THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE SERVICE ATTEMPTS ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN HEALTH AND BEAUTY CENTERS

Seda Kazmacı

Ankara Maya Sente Health and Beauty Center, Ankara; Turkey

Aykut Ekiyor ✉

Healthcare Management Department; Gazi University; Ankara; Turkey

aykutekiyor1974@yahoo.com

Abstract

In consideration of current global competitive conditions, establishments have to keep pace with the continuously renewing world and analyze the factors which have impact on the satisfaction and loyalty of their customers. In this study, it has been analyzed that what kind of perception is created by various and innovative service attempts implemented in health and beauty centers. The study sample is consisted of the customers of Maya Sente Health and Beauty Center in Ankara, Turkey. According to the hypothesis of the study, the perception of innovation in health and beauty centers does not have any impact on service perception of the establishment. The perception of innovation in health and beauty centers have positive impact on the customer satisfaction and loyalty. The result of the study have been considered and discussed in various angles and the importance of these findings have been explained in respect of health and beauty centers.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Customer Loyalty, Services, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Today, rapid changes in market conditions along with globalization, more complex nature for meeting requests and demands of consumers and technological developments and innovations experienced externally, force establishments more for making innovations. In this new era, we see that the most important factor which will increase the competitive power and advantage of establishments and continue their existence in that fierce environment of change is innovative ability of the establishment.

The innovativeness triggered by competition covers launching a new product in the market, renewing existing products, using new inputs, finding new markets or the changes and innovations which will increase the profitability of the establishment through existing production and marketing methods. As well as triggering innovativeness, competition provides contribution in expanding these innovations.

Determining the conditions which have impact on innovativeness as an important factor for sustainability of establishments in our era and taking precautions intended for these conditions will ensure that the establishment will become more successful in innovativeness. Innovative activities of establishments are not only important for these establishments but also extremely important for the economy of their countries.

The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Although, the concept of entrepreneurship attracts the attentions of several researchers and pragmatics, there is not any full agreement on its meaning. Sharma and Chrisman (1999), indicates that there are two prominent commonly accepted definitions for the concept of entrepreneurship which try to define it through an entrepreneur individual (Sharma and Chrisman, 1999). The first of these two definitions belongs to Schumpeter (1934) and Schumpeter defines an entrepreneur individual as a person who can invent new products, markets, processes, organizational structures or new combinations which can establish supply arrangements (Schumpeter, 1934). According to this, entrepreneurship can be defined as an action of inventing and/or finding new combinations and taking advantage of them. The second definition which has been presented by Gartner (1988), defines entrepreneurship as creating new organizations (Gartner, 1988).

Image Effect and Corporate Image

Image is the impression which is established or desired to be established for an organization, individual, product and etc. on others. Today, image stops being only a field of marketing branch, it has become a strategic tool which should be used by senior management. A positive corporate image has become a necessity for sustainability and strategic success of an organization. A strong corporate image established on the efforts of the marketing department for creating a positive image intended for a good and/or a service is a motive which increases sales of goods and services. A company can employ right personnel by means of its positive corporate image. The company cannot only attract standard personnel but also the analysts, investors, customers and partners it needs. A strong corporate image brings an emotional

added value to companies, it can distinguish and make it convincing and this allows them to stay one step ahead of their competitors (Erdogan et al., 2006).

According to Marken, corporate image is defined as perceiving all purposes and plans of an organization. Corporate Image supports the goods, services, management style, communication activities and other global activities of a company (Okay, 2012). According to Ragenthal, corporate image is the result of impacts of the corporate enterprise on employees, target groups and public opinion and covers four main points: The opinion about a corporate enterprise is the recognition, prestige and competitiveness of that enterprise (Okay, 2012). According to Elden and Yeygel, corporate image is the overall impression for that corporate enterprise on all target groups and the impression which the concerned corporate enterprise desires to create on all its target groups (Elden and Yeygel, 2006). Corporate image means the ideational images created in the minds of individuals through experience and perception (Sabuncuoglu, 2001). Kokturk et al., defines corporate image as all the perceptions which are created in the minds of individuals as a result of their interactions with that corporate enterprise and caused by knowledge, feelings and thoughts related with that corporate enterprise (Kokturk et al, 2008).

Customer Loyalty

In the marketing literature, customer loyalty is described by behavior and attitude factors. While, the repeating purchasing behaviors are objective determinants of loyalty for evaluating customer loyalty at behavioral level, we see the determinant of loyalty at attitudinal level is customer satisfaction. However, the clarity of loyalty is restricted if we try to explain that concept only by behavioral or attitudinal factors. What should be done is to take loyalty into consideration in respect of the relation between relative attitude and repeated purchasing behavior. While, the relative attitude criterion of this approach which has been developed by Dick and Basu (1994), is influenced from the perceptions of an individual among differences of brands while making his/her purchasing decision, the repeated purchasing behavior criterion is determined by traditional factors such as monetary value of performed purchase, its frequency, the last purchasing time, its share in overall budget and etc. (Oyman, 2002).

Keiningham et al. (2006), have emphasized that a continuously repeated sale might not be always directly proportionate to loyalty and explained the circumstances where behavioral loyalty criteria might be insufficient. Repeated purchases might be performed because of high cost of change, in other words, the economical additional expenses and time loss which the customers will have to stand, if they decide to give up their loyalty. The customers might not be willing to change their brands because of their concerns as whether the new product will display

good performance as the currently used one or satisfy the promised specifications, in other words, because the risk perception of customers might be high. In order to reduce the related risks, the consumers might look after their economical benefits by establishing multiple relations in a different category range. Therefore, they might try to make purchases from different establishments in environments with multiple alternatives. In addition to these, some consumers enjoy looking for alternatives and psychological advantages of establishing multiple business relations by trying separate suppliers (Keiningham et al., 2006). Oiver (1999) explains customer loyalty by considering behavioral and attitudinal criteria together. According to him, customer loyalty, is deep feeling of commitment of customers for purchasing the preferred goods and/or services in future despite existence of circumstances and marketing efforts which might cause changes in preferences of customers. While, customer loyalty is defined as the frequency of repurchase behavior or repurchase volume of similar goods, loyal customers are defined as the ones who purchases a brand again and does not look and need any information on it (Coban, 2005). While, this means waiving comfort and suffering of other brands, it also means paying the sales price of the brand which the customer is loyal without considering its amount and making any price comparison (Keiningham et al., 2006).

While, customer satisfaction is an attitude, loyalty is a behavior resulting in repurchase. Dick and Basu (1994), indicate that the repeated purchasing behavior does not completely mean customer loyalty, the customer loyalty issue should be taken into consideration as the relation between positive attitudes for a good, service or a brand/store and behaviors of becoming a regular customer (Dick and Basu, 2002).

The absolute purpose of all establishments is to create customer loyalty and the instruments such as relational marketing, one-to-one marketing and customer-oriented marketing strategies are used for achieving that purpose. Classifying the market in accordance with loyalty degrees shown by the customers to some variables such as a product brand (Tide), store brand (Walmart) and corporate enterprise (Ford) is called as loyalty status (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011). Buyers can be grouped in accordance with their loyalty degrees. Some customers are completely loyal and always purchase the same brand while some can show loyalty to two or three different brands. On the other hand, some consumers do not show loyalty to any brand and can prefer different brands at every time according to changing circumstances.

Innovation

It is inevitable for the establishments to renew themselves and accelerate their innovative activities against rapidly increasing competition. The reference which the establishments of our era apply for competing is information. Information can be identified as all skills and abilities

used by individuals for solving problems they experience (Probst et al., 2000). Businesses which aim to present a new product and service by taking advantage of information frequently experience innovative applications. Mission, vision and purpose or objective of any business are closely related with innovation because, innovation is inevitable for sustainability of businesses in today's conditions.

Several different definitions of innovation can be seen. If, these definitions are taken into consideration, it is observed that the ones who are making these definitions want to underline the issues they consider important according to their perspectives.

Certo (2000) identifies innovation as applying new methods in producing and/or serving goods and/or services and developing new methods for working conditions. It is not sufficient for businesses to perform just production of neither goods nor services for becoming prominent especially in the recent competitive environment. Taking advantage of information for gaining competitive advantage and establishing a relation between information management and innovation are considered sustainable advantages for competition (Keskin, 2004). It is necessary that employees improve their creativity and present new ideas in current working conditions by applying new methods. Improving working conditions by means of new and innovative methods will also have positive impact on motivation of employees and bring their creativity into the forefront.

As cited by C. Stewart, Drucker's innovativeness; is defined as "useful information", an instrument of entrepreneurship, which allows employees turn their various knowledge and skills into a productive manner. One of the issues emphasized in the definition of Drucker is considering innovation as an instrument for entrepreneurship. Furthermore, he indicates innovation as a scientific branch which can be developed by learning and practicing. Although, Drucker has several studies on innovation, there are also missing points in his definition. The political structures of organizations, the resistance possibility of employees against innovation and inappropriate and/or insufficient structure of innovation methods to the organizational structure of the concerned enterprise are the missing points of that definition (Stewart, 2005).

There are several studies on innovation and most of these studies are based on Oslo Guide. Innovation, as defined in this Guide; is implementing a new or significantly improved good and/or process, new marketing method or a new organizational method in intra-company practices, workplace organization or external affairs. The minimum conditions for an innovation are new and/or significantly improved good, process, marketing method or organizational method for the concerned business. This covers the goods, processes and methods which are developed by these enterprises for the first time and/or adapted from other enterprises and organizations (Tanaka, Glaude, Gault, 2005).

It is not mandatory that there is a significant good or process development in order to define a good or service resulting from a process as an innovation. Slow but continuous development of existing information, techniques and methods establishes the main infrastructure of successful innovations. In this respect, it can be said that innovation is not only formed as a result of a research and development activity. It is possible to succeed in extremely important innovation activities as a result of effective and efficient evaluation and processing of information and opinions of employees and/or customers. Implementing and producing these opinions and then efficient marketing have vital importance in the process. Efficient innovations require well-determination of customer needs, development of appropriate technologies and production methods and efficient market presentation of them.

Innovativeness Tendency in Entrepreneurship

Tendency for Innovativeness means the inclination of a firm towards the new one. In respect of both the goods and processes, innovativeness corresponds to creativity, empiricism, change, technological leadership and intentions including all methods applied in that direction (Lumpkin et al., 2000). The first step to develop a new product, new service or new processes as a result of intention for making an innovation at a firm is implemented if the concerned firm is inclined towards innovativeness (Fis et al., 2010).

According to Lumpkin and Dess (2001), innovativeness reflects the willingness for supporting developing new goods and services and research and development activities for developing technological leadership and new processes.

Usually, a strong relation is established between innovativeness and entrepreneurship (Hitt et al., 2001). Stopford and Fuller (1994); indicate that there are some uncertainties in the literature of entrepreneurship, however all authors doing research in that field have come to an agreement that innovativeness underlies entrepreneurship. Drucker (1985), defends that innovativeness is the activity of entrepreneurship with the highest priority. Lumpkin and Dess (1996), indicate that the key criteria of tendency for entrepreneurship is the importance attached to innovativeness. Therefore, innovativeness is a must for improving existing enterprises as well as the idea of creating new ones. Ireland et al. (2001), indicate that the fact of entrepreneurship which provides important advantages goes through developing new products and commercially marketing them. Kemelgor (2002), defends that a firm should be innovative in order to preserve its competitive advantage in an irregular environment. If, this firm is an entrepreneur in real sense, it should be able to collect required information and turn them into an innovation production strategy (Kemelgor, 2002).

Tendency to entrepreneurship should be focused on innovativeness in order to be implemented successfully by an organization. Therefore, a particular set of actions and processes are needed. These innovations will make companies stronger, create competitive advantages, support growth, create new fields of business and increase capital (Hayton and Kelley, 2006). Sexton and Barrett (2003), indicate that there is a hierarchy for motivation issues direct enterprises making innovations. Sexton and Barrett mention a three-level hierarchy where survival, consistency and development are these levels (Sexton and Barrrett, 2003).

The hierarchy model presented by Sexton and Barrett define innovation as a resource problem in respect of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). Three layers indicated in the pyramid might not develop sequential phases following each other; they can be cyclic based on the resource status of the concerned enterprise and the conditions of the market where this enterprise carries out its activities. According to Sexton and Barrett, vulnerability of small sized enterprises causes more rapid processing of that cycle. Small sized firms are not always willing to make innovations. If, they have concerns of survival, the efforts for restricting the risk and costs of an innovation become prominent. The hierarchy of motivation issues directing small sized enterprises towards innovation are dynamic and cyclic and it is not accurate to say that all small sized enterprises try to grow (Sexton and Barrett, 2003).

Purpose of the Research

Innovation consists of various phases which follows each other as a process. First of all, it is required to develop new ideas as a result of researches performed for initiating that process.

The purpose of this research is to determine how the innovation attempts performed at health and beauty centers are perceived by customers and how these customers are influenced by these attempts.

Within this scope, the first problem proposition of the study; "Are the innovations applied at health and beauty centers reacted positively by customers and is the image of that enterprise influenced positively?". The determined second problem proposition is designed as, "Does perception of innovation create customer satisfaction and loyalty feeling?".

METHODOLOGY

The study is limited with 100 people who regularly get service from Ankara Maya Sente Health and Beauty Center, Turkey The sample of the study was randomly selected. The established findings are limited with the data obtained from that enterprise, because the study is performed through the data obtained from that aforementioned 100 people. The study is limited only with the aforementioned health and beauty center. The number of consumers getting monthly

service from Ankara Maya Sente Health and Beauty Center during the term of study is 320. The consumers within the scope of the study approximately correspond to 32% of the study universe.

In the study, data has been collected by means of survey method. Related survey form consists of four chapters. In the first chapter, there are demographic data, in the second chapter, service perception of customers, in the third chapter the attitude and loyalty of customers and in the fourth chapter the innovation perception of customers.

In the study, the questions of Kathleen Seiders et al. from 2005, Kamilla Bahai and Jacques Nantel from 2000, Roger Hallowell from 1996 and Gilles Roehrich from 2004 have been used in the survey after the necessary permission were taken from related parties.

The variables determined in the survey have been subjected to analysis by scoring. Innovation perception (15 questions) has determined in between 15-75 points; service perception (20 questions) 20-100 points and customer attitude and loyalty (17 questions) 17-85 points.

The answers of the survey have been turned into a single variable by summing them up and the 5-piont likert scale has been used (1 Absolutely Disagree, 5 Absolutely Agree). A statistical software has been used in analyzing the obtained data. Frequency analysis, regression analysis and F (variance) test have been applied for analyzing the data. To identify the security levels of the scales used in the study, the Chronbach Alfa coefficiencies were gained. According to the results the identification was as below: the security level of the innovation factor was 0.883, the security level of the service factor was 0.912, the security level of customer attitude and loyalty was 0.893.

The hypotheses of survey have been determined as in the following.

H1: The innovation perception at health and beauty centers have impact on attitudes and loyalty of customers.

H2: The service perception at health and beauty centers have impact on attitudes and loyalty of customers.

H3: The service type at health and beauty centers have impact on attitudes and loyalty of customers.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The gender, age, educational status and occupation variables of the participants of the survey have been based on in the study in respect of demographic characteristics.

If, the gender variable of the survey participants is taken into consideration, it is observed that 56% of them are women while 44% of them are men. Today, there is a general

opinion that the services provided at heath and beauty centers are usually enjoyed by women. However, the gender distribution as a result of the survey is almost equal. If, the age variable of the survey participants is taken into consideration, it is observed that 40% of them are in between 33-40 ages, 22% in between 26-32 ages, 18% in between 41-49 ages, 10% in between 18-25 ages, 5% in between 50-60 ages and 5% over 61. It is observed that in general middle aged group get these services.

If, the education status variable of the survey participants is taken into consideration, it is determined that 40% of them are high-school graduates, 20% college graduates, 15% have post-graduate degree, 15% faculty graduates and 10% primary school graduates. If, the occupational status variable of the survey participants is taken into consideration, it is seen that 40% of them are housewives, 20% public servants, 20% students, 10% freelancers and 10% private sector employees. It is concluded that housewives prefer health and beauty centers more than other categories.

Table 1. Purpose of Service Acquisition

PURPOSE OF SERVICE ACQUSITION	N	%
For treatment	20	20
For aesthetic	40	40
For beauty	40	40
TOTAL	100	100

If, the purpose variable of survey participants is taken into consideration in respect of consumers preference for the enterprise, it is observed that 40% acquire these services for esthetic reasons, 40% for beauty and 20% for treatment.

Testing the Hypotheses

Regression analysis and F test were applied for testing hypotheses of the study.

Table 2. Statistics Related with Variables

VARIABLES	N	Minimum	Maximum	x	S
Innovation Perception	100	50	75	62.23	6.95
Service Perception	100	61	99	79.39	12.61
Customer Attitude and Loyalty	100	50	85	62.79	10.94

The statistics related with the variables determined in the study are seen in Table 2. According to Table 2, consumers perceive service variable more than other two variables. Innovation perception and customer attitude and loyalty perception averages seem to be close to each other.

Table 3. Relation Between the Innovation Perception and Customer Attitude and Loyalty

	R²	t	F	p
Innovation-Customer Attitude and Loyalty	0.554	6.256	13.001	0.002

In the study, innovation perception is determined as the independent variable, while the customer attitude and loyalty is determined as dependent variable and the impact of the independent variable on the dependent one has been analyzed.

The explanation rate of the independent variable for the dependent variable is 55.4% (R²=0.554). It can be considered that the unexplained part of the dependent variable are explained by other variables. Because the p value according to the table 3 which tests the meaningfulness of the model is lower than 0.05, the model is meaningful.

After, it is determined that the model is meaningful, the meaninfulness of parameters of the model are tested. The variables of the model are meaningful because the p values related with their parameters are lower than 0.05. In other words, innovation perception has impact on the customer attitude and loyalty. When, the innovation perception increases 1 unit, the customer attitude and loyalty increase 0.83 unit.

Hence, the hypothesis H1 is accepted from the hypotheses of the study.

Table 4. Relation Between the Service Perception and Customer Attitude and Loyalty

	R²	t	F	p
Service-Customer Attitude Loyalty	0.720	8.250	6.230	0.025

The impact of service perception on customer attitude and loyalty has been measured in order to test the second hypothesis of the study.

The explanation rate of the independent variable for the dependent variable is 72%. It can be considered that the unexplained part of the dependent variable are explained by other variables. Because the p value according to the table which tests the meaningfulness of the model is lower than 0.05, the model is meaningful.

After, it is determined that the model is meaningful, the meaninfulness of parameters of the model are tested. The variables of the model are meaningful because the p values related

with their parameters are lower than 0.05. In other words, innovation perception has impact on the customer attitude and loyalty. When, the innovation perception increases 1 unit, the customer attitude and loyalty increase 0.77 unit.

Hence, the hypothesis H2 is accepted from the hypotheses of the study.

The service perception and innovation perception determined within the scope of the study are considered jointly and their impact on the customer attitude and loyalty has been analyzed. In the study, service and innovation perception are determined as the independent variables, while the customer attitude and loyalty is determined as dependent variable and the impact of the independent variables on the dependent one has been analyzed.

The explanation rate of the independent variable for the dependent variable is 81%. When, the meaningfulness of the model has been tested, it has been determined that the p value is lower than 0.05.

After, it is determined that the model is meaningful, the meaninfulness of parameters of the model are tested. The variables of the model are meaningful because the p values related with their parameters are lower than 0.05. In other words, service and innovation perception has impact on the customer attitude and loyalty. When, the innovation perception increases 1 unit, the customer attitude and loyalty increases 0.47 unit while the service perception increases 1 unit, the customer attitude and loyalty increases 0.56 unit. This analysis validates the H1 and H2 hypotheses.

Table 5. Relation Between the Acquired Service and Customer Attitude and Loyalty

ACQUIRED SERVICE	N	x	S	F	p
Laser Therapy	16	81.01	7.15		
Skin Care	10	78.68	4.09		
Weight Loss	18	79.47	5.85		
Botox	6	76.45	6.39		
Thread Facelift	4	79.80	7.39	48.96	0.049
Acne Treatment	17	82.56	8.99		
Breast Lift	12	81.02	6.39		
Vagina Reduction	3	77.36	7.36		
Tattoo Removal	13	82.65	6.11		
TOTAL	**100**				

The results of unidirectional variance analysis which has been performed for determining the customer attitude and loyalty averages according to the type of treatment provided from health and beauty centers and whether there is any meaningful difference between these averages are

presented in the table 5 above. According to this, there is a meaningful difference between the customer attitude and loyalty averages in accordance with the acquired service type ($p<0.05$).

According to the results of the Tukey Test which has been performed in order to determine the group creating that difference, it has been determined that the attitude and loyalty averages of the customers who have Botox and vagina reduction are lower than other group averages.

Hence, the hypothesis H3 hypothesis determined in the study is accepted.

DISCUSSIONS

In today's changing world, keeping up with innovations, improving current methods and surviving in such competitive environment are extremely important for entrepreneurs. Making these innovations in accordance with the wishes and demands of customers influence the trust and loyalty of them.

If, the results of this study is taken into consideration; it is considered important to perceive customer demands rapidly and fulfill them as soon as possible. Parallel to the provided service quality, their perspective for innovations and loyalty become higher. Also, timely provision of services is another criteria which has impact on customer loyalty.

As it is known, customers desire is to get high-quality service for appropriate prices. If, they think that the service they are provided worth the money they pay for it, it becomes an important issue influencing their loyalty. From this point of view, it is observed that as long as the prices of innovations are adequate, they are considered appropriate by customers. If, they are satisfied with the provided service, this has positive influence on customer loyalty.

Customers come to an enterprise for a particular demand. However, if the enterprise combines these services in a meaningful manner and presents customers more than they expect, the customers rise the image of that enterprise in their eyes and their loyalty to that enterprise increases.

Customers do not change their loyalty due to different and new services. Innovation is not the sole issue which has impact on customer loyalty, but also the speed and high-quality presentation of it.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the performed survey; innovation perception has a meaningful impact on customer attitude and loyalty. Service perception has also a meaningful impact on customer attitude and loyalty. Innovation and Service perception jointly have also a meaningful impact on customer attitude and loyalty.

Especially, women should be given particular importance in promotions and campaigns because they consider innovations and service quality important. There should be sufficient information and follow-up for presenting different services to regular customers as well as gaining new ones. The service types and service quality provided by an enterprise should be increased in that scope.

In the study, the application of a different and innovative service attempt of a health and beauty center in Ankara was investigated. The study was conducted to 100 randomly selected customers who regularly take service in a health and beauty center in the health sector which facilitates in the province of Ankara. Accordingly the results are particularly to the customers getting service from the related health and beauty center. To generalize the results, the study should be conducted with different profiles of customers in different health and beauty centers in different regions. Other researchers can further contribute by conducting the same study using some additional factors.

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