

The Relation between Consumer and Brand Personality: Example of yemeksepeti.com

Ahmet Tan

Assistant Prof, Department of Business Administration, Gaziantep University,
Gaziantep/Turkey
Email: atan02@hotmail.com

Emre Çolakoğlu

Department of Business Administration, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep/Turkey
Email: colakogluemre@gmail.com

Emre Öztosun

Department of Business Administration, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep/Turkey
Email: emre@giem.com.tr

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to analyze whether there is a relationship between brand personality of an e-commerce company –yemeksepeti.com- and its customers' personalities. The dimensions of brand personality of yemeksepeti.com were identified to do this. The paper includes three sections. In the first part, a literature review and theoretical framework about brand personality and e-commerce was outlined. Then, a survey was held in the city of Gaziantep with 300 respondents via face to face interview method. According to the findings, a positive relationship between the brand personality and the customers' personalities was found. Discussions, limitations and further implications were presented in the final section.

Keywords: Brand personality, consumer behavior, e-commerce

1. Introduction

Brands, as tools that enable companies to achieve competitive advantages over competitors, play a key role in many of the company's marketing strategy (Srivastava et al. 1998). Consumers prefer a brand due to the influence of several factors. These factors are functional, experiential and symbolic benefits that a brand offers to consumer. (Lee, 2009). Usually service developers are focused more on products and services having; long useful life, high quality and lower prices. However, today functional benefits of the brands they offer in many areas are almost identical (Ivens and Valta, 2012). Therefore companies use symbolic meanings of services and products to differentiate their products from others' and to increase

desirability of their products. (Govers and Schoormans, 2005). In this context brand personality is one of the key concepts and it's a strategic tool to create powerful brands (Aaker, 2009).

The rapid development of information and communication technology paved way the emergence digital markets and e-commerce within these markets. Many companies in our country as in the world, offering products and services in the traditional market environment have started offering online sales opportunities through their internet addresses to take advantage of this new marketing environment. One of the most important result of this new situation is the emergence of e-commerce intermediaries as new types of business organization which has no physical location for commerce or service delivery, positioning between buyers and sellers in value chain and based entirely on the use of internet technology (Tomaş, 2014).

Yemeksepeti.com is the first to implement e-commerce intermediary model in food sector in Turkey. Although many online food ordering sites were established after the commencement of operations of the yemeksepeti.com (i.e.; afiyetle.net, aloyemek.com, anindayemek.com, doydum.com, evdebalik.com, neleryesek.com, nettenye.com and sefertas.com) no one could survive to catch the same success as yemeksepeti.com did (Tomaş, 2014). More comprehensive and different than the similar examples in the world yemeksepeti.com created a completely new business model in Turkey and was awarded the best web site award in "Golden Spider" web contest consecutively in 2004, 2005 and 2006 for their continuous success starting from the establishment (Habertürk, 2015). As of 2015, with nearly 10 thousand member restaurants in 62 provinces and 3 million order per month and operating in 7 countries (the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Greece) it became one of the rare companies which born in Turkey and became a global brand. Purchased by Delivery Hero, a German origin global company, with a worth of TL 589 million in 2015, it has become first internet venture reaching TL billion value in Turkey (Sabah, 2015).

As in the traditional markets there are several factors which affect the success of brands in digital markets. Among these are brand personality which is a component of the brand image. Although there were studies that tried determine brand personality of web sites or examining impact of personality characteristics or mental status on the online buying impulse (Turkyilmaz, Erdem, & Uslu, 2015) there is almost no study researching the relationship between brand personality and consumer personality within the e-commerce intermediary companies. This study, aiming to fill this gap in the literature, has focused on determining the relationship between consumer personality traits and personality traits of yemeksepeti.com brand and whether having a distinct brand personality has any role in the mentioned success and the emergence as a strong global brand.

2. Literature

Personalized brand idea began to attract the attention of marketing researchers throughout the 80s and 90s. This can be understood the proposal put forward by Oglivy in 1983 that "having personality can make products or brands a success or a failure" (Parker, 2009). In recent years as strategic importance of brand personality is becoming more evident, the interest in the subject is increasing (Grime, Diamantopoulos, & Smith, 2005).

Brand personality can be understood as human personality characteristics or character attributed by consumers to a brand (Keller and Richey, 2006). Therefore brands are considered to be anthropomorphic beings (Stinnett, Hardy, & Waters, 2013). Many researchers have seen the essence of brand personality as anthropomorphism (Puzakova,

Kwak, & Joseph Rocereto, 2009). As people generally tend to attach human characteristics to inanimate, it is possible that brands may appear in the minds of consumers with human characters (Bower, 1999; Boyer, 1996).

Although there are many definitions of the concept of brand personality the most common and the best known definition is done by Jennefer Aaker. According to this definition brand personality; is a set of human characteristics associated with a brand (J. L. Aaker, 1997) and it is a multi-dimensional and multi-featured structure that allow consumers to express themselves (Grohmann, 2009). Brand personality characteristics is shaped by consumer experience or by any direct/indirect interaction with the brand (Aaker, 1997; Keller, 1993). Brand personality helps to establish meaningful relations between consumers and brands. In this way as it contributes to brand value creation, it has a significant place in the components of brand value(D. A. Aaker, 2014). Brand personality is also a key component in the formation of the brand image. A well-built brand personality increases brand value as it become a leverage for a significant and unique set of brand image (Keller, 1993). Brand value, which is strengthened by brand personality, differentiates the brand from its competitors (Keller and Richey, 2006) creates higher purchasing intention and higher preferability by consumers (Freling et al. 2011) creates expansion opportunity for the brand, price elasticity (Wang, Wei, & Yu, 2008) and higher market share and increase in performance (Chaudhuri and Hoibrook, 2001).

When looked at the literature on brand personality it can be seen that the majority of the studies are focused on the two issues. The first of these are the studies which measure the main results of a positive and distinctive personality of a brand and emphasize the importance of the change in attitudes towards the brand. In these studies dependent variables commonly used are; customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, brand trust, brand dependency, brand-related attitudes such as purchase intent. Some of these studies are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1:

Studies in which brand personality is used as independent or mediating variable

Author	Country	Scope	Variables	Findings
Kim et al. (2015)	US	Shopping Mall	Brand experience, Brand satisfaction, Brand loyalty	Brand experience influences brand personality; although brand personality influences satisfaction, it does not have a direct influence on loyalty.
Ha and janda (2013)	China	Automobile	Perceived quality, Brand trust, Brand commitment	Brand personality positively affects brand trust and perceived quality;brand personality positively affects brand commitment via perceived quality.
Su and Tong (2015)	US	Sportwear	Brand equity	Brand personality has a positive and significant influence on brand equity.
Goldsmith and	US	Clothing	Brand engagement	Brand personality is related to brand engagement.

Goldsmith (2009)				
Lin (2010)	Taiwan	Video games	Brand loyalty	Brand personality has a significantly positive influence on brand loyalty.
Romero (2012)	Mexico	Consumer brands	Purchase intention	The dimensions hipness/vivacity, success, sincerity have positive influence on purchase intention and domesticity/emotionality, professionalism have negative influence on purchase intention.
Lee et al. (2009)	Korea	Restaurant	Customer satisfaction, Brand loyalty, Positive/negative emotion	Brand personality directly affects positive emotion, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty positively; Brand personality negatively affects customer satisfaction via negative emotion.
Akin (2011)	Turkey	Cell phone	Behavioral intentions	Brand personality positively effects behavioral intentions.
Lombart and Louis (2016)	France	Retail	Brand trust, Brand attitude, Brand loyalty	Brand trust and brand attitude have a positive and significant influence on retailer brand personality; retailer brand personality has no influence on brand loyalty.

The second issue which studies are focused on is how to measure the brand personality. Although there has been some studies on measuring and determining dimensions of the brand personality, the most well-known and used brand personality scale is the one developed by Aaker in her pioneering study. (Ivens and Valta, 2012). In her study Aaker (1997), using five-factor personality traits scale which is also used in personality psychology and social psychology, conducted a survey with over 1000 participants, consisting most known 37 brands and 114 personal traits. At the end of research she developed a valid and generalizable scale consist of 42 expressions under 5 dimensions. At the same time she has formed a theoretical framework that determines the nature and number of the brand personality. This pioneering study of Aaker was repeated by her and by other researchers to determine brand personality traits in different cultures, sectors and product groups. Some of these studies were conducted based on Aaker's scale and resulted in removal of some dimensions from original scale or addition of new dimensions. On the other hand some the studies without using Aaker's scale they directly tried to identify their unique brand personality

dimensions by using five-factor personality traits. Some of these studies are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2:
Brand personality scales and dimensions

Author	Country	Scope	Dimension
J. L. Aaker et al. (2001)	Japan Spain	Consumer brands	Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, Peacefulness, Passion
Caprara et al. (2001)	Italy	Consumer brands	Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Openness
Smit et al. (2003)	Netherlands	Consumer brands	Competence, Excitement, Ruggedness, Gentle, Distinction, Annoyance
Romero (2012)	Mexico	Consumer brands	Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Sophistication, Sincerity, Domesticity/Emotionality, Ruggedness, Professionalism
Bosnjak et al. (2007)	Germany	Consumer brands	Drive, Conscientiousness, Emotion, Superficiality
Ferrandi et al. (2000)	France	Consumer brands	Sincerity, Dynamism, Robustness, Conviviality, Femininity
Rauschnabel et al. (2016)	Germany	Universities	Prestige, Sincerity, Appeal, Lively, Conscientiousness, Cosmopolitan
Milas and Mlacic (2007)	Croatia	Consumer brands	Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Intellect, Emotional Stability
Herbst and Merz (2011)	Germany	Business-To- Business Brands	Performance, Sensation, Credibility
D'Astous and Lévesque (2003)	Canada	Stores	Enthusiasm, Unpleasantness, Genuineness, Solidity, Sophistication
Hosany et al. (2006)	England	Tourism destinations	Sincerity, Excitement, Conviviality
Geuens et al. (2009)	Belgium	Consumer brands	Responsibility, Activity, Aggressiveness, Emotionality, Simplicity
Kim et al. (2010)	US	Media Brands	Trustworthiness, Dynamism, Sincerity, Sophistication, Toughness

One of the studies to develop brand personality scales in different cultures is the study by Aksoy ve Özsoyer (2007) in Turkey. Similar to Aaker’s study Aksoy ve Özsoyer, based their study on five-factor personality classification to determine general personality characteristics in Turkey. As a result of the research with a sample of 1200 person, they identified an appropriate brand scale for Turkey with four dimensions; competency, excitement, traditionalistic and androgenic and 29 expressions which form dimensions (Dölarslan, 2012). These dimensions and expressions are shown in Table 3.

Table 3:
Brand Personality Dimensions and Items

Competency	Excitement	Traditionalism	Androgen
Quality	Entertaining	Economical	Masculine
Professional	Funny	Modest	Rebellious
Successful	Cheerful	Traditional	Feminine
Skilled	Rattling	Saving	Ostentatious
Trustable	Lively	Classical	
Prestigious	Sympathetic	Conservative	
Self-confident	Liberal	Family-focused	
Assertive	Swift		
Known	Younglike		
Reliable	Robust		
Global	Young		
Stable	Passionate		
Good	Sporty		
Original	Tempting		

Source: Aksoy and Özsoyer (2007)

3. Hypothesis and methodology

3.1. The hypothesis of the study

The concept of brand personality in many respects is closely related to self-concept theory (Sirgy, 1982) and attribution theory (Ay and Kahraman, 2014). According to self-concept theory, consumers compare their sense of selfness and the image reflected from a product or brand and they prefer the brand which concurs with their personality (Arora and Stoner, 2009). Many studies support the view that consumers prefer the brand which concurs with their personality (Govers and Schoormans, 2005; J. W. Lee, 2009; Maehle and Shneor, 2010; Phau and Lau, 2001). According to attribution theory, brand personality concept is a result of attribution of features like “young, modern, intellectual” to a brand by brand managers as a part of brand strategy or by consumers through the communication they establish with the brand (Ay and Kahraman, 2014). For both theories, customer behaviors are under the impact of their own personality traits and personality trait reflected from or attributed to the brand. This is actually a way of the expression the personality they have or they want to be. The hypothesis of the research under this theoretical framework is as follows;

$H_A =$ There is a relationship between brand personality traits of yemeksepeti.com and personality traits of its consumers.

3.2. Method of the research

To determine whether yemeksepeti.com brand has a distinctive brand personality and to search the relationship between brand personality traits of yemeksepeti.com and personality traits of its consumers a survey was conducted with 300 students, consumers of yemeksepeti.com, in Gaziantep University. 280 surveys from 300 participants were found as eligible for analysis. To save time and cost, non-random sampling method was used as sample collection method.

In questionnaire, in which brand personality scale developed for Turkey by Aksoy and Özsoyer (2007) is used, questions were asked as “if yemeksepeti.com brand was a person which characteristic it would have in your opinion” and participants were required to evaluate 39 expressions according to five point likert scale between “1-strongly disagree” and “5-certainly agree”. As all brand personality scales in the literature are largely based on five-factor personality traits, we have measured consumer personality in the same way since we thought it will reflect the relationship between customer personality and brand personality better.

4. Analysis

In Table 4 frequency and percentage distributions of data related to age, gender, level of education and monthly income of the participants are shown. The data show that 51.1% of participants were female and 48.9% male. 91.1% of respondents are aged between 15- 25, 7.9% aged between 26-35, 0.7% aged between 36-45, and 0.4% aged between 46- 55. In terms of education level 92% of participants are undergraduate students, 7.5% graduate student and 0.4%, is PhD candidate. 55,4% of participants have less than TL500 monthly income while 23.9% has monthly income between TL 501- 1.000, 10% has between TL 1001-1500 and 5% has TL 1501-2000 monthly income. The share of students with more than TL2001 monthly income is 5.7%.

Table 4:

Demographic characteristics of the participants

Demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	137	48.9
Female	143	51.1
Age		
15-25	255	91.1
26-35	22	7.9
36-45	2	.7
46-55	1	.4
Education		
Graduate	258	92.1
Master's degree	21	7.5
Doctor of philosophy	1	.4
Income		
500 TL and below	155	55.4
501-1000 TL	67	23.9
1001-1500 TL	28	10.0
1501-2000 TL	14	5.0

4.1. Factor analysis

The expressions used in the brand personality scale were subjected to factor analysis in the scope of the research. Under the Varimax Rotation procedure, the expressions, “global” under competency dimension, “young-spirited” and “vigorous” under excitement dimension of the brand personality scale were removed from the scale since they were defined for multiple factors. Similarly as a result of factor analysis for consumer personality scale, the expressions “known”, “robust”, “global” under competency dimension and “rebellious” under androgenic dimension were removed from the scale. Expressions used to determine both brand personality and consumer personality were grouped under 4 factors as it was in the original scale. Total variance explained for 4 factors constituting brand personality is calculated as 57.342% and total variance explained for 4 factors used for consumer personality is 60.3%. Factors of scales, factor loadings and expressions under the factors are shown in Table 5.

Table 5:

Factor analysis results

The brand personality dimensions of Yemeksepeti.com			Personality dimensions of Yemeksepeti.com users		
Factors	Factor loads	Variance %	Faktörler	Factor loads	Variance %
Factor 1		36.013	Factor 1		41.067
Competency			Competency		
Quality	.710		Quality	.729	
Professional	.775		Professional	.755	
Successful	.796		Successful	.827	
Skilled	.747		Skilled	.822	
Trustable	.714		Trustable	.770	
Prestigious	.812		Prestigious	.700	
Self- confident	.742		Self- confident	.615	
Assertive	.756		Assertive	.504	
Reliable	.469		Stable	.500	
Stable	.731		Good	.607	
Good	.586		Orijinal	.596	
Orijinal	.596				
Factor 2		10.077	Factor 2		8.416
Excitement			Excitement		
Entertaining	.758		Entertaining	.677	
Funny	.809		Funny	.636	
Cheerful	.779		Cheerful	.700	
Active	.783		Active	.753	
Lively	.694		Lively	.671	
Sympathetic	.689		Sympathetic	.717	
Liberal	.570		Liberal	.617	
Agile	.544		Agile	.712	

Young	.471		Younglike	.773
Passionate	.586		Robust	.744
Sporty	.518		Young	.732
Tempting	.487		Passionate	.659
			Sporty	.630
			Tempting	.470
Factor 3		6.878	Factor 3	5,922
Traditionalism			Traditionalism	
Modest	.660		Economical	.598
Traditional	.716		Modest	.648
Saving	.751		Traditional	.801
Classical	.759		Saving	.781
Conservative	.615		Classical	.776
			Conservative	.779
			Family-focused	.733
Factor 4		4,374	Factor 4	5,328
Androgen			Androgen	
Masculine	.617		Masculine	.641
Rebellious	.785		Feminine	.852
Feminine	.691		Ostentatious	.719
Ostentatious	.668			
KMO = 0.912; Bartlett's Test = 7106.175; sig. = 0.000			KMO = 0.921; Bartlett's Test = 7486.516; sig = 0.000	

4.2. Reliability analysis

After removal of some questions with factor analysis method reliability analysis is conducted. The scales are considered to reliable as cronbach's alpha values are bigger than 0.7 for both brand personality scale and consumer personality scale. Factors of the scales and cronbach's Alpha values are shown in Table 6.

Table 6:
Reliability analysis results

Brand personality			User personality		
Factors	Number of items	Crombach's Alpha	Factors	Number of items	Crombach's Alpha
Competency	13	.929	Competency	11	.936
Excitement	14	.928	Excitement	14	.938
Traditionalism	7	.855	Traditionalism	7	.886
Androgen	4	.733	Androgen	3	.730

4.3. Correlation analysis

The correlation test was used to test the hypothesis of the research. Pearson Correlation Analysis was applied since variables were distributed normally after the normalcy analysis. The correlation coefficients between brand personality of yemeksepeti.com and its consumer personality are shown in Table 7.

Table 7:

Correlation between brand personality dimensions and consumer personality dimensions

	User Competency	User Excitement	User Traditionalism	User Androgen
Brand Competency	.461**			
Brand Excitement	.312**	.90**		
Brand Traditionalism	.243**	.198**	.315**	
Brand Androgen	.094	.121*	.182**	.261**
** indicate statistically significance at the 1% level,				
* indicate statistically significance at the 1% level				

To determine whether there is a relationship between brand personality of yemeksepeti.com and its consumers personality we should look at correlation between the same dimensions of the personalities. When the relation between variables shown in Table 7 examined, correlation coefficient between brand competency dimension and consumer competency dimension is 0.461 at $p < 0.01$ significance level, correlation coefficient between brand excitement dimension and consumer excitement dimension is 0.290 at $p < 0.01$ significance level, correlation coefficient between brand traditionalistic dimension and consumer traditionalistic dimension is 0.315 at $p < 0.01$ significance level, and finally correlation coefficient between brand androgenic dimension and consumer androgenic dimension is 0.261 at $p < 0.01$ significance level.

Correlation coefficients are interpreted as very weak relationship between 0.00- 0.25, weak relationship between 0.26- 0.49, mid-level relationship between 0.50- 0.69, strong relationship between 0.70- 0.89 and very strong relationship between 0.90- 1.00. Findings show the weak relationship between dimensions and the hypothesis of the research is accepted.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined whether there is a relationship between brand personality and consumer personality traits. Although previous studies on this issue are very limited, since knowing whether the consistency between brand personality and consumer personality traits has an impact on preferability of brands, is valuable information, both marketing academicians and practitioners have a great interest in the issue. The findings of this study supported the hypothesis that there is a relationship between brand personality of yemeksepeti.com and its consumer's personality traits. Although the relation between variables is weak, the argument in the literature that "in choosing a brand, consumers are affected, as well as by many other factors, by the consistency of their personality," is empirically supported.

The second issue which the research examined was whether yemeksepeti.com has a significant brand personality. When the average values of dimensions are compared from the research results, the highest value is get by Competency dimension with 3,4909 and the lowest by Androgenic with 2.9321. Excitement with 3.2857 and Traditionalistic with 3.0250 value are very close to each other. As the average values of four dimensions of brand personality are very close to each other, the survey results show that yemeksepeti.com brand does not have any distinguishing personality trait.

There are some limitations to this study. First of these is lack of diversity in terms of demographic characteristics such as age, level of education and income as the sample was

formed from the students. Therefore these demographic characteristics were not included in the analysis since they would not have any additional effect. The sample had a limited size since the research was carried out in a local area with students. In next researches, choosing a diversified sample in terms of demographic characteristics and wide area coverage not limited to just a city will provide stronger results.

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