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A Comparison of the Shopping Preferences of College Age Apparel Shoppers in Turkey and the United States

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A COMPARISON OF THE SHOPPING PREFERENCES OF COLLEGE AGE APPAREL SHOPPERS IN TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES

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This study compared the store attribute preferences of college-age apparel shoppers in Turkey with those of their United States counterparts. The American respondents were selected from a convenience sample of students from a Midwestern university. The Turkish respondents consisted of a convenience sample of undergraduate and graduate students from two urban universities. Ninety-six surveys were given in Turkey and 113 were given in the United States to currently enrolled female and male undergraduate and graduate students between the ages of 17 and 51, yielding 204 usable surveys at a 97 percent response rate. Twenty-one shopping preferences were included in the survey instrument, such as physical store characteristics, pricing, value for the money, payment, credit card acceptance, and return policies. General demographics were also collected. Hypothesis 1 stated that US respondents would perceive service attributes to be more important than Turkish respondents. Contrary to Hypothesis 1 Turkish respondents were found to rate several service attributes higher than US respondents. Hypothesis 2 stated that there would be no difference in the importance of store attributes for Turkish respondents based on gender. Hypothesis 2 was partially corroborated. There were significant results for only three of the nine store attributes tested.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the results of survey research conducted in 2004 comparing the shopping preferences of college-age apparel shoppers in the US and Turkey. Modern retailing is replacing the traditional retail formats in Turkey. Consumers are being presented with more choices than ever. The process of retail internationalization is gaining momentum, and retailing is fast becoming a global industry (Homburg, Hoyer, & Fassnacht, 2002). Retailers in the new millennium are driven by the opportunities in developing economies, high economic growth rates, growing middle class, weakness of local retailers and the maturation of retailing in the developed economies (Goldman, 2001). These trends can be attributed to rising standards of living, the development and advances in mass media, increased travel, increased technology and its sophistication, and the increased educational level of consumers across nations and cultures (Kaynak, Kucukemiroglu, & Odabasi, 1992).

Turkish consumers are gaining affluence and becoming more western in their outlook (Anonymous, 1993). The retail industry in Turkey is continuing to expand. Retailing is shifting from traditional, small traders to large domestic and foreign corporations (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999). The Turkish experience of retail change is very similar to that of Greece or Portugal. The timing and phases of change coincide with economic liberalization and democratization process in these countries, as well as global trends in retailing. The main changes came from Western Europe, first by new production and distribution techniques and then with investments by European multinational retailers in the 1980s and 1990s. Some luxury European retailers that have increased their market share in Turkey include Burberry, Chanel and Versace (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998). The rapidly growing consumer market in Turkey offers United States retailers a wide array of expansion opportunities (Anonymous, 1995). Several US retailers currently have a presence in Turkey including Dockers, Levi's, Toys R Us, DKNY, Calvin Klein, and ACE hardware (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998). Turkey continues to show great promise as an export market for US products (Fitzpatrick, 1995). Foreign and domestic retailers have enjoyed government incentives as well as the genuine curiosity of the growing Turkish middle-class. This initial success has encouraged other foreign retailers to expand into Turkey, even beyond its three major metropolitan areas of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. Domestic retailers have also begun to adapt new business practices in order to compete (Ozcan, 2001).

Alexander (1997) defines international retailing as "the management of retail operations in markets which are different from each other in their regulation, economic development, social conditions, cultural environment and retail structures" (p. 37). As global integration unfolds in the world's marketplaces, decision-making is becoming increasingly complex for consumers (Lysonski, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1996). Whereas in the 20th century global retailing focused on similarities of consumers, in the 21st century effective retailing will require understanding differences among consumers across boarders (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002). Due to the competitive saturation of domestic markets, many retailers are exploring market development strategies as a primary means of growth (Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001).

As retailers are looking for markets beyond their own boarders, culture has become an important construct for business researchers. Organizational behavior, corporate strategy, manufacturing and production, and business communications researchers have all considered the consequences of culture. Despite significant changes in the commercial environment, very little is known about the consumer decision-making process in various countries (Lysonski, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1996).

The area of international retailing is relatively new. Little attention has been given to cultural impacts of international retail environment (Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001). There is only now beginning to be a significant body of research in cross-cultural retailing (Newman & Foxall, 2003). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to contribute to this literature by comparing the shopping preferences of college-age apparel shoppers in Turkey to that of their US counterparts.

Understanding markets and cultures is imperative for expansion beyond a retailer's own border. Ignoring cultural influences has led many companies to centralize operations and marketing which, instead of increasing efficiency, has resulted in declining profitability (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002). Cultural information is important to retail firms in established markets, such as the US, if they intend to successfully enter a foreign market. Recent examples of the failure of international retailers to take culture into consideration include Kmart's withdrawal from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Singapore. Kmart's lack of success was largely caused by its failure to adapt its North American discount department store format to the conditions in these countries. Likewise, Carrefour has left Hong Kong because the territory could support only a few of its large hypermarkets (Goldman, 2001).

The past 25 years has brought a transition in away from small "mom and pop" stores to modern department stores and shopping malls (Ozcan, 2001). Retailing has long been an easy entry point for job seekers in Turkey, as small retailing does not require a particular skill or significant capital investment (Ozcan, 2001). Following economic reforms implemented by the Turkish government in the 1980s, the shift of retail power is now moving away from small, independent retailers to large domestic and foreign owned corporate retailers (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999).

Significance of Study

This study can contribute to the literature on international retailing in several ways, first by gaining further understanding that culture is related to shopping preferences. Information regarding culture and shopping preferences can be useful to retailers when entering a foreign market and determining a retail strategy for that market. Particularly with such a young and curious population, apparel retailers and merchandisers may be incorrectly diagnosing specific store attributes and service offerings that may enhance the shopping experience for the Turkish consumer. In addition, combining shopping preferences with demographic information can provide an improved understanding of the targeted customers (Orhan, Oumlil, & Tuncalp, 1999). Retailers, both Turkish and non-Turkish retailers may benefit from this study by gaining further understanding of what shopping preferences Turkish apparel customers are looking for. Moreover, Turkish retailers looking to expand into the US market also may gain information from this research in order to identify the shopping preferences of US consumers.

Definition of Problem

Turkey's economy is growing; therefore the level of investment by retailers is expected to grow (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998). Turkish shoppers are encouraging the expansion of foreign retailers by increasingly purchasing imported products. As the Turkish economy prospers, the size of the consumer class is increasing. Turkey already possesses a very wealthy, western-oriented upper class and a sizable and growing middle class of salaried workers and small business owners who are becoming major consumers of imports (Anonymous, 1995). Forecasts indicate that per capita incomes in Turkey will more than double by the year 2020, potentially making Turkey the 10th largest economy in the world (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001).

Cross-cultural research suggests that consumers from different cultures may expect different things from the shopping experience (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002; Hong & Koh, 2002; Lysonski, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1996). As stores seek out markets beyond their traditional economic and cultural borders, retailers must understand the tastes, standards and culture of a foreign market if they are going to compete successfully in that marketplace.

Additionally, retailers must be able to draw customers and maintain their patronage (Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001). Store attributes are a primary way retailers attract new clientele. Consumers show preference or lack of preference for stores or brands by expressing a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the store. Consumers with a favorable attitude toward a store are more likely to patronize the store and buy its products (Moye & Kincade, 2003). Foreign retailers entering the Turkish market should take store attributes that draw customers into consideration as they develop merchandising strategies. Existing store layouts, fixtures, and service elements that have been successfully utilized in other countries may not enhance the shopping experience of the Turkish consumer. Likewise, it is important for foreign retailers entering the US market to consider the shopping preferences of US consumers. Service and merchandising attributes preferred by Turkish consumers may not be as desirable to US shoppers.

The effect of atmosphere and décor elements on customers is recognized by managers and mentioned in virtually all marketing and retailing behavior texts (Bitner, 1992). The internal store environment includes all elements that contribute to the shopping atmosphere (Terblanch & Boshoff, 2001). The physical store environment provides a visual image of the retailers' offerings (Bitner, 1992). Common shopping elements of the physical retail environment include traffic aisles, fixtures, lighting, color, and merchandise. Non-physical shopping elements are also important factors in consumer patronage decisions. Non-physical shopping elements include prices, payment options shopping hours, and systems for handling customer complaints (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

More research is needed that will help retailers understand consumers in foreign markets (Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001). International retailing has become the norm rather than the exception, with the clothing sector dominating the international retail landscape (Myers, 2003). Comparing consumer shopping preferences across nations and cultures and the relevant issues on an international basis deserve attention (Kaynak, Kucukemiroglu, & Odabasi, 1992). The existing research has identified price and quality, service and store characteristics as the primary factors that apparel shoppers identify with when making store patronage decisions (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002; Hong & Koh, 2002; Kaynak, Kucukemiroglu, & Odabasi, 1992; Newman & Foxall, 2003; Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001).

While retailers expand further beyond national borders, they will need insights that may assist them in building profitable merchandising strategies. This study compared shopping preferences among college-age consumers in Turkey and the US. This information may be useful to US retailers entering the Turkish market, as well as Turkish retailers seeking to further understand their domestic market.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Economic History and Development in Turkey

Turkey is poised to become a major market for retailers. Due to the continuing modernization of the Turkish economy, continuing negotiations for acceptance into the European Union and a growing middle class, the retail industry in Turkey is developing at a rapid rate. Occupying a landmass roughly the size of Texas, Turkey's current population is approximately 60 million and is estimated to reach 120 million by the year 2020 (Corro, 1994; Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). Turkey is arguably the most developed Muslim country and is being taken as an economic development model by other Middle Eastern countries[1] (Kaynak, Kucukemiroglu, & Odabasi, 1995; Toksöz, 2002).

Turkey is the most significant export market for American products and services in Eurasia, which includes Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the countries of the Black Sea region (Fitzpatrick, 1995). Turkey's economy is one of the largest outside of the industrialized world (Anonymous, 1995; Loewendahl & Loewendahl , 2001; Toksöz, 2002). During the period from 1981 to 1993, Turkey's economic growth averaged 5% annually (Anonymous, 1995; Corro, 1994; Nas & Perry, 2000). Because of a lack of consumer confidence in 1994, the economy suffered a minor crisis, but then recovered in 1995 with a growth rate of over 8%. The average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the years 1995 to 2000 was 4.2%. The Turkish government estimates growth for the years 2005 to 2023 to be over 7% per year (Embassy of Turkey, 2004). Compared

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[1] *Business Middle East (2000) defines the Middle East as: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.*

to the rest of the globe, Turkey's GDP growth is above average. Using 2002 statistics for comparison, Turkeys 7.8% GDP growth rate is higher than the world average of 2.7%, Egypt's 1.7%, the United Kingdom's 1.6%, Greece's 3.5%, or the United States 2.45%. Turkey was ranked number thirteen in percent of GDP growth for the year 2002 (US Central Intelligence Agency, 2003).

Stated in US dollars, Turkey's GDP for 2002 was $468 billion, which is distinctly higher than other nations in the region, including Egypt, $268 billion; Greece, $201 billion; Bulgaria, $50 billion; and Syria, $59 billion (US Central Intelligence Agency, 2003). Turkey is the largest economy in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Black Sea region and the Middle East. It is the European Union's sixth largest trading partner and the world's seventh largest emerging economy (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001).

Turkey is considered by the U.S. Export-Import Bank as a top potential market for American exports and offers all its programs in Turkey. The Export-Import Bank provides working capital guarantees (i.e., pre-export financing), export credit insurance (i.e., post-export financing), loan guarantees and direct loans (i.e., buyer financing) to US companies looking to export to international markets. Turkey is also one of the top five recipients of Trade Development Agency funds for feasibility studies where US goods could be purchased (Corro, 1994; Export-Import Bank of the United States, 1999). The US Department of State lists Turkey as one of the world's ten "Big Emerging Markets" (US Department of State, 2000). This designation is significant as it demonstrates the awareness and enthusiasm the US has for economic growth in Turkey.

The economic reforms instituted by the Turkish government in the 1980s include restructuring and privatization of state banks, fiscal adjustments in the macro-economic framework designed to reduce inflation and interest rates, and implementing reforms for the generation of employment (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998; Tokatli, 2003;

Toksöz, 2002; World Bank Country Brief on Turkey, 2004). An additional outcome of these reforms is that Turkey grants all rights, incentives, and privileges that are available to domestic firms to foreign investors (Anonymous 1995; Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). As a result of the economic reforms, several large Turkish companies such as Koç, Sabanci and Çukurova have opened businesses, including manufacturing and retailing (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999). Turkey is also promoting itself as a bridge between the capital-rich world and the former Soviet republics. For firms with an efficiency-seeking strategy inside the European market, Turkey is the only non-European Union member to have a customs union with the EU (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001).

Investment in retail capital is now emerging as a major player in the region, leaving behind previously favored investments in the textile and automobile industries. Investors from other sectors such as manufacturing and construction have begun to see retailing as a new opportunity for investment. An increasing number of medium-size retailers as well as wholesalers have been investing in their hometown and nearby regions. Voluntary chains and buying groups have also been set up by small retailers in order to cope with the new retail market. Retailing is characterized by high returns and relatively low risks in a fast growing economy with a young population (Ozcan, 2001).

Turkey has moved from the periphery of Europe to the center of the new political and economic reality of Eurasia. This region and Turkey, in particular, are attracting attention due to its position as a key transport corridor linking the East and West. Turkey has historic, cultural, and linguistic ties with the majority of the countries in this region (Oral, 1999).

Retailing in Turkey

History

The Turkish government has been enthusiastic about introducing modern retailing. The creation of a business class, or entrepreneurial bourgeoisie, began soon after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. The properties and enterprises left by departing Greeks, Armenians and Jews were given to the many returning émigrés from the lost provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The large domestic market, the oligopolistic structure, strong support and protection from the government made easy profits possible. The entrepreneurial environment provided by the government was accompanied by the proliferation of a large number of small manufacturing and commercial enterprises including a large number of wholesalers and retailers. Retailing became a trade known both for its ease of entry and high rate of attrition (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999).

The Turkish government was the first to set up large retail stores (Ozcan, 2001). Until the 1980s, the government had remained very involved in the creation and support of retailers, acting both as an investor and regulator of the retail industry. The government's role varied from determining food prices to establishing public retail businesses through co-operatives and state companies. State control, however, had ultimately brought inflexibility and encouraged the black market and unfair competition.

Following the economic reforms of the 1980s, several American and European retailers expanded into the Turkish market. Examples include Mothercare (1988) and Marks & Spencer (1995) from England, Benetton (1986) and Sisley (1991) from Italy, Levi's from the United States (1989), and Printemps from France (1987). These retailers generally located in the three major cities in western Turkey: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Most foreign retailers, with the exception of Marks & Spencer, Benetton and

Levi's, pulled out of Turkey after a few years due to poor sales. Some reasons for lack of success were the then relatively low level of disposable income and mobility of the urban population (Ozcan, 2001).

Neighborhood and Regional Retailers

The first department stores owned by large apparel manufacturers were established in the 1960s, such as Beymen and Yeni Karamursel (Ozcan, 2001). Some of these stores carried their own brands manufactured in their own factories. This dual role of manufacturer and retailer has become more and more common in Turkey. Another regional Turkish department store that has been moderately successful in its local urban market is Vakko. This luxury retailer/manufacturer has expanded into 14 freestanding and mall-based specialty stores in Turkey and one in Germany. Many of the stores located in Turkey were opened with the help of the Turkish government. Additionally, Vakko brand merchandise is available in several other retailers such as Özdilek, Vakko boutiques in smaller cities and a duty free shop at the Atatürk International Airport in Istanbul (Vakko, 2004).

The Turkish retail industry is still dominated by small "mom and pop" single-location retailers called a *bakkal* (literally a corner store) and located on the street level of almost any main or side street. These stores cater to the immediate neighborhood and are most often surrounded by similar size shops of approximately 20–50 square meters. They may sell anything from draperies (a *tuhafiyeci*), meat (a *kasap*), groceries (a *manav*), electronics, cellular phones or appliances. For the most part, these single-location retailers make their location decisions on the basis of intuitive judgment, experience, familiarity, coincidence and trade from their own identifiable locations (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998). The number and types of these stores in an area is very much determined by the socio-economic class occupying the area. Small retailers account for 62% of the retail turnover in the country. However, recent studies show that small retailers are beginning to lose their market share (Ozcan, 2001).

Clothing in these stores is often merchandised on large, low tables, piled several feet high with garments. The sidewalk immediately in front of the store may have one table for sweaters, one for pants and one for shirts. Battered mannequins are often standing at attention on the sidewalk in front displaying the day's offerings. This sidewalk display has been the dominant system of retailing for both food and clothing. Due to the low entry costs involved with renting and stocking a small store, and no need for specific skills, retail entrepreneurship has traditionally been a straightforward opportunity for job seekers in Turkey.

Development of International and Multi-Unit Retailing

Efforts to introduce large international retailing in Turkey were less than successful until the economic reforms of the past 20 years (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001; Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999; Tokatli, 2003; Toksöz, 2002; World Bank, 2004). Some reasons for the lack of success for Turkish retailers was the absence of many of the supportive businesses that are required to expand a retail operation, ranging from store refurbishment to retail specific software and hardware. Capital accumulation was also very small for many retailers, and investors from other sectors did not find retailing profitable enough at the time (Ozcan, 2001).

The evolution from a single store to a larger multi-store operation is difficult. The trend in most European countries has been for small retailers to increase the size of one location as opposed to opening a second one (Kacker, 1987). Again, the lack of support services in Turkey has been a major factor preventing Turkish retailers from expanding into multi-unit operations. Until the late 1980s there were only two Turkish companies that produced retail shelf systems, for example. The introduction of the bar code system in the 1990s was slow to catch on due to the lack of available retail-specific technology systems and software. Small-scale, capital-weak, independent and family-owned retailers dominated the trade (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998).

In recent years, other American and European specialty apparel stores have again begun to move into the ever-growing number of modern shopping malls that are appearing in Turkish cities. Currently Benetton, DKNY, Calvin Klein, Mango, Tommy Hilfiger, Dockers and Levi's all have a significant presence in the upscale Turkish retail market. As these stores continue to expand the American and European market presence in Turkey, they will lead the way for other specialty and department stores to follow their example. Pizza Pizza (Canada), McDonald's, Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken all entered the Turkish market in the 1980s while Subway and Burger King entered in the 1990s. All have continued to expand into large to medium-sized cities in Turkey. The success and expansion of these stores is a significant indicator of the potential for modern retailing in Turkey (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998).

Modern Shopping Center Development

Part of the economic incentives instituted by the Turkish government were domestic and foreign investment for retailers beginning in 1985, including the development of modern shopping malls (Ozcan, 2001). There is now more demand for large and suitably sited stores where retailers can sell a full range of items. Stores of this size are rarely readily available in an existing location in most Turkish neighborhoods. Property is more important for a large multi-location retail operation than a small, independent, single store location (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998). The first modern shopping center in Turkey, the Galeria, was based on an American model and opened in the Atakoy district of Istanbul in 1988 (Aslanyürek, 1999; Ozcan, 2001). Subsequently several other large shopping centers have been opened in Turkey. The

Bilkent Center in Ankara (50,000 square meters) opened in 1998, and Tepe M1 Shopping Center (68,000 square meters) in Gaziantep opened in 1999. The Tepe M1 Shopping Center was the first attempt to open a modern mall outside one of Turkey's three major cities. These centers have been able to attract anchor stores from the West, including Toys R Us from the United States and Marks & Spencer from the United Kingdom. According to the real estate company *Kuzey Bati Gayrimenkul Danismanlik*, besides shopping malls and centers, there is also significant retail space development within new office plazas in Istanbul (Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998).

With extensive mall developments and the growing shopping districts in major urban areas, specialty retailing is developing rapidly, both for international and indigenous brands. Local brands especially are transforming their focus from being manufacturer-driven to more consumer-driven with a chain-store mentality. This evolution is also contributing to the beginning of brand development for Turkish apparel retailers and manufacturers (Oral, 1998).

Shopping mall development is also becoming a trend in the region. Some other recent Middle East shopping developments are the Al Faisaliah Mall and Kingdome Mall both in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the Souq Sharq Mall in Kuwait (Young, 2001). Virgin Megastores, from the United Kingdom, has also recently opened a store in Beirut. These developments provide further examples of the potential for growth of retailing in the region. Foreign retailers in some Middle East countries are required to form joint ventures in which the foreign partner is limited to 49 percent equity (Jones, 2003). Joint venture agreements are not required for retailers seeking to enter the Turkish market.

Turkish Consumers

Since the 1950s and particularly since the 1980s Turkey has been undergoing rapid economic and social changes that are in line with the worldwide trends toward liberalization and globalization. Turkey has the fastest growing mobile phone, Internet and information technology markets in Europe (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). Modern Turkish youth have a relatively individualistic orientation and they emphasize freedom, self-respect and autonomy far more than their parents' generation. Such an individualistic orientation of the younger generation may be more prominent among the better-educated urban population. A relatively liberal family environment and openness to the influences of the mass media may foster individualistic orientations among such urban youth (Aygün & Imamoglu, 2002). As stated in Aygün's conclusion, "Since the liberalism-oriented socioeconomic changes from the 1980s, the present Turkish sample[2] seemed to emphasize a new pathway involving social power, status, recognition, and achievement-oriented self enhancement. Such power and achievement related concerns can be regarded as transitional values in a society undergoing change from traditionalism to modernism" (p. 345).

Turkey's average literacy rate is over 91% for 10 to 29 year olds and higher than other nations in the region such as Syria 64%, Egypt 48% or Iran 54% (US Census Bureau, 2003). Over 63 percent of Turkey's population is under the age of 29 (US Census Bureau, 2003). If the current birth rate continues, Turkey will double its population by 2020, and its increasingly affluent middle class will generate demand for consumer goods (Corro, 1994; Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). The new generation of consumers will have grown up with satellite television, the Internet and international

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[2] *Aygün's study sample consisted of 202 Turkish respondents (101 university students and 101 adults).*

fashion magazines. They are increasingly aware of the variety and quality of goods available to them from outside Turkey.

The recent economic growth and rising incomes have greatly improved Turkey's standard of living and the dynamism of its marketplace (Corro, 1994; Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999). Stated in US dollars, the per capita income for 2002 was $7047, an increase from the 1998 levels of $6470 (Embassy of Turkey, 2004; Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). These income levels place Turkey's population, in global terms, in the upper-middle income level (Martin, 1997). Turkish government forecasts indicate that per capita income will reach $20,000 by the year 2020, making Turkey the 10th largest economy in the world (Loewendahl & Loewendahl, 2001). This per capita increase in income is considerable and will significantly contribute to the further development of the middle class in Turkey. These new consumers will be imperative to the success of modern Turkish retailing.

Many contemporary studies have determined the growing demand for designer, luxury and high quality goods by Turkish consumers (Aygün & Imamoglu, 2002; Jones, 2003; Tokatli & Boyaci, 1999; Young, 2001). This demographic is the prime target of new and established retailers in Turkey's rapidly expanding marketplace. Apparel items are also one of the fastest growing markets for Middle East consumers (Young, 2001). The population of the Middle East region is approximately 283 million, making it comparable to the markets of the European Union and the United States (Thompson, 2001).

Shopping Preferences

Lindquist (1974) states that store image and attributes can be hypothetically grouped into nine categories: merchandise, service, clientele, physical facilities, convenience, promotion, store atmosphere, institutional factors and post-transaction satisfaction. These factors are used by consumers to make decisions on which stores to patronize (Lindquist, 1974). Consumers place emphasis on different store attributes, which influence patronage and purchase decisions (Moye & Kincade, 2003). Understanding what shopping preferences consumers react favorably to may assist a retailer with merchandising their store and developing a retail strategy. All shoppers, regardless of their ability to pay, seek stores whose total image is acceptable and appealing to them individually. Additionally, what image is acceptable may also vary by culture (Martineau, 1958).

Many US and international store-image, attribute and environment studies have identified merchandising attributes that are important to customers (Goldman, 2001; Kumar & Karande, 2000; Lindquist, 1974; Tokatli, 2003; Turnbull & Wilson, 1989). Retail atmospheres are often designed to create a buying environment that produces specific emotional effects that will enhance consumers' likelihood of purchase. Both the functional attributes (e.g., merchandise type) and the emotional attributes (e.g., pleasantness) that consumers' elicit in their mind determine the store's personality (Kumar & Karande, 2000).

A service oriented business strategy is a key for building strong customer relationships (Homburg & Garbe, 1999). In the 1990's, many retail companies acknowledged the critical importance of being customer-oriented and customer-driven in all their activities (Darian, Tucci, & Winman, 2001). Service attributes include a staff that efficiently deals with customer complaints, a fair policy of returns and exchanges, and an effective system of dealing with customer enquiries, credit options, payment terms, and handing customer complaints (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

Store attributes include all elements that contribute to a pleasant shopping atmosphere. These elements include store layout, aisles that make it easy to shop, store cleanliness, well placed displays, and attractive décor (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001). The physical environment and atmosphere can assume a variety of roles in the marketing and management strategies of a retailer. Store attributes provide a visual metaphor for a retailer's total offering (Bitner, 1992). The physical store environment can also serve as a differentiator to position and distinguish a retailer from the competition. The physical environment of a store consists of a wide range of elements (Orhan, Oumlil, & Tuncalp 1999). Some of the common elements of the physical store environment include the floor space allocated to various functions, traffic flow, width of aisles, fixtures, construction and finishing characteristics such as flooring, wall textures, density of merchandise, lighting and color (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

Price is important in the consumer decision-making process (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001). Price is a generally controllable cue of a produce that influences the way a shopper perceives the quality of a produce (Sirohi, McLaughlin & Wittink, 1998). Price affects the in-store shopping experience by influencing a shoppers perception of the value received, fairness, and quality of the product (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

College age apparel shoppers are a large economic force. In 2002, US consumers under the age of 25 spent over 11 billion dollars a year on apparel and related items (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002). Fashion retailers face increasing competition from new entrants as well as existing competitors. Many of these retailers are continuously trying to improve their market position by re-evaluating the product and service provision while investing in new store layouts and fixtures. These marketing strategies aim to strengthen the retailer's market position with the objective of focusing the customer attention on their stores (Birtwistle, Clarke, & Freathy, 1998). Consumer researchers have stressed the significance of in-store architecture and cues and have evaluated the importance of in-store features such as atmosphere, smell, color, music, merchandise, layout, fixtures and store image (Newman & Foxall, 2003). The relationship between preferred store attributes and personal demographics suggests that variations such as age, education, and income may lead to preferences for specific store attributes even though the same benefits were sought (Hong & Koh, 2002).

Hypotheses

Adding value to a product through customer service can be used to strengthen a retailer's market position over time (Turnbull & Wilson, 1989). Many retailers are continuously trying to improve their market position by re-evaluating the service they offer (Birtwistle, Clarke, & Freathy, 1998). The concept of customer service is still relatively new in Turkey as opposed to in the US. Turkish consumers are only now being exposed to, and beginning to expect, higher levels of service from retailers. These perceptions are created by the importance attached to the factors, which contribute to store choice (Osman, 1993). Because US consumers are more accustomed to higher levels of customer service Turkish consumers, it is expected that:

H_1 US respondents will rate retail service attributes higher than Turkish respondents.

In the US, several studies have focused on the differences and similarities in consumption patterns by gender. Retailers try to enable men to fulfill their achievement oriented shopping style partially by treating male shoppers as self-reliant, capable, assertive consumers. American men have been found to exhibit more loyal patterns to domestic retailers than American women (Otnes & McGrath, 2001).

In contrast to the US population, little research has been done in Turkey about shopping preferences. Cross cultural research suggests that culture is a determinant of some types of shopping behaviors, including shopping motivations and purchase patterns (Nicholls, Li Mandokovie, Rsolow & Krandendonk, 2000) information search (Dawar, Parker & Price, 1996 and response to situational factors (Nicholls, Roslow & Comer, 2002). Straughan & Albers-Miller found in their study of US, Australian, French and South Korean respondents, women are likely to be more responsive to international retailers and thus represent a more attractive target market (Straughan & Albers-Miller, 2001).

There is little research on the role of gender in shopping behavior in non-Western cultures. In Western retailing, gender differences in shopping styles justify specific changes in fashion store formats and space allocation (Newman & Foxall, 2003). In the US, shopping habits differ between men and women (Verdisco, 1999). American men spend only about 3 hours a week shopping as opposed to women who spend over 8 hours a week shopping (Fram & Ajami, 1994). Women in the US tend to be more hedonistic in their shopping motivations, while men tend to be more utilitarian (Otnes & McGrath, 2001). Women are the primary shoppers in America (Verdisco, 1999). Moreover, approximately 85 percent of everything sold in the United States is bought or influenced by a woman (Quinlan, 2003). For this reason, many retail stores are typically more feminine than masculine in décor and atmosphere (Otnes & McGrath, 2001). Otnes & McGrath also state that it is important to make men feel comfortable in retail stores that have traditionally designed for women, suggesting that retail managers should enable men to be in control of their interaction with the merchandise.

The Turkish socio-cultural context is characterized by close nuclear family relationships and loyalty to the family (Aygün & Imamoglu, 2002). In the traditional Turkish family, gender roles have traditionally been parallel with traditional gender stereotypes, with men as the supporter of the family and women as the nurturing influence in the family. In line with modernization and economic development, men and women in Turkey are breaking with traditional gender roles and participating in all aspects of the family (Aygün & Imamoglu, 2002). In contrast to men and women in the US, men and women in Turkey spend almost the same amount of time shopping, just over 4 hours a week (Fram & Ajami, 1994), implying that Turkish men and women share more equally in household shopping responsibilities than in the US. The motivations for shopping of Turkish men and women may therefore be more similar than those of US men and women. Therefore, it is expected that:

H_2 There will be no significant difference between Turkish men's and women's rating of store attributes.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to compare the shopping preferences of college-aged apparel shoppers in Turkey to those of their US counterparts.
Human Subject Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) approval of survey design was granted. (See appendix item A.) The survey instrument was administered to a convenience sample of university students in Turkey and the US.

Sample Selection

A survey instrument was given to a convenience sample of Turkish and US university students. The respondents were enrolled in both public and private universities in the case of Turkey, and a public university in the case of the US. The public Turkish university has an enrollment of approximately 9,000, and the private Turkish university's enrollment is approximately 2,000. Both universities offer undergraduate and graduate degrees. The public US university's enrollment is approximately 29,000 and offers undergraduate and graduate degrees. These universities were chosen due to connections to the researcher.

University students were chosen for this study because of their potential as middle to upper income consumers. Higher levels of education are among the better predictors of income (Lin, 1996). A greater number of Turks are graduating from universities, seeking better jobs, and with 63% of the population under the age of twenty-nine, they are an attractive demographic for the emerging retail industry in Turkey.

Instrumentation

A survey instrument originally developed by Terblanche & Boshoff (2001) was adapted for use in Turkey. The original instrument was developed to measure the in-store shopping experience at the store level, which consists of a variety of different dimensions controlled by the retailer (e.g. a pleasant shopping atmosphere, reasonable check out times, attractive product displays, reasonable prices, and convenient payment options). The original instrument was found to demonstrate high levels of reliability, discriminate validity, convergent validity and construct validity (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001). The instrument is consistent with the guidelines for development of a multi-item scale established by Churchhill (as cited in Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001) and is based on the results of two empirical surveys (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2001).

The instrument for this study was translated from English into Turkish for administration to the Turkish sample. (See Appendix item B.) The translation from English to Turkish was completed by a bi-lingual Turkish graduate research assistant at the Izmir University of Economics, Izmir, Turkey. In order to maintain the integrity of the original instrument, it was then back translated from Turkish into English by the chair of the foreign language department at the Izmir University of Economics. After final translation both and English and Turkish versions were given to several Turkish-English bilingual faculty members at the Izmir University of Economics for further review. The instrument was reported to have maintained validity. The English version of the instrument was used for data collection from the US students. (See Appendix item C.)

Instrument items were organized into four separate sections: (a) store attributes, (b) merchandise attributes, (c) service attributes, and (d) basic demographic information. The first three sections used a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from extremely important to not important. The fourth section of the instrument included multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. The instrument items addressed the respondent's preference for the controllable physical and service attributes during the in-store apparel shopping experience (e.g., check out times, store décor, cleanliness, and payment and credit options).

Data Collection Procedure

A faculty member or graduate student at the respective universities administered the surveys during the Fall 2003 and Spring 2004 academic terms. Turkish and US participants completed the four-part, twenty-eight item survey regarding their preferences for store attributes relating to store design, atmosphere, price, quality and store policies. The Turkish surveys were administered to classes at both universities in urban areas. One university was located in the southern Mediterranean region and the other was located western Aegean region of Turkey. The Turkish respondents were enrolled in two agriculture classes and one textile & apparel class. The US university was located in the Midwest. The US respondents were enrolled in two textile & apparel classes and one consumer education class.

The researcher provided verbal instructions to the respondents in English (See appendix item D) and Turkish (See appendix item E) respectively, in accordance with HSIRB protocol, prior to the respondents beginning the survey. The researcher administering the surveys then placed the surveys in a sealed envelope. The Turkish surveys were then placed in an additional preaddressed envelope and shipped via registered carrier to the researcher. The researcher administered the US surveys and followed HSIRB protocol.

The Turkish respondents consisted of 96 undergraduate and graduate students. The US respondents consisted of 113 undergraduate students. Two hundred nine surveys were distributed yielding 207 usable surveys at a 99 percent response rate. (See Table 1.) There were 57 male and 160 female respondents. (See Table 2.) Eighteen Turkish respondents were married and 189 were single. All of the US respondents were single. (See Table 3.) Over 78% of the Turkish respondents were seniors or graduate students and just over 37% of the US respondents were seniors and there were no graduate student respondents. (See Table 4.) Over 58% of the Turkish respondents reported a household income level[3] of $7047. (See Table 5.) More than 68% of US respondents reported a household income level over the US average[4] income of $39, 412.

Table 1

Age Distribution of Respondents.

Country	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*
Turkey	94	19	41	23.2	3.9
United States	113	17	51	20.8	3.8

[3] *Stated in US dollars. Data about average family income levels in Turkey was not available.*
[4] *Information obtained from US Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey Profile.*

Table 2

Gender Distribution of Respondents.

Gender	US Frequency	US Percent	Turkey Frequency	Turkey Percent
Male	9	7.9	48	51.1
Female	104	92.1	46	48.9

US *n*=113, Turkey *n*=94

Table 3

Marital Status of Respondents.

	US Frequency	US Percent	Turkey Frequency	Turkey Percent
Married	0	0	18	5.2
Unmarried	113	100	76	94.8

US *n*=113, Turkey *n*=94

Table 4

Education Levels of Respondents.

	US Frequency	US Percent	Turkey Frequency	Turkey Percent
Freshman	21	18.6	1	1.1
Sophomore	30	26.5	9	9.6
Junior	20	17.7	10	10.6
Senior	42	37.2	50	53.2
Graduate level	0	0	24	25.5

US *n*=113, Turkey *n*=94

Table 5

Turkish Income Levels.

*Income Level	*n*	Percent
4,030 and under	9	9.9
4,030 to 8,060	28	30.8
8060 to 16,120	25	27.5
16,120 to 32,240	19	20.9
64,480 and above	10	11.0

n=91

*Stated in US dollars using a conversion rate of $1.00 = 1,488,661 Turkish Lira.

Table 6

US Income Levels.

*Income Level	*n*	Percent
14,000 and under	14	13.3
14,000 to 28,000	10	9.5
28,000 to 56,000	9	8.6
56,000 to 112,000	49	46.7
112,000 and above	23	21.9

n=105
*Stated in US dollars.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences 11.5 (SPSS) using *t*-tests to assess mean differences between Turkish and US respondents. Items in the survey instrument representing retail store attributes and patronage perceptions were assessed. *T*-tests for two independent variables was used because it is the appropriate test to employ for contrasting the means of two independent samples. Significance for *t*-tests was set at .05.

Mean Responses: Turkish and US Shopping Preferences

Turkish and American respondents rated their preferences differently, Turkish respondents rated store layout that makes it easy to find what they needed as the most important followed, by convenient payment options and reasonable prices as the third most important. Well-placed product displays, attractive product displays and attractive décor were rated lowest by Turkish respondents. (See Table 7.)

US respondents rated a clean store as most important followed by prices that reflect the quality of the product and reasonable prices. Convenient shopping hours, convenient payment options and an effective system for dealing with customer complaints were rated the lowest by US respondents. (See Table 8.)

Both Turkish and US respondents rated reasonable prices as important. A possible reason for the similar rating may be in the highly competitive US market, price is a major factor in how retailers compete for customers. The lower average incomes in Turkey make price a factor in where consumers decide to shop.

Table 7

Mean Responses: Turkish Shopping Preferences.

Store Attribute	*M*	*SD*
A store layout that makes it easy to find what you need	4.62	.74632
Convenient payment options	4.55	.78449
Reasonable prices	4.54	.69601
A staff that effectively deals with customer complaints	4.51	.68383
Store layout and aisles that make it easy to shop	4.46	.77184
A clean store	4.45	.88448
An effective system for dealing with customer enquiries	4.44	.81377
A fair policy of returns and exchanges	4.39	.81936
A pleasant shopping atmosphere	4.38	.93734
Acceptance of all major credit cards	4.32	1.04097
Products at prices that represent a good value	4.32	.87238
Prices that reflect the value of the products	4.31	.89041
A convenient shopping environment	4.31	.82852
A fair system for dealing with complaints	4.28	.95740
Prices that reflect the quality of the product	4.25	.94496
Products at prices that represent a good value	4.07	.93675
Reasonable check-out times	3.97	1.19117
Convenient hours which the store is open for shopping	3.93	.99254
Well-spaced product displays	3.78	1.08630
Attractive product and promotional displays	3.76	1.18907
Attractive décor	3.73	1.15633

n=94

Table 8

Mean Responses: US Shopping Preferences.

Store Attribute	*M*	*SD*
A clean store	4.36	.61685
Prices that reflect the quality of the product	4.35	.71863
Reasonable prices	4.33	.67635
Products at prices that represent a good value	4.31	.69777
A pleasant shopping atmosphere	4.29	.73077
A store layout that makes it easy to find what you need	4.27	.79650
A fair policy of returns and exchanges	4.21	.77288
Products at prices that represent a good value	4.19	.71786
Reasonable check-out times	4.18	.67974
Prices that reflect the value of the products	4.15	.82987
Store layout and aisles that make it easy to shop	4.08	.79569
A staff that effectively deals with customer complaints	4.04	.77217
A convenient shopping environment	4.01	.86321
Attractive product and promotional displays	3.96	.94848
Convenient hours which the store is open for shopping	3.88	.78777
Convenient payment options	3.86	.95902
An effective system for dealing with customer enquiries	3.80	.80021
Attractive décor	3.80	.94763
A fair system for dealing with complaints	3.75	.80767
Acceptance of all major credit cards	3.73	1.15741
Well-spaced product displays	3.45	.99447

n=113

Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis 1 stated that US respondents would perceive service attributes to be more important than Turkish respondents. Contrary to the stated hypothesis, *t*-tests found Turkish respondents perceived 4 of the 7 service attributes to be more important than US respondents. The service attributes rated higher by Turkish respondents were convenient payment options (t = -5.558; $p < .001$), a staff that effectively deals with customer complaints (t= -4.555; $p < .001$), an effective system for dealing with enquiries (t = -5.630; $p < .001$), and acceptance of all major credit cards (t = -3.855; $p < .001$). There were no significant differences between Turkish and US respondents regarding the remaining three service attributes: a fair policy of returns and exchanges (t = -1.634; $p < .001$), the fairness of a stores return and exchange policies (t = -1.634; $p < .001$) and the convenience of the stores hours of operation (t = -.414; $p < .001$). (See Table 9.)

Hypothesis 2 stated that, for Turkish respondents, there would be no difference in the importance of store attributes based on gender for the Turkish sample. Hypothesis 2 was partially corroborated. *T*-tests found no significant results for the following store attributes: a pleasant shopping atmosphere, reasonable check-out times, a clean store, attractive product and promotional displays, attractive décor, and a store layout that makes it easy to find what you need.

There were significant differences based on gender for three variables. Men rated the following store attributes higher than women: a store layout that make it easy to shop (t = -2.316; $p < .05$), well-placed product displays (t = -2.289; $p < .05$), and convenient shopping environment (t = -2.139; $p < .05$). (See Table 10.)

Table 9

H_1. Mean differences between Turkish and US respondents on Service Attributes.

Store Attribute	*t*	*N*	Sig. (2-tailed)	*M* US	*M* Turkey	*M* dif.	*SE* dif.
A fair policy of returns and exchanges.	-1.634	205	.104	4.39	4.21	-.18	.1108
Acceptance of all major credit cards.	-3.855*	205	.000	3.73	4.33	-.59	.1544
Convenient payment options.	-5.558*	205	.000	3.87	4.55	-.68	.1234
Convenient hours which the store is open for shopping.	-.414	205	.679	3.88	3.94	-.05	.1237
A fair system for dealing with complaints.	-4.361*	205	.000	3.75	4.29	-.53	.1226
An effective system for dealing with customer enquiries.	-5.630*	205	.000	3.81	4.44	-.63	.1129
A staff that effectively deals with customer complaints.	-4.555*	205	.000	4.04	4.51	-.47	.1023

p < .001

Table 10

H_2. Mean differences between Turkish Female and Male Respondents on Shopping Preferences.

Store Attribute	*t*	*n*	Sig. (2-tailed)	*M* Turkey Men	*M* Turkey Women	*M* dif.	*SE* dif.
A pleasant shopping atmosphere.	-1.791	94	.076	4.22	4.56	-.34	.1902
Reasonable check out times.	-1.929	94	.057	3.75	4.21	-.47	.2422
A clean store.	-1.682	94	.096	4.31	4.61	-.30	.1798
Store layout and aisles that make it easy to shop.	-2.316*	94	.023	4.29	4.65	-.36	.1556
Attractive product and promotional displays.	-.2840	94	.777	3.73	3.80	-.07	.2453
Well placed product displays.	-2.289*	94	.024	3.54	4.04	-.50	.2192
A convenient shopping environment.	-2.139*	94	.035	4.14	4.50	-.36	.1669
Attractive décor.	1.029	94	.306	3.85	3.61	.24	.2385
A store layout that makes it easy to find what you need.	-1.222	94	.225	4.53	4.72	-.19	.1528

$p < .05$

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

There were differences in Turkish and US respondents in rating shopping preferences. Previous studies have identified that shopping preferences contribute to the shopping experience. Findings from this study could be used by retailers seeking to expand into the Turkish or US apparel market.

A possible reason why Turkish respondents may have rated the service attributes: convenient payment options, a staff that effectively deals with customer complaints, an effective system for dealing with enquiries, a fair policy of returns and exchanges, and acceptance of all major credit cards, higher than US respondents could be that the concept of western style service is in the introduction stage in Turkey and Turks are beginning to have higher expectations of the service they receive from retailers. Turkey is a country where retailing has traditionally been carried out in small, cramped neighborhood shops, open bazaars or in stores where items are literally laid out on a sidewalk. Under these conditions, it is the merchandise that makes the sale, not necessarily the retail atmosphere or level of customer service. Price, necessity or the individual attributes of a garment may have been the major factor in the decision whether to purchase or not. Where the Turkish shopper purchased the item, whether a mall or street side vendor, was not of as much concern. Turkish shoppers have not, in the past, received high levels of customer service, but this may be changing.

Foreign retailers are now beginning to provide increased levels of service and Turkish consumers are beginning to expect greater service from domestic and foreign retailers. A possibility for US respondents rating some service attributes lower than Turkish respondents may be that US respondents are more accustomed to higher levels of service and thus take it for granted. Implications for retailers entering the Turkish market would be for them to incorporate higher levels of service into new and existing retail stores, including payment options, credit card acceptance, and store staffs that are trained in handling customer complaints and inquiries. Domestic retailers should also consider adapting these service attributes in order to maintain and attract customers.

Today's highly competitive retail environment requires that the retailer gain some form of differential advantage. The predominant way for US retailers to differentiate is increasingly to pursue a merchandising and service oriented business strategy (Homburg, Hoyer, & Fassnacht, 2002). A customer always has an experience – good, bad or indifferent – when making a purchase from a store (Berry, Carbone, & Haeckel, 2002). US-style retailing and, thus, customer service as known in the US, are relatively new concepts in Turkey. Turkish consumers are only now coming to expect more service from the retailers they buy from (Aygün & Imamoglu, 2002). Augmenting products with service is a major way US retailers have of gaining differentiation in today's competitive market. As Turkish consumers become more accustomed to higher levels of service, retailers in Turkey may also have to begin differentiating themselves through products and services like their US counterparts. When competitive intensity is high in the local market, the retailer is typically under greater pressure to differentiate from the competition than when competition is lower (Homburg, Hoyer, & Fassnacht, 2002). One component of a store's "curb appeal" is the consumer's evaluation of the likelihood of receiving attention from store personnel, a factor that may be critical for a store that requires a high level of interaction between customers and employees. This curb appeal is especially important for small retailers in large malls who rely on recreational shoppers (Grewal, Baker, Levy, & Voss, 2003). As mall development in Turkey continues to gain momentum, information regarding a store's curb appeal may be important to small mom and pop stores that may decide to relocate from a traditional neighborhood location to a location in a modern mall.

Turkish men and women spend approximately the same shopping hours per week (Fram, 1994). One reason why Turkish men may have rated the last three store attributes higher than women did could be that they perceive shopping a necessity rather than a leisure or social activity and seek to be efficient while shopping. Turkish women rated two items as more important than Turkish men, "a store layout that makes it easy to find what you need" and a "store layout and aisles that make it easy to shop". These results may imply that women and men in Turkey do differ to some extent in some shopping habits.

Specific information about how Turkish men shop could be used by international and Turkish retailers in adapting merchandising techniques for stores that are likely to have more male shoppers. American men want to enter one store, buy a few items, and leave as quickly as possible (Otnes & McGrath, 2001). Turkish male respondents, by rating shopping preferences that would be related to ease of finding merchandise, may be exhibiting similar shopping habits as US males.

US retailers traditionally design and merchandise their stores to women (Otnes & McGrath, 2001). Results from this study suggest there is no significant difference between Turkish men's and women's ratings of atmosphere related items and reasonable check out times. Implications for retailers already in or seeking to enter the Turkish apparel market may be to be less 'gender specific' in the atmospheric elements of store design and merchandising.

Implications

Previous retail patronage studies (Birtwistle et al., 1998; Lindquist, 1974; Turnbull & Wilson, 1989) have identified that merchandise attributes (i.e. price, quality, selection) in conjunction with the service provided by the staff are especially important to customers when they purchase fashion clothing. A foreign retailer entering into the Turkish market should take culturally specific preferences, such as décor or credit card acceptance, into account when designing and merchandising their stores. This study found that for Turkish consumers, being able to find what they need easily, having convenient payment options, and reasonable prices are important when shopping for apparel. The findings of this study confirm other studies (Bertwistle et al., 1998; Bitner, 1992; Fram & Ajami, 1994; Hong & Koh, 2002; Newman & Foxall, 2003) that store, merchandise, and service attributes contribute positively to the customer shopping experience. The findings of this study also confirm studies (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002; Goldman, 2001; Jones, 2003; Tokatli & Boyaci, 1998) that expanding to foreign markets presents huge challenges for retail management, due to the variability of such factors as customer perception and culture.

As the Turkish retail market continues to expand, Turkish retailers, like their US counterparts, are also expanding beyond their own boarders. Mavi, a Turkish retailer and manufacturer, has recently expanded into the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, and the US. Mavi has opened its first US store in the Union Square district of New York City. This location was chosen specifically due to the high density of university students (Mavi, 2004). Several other Turkish retailers and designers have begun to expand into the US. Designers such as Rifat Ozbek and Hussein Chalayan have presented at US men's wear markets (Anonymous, 2003). The findings of this research may benefit Turkish retailers seeking to expand into the US market. By comparing the Turkish and US samples, a Turkish retailer could use the information from this study to ascertain the shopping preferences of US college age consumers. The Turkish retailer could then modify its merchandising practices to meet the needs of the US apparel market.

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study. The convenience sample is not representative of the US or Turkish populations. Variables, including limited sample size and the use of a statistically non-random sample, limit the scope of this study. An additional limitation of using this instrument is, at the time of this writing, it has not been tested in any languages other than English. The results and conclusions of this survey cannot be generalized to university students in the US or Turkey.

Further Research

Suggestions for further research would be to distribute the instrument to a broader segment of the population. With a randomly selected sample of university students, results could then be generalized to this population. Results from these types of studies can be used by both international and domestic apparel retailers in determining store attributes that are preferred by Turkish and US apparel shoppers.

Retailing in Turkey, and the rest of the world, is becoming increasingly internationalized. Stores are seeking customers and markets beyond their traditional borders. Understanding the shopping preferences of consumers in new marketplaces will be crucial for the success of stores as they expand into, and beyond, the Turkish and US markets. This study has highlighted some Turkish and US students shopping preferences.

APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Centennial
1903-2003 Celebration

Date: December 23, 2003

To: Barbara Frazier, Principal Investigator
William Perrine, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Mary Lagerwey, Ph.D., Chair Mary Lagerwey

Re: HSIRB Project Number 03-12-07

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Store Attribute Preferences for College Age Turkish Apparel Shoppers" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: December 23, 2004

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE TURKISH

"Store Attribute Preferences of College Age Turkish Apparel Shoppers"

Survey

William Perrine

Dr. Barbara Frazier

Western Michigan University

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008

United States of America

Kullanım Talimatları.... İlk olarak her bölümüm başında yer alan kutu içinde belırtilen talimati okuyunuz. Daha sonra ilk sütunda belmtimiş olan her mağaza / alışveriş özelliği içn seçim yapın. Sizin için en önemli olan özelliği yuvarlak içine alınız.

1. Bölüm

Kıyafet alışverişi yaparken, bana göre aşağıdaki mağaza özellikleri önemlidir:

Nitelik	çok önemli	önemli	yansız	biraz önemli	önemli değil
Memnuniyet verici bir alışveriş atmosferi	O	O	O	O	O
Ödeme yaparken harcanan zaman	O	O	O	O	O
Temiz bir mağaza	O	O	O	O	O
Kolay alışveriş imkanı sağlayan mağaza düzeni	O	O	O	O	O
Ürünlerin ve promosyonların çekici bir biçimde sunulması	O	O	O	O	O
Ürünlere yeterli yer ayrılması	O	O	O	O	O
Uygun bir alışveriş ortamı	O	O	O	O	O
Çekici bir dekor	O	O	O	O	O
Arananın kolayca bulunduğu mağaza düzeni	O	O	O	O	O

2. Bölüm

Kıyafet alışverişi yaparken, bana göre aşağıdaki fiyat ve ürün özellikleri önemlidir:

Nitelik	çok önemli	önemli	yansız	biraz önemli	önemli değil
Makul fiyatlar	O	O	O	O	O
Harcanan paranın değerini kareılayan fiyatlar	O	O	O	O	O
İyi bir değeri yansıtan fiyattaki ürünler	O	O	O	O	O
Ürünlerin değerini yansıtan fiyatlar	O	O	O	O	O
Ürünlerin kalitesini yansıtan fiyatlar	O	O	O	O	O

3. Bölüm

Kıyafet alışverişi yaparken, bana göre aşağıdaki mağaza kuralları önemlidir:

Nitelik	çok önemli	önemli	yansız	biraz önemli	önemli deg˘il
Ürün değiştirme ve iade konusundaki kurallar	O	O	O	O	O
Tüm kredi kartlarının kabulü	O	O	O	O	O
Uygun ödeme seçenekleri	O	O	O	O	O
Mağazanın açık olduğu saatler	O	O	O	O	O
Şikayetlerin dinlendiği bir sistem	O	O	O	O	O
Müşteri sorunlarıyla ilgilenilen etkin bir system	O	O	O	O	O
Müşteri şikayetleriyle etkin bir biçimde ilgilenen personel	O	O	O	O	O

4. Bölüm

Lütfen aşağıdaki soruları cevaplayınız:

Yaşınız	
Cinsiyetiniz	Bay O Bayan O
Medeni durumunuz	Evli O Bekar O
Evinizde yas¸ayan kaç kis¸i var?	Bir O Iki O Üç O Dört O Bes¸ O Altı O Yedi + O
Mesleg?iniz nedir?	

	500,000,000 TL'den az	**500,000,000 - 1,000,000,000**	**1,000,000,000 - 2,000,000,000**	**2,000,000,000 – 4,000,000,000**	**4,000,000,000 TL'den fazla**
Lütfen ailenizin aylık gelirini işaretleyiniz	O	O	O	O	O
Tahsil kazanmkak	O	O	O	O	O
	Bir Sene	Iki Sene	Üç Sene	Dört Sene	Bes¸ +

Zaman ayırdığınız ve araştırmamızda yardımcı olduğunuz için teşekkür ederiz.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE ENGLISH

"Store Attribute Preferences of College Age Turkish Apparel Shoppers"

Survey

William Perrine

Dr. Barbara Frazier

Western Michigan University

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008

United States of America

Directions...First read the statement in the box at the beginning of sections 1 through 3. Then, for each store/shopping feature listed in the first column, fill in the circle that best indicates how important the attribute is to you.

Part 1

When I am shopping for clothes for myself or others, the following store attributes are important to me:

Feature	Extremely Important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Not Important
A pleasant shopping atmosphere	O	O	O	O	O
Reasonable check-out times	O	O	O	O	O
A clean store	O	O	O	O	O
Store layout and aisles that make it easy to shop	O	O	O	O	O
Attractive product and promotional displays	O	O	O	O	O
Well-spaced product displays	O	O	O	O	O
A convenient shopping environment	O	O	O	O	O
Attractive décor	O	O	O	O	O
A store layout that makes it easy to find what you need	O	O	O	O	O

Part 2

When I am shopping for clothes for my self or others, I consider the following pricing and product items:

Feature	Extremely Important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Reasonable prices	O	O	O	O	O
Prices that offer value for the money	O	O	O	O	O
Products at prices that represent a good value	O	O	O	O	O
Prices that reflect the value of the products	O	O	O	O	O
Prices that reflect the quality of the product	O	O	O	O	O

Part 3

When I am shopping for clothes for my self or others, I consider the following policies of the store:

Feature	Extremely Important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Not Important
A fair policy of returns and exchanges	○	○	○	○	○
Acceptance of all major credit cards	○	○	○	○	○
Convenient payment options	○	○	○	○	○
Convenient hours which the store is open for shopping	○	○	○	○	○
A fair system for dealing with complaints	○	○	○	○	○
An effective system for dealing with customer enquiries	○	○	○	○	○
A staff that effectively deals with customer complaints	○	○	○	○	○

Part 4

Please answer the following questions:

What is your age?	
What is your gender?	Male O Female O
Are you:	Married O Single O
How many people are living in your household?	One O Two O Three O Four O Five O Six O Seven + O
What is your occupation?	
What is your education level?	O Freshman O Sophomore O Junior O Senior O Grad

	Less than US $ 14,000	**US $ 14,000 to 28,000**	**US $ 28,000 to 56,000**	**US $ 56,000 to 112,000**	**Over US $ 112,000**
Please check the following category that most accurately identifies your total annual family income.	O	O	O	O	O

Thank you for taking time to complete the survey and assisting us in our research.

APPENDIX D

RESEARCHER SCRIPT ENGLISH

My name is [ ]. I am working with William Perrine and Dr. Barbara Frazier from Western Michigan University on a project titled **"Store Attribute Preferences of College Age Turkish Apparel Shoppers"**. The survey has four parts and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue participation at any time. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate in the study. Should you decide to participate, your answers will be anonymous, and cannot be connected to you in any way. If you have any questions about the study later, you can call Mr. Perrine or the Vice President for Research at Western Michigan University. {Last sentence regarding phone number deleted for clarity.}

Thank you.

APPENDIX E

RESEARCHER SCRIPT TURKISH

Anketörün Bilgilendirme Notu

Adım .... Ben Western Michihan Üniversitesinden William C. Perrine ve Dr. Barbara Frazier ile birlikte **"Store Attribute Preferences of College Age Turkish Apparel Shoppers"** konulu arastırmada çalısıyorum. Anket 4 bölümden olusmaktadır ve yaklasık cevaplandırma süresi 15 dakkikadır. Ankete katılım istege baglıdır . Ankette katılmak istemeyenler için herhangi bir yaptırım uygulanmaz. Ankete katılanların isimleri kullanılmayacak ve sonuçlar ankete katılanlarla dogrudan ilskilendirlimeyecektir. Çalısma ile ilgili sorularınız olursa Bay Perrine 'yi veya Western Michigan Üniversitesi arastıma departmanı baskan yardımcısını arayabilirsiniz.

Teşekkürler.

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