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EXPERIENCE, PERSONALITY, AND LOVE EFFECT ON LOYALTY FOR COFFEE HOUSES

ABSTRACT

Fierce competition among coffee houses has made the concept of brand loyalty even more important. Investigating the premises that affect the loyalty towards the increasing number of coffee houses will provide the key to being preferred among the competitors. In the research, how the brand experiences promised by coffee houses affect the loyalty of consumers was examined. Also, it is aimed to contribute to the literature by investigating the effect of brand personality and love on the path that starts with brand experience and leads to loyalty. The results show that coffee house experiences affect brand love formation, reflect on brand personality, and in this way affect brand loyalty.

Keywords: Brand experience, brand love, brand personality, brand loyalty

DENEYİM, KİŞİLİK VE AŞKIN KAHVE EVLERİNE YÖNELİK SADAKAT ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Kahve evleri arasındaki kıyasıya rekabet, marka sadakati kavramını çok daha önemli bir unsur haline getirmiştir. Sayısı her geçen gün artan kahve evlerine yönelik sadakati etkileyen öncüllerin araştırılması, rakipler arasından tercih edilen olmanın anahtarını sunacaktır. Araştırmada kahve evlerinin vaat ettikleri marka deneyimlerinin tüketicilerin sadakatlerini nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir. Ayrıca marka deneyimi ile başlayan ve sadakate giden yolda, marka kişiliğinin ve aşkın nasıl bir etkiye sahip olduğu araştırılarak alan yazınına katkı sağlanması amaçlanmıştır. Sonuçlar, kahve evi deneyimlerinin marka aşkı oluşumuna etki ettiğini, marka kişiliğine yansıdığını ve bu yolla marka sadakatini etkilediğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka deneyimi, marka aşkı, marka kişiliği, marka sadakati

1. INTRODUCTION

It is observed that today's consumers tend to go to coffee houses with the influence of western societies. With this increasing demand, companies are making an intense effort to offer experiences suitable for the search of the consumer and to be preferred again (Ramadan, Kasuma, Yacob, Shahrinaz and Rahman, 2017). In this sense, the increasing competition due to the increasing number of coffee houses is forcing companies to make better strategic decisions and to understand the consumer better. In particular, every marketer in the coffee house business should be able to understand the wishes, thoughts, and feelings of customers and develop marketing programs accordingly (Susanty and Kenny, 2015). At this point, it is important to conduct researches on brand loyalty premises in the coffee house chain industry. It is recognized that success in the increasingly saturated market of coffee houses depends on extensive analysis of customer loyalty. On the other hand, identifying loyalty premises will enable chain coffee house operators to focus on key factors that will help retain customers (Han et al., 2018).

Brand love is an element that affects brand loyalty. Beyond satisfaction, love for the brand manages customers to shop again (Ünal and Aydın, 2013). Bıçakcıoğlu, İpek and Bayraktaroğlu (2018) stated that brand love affects brand loyalty positively. However, it is noteworthy that there are not many studies investigating the factors affecting brand love (Bairrada, Coelho and Coelho, 2018; Hegner, Fenko and

Teravest, 2017). On the other hand, the positive results of brand love increase the interest in discovering the premises of love day by day (Hegner et al., 2017). According to Huang (2017), brand experience positively affects brand love. Since the frequency of visiting a particular coffee house by the customer is relatively higher than the frequency of transactions in other sectors, it is more likely that customers will have a higher level of real brand experience (Choi, Ok and Hyun, 2011).

With the growth of the coffee house market, its industry is becoming more and more competitive (Chen and Hu, 2010). Brand personality helps the firm to differentiate itself strongly from its competitors. Most of the time, it is seen that human characteristics are used to express the image or personality of the brand (Kim, Han and Park, 2001). In terms of creating brand loyalty, again it must take place in the market with a brand personality different from its competitors (Lin, 2010). Because brand personality influences customers' preferences and uses it increases consumers' trust and loyalty to the brand (Akin, 2011).

In line with the support of the relevant literature, brand love and personality are considered as variables that affect brand loyalty. Also, the effect of brand experience on brand love and brand personality was investigated. In the study, it was aimed to contribute to the literature by examining the effect of experience on personality and love in the process leading to loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Brand Experience

Today, brand managers need to offer innovative products and services that offer new brand experiences to the market as well as improving the quality of their brands (Bairrada et al., 2018). Brand experience defines the consumer's perceptions of their experiences with the brand (Ding and Tseng, 2015: 996). Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) explained that the brand experience has four dimensions. These are sensory, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral. Sensory experience refers to the experience arising from the sensory interaction between the brand and the consumer, such as sight, touch, smell, listening, and emotion. Emotional experience, on the other hand, describes the experience consisting of the emotional interaction between the brand and the consumer, in other words, positive emotions. Behavioral experience refers to a consumer's action-based experience with the brand. Finally, the intellectual experience is the experiences that emerge as a result of an intellectual interaction such as positive thinking or interest between the consumer and the brand (Ong, Lee and Ramayah, 2018). In this sense, consumers who complete the process of seeking information, making decisions, or using products are also considered to have experienced (Ha and Perks, 2005).

Research shows that consumers are looking for brands that offer unique and unforgettable experiences (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010). Coelho, Bairrada and Peres (2019) discussed brand love in terms of its relationship with experience; They found that there is a positive relationship between brand experience and brand love. Bıçakcıoğlu et al. (2018) revealed that a positive brand experience affects brand love. On the other hand, according to Brakus et al. (2009), brand experience positively affects brand personality. Brand experience, which has a multidimensional structure, affects both the personality of the brand and brand loyalty (Nysveen, Pedersen and Skard, 2013). In line with the information obtained from the researches, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H₁: Brand experience affects brand love.

H₂: Brand experience affects brand personality.

2.2. Brand Love

Brand love is a “desirable degree of emotional dependence that a satisfied customer has on a particular trade name” (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006: 81). According to Albert and Merunka (2013), brand love is deep and permanent beyond a simple effect. Thus, people think that the brand they fall in love with is irreplaceable, even if they are deprived of the brand for a long time, they may experience great sorrow.

For this reason, brand love, beyond affecting people's purchasing behavior, makes it an important advocate of the brand (Rossiter, 2012).

Businesses want consumers not only to be satisfied with their products but also to have loyal customers. Therefore, satisfaction is not enough for the consumer to be in constant contact with the brand. For a loyal customer group, it is necessary to create "brand love", which expresses an emotional bond beyond satisfaction (Ünal and Aydın, 2013). Also, studies are stating that brand love predicts brand loyalty better than traditional attitude models based on the perceived quality of the brand (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014). For this reason, determining the premises and consequences of brand love is very important for marketers and managers to better understand the factors that ensure their emotional loyalty to the brand (Roy, Eshghi and Sarkar, 2013). However, brand love is a very important factor for corporate performance (Bairrada et al., 2018). So much so that brand love is defined as one of the main goals in terms of brand management (Hegner et al., 2017). Therefore, it is observed that companies frequently resort to emotional advertising messages to create brand love (Bauer, Heinrich and Albrecht, 2009). Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) stated in their study that brand love affects brand loyalty. It is also seen that studies are indicating that brand love has a positive effect on brand loyalty and word of mouth marketing (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010; Maisam and Mahsa, 2016).

In light of this information, the H₃ hypothesis has been developed.

H₃: Brand love affects brand loyalty.

2.3. Brand Personality

Companies take care to create a brand personality to attract the attention of consumers and be preferable among alternatives (Mulyanegara, Tsarenko and Anderson, 2009). Brand personality can be defined as "human qualities that can be attributed to a brand" (Keller and Richey, 2006: 74). Aaker (1997) stated that brand personality consists of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness dimensions. The dimension of being sincerity is characterized by being realistic, honest, virtuous, and cheerful. Creating excitement is characterized by qualities such as daring, spirited, imaginative, and contemporary. The competence dimension is personalized with features of being reliable, intelligent, and successful. While the dimension of sophistication is represented by features such as wealth and attractiveness, the dimension of ruggedness is associated with features such as harder and outdoorsy.

It is becoming more difficult for companies to differentiate products that are perceived as similar to each other. It is seen that especially emotional factors come to the fore in the differentiation of products. Therefore, if the features of the product are subjective and difficult to evaluate, consumers start to take into account the brand personality more and rely on it. Therefore, the importance of brand personality is increasing today (Akin, 2011). Bairrada et al. (2018) stated that there is a positive relationship between brand love and brand loyalty. Brakus et al. (2009) stated that brand personality is another component that affects the consumer's loyalty towards the brand.

In light of this information, the H₄ hypothesis has been developed.

H₄: Brand personality affects brand loyalty.

2.4. Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is defined as customers' dedication to the brand and repetitive buying behavior from the same brand (Susanty and Kenny, 2015). It is observed that customers with brand loyalty often buy the same products regardless of price or convenience factors (Ramadan et al., 2017). Brand loyalty consists of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty (Oliver, 1999). The cognitive loyalty dimension means that consumers make a preference based on their knowledge of the brand or their experiences with the brand. Affective loyalty reflects the liking of the brand by the consumers. Conative loyalty explains the consumer's commitment to buy the brand again. Finally, inaction loyalty reflects the stage in which the consumer's purchase intention takes action and this desire turns into purchasing behavior (Oliver, 1999: 35-36).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Purpose, Scope, and Limitations of the Research

It is seen that many studies reveal the direct effect of brand experience on brand loyalty. It is thought that revealing the mediating role of brand personality and brand love in this process will contribute to the current literature. It is also important to know how these variables, taken together, will have an impact on brand loyalty. Because in this way, brands will be able to design their experiences to affect the personality of their brands and to create brand love. The benefit of this process will be loyal customers. From this point of view, the research aims to investigate the effect of brand experience on brand personality and brand love, and brand loyalty in these variables in the loyalty-building process.

Brand experience scale was obtained from developed by Brakus and colleagues (2009), brand personality scale was obtained from developed by Aaker (1997), brand love scale was obtained from developed by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and brand loyalty scale was obtained from developed by Oliver (1999). The scales were adapted and used for the research. Before the implementation started, a pilot application was carried out with 20 people who are customers of coffee houses. The survey was conducted online between 7-14 August 2020 with individuals aged 18 and over. Except for demographic questions, the questionnaire, all of which were 5 Likert (5=Strongly agree, 1=Strongly disagree), was presented to the respondents and the research was conducted with 300 people. SPSS (22) and AMOS (22) package programs were used to test the collected data and research model. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed, and Structural Equation Modeling was used to test the model as a whole. Since the results obtained are valid for this sampling, they cannot be generalized to other consumers.

3.2. Research Model

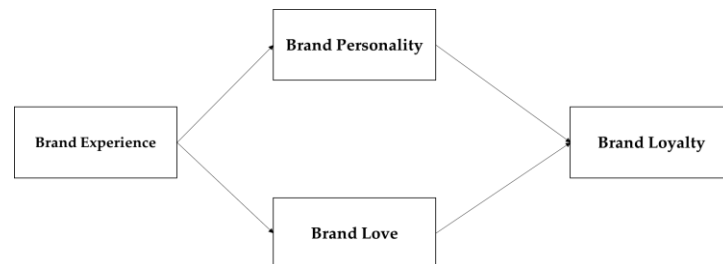


Figure 1: Research Model

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Analysis of Participants' Demographic Characteristics and Coffee House Preferences

43.6% of the respondents participating in the study were female, 56.4% were male, 66.7% were between the ages of 18-33, 73.3% were single, 90.7% were High School and University Students, 86.7% were an income of 3500 TL and below.

Also, 98.2% of the participants like to drink coffee, 88.5% preferred to drink coffee over tea, they all go out for coffee, when asked which coffee house they frequently go to, it was determined that 35.8% preferred Starbucks, 30.6% Kahve Dünyası 20% Gloria Jean, 10.8% Kahve Diyarı and 2.8% preferred other coffee houses.

4.2. Reliability Analysis

The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of the scales used were measured as 0.77 for the Brand Experience, 0.91 for Brand Love, 0.98 for Brand Personality, 0.96 for Brand Loyalty.

4.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed to test the measurement model. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that the expressions had acceptable compliance values. fit indexes are as follows: CMIN/df= 1.73; RMSEA=0.06; RMR=0.03; AGFI=0.90; GFI=0.93; NFI=0.96; CFI= 0.98; TLI=0.98.

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the accuracy of the structures. The results obtained are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Scales

	Standardized Coefficients	Error Variances	(t) Value	P	R2
Sensory <--- Brand Experience	0,645	,112	8,123	***	0,416
Affective <--- Brand Experience	0,577	,127	7,374	***	0,333
Behavioral<--- Brand Experience	0,761	,199	9,311	***	0,579
Intellectual<--- Brand Experience	0,659				0,434
Excitement<--- Brand Personality	0,971	,056	22,254	***	0,942
Sincerity <--- Brand Personality	0,881	,063	17,927	***	0,777
Competence <--- Brand Personality	0,924	,060	19,844	***	0,854
Sophistication<--- Brand Personality	0,929	,059	20,087	***	0,864
Ruggedness <--- Brand Personality	0,863				0,745
Brand Love	0,851				0,723
Behavioral Loyalty <--- Brand Loyalty	0,862				0,743
Attitudinal Loyalty <--- Brand Loyalty	1,016	,061	17,959	***	1,032

***p<0.000

It confirms the factor structure of the scale according to the confirmatory factor analysis results. The research model created based on factor analysis was tested with structural equation analysis. The structural model, statistical values, and model fit indices are shown below.

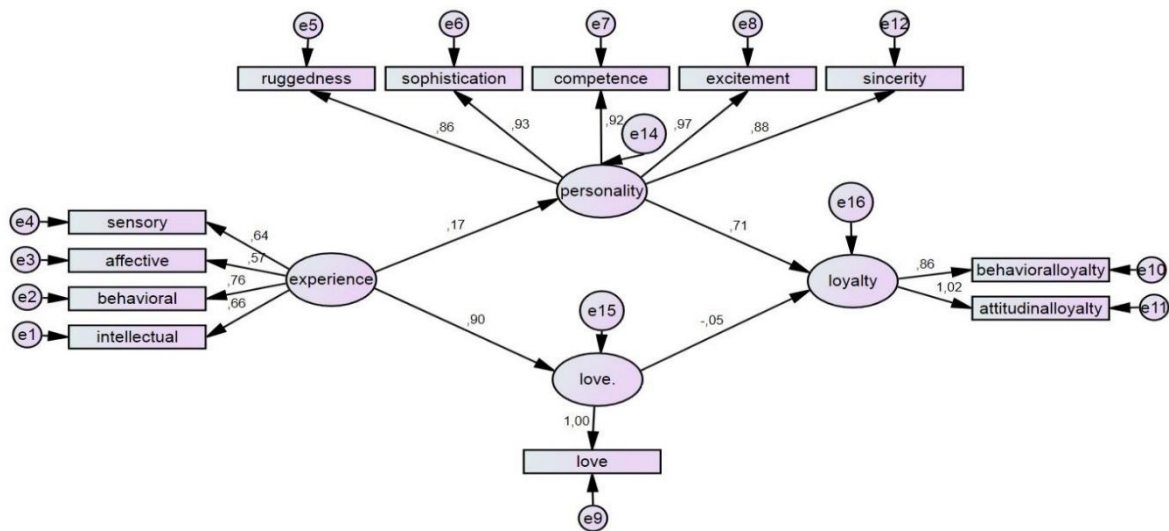


Figure 2: Structural Model

X² /sd: 1,68, RMSEA: 0.06, RMR: 0.03, AGFI: 0.90, NFI: 0.96, CFI: 0.98, GFI: 0.93, TLI:98.

Table 2: Results of the Research Models

Statistically Important Paths	Standardized Coefficients	Error Variances	(t) Values	P	R ²
Brand Personality <---Brand Experience	,174	,134	2,312	,021	0,030
Brand Love <---Brand Experience	,896	,195	10,177	***	0,802
Brand Loyalty <---Brand Personality	,712	,084	9,940	***	0,498
Brand Loyalty<---Brand Love	-,051	,046	-1,1053	,292	
Sensory <--- Brand Experience	,644	,112	17,930	***	0,414
Intellectual<---Brand Experience	,659				0,435
Behavioural <---Brand Experience	,760	,199	9,326	***	0,578
Affective <---Brand Experience	,574	,126	7,356	***	0,330
Sincerity<---Brand Personality	,881	,063	17,930	***	0,777
Ruggedness<---Brand Personality	,863				0,745
Sophistication<---Brand Personality	,929	,059	20,095	***	0,864
Competence <---Brand Personality	,924	,060	19,840	***	0,854
Excitement<---Brand Personality	,971	,056	22,252	***	0,942
Behavioral Loyalty <--- Brand Loyalty	,862				0,742
Attitudinal Loyalty <--- Brand Loyalty	1,017	,061	17,943	***	1,034
Brand Love <--- Brand Love	1,002				1,004

***p<0.000

As shown in Figure 2 and Table 2, the path coefficients and model fit values of the variables are within acceptable limits and significant. In this context, it was observed that the brand experience variable is observed to affect brand personality. Besides, it is understood that brand experience affects brand love. Also, brand personality affects brand loyalty. But brand love does not affect brand loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

Brand experience research has gained immense importance in recent years as firms realize the importance of understanding how consumers experience brands. The brands that offer customers experience will be able to gain a place in the market and gain a competitive advantage. With the increasing importance of brand experience, marketers seek to understand the various dimensions of the brand experience and explore its impact on other brand variables. Addressing the brand experience is powerful enough to help managers develop the right marketing strategies (Bapat and Thanigan, 2016). However, coffee houses, whose popularity is increasing day by day, are looking for ways to create brand loyalty to have customers who can remain loyal to them. In this direction, in the process of brand loyalty, the effects of the concepts of love and personality were discussed, taking into account the experiences of coffee houses to their customers.

As a result of the research, it was determined that the brand experience has a positive effect on brand love (H1 was accepted). The study of Prentice, Wang and Loureiro (2019) also supports the positive relationship between these two variables. The experiences offered by coffee houses and the attraction of this environment from different angles make customers feel good. Even coffee houses that manage to offer different experiences to people will be able to have passionate and happy customers. In summary, whether the customer sees the coffee house he goes to as a perfect or wonderful place depends on his experience. In light of this result, the coffee houses in the sector must have positive experiences to have customers who are passionately attached to them and in love.

Similarly, it has been seen that the brand experience has a positive effect on brand personality (H2 was accepted). The study of Keng, Tran and Le Thi (2013) also parallels this result. Consumer experience is an effective factor in creating a brand personality, which is one of the forerunners of loyalty. With coffee houses appealing to the senses of the consumer, attracting the person, and providing different experiences, customers see the brand as more successful, intelligent, and dazzling. When the consumer chooses a coffee house, it evokes different thoughts or activates his emotions, triggering the brand to see as a person. The experiences of the consumer after this moment make the coffee house see both magical and as a top-class person. Therefore, consumers should have more experience considering the

effect of brand personality on the way to loyalty. The company can allow the customer to spend time at the coffee house with attractive campaigns or slogans, and see the brand as a friend through positive experiences.

Contrary to these results, it was determined that brand love was not effective in creating brand loyalty for the sample of the study (H3 was rejected). While it is seen that attributing human qualities to the brand is effective in the loyalty of the individual, it can be said that the love felt is not enough for the realization of loyalty. In other words, for the sampling of the research, coffee houses are a sincere and warm friend rather than a place to be loved.

Another result obtained is the positive effect of brand personality on brand loyalty (H4 was accepted). The study of Guido and Peluso (2015) also supports this result. In this context, associating the brand with human characteristics can bring a process that creates loyalty for the individual. The fact that coffee houses have human characteristics such as sincere, sincere, exciting, reliable, and hardworking affects the attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of the consumers. At this point, the fact that consumers are satisfied with the coffee house they prefer increases the rate of going to the same coffee house again. Because communication plays a vital role in the creation and maintenance of brand personality (Kim et al., 2001), the fact that a coffee house has qualities such as being intelligent, successful, leader, and attractive is effective in recommending it to other consumers. Therefore, companies should know their target audience very well and correctly identify their communication channels in the process of creating a brand personality that will provide a competitive advantage. Considering that the audience that coffee houses appeal to is especially young consumers, coffee houses should respond to the tendency of this group to see a piece of themselves from the place they go. In this way, the tendency of young people to establish loyalty bonds will increase. The personality created by coffee houses should show consistency by appearing in the social networks most preferred by the target audience. Besides, the coffee house can position its brand as sincere, excited, competent, developed, or solid under the culture of the market or in line with the expectations of society. Thus, coffee houses can differentiate themselves by transferring human personality traits to the brand and can be successful in the loyalty process.

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