

The Perception of Customer Satisfaction in Textile Industry According to Genders in Turkey

Ikilem Gocek, Senem Kursun, and Yesim Iridag Beceren

Abstract—The customer satisfaction for textile sector carries great importance like the customer satisfaction for other sectors carry. Especially, if it is considered that gaining new customers create four times more costs than protecting existing customers from leaving, it can be seen that the customer satisfaction plays a great role for the firms. In this study the affecting independent variables of customer satisfaction are chosen as brand image, perceived service quality and perceived product quality. By these independent variables, it is investigated that if any differences exist in perception of customer satisfaction according to the Turkish textile consumers in the view of gender. In data analysis of this research the SPSS program is used.

Keywords—Customer satisfaction, textile industry, brand image, service quality, product quality, gender.

I. INTRODUCTION

IN today's competition conditions, which factors cause customer satisfaction, which variables change customer satisfaction in which ways and how these variables can be managed, for which segments which activities can be designed are the main questions that marketing managers must consider. Especially, if it is considered that gaining new customers create four times more costs than protecting existing customers from leaving, it can be seen that answers to these questions carry great importance for the firms [1].

Satisfaction is a phenomena expressing that the performance and benefits of the products exceed the expectations of the customers [2].

Customer satisfaction increase the existing customer loyalty, repurchase process, awareness of the people about the firm, decrease the price flexibility, the cost of gaining new customers and prevent the customer being affected from competitive enterprise [2]. As a result, the positive word of mouth occurs in contrast negative word of mouth is destroyed. The purpose of this study is to identify if any differences exist in the perception of customer satisfaction according to the

Turkish textile consumers in the view of gender. In this sense, the factors affecting customer satisfaction is considered as: perceived service quality, perceived product quality and brand image. In this research firstly, the basic concepts of the study is explained then, the field and analysis process of this study, "Customer Satisfaction and Affecting Factors", are examined. To analyze the survey, SPSS statistical package program is used.

II. DATA AND FIELD PROCESS

To comprehend the importance of customer satisfaction in textile sector and to identify the factors affecting customer satisfaction, the field process of this research includes the selection of sampling technique and data collection, to hand out the prepared survey from the sample that is considered to respond, suppositions and constraints of the research and finally to enter the data to SPSS program gathered from the respondents to determine the details of the sample.

A. Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

When applying the previously prepared survey forms, both face to face and e-mail techniques are used. After the survey application process, the 142 survey forms were collected. The data collection method is determined by considering the factors such as sampling technique, sampling size and characteristics, number of questions and the time constraint

To identify the relationship hypothesis between three independent variables and the dependent variable the *paired samples t-test* is used.

The hypothesis of each independent variables based on only two independent different groups are tested by *independent samples t-test* in this study.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

A. Variables of the Customer Satisfaction Research

In marketing researches, the factor variable that provides the causability on investigation about the cause and effect relationships is defined as independent variable, and at the result of this investigation the effected variable is defined as dependent variable [3].

A.1 The Perceived Service Quality

Although the measurement and the conceptualization of service quality could not be agreed and decided obviously by

Manuscript received July 30, 2007.

I. Gocek, is with the Department of Textile Engineering, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey (e-mail: goceki@itu.edu.tr).

S. Kursun, is with the Department of Textile Engineering, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey (e-mail: kursuns@itu.edu.tr).

Y. Iridag Beceren, is with the Department of Textile Engineering, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey (e-mail: iridag@itu.edu.tr).

the researchers, in this paper service quality is defined as the level of perfection and excellence of service quality perception.

The higher level of service quality means higher level of customer satisfaction and results in better customer loyalty and high level of profitability [4]. To transfer the quality to service means to satisfy customers' requirements. So that the firms aspiring to adopt the customer oriented approach should determine the customer requirements and associate the customer requirements with service design and capabilities [5].

According to Cronin and Taylor's research in four different service industry, it is found that quality has a direct and positive effect on customer satisfaction, but no other inverse causal effect could not be proved [6].

A.2 The Perceived Product Quality

According to Didier, considering a marketing perspective, quality denotes a product's ability to satisfy a customer's requirements. On this wise, this definition focuses entirely on the customer and how the customer thinks a product will fit that purpose [7].

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry mentioned on the necessity of distinguishing product quality from service quality as the aspects which they are assessed differ. Consumers use product specific intrinsic cues to evaluate product quality. Intrinsic cues like flavor or color etc. are an inseparable and highly integral part of the product. Simultaneously, consumers also trust the relevant extrinsic product cues such a price, brand name and store name as indicators of product quality. In other words, cues associated with, but not belonging to, the actual physical product are used signals to imply overall product quality [8].

A.3 The Brand Image

Nowadays, the formal introduction of the company, what it stands for, and the product it provides to the consumer are denoted by branding. Brand informs the consumers about what the company's commitments are. Companies are identified by brands and brands bring specific value to the market. As defined by the American Marketing Association, a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of them, intended to identify goods and services of one seller, or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition [7].

When the company on the basis of it's view of the market creates brand and translates this brand into the brand image as perceived by customer, this strategy develops greater customer satisfaction furthermore greater brand loyalty [9].

B. Research Hypothesis and Analysis

H_0 = There is no relation between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction.

H_1 = There exist a relation between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction.

As shown in Table I, when the relation between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction is analyzed, the value of the significance level is found as "0.000". Since the significance value is less than 0.05 for 95% confidence

interval, there is no sufficient evidence to reject H_1 hypo these which implies that there exist a relation between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction according to the customers.

As a result of this analysis, there is a relation between the perceived service quality and customer satisfaction.

TABLE I
 PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS REFERRED TO HYPOTHESIS 1-3

Paired Samples T-Test		Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. 2-tailed
Customer Satisfaction	Perceived Service Quality	7,288E-02	0,223	0,000
	Perceived Product Quality	2,819E-02	0,242	0,168
	Brand Image	-0,1589	0,332	0,000

As shown in Table I, the other results that are acquired by applying paired samples t-test are as follows:

H_{20} : There is no relation between perceived product quality and customer satisfaction.

H_{21} : There exists a relation between perceived product quality and customer satisfaction.

In this research, it is found that there is no sufficient evidence to reject H_{20} , thus there is no relation between perceived product quality and customer satisfaction.

H_{30} : There is no relation between brand image and customer satisfaction

H_{31} : There exists a relation between brand image and customer satisfaction.

The other result obtained from this analysis is that there is no sufficient evidence to reject H_{31} , thus there is a relation between brand image and customer satisfaction.

H_{40} : There is no difference in perceived service quality according to gender of respondents.

H_{41} : There is a difference in perceived service quality according to gender of respondents.

According to independent sample t-test; since there are two groups, the variances between two groups must be controlled. Because the tests of the groups with equal variances and not equal variances are different and the significance levels obtained from these tests are also different. To test if the variances are equal or not for H_4 , hypotheses related with variance equivalence are formed such as:

H_0 : The variances of two groups based on gender related to H_4 are equal.

H_1 : The variances of two groups based on gender related to H_4 are not equal.

To identify if the variances equal or not, the Levene's test is considered (Table II). If the significance level obtained from Levene's test is greater than 0.05 for 95% confidence interval then, it is obvious that there is no sufficient evidence to reject H_0 implying the equivalence of variances. Then in this condition; the line of "equal variances assumed" is considered and this line's significance 2-tailed value is valid. Otherwise, if equal variances are not assumed, the line of "equal variances not assumed" is considered and this line's significance 2-tailed value is valid. As H_4 is considered; the significance level of Levene's test is obtained as 0.135 which

TABLE II
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST RESULTS REFERRED TO HYPOTHESIS 4-7

Independent Samples Test			Levene's Test		T-test For Equality of Means		
			F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. 2-tailed
Gender	Perceived Service Quality	Equal Variance Assumed	2,266	0,135	-2,178	140	0,031
		Equal Variance Not Assumed			-2,083	70,072	0,041
	Perceived Product Quality	Equal Variance Assumed	0,159	0,691	-0,629	140	0,530
		Equal Variance Not Assumed			-0,636	78,828	0,527
	Brand Image	Equal Variance Assumed	3,392	0,068	-1,011	140	0,314
		Equal Variance Not Assumed			-1,075	88,905	0,285

which means equal variances are assumed and since the significance 2-tailed value is 0.031, then there is sufficient evidence rejecting the H_{40} so that H_{41} is accepted. As a result there is a difference in perceived service quality according to gender of respondents.

According to Table III, as the mean value of the females are greater than males it can easily be concluded that female respondents give greater importance to perceived service quality than male respondents.

TABLE III
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST GROUPS STATISTICS REFERRED TO HYPOTHESIS 4-7

Independent Samples T-Test (Group Statistics)						
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Gender	Perceived Service Quality	Male	42	4,0923	0,4226	6,521E-02
		Female	10	4,2490	0,3790	3,790E-02
	Perceived Product Quality	Male	42	4,1238	0,4148	6,400E-02
		Female	10	4,1727	0,4253	4,253E-02
	Brand Image	Male	42	3,9024	0,4698	7,249E-02
		Female	10	4,0000	0,5462	5,462E-02

H_{50} : There is no difference in perceived product quality according to gender of respondents.

H_{51} : There is a difference in perceived product quality according to gender of respondents.

As H_5 is considered; the significance level of Levene's test is obtained as 0.691 which means equal variances are assumed and since the significance 2-tailed value is 0.530, then there is no sufficient evidence to reject the H_{50} so that H_{50} is accepted. As a result there is no difference in perceived product quality according to gender of respondents (Table II).

H_{60} : There is no difference in brand image perception according to gender of respondents.

H_{61} : There is a difference in brand image perception according to gender of respondents.

As H_6 is considered; the significance level of Levene's test is obtained as 0.068 which means equal variances are assumed and since the significance 2-tailed value is 0.314, then there is no sufficient evidence to reject the H_{60} so that H_{60} is accepted. As a result there is no difference in brand image perception according to gender of respondents (Table II).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the analysis of hypothesis, the obtained results are evaluated based on three different hypothesis groups. But

firstly, it has to be noted that the most important supposition in these results is the honesty and the accuracy of the respondents. Furthermore, because of the time constraint of the research, since the number of respondents acquired in this research is 142, the constraint in the number of sample may decrease the representation ability of the sample.

A. Results According to the Hypothesis between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable

According to the results, textile firms in Turkey should never ignore the brand image and service quality in their marketing and sales strategies as the service quality and brand image effects the customer satisfaction directly due to the Turkish customers. Thus, to increase the number of the customers and to create loyal customer profile, firms should consider these two important factors. In other words, textile firms should base their strategies on brand image and perceived service quality.

B. Results According to the Mean Difference Hypothesis between the Independent Groups

By considering genders of survey respondents, it is found that there are no differences in perceived product quality and brand image according to the respondent genders. Despite, it is found that perceived service quality shows difference according to the genders of the respondents. Providing that, textile firms should create different strategies for perceived service quality but needn't create different strategies for neither perceived product quality nor brand image when considering the genders of the consumers. As the service quality perception of the females are more than the males and females give more importance than males to perceived service quality, textile firms should highlight service quality more in products for females. In contrast there is no need to emphasize service quality in marketing strategies when males are considered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to sincerely express our highest appreciations and gratitudes to the respondents of our survey.

REFERENCES

- [1] Grönroos, C., 1996. Relationship Marketing: Strategic and Tactical Implications, *Management Decision*, Vol. 34 No. 3, 5-14.
- [2] Peter, J.P. and Olsan, J.C., 2005. Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Strategy, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., New York.
- [3] Özdamar, K., 2004. Paket Programlar ile İstatistiksel Veri Analizi I-II, Kaan Kitabevi, Eskişehir.

- [4] Ghobadian, A., Speller, S. and Jones, M. , 1993. Service quality : concepts and models, *International Journal of Quality&Reliability Management*, Vol.11, No.9, 43-66.
- [5] Chow-Chua, C. and Komaran, R., 2002. Managing Service Quality by Combining Voice of the Service Provider and Voice of Their Customers, *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 12 No. 2, 77-86.
- [6] Warrington, P.T., 2002. Customer evaluations of e-shopping: the effects of quality-value perceptions and e-shopping satisfaction on e-shopping loyalty, *PhD Thesis*, The University of Arizona.
- [7] Didier, S.M., 2003. The marketing function and consumer satisfaction online, *PhD Thesis*, Capella University.
- [8] Zeithaml, V.A., 1988. Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol.52, No.3, 2-22.
- [9] Royle, J.,L. Cooper, R.Stockdale. 1999. The use of branding by trade publishers: an investigation into marketing the book as a brand name product, *Publishing Research Quarterly*, Winter, 1-13.