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EGO STATES IN BRAND-CONSUMER TRANSACTIONS

Sema KURTULUŞ *
Taşkın DİRSEHAN **

Abstract

Psychology-related concepts such as personality are used in branding in order to target people who have personalities congruent with the personality created for brands. To reach these people, companies use integrated marketing communication. Thus, being a psychology- and communication-related theory, transactional analysis is proposed in this study to evaluate the transactions between consumers and brands in terms of ego states.

This exploratory study provides a tool to identify the ego states of brands and consumers in different sectors. The results propose that consumer-brand transactions may differ according to different sectors and different brands. So, brand managers should recognize the ego states of brands and consumers to build complementary transactions in their strategy of marketing communications.

Keywords: Brand Ego States, Transactional Analysis, Marketing Communication

JEL Classification: M31, M37

MARKA-TÜKETİCİ TRANSAKSİYONLARINDA BENLİK DURUMLARI

Özet

Kişilik gibi psikolojiyle ilişkili kavramlar; markalamada, markalar için yaratılan kişiliklerle uyumlu kişiliklere sahip kişileri hedeflemek için kullanılmaktadır. Bu kişilere ulaşmak için firmalar bütünleşik pazarlama iletişimini kullanmaktadır. Bunun için, bu çalışmada hem psikoloji hem iletişimle ilişkili bir teori olan transaksiyonel analiz, tüketicilerle markalar arasındaki transaksiyonlarda, benlik durumlarını değerlendirmek için önerilmektedir.

* Prof.Dr., Istanbul University, Faculty of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration, Sub-Department of Marketing, semad@istanbul.edu.tr

** Dr., Marmara University, Faculty of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration lectured in English, Sub-Department of Production Management and Marketing, taskin.dirsehan@marmara.edu.tr

Bu keşifsel çalışma, markaların ve farklı sektörlerde tüketicilerin benlik durumlarını belirlemede bir araç sunmaktadır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, tüketici-marka transaksiyonlarının farklı sektörlere ve farklı markalara göre farklılık gösterebildiğini ileri sürmektedir. Dolayısıyla marka yöneticileri, pazarlama iletişimi stratejilerinde tamamlayıcı transaksiyonlar yaratmak için markaların ve tüketicilerin benlik durumlarını tanımalıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Marka Benlik Durumları, Transaksiyonel Analiz, Pazarlama İletişimi

JEL Sınıflaması: M31, M37

1. Introduction

In marketing studies, human-related concepts are commonly used to characterize brands. So, human-defining theories and scales from psychology are introduced to the marketing area in terms of consumers but also for brands. One such basic study is the research of Aaker[1] with the aim of developing brand personality dimensions by "Big Five" human personality structure (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness). Since a brand's personality has been viewed as a connection with the target consumers[2], this approach is useful for marketers to define the characteristics of their target and adapt a congruent brand personality to implement an effective marketing communication. Mulyanegara et al.[3] propose that brand managers should implement advertising strategies emphasizing their brand's personality since this type of advertising enables target consumers to see the congruence between their own personality and that of the brand. So, the congruency has been an important research topic in marketing communications. Dolich's[4] empirical study indicates that respondents' favored brands are consistent with their self-concept. Moreover, Kressmann et al.[5] reveal the positive effect of self-image congruence on brand loyalty, which is direct and indirect, through functional congruity, product involvement, and brand relationship quality.

So, brand managers can attract consumers in line with the created brand's personality traits. Valette-Florence et al.[6] provide empirical support for the positive effect of brand personality

1 Aaker, J. (1997), "Dimensions of Brand Personality", **Journal of Marketing Research** , *34* (August), 347-356.

2 De Chernatony, L. (2010), **From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation: The Strategic Process of Growing and Strengthening Brands** (3rd Edition), Elsevier Ltd.

3 Mulyanegara, R., Tsarenko, Y., & Anderson, A. (2007), "The Big Five and Brand Personality: Investigating the Impact of Consumer Personality on Preferences Towards Particular Brand Personality", **Brand Management** , *16* (4), 234-247.

4 Dolich, I. (1969), "Congruence Relationships Between Self Images and Product Brands", **Journal of Marketing Research** , *6* (February), 80-84.

5 Kressmann, F., Sirgy, M., Herrmann, A., Huber, F., Huber, S., & Lee, D.-L. (2006), "Direct and Indirect Effects of Self-Image Congruence on Brand Loyalty", **Journal of Business Research** , *59*, 955-964.

6 Valette-Florence, P., Guizani, H., & Merunka, D. (2011), "The cImpact of Brand Personality and Sales Promotions on Brand Equity", **Journal of Business Research** , *64*, 24-28.

dimensions on brand equity. In addition, Grohmann[7] developed an approach for gender dimensions of brand personality, which influence affective, attitudinal, and behavioral consumer responses positively when they are congruent with consumers' sex role identity.

Murphy et al.[8] use brand personality to differentiate regional tourism destinations and indicated that tourists are able to articulate different destination personalities for each region. Kaplan et al.[9] applied this concept to cities, and they extracted new factors. Kurtuluş[10] applied it to countries and revealed more factors than product brand personality dimensions. Furthermore, Das et al.[11] conceptualized retail brand personality, Tran et al.[12] revealed the relationship between hotel brand quality and hotel brand personality, Aiken et al.[13] investigated the brand personality dimensions associated with professional sports teams as brands, and an increasing number of examples exist in the literature. Adapting brand personality as marketing has broadened its traditional limits of for-profit organizations. Kurtz and Boone[14] identify five major categories of nontraditional marketing: person marketing, place marketing, cause marketing, event marketing, and organization marketing. So, brand personality can be adapted for all of these categories as well.

Even though there are a wide range of studies on brand personality measurements in the marketing literature, there is little research on how brand personalities are formed, which is a gap identified by Maehle and Supphellen[15]. They base their research on the statement of Batra et al.[16], who suggest that a brand's personality is created over time by the entire marketing mix, including all phases of brand communication, sales promotions, and media advertising. In order to create a competitive advantage, a brand should have a position in the mind of consumers. So,

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7 Grohmann, B. (2009), "Gender Dimensions of Brand Personality", **Journal of Marketing Research** , *46* (February), 105-119.

8 Murphy, L., Moscardo, G. og Benckendorff, P. (2007), "Using Brand Personality to Differentiate Regional Tourism Destinations", **Journal of Travel Research**, 46(1), 5-14.

9 Kaplan, M., Yurt, O., Guneri, B., & Kurtulus, K. (2010), "Branding Places: Applying Brand Personality Concept to Cities", **European Journal of Marketing** , *44* (9/10), 1286-1304.

10 Kurtuluş, S. (2008), "Ülkelerin Marka Kişiliği Üzerine Bir Araştırma (A Study on Countries› Brand Personality)", **Atatürk Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi** , *22* (2), 285-300.

11 Das, G., Datta, B., & Guin, K. (2012), "From Brands in General to Retail Brands: A Review and Future Agenda for Brand Personality Measurement", **The Marketing Review** , *12* (1), 91-106.

12 Tran, X., Dauchez, C., & Szemik, A. (2013), "Hotel Brand Personality and Brand Quality", **Journal of Vacation Marketing** , *19* (4), 329-341.

13 Aiken, K., Campbell, R., & Koch, E. (2013), "Exploring the Relationship Between Team (as Brand) Personality and Geographic Personality: Linking Consumer Perceptions of Sports Teams and Cities", **International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship** , *October*, 7-19.

14 Kurtz, D., & Boone, L. (2010), **Principles of Contemporary Marketing** (14th International Edition b.), China: South-Western.

15 Maehle, N., & Supphellen, M. (2011), "In Search of the Sources of Brand Personality", **International Journal of Market Research** , *53* (1), 95-114.

16 Batra, R., Lehmann, D., & Singh, D. (1993), The Brand Personality Component of Brand Goodwill: Some Antecedents and Consequences. In: D. Aaker, & A. Biel, **Brand Equity and Advertising** (p. 83-96), Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

these communication tools are used in a consistent way, which is the basic statement of integrated marketing communication. As stated by Belch and Belch[17]:

"Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) approach seeks to have a company's entire marketing and promotional activities project a consistent, unified image to the marketplace. It calls for a centralized messaging function so that everything a company says and does communicates a common theme and positioning."

Since IMC requires that all of a brand's communication media deliver a consistent image to targeted audiences[18], and a brand's personality has been viewed as a connection with them[19], "transactional analysis" —as a psychology- and communication-related theory— is proposed in this study to evaluate the transactions between consumers and brands in terms of ego states and to provide insights about the results of the transactions.

The research of Lambert[20] supports that congruity among an ad's elements enhances recall and that transactional analysis may provide a framework for the operational definition of congruity. Accordingly, brands adopting IMC may be analyzed for their ego states in brand-consumer transactions. An *ego state* may be described as a coherent system of feelings and, operationally, as a set of coherent behavior patterns, and a *transaction* as the unit of social intercourse[21]. So, the transactional analysis approach may be useful in two ways. First, the customers' ego states and the ego states used by brands in their transactions with customers may be revealed; and second, it can provide whether a transaction between brand and customer is complementary or crossed.

Bennett[22] contrasts the transactional analysis versus the behaviorist approach in the consumer marketing field. So, behaviorist exchange theory focuses on the rewards and costs during the interactional processes, and it follows that an increase in the physical and/or emotional rewards provided to the customer, ceteris paribus, will increase his or her liking for the firm. Phenomenological approaches suggest that deeper and more complex ego-related psychodynamics (individual and collective) are at work.

So, this study attempts to adapt transactional analysis as a personality and communication approach of psychology into the marketing area. We investigate whether brands and customers may be characterized with an ego-states approach in transactional analysis, and we attempt to provide insights about the consequences of transactions between brands and customers.

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17 Belch, G., & Belch, M. (2009), **Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective** (8th Edition), NY: McGraw-Hill International Edition, p.11.

18 Shimp, T. (2007), **Advertising, Promotion, and Other Aspects of Integrated Marketing Communications** (7th Edition), USA: Thomson South-Western.

19 De Chernatony, ibid.

20 Lambert, D. (1980), "Transactional Analysis as a Congruity Paradigm for Advertising Recall", **Journal of Advertising** , *9* (2), 37-45.

21 Berne, E. (1964), **Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships**. New York: Grove Press, Inc.

22 Bennett, R. (1996), "Relationship Formation and Governance in Consumer Markets: Transactional Analysis Versus the Behaviorist Approach", **Journal of Marketing Management** , *12*, 417-436.

2. Theoretical Framework of Transactional Analysis

In the theory of transactional analysis (TA), ego states are used to conceptualize the structure and the function of personality[23]. In practical terms, it is a system of feelings accompanied by a related set of behavioral patterns, and each individual has a limited repertoire of such ego states, which are psychological realities. This repertoire can be sorted as[24]:

(1) ego states that resemble those of parental figures,

(2) ego states that are autonomously directed toward objective appraisal of reality, and

(3) those that represent archaic relics, still-active ego states that were fixated in early childhood.

Technically these are called, respectively: exteropsychic, neopsychic, and archaeopsychic ego states. Colloquially, their exhibitions are called Parent, Adult, and Child[25]. A structural diagram drawn in Figure 1(a) represents a diagram of the complete personality of any individual, including his Parental, Adult, and Child ego states. The simplified form of the structural diagram is represented in Figure 1(b).

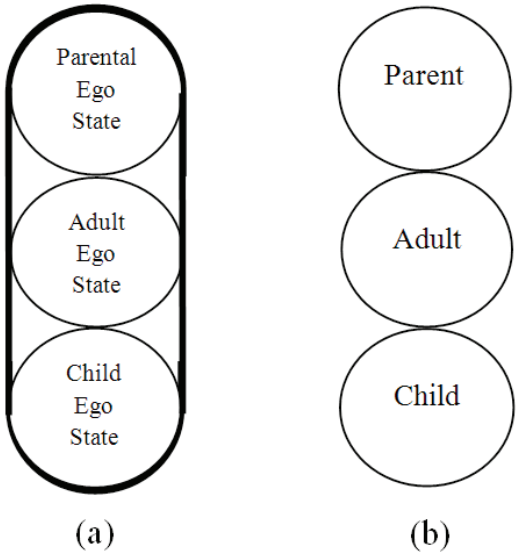

Figure 1. The structural diagram and the simplified form.

Source: Berne, E. (1964), ibid, p. 25.

23 Williams, K., & Williams, J. (1980), "The Assessment of Transactional Analysis Ego States Via the Adjective Checklist", **Journal of Persoanlity Assessment** , *44* (2), 120-129.

24 Berne, ibid.

25 Berne, ibid.

Functional analysis divides the Parent ego state into Critical or Controlling Parent (CP) and Nurturing Parent (NP) and the Child ego state into Free Child (FC) and Adapted Child (AC). The Adult (A) ego state has not subdivisions. The descriptions of Berne[26,27] for the ego states are as follows:

- *CP: Designating a set of feelings, attitudes, and behavior patterns that resemble those of a parental figure who criticizes, finds fault, and reflects the rules of society and the values of the individual.*
- *NP: Represents a parental figure who nurtures and promotes growth.*
- *A: Represents feelings, attitudes, and behavior patterns that are adapted to current reality and used for logical reasoning and precise predictions.*
- *FC: Embraces feelings, attitudes, and behavior patterns that are relics of an individual's own childhood and characterized by fun, self-indulgence, and natural and spontaneous feelings.*
- *AC: Is manifested by conforming and compromising behaviors resulting from the domination of parental influence.*

Berne[28] indicates that each type of ego state has its own vital value for the human organism, and no ego state is inherently positive or negative.

Transactional analysis adapts the idea that all of these ego states may be found in any one individual, though one of them is likely to dominate at a particular moment in time. Simple transactional analysis is concerned with diagnosing which ego state implemented the transactional stimulus and which one executed the transactional response[29]. Transactions tend to proceed in chains, and each response is, in turn, a stimulus. As long as the transactions are complementary, the communication will proceed smoothly. In a complementary transaction, two people may be engaged in critical gossip (Parent-Parent), solving a problem (Adult-Adult), or playing together (Child-Child or Parent-Child). When a crossed transaction occurs, the communication is broken off[30].

Figure 2. represents two types of transactions that are complementary. It means that the response is appropriate and expected and follows the natural order of healthy human relationships[31].

26 Berne, ibid.

27 Berne, E. (1961), **Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy**, New York: Ballantine Books.

28 Berne, ibid.

29 Berne, ibid.

30 Berne, ibid.

31 Berne, ibid.

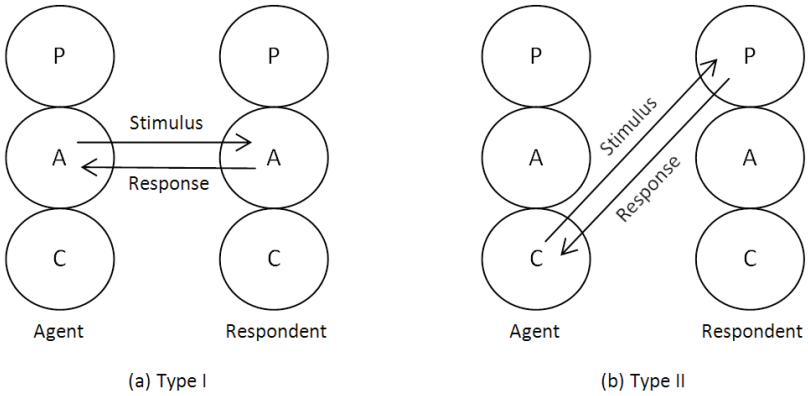

Figure 2. Complementary transactions.

Source: Berne, E. (1964), ibid, p. 30.

On the other hand, Figure 3 represents two types of crossed transactions. The transaction type 1 in Figure 3 is the most common crossed transaction, causing social difficulties in marriage, love, friendship, or work. In this case, the stimulus is Adult-Adult: e.g., "Maybe we should find out why you've been drinking more lately." The appropriate Adult-Adult response would be: "Maybe we should. I'd certainly like to know!" But if the respondent flares up, the response is something like: "You're always criticizing me, just like my father did." This is a Child-Parent response, and the vectors cross, as Figure 3a shows.

In this study, we attempt to adapt these relationships to brand-consumer transactions and provide some insights into the results of the transactions.

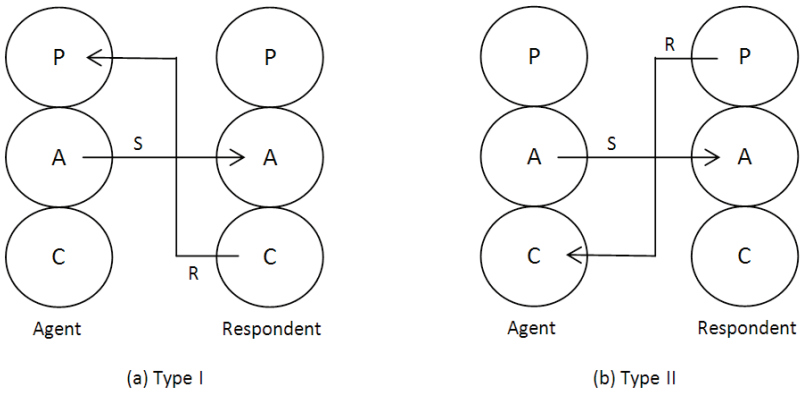

Figure 3. Crossed transactions.

Source: Berne, E. (1964), ibid, p. 31.

3. Research Methodology and Findings

Three consecutive studies are conducted. The first one aims to determine the brands to use in the study. It's exploratory by nature and reveals the brands for different brand ego states. The second study reduces the adjectives used to measure ego states into a more reasonable number, to make them more effective for further studies. The third study is more comprehensive, but due to the limitations, it should be considered as a pilot study to introduce the concept into the marketing area. In this final study, four brands from two sectors are used to reveal the results of consumer-brand transactions, such as brand love, WOM, and brand image. The next parts detail these studies.

3.1. First Study: Exploring the Brands for Different Ego States

The purpose of the first study is to reveal the brands that are suitable for different ego states. In order to determine the brands to be included in the main study, an exploratory study is conducted with 18 students of Business Administration in Marmara University. They are given five different groups of adjectives—each one representing a unique ego state based on the studies of Arı[32] and Williams and Williams[33]—and they are asked to indicate the brands suitable for each group of adjectives. The free association technique was used in data gathering, and there was no minimum or maximum limit to the number of brands recalled, so they each stated separately all the brands matching with each group of adjectives. The list of brands cited for each group in this study is given in Table 1.

32 Arı, R. (1989), *Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Baskın Ben Durumları ile Bazı Özlük Niteliklerinin, Ben Durumlarına, Atılganlık ve Uyum Düzeylerine Etkisi,* Ankara: Hacettepe University Unpublished PhD Thesis,

33 Williams & Williams, ibid.

Table 1. First Pretest Results: Brands Indicated for Different Ego States

CRITICAL PARENT	*NURTURING PARENT*	*ADULT*	*ADAPTED CHILD*	*FREE CHILD*
Mercedes (3)	Arçelik (5)	Samsung (4)	Ülker (4)	Apple (7)
Ziraat Bank (3)	Türkiye İş Bank (5)	Mercedes (3)	Eti (2)	Coca-Cola (5)
BMW (2)	Milka (4)	Teknosa (3)	Nokia (2)	Adidas (3)
Good Year (2)	Algida (3)	Apple (2)	Samsung (2)	Ferrari (3)
HSBC (2)	Samsung (3)	Garanti Bank (2)	Starbucks (2)	Victoria's Secret (3)
P&G (2)	Akbank (2)	Henkel (2)	Teknosa (2)	Arçelik (2)
TTNet (2)	Danone (2)	Türkiye İş Bank (2)	Turkcell (2)	Audi (2)
Turkcell (2)	Google (2)	Toyota (2)		BMW (2)
	Koton (2)	Vestel (2)		Lacoste (2)
	Lipton (2)	Volvo (2)		Magnum (2)
	Omo (2)			Mini Cooper (2)
	Peugeot (2)			Nike (2)
	Pınar (2)			Redbull (2)
	Sony (2)			Samsung (2)
	Toyota (2)			
	Turkcell (2)			
	Ülker (2)			

Note. The numbers in parentheses stand for the number of different people citing the brand for the given ego state's adjectives.

3.2. Second Study: Reducing the Adjective List to Measure Brands' Ego States

The purpose of the second study is to choose the adjectives to be used to determine the ego states of brands and consumers. To measure the ego states of brands, the adjective checklist provided by Arı[34] is used. This checklist includes 95 adjectives to determine a person's dominant ego state. The procedure of application is as follows: The participants are given the checklist, and they indicate the adjectives suitable for themselves. Each adjective has different weighted points between zero (indicating no contribution for a unique ego state) and four (indicating

34 Arı, ibid.

the maximum contribution for a unique ego state), contributing to five different ego states. The contribution of these point weights were calculated based on expert opinions. So, according to the respondents' checked adjectives, a total amount of points is calculated based on this scoring, and the individuals' ego states can be determined by this method developed by Arı[35].

In this study, this technique has been changed in two ways. Firstly, it's aimed to develop a reduced adjective list to measure the ego states. The reason is to make the method more convenient and more practical for large samples. Secondly, the scoring system is replaced by a measurement with a 5-point Likert scale to make it more efficient for statistical techniques.

A two-step approach is applied to reduce the adjectives determining the dominant ego state. The first step is to select the adjectives in regard to the weighted points developed by Arı[36]. Based on his scoring system, the adjectives contributing with 4-point weights on any ego states are retained, and the others are excluded from the adjective list. With this procedure, 51 out of 95 adjectives are selected as representing their ego state best. These adjectives are used in a second step—a survey study—to be reduced furthermore.

The last step before collecting data is to determine the brands for which the ego states will be analyzed. The results of the first study (Table 1) are used in this step. The decision criteria are: (1) brands' suitability for at least one ego state, (2) selecting brands from the same sector with different ego states, and (3) covering all the ego states. So, six brands from three sectors (two for each sector) are selected to be analyzed in the survey: banking sector, confectionery sector, and technology sector. This way, all the ego states have their representative brands in this study.

Students of the Business Administration Department in Marmara University were asked to evaluate the brands' ego states with 51 adjectives on a 5-point Likert scale. Each of them responded for two brands in one of three sectors randomly assigned to them. So, in this exploratory study, a total of 122 cases were collected by 61 respondents. In addition, they selected these adjectives for themselves as well, considering their transactions with the brands in the sector. So, the exploratory factor analysis was conducted with 183 cases (122+61).

Based on the factor analysis (for which the KMO Measure is 0.83 and Bartlett's Test is significant at $p=0.01$) with Varimax rotation, 22 adjectives constituting five main factors with factor loadings greater than 0.6 and for which the total variance explained is 50%. These are included in the final scale of the next step to measure ego states of brands: (1) six adjectives for Adult, (2) five adjectives for Free Child, (3) four adjectives for Nurturing Parent, (4) four adjectives for Adapted Child, and (5) three adjectives for Critical Parent. In addition, the two brands in the chocolate industry are excluded from the next study since the ego states difference between them was unsatisfactory.

35 Arı, ibid.

36 Arı, ibid.

3.3. Third Study: Determining "Ego States" of Brands and Consumers in their Transactions

The aim for this final step is testing the "brand ego states" scale for different brands and consumers in their transactions. This final study is conducted in a different sample composed of students of Istanbul University, faculty of Business Administration to ensure cross-validation.

In the questionnaire, the adjective list of ego states was used three times (once for each of the two brands and once for the respondent's self-evaluation).

Ninety-five evaluations of the adjective list for each of the two brands, in addition to the self-evaluations in the technology sector, and 83 evaluations of the adjective list for each of the two brands, in addition to the self-evaluations in the banking sector, produce a total of 534 cases for brand-ego-states-scale factor analysis.

One hundred face-to-face interviews are conducted with the master students of Istanbul University, faculty of Business Administration. The participants' ages range from 22 to 41 with an average age of 27.4. They are asked to evaluate the appropriateness level of the adjectives for the two brands in the banking sector (Garanti Bank and Ziraat Bank). One week later, the same procedure is repeated with the same sample for the two brands in the technology sector (Apple and Blackberry). So, the sample difference is controlled in this study (this is important since one of the research objectives is to analyze whether the ego states change according to different sectors). These students are selected based on convenience sampling method because of their convenient accessibility for a second time.

At the end of these two sections, a total of 178 usable questionnaires were gathered (83 for the banking sector and 95 for the technology sector) by the respondents.

3.3.1. Determining ego states based on the adjective list

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.884, and Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant (for 99% confidence interval) for the brand ego states scale. In addition, total variance explained is 69.886 for a four-factor result. The factor loadings are shown in Table 2 (The extraction method is the principal component analysis, and the rotation method is Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations).

Table 2. Factor Loadings of Ego States' Adjective List

	Factors of Brand Ego States				
	F1. Adult	**F2. Free Child**	**F3. Adapted Child & Critical Parent**	**F4. Nurturing Parent**	
Cronbach's Alphas	*0.903*	*0.927*	*0.862*	*0.878*	
Explained Variance	*33.69%*	*14.67%*	*12.53%*	*8.99%*	
Adjectives Defining Ego States					*Original Words in Turkish*
Cautious	.855				Dikkatli
Logical	.805				Mantıklı
Rational	.803				Gerçekçi
Organized	.797				Düzenli
Reasonable	.783				Akıllı
Prudent	.728				Temkinli
Humorous		.889			Neşeli
Adventurous		.855			Maceracı
Excited		.842			Heyecanlı
Affectionate		.806			Sıcakkanlı
Energetic		.800			Girişken
Pessimistic			.785		Kötümser
Complaining			.771		Mızmız
Rigid	.745				Katı
Shy			.737		Çekingen
Inhibited			.703		Tutuk
Argumentative			.660		Eleştirici
Prescriptive			.628		Kuralcı
Merciful				.896	Merhametli
Unselfish				.816	Başkasını Düşünen
Faithful				.813	Vefakâr
Generous				.731	Cömert
KMO Measure	*0.884*				
Bartlett's Sig.	*.000*				
Total Variance Explained	*69.89%*				

The test results of reliability (Cronbach's alpha) indicate high reliability for these factors, as indicated in the same table. Then, the correlation matrix is produced separately for the banking and technology sectors, as seen in Table 3. Accordingly, the correlations are lower than 0.6 which indicates discriminant validity for ego states.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix for Brands' Ego States

	Free Child	**Adult**	**Nurturing Parent**	**Adapted Child & Critical Parent**
Free Child	1			
Adult	0.013 *0.491***	1		
Nurturing Parent	-0.049 *0.569***	0.122 *0.407***	1	
Adapted Child & Critical Parent	-0.367** *-0.462***	-0.053 *-0.252***	-0.089 *-0.151**	1

*Correlation is significant at the 95% confidence interval.
**Correlation is significant at the 99% confidence interval.
Note.
1. The first numbers in each cell represent correlation coefficients for Brands in Banking Sector
2. The second numbers (in italics) represent correlation coefficients for Brands in Technology Sector

After determining the ego states' adjectives, it's useful to reveal the ego states of brands in their transactions with consumers. The ego states significantly higher than 3 (the midpoint of the scales), at 99% confidence interval, are accepted as main ego states for the brands. The results are given in Table 4, and the main ego states for the brands are illustrated in Figure 4.

Table 4. Ego States of the Brands

	Brands			
	Garanti Bank	Ziraat Bank	Blackberry	Apple
Ego States	Mean (std)	Mean (std)	Mean (std)	Mean (std)
Free Child	3.49* (0.83)	2.13 (0.80)	2.45 (0.92)	4.32* (0.74)
Adult	3.44* (0.74)	3.75* (0.79)	3.53* (0.86)	4.15* (0.68)
Nurturing Parent	2.22 (0.92)	2.96 (0.88)	2.83 (0.74)	3.52* (0.89)
Adapted Child & Critical Parent	2.62 (0.76)	2.97 (0.70)	3.01 (0.70)	2.25 (0.96)

* indicates the main ego states for the brands (significantly higher than 3).

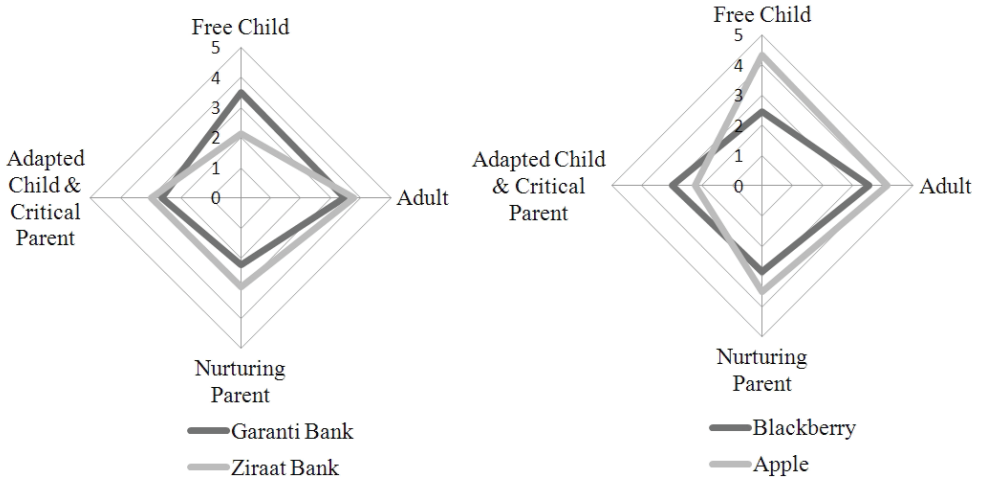

Figure 4. Comparison of the ego states of brands.

Accordingly, Free Child (t=5.31) and Adult (t=5.29) are the main ego states for Garanti Bank; Adult (t=8.56) is the main ego state for Ziraat Bank; Adult (t=5.82) is the main ego state for Blackberry; and Free Child (t=17.13), Adult (t=16.4), and Nurturing Parent (t=5.62) are the main ego states for Apple in their transactions. These results are consistent with their messages in their advertising campaigns. For instance, Garanti Bank uses cartoon animals (which can be considered as creating a Free Child ego state) and calculation of personal loans (as Adult) in their ads, providing logical explanations. Ziraat Bank's use of the success stories of SME after using the loan may create an Adult ego state because these stories provide logical, rational, and reasonable evidence. BlackBerry's feature explaining focus may be the reason for its Adult ego state since it provides a tool to compare the product in a rational way. Apple's logo and innovation-based communication may create its Free Child ego state because they represent an energetic and excited brand. Features-based presentation may be the reason for its Adult ego state by providing logically comparable figures. The Apple ads including ease of use and design may enhance its Nurturing Parent ego state with a focus on being an unselfish brand.

3.3.2. Comparing consumers' ego states between sectors; banking and technology

Until this part of the study, the ego states are only analyzed from the brands' side. On the consumers' side, one may have different ego states in different situations. Thus, it's important to analyze whether the ego states of the respondents differ when buying a product from a different sector. At this point, it's important to note that the consumers' ego states are measured according to the individuals' self-evaluations. So, the ego states are the consumers' perceptions of the ego states of both themselves and the brands.

In this step, as the sample is not independent, paired sample t-tests are used to compare the consumers' ego states between the two sectors. In order to equalize the sample sizes, 12 cases are excluded from the technology sector, and the self-ego-state evaluations of 83 participants are compared between sectors. The details are provided in Table 5.

In their transactions with technological products, the individuals evaluate themselves as being more humorous, adventurous, excited, affectionate, and energetic. So, they have a larger Free Child ego state in their transactions with technological products as compared to the banking sector.

Table 5. Comparison of Consumers' Ego States in Transaction in Different Sectors

Ego States	*Sector*	*Mean (std)*	*t-value*
Adult Ego State	Banking	3.95 (0.72)	0.073
	Technology	3.94 (0.70)	
Free Child Ego State	Banking	3.34 (0.91)	2.33*
	Technology	3.67 (0.84)	
Adapted Child & Critical Parent Ego State	Banking	2.51 (0.79)	0.91
	Technology	2.63 (0.91)	
Nurturing Parent Ego State	Banking	3.25 (1.20)	1.45
	Technology	3.49 (0.82)	

* Indicates that the mean difference is significant at the 95% confidence interval

4. Conclusion

In marketing literature, brands try to identify themselves with certain psychological dimensions, and there is a wide use of brand personality. This kind of categorization is useful for marketers to target consumers who have personalities congruent with the personalities created for brands. As brands implement integrated marketing communications in order to have a unique position in the minds of consumers, they gain an ego state such as those possessed by human beings. So, a transactional analysis that investigates communication and personality traits is useful to identify brands. For this reason, marketers should use transactional analysis for an effective marketing communication. Thus, this study adopts a phenomenological approach to marketing communications.

This study proposes an insight for further research and provides an ego state research tool to brand researchers. This tool—as a first contribution of this study—was developed by an exploratory research, and it is used to identify brands' and consumers' ego states. So, this approach is a preliminary step to fill the gap in psychology and communication analysis of brands.

As a second contribution, this study indicates that brands are perceived as having different ego states. So, they produce different transactional stimuli. As an example in the banking sector, while Garanti Bank is perceived with its Free Child and Adult ego states, Ziraat Bank is only perceived with its Adult ego state. Indeed, Garanti Bank uses cartoon characters in its ads which produce Free Child stimuli. In addition, these two brands explain the reasoning of credit uses with figures which makes them characterized with Adult state. This is an important point to be studied, both by academics and managers, to reveal the consequences of brands' marketing communication activities.

As a third contribution, the research indicates that consumers in different sectors behave according to different ego states, so they use different transactional responses for different sectors. This is important to determine the brand ego states of consumers in different sectors. The results indicate that same consumers behave more with their Free Child ego state in their transactions with technological products as compared to the banking sector. According to this analysis, the managers should decide which ego state should be created for consumer-brand transactions. As a practical implication, the marketing communication messages should be decided carefully according to the brands' ego states. By this way, brand managers can better understand the reasons of crossed transactions, then, a complementary transaction can be created and an effective communication can be established among brands and consumers.

Further investigations are necessary to expand the information provided in this study. Different cultures, different sectors, different media, different communication, and different consequences of transactions may be included in order to have a broader knowledge about this topic.

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