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HOW FOREIGN BRANDING AFFECT BRAND PERSONALITY AND PURCHASE INTENTION?

Abstract:

Foreign branding as a product naming strategy is very popular. (Batra et. all 2000; Ling 2008). There is an emerging stream of research which empirically examines the effect of foreign branding on consumers' product evaluations and attitudes. (Li, Murray 2001). However how the foreign brand names effect brand personality is not studied. A brand personality is "a set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker 1997). Favorable brand personality can enhance brand attitudes, consumer-brand relationships and purchase intentions (Freling, Crosno, Henard 2011). Therefore, studying the effect of foreign brand names on brand personality will contribute to the relevant literature. In this research we have made an attempt to analyze the effect of foreign brand naming on brand personality, attitudes and purchase intention. As a foreign brand name we have chosen English and English sounded words. The desire of consumers for westernization in developing countries (Stanlaw 1987) effected this decision. English, serving as the language of modernity, progress and globalization (Piller 2003) associates with a more urban, cosmopolitan, and upper class way of life and increases the prestige associated with a product (Friedrich 2002; Griffin, 1997; Haarmann 1989).

Products with a foreign brand name will be evaluated as having a foreign country origin and improves the brands' desirability for symbolic, status and enhancing reasons in addition to suggesting overall quality for the developing country' consumers (Batra 2000) So we hypothesized that; use of English and English sounded brands will differentiate the perception of brand personality, will create more favorable attitude and increase product purchase intentions.

We have chosen blue jean and café as products for analysis because of the prevalence of foreign brand names on both categories. Three group of participants were shown a blue jean image created by an advertisement agency for the purposes of this research but the brand names appeared on the blue jean image were different for each group as; Turkish, English and English sounded. Since the consumer may perceive brand personality differently depending on their culture (Lee, Kang 2013) we used the scale developed for Turkish consumers (Aksoy, Özsoy 2007) to measure brand personality. The same study is replicated for cafe. For the blue jean product significant differences were found between the Turkish and English/English sounded brands in terms of brand personality perception, attitudes and intention to purchase. For the café category use of local or English brand didn't make difference on purchase intention.

Keywords:

Foreign branding, Brand personality, Brand names, Brand attitudes, Purchase intention

JEL Classification: M31

Introduction

Foreign branding as a product naming strategy is very popular in both developing and non-English speaking countries (Batra et. al, 2000; Hsu, 2008). There is an emerging stream of research that empirically examines the effect of foreign branding on consumers' product evaluations and attitudes. (Li and Murray, 2001). However how the foreign brand names affect brand personality is not studied. Brand personality influences brand loyalty (Kressmann et al., 2006; Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello, 2009), brand preferences (Kim, 2000), brand trust (Hess et al., 2007), and brand attachment (Sung, Park, and Han, 2005; Bouhlej et al., 2011). Favorable brand personality can enhance brand attitudes, consumer-brand relationships and purchase intentions (Freling, Crosno, and Henard, 2011). Therefore, studying the effect of foreign brand names on brand personality will contribute to the relevant literature. In this research, we have made an attempt to analyze the effect of foreign brand naming on brand personality, attitudes and purchase intention.

Foreign Branding and Use of English in Branding

Choosing a brand name is an important part of the marketing strategy. A carefully created and chosen name can bring inherent and immediate value to the brand (Kohli and LaBahn, 1997). Although the marketing literature have suggested desirable qualities of a good brand name, e.g. easy pronunciation, distinctiveness, translatability into foreign languages, extendibility, conveying product benefits (Kotler and Armstrong 2012), foreign branding or brand names that sound like a foreign language was not one of these suggestions. But in a global world there are various examples of domestic products with foreign brand names both in developing and developed countries. Foreign Branding, -the strategy of spelling or pronouncing a brand name in a foreign language seems to be targeted primarily towards influencing the brand image dimensions of brand equity (Leclerc, Schmitt and Dube, 1994) and also increase product's desirability or 'perceived value' (Schiffman, 2007). Choosing French brands as a specific case, experiments by Leclerc, Schmitt and Dube (1994) demonstrated that foreign branding could be an effective means of influencing consumers' perceptions and attitudes.

The emerging research on foreign versus local branding suggests that made-in label may not be the only way that country of origin information can be conveyed and like made in information branding may also trigger the stereotypes consumers possess towards particular countries and cultures and that stereotypes can in turn affect consumers perceptions and evaluations of the product (Li and Murray, 2001). Products with a foreign brand name will be evaluated as having a foreign country origin and improves the brands' desirability for symbolic, status and enhancing reasons in addition to suggesting overall quality for the developing country' consumers (Batra et. al, 2000).

The use of English in commercial advertising and naming practices is attested on a global scale (Pahta and Taavitsainen, 2004). English is the most frequently used

language in advertising messages in non-English-speaking countries. Internationally, it has become a general symbol of modernity, progress, and globalization so it is used to associate a product with a social stereotype (Piller, 2003). So it may be expected that English is also one of the most popular languages used in foreign branding. English seems to be in a unique position at present where it is capable of symbolizing modernity, being accessible enough to be intelligible, having linguistic properties (such as size of words) which make it attractive, having a connotation of Westernization, providing extra-linguistic material, to quench the creative thirst of advertisers and businesspeople all over the World (Friedrich, 2002). English, is associated with a more urban, cosmopolitan, and upper-class way of life and increases the prestige associated with a product (Friedrich, 2002; Griffin, 2001; Haarmann 1989). English brand names also imply superior standards of production and give a universal image of what is produced or advertised (Khosravizadeh and Sanjareh, 2011). The analysis by Doğançay-Aktuna (1998), which is still and by large true, indicates that it is used as link language for international business and for tourism while also providing a code that symbolizes modernization and elitism to the educated middle classes and those in the upper strata of the socioeconomic ladder.

Use of English brand names is not limited to the developing countries. A large body of research has been conducted on the impact and use of English in advertising, brand-naming, media, and TV commercials of many countries around the world aiming at explaining the reasons and consequences of this phenomenon (Khosravizadeh and Sanjareh, 2011) According to researchers such as Wilkerson (1997), Martin (2002), Alm (2003), Piller (2003), Kelly-Holmes (2005), Ustinova and Bhatia (2005), and Lee (2006), English is used because it enhances the image of a product. So in this study we hypothesize that; use of English and English sounded brands compared to the local brand names will differentiate the perception of brand personality, will create a more favorable attitude and increase product purchase intentions.

Brand Personality

A brand personality is formally defined as "a set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997). Aaker (1997) has demonstrated that brands can be differentially associated with personality traits in consumers' minds. Brand personality may be inferred from a brand's price, product properties, distribution, packaging, symbols, sales promotion, and advertising (Batra, Lehmann, and Singh, 1993). A potential antecedent to brand personality is the brand name (Klink and Athaide, 2012). So it is important to study the impact of a brand name on brand personality (Klink 2001). But the research on brand name- brand personality relationship is very limited. In a meta-analytic review of antecedents and consequences of brand personality branding activities that support the creation of a unique and inimitable brand was taken as one of the antecedents of brand personality (Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer, 2013). But in terms of the effect of the brand name itself on the brand personality the only accessible research is Klink's and Athaide's (2012) article titled "Creating the brand personality with

brand names". Drawing on theory and research from sound symbolism the authors have investigated how the brand names can be formed to create the brand personality.

In Aaker's (1997) study brand personality was identified using five dimensions 1) sincerity, 2) excitement, 3) competence, 4) sophistication and 5) ruggedness. Evidence in favor of the robustness of this scale in other cultures besides western cultures has been limited (Aksoy and Özsoy, 2007) Based on the idea that consumers may perceive brand personality based on their culture in various studies brand personality dimensions that are relevant to a particular culture are used. For example Yang and Cho (2002) developed new scales of brand personality that were appropriate for Korea that consist of 5 dimensions as 1) sincerity, 2) excitement, 3) sophistication, 4) ruggedness, and 5) cute. Chu and Sung (2011) have found that among the six dimensions of Chinese brand personality identified, just competence, excitement and sophistication dimensions were shared between China and the USA and there were three other dimensions named Traditionalism; Joyfulness; and Trendiness that were relatively specific to the Chinese culture. Aksoy and Özsoy's (2007) research with a representative sample of 1200 Turkish individuals aimed to determine the dimensions of brand personality and traits characteristic to Turkish culture. Results of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyzes indicated that Turkish brand personality can be defined in terms of reliability, excitement, traditionalism and androgyny.

Table 1. Brand Personality Dimensions

Author(s)	Brand Personality Dimensions
Aaker (1997)	Sincere, Excited, Competent, Sophisticated and Rugged
Keller and Richey (2006)	Passionate and Compassionate (Heart), Creative and Disciplined (Mind) and Agile and Collaborative (Body)
Okazaki (2006)	Excited, Sophisticated, Affectionate, Popular and Competent
Geuens et al. (2009)	Responsible, Active, Aggressive, Simple and Emotional
Lee and Rhee (2008)	Attractive, Intelligent, Enjoyable, Lively, Friendly and Affluent
Aksoy and Özsoy (2007)	Reliability, Excitement, Traditionalism and Androgyny
Chu and Sung (2011)	Competence, Excitement, Sophistication, Traditionalism, Joyfulness, Trendiness
Yang and Chao (2002)	Sincerity, Excitement, Sophistication, Ruggedness, Cute

Source: Adapted from Ahmad and Thyagaraj, 2014.

Method

This study used local, English and English sounded brand names as independent variables and perceived brand personality, attitudes towards the brand name and intention to purchase as dependent variables. For the purpose of this research blue-jean and café are selected as products for analysis because of the prevalence of foreign brand names on both categories. As we have searched the products, which are

dominated with, foreign brand names we have explored that use of foreign brand names are very popular in both categories such as Big Chef, Midpoint, Little Kitchen, Spoon, House Café and Little Big, Colin's, De Facto, Collezione, Rodi Jeans. For the blue-jean we have selected Passion as the English brand name, Tutku as the Turkish brand name and Tootkhu as the English sounded brand name. For the café brand Xerion is selected as the English brand name, İksir as Turkish and Ixir as the English sounded brand name. The chosen English and Turkish brand names have the same meaning in both languages. Although several brand name alternatives are created by the authors we have taken the opinion of two copy writers from an advertising agency for the ultimate decision.

The sample for the research consisted of the 3rd and 4th level business students with similar levels of English proficiency. In each class respondents were divided into three groups and each group have filled the same questionnaire except the brand name seen on a commercial (See Figure 1 for the commercials). The commercial is created by an advertising agency for the purpose of this research and no written message took place on it. Then the respondents answered the questions about brand personality, brand attitudes, and intention to buy the brands presented on the questionnaire. The same study is replicated for the café brand and in this case instead of intention to purchase, intention to visit is asked. We assessed the brand personality using the scale items developed by by Aksoy and Özsoymer (2007) which is developed for the Turkish context.

Figure 1. Commercials Designed for Jean and Café Brands



Findings and Results

The results are presented separately for blue jean and café brands.

Study 1: Blue Jean

Table 2 shows the factor analysis results of brand personality dimensions for Blue Jeans. Four factors were identified based on the factor analysis with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, explaining 57% of the variance. Factor 1, *competence* comprises eleven items. The eigenvalue is 13.36 and the factor explains 39% of the total variance. Factor 2, *excitement* comprises ten items (eigenvalue = 3.46, variance explained = 10%). *Traditionalism* was the third factor identified (eigenvalue = 1.45, variance explained = 4%) and consists of seven items. Fourth factor, *joyfulness* (eigenvalue = 1.27, variance explained = 3%), includes four items. Cronbach's alphas calculated for each of the four dimensions indicated high levels of internal reliability, ranging from .79 (Traditionalism) to .92 (Competence and Excitement).

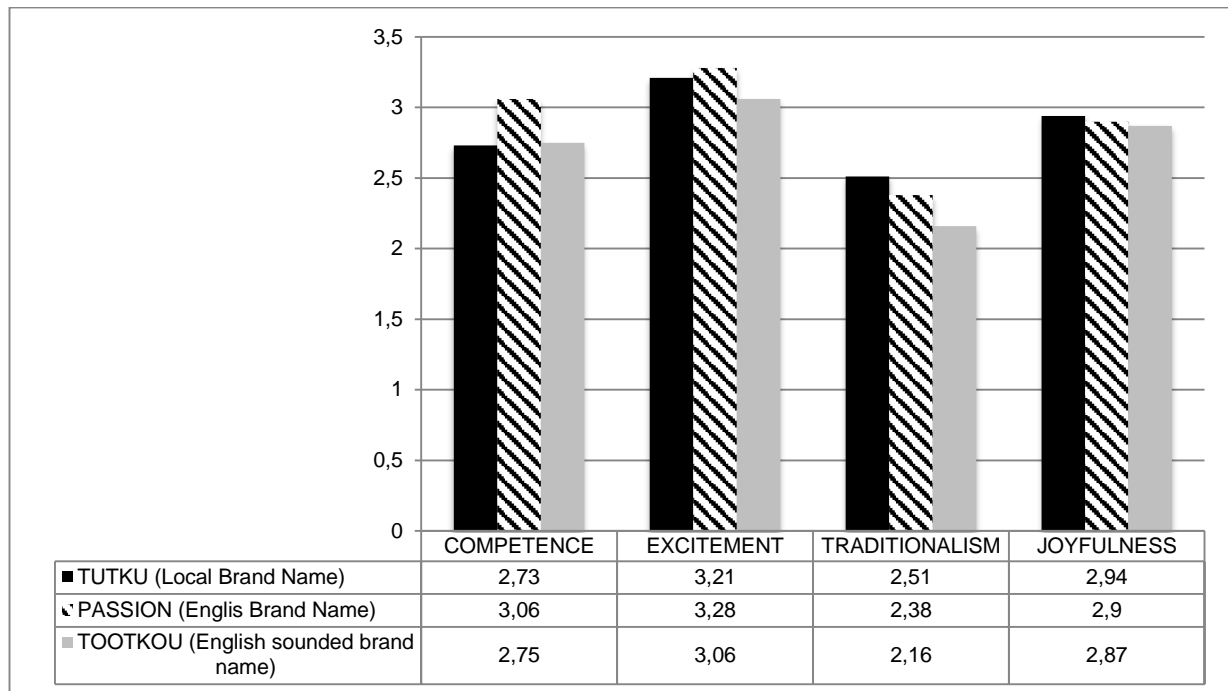
Table 2. Factor Analysis of Brand Personality Attributes for Blue Jeans (N=251)

Items	M	SD	Factors			
			1	2	3	4
COMPETENCE						
Professional	2.72	1.04	.760			
Hard working	2.70	1.05	.717			
Prestigious	2.69	1.13	.710			
Successful	2.87	1.06	.690			
Secure	2.92	1.09	.662			
Qualified	2.91	1.12	.647			
Original	2.95	1.23	.646			
Reliable	2.80	.982	.639			
Good	2.95	1.09	.632			
Global	2.90	1.24	.583			
Consistent	2.80	.947	.565			
EXCITEMENT						
Assertive	3.24	1.25		.734		
Passionate	3.22	1.29		.713		
Young spirited	3.64	1.17		.687		
Self-confident	3.24	1.22		.672		
Daring	2.65	1.32		.667		

Independent	3.27	1.19	.645	
Lively	3.11	1.14	.622	
Youthful	3.09	1.06	.590	
Loving life	3.09	1.10	.557	
Agile	2.82	1.03	.537	
TRADITIONALISM				
Traditional	2.19	1.14	.782	
Classic	2.47	1.17	.706	
Conservative	1.97	.971	.660	
Modest	2.38	1.03	.648	
Prudent	2.61	1.01	.619	
Family oriented	2.13	.999	.612	
Familiar	2.65	1.23	.581	
JOYFULNESS				
Enjoyable	2.76	1.11	.738	
Cheerful	2.78	1.10	.731	
Entertaining	2.89	1.11	.702	
Sympathetic	2.96	1.18	.598	
Eigenvalue	13.361	3.465	1.452	1.278
Variance Explained (%)	39.297	10.192	4.272	3.759
Cronbach Alfa	.928	.923	.793	.874

Figure 2 shows the mean values of brand personality dimensions for the three blue jean brands. As seen on the figure, although all the brands have closer means, PASSION (English brand name) has slightly higher scores on competence (3.06) and excitement (3.28). On the other hand, TUTKU (Local brand name), as expected, has the highest score on traditionalism (2.51). In terms of joyfulness dimension of the perceived brand personality the mean values are very close to each other for local, English and English sounded brand names (2.94, 2.9 and 2.87 respectively).

Figure 2. Brand Personality Dimension Scores According to Blue Jean Brands



To test if blue jean brands significantly differ according to the dimensions of brand personality dimensions, we conducted ANOVA test. Based on the ANOVA analysis, significant difference on the brand personality has been found on competency and traditionalism dimensions. Table 3 shows the results of these comparisons. According to the analysis, PASSION (English brand name) was perceived more competent than TUTKU (Local brand name) (<.05), and TUTKU (Local brand name) was perceived more traditional than TOOTKOU (English sounded brand) (<.05). But there was no significant difference on the other brand personality dimensions.

Table 3. Comparison of Brand Personality Dimensions for Blue Jean Brands

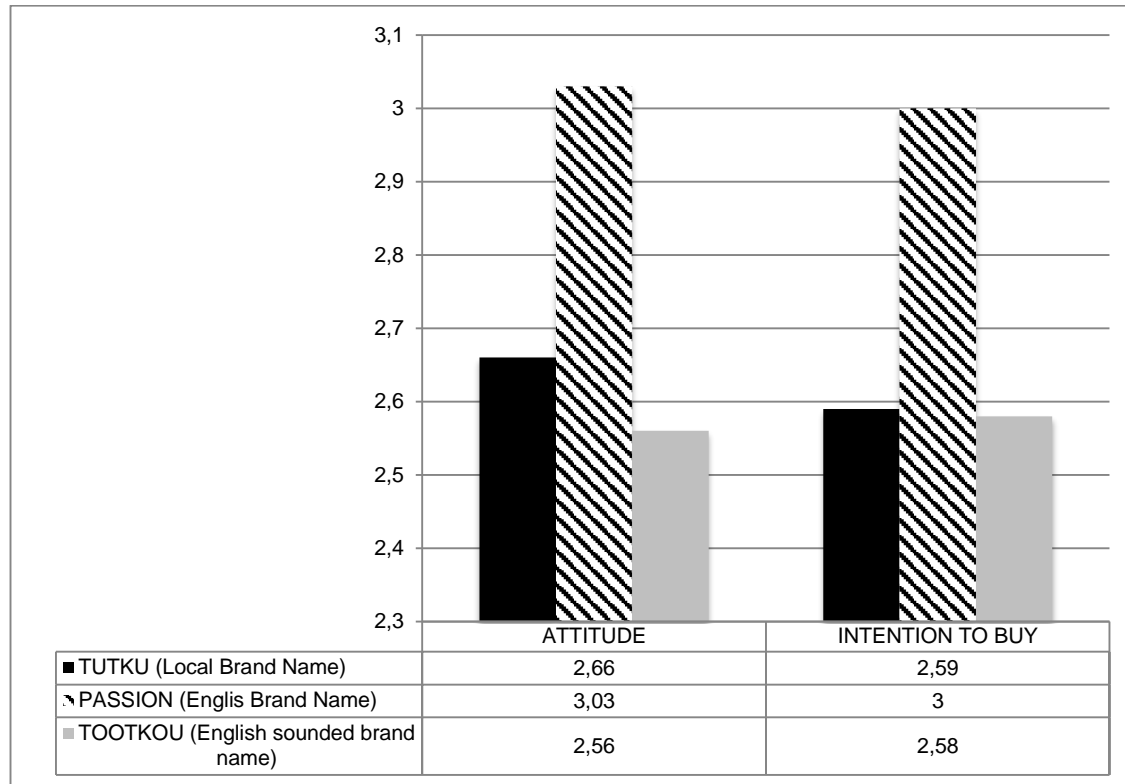
	BLUE JEAN BRAND NAMES			ANOVA		
	TUTKU (Local Brand Name) (A)	PASSION (English Brand Name) (B)	TOOTKOU (English Sounded Brand Name) (C)	Mean Square	F	Sig.
COMPETENCE		A		2.714	3.987	.020
EXCITEMENT				1.065	1.229	.294
TRADITIONALISM	C			2.852	5.668	.004
JOYFULNESS				.101	.117	.890

* Results are based on two-sided tests assuming equal variances with significance level .05. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears under the category with larger mean.

** Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

Figure 3 shows the means of attitude towards and intention to buy the blue jean brands. As seen on the figure, PASSION (English brand name) has the highest scores on attitude (3.03) and intention to buy (3).

Figure 3. Attitude and Intention to Buy Scores According to Blue Jean Brands



On the other hand, to test if attitude and intention to buy differ according to the blue jean brands, we conducted an ANOVA analysis. The results showed that PASSION (English brand name) has quite higher ratings than TUTKU (Local brand name) and TOOTKOU (English sounded brand name) in terms of attitude (<.05) and intention to buy (<.05) (Table 4). But there was no significant difference between TUTKU (Local brand name) and TOOTKOU (English sounded brand name).

Table 4. Comparison of Attitude and Intention to Buy for Blue Jean Brands

	BLUE JEAN BRAND NAMES			ANOVA		
	TUTKU (Local Brand Name) (A)	PASSION (English Brand Name) (B)	TOOTKOU (English Sounded Brand Name) (C)	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ATTITUDE		A, C		4.841	5.433	.005
INTENTION TO BUY		A, C		4.667	5.127	.007

* Results are based on two-sided tests assuming equal variances with significance level .05. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears under the category with larger mean.

** Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

STUDY 2: Café

Table 5 shows the factor analysis results of brand personality dimensions for Café brands. Five factors were identified based on the factor analysis with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, explaining 59% of the variance.

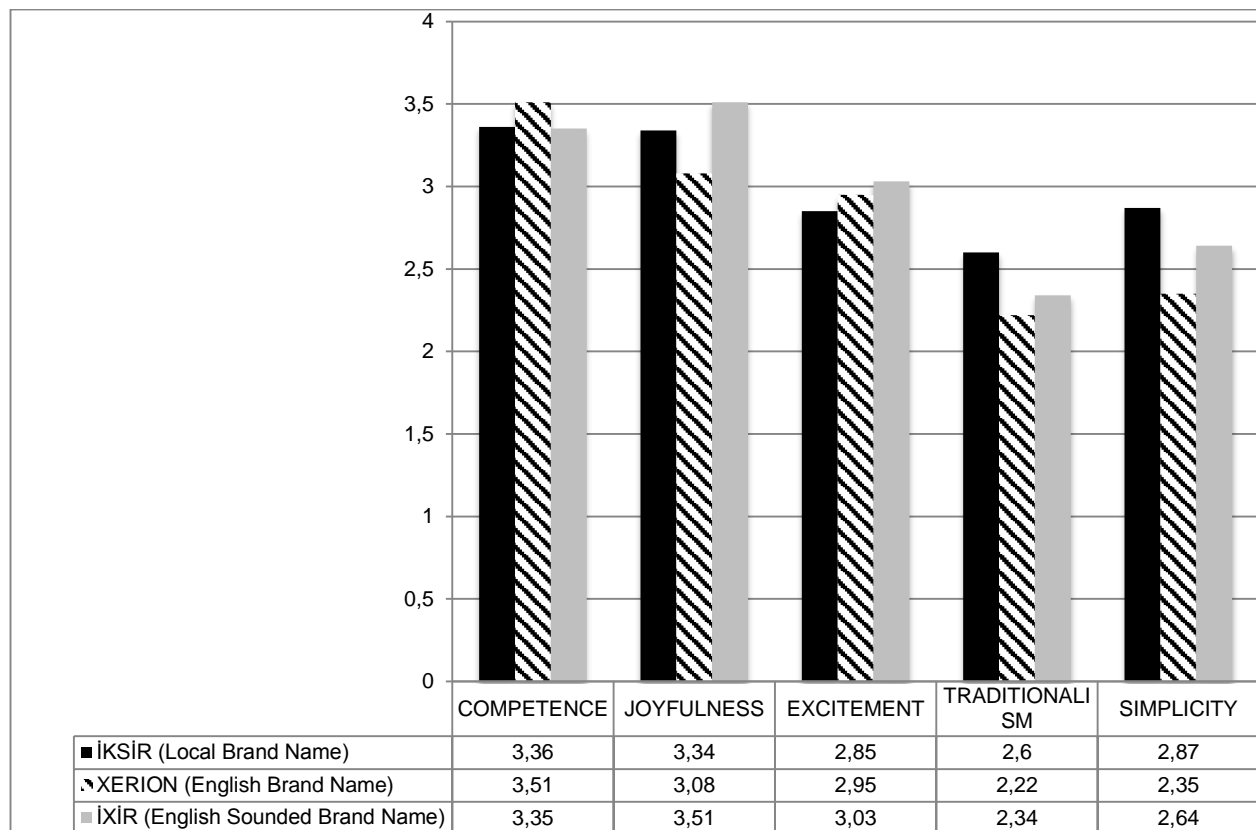
Table 5. Factor Analysis of Brand Personality Attributes for Cafés (N=242)

Items	M	SD	Factors				
			1	2	3	4	5
COMPETENCE	3.40	1.07	.781				
Prestigious	3.42	1.02	.757				
Successful	2.61	1.17	.752				
Qualified	3.28	.987	.741				
Hard working	3.52	1.04	.702				
Good	3.22	.923	.697				
Reliable	3.67	1.02	.672				
Self-confident	3.07	.990	.526				
Consistent	3.60	2.75	.483				
Professional	3.40	1.07	.781				
JOYFULNESS							
Cheerful	3.18	1.07		.772			
Entertaining	3.15	1.07		.770			
Sympathetic	3.28	1.03		.718			
Young	3.54	1.10		.712			
Young-spirited	3.43	1.14		.685			
Lively	3.28	1.01		.643			
Independent	3.37	1.03		.557			
Loving life	3.25	.97		.548			
EXCITEMENT							
Daring	2.73	1.15			.568		
Athletic	2.67	1.09			.556		
Assertive	3.66	1.11			.483		

Rebellious	2.54	1.15			.478		
Passionate	3.08	1.08			.434		
TRADITIONALISM							
Traditional	2.22	1.03				.716	
Classic	2.61	1.17				.673	
Familiar	2.60	1.11				.670	
SIMPLICITY							
Economic	2.61	.962					.739
Prudent	2.63	.91					.708
Modest	2.65	1.09					.576
Conservative	2.12	.960					.405
Eigenvalue			9.413	3.134	2.180	1.315	1.043
Variance Explained (%)			32.460	10.808	7.518	4.533	3.595
Cronbach Alfa			.766	.893	.708	.648	.658

Factor 1, *competence* comprises nine items. The eigenvalue is 9.41 and the factor explains 32% of the total variance. Factor 2, *joyfulness* comprises eight items (eigenvalue = 3.13, variance explained = 10%). *Excitement* was the third factor identified (eigenvalue = 2.18, variance explained = 7.5%) and consists of five items. Factor 4, *traditionalism* (eigenvalue = 1.31, variance explained = 4.5%) includes three items. At last factor 5, different from the factor analysis results of blue jean, *simplicity* comprises four items (eigenvalue = 1.04, variance explained = 3.5%). Cronbach's alphas calculated for each of the five dimensions indicated acceptable levels of internal reliability, ranging from .64 (Traditionalism) to .89 (Joyfulness).

Figure 4 shows the mean values of brand personality dimensions according to the café brands. XERION (English brand name) has a slightly higher rating on competence (3.51). IXIR (English sounded brand) has the highest ratings on joyfulness (3.51) and excitement (3.03). On the other hand, İKSİR (Local brand name) has the highest scores on traditionalism (2,6) and simplicity (2,87).

Figure 4. Brand Personality Dimension Scores According to Café Brands

To test if café brands significantly differ according to the dimensions of brand personality, we carried out an ANOVA test. Based on the ANOVA analysis, significant difference on the brand personality has been found on joyfulness, traditionalism and simplicity dimensions. Table 6 shows the results of these comparisons. According to the analysis, İXİR (English sounded brand name) was perceived as more joyful ($<.05$) and simple ($<.05$) than XERION (English brand name). On the other hand, İKSİR (Local brand name) was perceived as more traditional ($<.05$) and simple ($<.05$) than XERION (English brand name). But no difference has been found on any of the the brand personality dimensions between İKSİR (Local brand name) and İXİR (English sounded brand name).

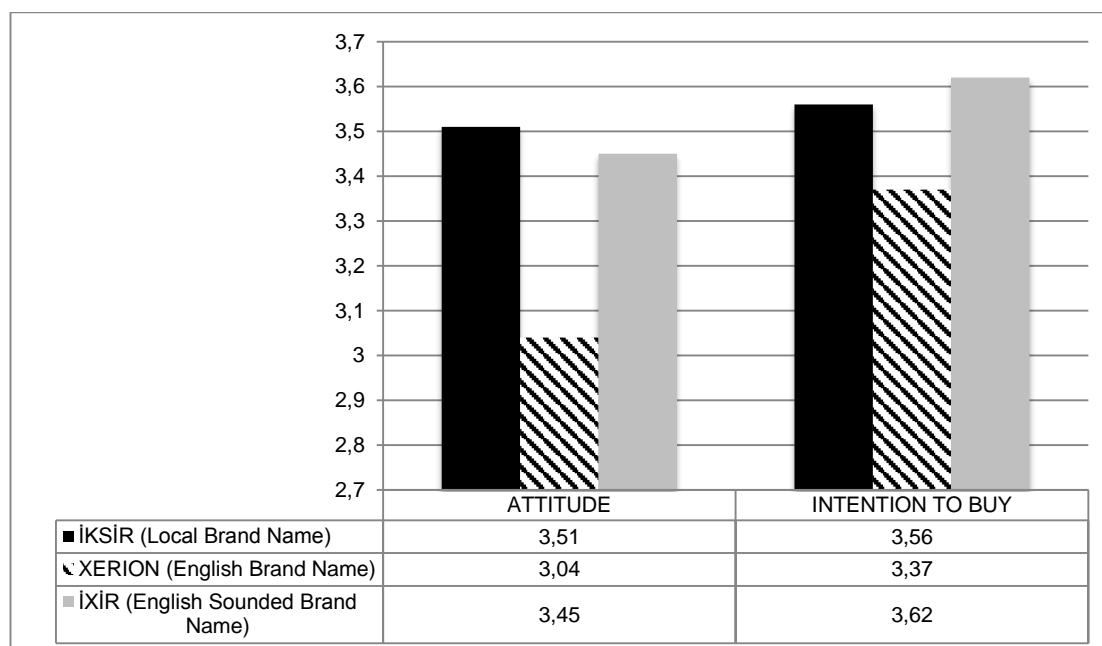
Table 6. Comparison of Brand Personality Dimensions for Café Brands

	CAFÉ BRAND NAMES			ANOVA		
	İKSİR (Local Brand Name) (A)	XERION (English Brand Name) (B)	İXİR (English Sounded Brand Name) (C)	Mean Square	F	Sig.
COMPETENCE				.640	.876	.418
JOYFULNESS			B	3.802	6.190	.002
EXCITEMENT				.700	1.210	.300
TRADITIONALISM	B			3.085	5.712	.004
SIMPLICITY	B		B	5.541	10.539	.000

* Results are based on two-sided tests assuming equal variances with significance level .05. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears under the category with larger mean.

** Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

Figure 5 shows the means of attitude towards and intention to buy the café brands. As seen on the figure, XERION (English brand name) has the lowest scores on attitude (3.04) and intention to buy (3.37). Although İKSİR (Local brand name) has the highest score on attitude (3.51), İXİR (English sounded brand name) has the highest score on intention to buy.

Figure 5. Attitude and Intention to Buy Scores According to Café Brands

On the other hand, to test if attitude and intention to buy differ according to the café brands, we conducted an ANOVA analysis. The results showed that both İKSİR (Local brand name) and İXİR (English sounded brand name) have a more positive attitude ($<.05$) than XERION (Table 7). No significant differences were found between the café brands in terms of intention to buy.

Table 7. Comparison of Attitude and Intention to Buy for Café Brands

	CAFÉ BRAND NAMES			Mean Square	F	Sig.
	İKSİR (Local Brand Name) (A)	XERION (English Brand Name) (B)	İXİR (English Sounded Brand Name) (C)			
ATTITUDE	B		B	5.274	5.215	.006
INTENTION TO BUY				1.330	1.455	.235

* Results are based on two-sided tests assuming equal variances with significance level .05. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears under the category with larger mean.

** Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to examine how the foreign brand name alone affect the brand personality perception. We examined the effects of foreign brand names versus local brand names on brand personality perception on two product categories. We have used the brand personality scale that is developed for the Turkish culture but factor analysis of brand personality scale resulted different dimensions for the blue jean and café brands. In addition to competency, excitement, joyfulness and traditionalism dimensions, café brand's personality included simplicity as the fifth dimension.

This research is the first study to link brand personality and foreign branding which are two popular areas of marketing inquiry. An obvious contribution of this study is to show brand personality dimensions are affected by the use of a foreign brand name. Although brands have gained new meanings for today's consumers and we attach human characteristics to the brands, whether foreign branding will make a difference on brand personality perception is not questioned in the previous studies. English brand names increased the products' perceived competency in both product groups in this study. Attitude towards the brand name was significantly more favorable for English brand name for the blue jean category. Intention to buy the blue jean branded in English was founded to be higher also. So it can be concluded that English brand name suggests a more competent product, more favorable attitude towards the brand name and higher intention to purchase the product. Turkish branded blue jean is rated higher in the traditionalism dimension of brand personality. English sounded brand name was not

found to be different than Turkish brand name in terms of brand personality dimensions, attitudes, and intention to buy.

For the café brand English brand name has been rated highest in excitement and joyfulness dimensions. Turkish brand name had higher mean scores in traditionalism and simplicity dimensions. Attitude towards the local brand name was more favorable and intention to visit the Turkish branded café and café branded by using an English sounded name was higher compared to the English brand name. So the second study didn't replicate the results of the first study. This may occur due to the choosing two different categories of products for analysis, one is totally a physical product like a blue jean, and the other is a service product like a café. Taking just two different categories of products is a limitation of this study. Future studies about the foreign brand name and brand personality relationship may include more brand names and more products in the same category to get better products. Another limitation of this study is that the research is not conducted as an experimental design. Although we have studied together with an advertising agency when choosing the brand names it would be better to make a survey with a sample of students to choose local, English and English sounded brand names.

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