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Sevimli Ürünlerin Duygusal Faydasının Plansız Satın Alma Davranışı Üzerine Etkisi

The Effect of Emotional Benefit of Cute Products on Impulsive Buying Behavior

Abdülkadir ÖZTÜRK

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniv. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi
Asst. Prof., Recep Tayyip Erdogan University, Faculty of Economics and
Administrative Sciences
abdulkadir.ozturk@erdogan.edu.tr / Orcid ID: 0000-0002-1855-8892

Arif KIRMIZIKAYA

Dr. Öğrencisi, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniv. Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü
PhD Student, Recep Tayyip Erdogan Univ. Institute of Graduate Studies
arif_kirmizikaya20@erdogan.edu.tr / Orcid ID: 0000-0002-1445-9643

Mustafa Said AKIN

Dr. Öğrencisi, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniv. Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü
PhD Student, Recep Tayyip Erdogan Univ. Institute of Graduate Studies
m.said.akin@hotmail.com / Orcid ID: 0000-0002-3207-5555

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Sevimli Ürünlerin Duygusal Faydasının Plansız Satın Alma Davranışı Üzerine Etkisi *

Öz

İşletmelerin pazarlama çabaları ürünün tasarımından başlayarak satış sonrası deneyime kadar devam eden bir süreçtir. Ürünün tasarımında farklılık yaratmak var olan müşterileri elde tutmaya yarayacağı gibi yeni müşterileri kazanılmasına da yardımcı olacaktır. Ürün tasarımı ve üretim aşamasında yapılacak farklılıklar ürünün modeli, ölçülendirilmesi, ambalajı, boyutu, fiyatı ve dağıtımını gidi özelliklerden oluşabilir. Bunlara ek olarak büyüklük, küçüklük, tombulluk, renk gibi ürün sevimliliği özellikleri de farklılık oluşturulabilir. Özellikle oyuncak şekline benzer ürünler, tüketicilerde sevgi hissi oluşturmaktadır. Tüketiciler bu tarz ürünleri bazı durumlarda sağladıkları fonksiyonel faydasından dolayı değil de duygusal veya sembolik faydadan dolayı tercih edebilirler. Bu özellikleriyle sevimli ürünlerin tüketicilerde duygusal fayda oluşturacağı ve ürün farklılaşmasına yardımcı olabileceği düşünülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, sevimli ürünlerin duygusal faydasının ve reklama yönelik tutumun plansız satın alma davranışları üzerine etkisini analiz etmektir. Araştırma için gerekli veriler, araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan çevrimiçi anket formu aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Oluşturulan anket formunun linki, kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle katılımcılara ulaştırılmıştır. Veri toplama süreci 371 kişinin katılımıyla tamamlanmıştır. Frekans ve açıklayıcı faktör analizleri (AFA) için SPSS 22 programı kullanılmıştır. Çalışmaya katılanların demografik özellikleri incelendiğinde dağılımın dengeli olduğundan bahsedilebilir. Faktör analizi sonuçlarına göre, yapıyı bozduğu düşünülen reklama yönelik tutumun 1. ve 5. ifadeleri çıkartılmıştır. Gerekli analizler bu ifadeler kullanılmadan yapılmıştır. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) ve yapısal eşitlik modellemesi için ise Amos 20 programı kullanılmıştır. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri sonucunda önerilen modifikasyonlar yapılmıştır. Yapısal eşitlik modellemesi ile araştırma amacına yönelik oluşturulan hipotez testleri analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma sonuçlarına göre sevimli ürünlerin duygusal faydasının plansız satın alma davranışını ve reklama yönelik tutumu etkilediği görülmektedir. Fakat reklama yönelik tutumun plansız satın alma davranışı üzerinde etkisi görülmemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sevimli Ürün, Duygusal Fayda, Reklama Yönelik Tutum, Plansız Satın Alma Davranışı, Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi

* Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulunun 16.03.2021 Tarih, 2021/65 Sayılı Kararı ile Etik Kurul İzni Alınmıştır.



The Effect of Emotional Benefit of Cute Products on Impulsive Buying Behavior

Abstract

Marketing efforts of businesses are a process starting from the design of the product to the after-sales experience. Making a difference in the design of the product will help to retain existing customers as well as gaining new customers. Differences to be made in product design and production may consist of features such as product model, dimensioning, packaging, size, price and distribution. In addition to these, product sweetness features such as size, smallness, plumpness, and color can also be different. Especially products similar to toy shapes create a feeling of affection in consumers. In some cases, consumers may prefer such products not because of their functional benefits, but for their emotional or symbolic benefits. With these features, it is thought that cute products will create emotional benefits for consumers and help product differentiation. The aim of this study is to analyze the effect of emotional benefits of cute products and attitude towards advertising on impulsive buying behavior. The data required for the research were collected through an online questionnaire prepared by the researchers. The link of the questionnaire form created was delivered to the participants by using the convenience sampling method. The data collection process was completed with the participation of 371 people. SPSS 22 program was used for frequency and explanatory factor analysis (EFA). When the demographic characteristics of the participants are examined, it can be said that the distribution is balanced. According to the results of the factor analysis, the 1st and 5th expressions of the attitude towards advertising, which is thought to disrupt the structure, were removed. Necessary analyzes were made without using these expressions. Amos 20 program was used for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling. The modifications suggested as a result of the confirmatory factor analysis were made. Hypothesis tests created for research purposes with structural equation modeling were analyzed. According to the results of the study, it is seen that the emotional benefit of cute products affects impulsive buying behavior and attitude towards advertising. However, the attitude towards advertising does not seem to have an effect on impulsive buying behavior.

Keywords: Cute Product, Emotional Benefit, Attitude Towards Advertising, Impulsive Buying Behavior, Structural Equation Modeling



Introduction

Considering the success stories of the products in today's competitive environment, it is seen that the physical characteristics of the products direct the consumer choices. It is also seen that the pleasure perceived by consumers is determined by visual appeal. The physical features of the products are extremely important in the decisions and choices of the consumers. In some cases, physical features (size, smallness, plumpness, color, etc.) are considered superior to durability. Consumers get the product not only for its functional benefit, but also for the emotional experience that is integrated with the product (Crilly et al., 2004: 569). These experiences may be related to the emotional bonding between some of the physical features of the product and its consumer.

In order to characterize a product as cute, it must have some physical features such as thickness-plumpness, arrangement, proportion, size, analogy, shape, color and brightness. Cute products not only arouse feelings such as wishes and needs, but also activate emotional factors in their perceptions. This emotional mobility shows that besides the design, innovation and technology used in the products, the concept of cuteness is also extremely important (Chowdhury et al., 2014: 133).

Cute products have a relationship with the sensuality of the individual. It is because the person establishes a connection with the object and is positively affected by his/her relationship with the object. For example, toy-shaped products look cute because they have a shape that creates a feeling of affection and compassion. For this reason, products with toy shapes are preferred not because of their product benefits, but because of their emotional benefits (Gn, 2016: 50).

In the study conducted by Barutçu and Adıgüzel (2017: 37), they concluded that although the individuals participating in the study had a positive attitude towards cute products, they found the prices of cute products more expensive than normal products. The thought that cute products can be expensive can cause some consumers to have a negative attitude towards these products.

Attitude is the totality of positive or negative beliefs that occur in people's minds about an object, institution, brand, situation or person (Elden, 2009: 415-416). As mentioned in the definition, the attitude towards advertising is the orientation of positive and negative behavioral tendencies towards advertising (Akyüz, 2010: 215).

It is emphasized that the attitude has serious effects on the purchasing decision processes of the consumers (Odabaşı and Barış, 2017: 157). It is likely that attitude has an effect on certain purchasing decisions of



consumers, as well as being linked to impulsive buying behavior, which is one of the types of purchasing.

Impulsive buying is a purchases activity that made as a result of the sudden presence of an impulse, without a specific plan. People perform an impulsive buying decision by being influenced by their emotions (Arslan, 2018: 60). While impulsive buying was mostly seen in supermarket shopping in the past, today it is seen in all areas of economic life. Impulsive buying defines the consumer's intention to buy immediately and without thinking. Impulsive buying, which is an unthinkable purchase, occurs by emotional decisions and out of control. Planned purchasing, which is the opposite of impulsive buying, prevents uncontrolled behavior of the consumers (Rook and Fisher, 1995:306).

The aim of this study is to analyze the effects of the emotional benefits of cute products and attitudes towards their advertisements on impulse buying behavior. For this purpose, the study was created based on the cute characters. In the first part of the study, there is a literature review. The next parts of the study are the research part and conclusion.

Literature Review

Cute Products and Emotional Benefit

Cute products are small, soft, human-looking, chubby, pastel-colored products that can have personality traits and trigger positive emotions by providing happiness (Hellen and Saaksjarvi, 2013: 144-152). The features that will distinguish cute products from others are size-smallness, shape-sharpness, structure-simplicity, color-texture, brightness-softness, proportion-width, arrangement, simile and thickness (Adıgüzel et al., 2017: 42-45).

It is seen that cute products evoke positive feelings in consumers. Consumers like cute products and thus arouse the consumer desire to use this kind of products (Adıgüzel and Barutçu, 2017: 37). Nenkov and Scott (2014: 332) analyzed the effect of cuteness on consumer preferences and product designs in their study. It was noticed that although consumers know that it is not durable, they prefer the cutely designed ice-cream spoon to the regular spoon. In the same study, it was seen that the crocodile shaped stapler with a cute design was preferred more than the regular designed one. Although consumers have negative thoughts about the durability of the products with cute features, it was observed that they prefer these products.

It can be said that the emotional benefit is the pleasure and entertainment that the consumer receives in the shopping process (Bei and Chen 2015: 490). A product that provides rational benefit can also include emotional elements such as talent, happiness, success and trust. For example, while purchasing a car, the fuel saving of the car offers rational benefits, while its interior design provides emotional benefits (Stock et al. 2015: 392).



In advertisements showing emotional benefit, the consumer is asked to imagine the state of pleasure shown. In this context, it is expected that the happiness in the advertisement will reflect on the product and the consumer (Odabaşı and Barış 2007: 188). In other words, advertisements with emotional benefits are associated with words such as entertainment, fantasy, excitement, pleasure, happiness, and relaxation (Addis and Holbrook 2001, Arnold and Reynolds 2003).

Pylones, a French business, is one of the best examples of using humor in cute products. The business specializes in colored objects, as indicated on its online page. While Pylones designs cute products, it promises its customers to feel happy and to smile. As shown in Figure 1, Pylones markets a variety of cute products, from phone holders to mousepads, from spoons to masks, from phone cases to thermoses (The Pylones Adventure, 2017). It is obvious that the use of such products will bring happiness to consumers by providing emotional benefits.



Figure 1: Pylones Cute Product Examples

Source: Pylones (2021)

Attitude Towards Advertising

Attitude can be defined as behaviors that a person tends to exhibit positively or negatively towards other people, events, facts or environments (Odabaşı and Barış, 2017: 157). The attitude towards advertising is evaluated under two subheadings: The first is the attitude towards a specific advertisement and the other is the general attitude towards the advertisement (Akyüz, 2010: 215). The attitude towards a particular advertisement will vary depending on whether the factors used in that advertisement penetrate the consumer's perception. Various factors such as the music and the colors used in the advertisement, the social and cultural status of the consumer, and the profession cause the attitude towards a particular advertisement to differ. The general attitude towards advertising can be evaluated as the



attitude of the consumer towards advertisements in general. While some people are generally affected by advertisements, some people may not pay any attention to advertisements. For these reasons, while businesses are conducting their advertising activities, they try to use advertisements that can penetrate consumers. While there may be elements that try to activate the consumers in their advertisements, there may also be emotional factors in order to appeal to emotions (Gökaliler and Saatçioğlu, 2016: 65, 74-75).

It is observed that consumers have a positive attitude towards mobile ads that are of their interest (Barutçu, 2009: 39). In another study conducted on the same subject, it was concluded that, on the contrary, consumers' attitudes towards mobile ads were negative (Boz and Karakaş, 2014: 17). In a study, it was emphasized that the most important factor affecting people's attitudes towards mobile ads is the prior consent of the consumer (İspir and Suher, 2009: 15).

In a study investigating the attitudes of consumers towards advertising, it is emphasized that the focus of advertising to be made for consumers with low income should be the price (Köksal and Ulusu, 2012: 4666). For consumers whose income level is below a certain limit, one of the most important focus points of a product is expected to be the price.

In a study on attitudes towards advertising, it is emphasized that conveying products to consumers in a funny and humorous way affects the consumer positively (Lee and Mason, 1999: 162). Because cute products seem funny to consumers and thus lead to positive feelings, in our study, the attitude towards cute products in advertisements was tried to be obtained through these study questions.

As can be understood from the above studies, personal factors come into play in the attitude towards advertising as well as in the attitude towards every issue. People may have more positive attitudes towards a stimulus they are exposed to in the area they are interested in, and negative attitudes towards the stimulus they are exposed to in subjects that are not in their area of interest. This situation may arise from the fact that people have different perception thresholds from subject to subject.

Impulsive Buying Behavior

Impulsive buying tendency includes situations such as emotional level, senses, mood and drive. Cognitive level, on the other hand, refers to constructing purchasing, acting suddenly without considering the future time and cognitive thinking. In impulsive buying, the existing budget is often overlooked, unhelpful decisions can be made, it is uneconomical and there are unnecessary expenses (Choudhary, 2014: 3). If a person is in a purchasing behavior in a shopping environment without planning a requirement before shopping, that is, when the idea of buying has not been formed, there is an impulsive buying.



According to Öztürk and Nart (2016: 53), fashion clothing interest and materialist values have an important effect on impulsive buying behaviors of young people. In this direction, businesses can influence young people by using the messages of fashion clothing interest and materialistic variables. In addition, it is observed that women are more prone to fashion clothing interest and impulsive buying behavior than men.

Impulsive buying can be expressed as a purchasing behavior that consumers make outside of what they plan before going shopping (transmitting from Stern, 1962, Akbay and Ergin, 2011: 276). For example, yoghurt, bread and milk are on the shopping list. The consumer goes to the store and buy the products on the list. In the meantime, he/she also buy chips, nuts and drinks that are not on the shopping list. Buying extra products such as chips, nuts and beverages is a reflection of the impulsive buying of the consumer.

As a result of increasing competition between businesses, they want consumers to make more impulsive buying and plan their marketing activities accordingly. One of these plans is the use of cute products in marketing activities. In this study, the relationship between the emotional interest of consumers in cute products and impulsive buying behavior was tried to be understood.

Research Methodology

The research model and related hypotheses created in line with the conceptual framework of the study are as follows.

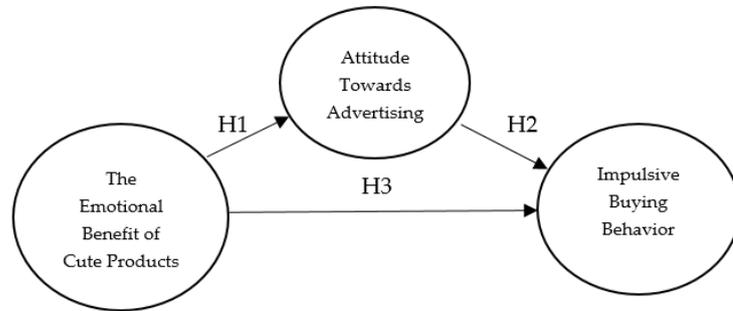


Figure 2: Research Model

In order to increase the efficiency of the businesses' advertisements in a sustainable way in a competitive environment, the messages given should be remarkable and informative. Alagöz and Ceyhan (2018: 106) emphasize that consumers' positive attitudes towards advertisements affect impulsive buying behavior. In this study, the effect of consumers' attitudes towards advertisements on impulsive buying behavior and the relationship between the emotional benefit of cute products and impulsive buying behavior were tried to be understood.



The concept of cute product is an extremely important phenomenon in consumer satisfaction and decisions. Adıgüzel (2019: 91) evaluated the most prone consumer characteristics of cute products in terms of purchasing and attitude in terms of marital status, age, gender, income, having children, education level, and hedonism. In this study, it was tried to understand the emotional benefit of cute products on both the attitude towards advertising and the impulsive buying behavior. In this direction, the hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H1: The emotional benefit of cute products has a positive impact on the attitude towards advertising.

H2: The attitude towards advertising has a positive impact on impulsive buying behavior.

H3: The emotional benefit of cute products has a positive impact on impulsive buying behavior.

An online questionnaire was created to collect data to be used in the study. In the first part of the questionnaire, there are expressions for the variables. In the second part, there are questions about the demographic characteristics of the participants. Questions about the emotional benefits of cute products were created using the scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001). The scale developed by Lee and Mason (1999) was used to measure the attitude towards advertising. The expressions developed by Rook and Fisher (1995) were used for the questions regarding the impulsive buying variable. Since the expressions used in the questionnaire would be translated into Turkish and used, the questionnaire was finalized after the pre-pilot study was conducted with a group of 100 people. The researchers shared the link of the questionnaire form with those around them in order to reach the sample. The data were collected using the convenience sampling method through the online questionnaire form. Between 20 March 2021 and 10 April 2021, the data collection process was ended with the participation of 371 people.

Analysis of Data and Findings

The demographic information of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Data on the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

		f	%
Gender	Male	190	51,2
	Female	181	48,8
Marital Status	Single	172	46,4
	Married	199	53,6
Age	18-25	67	18,1
	26-33	69	18,6
	34-41	52	14,0
	42-49	61	16,4
	50 and above	122	32,9
Education	High school and below	71	19,1



	Associate degree	91	24,5
	Undergraduate	125	33,7
	Graduate	84	22,7
Profession	Public personnel	166	44,7
	Private sector	55	14,8
	Self-employment	27	7,3
	Retired	38	10,2
	Unemployed	18	4,9
	Student	67	18,1
Income	3000 TL and below	68	18,3
	3001-5000 TL	61	16,4
	5001-7000 TL	69	18,6
	7001-9000 TL	61	16,4
	9001 TL and above	112	30,3
Total		371	100,0

When the data table of the demographic characteristics of the survey participants is examined, it is seen that 51,2 percent of the participants are male, whereas 48,8 percent are female; 46,4 percent are single and 53,6 percent are married. In the light of these data, it is possible to say that the general distribution is balanced. When the age data are examined, it is seen that the percentage distribution is generally equal and the excess participation range is from the participants aged 50 and over with a rate of 32,9 percent. In the survey study, the graduation status of the participants was asked as primary, high school, associate degree, undergraduate and graduate. In the case of education, as the number of participants who graduated from primary education is less than 10 (5 participants) according to the data obtained, we combined this education status with high school. We named the final version high school and below. According to the educational status data, it is seen that 19,1 percent of the participants have high school and below level, 24,5 percent associate degree, 33,7 percent undergraduate and 22,7 percent graduate education level. When the occupational groups of the participants are examined, it is understood that 44,7 percent of the participants are public employees, 14,8 percent are private sector employees, 7,3 percent are self-employed, 10,2 percent are retired and 18.1 percent are students. Finally, when the income status is examined, it is seen that the group with the highest participation rate of 30,3 percent is 9001 TL and above.

In the difference tests conducted according to demographic characteristics in the study, the participants differed in the impulsive buying of cute products only according to their income. This difference is between the participants in the range of 3001-5000 TL and the participants in the range of 9001 TL and above. No difference was observed between other groups.



Explanatory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A 5-point Likert scale was used in order to measure the variables in the model created for the purpose of the research. Explanatory Factor Analysis was conducted to test the compatibility of 17 statements in total with the model. The 5th and 1st values of the attitude towards advertising disrupting the model structure were removed from the application.

As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, the goodness of fit values of the model was not found within the desired ranges. When the relationship of the error terms with each other is checked, it is seen that the error terms e11 and e9 are highly correlated with e12 and e10. Therefore, first error term e11 (IB3) and then error term e9 (IB1) expressions were excluded from the study. Modification suggestions were taken into consideration for CFA analysis and two co-variances were added to the study. The values obtained were within acceptable values.

Factor analysis results and goodness of fit values after the modifications in CFA are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Analysis Results for the Variables

	Average Participation	Factor Load	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Explained
Impulsive Buying Behavior			,939	55,114
IB6	2,54	,846		
IB5	2,50	,823		
IB3	2,31	,810		
IB8	2,44	,791		
IB9	2,26	,770		
IB4	2,42	,742		
IB2	2,39	,738		
IB7	2,70	,714		
IB1	2,56	,666		
Emotional Benefit of Cute Products			,941	14,472
EB5	3,12	,841		
EB2	3,18	,818		
EB3	3,01	,798		
EB4	3,06	,785		
EB1	3,45	,755		
Attitude Towards Advertising			,894	5,553
ATA3	3,05	,837		
ATA4	3,13	,814		
ATA2	2,84	,684		

(KMO: ,938 Total Variance Explained: % 75,140 Goodness of fit: $\chi^2=264,526$, $df = 85$ CMIN/DF = 3,112 $p = 0.000$, GFI = ,92 AGFI = ,887 TLI = ,954 CFI= ,962 RMSEA = ,076)

Cronbach's Alpha values of the variables used in the research are $\alpha = 0,939$ for impulsive buying behavior, $\alpha = 0,941$ for emotional benefit of cute products and $\alpha = 0,894$ for attitude towards advertising. The reliability



analysis results found are far above the acceptable value of ".70" and show that the scales used in the questionnaire are reliable, in other words, the questionnaire can measure the subject it wants to measure safely and consistently (Coşkun et al., 2015: 126). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test result is 0,938 and it can be stated that the data set is suitable for analysis.

Structural Model

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values, which show the reliability of the research model, are given in Table 3 below. It is expected that the AVE values will be more than 0,50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and the CR values will be more than 0,70 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 3: AVE and CR Values of the Structural Model

Variables	CR	AVE
IB (Impulsive buying behavior)	0,922	0,632
EB (Emotional benefit of cute products)	0,937	0,750
ATA (Attitude Towards Advertising)	0,899	0,751

When the results are examined, it is seen that the AVE values are above 0,50 and the CR values are above 0,70. Therefore, as a result of the analysis, it was concluded that the model was suitable for structural model testing and that the hypotheses could be tested. The structural model of this study is as in figure 3.

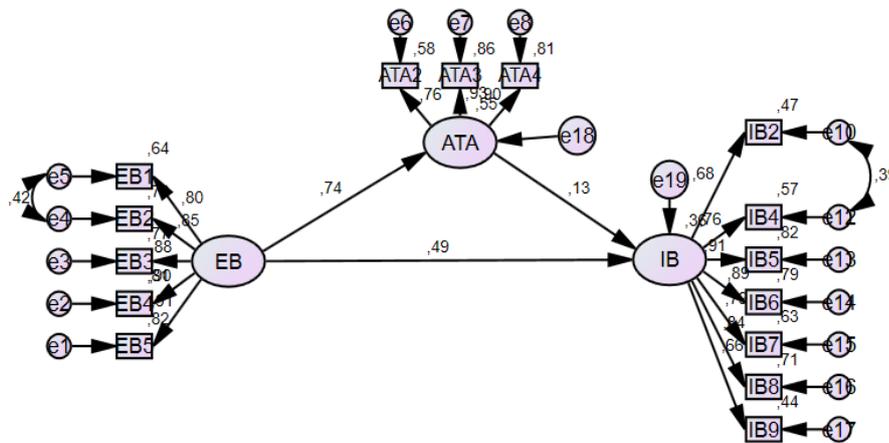


Figure 3: Structural Model

Hypotheses will be interpreted according to the standardized direct impact coefficient and p-values to determine whether the emotional benefit of cute products has an impact on the attitude towards advertising and impulsive buying behavior and the attitude towards advertising on impulsive buying behavior. The results are shown in Table 4.



Table 4: Standardized Direct Effects and p-values

Between Variables	Standardized Impact Coefficient (β)	P
ATA <--- EB	,744	***
IB <--- ATA	,132	,082
IB <--- EB	,492	***

p< 0.05,

When the results are examined, it is seen that the emotional benefit of cute products has a statistically significant effect on attitude towards advertisements and impulsive buying behavior. It was concluded that the attitude towards advertisements did not have a statistically significant effect on impulsive buying behavior ($p = 0.082$). According to the results, hypotheses H1 and H3 were accepted, while hypothesis H2 was rejected.

Conclusion

In today's competitive environment, companies need to spend more effort in order to increase their sales and to be successful. The purpose of cute products is to appeal to the emotions and hearts of the consumers and to encourage them to take action and to direct them to buy (Adigüzel and Barutçu, 2017: 36).

When the previous studies on the subject are examined, it is seen that personality types (open to new ideas, cool, polite, artistic, extroverted, etc.) are effective in the attitude towards cute products. At the same time, it has been concluded that individuals who prefer cute products are generally female consumers with a hedonic nature and male individuals with children (Adigüzel, 2019: 91-92). In another study, it was concluded that cute products are preferred despite the negative attitude towards their durability, and cute products make consumers want to use them (Nenkov and Scott, 2014: 332). As a result of the present study, it was understood that the emotional benefits of cute products affect impulsive buying behavior. It is thought that cute products produced for consumers with a hedonic structure can create an emotional benefit for them.

In previous studies related to the attitude towards advertising, it is seen that the attitude towards advertising affects the person's level of interest and the direction of the attitude (positive, negative) of the person's expectation from the product. While creating an attitude towards advertising, it was stated that the focus should be the price in the advertisements to be made to individuals with low income (Lee and Mason, 1996; Köksal and Ulusu, 2012). As a result of this research, it was seen that the emotional benefits of cute products were effective on the attitude towards advertising. With the emotional benefit of cute products, it can be ensured that consumers create a positive attitude about the product. It is also recommended that businesses pay attention to consumer income levels when it comes to pricing cute products.



According to another result of the study, it was concluded that the attitude towards advertisements does not affect impulsive buying behavior. In a similar study, it is emphasized that impulsive buying behavior is affected by the attitudes of consumers towards advertisements (Alagöz and Ceyhan, 2018: 106). It is seen that the results obtained from these two previous studies in the literature are not similar. It is thought that this difference may be due to the fact that samples of the two studies consist of different participants.

When the results of the current study are evaluated, it is thought that it will be beneficial for the business to better understand the expectations of the consumers and to know that the product cuteness creates a positive attitude in the product development process. It is thought that businesses will differentiate from other businesses in competition with this kind of product development and product planning efforts, thus gaining an advantage.

In future studies, variables such as product value, hedonic and symbolic value, and purchase intention can be added to the model, and the emotional benefits of cute products can be examined by establishing other relationships.

The research was carried out with the data collected by convenience sampling method between 20 March and 10 April 2021. Since the convenience sampling method was used in the study, statistical estimates cannot be made about the representation of the population. Therefore, it may be possible to obtain different results as a result of the data that can be obtained at different times and with different methods and scales.

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