

The Effects of Brand Loyalty on the Consumer Buying Behaviors: The Example of Perfume in the Province Of Ankara

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Abstract— Establishing brand loyalty among the consumers is the most important aspect desired by establishments to outmaneuver their competitors in the increasing competitive environment. Therefore, when developing their marketing strategies, establishments need to examine the factors that can create brand loyalty with great care. Brand loyalty has a significant effect on consumer buying behaviors. Consumers are affected by a variety of factors when buying products.

In this study, determining the effect of consumer buying decisions on each dimension of brand value and the effects of these dimensions on brand loyalty constitute the main objective of the research. In this context, a questionnaire consisting of questions explaining the components of brand value has been used. The questionnaires have been applied on 400 consumers living in the province of Ankara. The findings obtained as a result of the questionnaire have been analyzed. It has been determined that there are significant relations between the variables. According to the data obtained from the research; perceived quality affects brand loyalty at a rate of 44,8%, brand awareness affects at a rate of 46,4%, and brand association affects brand loyalty at a rate of 37,4%.

Keywords—Brand Loyalty, Brand Value, Consumer Behaviors, Perfume, Ankara.

I. INTRODUCTION

IN the increasing competitive environment of this day and age, establishments are developing a variety of strategies in order to outmaneuver their competitors and to become preferable by consumers, and are making a serious effort for this objective. One of the most important competition weapons of establishments against their competitors is their brand. If establishments manage to create brand loyalty among consumers, they can surpass their competitors with minimum costs. Thus, establishments will be able to reach

their short term and long term goals with lower costs, less effort and in a shorter period of time compared to their competitors.

Brand value definitions have been made intended to comprehend consumer behaviors. Aaker (1991) has defined brand value as a set of assets and commitments that increase or decrease the value provided through the means of goods and services for the company and the customers of the company in accordance with the symbol and name of the brand [1]. Keller is the first to suggest the concept of customer based brand value. Keller (1993) has defined consumer based brand value as the differentiating effect of brand knowledge on consumer reactions that develop as a result of marketing activities [2].

Brand value enables the brand to hold a positive place in the mind of the consumer. Another reason for brand value being important is that it increases brand loyalty and protects the brand from threats originating from the competitors [3].

There are two different theories in literature on consumer based brand value. These belong to two researchers named Aaker and Keller. Both researchers have defined brand value from a point of view originating from the memory-based brand association of consumers. Brand value and dimensions of Aaker is examined here in order to establish the basis of the research model. Aaker has defined brand value as a cluster of assets. According to Aaker, brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty constitute the brand value. These assets mentioned are also referred to as dimensions or components. In terms of the consumer's point of view, brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty have been adopted as the four important dimensions of brand value in the related literature [2,1]. Our research also attempts to present the effect of brand associations, brand awareness and perceived quality on brand loyalty during the customer buying process.

II. THE EFFECT OF BRAND LOYALTY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIORS

The concept of brand loyalty has a close relationship with the preferences of consumers, or in other words their buying behaviors. When determining their preferences, consumers

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can experience indecision from time to time. The dimension of this indecision may increase or decrease depending on whether the related brand demonstrates the expected performance (functional risk), whether the expected benefit will be obtained in return for the time and money spent (financial and physical risk), whether it is favored by the general population (social risk), or whether the brand has satisfied the consumer or not (psychological risk). If the risk rate increases, the consumer will always prefer the same brand. However, especially in times where financial risk is low or when the brand fails to satisfy the customer as it once did, preferences may differ. Brand loyalty is a psychological commitment similar to friendship [4].

Brand loyalty is a conscious act and cannot be formed by coincidence. Brand loyalty can be perceived as a behavioral reaction. It is developed in a certain period of time. It is realized through decision making units. It occurs in cases where more than one brand alternatives are involved. It is a situation that occurs after the decision making and evaluation processes [5].

According to Palumbo and Herberg (2000), brand loyalty is the situation where consumers constantly search for and buy only a certain brand when competitors present lower prices and sales promotions [6]. According to Aaker (1991), brand loyalty brings in sales advantages in terms of reducing marketing costs, gaining more new customers and establishing a better financial leverage effect [1].

The effects of brand loyalty on marketing costs are generally apparent. Protecting the current customers is more cost-efficient than influencing new customers. A frequent expensive mistake is trying to expand by gaining new customers for the brand without considering the current customers. The loyalty of the current customers also means an important entry barrier for competitors since convincing customers into changing their loyalties generally requires high costs.

It could be said that consumers prefer the product to be of a known brand rather than an unknown brand, when buying goods and services in order to meet their needs. If the buying is for long term usage and for an expensive product, in other words if the financial risk of the product is high, the effects of known brands are greater in the buying process of consumers. The reason for this is the benefits the brand provides to its consumers [7].

There are two different approaches – behavioral and attitudinal - in literature in explaining brand loyalty [8,9,10]. According to the behavioral approach, brand loyalty is choosing one brand over another and the behavior of repurchasing the brand. It is stated that the reason for choosing one brand over another can be related with motivation, advertisement and promotion [11,12,13,8]. According to the attitudinal approach, it is emphasized that the behavior of repurchasing a brand cannot be an indicator on its own and that it is necessary to evaluate it by relating it

with a psychological process [14,15,16].

Brand loyalty has been expressed as the consumer's positive feeling about the same brand, consumer purchasing the brand more frequent than the others as well as buying and using the same brand for a long time. Moreover, some tendencies and common conditions have been stated in order to be able to talk about brand loyalty. Brand loyalty needs to include psychological functions such as prejudice, behavioral reaction, a certain time frame, certain decision making components, being about one or two alternative brands other than many brands [9]. Mistakes can be made when only the behavioral dimension is used because the consumer may constantly purchase the same brand due to its low price but may shift to another brand when the price increases. Loyalty needs to accompany a recurring behavior [17]. A customer with attitudinal commitment may recommend the products and services of an establishment even if s/he doesn't use them regularly. Customers with attitudinal commitment are of great importance for establishments because these consumers are emotionally attached to the establishment [18].

Brand associations ease the processing, organizing and internalizing the information that could help consumers in the decision of buying. Comprehending the brand perceptions of consumers is rather complicated due to the multi-dimensional structures of brand associations being very similar to each other [19]. Brand association, which is a key component of brand image, contributes to the differentiation and positioning of a brand as well as creating positive attitudes and opinions towards the brand [20]. Consumer based brand value necessitates the brand to have positive associations. A company wanting to create a valuable brand also needs to create a suitable, powerful and unique brand association system for the brand to be created [21]. The qualities, benefits and identity of a brand along with the association the brand will create on consumers will help the increase of brand value on the memories of consumers [22]. According to Aaker (1991), there are 11 brand association types including the brand qualities, moral values, benefits it provides to the consumer, related price, usage, user, famous people, lifestyle, product class, competitors and geographical environment [1].

According to Aaker, brand awareness is the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or remember that the brand is a member of a certain product category and includes the connection of a product class and the brand. The role of brand awareness on brand value depends on both the content and the brand awareness level [1]. Level of brand awareness is one of the factors affecting the market share of the company related to that product. As the number of those in the market who are aware of the brand increase, the chances increase for the market share of the product to increase. The market share being high may be effective in the profitability of the establishment [23]. Brand awareness is an element of trust for the consumers. In the studies of Macdonald and Sharp, it has

been seen that consumers generally prefer brands with high recognition levels despite the price and quality differences [24].

The perceived quality model has been developed by Amma Kirmani and Valaria Zeithaml. Kirmani and Zeithaml have defined perceived quality as the judgment of a consumer on the extensive perfection or superiority of a product. It is indicated that the quality of perceived in the model is established by the internal qualities containing the physical characteristics such as the color, shape and size of the product as well as the external characteristics such as the name, price, advertisement, after sales services and guarantee of the brand [25]. Aaker defined perceived quality as the perception of customers on the quality or superiority of a product or service compared to its competitors and the aim of its design and has stated that it cannot be determined objectively because they change according to the judgments of consumers, and that it is determined according to the aim and alternatives [1]. Quality, which is perceived as one of the brand associations determining brand attitudes, directly or indirectly affects the brand image through the perceived value or brand attitude, and directs consumer preference and behaviors [2]. Some research has suggested that the most important criterion in selecting a brand is quality [26]. Determining the perceived quality is a significant prediction tool in the assessment of brand loyalty. Quality perception is effective on the profitableness of the brand, sales volume and the perceived value of the consumer [27].

Research has been conducted in various fields related to brand value. In a research conducted by Gordon et al (1993) in order to determine the elements contractors attach importance to in the purchasing of switches, it has been revealed that the brand loyalty of buyers is high, that quality and price is a determinant on the selection of a brand, and that brand loyalty as well as product quality creates brand value [28]. In the studies Michell et al (2001) have conducted in the chemical, plastic, electronic, paper and machinery sectors, they have obtained results related to brand value and brand loyalty. Researchers have ordered the elements that are the indicators of brand loyalty as quality, reliability, performance, services and financial value. They have stated perceived quality, image, market leadership, and brand differentiation as the most important elements of brand value [29]. Taking Aaker's brand value infrastructure consisting of brand associations, brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality and the other assets related to the brand, a study has been conducted on university students about the assessment of brand value of a beverage sector in Turkey. In this study, it has been determined that the dimension of brand loyalty is the most important factor affecting brand value [30]. Perceived quality is the customer's perception on the priority of a product in replacement [31].

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

In this research, it has been attempted to analyze the factors affecting perfume preferences based on the consumers. Relationships between brand value and its dimensions with brand loyalty have been researched.

The primary objective of the research is to determine the effects of consumer buying decisions on each dimension of brand value and the effects of these dimensions on brand loyalty. For this purpose, finding answers to the question of whether brand awareness, brand associations and perceived quality – which are among the components Aaker has included in his scale of brand value- have an effect on brand loyalty is among the objectives of the research.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Questionnaire technique has been used in the research as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire used in the research consists of two parts. There are 6 questions related to the demographic characteristics in the first part, and 24 questions related to the brand value dimensions in the second part. A 5 point likert scale has been used in the preparation of the questions related to the brand value dimensions existing in the questionnaire form. Consumers living within the borders of the province of Ankara constitute the target population of the study. For sample calculation, "Population Registry System Results Based on Address" prepared by the Turkish Statistical Institute (2013) has been used. According to the 2013 data of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the population of the province of Ankara constitutes of a total of 5.045.083 people with 2.537.588 women and 2.507.525 men. Research sample has been determined as 385 as a result of a calculation with a sampling error of $\pm 0,05$ at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha=0,05$). However, in order to increase the reliability of the research, it has been calculated as 400 with the convenience sampling method. The research has been limited with the consumers living in the province of Ankara.

The analysis of the data obtained in the research has been done through a packet program. Reliability analysis has been applied for the brand value scale and its sub-dimensions. As a result of the reliability analysis, brand value Cronbach's Alpha coefficient has been determined as 0,94. According to the reliability analysis results conducted on the brand value dimensions, Cronbach's alpha coefficients have been determined as 0,92 for brand loyalty, 0,86 for brand awareness, 0,68 for brand associations and 0,86 for perceived quality. Demographic characteristics have been determined with a frequency analysis. Independent sample t test has been used to see whether there is a difference between the two independent groups, and a one-way analysis of variance has been used to see whether there is a difference between more than two independent groups. A simple linear regression analysis has been applied in order to determine the individual

effects of perceived brand, brand awareness and brand associations on brand loyalty. A multi-linear regression analysis has been applied in order to determine the joint effects of perceived quality, brand awareness and brand associations on brand loyalty.

The research has been conducted in order to determine the effect of brand value components on brand loyalty. Within this scope, it is necessary to analyze the relationship between the sub-dimensions of brand value and brand loyalty. The research model developed in accordance is given below.

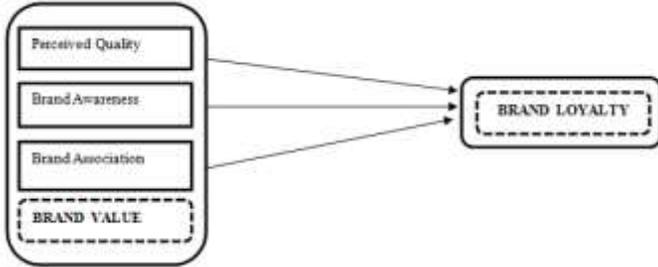


Fig.1: Model of the Research

Hypothesis in accordance with the model developed have been developed as below.

H1: There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty.

H2: There is a positive relationship between brand association and brand.

H3: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and brand.

V. FINDINGS

49,8% of those who have participated in the research are female and 50,2% are males. 39,8 are between the ages of 20-30, 34,3% are between the ages of 31-40, 19,5% are between the age group of 41-50, and 6,4% are at or above the age of 51. According to their education levels, 6,0% are primary school graduates, 34,7% are high school graduates, 50,8% are university graduates, 8,0% are postgraduates, and 0,5% have a doctorate degree. While 60% of consumers are married, 40% are single. 8,3% of the consumers are teachers, 6,5% are lawyers, 6,0% are doctors, 7,5% are laborers, 9,8% are civil servants, 6,0% are retired, 10,0% are in the field of sales and marketing, 7,8% are students, 8,8% are housewives, 3,8% are unemployed, 11,5% are self-employed, 14,3% are in other occupational groups. When their level of income is analyzed, 16,8% earn less than 850 TL, 11,0% earn between 851-1350 TL, 12,0% earn between 1351-1850 TL, 16,3% earn between 1851-2350 TL, 23,0% earn between 2351-3350 TL, 9,3% earn between 2851-3350 TL, and 11,8% earn 3351 TL and higher per month.

TABLE I
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF BRAND VALUE (N=400)

VARIABLES	\bar{x}
Brand loyalty	
I believe that I am loyal to the perfume brand I use	3,55
The perfume brand I use would be my first choice	3,63
If the perfume brand I use is not available in the store, I would not buy other brands	3,17
I would choose the brand I currently use even if another brand has the same characteristics	3,42
Even if another brand doesn't have any differences, I would recommend the brand I use	3,59
Even if I am going to buy a different model, I would still buy the product of the brand I use	3,09
Even if the other brands demonstrate the same characteristics, buying the brand I currently use is meaningful	3,56
I believe that the perfume brand I use is an indicator of prestige	3,20
Perceived Quality	
The perfume brand I use is of high quality	3,73
The possibility of the perfume brand I use being functional is rather high	3,76
The reliability of the perfume brand I use has a very high possibility	3,82
The perceived quality of the perfume brand I use very high	3,70
The product quality of the perfume brand I use is very high	3,80
The perfume brand I use advertises very frequently	3,20
Brand Awareness	
I can differentiate the perfume brand I use among the other competing brands	3,93
I know/am aware of the perfume brand I am using	4,03
I know what the perfume brand I use looks like	4,00
The perfume brand I use is sold in more stores compared to the competing brands	3,27
When buying perfume, the first brand to come to my mind would be the brand I use	3,61
Brand Association	
I can immediately remember some of the characteristics of the perfume brand I use	3,95
I can immediately remember the symbol and logo of the perfume brand I use	3,99
I find it difficult to envision the perfume brand I use	1,90
The perfume brand I use is a pioneer and a leading brand in developing new products	3,23
The perfume brand I use offers a variety of price ranges	3,12

In the statistics developed according to the dimensions of brand value, it has been determined that the statement that consumers most agree with is "I know/am aware of the perfume brand I use" (4,03), and the statement consumers least agree with is "I find it difficult to envision the perfume brand I use" (1,90). In terms of brand loyalty, the highest average is on "the perfume brand I use would be my first choice" (3,63), in terms of perceived quality, the highest

average is on “the reliability of the perfume brand I use has a very high possibility” (3,82), in terms of brand awareness, the highest average is on “I know/am aware of the perfume brand I use” (4,03), in terms of brand association, the highest average is on “I can immediately remember the symbol and logo of the perfume brand I use” (3,99). As it can be understood from table 1, the variables related to the brand value dimensions is high.

A. Testing of the Research Hypotheses

Analysis results conducted in order to research whether perceived quality has an effect on brand loyalty is presented in table 2.

TABLE II
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND LOYALTY AND PERCEIVED QUALITY

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R	R ²	Anova	
				F	p
Brand Loyalty	Perceived Quality	0,670	0,449	287,178	0,000
Independent Variable	Beta	Std. Error	t	p	
				p	
Stable	0,464	0,177	2,616	0,009	
Perceived Quality	0,801	0,047	16,946	0,000	

p<0,05

As a result of the regression and one-way variance analysis conducted in order to test the significance of the model, the difference of 44,9% on brand loyalty is explained by perceived quality. It is seen that the model developed to determine the effect of perceived quality on brand loyalty is significant. As a result of the t test we have conducted in order to test our hypothesis H1, it has been revealed that there is significant relationship between perceived quality and brand loyalty (p<0,05). There is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and perceived quality. In the perfume buying decisions of consumers, perceived quality creates a brand loyalty.

Hypothesis H1 of the research has been accepted.

Analysis results conducted in order to research whether brand awareness has an effect on brand loyalty is presented in table 3.

TABLE III
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND LOYALTY AND BRAND AWARENESS

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R	R ²	Anova	
				F	p
Brand Loyalty	Brand Awareness	0,683	0,466	307,097	0,000
Independent Variable	Beta	Std. Error	t	p	
				p	
Stable	0,374	0,177	2,116	0,035	
Brand Awareness	0,804	0,046	17,524	0,000	

p<0,05

In the multi-regression analysis conducted in order to test whether the model we have established between brand loyalty and brand awareness is meaningful, 46,6% change in brand loyalty is explained with brand awareness. As a result of the t test we have conducted in order to test whether there brand awareness has an effect on brand loyalty in the decisions of

consumers on buying perfume, it has been revealed that there is a meaningful relationship (p<0,05). It has been understood that there is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand awareness.

Thus, Hypothesis H2 that we had determined in the research has been accepted.

TABLE IV
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND LOYALTY AND BRAND ASSOCIATION

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R	R ²	Anova	
				F	p
Brand Loyalty	Brand Association	0,613	0,376	212,000	0,000
Independent Variable	Beta	Std. Error	t	p	
				p	
Stable	0,164	0,226	0,728	0,467	
Brand Association	0,880	0,060	14,560	0,000	

p<0,05

The relationship between brand loyalty and brand association is presented in table 4. A multi-regression analysis has been conducted in order to reveal the relationship between brand loyalty and brand association. As a result of the analysis, the 37,6% rate of change in brand loyalty is explained by brand associations. It has been revealed as a result of the t test that brand association has a significant effect on brand loyalty. Brand associations contribute to brand loyalty in the perfume buying behaviors of participants. In other words, there is a positive relationship between brand association and brand loyalty.

Hypothesis H3, which is the final hypothesis of the research, has also been accepted.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Brand value, which is among the topics that marketing researchers and establishments are focusing on, are considered as non-physical assets. Financial methods, consumer based methods and methods where both are used in the assessment of brand value. In recent years, researchers use consumer based brand value assessment method because the factor of consumers should not be ignored in the assessment of brand value. Brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality – which are among the components of the Aaker (1991) model - are dimensions of brand value that can be explained through the data obtained from consumers. These data are generally obtained through the questionnaire technique.

In this research, the relationship between consumer based brand value and its components in the perfume sector have been researched. According to the findings, the variables that most effect brand loyalty are perceived quality and brand awareness. It is possible to say that there can be an increase in brand loyalty by creating the image that the perfume used by the consumer is a quality perfume by producing quality products. If brand awareness, which is another variable, increases then the loyalty towards the brand will also increase. Thus, in order to increase brand awareness, establishments need to ensure that consumers recognize the

brand through frequent advertisements and ensure that their products are sold in more stores compared to their competitors.

The brand name is an effective factor in consumer preference. Because in the applied researches, the brand name and price are important clues in the perception and evaluation of the consumers (Jacoby and Olson, 1985; Wheatley, Chiu and Goldman, 1981). When the consumers have problems in the stage of purchasing a product they depend on known brands (Selvi and Kılıç, 2006). For this, the brand name is an abstract clue in the decision making of consumers. When the consumers face a brand with a good image they will have a good perception on it (Lee and Bae, 1999).

There is a geographical limitation to this research study. The research has been conducted on 400 consumers residing in the province of Ankara. Thus, the model results obtained should not be generalized to the entire Turkish market. In order to generalize research results, the research needs to be conducted in different regions, different hospitals and different sectors. Other researchers can contribute to the development of the research based on the outcomes of this research.

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