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## Influence of Quality Management Practices on Customer Brand Equity among Public Chartered Universities in Kenya

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### Abstract:

*The concept of quality management has remained the driver of competitive organizations in the changing business environment. However, it is revealed from literatures that quality management facets are unlimited and ambiguous to be measured by individual consumers with regard to products and services. Since quality management practices are associated with intangible aspects of brand equity, organizations are still experiencing challenges of maintaining customer brand equity. Therefore, it is on this background this study sought to determine the influence of quality management practices on customer brand equity. The specific objectives of the study were; to determine the influence of consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation on customer brand equity. This study was anchored on Total Quality Management and Theory, Brand Equity Theory. The study adopted descriptive research design since it provides the opportunity to collect and record data without manipulation. The target population of the study was 175 students selected from five Chartered Public Universities in Kenya. However, to narrow down the number of the population, 15 students were selected from each University using purposive sampling technique. Therefore, 75 students were the representative sample of this study. The unit of analysis university students while the unit of observation were Chartered Public Universities in Kenya. Primary data was collected using Questionnaires and secondary data collected from quality assurance audit reports was analyzed using content analysis method. Statistical Package of Social Sciences was used to analyze qualitatively in form of means and percentages. To establish the hypothetical relationship between the independent variables on the dependent variable, log it regression model was used. Data analyzed was presented in form of tables. After analysis it was established that there was a positive relationship between consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation on customer brand equity. Further it was concluded by the study that quality management practices should be improved to meet customer expectations. It was recommended by the study that, for Chartered Public Universities in Kenya to be competitive, a number of issues like corporate governance, reviewing of academic programs, staff development, process automation and consumer research should be addressed.*

**Keywords:** Brand equity, it involves the real value that a brand name/product/service holds in the mind of consumers.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 General Background

Quality management is a philosophy that originated in 1950's from quality authorities like Joseph Juran (1950's); Edward Deming (1950's) and Philip Crosby (1980's) (Kalicinin, Veljkovic & Bogetic, 2015). Since the establishment of quality management, the concept has evolved over time due to organizational dynamics. In extension, a number of approaches have been developed by world class organizations around the globe. Companies like; General Electric Toyota, IBM, Microsoft, Samsung, Coca Cola, among others have continued to embrace quality management practices and approaches in order to enhance their performance (Yusufu, 2013). These approaches are embodied in a set of quality management practices, known as Total Quality Management (TQM). On account of these policies, different approaches have been adopted for the introduction of quality management in organizations, such as consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation (Bijuna, Mohan & Sequeira, 2016). Quality management practices adopted by global companies have significantly contributed to enhanced brand equity among customers in terms of increased profits, market share and consumer loyalty (Chen, 2011)

Christodoulides and Chernatony (2010) suggest that quality management is seen as a dynamic concept in the organizational context. A number of scholars have continued debate and search for exact definition of quality, but it is evident from literature that still quality management is an evolving practice in modern competitive organizations (Haxthausen, 2009). With changing business environment, change of consumer needs and wants, increased competition, employee diversity and influence of technology, quality management has remained the driving force of competitive firms operating in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. World class organizations have been associated with quality management models that are customer centric in nature (Hamed & Yosefi, 2013). Organizations from multiple sectors ranging from developed and developing countries have continued to adopt quality management practices in order to gain a competitive edge in the

local and global marketplace. Quality management is generally described as a collective, interlinked system of quality management practices that is associated with organizational performance (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Keller and Lehmann (2006) argue that quality management practice is based on customer centric philosophy that always emphasize on production of goods that exceed customer expectation thus enhanced brand equity. Due to high quality services produced by world class organizations around the world, many are the benefits experienced. For instance, organizations that adopt quality management practices have always realized increased profits, increased market share, enhanced customer loyalty, minimal costs of operation, increased volume of sales and improved brand image (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Quality experts such as Crosby (1979), Deming (1986) and Juran (1982) have greatly contributed to the advancement of quality concepts around the world (Aldridge & Rowley, 1998), as a result of which many firms have continued embrace quality management practices, leading to enhanced brand loyalty. In the modern changing business environment, there is a worldwide acceptance and use of quality management models (Huang & Sarigollu, 2014). Although there is a drive to adopt quality management practices to enhance brand equity, still there is an uphill task among organizations when trying to adopt quality management systems to improve overall performance of the organization.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Quality Management Practices

Defining the exact meaning of quality has remained a challenging and complex issues among scholars (Martens & Hilbert, 2011). It is argued that the word "quality" has been derived from the Latin word "qualis", meaning, "what kind of". With a wide variety of meanings and connotations attached to it, defining the "quality" has remained a "slippery concept" (Lennartz, Fischer, Krafft & Peters, 2015). Despite a common consensus on the definition of "quality", it is witnessed that consumers perceive "quality" from different perspectives with regard to products and services offered by organizations. Quality perspective can be categorized into organizational perspective and consumer perspective. From the perspective of the organization, providing goods and services more efficiently and effectively can be termed as "quality production" while from the perspective of the consumer, providing goods and services that conform or exceed expectations can be termed as "quality goods and services" (Chen, 2011).

According to Gupta and Adil (2015), quality involves conformity to customer requirements. Production of quality products and services by modern organization automatically enhances brand equity. Organizations that produce or focus on quality services are more likely to attract, develop and retain customers in the long-term period and vice versa. To enhance brand equity in the modern changing business environment, organization should always emphasize on marketing philosophy that focus on producing goods that exceed customer expectations hence brand equity. Organizations that do not address quality issues find it difficult to survive in the changing marketing environment (Gromark & Melin, 2011).

Quality management has remained the integral part of any competitive organization in the changing business environment (Magutu et al, 2010). Issues that enhances the quality of products and services in organizations can range from top leadership, technology integration in the system, staff development and consumer research. Consumers are more likely to develop strong attachments with brands that give or exceed their expectations (Bijuna, Mohan, & Sequeira, 2016). Consumers always seek to maximize utility of products and services while organizations seek to minimize cost of producing goods and services. However, it is argued by Evangelos, Areti, Efthimios and Konstantinos (2016) that to enhance brand equity, organizations should always strive to improve quality of their products and services rather than minimizing costs at the expense of compromising quality.

### 2.2. Customer Brand Equity

Quite a number of scholars have defined "brand equity" from different perspectives (Keller, 2000). From the definitions it is observed that scholar have tried to have a common consensus on what "brand equity" entails. For instance, Keller and Lehmann (2006) brand equity is defines as a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/ or to that firm's customers. Lee, Par, Baek and Lee (2008) suggest that brand equity can be regarded as the marketing and financial values linked with a brand's strength in the market, including actual proprietary brand assets, brand name awareness, brand loyalty, perceived brand quality, and brand associations"

When customer brand equity is positive (assets outweigh liabilities) for substantial numbers of customers this reflects the nurturing of trust between the brand owner and customer (Gromark & Melin, 2011). Customer brand equity seems generally to be built up slowly over time, is fragile and can be quickly dissipated by negative information generated by managerial mishaps. High customer brand equity does not just happen; it must be fostered by active brand management over many years using a variety of brand building activities. However, just as some decisions can lead to enhanced brand equity, so other decisions may over-exploit brand equity and cause it to decline (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Consumer loyalty to organizational products and services is basically determined by the value of the offering (Verbeeten & Vijn, 2010). Keller (2012) suggest that brand equity is relates to the way customers react to the brand's elements of marketing mix as compared with those of an unnamed product category. Kotler and Keller (2012). Further describes that creating brand equity consists of two steps: choosing brand identities like; names, logos and developing supportive marketing programmes that integrate all of those identities. According to Keller (2000), brand equity is defined as "the value attached to a functional product or service by associating it with the brand name". According to Herrmann, Henneberg and Landwehr (2010), brand equity involves the real value that a brand name holds in the mind of consumers. Brand equity can be a strong influencer of individual and organizational buying behavior in the modern changing

marketing environment. A strong brand in the market can distinguish products and services provided by organizations resulting to premium prices. According to Kotler & Keller (2012), brand equity can generate numerous benefits to both large and small organizations ranging from; perceived value, consumer loyalty, increased profits, enhanced trade corporation and supports minimal marketing costs, and brand extension. The knowledge consumers have about a branding can create a significant impact on performance.

### 2.3. Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

UNESCO (2016) suggests that development of University education in Kenya can be traced back to 1922 when Makerere college was established a Technical college to admit students from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. As a result, in 1949 and 1954, Makerere College was necessitated to enter into special relations with Universities from London to enable Africans to study for degree programs. Later in 1954, Makerere College was converted to be the University College of East Africa. In 1970, it was decided by the African Authority to split University of East Africa into three major Universities which included: Makerere University (Uganda,) University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), and the University of Nairobi (Kenya). Since 1970, to date, the University Education has experienced rapid growth. The number of universities offering degree programs has increased significantly thus resulting to increased number of student enrollment. According to the Ministry of Education Report (2016), Chartered Public Universities have continued to record increased number of student enrollment in various certificate, diploma, degree and postgraduate programs due to Governments initiatives to promote quality education to all Kenyans as spelt out in vision 2030. With increased competition from international and local private Universities, Chartered Public Universities have continued to experience a number of challenges to accommodate the increased number of students. Some of these challenges are: accreditation of academic programs, lecturer verses student ratio, inadequate infrastructural facilities and capacity of the teaching staff. As a result of the integrity questions raised from key stakeholders in the education sector with regard to quality of education in higher institutions of learning in Kenya, the Commission for University Education (CUE) was established under the Universities Act, No. 42 of 2012 to replace Commission for Higher Education to oversee and regulate university education in Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2016). However, despite the establishment of Commission for University Education in Kenya, quite a number of quality issues are of great concern in Chartered Public Universities.

### 2.4. Statement of the Problem

Quality management practices have become drivers of enhancing organizational competitiveness in the changing business environment (Mzungu, Merrilees, & Miller, 2010). Bijuna and Sequeira (2016); Sallam (2015); Berthon et al. (2011) & Hong (2009) established that effective quality management is directly correlated with customer satisfaction, profitability, market share and employee motivation. The quality of products and services produced by organization has continued to be of great concern for both private and public organizations. However, it is argued by Kotler and Aaker (2012) that the concept of quality has continued to remain an evolving aspect since it is dependent on consumer attitudes, perceptions and motivations. For instance, quality management in Public Chartered Universities has been an issue of great concern from multiple stakeholders that include; employers, parents, students, and the Government (UNESCO, 2016).

Commission for University Education (2016) revealed that majority (87%) of the Public Universities operating in Kenya are not compliant with the set standards and regulations. Issues of capacity development, accreditation of academic programs, diversity of university management boards, state of infrastructural facilities and process computerization have continued to hinder the quality of services provided by Public Chartered Universities in Kenya. As result, it is noted that limited studies which have been conducted locally have not paid due attention in this area. For instance, a study by Magutu, Mbeche, Bitange, Onserio, Nyaanga and Ogoro (2010) was confined to University of Nairobi only. Another study by Njuguna (2014) was confined to supermarket Kenya. A study by Nyambura (2011) was also confined to the banking sector and a study by Nyangechi (2011) was confined to media agencies in Kenya.

The issue that exists is that there is little evidence of whether quality management practices that are based on a holistic approach of total quality management can be used to influence customer brand equity. As such, research into this phenomenon would shed more light in order for management and marketing practitioners to recognize the need of consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and systems automation on customer brand equity.

### 2.5. Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were to;

- Determine the influence of consumer research and customer brand equity.
- Establish the effect of leadership and customer brand equity of public universities in Kenya.
- Evaluate the influence of employee motivation and customer brand equity.
- Assess the effect of system automation and customer brand equity.

### 2.6. Research Hypotheses

Research hypotheses of the study were;

- H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no relationship between consumer research and customer brand equity
- H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no relationship between leadership and customer brand equity
- H0<sub>3</sub>: There is no relationship between employee motivation and customer brand equity
- H0<sub>4</sub>: There is no relationship between system automation and customer brand equity

## 2.7. Conceptual Framework

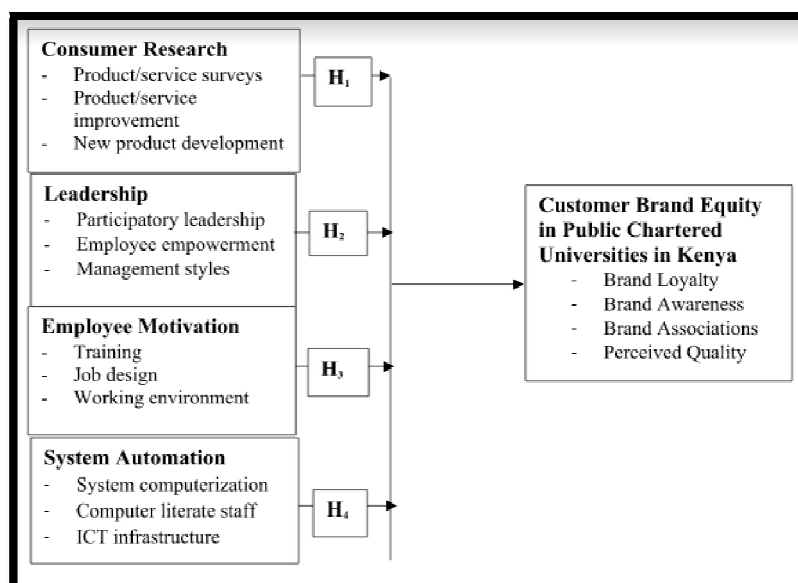


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 2.8. Theoretical Review

Total Quality Management and Brand Equity Theories were adopted to inform this study. TQM theory was established by Deming and Juran (1931). The theory is established on the foundation of customer satisfaction (Chen, 2011). According to the theory, quality is perceived from different perspectives by different customers. Application of the principles of TQM in competitive organizations has contributed to enhanced customer loyalty and profitability. It holds that organizational performance is enhanced by designing products and services that meet or exceed customer expectation by empowering workers to find and eliminate all factors that undermine product or service quality (MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2011). Quality management practices are associated with organizational efficiency and effectiveness based on stakeholder satisfaction involvement, continuous improvement, proactive leadership, research and development, teamwork, technology integration in the system, employee training and change management (Thu, 2016).

Brand Equity Theory was established by Aaker (1996) and is based on four key dimensions which include: brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and proprietary brand assets. Among these five brand equity dimensions, the first four represent customers' evaluations and reactions to the brand that can be readily understood by consumers while the last dimension represents brand patents, trademarks and channel relationships. Brand equity plays a very significant role in the understanding of the objectives, mechanisms and net impact of the holistic impact of marketing (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Further, the theory argue that brand equity is a multidimensional concept and a complex phenomenon. Keller (2000) divided it into two components: awareness and association. Aaker (2000) grouped it into five categories: perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness,

## 2.9. Empirical Review

Oluoch, Machuki and Awino (2015) studied on the influence of organizational factors and quality management practices on strategy content and organizational performance and established that there is no agreement on what dimensions of overall organizational. Performance can be used to measure quality management. The study indicated that quality management was complex to measure, since its dimensions were associated with internal organizational factors like strategy, structure, system, shared values, staff, style and skills. However, the study focused on the effect of strategy content on organizational performance and quality management practices like leadership, information analysis, strategic planning, human resource development, quality assurance and customer relationship were introduced in the conceptual model as moderating variables. Consequently, results of this study were limited to organizational performance and the study jointly applied structural equation modelling and partial least squares in data analysis of the mentioned variables which is complex procedure.

A study by Bijuna, Mohan and Sequeira (2016) on the impact of customer-based brand equity on the operational performance of FMCG companies in India established that brand equity was promoted among customers by maintaining quality customer service and keeping long term relationship. Customer relationship management was identified to be the core drive of brand equity and sustainable organizational competitiveness. It was also noted that enhancing organizational performance, brand equity was determined by continuous improvement of products and services, conducting customer satisfaction surveys, integration of technology in the system and employee motivation. Sallam (2015) conducted a survey on the impact of brand image and corporate branding on consumer's choice and revealed that modern organizations are investing in marketing information systems as a measure of exceeding customer expectations in the changing business environment. Marketing research, marketing intelligence, decision support system and internal systems are initiatives of marketing information systems that enhances consumer loyalty. With system automation, marketing managers always

take less time to give customers timely information, companies take less time to produce products, a larger number of customers can be reached through online platforms at minimal costs, instant feedback between the company and customer is enhanced.

Magutu, Mbeche, Bitange, Onserio, Nyaanga and Ogoro (2010) conducted a study on the quality management practices in Kenyan educational institution revealed quality management practices had significant effect on performance of organizations. Furthermore, organizations were likely to experience efficiency and effectiveness if internal systems were aligned with changing business trends. It was also noted that TQM culture was not effectively articulated as it evolved based on consumer changing trends. Customer centric culture was established to be holistic concept of quality management. The ability of managers to formulate, implement and evaluate strategies was observed to be practice that promoted organizational competitiveness. Due to complexity of the business environment, modern leaders should identify ways of institutionalizing strategies formulated among workers. In addition, Magutu et al (2010) also noted that good leadership had a direct impact on organizational productivity in terms of; business process reengineering, creativity and innovation, new product development, change implementation and customer relationship management.

Further, Mzungu, Merrilees and Miller (2010) on brand management to protect brand equity: a conceptual model and revealed that brand management was a complex concept associated with mental models. Brand equity was associated with a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Consumer attitudes, perceptions and motivation were key intrinsic aspects that triggered consumer drive to purchase or not to purchase product. On the other hand, extrinsic drives like advertisement were observed to be drivers of consumer behavior. However, it was noted that brand equity was also extended to management styles and employee knowledge to provide distinguished services. Mzungu et al (2010) went further and revealed that there was significant impact of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary brand assets on consumer buying behaviour. The study also revealed that brand equity among customers was driven by quality management measures that were adopted by companies operating in the changing business environment. It emerged that product or service quality was a key determinant of brand equity.

A study by Owino, Cherotich, Karuri, Gitonga, Kimuya and Kaumbulu (2016) on the influence of social media on brand equity in Kenyan banking industry brand revealed that brand characters had significant effect on brand equity. It was also noted that consumers were likely to associate and perceive products endorsed by famous media personalities to be of high quality. The perception of the brand character had a direct impact on the consumer buying behavior. However, on the other hand it was noted that endorsement of brands using celebrities was a risk practice since integrity of celebrities was questionable over time. Nevertheless, it was revealed that highly satisfied or motivated staff always provide satisfactory services to customers and vice versa. Chen (2011) also studied on the relationship between the characteristics of brand associations and brand equity and indicated that organizations with poorly motivated workers always offered unsatisfactory services to customers due to low self-esteem and recognition of the system and vice versa. Provision of standardized customer care trainings among workers of the organization had a direct effect on customer loyalty. Employee motivation always promoted customer relationship management by attracting, developing and retaining customers. A study by Nyambura (2009) on the perceived influence of marketing promotion on brand equity: a case of Kenya commercial bank revealed that customers were likely to memorize services that exceed their expectations and tend to have a repeat purchase behavior. Employees' distinguished services to customers had significant effect brand equity and profitability. Participatory leadership, delegation and training are practices that contributed to employee morale to perform effectively.

A study by Saša Veljković Djordje and Kaličanin (2016) on improving business performance through brand management practice established that companies that make the brand central to their company's strategy perform better financially. Further, it was noted that there are statistically significant differences between companies in terms of individual elements of brand management practice which they categorize into three clusters: brand-guided companies, emerging brand companies and brand-agnostic companies. They revealed that the three brand management elements differ from each other in terms of: brand-oriented approach, innovativeness, brand support activities, unique marketing offers, marketing channel relationships, brand performance measurement, brand barriers, company size, and specific business area of a key-brand. The results of the study were limited aspects of improving business performance through brand management elements. Further, the variables of the study were too wide in scope to as brand management was a wide concept.

Onyancha (2013) conducted a study on the impact of bank brand image on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Kenya Commercial bank and revealed that bank brand image has positive effects on customer satisfaction and loyalty. It means that a positive bank brand image not only increases customer loyalty directly, but it also improves customer satisfaction through the enhancing of perceived service quality, which in turn increases the loyalty of customers. Bank brand image indeed serves as a lead factor in enhancing service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. However, the results of the study were limited brand image on customer satisfaction. In addition, the study adopted content analysis method that was associated with biasness compared to multiple regression method that is objective and less biased. A study by Verbeeten and Vijn (2010) on brand-equity measures associated with business-unit financial performance found that there was a connection between spending on advertising and promotion and the market value of an enterprise. In this way they demonstrated a link between the brand-building activities and financial performance of a company. It was concluded that there was association between some brand-equity measures and business-unit financial performance. Nevertheless, the findings of the study were limited to variables which concentrated on total marketing philosophy like; brand support activities, marketing channel relationships, Innovativeness, Unique marketing offers. Gyrd, Helm and Munk (2013) also noted that applying brand equity theory to understand consumer opinion in social media had a positive effect

on brand equity. Consequently, consumers were strongly attached to brand that were marketed by organizations using digital platforms compared to brands marketed using conventional methods.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design to determine quality management practices on customer brand equity. Descriptive research design was appropriate because it helps the researcher to answers research questions such as; who, what, where, when and how of the problem (Collis & Hussey, 2014).The population of this study included 175 students of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya. The five universities were: University of Nairobi, Moi University, Egerton University, Kenyatta University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The five Universities were selected based on the year of establishment, number of academic programmes offered and student population. Out of the five universities selected, a sample of 75 students was chosen using purposive sampling technique. Further, a 5% margin of error for a 95% confidence level was used to choose the sample size. To calculate the sample size, Fisher (2012) scientific method was adopted. Both primary and secondary data was utilized in this study. Primary data was collected from respondents by the use of questionnaires as the main instrument of data collection. Questionnaires were appropriate tools of data collection because they provided an opportunity to compare items in a standardized manner (Novikov & Novikov, 2013). Secondary data was also sourced through documents analysis. Amongst documents which were analyzed comprised of quality assurance audit reports. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis method and key themes of published content were reviewed and conclusions were made with reference to literature. Statistical Package for Social Scientist (versions 21) software was used to analyze data descriptively. Descriptive data was analyzed in form of means, percentages and standard deviation. Correlation and regression analysis were also conducted to determine the statistical relationship between variables at 5% significance level. Data analyzed was presented in form of Tables. This tool was selected due to its clarity, preciseness, ease of understanding and interpretation. To establish the hypothetical relationship between the independent variables on the dependent variable, logit regression model was adopted:

$$\text{Logit} \{ \ln(P_i / (1-P_i)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

The dependent variable is the natural log of the probability of customer brand equity ( $P_i$ ) divided by the probability of No enhanced brand equity ( $1-P$ ).

Where:

$P_i$  = the probability of enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya.

$(1 - P_i)$  = probability of no enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya.

$\beta_0$  = is the constant value

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_4$  = coefficient of regression which measures how each independent variable influences the dependent variable that is brand personality.

$X_1$  = Consumer Research

$X_2$  = Leadership

$X_3$  = Employee Motivation

$X_4$  = System Automation

$\epsilon$  = Error term

### 4. Data Analysis, Findings and Discussions

This section describes data analysis and findings of the research. Data is summarized in form of means, standard deviation and percentages and presented in form tables. Data was collected from 63 students of five Chartered Public Universities in Kenya which included: University of Nairobi, Moi University, Egerton University, Kenyatta University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The data collected was analysed and interpreted in line with objectives of the study. Out of the 75 questionnaires administered to students of the Five Chartered Public Universities, only 63 questionnaires were fully completed and returned. However, 7 questionnaires were not incomplete and 5 of them were not returned. This gave a response rate of 84% percent and which was justifiable to make conclusions of the study as suggested by Collis and Hussey (2014).

#### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Indicators of Measurement	Mean	S.D	%
My University is having mechanisms of measuring customer (student) satisfaction	2.91	.544	65%
Programs offered by my University are relevant to industry trends	2.88	.487	63%
My University conducts thorough research before introducing any new academic programme	2.73	.421	61%
My University has customer centric culture that seek to exceed student expectations	2.56	.374	59%

Table 1: Consumer Research

As illustrated in Table 1, it was indicated by the majority of the respondents to a larger extent that their Universities rarely conducted consumer research as an initiative of enhancing customer brand equity. For instance, it was

indicated that Chartered Public Universities did not have appropriate mechanisms of measuring student satisfaction with a mean of 2.91, academic programs offered did not address dynamics in the labour market with a mean of 2.88, conducting of research before introducing new academic programmes was not a common practice with a mean of 7.73 and universities did not exceed student expectation with a mean of 2.56. These findings implied that Chartered Public Universities in Kenya were introducing new academic programs without considering views of key stakeholders due to lack of customer centric culture. These findings are supported by Bijuna, Mohan and Sequeira (2016) who established that the only way of enhancing customer loyalty is through conducting periodical satisfaction surveys to measure consumer attitudes, perceptions and motivations.

Indicators of Measurement	Mean	S.D	%
My University has diverse management boards that act for the interest of students	3.86	.665	81%
My University values the role of student leaders in key decisions	3.77	.654	80%
My University has leaders who own the vision and mission	3.45	.623	72%
My University has competent leaders who plan, implement and evaluate progress of projects initiated	3.31	.584	67%

Table 2: Leadership

As illustrated in Table 2, it was indicated by the majority of the respondents that to a larger extent their Universities have failed to meet students' expectation due to challenges of top leadership. For instance, lack of diversity in university management had resulted to student dissatisfaction with a mean of 3.86, students' leaders were partially involved in key decisions with a mean of 3.77, leaders did not own the vision and mission with a mean of 3.45 and university leaders did not have adequate project planning, implementation and evaluation skills. These findings implied that top leadership of Chartered Public Universities was political in nature and aspects of effective managerial skills were not considered during appointments. These findings correspond with Magutu et al. (2010) who established that leadership was a science and art which was not only dependent on academic qualifications but on charismatic qualities of a leader. Consideration of diverse skills during the appointments of senior leaders in any organization is key.

Indicators of Measurement	Mean	S.D	%
My University has provided conducive working environment for employees	4.21	.544	75%
My University Trains employees to offer better services	3.98	.487	53%
Teaching staff are highly dedicated to teach and supervise students	3.33	.421	51%
As a student am satisfied with services offered by the University teaching and non-teaching staff	3.26	.374	49%

Table 3: Employee Motivation

As illustrated in Table 3, it was indicated by the respondents that their Universities to a larger extent did not motivate their employees effectively. For instance, some employees were not provided with conducive working environment with a mean of 4.21, some employees did not provide relevant training to non-teaching staff with a mean of 3.98, some lecturers were not dedicated in teaching and supervising with a mean of 3.33 and most of the students were unsatisfied with services provided by university non-teaching staff with a mean of 3.26. These findings implied that due to poor motivation of teaching and non-teaching of university staff, students were given poor services. It was noted that most of the students did not get the expected support from their supervisors during thesis supervisions resulting to delays in graduation. Further, it was noted that some non-teaching staff were involved in soliciting some monetary rewards to serve students. These findings correspond with Verbeeten and Vijn (2010) who revealed that well motivated employees were likely to offer excellent services to customers and maintain the reputation of the organization compared to poorly motivated workers.

Indicators of Measurement	Mean	S.D	%
My University has a reliable internet which all students have access to at any time	3.95	.768	81%
My University has a reliable system of managing student financial information	3.91	.781	78%
My University Library System is reliable and effective	3.88	.744	81%
Lectures always post course materials through online systems	3.71	.687	73%
I can easily access the system and book my room online	3.42	.621	72%

Table 4: System Automation

As illustrated in Table 4, it was indicated by the majority of the respondents that to a larger extent their Universities were not ICT compliant. For instance, it was indicated that downtime challenges were experienced during

internet connectivity with a mean of 3.95, some respondents also indicated that financial systems used by their universities were not reliable with a mean of 3.91, it was also noted that some students were not conversant of how to use the system to get recommended textbooks with a mean of 3.88 and some lecturers were challenged to use online platforms to update students on unit content with a mean of 3.71, and booking rooms online was an impossibility with a mean of 3.71. These findings implied that financial systems of Chartered Public Universities were not efficient and effective because some students were forced to provide evidence of receipts during enquiry of their fee balances. Furthermore, it was noted that some lecturers were aged and training them on computer skills was a big challenge. These findings correspond with Efthimios, Konstantinos (2016) and Chen (2011) who indicated that system automation is the only approach competitive organization can surpass customer expectation and minimize costs.

#### 4.2. Inferential Statistics

##### 4.2.1. Regression Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

To Test the Hypothetical relationship between the independent variables (Consumer Research, Leadership, Employee Motivation and System Automation) and dependent variable (Customer Brand Equity among Chartered Public Universities in Kenya), a Binary Logistic Regression model was used to predict the effects of customer brand equity among chartered public universities in Kenya. The Binary Logistic Regression Analysis was employed because the dependent variable (customer brand equity) is a categorical variable with two categories which was coded in a binary function (1 = enhanced customer brand equity; and 0 = No enhanced customer brand equity). The contribution of each predictor variable was tested using Wald statistics. According to Bajpai (2011), for a predictor variable to be considered significant to a model, it must have a combined odds ratio (Exp B) value of more than 1 and a significance value of less than 0.05. The following logistic regression model from chapter three was used for the study:

Model 1 Equation (direct effects)

$$\text{Logit} \{ \ln(P_i / (1-P_i)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

The dependent variable is the natural log of the probability of customer brand equity (Pi) divided by the probability of No enhanced brand equity (1-P).

Where:

Pi = the probability of enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

(1- Pi) =probability of no enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

$\beta_0$  = is the constant value

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_4$  = coefficient of regression which measures how each independent variable influences the dependent variable that is quality management practices.

X<sub>1</sub> = Consumer Research

X<sub>2</sub> = Leadership

X<sub>3</sub> = Employee Motivation

X<sub>4</sub> = System Automation

$\varepsilon$  = Error term

The logistic regression was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

The model developed from the analysis for the study is given below:

$$\ln(P_i / (1-P_i)) = -18.221 + 1.669 CR + 1.123 L + 1.118 EM + 0.892 SA$$

Where:

Y = Customer enhanced Brand Equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

Pi = the probability of enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

(Pi-1) =probability of no enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  and  $\beta_4$  = Logistic regression coefficients of BP, PI & BP\*PI

BP = Independent variable (composite value of Quality Management Practices)

$\varepsilon$  = Error Term

Variable	$\beta$	Wald's X <sup>2</sup>	Odd Ratio Exp (B)	P-Value
Consumer Research	1.669	6.832	5.308	0.009
Leadership	1.123	7.489	3.073	0.006
Employee Motivation	1.118	7.233	3.057	0.007
System Automation	0.892	6.026	2.440	0.014
Constant	-18.221	37.080	0.000	0.000

Table 5: Results of Logit Regression Analysis

Observations (N) 63

Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup> 0.281

Cox & Snell's R<sup>2</sup> 0.218

Hosmer & Lameshow(8df)0.825

Dependent Variable (Customer Brand Equity)

Note: P ≤ 0.05



From Table 4.15 the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  test for the logistic regression model is 0.281. According to Novikov and Novikov (2013), the Pseudo  $R^2$  values are considerably lower than those of the multiple linear regression  $R^2$ . The model is excellent when the Pseudo  $R^2$  values are 0.2 to 0.4 which is equivalent to 0.7 to 0.9 of multiple linear regression  $R^2$ . Therefore, the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  value of 0.28 symbolizes a strong model of predicting dependent variable. The contribution of each predictor variable was tested using Wald statistic. According to Mertler and Vannatta(2010) for a predictor variable to be considered significant to a model, it must have a combined odds ratio value of more than 1 and a significance value of less than 0.05.

#### 4.3. Testing of Hypotheses

To Test the four Hypotheses of the study, a Binary Logistic Regression model was used to predict the influence of quality management practices on customer brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya. The Binary Logistic Regression Analysis was employed because the dependent variable (customer brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya) is a categorical variable with two categories which was coded in a binary function (1 = Enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya; and 0 = No enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya). The contribution of each predictor variable was tested using Wald statistics.

Logit regression was conducted to Test whether there was a relationship between independent variables (consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation) and dependent variable (customer brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya). As illustrated in Table 5 it was established that hypothesis one had a beta value of ( $\beta=1.669$ ), odd ratio value of (Exp (B) =5.308 and significance value of (= 0.009), Hypothesis two had a beta value of ( $\beta=1.123$ ), odd ratio value of (Exp (B) =3.073 and significance value of (= 0.006), Hypothesis three had a beta value of ( $\beta=1.118$ ), odd ratio value of (Exp (B) =3.057 and significance value of (= 0.007) and Hypothesis four had a beta value of ( $\beta=0.892$ ), odd ratio value of (Exp (B) =2.440 and significance value of (= 0.014),

Based on these results, the null hypothesis were rejected at 95% confidence level since predictor variables (consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation) had a significance value of less than 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ) and odd ratio(Exp (B) values of more than 1 (5.308, 3.073, 3.057 and 2.440) and positive beta values of (1.669, 1.123, 1.118 and 0.892), implying that that a unit increase in consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation will lead to enhanced brand equity of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya. These findings therefore imply that Chartered Public Universities are likely to enhance customer brand equity if only they opt to invest in consumer research, appoint leaders based on managerial skills, develop employee skills and automate internal processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of services (Magutu et al, 2010).

## 5. Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Way Forward

### 5.1. Summary

It can be summarized from the findings of the study that despite the low attention paid by the management of chartered public universities in Kenya with regard to quality related issues to enhance customer satisfaction, quality management practices like consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and system automation have remained to be some of the key drivers of customer brand equity. If the public universities embrace the quality management culture, they are likely to experience enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, increased number of students due to service quality, minimal costs of operation, diversification and increased number of industry and research partners.

### 5.2. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that despite the regulations of Commission for University Education, Chartered Public Universities in Kenya should embrace internal mechanisms of implementing policies of the Commission for University Education. Teaching and non-teaching staff of Public Universities in Kenya should embrace regulations of the Commission for University Education in order to enhance customer loyalty.

### 5.3. Recommendations

From the findings of empirical studies, quite a number of recommendations are made with regards to quality management practices and customer brand equity: Firstly, organizations should always dedicate their effort in conducting consumer research to establish product and services gaps thus effective product/service positioning. Secondly, shareholders of companies should ensure that managers hired to perform various duties and responsibilities on behalf of the organization have an appropriate knowledge, skills and to influence workers to provide excellent customer services hence enhanced customer loyalty and minimal resistance to change. Thirdly, to enhance employee motivation, top level managers should develop policies that promote staff development and training thus distinguished customer service delivery. Fourthly, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the system, top level managers in organizations should ensure information and Communication Technology culture is institutionalized among workers. Employees should be provided with personal computers and encouraged to generate online reports and prepare electronic records for marketing decision making. Further, chartered public universities in Kenya should invest in modern systems of information management in order to enhance customer brand equity. Further, leaders in Chartered Public Universities in Kenya should ensure that their organizations are ISO compliant and all workers are sensitized on the value of ISO on customer brand equity. In addition, employees should be encouraged to embrace Commission for University Education regulations that foster on team work and shared mental values. Employees should be informed that quality management is

a collaborative initiative but not an individual effort. It is the responsibility of each employee to dedicate his or her effort to customer centric culture.

#### 5.4. Suggestion for Further Research

The researcher recommends that future research should be directed towards validating the results of this study by conducting a similar research in other areas like private Universities and technical colleges in Kenya. In addition, future research should consider using a longitudinal and cross-sectional surveys. Furthermore, future studies should look into other quality management practices apart from consumer research, leadership, employee motivation and systems automation that enhance customer brand equity. It is also recommended that future researchers should seek to establish the effect of quality management on customer retention and attraction.

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