

DETERMINING THE IMPACT ON THE PERCEPTION OF BRAND EQUITY ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND ETHNOCENTRIC TENDENCIES OF A PILOT STUDY

Serhat DAĞLI¹

Sema KURTULUŞ²

Abstract

Nowadays, companies want to find themselves a place at the multinational markets that they joined, local companies struggled to compete with the strong multinational companies and they expose to the threat of staying out of the game. The importance of the concepts of consumer ethnocentrism and customer experience are known and consumers are exposed to the effects to change their habits or not. Another fact that to create the said effect is the perception of brand equity. At this study, in which the perception of consumer's brand equity is also handled, the effects of customer's experiences and ethnocentric tendency to their perception of brand equity are examined. In line with that main purpose, data are collected from coffee chain customers in Istanbul city. The effects of customer experiences to the perception of brand equity are tested in both two chain groups. At the end of the study, the result of customer experiences effected the perception of brand equity positively in both of the two group of chain's customers found and it's detected that this effect is more in local chain customers than in foreign chain customers. And the effects of consumer's ethnocentric tendency to the perception of brand equity effected significantly in a positive way whereas in foreign chain customers it's not. Also it's determined that consumer's ethnocentric tendency effect their experiences in a positive way and these effects do not differentiate among chains finally, it's determined that the levels of satisfaction of both chain customers effect their perception of brand equity.

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Keywords: *Brand equity, customer experience, consumer ethnocentrism, customer satisfaction*

¹ Nişantaşı University Faculty of Economic, Administrative and Social Sciences, Public Relations and Advertising Department

² Istanbul University School of Business, Marketing Science

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MÜŞTERİ DENEYİMLERİNİN VE ETNOSENTRİK EĞİLİMLERİNİN MARKA DEĞERİ ALGILARINA OLAN ETKİLERİNİN BELİRLENMESİ ÜZERİNE BİR PİLOT ARAŞTIRMA

Özet

Günümüzde firmalar, girdikleri uluslararası pazarlarda kendilerine yer bulmak istemekte, yerel firmalar da güçlü uluslararası şirketler ile rekabet etmekte zorlanmakta ve oyun dışı kalma tehdidiyle karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Bu noktada tüketicilerin etnosentrik algıları ve yaşadıkları müşteri deneyimi, tüketicilerin alışkanlıklarını değiştirip değiştirmeme noktasında etki etmektedir. Yine söz konusu etkiyi yaratan unsurlardan bir diğeri de marka değeri algısıdır. Bu çalışmada, tüketicilerin deneyimlerinin ve etnosentrik eğilimlerinin marka değeri algılarına olan etkilerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu temel amaç doğrultusunda İstanbul ilindeki 2 yerli, 2 yabancı kahve zinciri müşterilerinden veri toplanmıştır. Araştırma hipotezleri yapısal eşitlik modeli ile test edilmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda müşterilerin deneyimlerinin, marka değeri algısını her iki zincir müşterilerinde de pozitif yönde etkilediği ve bu etkinin yerli zincir müşterilerinde yabancı zincir müşterilerine oranla daha fazla olduğu; ayrıca yerli zincir müşterilerinin etnosentrik eğilimlerinin, marka değeri algılarını pozitif yönde anlamlı bir şekilde etkilediği, yabancı zincir müşterilerinde ise etkilemediği tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca tüketicilerin etnosentrik eğilimlerinin deneyimlerini olumlu yönde etkilediği ve bu etkilerin zincirler arasında farklılaşmadığı; her iki zincirin müşterilerinin tatmin düzeylerinin de marka değeri algılarını etkilediği belirlenmiştir.

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka değeri, müşteri deneyimi, tüketici etnosentrizmi, müşteri tatmini

1. BRAND EQUITY

The concept of brand equity began to draw attention in the nineties. Peter Farquhar's article is the leading study on this subject (1990). Baldinger also considered brand equity as an important opportunity to direct managers and researchers to make strategic decisions, emphasized that the need for the companies to have a dominant brand and the brand extension in new product presentations increase the brand equity (1990). The brand equity is the expression of the position of the brand in the consumer's mind. As the brand's positive position increases in the mind of the consumer, the brand equity also increases in the eyes of the consumer. Other reasons why the brand equity is important for the companies are to increase the chance of choosing the brand, to increase the brand loyalty, and to protect the brand against the threats arising from the competitors. (Pitta and Katsanis,1995). Brand equity is evaluated as a very important subject lately, as it reflects the overall competitive power of the companies (Kavas, 2004).

Though it is possible to come across many definitions of brand equity in the literature, there is no definite consensus on exactly what brand equity is. Besides there is a consensus about what brand equity covers in a broad sense among the researchers. Brand equity is consistent with Farquhar's definition of "additional value added to the product by brand" in a broad sense. Researchers such as Aaker, Keller, Leuthesser, Srinivasan, Srivastava and Shocker, Yoo and Donthu have made similar definitions to Farquhar's definition (Pappu et al., 2005). Aaker defines the brand equity as the brand assets and liabilities that depend on the distinctive characteristics of the brand, such as the brand's name or symbol, that increase or decrease the value of products and services offered by the operation to its customers (1991). According to Keller, the brand equity is the discriminating effect of brand knowledge on the consumer's response during the marketing of the brand (1993). Aaker described the brand equity as a set of active and passive attributes such as brand awareness, perceived quality, loyal customers and connotations (1991). Besides Kerin and Sethuraman defined the brand equity as commodities or assets that operate in connection with the brand name or symbol that "increase or decrease the value" provided by the business to the customers through goods or services (1998). Kırdar, one of the writers who explained the brand equity through the brand loyalty, defined the brand loyalty as a tendency of the customer to purchase the same brand every time (2005).

In the marketing world, the concepts of brand equity and brand loyalty have become increasingly important together with the intensification of competition. In a fast-growing

global competitive environment, the retail and service sectors have become environments where the most intense competitive battles and the most intensive marketing practices began to be implemented. The idea of investing in brand equity in order to ensure the brand loyalty has showed up through this idea and so forth. The determination of consumer behavior towards a particular product affects the planning of new strategies for that product (Quah, 2000).

Referring to the studies related to the brand equity perception, Keller, has classified the dimensions that generate the brand equity as brand awareness and brand connotations (1993). Yoo et. al, conceptualized the brand equity as similar to Aaker's brand equity model, but united these two dimensions by determining that brand name awareness and brand connotations' dimensions do not have the discriminative validity, and thus they indicated that the brand equity consists of three dimensions (brand loyalty, brand awareness / connotations, perceived quality) (2003). Washburn and Plank (2002), Kim et. al (2003) and Pappu et al (2005) conceptualized the brand equity similar to Aaker's brand-value model and they identified that the brand equity consists of four dimensions (brand awareness, brand connotations, perceived quality and brand loyalty). In recent years, the brand equity perceptions particularly in different sectors have been examined in our country, and the dimensions of brand equity and different sectors for brand equity have been examined in general (Atilgan et al., 2005; Avcılar, 2008; Yapraklı and Can, 2009; Yüce, 2010).

In recent years, the experiences of the consumers have begun to be taken into consideration in the studies about the brand. Although some research has shown the potential of customer experience in the development of brand equity, they have not been able to explain the obvious effect of experience on the brand equity. Few studies indicate that the experience is related to the development of brand equity when evaluating the different outputs of brand strategies. The previous brand studies indicated that customer experiences arise from the interaction of the customer with the brand and this affects the brand connotations, brand choice, subsequent acquisitions and also all the brand equity indirectly by means of the brand interpretation. In addition, previous findings have shown that customer experience has an impact on all the attitudes, beliefs, judgments and behavior of the customers (Sukwadi et al., 2012). Although some research has shown the potential of customer experience in the development of brand equity, they have not been able to explain the obvious effect of experience on brand equity. The impact of the company's promises in the mind of the customer and the learning of the customers results in experience. The experience gained contributes to the formation of

customer based brand equity. For this reason, we need to investigate the effect of customer experience on brand equity.

1.1. Brand equity and Customer Experience Relationship

The formation and development of brand equity is vital for the success of the companies. Brand equity consists of the assessment of the dimensions of brand awareness, brand connotation, perceived quality and brand loyalty all together. Few studies have evaluated the structural analysis of brand equity and these related dimensions. It is becoming more and more important for marketing executives to differentiate their products and it forces them to give importance to brand equity. This issue is especially important for brand equity creation, standardization and similar products. The current trend is to create linkages in differentiating products and services and to give experience to the customers. The experiences play an important role for the business management in its current and future activities (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Consumer's brand experiences, recognition of the brand name, use or acquisition of the brand occur as a result of the customer encountering the brand and brand advertisement (Alba vd., 1991). When determining the specific characteristics of products and services, it is necessary to know that the interaction of the employees with the customers has a major role in creating the experience and creating the brand equity. From the perspective of the customer experience, the experience is considered as the basis of the value proposition between the business and the customer. On this basis, the customers lead their behavior according to the signification of the rising value of the products in terms of experience in the evaluation phase of multi-product offerings (Pine and Gilmore; 1998).

A new approach, the customer experience concept, first emerged in the mid-80's, and in the 90's there was a growing interest in the concept of customer experience (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Carbone and Haeckel, 1994; Johnston and Kong, 2011). In the marketing literature, the concept of experience has been examined in different contexts such as consumer experience, product experience, aesthetic experience, service experience, shopping experience and customer experience. In the following years, the attention has been focused on the customer experience, which is considered as a new concept in creating value for both the company and the customer. (Gentile et al., 2007, p. 396).

In marketing applications where customer experiences are at the forefront, each customer has different experiences while the business defines the customer as a guest. Thus, each customer's feelings are different from each other. Different experiences are created for each

customer. Harmonization of products and services on the basis of individual customers is another essential feature of experience marketing (Pine and Gilmore, 2001). The experience during shopping is a result of the rational and hedonic experiences arising from the qualities of the objects and the shopping environment (Berry vd., 2002; Kim et al., 2007; Seo and Lee, 2008). Rational experiences are associated with the functional benefits of products or services; while hedonic experiences are associated with various senses and emotional qualities that are not necessary in terms of actual functions but enhance the consumer's experience in using the product or service (Chitturi et al. ,2008). A service received by the customer always brings an experience with it, and all service offerings provide an opportunity for emotional participation, even though the product or service may be ordinary. However, the experience is fully perceived from a retail customer point of view and is subjective due to the fact that it only exists in the mind of the customer. For this reason, it can be said that any two people receiving the same service will not have the same experience. (Johnston and Kong, 2011). The environment and aesthetic elements in the hotels, cafes and restaurants provide the first impression before the customer contacts the employees. That's why, these areas conduct customers' ideas, expectations and attitudes (Lin, 2004; 176). Thus the aesthetic elements are considered important for creating emotions and drawing attention in personal experiences (Pikkemaat and Weiermair, 2003; 827). In addition, they have a positive direct impact on customer emotions and satisfaction (Hamrouni and Touzi, 2011, Slatten et al., 2011, Bowie ve Buttle, 2009). Slatten et al., reveal that the decor factor comes before the customer experience output namely the perceptual process factor that has the most impact on loyalty and entertainment (Slatten et al., 2011). Hamrouni and Touzi indicate that the atmosphere consisting of content such as smell, temperature, air quality, illumination creates the effects of excitement, relaxation and dynamism in the customers by creating emotional effects. In yet another study, Lam et al reached the conclusion that the ambiance provides customer satisfaction in a positive way in their research on casinos (Hamrouni and Touzi, 2011). According to various researches regarding the customer experience; it's important to enrich consumers' dreams and memories; to add meaning to their lives and to make them have positive experiences. Positive experience and emotional states have a positive reflection on the consumption preferences and all these experiences bring about differentiation in the competition process in terms of the businesses (Whelan, S and Wohlfeil, M, 2006; Mcintosh and Siggs, 2005; Holbrook, 2007; Edvardsson et al., 2005; Nguyen, et al., 2007). The customer experiences can be positive or negative, short-term or long-term. Besides, the positive consumer satisfaction generated by the experience may affect brand loyalty and

brand relationship (especially brand personality). As the experience concept is based on an individual experience, it is distinguished from other brand and customer oriented concepts (including brand loyalty, brand engagement and customer satisfaction) (Berry vd., 2002; Kim et al., 2007; Seo and Lee, 2008). The key element to be considered in establishing the main idea of the experience is that the main idea is different and original from the others. The fundamental goal of this principle is that the customers would understand in a short period of time what kind of experience they will have in the present operation or they would know what kind of an experience the operation will let them have in their visits. (Pine and Gillmore, 1998).

In many studies, the customer experience dimensions are different. According to Schmitt, the basis of the customer experience concept consists of five different experiences that the customers can experience. These are perceiving, feeling, thinking, acting and relating (Schmitt, 1999). According to Gentile et al, Fornerino et al. analyzed an immersive consumption experience case and identified five different dimensions. These are sensory-perceptual, sensory, physical-behavioral, social and cognitive (Gentile et al., 2007). Gentile et al., in their study, they identified six different dimensions of customer experience, the sensory component, the emotional component, the cognitive component, the pragmatic component, the lifestyle component, and the relational component (Gentile et al., 2007). In another study, Verhoef et al. predicted that the customer experience structure includes customer's affective, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical responses for the retailers (2009). Wenwei and Tongtong classified the customer experience in seven dimensions during their study in the supermarkets. These are store atmosphere, product, service, relationship, price, compatibility and brand image (2010). Yang and He assumed in their study that the customer experience includes three dimensions, sensory experience, emotional experience, and social experience (2010). Su has set five dimensions in the experimental model to find out the customer experience. These are emotion, feeling, thought, movement and association (2011). Finally, Sukwadi and others have studied customer experience in their study on the coffee shops. They classified them in four dimensions as psychological, functional, creative and economical (2012).

In recent years, the concept of consumer ethnocentrism has been used in some studies on the brand, but a study revealing the relationship between this concept and brand-value perception has not been found. For this reason, it became necessary to address both concepts together.

2. CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM

“Consumer ethnocentrism” is a concept that was proposed for the first time by Sharma and Shimp in their study published in 1987. In the study, the opinions have been expressed about how appropriate or ethical it would be for American consumers to use foreign products. The consumers with a high sense of ethnocentrism stated that the consumption of imported products are definitely not suitable on the grounds that it is wrong to use the products of a foreign country, it harms the country's economy and causes unemployment, also it is not a patriotic approach. On the other hand, the consumers with a low sense of ethnocentrism evaluated the foreign products according to their advantages without considering where they are produced. (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

The researches done on the reason why consumers prefer local and foreign brands and the researches done on the criteria that they use during the assessment have different results. The reasons for this difference are the differences between cultures and countries when examined from the macro point of view, the different data processing, evaluation and decision making processes of each individual when examined from the micro point of view and the different criteria used in these processes. It has been observed in the researches that some consumers prefer primarily local brands and some tend to prefer foreign brands (Knight, 1999). Consumers' preference for local brands may be due to macro factors such as countries' images and development levels, as well as micro factors such as price, quality, product range. The consumers may not prefer local products with lower quality when there are foreign products in better quality. Consumers' attitudes towards foreign branded products may vary according to the product groups (Knight, 1999). The ethnocentric tendencies of consumers are a part of socio-psychological and demographic effects. In consumer ethnocentrism literature, the ethnocentrism precursors seem to be divided into four categories; socio-psychological, economic, political and demographic (Shankarmahesh, 2006). During the studies in the literature, the demographic factors related to openness to foreign cultures, conservatism, patriotism, nationalism and collectivism, as well as age, gender, education and income status which are defined as socio-psychological precursors of ethnocentrism concept have been discussed (Ruyter et al., 1998; Javalgi et al., 2005; Shankarmahesh, 2006; Altıntaş ve Tokol, 2007). In the studies of Balabanis et al., a positive link has been found between conventionality and consumer ethnocentrism. According to the study result, as conventionality increases, consumer ethnocentrism increases too. (2001). Uz Kurt and Özmen observed high ethnocentric tendency in Turkish consumer in their studies, but determined that

there was no significant difference regarding the price between high and low ethnocentric consumers (2004). There are many studies in which consumer attitudes to foreign products are associated with demographic characteristics and it is seen in the researches that the feeling of ethnocentrism increases as the age of consumers increases, and that also the female consumers exhibit a more ethnocentric profile (Han, 1988; Orth and Firbasova, 2003; Supphelen and Rittenburg, 2001; Shimp 1984; Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Küçükemiroğlu, 1999; Javalgi et al., 2005; Ruyter et al., 1998; Lee et al., 2003; Bawa, 2004; Good and Huddleston, 1995). In consumer ethnocentrism literature, older consumers are generally more ethnocentric than younger consumers because they are generally conservative and less prone to imports (Balabanis et al 2001; Javalgi et al., 2005). As a result of the study done by Nguyen et al. in Vietnam on consumer ethnocentrism, cultural sensitivity and intention to purchase local products, it is determined that consumer ethnocentrism is positively related to the intentions of buying local products (2008). When demographic variables are taken into consideration, there is a difference in consumer ethnocentrism and purchasing intentions between young and old consumers.

Lately, in studies conducted on consumer ethnocentrism in our country, the assessments are usually carried out on the basis of country origin, its relationship with the brand personality and the effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchasing a new product. (Aysuna 2006, Ellialtı, 2009; Özçelik and Torlak, 2011).

The studies conducted on consumer ethnocentrism both in Turkey and abroad have been made on the basis of products in general and there have not been many studies carried out for the service sector. For this reason, a research has been done for the service sector in this study.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Objectives and Limitations of Research

As long as the relationship between the consumers and the brands continue, brand-value perceptions will continue to develop and the producers and the retail stores will keep on trying in order to understand the consumer's point of view and increase the sales (Bell et al. 2001). Nowadays, it can be argued that the consumption style is no longer confined to the necessities, but extends to a wide range of living that consists of social and symbolic relations and emotional experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). While most of the relevant research has been focused on the customer assessments in the western world, a smaller part was based on the consumer attitudes in Asia (Seo and Lee, 2008, Chao and Gupta, 1995). The findings show

that the experience perception of the consumers with different cultural backgrounds living in different countries, regions may be different (Liao et al., 2009).

In the study, both time and cost and sample constraints make it impossible to reach all of the groundmass; so the study has been restricted to consumers residing in the provincial borders of Istanbul and the data has been collected from a sample selected from the consumers who visit the first four chains in the sector in terms of store number. As there is a differentiation of the purpose of visit and in-store experiences, it has been necessary to limit them with coffee drinking consumers due to the fact that the consumers have an experience of the brand in question at the time of the survey and that coffee related products are mainly presented in the related chains. In this context, the coffee consumers in the coffee chains in the provincial borders of Istanbul were included in the scope of the study. In order to be able to classify the consumers involved in the research and to compare the effects of customer experiences, ethnocentric trends and customer satisfactions of each group on the brand-value perceptions, the study has been divided into two groups as local and foreign coffee chains. In the study, the foreign coffee chains have 70, local coffee chains have 78 branches. This number constitutes 84% of the total number of chains. In both groups, the first four chains in the market with the highest number of stores in İstanbul Province (foreign Starbucks and Caribou, local Kahve Dünyası and Kahve Diyarı) were included. Again, due to the above mentioned constraints, convenience sampling has been done during the field application.

In the coffee chain sector, which is an area of retail business, it can be said that there has been an increase and a change in both the products and services as well as the quality and quantity of the consumers (Akyol, 2009). In this context, it's worth investigating the attempt to define the factors that effect the customers, who visit the coffee chains that have a different competitive structure with different marketing practices within the relevant growth and change, in terms of brand equity perceptions, customer experiences and consumer ethnocentrism, and to define which of these factors are more effective. For this reason, there was a need to research the relationship between the customer experiences and the brand equity and how consumer ethnocentrism have an effect on this relationship. In the literature, there aren't any models that address the variables of customer experience, consumer ethnocentrism and brand equity perception all together. For this reason, it was necessary to examine a model that analyzes all the variables involved in the studies in the literature. The research aims to contribute to the literature at the point of identifying the possible effects of customer experiences and ethnocentric perceptions on brand-value perceptions. Satisfactory

dimensions of the consumers were also taken into account when the mentioned effects were determined. Another contribution is the elaboration of these effects in the light of socio-economic and demographic factors. The studies linking the brand equity and the customer experience with the customer satisfaction are found in the literature and again in the literature, this link has been taken into consideration during the creation of the study model since the customer satisfaction concept is evaluated together with the customer experience concept. This study, unlike existing studies in Turkey and worldwide, examines the effect of the variables of experience and consumer ethnocentrism on the brand equity by taking into consideration the customer satisfaction hierarchically and with a structural equation model. Again a study that addresses the dimensions of customer experience, consumer ethnocentrism and brand-value perceptions and examines them all together has not been found among the studies conducted in the coffee chains in our country. This study enables the assessment of not only the direct effects of customer experiences and consumer ethnocentrism variables but also their indirect effects.

Despite all the constraints of the research output, it seems possible to offer attractive and significant contributions to both the retail sector and the academic community in accordance with the main purpose of determining the effects of consumer's brand experiences and ethnocentric tendencies on brand-value perceptions and the aforementioned sub-objectives.

3.2. Research Model, Variables and Hypotheses

The research model is a descriptive research model. In this context, Sukwadi et al.'s experience scale (2012) for measuring customer experience, Yoo and Donthu's brand equity scale (2002) for measuring brand equity perception, Westbrook and Oliver's customer satisfaction scale (1981) for customer satisfaction and Shimp & Sharma's consumer ethnocentrism (1987) scale for consumer ethnocentrism have been used in the research.

In the research, the effects of coffee chain customers' experiences and ethnocentric tendencies on brand-value perceptions of consumers have been tested with a structural equation model. In order to be able to classify the consumers involved in the research and to compare the effects of customer experience, ethnocentric trends and customer satisfaction of each group on brand-value perceptions, the study has been divided into two groups as local and foreign coffee chains. The structural model for measuring the above-mentioned effects for local and foreign coffee chain is as shown below.

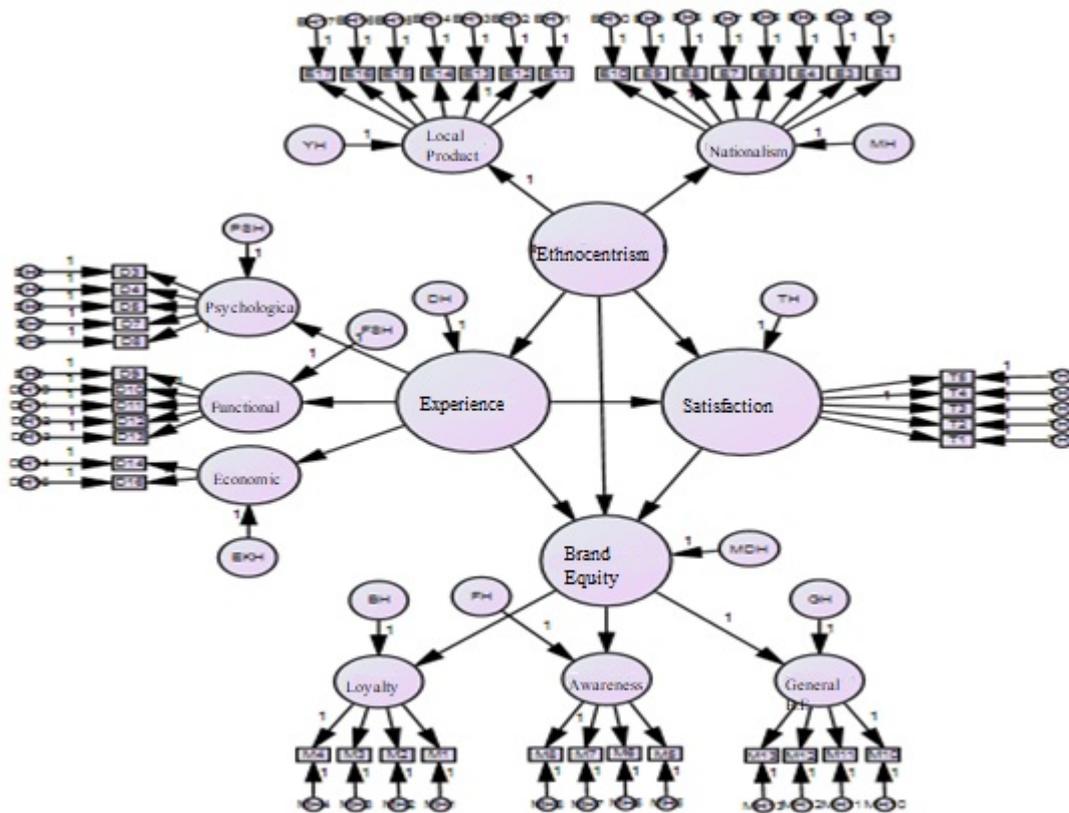


Figure 1: Research design

Hypotheses emerged in line with the research model are as follows:

- H1: The ethnocentric tendency of coffee-chain customers affects customer experience positively.
- H2: Coffee-chain customer experiences affect the brand equity perceptions positively.
- H3: The ethnocentric tendency of coffee-chain customers, affect the brand equity perceptions positively.
- H4: Coffee-chain customer experiences affect Customer Satisfaction positively.

H5: The ethnocentric tendency of coffee-chain customers affect Customer Satisfaction positively.

H6: Satisfaction levels of coffee chain customers affect the brand equity perceptions positively.

H7: The impact of coffee chain customers' ethnocentric tendencies on their experience is greater in the local chain customers than in the foreign chain customers.

H8: The impact of coffee chain customers' experiences on the brand equity perception of the consumers is greater in the local chain customers than in the foreign chain customers.

H9: The impact of coffee chain customers' experiences on customer satisfaction is greater in the foreign chain customers than in the local chain customers.

H10: The impact of coffee chain customers' satisfaction levels on brand equity perceptions is higher in the foreign chain customers than in the local chain customers.

3.3. Sampling and Data Gathering

The research was carried out in the province of Istanbul and applied to the customers of four coffee chains: two of them foreign (Caribou, Starbucks) and two of them local (Kahve Diyarı, Kahve Dünyası). A total of 1,400 coffee chain visitors between the ages of 18 and 65 from the customers of Caribou, Kahve Diyarı, Kahve Dünyası and Starbucks chains were included in the survey. The research was carried out in the districts of Şişli, Kadıköy, Küçükçekmece and Maltepe, which have different socio-economic levels in Istanbul Province and in which all four coffee chains are found. It has been taken into consideration that the demographic distribution is heterogeneous and all four chains are found in the selection of the mentioned districts. The sample mass which was the subject of the survey was selected by means of convenience sampling among the consumers between the ages of 18-65 who have the customer experience regarding the products and services in the coffee chain at that moment in the mentioned districts. The data has been collected by face to face interviews with 1400 people in total, provided that it makes 350 people for each coffee chain.

Data have been collected through questionnaire by face to face interviews . In-depth interviews with Istanbul University Marketing Ph.D. students have been conducted for adaptation of the scales to our language. First of all, a preliminary evaluation was made with 20 people in order to check the clarity of statements of scale. After the regulation of the statements, the survey has been applied to another 100 people in order to be evaluated for the second time. Preliminary analyzes were conducted by processing 80 surveys with the

elimination of the people whose data was found missing and carelessly filled. In the preliminary study, it was understood that one of the expressions regarding the customer's experiences did not fully reflect the experience and contained two judgments. The final survey form obtained the assessment of the preliminary surveys and the necessary corrections, simplifications and revisions performed after the analysis was applied to the coffee chain customers by face to face survey method.

In the survey form, the first two questions feature the filter question. With the first two filter questions, it has been tried to ensure that the chain is the chain of choice for the consumers who are currently having a customer experience and that they are coffee-consuming customers as the main subject of consumption is the coffee presentation. And while this was being done, the customers were asked multiple choice questions in order to try to avoid a possible error. Consumers who answered both of these two questions positively were included in the scope of the study. After these two questions, respectively, the questions about "customer experiences, brand-value perception, satisfaction levels and ethnocentric tendencies with demographic characteristics" were asked. In the research, the customer experience scale was measured with 16 variables (Sukwadi et al., 2012), the brand equity perception with 13 variables (Yoo and Donthu, 2002), customer satisfaction level with 5 variables (Westbrook and Oliver, 1981) and consumer ethnocentrism with 17 variables (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Aysuna, 2006). A total of 51 variables were used in the study.

In the study, a 5 point Likert scale was used in evaluating the statements. Likert scale shows to what extent the participant agrees or disagrees with the statements addressed to him/her. The scale consists of five expressions: "I strongly agree, I agree, I neither agree nor disagree, I do not agree, I strongly disagree". Such scales take the form of high to low (from 5 to 1) or vice versa (from 1 to 5) (Gegez, 2007).

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In the study, the socio-demographic characteristics of the coffee shop visitors were asked by multiple choice questions with four variables including gender, age, educational status and income. Among the coffee chain visitors involved in the study, there were 51.3% women and 48.7% male consumers. %49,1 of the coffee chain customers involved in the study are in the age range of 18-26, 32,1% of them are in the age range of 27-35, 14,4% of them are in the age range of 36-44 and 4,4% of them are in the age range of 45-53. With these results, it is seen that 81.2% of the participants in the survey are under 35 years old and that this rate is

very high. According to these data, it can be said that the coffee chain customers are mostly 35 years old and younger. When we observe the educational status, it is seen that 48 percent of the coffee chain customers participating in the survey are university graduates. It is seen that the following level of education is high school graduate degree with 42%, primary school education with 7% and lastly postgraduate degree with 3%. According to this data, it's observed that the coffee chain visitors involved in the survey are predominantly formed of high school and university graduates. Given the level of income, it's observed that 86% of the coffee chain customers participating in the survey have a level of income between 0 and 4.500 TL.

When a multi-variate scale is used in a research, the accuracy and the applicability of the scale should be assessed. The accuracy of the measurement is fundamental in the assessment of the scale. Because the measurement reflects not only the actual value of the relevant state but also its observed value. For this reason, each measurement contains some errors (Malhotra, 2006, p.268). For this reason, the validity and reliability of each scale should be tested. Cronbach's alpha coefficient method was used to test the reliability of the scales used in this study. The reliability analysis has been applied to the scales that measure the customer experiences, brand equity perceptions, satisfaction levels and finally ethnocentric perceptions of the consumers involved in the study. The performed analysis are divided into two groups as local and foreign coffee chains and as a result of the reliability analysis of each scale. The alpha coefficient value, namely internal consistency ratio of all of the scales, has been over 0,75. For this reason, it can be said that the scales are reliable. Detailed results are as follows.

Table 1: Reliability analysis

Scale	Count of Variables	Alpha Coefficient Local Chain / Foreign Chain
Customer Experience	16	0,925 / 0,928
Brand Equity	13	0,797 / 0,770
Customer Satisfaction	5	0,875 / 0,816
Ethnocentrism	17	0,962 / 0,958

The structural equation model has been conducted to test hypothesis. In the analysis stage, the data consisting of 1,400 participants were divided into two equal parts, as local and foreign, and each data set was analyzed by the program SPSS 21 in the exploratory factor analysis. First of all, the factor analysis has been performed for the scale of experience. The factor

analysis in order to test the structural validity of the scale has been performed with 16 variables. Before applying the factor analysis, KMO sampling suitability measurement and Bartlett's test have been performed in order to understand whether the factor analysis is the right statistical method. When the results of the performed factor analysis are observed, KMO value of the experience scale has been found within 0,917 for both coffee chains (foreign-local). This value is quite higher than the minimum rate of 0,50 which is required. Since its KMO value is high and Bartlett's Test is significant, the factor analysis has been performed to all the variables. When the results of the performed factor analysis are observed, there were no variables that were canalized on more than one factor and that overruled the factor structures. Thus, the experience scale is built in three dimensions. These dimensions consist of psychological, functional and economic dimensions. The revealed total variance of the experience scale with three dimensions mentioned were calculated as 66,881 in the foreign coffee chain and 64,211 in the local coffee chain. The abovementioned analysis was also performed for brand equity perception later on.

The exploratory factor analysis performed in order to determine the structural validity of the consumer brand equity perception scale was conducted with 13 variables. KMO value of the brand equity scale formed of 13 variables is calculated as 0,836 in foreign coffee chain and 0,848 in local coffee chain. These values are also quite higher than the minimum rate of 0,50 which is required. Besides, Bartlett's test, which measures the overall significance of all correlations in the correlation matrix, was also significant. Thus, the factor analysis is the appropriate statistical analysis for this data. Since KMO value is high and Bartlett's test is significant, the factor analysis has been formed to 13 variables. When the results of the factor analysis are observed, it's seen that the variables are accumulated in three factors. There were no variables that were canalized on more than one factor and that overruled the factor structures. Among the factors that come out after the analysis, the brand loyalty is measured with four variables, brand awareness with five variables and overall brand equity with 4 variables. According to these three dimensions, the total declared variance of brand equity scale was calculated as 50,441 in foreign coffee chain and as 51,582 in local coffee chain.

As the third step, exploratory factor analysis was applied to the customer satisfaction scale in the survey. The exploratory factor analysis performed in order to determine the structural validity of the customer satisfaction scale was conducted with five variables. KMO value of the satisfaction scale which consists of five variables has been found as 0,764 in foreign coffee chain and as 0,828 in local coffee chain. These values are also quite higher than the

minimum rate of 0,50 which is required. Besides, Bartlett's test, which measures the overall significance of all correlations in the correlation matrix, was also significant. Thus, the factor analysis is the appropriate statistical analysis for this data. Since KMO value is high and Bartlett's test is significant, the factor analysis has been applied to five variables. When the results of the performed factor analysis are examined, it was observed that the variables are accumulated in one factor since the number of variables are limited. The total declared variance of customer satisfaction scale was calculated as 57,788 in foreign coffee chain and as 66,822 in local coffee chain.

Finally, exploratory factor analysis was applied to the consumer ethnocentrism scale. The exploratory factor analysis performed in order to determine the structural validity of the consumer ethnocentrism scale was conducted with 17 variables. KMO value of the brand equity scale which consists of 17 variables has been found as 0,951 in foreign coffee chain and as 0,958 in local coffee chain. These values are also quite higher than the minimum rate of 0,50 which is required. Besides, Bartlett's test, which measures the overall significance of all correlations in the correlation matrix, was also significant. Thus, the factor analysis is the appropriate statistical analysis for this data. Since KMO value is high and Bartlett's test is significant, the factor analysis has been applied to 17 variables. When the results of the performed factor analysis are examined, it was observed that the variables are accumulated in two factors. There were no variables that were canalized on more than one factor and that overruled the factor structures. Among the factors that come out after the analysis, the nationalism is measured with ten variables and local product preference with seven variables. By these two dimensions, the total declared variance of the brand equity scale was calculated as 70,120 in foreign coffee chain and 70,687 in local coffee chain.

In the rest of the study, the measurements of variables observed by confirmatory factor analysis were examined. In DFA stage, all of the variables obtained as a result of exploratory factor analysis were included in the measurement model. Here, the data set for the foreign coffee chain and the local coffee chain was divided into two and continued to work with two separate models. The experience scale was included in the model with 16 variables in three dimensions: psychological, functional and economical. Likewise, the brand equity was included in the model with 13 variables in three dimensions, Customer Satisfaction with 5 variables and consumer ethnocentrism with 17 variables in two dimensions in total. In the confirmatory factor analysis and the structural equation model, the chi-square test is most

commonly used, and the result shows the compatibility between the data and the model. This value, as a difference value, indicates that the two squares differ significantly from each other, since the chi square is significant. Therefore, it shows the model compatibility if the value is not significant and the chi-square / degree of freedom is less than 3. (Şimşek, 2007; Meydan and Şeşen, 2011; 32). The chi-square value is sensitive to the sample size, and as the sample number increases, the chi-square value can be significant (Raykov and Marcoulides, 2006; Bayram, 2010). The values of GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI are between 0 and 1. The closer these values are to 1, the better they show their compatibility. Additionally, A value of RMSEA of 0.05 or less indicates a good fit, between 0,05 - 0,08 indicates an acceptable fit, 0,10 or more indicates a bad fit (Bayram, 2010;76).

The compliance values of both models were examined after confirmatory factor analysis. Firstly, Chi-square / degree of freedom was calculated as 2,435 for foreign chain and 2,496 for local chain and it was observed to be smaller than 3. Likewise, when the other compatibility indices are observed, goodness of fit index (GFI) is 0,877 for foreign chain and 0,883 for local chain. Adjusted good fit index (AGFI) is determined as 0,860 for foreign chain and 0,868 for local chain; incremental fit index (IFI) is determined as 0,928 for foreign chain, 0,936 for local chain; comparative fit index (CFI) is determined as 0,928 for foreign chain, 0,936 for local chain. These values were found to be acceptable values. Finally, the value of root main square error of approximation (RMSEA) is determined as 0,045 for foreign chain and 0,043 for local chain and both of the values are less than 0,05. Therefore, after DFA (dynamic factor analysis) the factor structures of the variables were tested and it was determined that the data examined in the study was appropriate for the formed factor structure. After DFA (dynamic factor analysis), 4 variables of the psychological experience factor of the experience scale were removed from the model. In addition, all the dimensions remained the same, the experience scale was measured by its psychological, functional and economical dimensions. 2 variables of the nationalism factor of the consumer ethnocentrism scale were removed from the model. Consumer ethnocentrism scale was measured by the dimensions of nationalism and local product preference. Variable M9 of the awareness factor of brand equity scale was removed from the model. Brand equity perception was measured by the dimensions of brand loyalty, awareness and overall brand equity. The customer satisfaction dimension was measured by the same variables since no variable was removed. Satisfactory dimension is measured in one dimension.

As a result; the experiences of foreign coffee chain customers were analyzed in 3 different dimensions with 12 variables, customer satisfaction was analyzed in a single dimension with 5 variables, consumer ethnocentrism perceptions were analyzed in 2 dimensions with 15 variables and brand equity perceptions were analyzed in 3 different dimensions with 13 variables in total. In the model there are 45 variables in total. As a result of the dynamic factor analysis, the fit indices were checked.

In the ongoing study, a model of structural equality was addressed in order to test the effects of the consumer experiences and ethnocentric tendencies on the brand equity perception and customer satisfaction. Structural equality models include both confirmatory factor analysis models and path analysis at the same time. These models can be observed and they may contain hidden variables simultaneously. (Meydan and Şeşen, 2011; 121).

Chi-square /level of freedom was calculated as 2, 348 for foreign chain, 2,355 for local chain and it was observed to be less than 3. For this reason, it can be said that there is a very good fit between the data and the model. Likewise, when the other compatibility indices are observed; goodness of fit index (GFI) was 0,879 for foreign chain and 0,880 for local chain. Since these values are higher than 0,85, it was also provided with this criteria that there was an acceptable compatibility between the data and research model. Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) was calculated as 0,863 for foreign chain and 0,865 for local chain. Since these values are also higher than 0,85, they confirm that the research model is a good fit. After looking at the overall fit indices, the comparative fit indices were also observed. Incremental fit index (IFI) was calculated as 0,932 for foreign chain, 0,933 for local chain. Also this data shows that there is a good fit between the research model and the data. Comparative fit index (CFI) was determined as 0,933 for foreign chain and 0,933 for local chain. It was observed that these values were acceptable. Finally, the value of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was determined as 0,044 for foreign chain, 0,044 for local chain and that both of the values were less than 0,05. This fit criteria indicates a very good fit below 0,50, an acceptable fit below 0.80 and a poor fit above 0,10. The results show that there is a very good fit for both data groups.

Table 2: Findings After Hypotesis Tests

HYPOTHESIS	FINDINGS	
	FOREIGN CHAINS	LOCAL CHAINS

H1	ACCEPTED	ACCEPTED
H2	ACCEPTED	ACCEPTED
H3	ACCEPTED	ACCEPTED
H4	REJECTED	ACCEPTED
H5	REJECTED	ACCEPTED
H6	REJECTED	ACCEPTED
H7	REJECTED	
H8	ACCEPTED	
H9	REJECTED	
H10	REJECTED	

After explaining the compatibility between the research model and the data with the criteria of goodness of fit, the relations mentioned in the research were tested and their results were revealed. Following the analysis, it has been determined that the ethnocentric trends of coffee-chain customers influence the consumer's experiences both positively in local and foreign coffee-chain customers, and that the chains do not differ from each other in these effects. Again it has been observed that the experiences of the coffee chain customers affect positively the brand equity perceptions of the consumers both in local and foreign coffee chains similar to Mano and Oliver; Yoo et al.; Pappu et al; Sukwadi et al., it has been determined that this effect is this effect is higher in local chain customers than in foreign chain customers. As another finding of the research, it has been determined that the satisfaction levels of the consumers affect the brand equity perceptions positively in both local and foreign chains similar to Mano and Oliver; Yoo et al.; Pappu et al; Sukwadi et al., that the chains do not differ from each other in these effects. Again, it has been determined that ethnocentric trends of coffee chain customers affect significantly Customer Satisfaction in local chains in a positive way and they do not affect significantly in foreign chains. Another consequence of the research results is that ethnocentric trends of coffee chain customers affect significantly consumers' brand perceptions positively in local chains and they do not affect significantly in foreign chains.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data revealed in the research results, it can be said that the customer experience is a factor that affects the brand equity perception positively both in local and foreign coffee chains. It is determined that as the customer experience increases positively, the brand equity perception of the consumers also increases. When the literature is observed, there are findings

that many researches have been made in order to measure the brand equity (Washburn and Plank, 2002; Kim et al, 2003; Pappu et al., 2005; Yoo et al, 2000) and in some of them the customer experience had an impact on the brand equity perception (Mano and Oliver, 1993; Yoo et al, 2000; Pappu et al., 2005; Sukwadi et al., 2012). Based on this data revealed by this research, an inference can be made such as the consumers would tend to continue visiting the chain that they prefer.

Based on the reasons stated above, it's important for the marketing managers to raise the customer experience to a better level in order to keep the customers' brand equity perceptions high. Customer experience is addressed psychologically, functionally and economically. It is therefore beneficial for marketing managers to handle all of these dimensions together. Psychological and functional dimensions in foreign coffee chains are more weighted than economic dimensions. In the local coffee chains, the ranking was in the form of functional, psychological and economic dimensions and the first two factors were not as important as they were in the foreign chains and a more balanced distribution was made.

On the basis of these data, the foreign chain marketing managers should give importance to the functional and psychological dimensions respectively rather than the economic aspects. For domestic chains, the marketing managers can be advised to evaluate all dimensions together. Another important issue revealed by research findings is that there is a significant difference in favor of local chains in terms of the effects of consumers' experiences on brand equity perceptions.

In the study, the functional, psychological and economical dimensions, which have not been studied in Turkey before and whose reliability and validity have been tested, were established. It is thought that the effect of experience on brand equity can be used especially in new studies for different sectors. The effect of customer experience revealed in this study is consistent with the literature in this context. For this reason, it can be said that the experiences of the local chain customers have a higher impact on the brand equity perceptions. At this point, foreign chains can put the experience to the forefront in some pilot areas by serving at the desk instead of self-service and also by rearranging the store ambience. Local chain managers may further emphasize their advantage in this subject and work to improve the customer experience to a better level. Again in the study, the relationship between the consumer ethnocentrism and the brand equity has been examined by taking into consideration the experience and the satisfaction levels for the first time in Turkey.

According to the research data, it can be said that the ethnocentric tendencies of the coffee chain consumers do not significantly affect brand equity perceptions in foreign chains and do significantly affect them in local chains. In the light of this information, it can be said that local chain customers are more delicate than foreign chain customers in terms of nationalism and local product use and that as their ethnocentric tendencies increase, the local chains perceive the brand equity higher. Based on the above-mentioned reasons, the fact that the marketing managers of local chains use local products and bring the elements of nationalism to the forefront may benefit in terms of keeping brand equity perceptions of their customers high. Consumer ethnocentrism is considered as nationalism and the use of local products. Therefore, it would be more useful for marketing managers to address all of these dimensions together. Marketing managers of the local coffee chains are being advised to take advantage of the ethnocentric tendencies of consumers by giving importance to the emphasis of national products and national coffee chain. The situation is different for foreign chain marketing managers. The ethnocentric tendencies of foreign chain customers do not significantly affect their brand-value perceptions. Marketing managers of foreign chains can lay emphasis on local products in order to expand their market share and they can plan their marketing campaigns by using national items. However, since it is not the subject of this research, how this situation reflects to the existing customers can be taken into account in the future researches.

According to the research results, it can be said that the ethnocentric tendencies of consumers have an effect on the customer experience positively both in local coffee chains and foreign coffee chains, and this effect does not significantly differ. It has been found that as the consumer ethnocentrism increases, the perception of customer experience increases too. On the basis of this data, it is also possible to make an inference that consumers will tend to continue to visit the chain that they prefer, as it also supports the influence of the consumer experience on the perception of brand equity.

Again, from the results of the research, it can be said that ethnocentric tendencies of the local coffee-chain customers affect the customer satisfaction and when it comes to the foreign coffee chain customers they do not significantly affect. From this, it can be said that the ethnocentric trends of local chain customers have a positive impact on the satisfaction levels of the customers and in the light of this data, they are satisfied more easily, thanks to the effect of the ethnocentric tendencies of local chain customers. When the effect of the

customer experience on the customer satisfaction is observed, we can say that this effect is not very strong, although the customer experience affects the customer satisfaction significantly both in local and foreign chains. In the study, we can say that the customer satisfaction affects the brand equity perception significantly and strongly in both local and foreign coffee chains. Thus, it can be advised to the marketing managers of both local and foreign coffee chains that they should try harder in order to increase the customer satisfaction.

In the future studies, each of the structures such as customer experience, consumer ethnocentrism and brand-value perception used in this study can be utilized with a different sample size or a different sampling method. Again, the structures tested in this study can be tested in a different sector. And again the structures used in this study can be examined by international comparisons

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