II4	311	3.1994	1.15513	7	2.2	1	5
C_II5	315	3.0190	1.22849	3	.9	1	5
C_II6	308	3.1071	1.19644	10	3.1	1	5
C_II7	316	3.3196	1.20675	2	.6	1	5
C_II8	315	3.1587	1.26951	3	.9	1	5
C_III1	317	3.6088	1.08717	1	.3	1	5
C_III2	314	3.2548	1.16884	4	1.3	1	5
C_III3	312	3.1186	1.34022	6	1.9	1	5
C_III4	314	3.1720	1.23153	4	1.3	1	5
C_III5	314	2.7866	1.36677	4	1.3	1	5
C_III6	317	2.8864	1.26029	1	.3	1	5
C_III7	314	3.2325	1.15566	4	1.3	1	5
D_I1	315	3.9302	1.03515	3	.9	1	5
D_I2	313	3.7923	1.11157	5	1.6	1	5
D_I3	312	3.6987	1.11361	6	1.9	1	5
D_I4	309	3.4337	1.24302	9	2.8	1	5
D_I5	311	2.6013	1.38489	7	2.2	1	5
D_I6	315	3.0095	1.24789	3	.9	1	5
D_I7	313	3.2780	1.20737	5	1.6	1	5
D_I8	313	2.9968	1.17805	5	1.6	1	5
D_I9	310	3.2226	1.10257	8	2.5	1	5
D_I10	313	3.1885	1.32273	5	1.6	1	5
D_I11	314	3.1178	1.15374	4	1.3	1	5
D_II1	318	2.6730	1.42309	0	.0	1	5
D_II2	316	3.3291	1.23156	2	.6	1	5
D_II3	315	3.5333	1.11218	3	.9	1	5
D_II4	316	2.8291	1.38102	2	.6	1	5
D_II5	315	3.3556	1.34280	3	.9	1	5
D_II6	316	3.2025	1.39959	2	.6	1	5
D_II7	317	3.2587	1.38343	1	.3	1	5
D_II8	317	3.5268	1.23378	1	.3	1	5
D_II9	318	4.1730	1.09413	0	.0	1	5
D_III1	317	4.1735	.99279	1	.3	1	5
D_III2	315	3.5492	1.22343	3	.9	1	5
D_III3	315	3.5556	1.09687	3	.9	1	5
D_III4	312	3.7949	1.05914	6	1.9	1	5
D_III5	313	3.9936	1.01588	5	1.6	1	5
D_III6	312	3.9295	1.01508	6	1.9	1	5

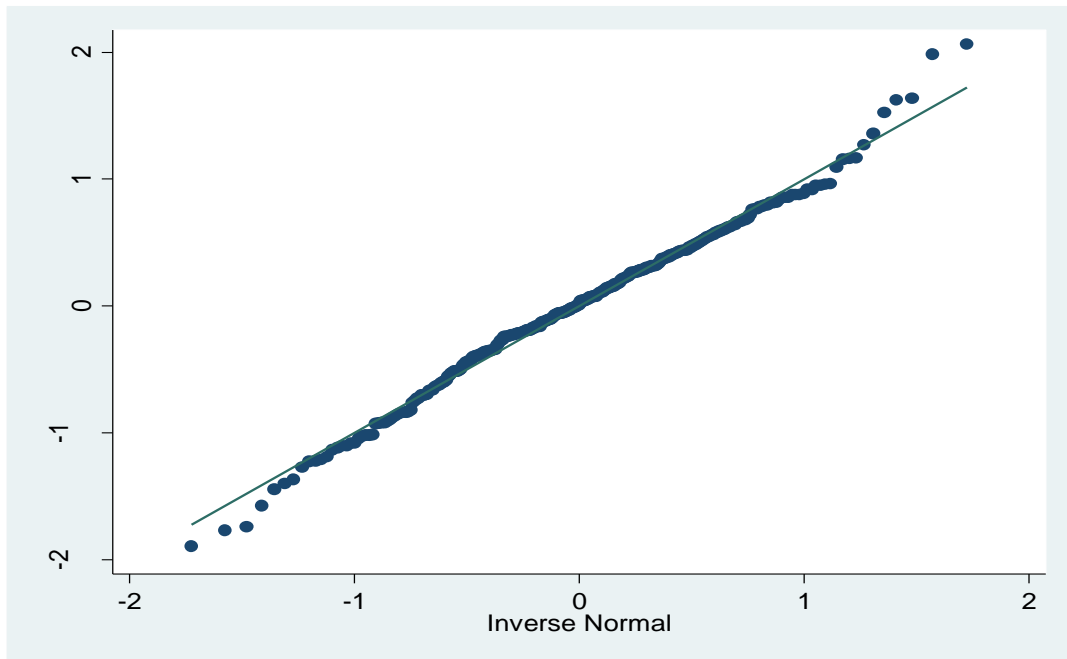
**Appendix 8: Missing Data by Variable (Cont'd)**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missing		Min	Max
				Count	Percent		
D_III7	316	3.8639	1.06778	2	.6	1	5
D_III8	317	3.6972	1.20774	1	.3	1	5
D_III9	315	3.4127	1.23426	3	.9	1	5
E1	316	3.5000	.99363	2	.6	1	5
E2	317	3.1546	1.04855	1	.3	1	5
E3	313	3.0799	1.07268	5	1.6	1	5
E4	311	3.2669	1.06081	7	2.2	1	5
E5	309	3.0000	1.12815	9	2.8	1	5
E6	316	3.1614	1.59639	2	.6	1	24
E7	312	3.5801	1.19484	6	1.9	1	5
E8	316	3.8481	1.03695	2	.6	1	5
E9	313	3.3035	1.35657	5	1.6	1	5
E10	310	3.0161	1.18638	8	2.5	1	5
E11	316	3.4905	1.19386	2	.6	1	5
E12	315	3.3302	.99946	3	.9	1	5
E13	312	3.6154	1.16465	6	1.9	1	5
E14	315	3.6889	.99603	3	.9	1	5
E15	312	3.4744	1.08452	6	1.9	1	5
E16	314	3.4427	1.11262	4	1.3	1	5
E17	317	3.8486	1.14285	1	.3	1	5
E18	315	3.3111	1.33248	3	.9	1	5

a. Number of cases outside the range (Q1 - 1.5\*IQR, Q3 + 1.5\*IQR)

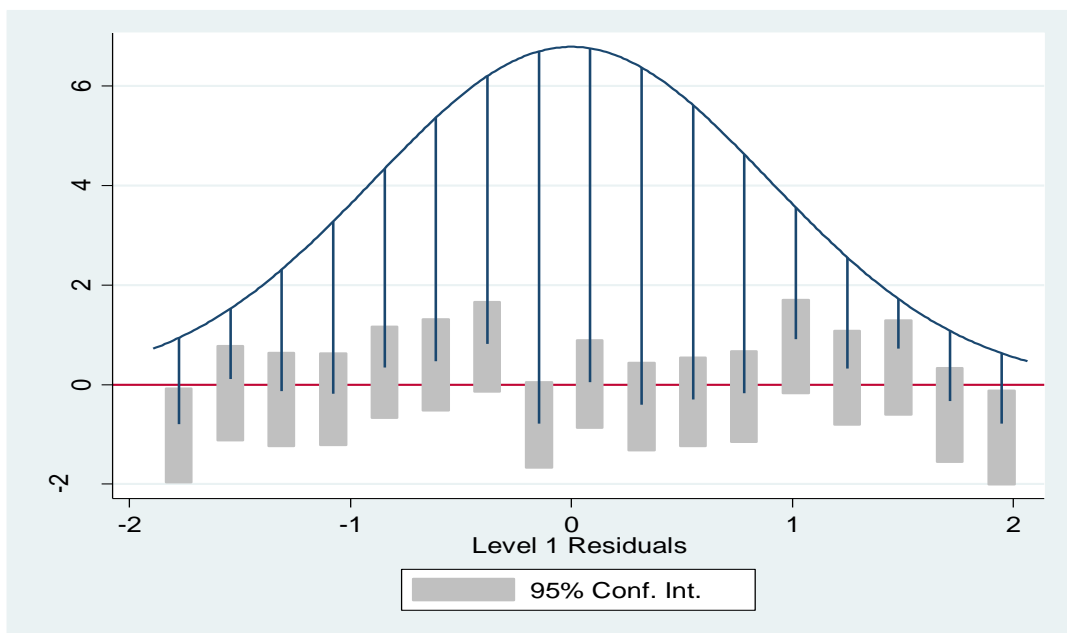
Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 9: Normality Q-Q Plot for Level-1 Residuals



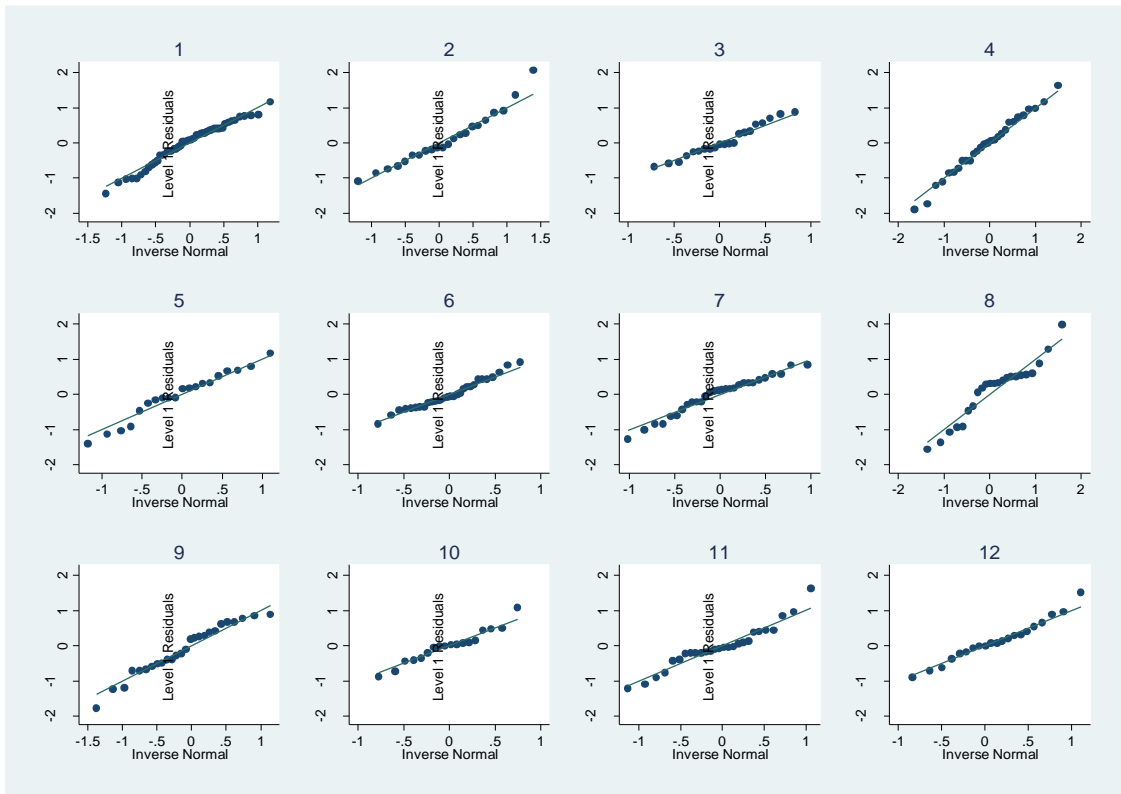
Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 10: Hanging Rootogram for Level-1 Residuals



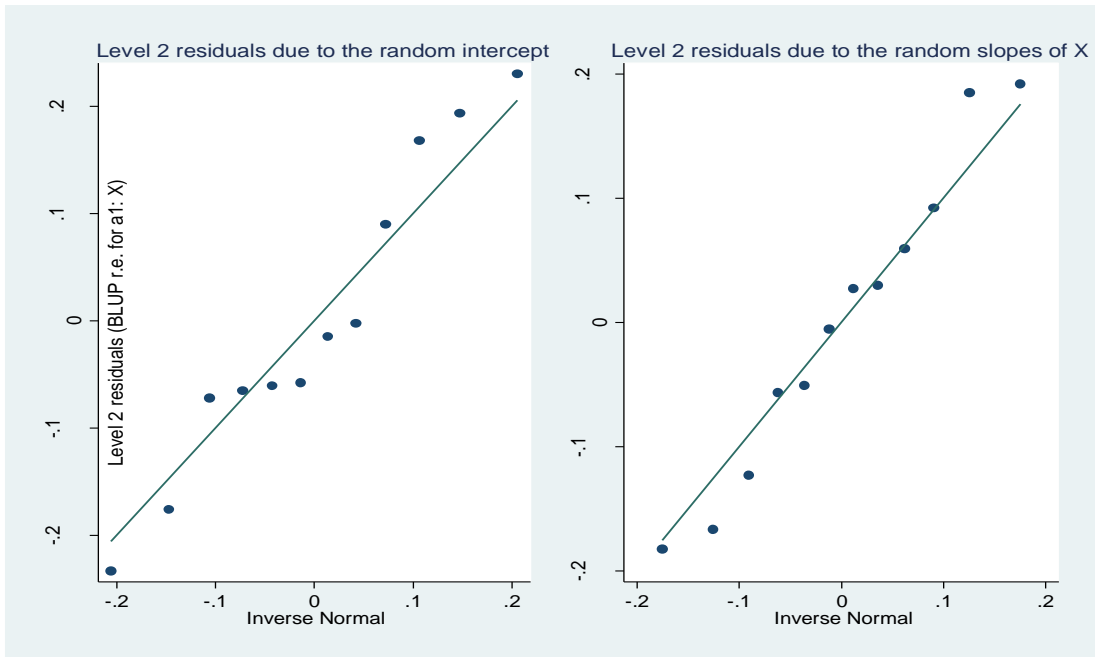
Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 11: Q-Q Plot line-up by University for Level-1 Residuals



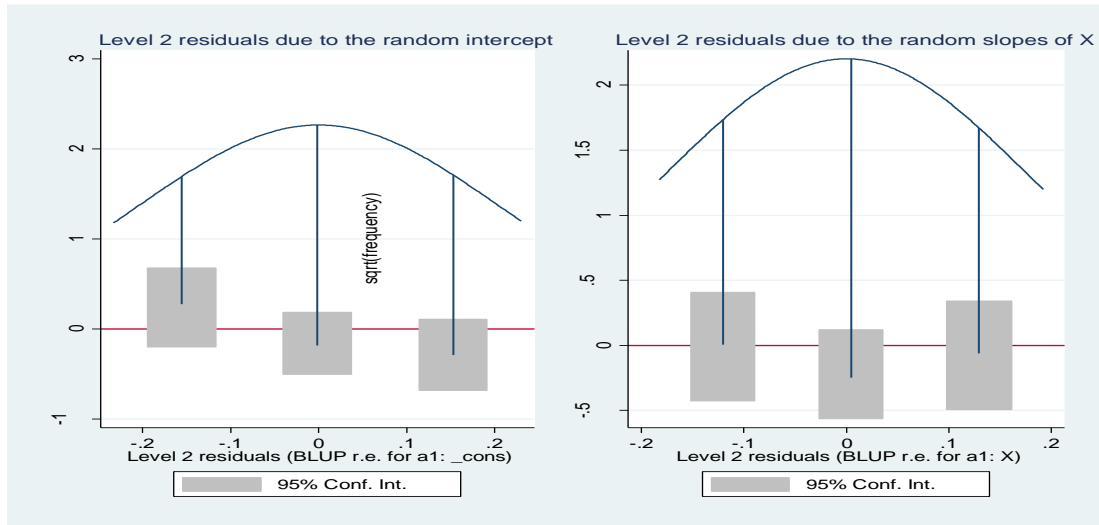
Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 12: Normality Q-Q Plots for Level-2 Residuals



Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 13: Hanging Rootograms for Level-2 Residuals



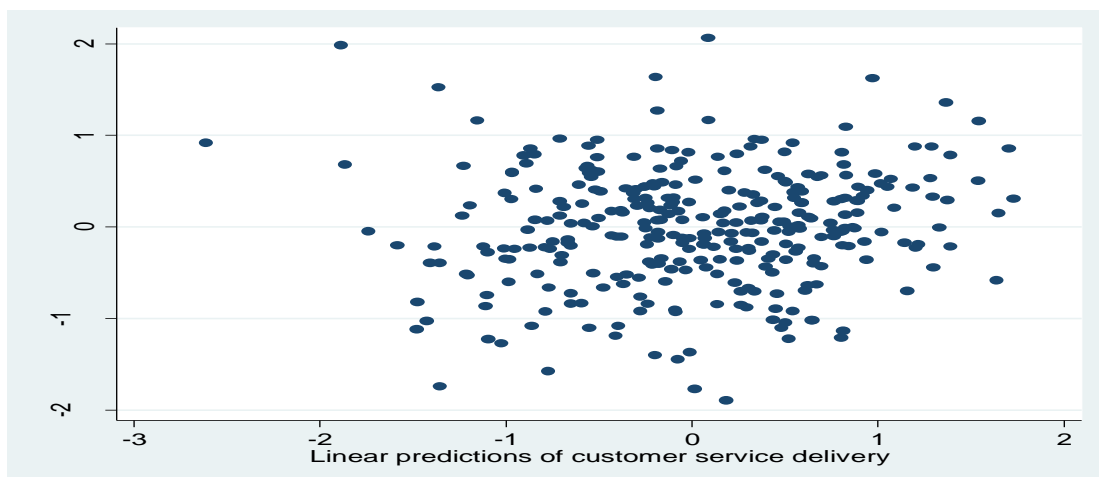
Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 14: Jaque-Bera Normality Test for both Level-1 and Level-2 Residuals

Variable	Ob s	Pr (Skewness)	Pr (Kurtosis)	Adj chi2(2)	Prob>chi 2
Level 1 residuals	314	0.529	0.097	3.170	0.205
Level 2 res (BLUPs_cons)	12	0.730	0.597	0.400	0.818
Level 2 res (BLUPs_slope)	12	0.881	0.561	0.360	0.835

Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 15: Residual Scatter Plot for level-1 Residuals



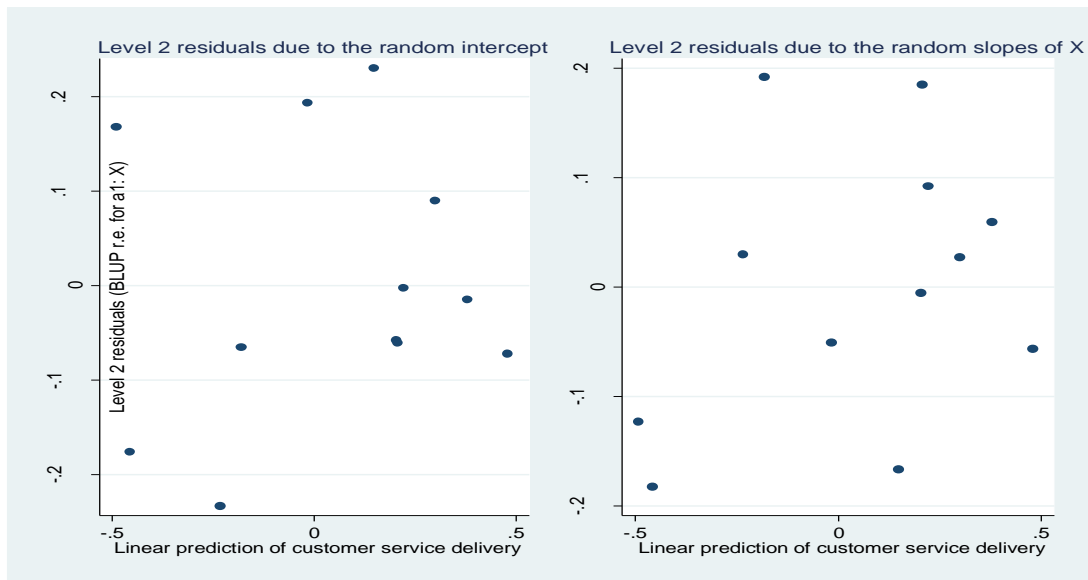
Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 16: Residual Scatter Plot Line-up for Level-1 Residuals



Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 17: Residual Scatter Plots for Level-2 Residuals



Source: Primary Data

### Appendix 18: Multicollinearity Test

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Brand Personality (fac1_1)	2.440	0.410
Strategic Marketing Partnerships (fac1_2)	2.030	0.494
Organizational Demographics (fac1_3)	2.980	0.335
Mean VIF	2.480	

Source: Primary Data.

### Appendix 19: Item-Total Statistics for Brand Personality

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
B_I1	207.1401	1295.130	.457	.952
B_I2	206.5255	1297.247	.500	.952
B_I3	206.4108	1294.716	.532	.952
B_I4	206.7771	1289.017	.534	.952
B_I5	207.2834	1289.411	.409	.953
B_I6	205.9841	1321.690	.188	.953
B_I7	206.7484	1301.467	.309	.953
B_I8	206.1369	1312.828	.243	.953
B_I9	206.4140	1303.969	.403	.953
B_I10	208.0987	1300.428	.336	.953
B_I11	208.0892	1303.168	.317	.953
B_I12	207.2325	1306.818	.257	.954
B_I13	206.7134	1297.943	.479	.952
B_I14	206.5350	1300.799	.480	.952
B_I15	207.1911	1291.420	.425	.953
B_I16	207.5287	1298.218	.342	.953
B_I17	208.2261	1299.358	.365	.953
B_I18	207.4586	1288.888	.453	.952
B_II1	206.5541	1298.778	.557	.952
B_II2	206.1433	1307.944	.425	.953
B_II3	206.5159	1299.976	.491	.952
B_II4	206.8790	1289.008	.595	.952
B_II5	206.6338	1289.268	.639	.952
B_II6	206.5510	1294.427	.604	.952
B_II7	206.7707	1294.510	.511	.952
B_II8	206.7261	1295.982	.506	.952
B_II9	207.0159	1293.102	.544	.952
B_II10	207.3089	1288.233	.546	.952
B_III1	207.0478	1287.541	.526	.952
B_III2	207.2261	1289.728	.530	.952
B_III3	207.1083	1289.988	.601	.952
B_III4	206.6943	1292.334	.604	.952
B_III5	207.3917	1287.932	.589	.952
B_III6	206.7834	1289.998	.528	.952
B_III7	206.9045	1285.160	.564	.952



**Appendix 19: Item-Total Statistics for Brand Personality (Cont'd)**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
B_III8	207.1338	1277.017	.628	.952
B_III9	207.0860	1286.053	.467	.952
B_III10	207.3854	1288.020	.443	.953
B_III11	207.1210	1289.979	.535	.952
B_IV1	206.3376	1287.579	.664	.952
B_IV2	206.4936	1284.161	.622	.952
B_IV3	206.7229	1291.140	.574	.952
B_IV4	206.9268	1293.461	.518	.952
B_IV5	206.8185	1287.740	.595	.952
B_IV6	207.1338	1282.749	.622	.952
B_IV7	207.0955	1285.953	.626	.952
B_IV8	206.9268	1290.541	.531	.952
B_IV9	206.8599	1287.648	.615	.952
B_IV10	207.2898	1283.037	.534	.952
B_IV11	207.3662	1294.265	.430	.953
B_IV12	207.4299	1289.990	.459	.952
B_V1	206.5669	1292.451	.533	.952
B_V2	207.4108	1285.802	.552	.952
B_V3	207.4299	1287.115	.533	.952
B_V4	207.0510	1292.298	.524	.952
B_V5	208.2611	1304.353	.311	.953
B_V6	207.0255	1292.542	.460	.952
B_V7	206.4713	1287.323	.623	.952
B_V8	206.7070	1289.364	.570	.952
B_V9	206.4363	1294.841	.514	.952
B_V10	206.7962	1289.786	.542	.952

Source: Primary Data

**Appendix 20: Variance of Brand Personality**

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	17.418	28.554	28.554	17.418	28.554	28.554	4.202	6.888	6.888
2	2.808	4.603	33.157	2.808	4.603	33.157	3.860	6.328	13.216
3	2.404	3.941	37.098	2.404	3.941	37.098	3.265	5.353	18.568
4	2.096	3.436	40.534	2.096	3.436	40.534	3.158	5.177	23.745
5	1.817	2.978	43.513	1.817	2.978	43.513	2.991	4.904	28.649
6	1.713	2.808	46.321	1.713	2.808	46.321	2.961	4.853	33.502
7	1.553	2.545	48.867	1.553	2.545	48.867	2.732	4.479	37.982
8	1.457	2.389	51.255	1.457	2.389	51.255	2.714	4.449	42.430
9	1.380	2.263	53.518	1.380	2.263	53.518	2.598	4.259	46.690

**Appendix 20: Variance of Brand Personality (Cont'd)**

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	10	1.304	2.138	55.656	1.304	2.138	55.656	2.591	4.248
11	1.262	2.069	57.725	1.262	2.069	57.725	2.278	3.735	54.673
12	1.181	1.935	59.660	1.181	1.935	59.660	1.943	3.186	57.859
13	1.070	1.754	61.414	1.070	1.754	61.414	1.702	2.790	60.649
14	1.043	1.709	63.123	1.043	1.709	63.123	1.510	2.475	63.123
15	.979	1.606	64.729						
...	...	...	...						
58	.183	.300	99.247						
59	.177	.291	99.538						
60	.150	.247	99.784						
61	.132	.216	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary Data

**Appendix 21: Item-Total Statistics for Strategic Marketing Partnerships**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
C_I1	62.2548	233.123	.598	.916
C_I2	62.3599	234.480	.597	.916
C_I3	62.4745	233.068	.572	.916
C_I4	62.5669	238.182	.402	.920
C_I5	62.0637	236.686	.503	.918
C_I6	62.5573	232.669	.603	.915
C_II1	61.8917	234.602	.587	.916
C_II2	61.9554	233.615	.668	.914
C_II3	61.9204	234.891	.648	.915
C_II4	62.1115	234.317	.628	.915
C_II5	62.2675	235.002	.566	.916
C_II6	62.1975	232.747	.648	.915
C_II7	61.9809	233.271	.628	.915
C_II8	62.1369	234.905	.547	.917
C_III1	61.6815	238.531	.539	.917
C_III2	62.0350	234.762	.603	.916
C_III3	62.1815	232.034	.587	.916
C_III4	62.1178	237.568	.497	.918
C_III5	62.5159	235.957	.477	.918
C_III6	62.4076	234.581	.561	.916
C_III7	62.0541	235.815	.584	.916

Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 22: Variance of Strategic Marketing Partnerships

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.256	39.315	39.315	8.256	39.315	39.315	4.162	19.819	19.819
2	1.662	47.231	47.231	1.662	47.231	47.231	3.094	14.735	34.554
3	1.391	53.857	53.857	1.391	53.857	53.857	2.604	12.401	46.954
4	1.213	59.632	59.632	1.213	59.632	59.632	1.922	9.150	56.104
5	1.143	65.073	65.073	1.143	65.073	65.073	1.883	8.969	65.073
6	.811	68.935	68.935						
7	.731	72.417	72.417						
8	.636	75.444	75.444						
9	.607	78.334	78.334						
10	.556	80.981	80.981						
11	.543	83.569	83.569						
12	.467	85.790	85.790						
13	.438	87.875	87.875						
14	.412	89.838	89.838						
15	.396	91.724	91.724						
...	...	...	...						
18	.312	96.479	96.479						
19	.289	97.855	97.855						
20	.242	99.009	99.009						
21	.208	100.000	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 23: Total Statistics for Organizational Demographics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
D_I1	95.9395	394.594	.601	.929
D_I2	96.0828	393.175	.592	.929
D_I3	96.1815	393.631	.576	.930
D_I4	96.4586	392.997	.519	.930
D_I5	97.2643	388.221	.557	.930
D_I6	96.8694	387.865	.628	.929
D_I7	96.5828	391.369	.577	.930
D_I8	96.8822	394.577	.523	.930
D_I9	96.6624	389.630	.677	.928
D_I10	96.6911	381.530	.722	.928
D_I11	96.7484	392.764	.574	.930
D_III1	97.2006	388.551	.531	.930
D_II2	96.5637	387.282	.647	.929

**Appendix 23: Total Statistics (Organizational Demographics) (Cont'd)**

D_II3	96.3344	391.853	.622	.929
D_II4	97.0478	399.413	.347	.933
D_II5	96.5064	393.203	.474	.931
D_II6	96.6783	387.976	.549	.930
D_II7	96.6178	380.339	.706	.928
D_II8	96.3662	384.936	.699	.928
D_II9	95.7006	401.712	.398	.932
D_III1	95.6975	400.288	.480	.931
D_III2	96.3376	392.537	.542	.930
D_III3	96.3280	394.911	.558	.930
D_III4	96.0892	398.075	.499	.931
D_III5	95.8917	399.630	.477	.931
D_III6	95.9490	398.981	.501	.931
D_III7	96.0255	399.047	.470	.931
D_III8	96.1847	397.212	.452	.931
D_III9	96.4618	397.425	.438	.931

Source: Primary Data

**Appendix 24: Variance of Organizational Demographics**

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.300	35.516	35.516	10.300	35.516	35.516	4.313	14.871	14.871
2	2.291	7.901	43.417	2.291	7.901	43.417	3.826	13.192	28.064
3	1.536	5.297	48.714	1.536	5.297	48.714	3.149	10.858	38.922
4	1.478	5.097	53.811	1.478	5.097	53.811	2.778	9.578	48.500
5	1.183	4.080	57.891	1.183	4.080	57.891	2.299	7.929	56.429
6	1.077	3.713	61.604	1.077	3.713	61.604	1.501	5.176	61.604
7	.945	3.259	64.863						
8	.914	3.153	68.017						
9	.835	2.878	70.894						
10	.732	2.525	73.419						
11	.666	2.297	75.716						
12	.630	2.172	77.888						
13	.599	2.067	79.955						
14	.586	2.021	81.976						
15	.529	1.824	83.799						
26	.266	.918	97.949						
27	.223	.771	98.720						
28	.206	.710	99.429						
29	.166	.571	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary Data

**Appendix 25: Item-Total Statistics (Customer Service Delivery)**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
E1	57.4395	155.678	.564	.912
E2	57.7834	153.122	.630	.911
E3	57.8631	152.412	.644	.910
E4	57.6752	152.597	.635	.911
E5	57.9236	153.010	.587	.912
E6	57.8471	153.255	.599	.911
E7	57.3694	151.544	.595	.912
E8	57.0987	155.406	.544	.913
E9	57.6433	153.751	.450	.916
E10	57.9236	152.141	.580	.912
E11	57.4395	151.442	.609	.911
E12	57.5987	153.749	.637	.911
E13	57.3248	152.718	.575	.912
E14	57.2580	154.454	.604	.911
E15	57.4554	153.067	.601	.911
E16	57.4936	152.756	.605	.911
E17	57.0924	150.985	.652	.910
E18	57.6338	150.885	.545	.913

Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 26: Variance of Customer Service Delivery

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.567	42.037	42.037	7.567	42.037	42.037	3.586	19.925	19.925
2	1.466	8.146	50.183	1.466	8.146	50.183	3.580	19.889	39.814
3	1.094	6.079	56.262	1.094	6.079	56.262	2.961	16.448	56.262
4	.942	5.235	61.497						
5	.854	4.742	66.239						
6	.739	4.105	70.344						
7	.692	3.847	74.191						
8	.597	3.318	77.509						
9	.562	3.124	80.634						
10	.552	3.069	83.702						
11	.496	2.755	86.457						
12	.448	2.487	88.944						
13	.421	2.339	91.283						
14	.389	2.159	93.442						
15	.354	1.968	95.409						
16	.318	1.766	97.176						
17	.293	1.626	98.802						
18	.216	1.198	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary Data

## Appendix 27: University of Nairobi Research Authorization Letter



### **UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

Telephone: 4184160-5 Ext 215  
Telegrams: "Varsity" Nairobi  
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi, KENYA

28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam,

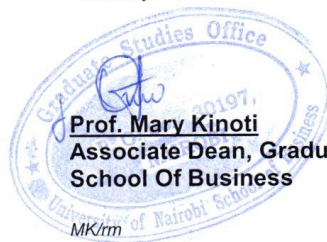
**INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR RESEARCH  
ONGOTO HENRY KEGORO – REGISTRATION NO. D80/97534/2015**

The above named is a registered PhD candidate at the University of Nairobi, School of Business. He is conducting research on ***"Brand Personality, Strategic Marketing Partnerships, Organizational Demographics and Customer Service Delivery of Public Universities in Kenya."***

The purpose of this letter is to kindly request you to assist and facilitate the student with necessary data which forms an integral part of the research project. The information and data required is needed for academic purposes only and will be treated in **Strict-Confidence**.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.



**Prof. Mary Kinoti**  
Associate Dean, Graduate Business Studies  
School Of Business

MK/m

**Appendix 28: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
Research Authorization Letter**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete  
Off Waiyaki Way  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/19/36732/28807**

Date: **15<sup>th</sup> March, 2019**

Henry Kegoro Ongoto  
University of Nairobi  
P.O. Box 30197-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Brand personality, Strategic marketing partnerships, organizational demographics and customer service delivery of public universities in Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **15<sup>th</sup> March, 2020.**

You are advised to report to the **Vice Chancellors of selected Universities, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

  
**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM  
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**




Copy to:



The Vice Chancellors  
Selected Universities.

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.



**Appendix 29: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
Research Authorization Permit**

<p><b>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:</b>  <b>MR. HENRY KEGORO ONGOTO</b>  <b>of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 26495-100</b>  <b>NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct</b>  <b>research in Nairobi County</b></p> <p><b>on the topic: BRAND PERSONALITY,</b>  <b>STRATEGIC MARKETING PARTNERSHIPS,</b>  <b>ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND</b>  <b>CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY OF</b>  <b>PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA</b></p> <p><b>for the period ending:</b>  <b>15th March,2020</b></p> <p>  <b>Applicant's</b>  <b>Signature</b></p>	<p><b>Permit No : NACOSTI/P/19/36732/28807</b>  <b>Date Of Issue : 15th March,2019</b>  <b>Fee Received :Ksh 2000</b></p>  <p>  <b>Director General</b>  <b>National Commission for Science,</b>  <b>Technology &amp; Innovation</b></p>
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