THE CLASSIFICATION OF BAD CUSTOMERS BASED ON ACTION AND CHARACTER SPECIFIC[1]

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ABSTRACT

The target of the study is to determine which sub-components are used to account for character-based and behavior-based factors, which are the two main primary deviant consumer behavior types in Turkey. In Literature, researches aiming at identifying the general structure of consumer deviance have been conducted. However, there is not a study which has attempted to develop a pilot conceptual-based scale and a classification for the main groups. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, it was depicted that the 10-items revised four-factor model for character-based consumer deviance behavior has strong construct validity. As for the action-based four-factor model, the unrevised version was seen to be more reliable.

Keywords: Deviant Behavior, Character Based Model, Action Based Model.

Jel Classification: M31, M37.

SAPKIN MÜŞTERİLERİN EYLEM VE KARAKTER ÖZELİNDE SINIFLANDIRILMASI

ÖZ

Çalışmanın hedefi, Türkiye'deki temel sapkın tüketici davranışı olan karakter temelli ve davranış temelli etkenlerin oluşturulması için alt bileşenlerin belirlenmesidir. İlgili yazında, tüketici sapkınlığının genel yapısının tanımlanmasını amaçlayan çalışmalar söz konusudur. Ancak, ana grupların sınıflandırılması ve kavramsal temelli bir pilot ölçek geliştirilmesini amaçlayan bir çalışma mevcut değildir. Faktör analizi sonucunda, karakter temelli müşteri sapkınlığı davranışının güçlü yapısal geçerliliği belirlenmiştir. Eylem temelli modeled ise revise edilmemiş olan model daha güvenilir bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sapkın Davranış, Karakter Temelli Model, Eylem Temelli Model

Jel Sınıflandırması: M31, M37.

INTRODUCTION

Even though many researches indicate that customers monotonically act in both a functional and a good-mannered way during transaction, considerable anecdotal evidence proposes that customers frequently behave negatively and often disrupt otherwise functional encounters (Reynolds and Harris, 2009).Sometimes customers deviate from the desired and expected behavioral norms of both the organizations and society during their consumption experience (Fullerton and Punj, 2004; Fullerton and Punj, 1997). This so called 'dark side' of consumer behavior can sometimes be classified as illegal behavior such as shoplifting al and physical assault of company representatives, credit misuse and abuse, purchase of illegal products, fraudulent return of merchandise, fraudulent request for warranty service, purchase of counterfeit products, violation of license agreements (Budden and Griffin, 1996; Phillips et al, 2005), or unethical and unpleasant yet not actually illegal behavior such as verbal abuse, or renting a double-bed hotel room for more than two people (Babakus et al. 2004). Dysfunctional behavior like this, which violates generally acceptable norms, is considered to be frustrating both to marketers and the majority of consumers (Harris and Reynolds, 2004). Unfortunately, such behavior from customers is far from unusual according to relevant research. For example, Harris and Reynolds (2003) found that 82% of employees who are in contact with customers have been exposed to dysfunctional consumer behavior. Even worse, Boyd (2002) found that deviant behavior of customers has a significant detrimental effect upon the health of employees who must deal with this behavior.

Even so, as well as the socialization process, it would appear that individual personality factors will also have a major impact on the likelihood of a consumer reacting in a dysfunctional way either in general, or in response to a specific interaction. For example, prior work has found that Machiavellianism and intra- or extraversion is important (Fisk et al., 2009). Especially, Machiavellianism is associated with a maladaptive personality (McHoskey, 2001), which is also likely to lead to deviant consumer behavior. Furthermore, general negative affect also appears to have an impact (Yi and Gong, 2006). This negative affect also seems to influence an individual's perception of distributive and procedural justice (Yi and Gong, 2008), which may have an extra impact on dysfunctional reactions to any given situation. In addition, while most consumers who display deviance do not have a personality disorder, or other pathological factor which may influence deviance, there will clearly be a very small percentage of consumers who deviate based in some way on general psychological factors which may be exacerbated by a given consumption situation. For example, low self-esteem may be a cause (Walker and Bright, 2009), and other work has found that deviant consumers lack attachment, commitment, involvement, and/or belief (Erickson et al., 2000). Additionally, consumers who have less self-control (Baumeister, 2002) are more likely to spend money without thinking of the consequences, and also more likely to commit crime and leave deviantly to live pleasurably (Hayward, 2004) in a consumer culture. There for those consumers who have little to lose, because they are not strongly attached to others and hence, run no risk of destroying valued relationships would be most likely to commit deviance.

One sophisticated, approach is to differentiate deviant behaviors based on to the situations of their occurrence, depending on whether they take place during the act of purchase or the act of consumption. Houston and Gassenheimer (1987) view deviant behavior in the retail outlet as expressing expectations between the actors that have not been met at the end of the transaction. During the act of consumption, deviant behavior refers to the quantitative (volume of consumption culturally viewed as abnormal) and qualitative (nature and characteristics of the goods consumed) levels of satisfaction. Being a deviant consumer consequently means that the person's needs are overly or unfairly (un)satisfied in relation to what is normally accepted (or practiced) in a society (Amine and Yohan, 2011). It can be seen that the different behaviors and categorizations above share similarities, yet there are distinct differences between each of them. Furthermore, as well as these general profiles, some studies have suggested that additional behaviors need to be considered in certain service industries such as hotels (Gill et al, 2002; Jones and Groenenboom, 2002), and restaurants (Withiam, 1998). Dysfunctional consumer behavior in the retailing context is categorized into 13 main groups; being orally aggressive, discomforting to the employees, theft, arguments, violation of the service, other behaviors, insisting, physical aggressiveness, complaining, sabotaging, sexual abuse, alcohol, passive influence, and revenge (Altıntaş, 2007).

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It is clear that dysfunctional consumer behavior can have significant negative effects on various segments of society (Budden and Griffin 1996). Therefore, it is vital to fully understand dysfunctional consumer behavior types, which may allow organizations to develop better methods for eliminating these behaviors, and also reducing the negative effects of these behaviors on society. Prior research has investigated such issues on a number of levels. However, when studies regarding deviant customer behavior are examined, it is most common to see qualitative (critical incident and interview-based) research, while very few studies utilize quantitative research such confirmatory analysis. This is not surprising as the objectives of most research in this area are exploratory, yet even so, specific studies related to the quantitative explication of deviant customer behavior are conspicuously absent.

As a result, while there is some research on the types of consumer behavior considered as deviant in specific service or consumption situations, we have little generalizable information regarding the specific consumer characteristics that can be classed as deviant. This study has two main research objectives; 1) to determine which inherent traits are associated with consumer deviance 2) to determine which behavioral patterns are defined, in a general sense, as deviant. In taking this approach we aim to develop a more complete understanding of deviant consumer behavior, and to create a measuring tool to be used in future work. Such a consistent definition and measurement device will enhance the development of future work, and enable a more consistent incremental approach to work in this area.

However, in a more general sense, the reasons for dysfunctional consumer behavior have been based on exchange theory (Harris and Reynolds, 2004). Similarly, Huefner and Hunt (1994) and Goodwin et al. (1999), claimed that consumer misbehavior occurs as a result of dissatisfaction and discontentment with the service provided. For example, Albers-Miller (1999) stated that individuals tend to misbehave when there is no fear of retaliatory exchanges of punishment. Wilkes (1978) further stated those factors such as the thought that the enterprise deserves harm; the perception that deviance is not something against the law, the indifferent state of uneducated employees, and others, can be listed as the reasons for aberrant consumer behavior. Yet, psychological research also tells us that one must take into account the specific environment that may also influence deviant behavior. In the context of the deviant consumer behavior the critical environment in the most general sense is of course the marketplace.

In this research, we analyzed the basic groups of deviant consumers based on quantitative approach. Our main purpose was to clarify the possible perceived classification based on character and behaviors of consumers.

1. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to design a pilot psychological model that could be utilized in conceptualizing the term, consumer deviance. The results that were obtained from three studies reveal the fundamental aspects regarding customer characteristics and action aspects of these behaviors. In study 1, possible consumer deviance items were collected from 265 consumers and these items were analyzed by content analysis and reduced 115 items. As a result of the content analysis, the aspects that are supposed to fit into the description of deviant customers These 115 items induced to 68 items and divided into main groups by authors based on literature and practical information. In the second study, all consumer deviance items designed from study 1 were asked to different consumer sample of 285 to evaluate as importance level. Then exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were done to indicate the validity of these construct found from exploratory factor analysis.

1.1. Study

1.1.1. Development of Items

It is considered important, when developing an index (scale), to provide a thorough structural construct. This study adopted a similar approach. First, a consumer deviance concept was described and an items pool was formed. Then this pool was eliminated as character and behavioral-based deviant behaviors. At the last stage, uni-dimensionality and multidimensionality of the constructs were compared for the validity.

To determine of the deviant consumer behaviors, 265 consumers in Ankara and Bursa cities were asked to respond to one main questions:

1) What are the first three words that occur to you when one says deviant consumers?

Content analysis was performed to analyze the data obtained through the questions. The content analysis or critical incident methods were used in "the deviance customers" literature as well: Reynolds and Harris, 2005; Harris and Reynolds, 2004; Elliot et al, 1996; Harris and Ogbonna, 2002. There are three main components of the content analysis: 1) It is objective, which accounts for following certain rules and procedure, 2) It is systematic and 3) quantitative, which focus on a choice system according to the aim of the study (Kassarjian, 1977). Measurement units are words, theme, time-place and font, idioms, sentences, paragraphs and the whole text (Kassarjian, 1977; Weber, 1990).

At the first phase, four coders went over the answers and the paragraphs. At the second phase, these were coded based on the set criteria. In the study, word, theme and sentence criteria were used. Sentence criterion is in particular more reliable than other analysis units (Milne and Adler, 1999: 243). In the coding process, the rule of the emergent

has been preferred (Stemler, 2001). In determining the common words, the principle of the basic word count (Ryan and Bernard, 2000) was employed. 780 factors obtained from the question were analyzed in detail and 115 factors were obtained in the light of the principles stated above.

1.1.2. Sorting Deviant Consumer Groups

The 115 items obtained as a result of the first study were evaluated on another sampling group of 155 consumers using a 5-item Likert Scale (1 = I strongly disagree, 5 = I strongly agree) to find out whether the determined items could be considered as deviant consumer behavior or not. As a result of this evaluation, a total of 68 statements with a mean value of above 3.5, that is, the ones that are more likely to be considered in the definition of consumer deviance, were included in the analysis and the other items were excluded from the analysis.

Afterwards, the four coding experts participating in the study divided these 68 items into two main categories in terms of the consumer deviance classification system. These are character and action based behaviors of the customers. The two categories are displayed in Table 1

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Table 1: Consumer Deviance Antecedents

Consumer Deviance Items			
Item 1	Exaggerating	Item 35	Degrading
Item 2	Aggressive	Item36	Scolding
Item 3	Bad-tempered	Item 37	Shouting
Item 4	Inconsiderate	Item 38	Rude to employees
Item 5	Malevolent	Item 39	Detaining
Item 6	Irritable	Item 40	Abusive to employees
Item 7	Sulky	Item 41	Impudent to other customers
Item 8	Moody	Item 42	Immoral
Item 9	Tactless	Item 43	Tantalizer
Item 10	Dishonest	Item 44	Domineering
Item 11	Committer	Item 45	Annoying
Item 12	Cantankerous	Item 47	Noisy
Item 13	Graceless	Item 48	Insulting
Item 14	Unreliable	Item 49	Exaggerating mistakes
Item 15	Intolerant	Item 50	Revengeful
Item 16	Rude	Item 51	Insensible
Item 17	Capricious	Item 52	Thick-skinned
Item 18	Quarrelsome	Item 53	Frightening

Item 19	Angry		Item 54	Exploiting
Item 20	Conceited		Item 55	With a vicious style
Item 21	Ill intentioned		Item 56	Disparaging
Item 22	Pessimistic		Item 57	Nonobservant
Item 23	Underestimating		Item 58	Nit-picking
Item 24	Insolent		Item 59	Foul mouthed
Item 25	Merciless		Item 60	Discomforting
Item 26	Impolite		Item 61	Hostile
Item 27	Provoking		Item 62	Problematic
Item 28	Characterless		Item 63	Violent
Item 29	Nervous		Item 64	Abusive
Item 30	Violator		Item 65	Brawler
Item 31	Unmannerly		Item 66	Unconforming
Item 32	Peevish		Item 67	Destructive
Item 33	Know-it-all		Item 68	Vandal
Item 34	Patronizing		Item 34	Hassling

1.2. Validity of Deviant Consumer Constructs

In the second study, the different sampling group of 285 consumer, (51% male, 48% female; age distribution: 22.7% 11 - 20; 48.3% 21-30; 16.5% 31-40; 9.4% 41-50; 3.1% > 51), were asked to respond to a 5-item Likert Scale about whether the 68 items could be considered as the part of the definition of the deviant customer. It is crucial at this stage to determine which model will be designed since the main purpose of the study at this stage is to develop a scale model. In this respect, two models, uni-dimensionality and multidimensionality, were compared. The reason for the large sampling group is that it is closely related to the indices in terms of the construct's validity (Kim, 2005).

Multidimensionality versus Uni-dimensionality

The multidimensional model was examined first and accepted as the first model. Then, as the second model, all of the items deviance group was loaded at the same time; that is, the one-factor model (uni-dimensionality). The basic assumption here is that all variances were defined as latent variables or a single unit was grouped as two factors based on EFA.

To achieve multidimensionality, factor analysis (EFA) was conducted by the maximum likelihood extraction method, with a varimax rotation. In both the deviant consumer groups: 1) a cut of 0.50 and 2) a scree plot test was used as a criterion to identify the appropriate factors.

Exploratory factor analysis on DEV1 and DEV2

EFA results of the character-based consumer deviance (DEV1) model suggest a four-factor solution corresponding to f1, f2, f3 and f4 (with item loading > 0.60. The KMO value is 0.967. There are a total of 15 components in the factors. The total variance explained by the four factors is 53.56%. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, which was done with the consideration of the above-mentioned principles regarding the character-based group, 4 factors were identified (Table 2). EFA results of the action-based consumer deviance model (DEV2) suggest a four-factor solution corresponding to f1, f2, f3 and f4. KMO value is 0.965. A total of four factors were identified and there are 16 components in the factors (Table 3). The total variance explained by the factors is 55.4 %. Then, a comparison of each group with a one-factor model will be made for cross validation of the indices.

Table 2: EFA Results of DEV1

		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Ill-intentioned	Item 21	0.600			
Underestimating	Item 23	0.632			
Insolent	Item 24	0.629			
Provoking	Item 27	0.660			
Characterless	Item 28	0.639			
Unmannerly	Item 31	0.701			
Aggressive	Item 2		0.744		
Bad-tempered	Item 3		0.720		
Irritable	Item 4		0.691		
Angry	Item 19			0.652	
Conceited	Item 20			0.652	
Nervous	Item 29			0.602	
Dishonest	Item 10				0.722
Unreliable	Item 14				0.735
Violator	Item 30				0.703
	Expl.Var	6.214	3.720	4.398	3.882
	Prp.Totl	0.183	0.109	0.129	0.114
	Cronbach Alpha	*0.859*	*0.785*	*0.760*	*0.780*
	Mean	*4.071*	*3.796*	*3.66*	*3.692*
	(s.d)	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*
	n	*6*	*3*	*3*	*3*

When the inter-structural correlation values of the dimensions in the scale are examined, it is seen that they vary, for DEV1 between 0.38 and 0.64, and for DEV2 between 0.46 and 0.70.

Table 3: EFA Results of DEV2

		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Item 13	Insulting	0.640			
Item 19	Exploiting	0.651			
Item 24	Foul mouthed	0.751			
Item 26	Hostile	0.689			
Item 28	Violent	0.823			
Item 29	Abusive	0.783			
Item 33	Vandal	0.678			
Item 23	Nit-picking		0.650		
Item 30	Brawler		0.662		
Item 34	Hassling		0.617		
Item 1	Degrading			0.645	

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Item 2	Scolding		0.654		
Item 4	Rude to employees		0.662		
Item 5	Detaining		0.601		
Item 12	Noisy				0.641
Item 17	Thick-skinned				0.626
	Exp. Var.	7.651	3.829	4.120	3.230
	%Exp. Var.	0.225	0.113	0.121	0.095
	Cronbach alpha	*0.893*	*0.757*	*0.792*	*0.646*
		4.249	*3.802*	*4.055*	*3.599*
	Mean(s.d)	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*	*(0.03)*
	N	*7*	*3*	*4*	*2*

1.2.1. Estimate Procedure

When skewness and kurtosis values were examined, normal distribution was observed. Therefore, maximum likelihood estimation was done. Factor loads are of importance. Within the framework of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), which is associated with the exploratory factor analysis, the factor loads for EFA are expected to be between 0.30 and 0.70 (Di Stefano, 2002: 333). In the character-based four-factor model, the factor loads are between 0.75 and 0.97; in action-based four-factor model between 0.65 and 0.95. The intervals for the one-factor model of each group are 0.60-0.85 and 47-88, respectively.

It is preferred to conduct the verifying factor analysis after the exploratory factor analysis in hypothesizing factor structures and to account for how the correlation between the observed variables can be explained by theoretical limitations (Nora and Cabrera, 1993: 249) and also to test whether the empirical data in the multidimensional analyses is in accordance with theoretical data (Long and Perkins, 2003). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is better than the exploratory factor analysis in high-value factors: it allows us to test more specific models, and to compare the compatibility of the models with unique or different parameter estimations (Marsh et al., 1985: 432).

Then, to find out which model was better, the CFA was conducted and cross validity indices were examined to identify the best model for the data. Five fit indices were examined: chi-square/d.f., GFI, RMSEA, CFI and NFI. GFI, RMSEA and RMSR are absolute fit indices and CFI, NFI are incremental fit indices. It is expected that RMSEA and SRM values are lower than 0.05, and GFI, NFI and CFI are bigger than 0.95. Chi-square/d.f. ratio should be equal with or lower than 2.0 (Schermelleh-

Engel et al, 2003: 52; Segars and Grover, 1993: 522). Goodness of fit indices is also acceptable if the cross-validation index is low (Cudeck and Browne, 1983). The accepted value of the GFI is important as it indicates a fit between covariance structure of the sampling data and covariance structure of the hypothesized model (Cheung and Rensvold, 2002) and the bigger value shows a better model framework when comparing with an alternative model (Chen, 2007).

The character-based and action-based four-factor models are different from each other but they are correlated. One factor designed for both of the groups is the consideration of four factors as one single factor for each group. When chi-square values are examined, it was seen that for both deviant consumer groups the designed four-factor model displayed a better cross validity results as compared to the one-factor model (Chi-square$_{character}$416 (84); Chi-square$_{action}$ 727 (98). However, when 5 variables in the character-based explanatory factor analysis were excluded, it was observed that the chi-square/d.f. ratio increased and the other indices increased, too. In this case, the variables are f1=4 (Ill intentioned, Insolent, Characterless, Unmannerly), f2 = Bad tempered, f3 = Angry, Conceited, f4 = Dishonest, Unreliable, Violator). In the action-based model, on the other hand, the revised model is not suggested; the reason for this is that the revised model yields to worse results than the present model (f1 = Insulting, Exploiting, Foul mouthed, Hostile, Violent, Abusive, Vandal) , f2 = Nit-picking, Brawler, Hassling), f3 = Degrading, Scolding, Rude to employees, Detaining), f4 = Detaining, Noisy, Thick-skinned). Table 4 shows the tests and their results

Table 4: Model Comparison: CFA Results for all Models

	Character-based			**Behavior-based**	
	One-factor model	Four-Factors Model	*Revised Four-factor Model*	One-factor model	Four-Factors Model
Chi-square (d.f.)	1521(90)*	416(84)*	66(30)*	1646(90)*	727(98)*
GFI	0.880	0.960	0.990	0.823	0.932
RMSR	0.06	0.049	0.018	0.078	0.046
RMSEA	0.11	0.054	0.021	0.126	0.068
Cross-validation index	1.223	0.378	0.091	1.338	0.524
AGFI	0.792	0.943	0.981	0.764	0.904
NFI	0.819	0.950	0.998	0.813	0.925
CFI	0.828	0.960	0.993	0.821	0.934
* p < 0.000					

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main aim of the study is to identify which sub-components are used to account for character-based and behavior-based factors, which are the two main primary deviant consumer behavior types in Turkey. Various studies aiming at identifying the general structure of the term consumer deviance have been conducted. However, there is not a study (to this researcher's knowledge) which has attempted to develop a pilot conceptual-based scale and a classification for the main groups. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, it was seen that the 10-items revised four-factor model for character-based consumer deviance behavior has strong construct validity. As for the action-based four-factor model, the unrevised version was seen to be more reliable. Therefore, it would be more rational to consider it as a pilot study. It would be useful to conduct a study to find which sub-components could be considered in the classification of the character-based and action-based consumer deviance behavior and to identify which of these components would be used in the surveys to be conducted. One limitation to this study is that it includes data obtained only from Turkish consumers. It is no doubt that cross-cultural studies would provide better insights to the phenomenon.

After a thorough analysis of the theories in the related literature regarding aggressiveness was done, it was seen that the character-based and action-based factors suggested in this study are not in conflict with these theories. As far as the theories discussed in the conceptual framework part are considered, it is observed that the main point of discussion is about how the concept of a consumer deviance is determined and whether the behavior of someone stems from his/her personality traits or from the influence of the particular situation (Jones and Davis, 1965). Considering the theories discussed in the conceptual framework part and the findings of the study, we can come to some conclusions regarding the aggressive behavior of consumers. A multidimensional definition of each group is required, considering the results of the analyses conducted for both groups within the framework of conceptualizing the term, consumer deviance. It is suggested that the scale developed in this study or its variations should be used when making character-based or action-based measurements
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