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Development of a Scale for Measuring Consumer Behavior in Store Choice

Tüketici Market Seçim Davranışının Ölçülmesi İçin Bir Ölçek Geliştirme

Veysel YILMAZ, Cengiz AKTAŞ, H.Eray ÇELİK*

Abstract: This study was designed to research factors which consumers consider when choosing a shopping store and to develop a scale. 500 supermarkets shoppers completed self-administered surveys regarding their attitudes toward 34 individual shopping store choice items. The paper used both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to develop a Consumer Store Choice (CSC) scale. The results of EFA found 10 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. According to the results convenient location, price and quality of products, sales personnel attitudes and physical attractiveness play very important roles in CSC.

Key words: Consumer behavior, Consumer Store Choice (CSC), EFA and CFA, LISREL

Öz: Bu çalışma tüketicilerin alışveriş merkezi tercihinde hangi faktörleri göz önünde bulundurduklarını araştırmak ve bu konuda bir ölçek geliştirmek amacıyla tasarlanmıştır. 500 süpermarket müşterisine, market seçimi ile ilgili 34 maddeyi içeren bir anket yüz yüze görüşme tekniğiyle uygulanmıştır. Bu çalışmada Tüketici Market Seçimi (CSC) olarak adlandırılan ölçeğin geliştirilmesinde hem açıklayıcı factor analizi (AFA) hemde doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) kullanılmıştır. AFA sonucunda öz değerleri 1.0'den büyük olan 10 faktör bulunmuştur. Uygun alışveriş yeri, ürünün fiyat ve kalitesi, satış personelinin fiziksel görünümü ve tutumu CSC üzerinde önemli bir yere sahip olduğu sonuçlarda bulunmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: Tüketici Davranışı, Tüketici Market Seçimi (CSC), AFA ve DFA, LISREL

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1. INTRODUCTION

A number of approaches have been used to determine consumer store choice. Berry (1969, p.4) pioneered store attribute research determining that store image is based on the composite value of 12 components: price, quality, assortment, fashion of merchandise, sales personnel, location convenience, other convenience criteria, services, sales promotions, advertising, store atmosphere, and reputation on adjustments. With the benefit of the studies performed before, Lindquist (1974, p.31-32) used a model composed of nine factors such as product, service, consumer, physical conditions, comfort, discount, location atmosphere, conventional factors and antecedent satisfaction. In addition to this, Doyle and Fenwick (1974, p.40-41) identified the image elements in six factors such as store name, product, price, product assortment, style and location place. Belk (1975, p.158) suggested that there are five factors that may influence shopping behavior; physical environment, social environment, temporal perspectives, task definition and antecedent states. Similar to this, Bearden (1977, p.16) grouped the location image elements under seven different factors covering store name, price, product quality, product assortment, location atmosphere, location place, parking facilities and helpfulness of salespeople. Koppelman and Hauser (1979, p.157) described five factor of shopping attractiveness, variety, quality, satisfaction, value, and parking. Ingene (1984, p.15) suggested that a nice atmosphere positively affects the consumers' shopping time and demand for spending money. According to Hackett et al. (1993, p.378), the basic determinants of store choice behavior are; general evaluation, safety and quality of merchandise, physical environment, efficiency, distance of store to house, accessibility, and social environment, including store atmosphere. Erdem et al. (1999, p.137) examined the linkage between consumer values and the importance of some salient store attributes. List of store attributes used in this study: class of clientele, fairness on adjustments, convenience of location, general level of prices, helpfulness of salespeople, quality of merchandise, degree of selection, credit arrangements, physical attractiveness of store, reputation for fashion, brands carried by store, and special sales or promotions.

Degeratu et al. (2000, p.55) focused specifically on assessing whether or not brand names and price have an impact on choices online and in traditional supermarkets. Severin et al. (2001, p.185-186) investigated use of relatively recent developments in random utility theory to assess the stability over time and space of the preferences underlying retail shopping choice. They found that good quality, wide selection, good service, nice atmosphere and convenient location were significant factors in choice of retail shopping center model. They noted that high and low prices and latest fashion were not consistently significant in the separate years' models. They also showed that convenient location had the greatest impact on the shopping center choice.

Baker et al. (2002, p.120) developed that a store choice model that includes three types of store environment cues as exogenous factors, and various store choice criteria and store patronage intention as the endogenous factors. From observing actual consumer shopping behavior, the determinants of shopping store choice behavior could be classified into five main categories: characteristics of price, characteristics of accessibility, characteristics of atmosphere, demographic characteristics of the consumers, and the retailer's reputation (Dawar and Parker, 1994, p.81; Thang end Tan., 2003, p.193; Turley and Milliman, 2000, p.194, Yilmaz, 2004a, p.790).

In respect to the store choice criteria, a growing literature has identified the most important store attributes of retail patronage. Specifically, store images have been described as an important determinant of consumer choice. Yilmaz (2004a, p.790), Kim and Jin (200, p.236) found that location was the most important attribute in choosing a store. Other studies have examined the role of store environment (Baker et al., 1994, p.141), store atmosphere (Donovan et al. 1994, p.294; Turley and Milliman, 2000, p.193), product assortment (Grewal et al. 1999, p.405), store price format (Bell and Lattin, 1998, p.66), and store brands (Burt 2000, p.890). Hutcheson and Moutinho (1998, p.705) found that shoppers used a combination of the quality of staff and the occurrence of the low prices and the frequency of promotions in choosing a store. Baltas and Papastathopoulou (2003, p.498) investigated importance of brand choice criteria, store selection criteria and the role of shopper characteristics by collecting and analyzing data on the Greek grocery sector. They used seven store attributes. List of store attributes used in their study: merchandise quality, service, location, merchandise variety, price level, store brands and store atmosphere.

The purpose of this study is to develop a measurement tool to assess supermarket consumers' attitudes and behaviors, which determine their shopping center choice, and to perform validity and reliability studies of this measurement tool. When the literature is reviewed, it is understood that there are no measurement tools, of which the reliability and validity measurement studies performed, for Turkey on this subject. First, a measurement tool, which composed of frequently asked questions in determining the consumers' store choice, was compiled through a comprehensive literature scanning. This measurement tool is named as CSC. The prepared a priori CSC is composed of 34 items. The first section of the study mentions about the literature study related to CSC, a short status review of the stores in Turkey takes place in the second section, the third section includes method, the fourth section covers findings related to validity and reliability of measurement tool, findings of EFA and CFA. Various discussions, according to the results obtained through EFA and CFA, are given at the last section.

2. THE STATUS OF THE SUPERMARKETS IN TURKEY

Supermarket first aroused and grew in USA, then widened all over the world including socialist countries. A supermarket is a large retail market selling all kinds of food products such as fresh meat and products, milk and products, fresh fruits and vegetables, groceries products, non-food products and easy consumption products with various quantities in the individual departments. Having exit doors and cash registers more than one, with rapid stock turns, cash payment, low price and self-service principles, the supermarket is usually a wide building located in an independent area with private car park for consumers.

In Turkey, the retail store number with 176437 in 1996 decreased to 164593 in 1999. While the number of grosser in 1996 was 164366, it decreased to 148925 in 1999. On the other hand, hypermarket and chain market numbers increased to 2421 from 1316, market numbers increased to 13247 from 10755. While the retail trade in Turkey has a scattered settlement structure, this does not mean that they will not join and associate in the future. According to the researches, the value of market size is about 70 million Dollars.

Table 1. The Retail Store Number and Improvement

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2003
Hyper/Supermarket	1316	1682	2135	2421	2636	3500
Store	10755	11417	12192	13247	13795	16000
Grosser	164366	159171	155420	148925	147715	131000
TOTAL	176437	172270	169747	164593	164146	150500

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Tendency to a more great and modern retail marketing is a new event in Turkey seen in the last years. This big swift resulted from impacts of European retail merchants, will oblige the organizations to focus entirely on satisfaction and consumers in the future. While the great retail merchants are getting stronger by their own brand in the developed economies in the Europe, the wholesalers and manufacturers in Turkey keep their forces in food retail stores.

The Turkish supermarkets and hypermarkets are on their crawling term, yet. For this reason, the brand is not the most important subject for the Turkish retail merchants. Supermarket and hypermarket numbers increase gradually, and both the initiatives and the investors and the enterprisers succeed to keep abreast of new retail selling trend in Turkey. One of the main reasons of this success is the rapid change taking place in Turkey during the integration process into the European Union. Small retailers are gradually losing the consumer loyalty, which they maintained for a long time. The facilities/chances presented by the big stores, installment payment by credit card, wide range of product and promotion activities tend individuals to shopping from these stores. However, it cannot be said that these big stores are institutionalized on consumer satisfaction.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling

The CSC measurement tool a priori designed was applied to store consumers in February 2005. The sample was consisted of 500 supermarket consumers living in 28 cities of five geographical regions in Turkey. During practical investigation by using Likert-type scale, it was considered that the number of questions should be more than at least five times of the items in the sample in order to get significant and reliable results. Consequently, the sample size in this study is found adequate to obtain statistically significant results. The questionnaire survey was carried out with the support of 3rd year students of Eskisehir Osmangazi University Statistics Department on a basis of face-to-face interviews with supermarket consumers. The analysis was performed based on the 495 consumer. Of these, 278 were female and 217 were male, 54% were aged from 15-34 years old, 41% were 35-54, and 5% of them were 55 years old and above. 47 of the consumers in this sample go to store everyday, 163 of them go two or three times in a week, 135 consumers go weekly shopping, 93 of them go two times per a month and 57 of them go monthly shopping.

3.2. Factor analysis

There are two basic factor analyses; exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In these analyses, the researcher is not aware of the number of factors measured through the measurement tool. When attempting to obtain information on the nature of factors detected *a priori*, instead of examining a specific hypothesis, the researcher uses exploratory factor analysis. In case of examining a theory developed by the researcher to test a hypothesis, confirmatory factor analysis is used (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996, p.660). At the beginning in this study, exploratory factor analysis was applied to the data set obtained for the 34 items that make up the sub-measurement. Principal component analysis, commonly used in determining factors, was used together with a varimax rotation approach. After performing factor analysis, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to determine homogeneity of the measurement tool

In test theory, the reliability of the instrument is one of the most important and basic features of a test. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which is the most used method in social and behavioral sciences to identify causal relations among the variables, was used to determine the instrument reliability. The linear structural relation (LISREL) analysis program was used for confirmatory factor analysis, with the aim of examining the fit of the factor models carried out by the exploratory analysis.

In determining the fit of the SEM model, multi-fit measures are used. In this study, AGFI (Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index), GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index), NFI (Normed Fit Index), NNFI (Nonnormed Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), IFI (Incremental Fit Index) and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) were used as absolute fit measures for determining the model fit (Byrne, 1998, p 107; Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2001, p.29; Reisinger and Turner, 1999, p.72-74; Pang, 1996, p.65-67; Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996, p.749).

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Validity findings

First, an item analysis was performed for the measurement tool composed of 34 items. During the item analysis, three different techniques were used. They are; item analysis based on correlation coefficients, difference of lower and upper samples mean and simple linear regression technique. At the result of the analysis made, two items decided to be removed from the measurement tool. At last, the CSC measurement tool composed of 32 items. Next analyses, which are EFA and CFA, were performed on 32 items. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was found 0.82 in the analysis. KMO should be over 0.60, and if it is close to 0.90, it is stated to be perfect. Therefore the KMO value in this research can be said to be perfect.

The following criteria were considered to hold items in the scale: (a) According to the results of Varimax Rotation, the items should be in only one factor with a factor load of 0.40 or above (b) If an item appears in more than one factor, difference between two loadings should be at least 0.10. The research also used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) which test the hypothesis 'correlation matrix= unit matrix'. The rejection of the hypothesis shows that correlation between the variables is different from 1.0 and the factor analysis is appropriate for the variables. Approximately Chi-Square value for BTS was found 4171.12 ($df=496, p=0.000$) for this study.

4.2. Findings of EFA

The responses were recorded using a set of 34 statements measured on five point Likert type scale (5= very important and 1= very unimportant). The statements were derived from the literature survey (For Literature see: Baker et al; 2002; Turley and Milliman 2000; Baltas and Papastathopoulou 2003; Sinha and Banerjee 2004; Baltas 1997; Jamal et al. 2006; Wei-Ming et al. in pres; Erdem et al. 1999; Bell 1999; Semeijn et al 2004; d'Astous 2000; Sharma and Stafford 2000; Van Kenhove et al. 1999; Berry 1969; Belk 1975; Koppelman and Hause 1979; Hackett et al. 1993; Yilmaz 2005; Yilmaz 2004b; Kim and Jin 2001).

The results of EFA found 10 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Table 2). The 10-factor solution accounted for 62% of the total variance. Factor A was interpreted as 'selling improvement efforts (promotion services)', while factor B was defined as 'Sales personnel attitudes', 'Factor C related to the 'Service'. Factor D was defined as 'convenient location' while factor E was interpreted as 'physical environment'. Factor F 'store reputation', Factor G 'greengrocer butcher services', Factor H 'attractive atmosphere'. Factor J 'characteristics of price-quality and wide selection', Factor K 'neat and order'. Results of EFA together with the percentage of total variance for each factor and calculated Cronbach alpha scores are shown in Table 2. Factor loadings ranged from 0.42 to 0.83 and alphas ranging from 0.60 to 0.77.

Table 2. Measurement items, EFA results and Cronbach's α

Factors/items	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Explained variance (%)	α
A. Selling improvement efforts		2.51	7.84	0.77
A1. Easy payment.	0.73			
A2. Promotion services.	0.78			
A3. Discount card.	0.69			
A4. Bonus.	0.63			
B. Sales personnel attitudes		2.37	7.42	0.72
B1. Knowledge level and experience of sales personnel.	0.53			
B2. Helpfulness of sales personnel.	0.74			
B3. The attire of the sales personnel is neat and clean	0.68			
B4. Cheerfulness of sales personnel.	0.71			
C. Service		2.17	6.78	0.68
C1. Quality of cash services of the store (speed, reliability, etc.).	0.66			
C2. To meets replacement demand of the sold products.	0.66			
C3. Consumer services after sales.	0.45			
C4. To take consumer complains into account.	0.69			
D. Convenient location		2.03	6.35	0.69
D1. Closeness of store to house.	0.81			
D2. Accessibility to the market.	0.83			
D3. having service vehicle.	0.61			
E. Physical environment		1.99	6.21	0.61
E1. Parking facility.	0.64			
E2. Security services inside and outside of the store.	0.71			
E3. Cleanness of the supermarket.	0.64			
E4. A proper indoor atmosphere (ventilation, air conditioning, illumination, smell, etc.).	0.42			
F. Store reputation		1.89	5.92	0.67
F1. Friend recommendation.	0.72			
F2. Advertisements, brochures in multimedia.	0.77			
F3. Image of the store in the market.	0.66			
G. Greengrocer butcher services		1.88	5.90	0.74
G1. Assortment, quality, fresh products in the greengrocer department.	0.79			
G2. Assortment, quality, fresh products in the butcher department.	0.81			
H. Attractive atmosphere		1.80	5.63	0.62
H1. Ordering online or by phone system.	0.52			
H2. Eat and drink facility at the store.	0.79			
H3. To have an atmosphere and chance for a plentiful time in the store (movie, game center, etc).	0.78			
J. Characteristics of price-quality		1.72	5.36	0.60
J1. Brand variety of the products sold in the store.	0.52			
J2. Quality of products sold in the store.	0.72			
J3. Prices of products sold in the store.	0.73			
K. Neat and order		1.21	3.79	0.64
K1. Neat and order of the departments in the store.	0.80			
K2. Easy accessibility to the product in the store (guidance with signboards, illumination, arrows).	0.48			

Table 3 . CFA results and descriptive statistics

Factors/items	Standardized loadings	t	R ²	Mean	SD
A					
A1.	0.58	12.93	0.34	4.13	0.99
A2.	0.75	17.60	0.56	3.77	1.10
A3.	0.75	17.52	0.56	3.76	1.14
A4.	0.65	14.74	0.42	3.09	1.23
B					
B1.	0.64	14.00	0.41	4.15	0.81
B2.	0.66	14.63	0.44	4.10	0.95
B3.	0.67	14.82	0.45	4.31	0.76
B4.	0.57	12.30	0.33	4.42	0.71
C					
C1.	0.52	14.78	0.27	4.49	0.80
C2.	0.67	14.48	0.44	4.41	0.78
C3.	0.63	13.56	0.40	4.06	0.89
C4.	0.58	12.36	0.33	4.49	0.70
D					
D1.	0.72	14.99	0.52	3.91	1.01
D2.	0.83	17.33	0.69	4.12	0.90
D3.	0.49	10.23	0.24	3.70	1.18
E					
E1.	0.48	9.25	0.23	3.52	1.43
E2.	0.55	10.72	0.30	4.18	0.93
E3.	0.59	11.72	0.35	3.89	1.09
E4.	0.51	9.89	0.26	4.30	0.84
F					
F1.	0.56	11.56	0.31	3.29	1.10
F2.	0.78	16.20	0.62	3.27	1.10
F3.	0.59	12.23	0.35	3.94	0.98
G					
G1.	0.76	15.37	0.57	4.45	0.88
G2.	0.78	15.86	0.61	4.47	0.86
H					
H1	0.35	6.77	0.12	2.77	1.30
H2.	0.68	12.96	0.46	3.42	1.14
H3.	0.76	14.14	0.58	3.43	1.20
J					
J1	0.54	10.25	0.29	4.53	0.67
J2.	0.72	13.04	0.52	4.73	0.50
J3.	0.38	7.08	0.14	4.68	0.54
K					
K1.	0.16	2.69	0.03	4.58	2.42
K2.	0.90	4.12	0.81	4.54	0.66

4.3. Findings of CFA

CFA using LISREL 8.54 was conducted. A measurement model was set to have 10 factors. A completely solution produced by LISREL 8.54 using maximum likelihood method showed that all of 32 items load highly on their corresponding factors, confirming the unidimensionality of the construct and providing strong empirical evidence of their validity (Table 3). The *t* values for the loadings were high significant. The goodness-of-fit indices suggest satisfactory results for the survey data; $\chi^2= 898.32$, d.f = 419, RMSEA = 0.048, GFI = 0.90, AGFI = 0.87, NFI= 0.90, NNFI= 0.93, CFI=0.94 and IFI = 0.98. An RMSEA value equal to 0.05 or less reflects a perfect fit; values under 0.10 indicate an acceptable fit; and those above 0.10 indicate a bad fit. Other fitness criteria are between 0 and 1; closeness to 1 indicates a better fit of the model (Yılmaz, 2004b, p.81-82, 2005, p.176). When all fitness criteria are considered, it is evident that model is valid.

5. DISCUSSION

As it is known, the factor analysis is the most used procedure to get information about structure of measurement tool. General structure, lower dimensions, and numbers of measurement tool are provided with factor analysis. In this practical study, EFA and CFA results show parallelism. From this point, it should be perceived that this is an indicator of CSC convenience. In this study, CSC model was determined with analysis results, through which can be explained with 10 sub models, generally. The section of 38% could not be explained by the model. When the items in the study were reviewed, it is seen that especially the items B3, E2, H1, G1 and G2 did not take place in studies in the literature. Privately these 5 items reflect the attitudes and tendencies determined by social and economical conditions of Turkish people involved. About G1 and G2 items, since standardization has not been provided in Turkey, respondents gave significant and different answers. According to CFA results, easy accessibility to the products in short time at the store (K2) and accessibility to the market (D2) are the most important subjects for the consumers. The load of K2 is 0.90 and R^2 is 0.81. The load of D2 is 0.83 and R^2 is 0.69.

From these results, it can be said that consumers want to access to the supermarket easily and they prefer closeness of the store to their house. This is because the numbers of stores, which are increasing gradually nowadays, are very few in Turkey. According to the importance order, other items are G2, F2, G1, A2, A3, D1 and J2. The loads and R^2 of these items are 0.78, 0.78, 0.76, 0.75, 0.75, 0.72, 0.72 and 0.61, 0.62, 0.57, 0.56, 0.56, 0.52, 0.52, respectively.

Considering the results obtained from the analysis, in order to increase consumer number and satisfaction, the following advices can be given to the store managers in Turkey.

(1) Stores should be built in the regions where the consumers could access easily. By providing service vehicles, the store managers should provide accessibility for the consumers. We know that this facility is available in some stores in Turkey. (2) Stores should improve new designs for easy accessibility to the products in the store. A suggestion for this is to hang illuminated signboards from ceiling showing products' place. In addition, it would be useful to provide a computer in the entrance of the store to locate

the place and code of the product by entering the searched products. (3) To have an atmosphere and chance for a plentiful time in the store (movie, game center, etc) is advised also. (4) Opportunities provided by the stores must be announced thru multimedia. Shortly, they should consider the importance of advertisements. (5) Especially assortment, quality, fresh products in the greengrocer and butcher departments take important role for the consumers. At these departments, consumers should be informed accurately about the products. (6) Selling improvement efforts should be increased by diversification. Consumer's suggestions should be asked for promotion services and the best service should be given. In addition, free shopping credit cards unique to stores should be provided to the consumers. (7) In order to improve service quality, Consumers' Advice and Complain Offices should be established to track their satisfaction and dissatisfaction after sales. In this way, problems met would be determined and necessary actions would be taken. (8) Considering that the attire of the sales personnel is an important factor for the consumer store choice, a convenient mode of dressing should be assigned. By in-service training of the sales personnel, they should be equipped with consumer focused behaviors, helpfulness and politeness during sales. These job characteristics should be asked for the candidate personnel, too. There should be an adequate parking place. Security services inside and outside of the store should be improved. (9) Ordering online or by phone system, which is not functionally applied in Turkey, should be improved.

Limitations and directions for future research

The measurement tool developed in the study is an initial and advisement model for the supermarket consumers in Turkey related to their store choice. For this reason, both the measurement tool and the model need to be improved. The rate of total variance explanation of the developed measurement tool is 62%. In order to decrease the unexplained section it is necessary to add the factors such as music, crowdedness, shelf order, worldview of the individual and etc. during future studies. Furthermore, validity of the developed measurement tool for the various social classes and different income groups should be compared. Beside these, the differences among other demographic variables such as gender, education, income, and family size, mode of living, region, nationality, and occupation were not inspected in this study. Store shopping in Turkey is growing rapidly and successfully. There is no doubt that there are social, physical and economical interruptions in this process. Research and investigation of them will form another study subject.

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