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Full Length Research Paper

A comparative study of consumer preferences for manufacturer or private labelled food products

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The increasing competition in the global market has directed retailers to develop strategies both to continue operating and to obtain a greater share from the market. In this process until the present, private label brands have emerged alongside manufacturer brands in the retail market. The aim of this study is to compare the attitudes and preferences of consumers who purchase food products with manufacturer and private brands. In the study, 90% of the consumers in question are familiar with private brand food products. The quantity of purchased of private brand food products increases with household size. 75% of the consumers possess at least one shop card and a significant relationship between possession of a market card and age, gender, education level, income, household size, and occupation exists. The preferences of 55% of the consumers have been affected by brand loyalty. The percentage of consumers purchasing private brand food products is found to vary between 10 and 51% depending on the product. While the consumers who purchase manufacturer brand food products strongly agree with the idea that these are qualified products, they generally agree that private brand food products are cheap, not attractive and that their packaging is suitable. However, consumers who purchase private brand food products strongly agree that these are qualified, reliable, and cheap products. The consumers in both groups agree that manufacturer brand food products are more diverse, more attractively and carefully displayed, more familiar, more widely available, fresher and have a high brand image.

Key words: Food, consumer preferences, retailing, manufacturer brand, private label, brand loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization leads to important changes in retailing. In this process, the number of retail outlets and product diversity increases in big cities while due to competition new strategies are added to the conventional demand creating techniques such as providing better service to ensure consumer satisfaction, facilitation in payment and discounts. In fact, the emergence of consumers' brand preferences has resulted in more strategic "Brand Management" and in various brand applications that are all features that add to the value of a product (Kotler and Armstrong, 1996). One of these strategies involves products sold with the label of the wholesaler/retailer that is different from the manufacturer/national brand, also referred to as private brand, private label brand or store/ supermarket brand (Burton and Lichtenstein, 1998; Quelch and Harding, 1996; Halstead and Ward, 1995; Hoch, 1996). In order to obtain competition advantage, to increase their market share and profit margin, and to obtain loyal customers, retailers develop their own private brands for products or product lines (Davies, 1998). These private/supermarket brand products produced/ ordered by retailers are observed in especially the food sector and occupy an increasingly larger space in the stacks of the product groups with high purchasing frequency (Anonim, 2003). An increase in the number, quality and promotion of supermarket brand products is observed (Özkan ve Akpınar, 2003). Despite the advan-

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tages of supermarket brands that they bring to the manufacturer and the retailer, they pose some risk and difficulties as well (Berman, 1996; McGoldric, 1990). Therefore it is important that elements of loyalty between producer and retailer must be improved (Özgül, 2004).

It is reported that the market share of private brands is increasing rapidly worldwide as well as in Turkey and that private brands constitute 15% of total consumer purchases in the world, whereas this percentage is only 3.2% (2003) in Turkey (Albayrakve ve Dölekoğlu, 2006). Private brand products are mostly purchased in Europe and North America (95%) (www.plturkey.org). In Turkey, on the other hand, the 3.2% markup of private brand products continues to hold its growth potential as is indicated by the sales volume of private brand products that rose to 7 - 8% in 2006 (Celebi, 2006, www.plturkey.org). After the 2001 crisis in Turkey the market share of private brand products increased (www.sabah.com, 2009a, www.gidamarka.com, 2009). In fact, according to the 2006 Private Brand Report of the Retailing Institute, in 2005 and 2006 the fastest growing product category was food (25% growth rate), whereas in cleaning products there was a shrinkage. In 2006 the market grew by 22% and prices increased by 4 - 5%. Products yielding the highest revenue were pulses and drinks after paper products. According to the report, with the exception of cleaning products, consumers' loyalty to private brand prodcuts was found to have increased for products in all categories. Despite the growing demand for private brand products, consumers have different reasons for their preferences that are sensitive to product type and price, and the socio-economic status of consumers (Dölekoğlu et al. 2008, Mucuk 2001).

The aim of this study is to identify the attitudes toward private brand products and demographic features of private brand purchasing consumers and those of manufacturer brand purchasing consumers in the retail sector in Turkey, which has boomed with the arrival of international hyper and supermarkets in recent years, and to determine whether any differences exist between the two consumer groups.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Material

A face to face questionnaire was administered in the district Çankaya in Ankara in 2004 to elicit consumer preferences regarding private and manufacturer brand products. The responses obtained from consumers constitute the primary data for this study. The district Çankaya in Ankara was chosen as research field since the most private brand selling retailers operate in this area. In the sampling process, the One Stage Simple Random Sampling Leaning against Population Rates Method was used (Collins, 1986; Gül et al., 2003,).

$$n = t^2 \ x \ [1 + (0,02)(b - 1)] \frac{p \ x \ q}{x_{e2}}$$

Where;
n : Sample size
t : T value in the level of the confidence 95%
b : sampling stage (since there is only 1 stage, it is 1)
p : probability of occurrence for the investigated event
q : probability of none-occurrence for the investigated event (q = 1 - p)
e : error (5% in this study)

Two hundred and seventeen (217) respondents were selected through random sampling. The 217 consumers were divided into two groups as those who buy private brand products and those who buy manufacturer brand products. Their preferences for private and manufacturer brand products and cross relationships between variables involved were examined. Consumer preferences for manufacturer and private brand products were assessed on a Likert Scale (Anonymous, 2004; Tull and Hawkins, 1990; Albayrak, 2000). The differences between the consumers' purchases of manufacturer and private brand products as well as the significance of the relationship between variables was determined with a Chi-square test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSĐON

Demographic features of the consumers examined in the study

The demographic features of the two consumer groups are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 presents the demographic features of consumers that purchase manufacturer brand products and Table 2 those that purchase private brand products.

Tables 1 and 2 show that no striking differences exist between the demographic features of the two consumer groups, and that the majority of the consumers are in the 26 - 35 age range, college/university graduates, civil servants, married and with an income of 501 - 1.000 TL. The only demographic difference between the two consumer groups is that manufacturer brand product purchasing consumers are members of 3 - 4 person households whereas private brand product purchasing consumers are members of households of 5 persons or more.

Brand preferences of the consumers in the study

Consumers' possession of a market card offered by the supermarket, familiarity with the private brand food products and their use, reasons for (non) preference, preferred product groups and brand loyalty were identified. Of all the consumers, 81 (37.3%) purchase only manufacturer brand food products while 136 (62.7%) purchase private brand products alongside manufacturer brand food products.

It was revealed that 75.6% of the consumers possess at least one market card offered to customers by supermarkets, and that 24.4% did not possess any of these market cards. The majority of the consumers (3/4) have used these cards to obtain price advantages while

Table 1. Demographic features of manufacturer brand product consumers.

Age	n	%	Education	n	%
15 - 25	31	38.3	Post-Graduate	22	27.2
26 - 35	38	46.9	College/university Graduate	47	58.0
36 - 45	6	7.4	High School	9	11.1
46 - +	6	7.4	Middle School	3	3.7
			Primary School	-	-
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0
Gender	**n**	**%**	**Marital status**	**n**	**%**
Female	51	63.0	Married	54	66.7
Male	30	37.0	Single	21	25.9
			Widow(er)/Divorced	6	7.4
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0
Household size	**n**	**%**	**Income (TL)**	**n**	**%**
1 - 2	18	22.2	250 and below	13	16.0
3 - 4	44	54.3	251 – 500	21	25.9
5 - +	19	23.5	501 – 1.000	32	39.6
			1.001 and above	15	18.5
Total	81	100.0	Total	81	100.0
Occupation	**n**	**%**			
Housewife	3	3.7			
Civil servant	31	38.3			
Worker	9	11.1			
Business owner	16	19.7			
Retired	-	-			
Student	22	27.2			
TOTAL	81	100.0			

shopping. Possession of market cards is related to consumers' age (χ^2: 19.032 df:3 p:0,000), gender (χ^2: 14.732 df:1 p: 0.000), household size (χ^2: 14.059 df:2 p: 0.001) and occupation (χ^2: 24.130 df: 5 p: 0.000) as well. The Chi-square test results reveal a 0.05 significant relationship between possession of a market card and age, gender, household size, and occupation ($p < 0.05$). Market card owners are mainly the consumers in the 26 - 35 age range (90.2%). 82% of the female consumers possess a market card. The Chi-square test result also revealed a statistically significant relationship between household size and possession of a market card ($p < 0.05$). Consisting of 5 - 6 members has encouraged households to obtain a market card. While determining the relationship between occupation and possession of a market card, all retired, 91% of business owners, 86% of students 57% of housewives were found to possess market cards. Of all the consumers, 30% possessed at least one, 52% possessed two and 18% possessed three or more market cards. While 90% of the consumers reported to be familiar with private brand food products, 10% reported not to be familiar with these products. It was found that the consumers were most familiar with the private brand food products of the Migros and Gima supermarkets. 46.9% of the manufacturer brand only consumers reported to have used private brand food products, but then not to have preferred them afterwards. The idea that these are not qualified products plays a role in this attitude. In fact, 32.1% of the consumers reported not to purchase them because they think they are of no quality, and 14.8% report both that they have used them but that they were not satisified, and that they do not purchase private brand food products because they think they are not qualified. 55.1% of private brand food product consumers report to purchase private brand food products because they are cheap, and 21.3% report to have purchased them for trial purposes in addition to their low price. While the private brand product group with the highest consumption is cleaning products with 25.7%, dry food products follow with 23.5%. For all product groups

Table 2. Demographic features of private brand product consumers.

AGE	n	%	EDUCATION	n	%
15 - 25	37	27.2	Post-Graduate	20	14.7
26 - 35	54	39.7	College/university Graduate	76	55.9
36 - 45	20	14.7	High School	12	8.8
46 - +	25	18.4	Middle School	12	8.8
			Primary School	16	11.8
Total	136	100.0	Total	136	100.0
Gender	**n**	**%**	**Marıtal status**	**n**	**%**
Female	111	81.6	Married	63	46.3
Male	25	18.4	Single	60	44.1
			Widow(er)/Divorced	13	9.6
Total	136	100.0	Total	136	100.0
HOUSEHOLD SIZE	**n**	**%**	**Income (TL)**	**n**	**%**
1 – 2	37	27.2	250 and below	17	12.5
3 – 4	49	36.0	251 – 500	42	30.9
5 - +	50	36.8	501 – 1.000	45	33.1
			1.001 and above	32	23.5
Total	136	100.0	Total	136	100.0
Occupatıon	**n**	**%**			
Housewife	16	11.8			
Civil servant	52	38.2			
Worker	8	5.9			
Business owner	28	20.6			
Retired	9	6.6			
Student	23	16.9			
TOTAL	136	100.0			

groups the percentage of consumers that purchase private brand products is only 8.8%. In a study by Orel (2004) it was revealed that price advantages are perceievd better in the case of private brand products.

When asked whether they would buy a private brandfood product or not, 62.7% of the consumers said they would, 19.8% said they would not and 17.5% said they would be undecided.

Of all the consumers, 44.2% said they were not brand loyal, and 55.8% said they were brand loyal. The consumers who considered themselves to be brand loyal counted Pınar, Süta , Ülker and AOÇ as the brands they would never stop buying. A meaningful relationship was found between brand loyalty and age (χ^2: 18.871 df: 3 p: 0.000), education level (χ^2: 17.247 df: 4 p: 0.002), income (χ^2: 23.987 df: 3 p: 0.000) and occupation (χ^2: 33.232 df: 5 p: 0.000). In fact, brand loyalty changes with respect to age. While 63.2% of the consumers in age range 15 - 25 are brand loyal, this percentage is 29.0% for the consumers in the age range 46 and above. Brand loyalty is also related with education. All the consumers that are primary school graduates (100%) were found not to be brand loyal, whereas 50% of the consumers with postgraduate degrees were found to be brand loyal. Income also affects brand loyalty. In fact, brand loyalty ratios appear to increase as income increases. In the relationship between occupation and brand loyalty, it was seen that 63.9% of the civil servant consumers and 55.6% of the retired consumers were brand loyal, while there were no brand loyal worker consumers. In addition, brand loyalty was lower among the housewives, students and business owners compared to the other consumer groups.

The consumers' preferences for private brand meat and meat products was approximately 10% (11.1% for red meat; 13.4% for white meat; 11.5% for salami; 13.8% for sausage; 17.1% for pepperoni); yet, consumers' preferences for manufacturer brands was considerably higher for all meat products, except for red meat which may be largely due to the fact that red meat is usually not packaged but sold in bulk (19.4% for red meat, 53.9% for white meat, 59.4% for salami, 56.7% for sausage and

Table 3. Manufacturer brand food product preference analysis of manufacturer brand food consumers (Likert scale).

Options	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Stand. Dev.
1. quality	61	17	3	-	-	1.28	0.53
2. low price	10	6	25	15	25	3.48	1.33
3. reliable	49	23	6	3	-	1.54	0.79
4. diverse	50	10	12	4	5	1.81	1.23
5. attractively displayed	41	13	15	4	7	2.02	1.30
6. attractiveness	5	15	23	14	24	3.46	1.27
7. suitably packaged	43	13	18	7	-	1.86	1.05
8. much advertised	40	9	13	11	8	2.23	1.43
9. intensively promoted	22	19	12	13	15	2.75	1.48
10. imitation of manufacturer brand products	-	-	15	-	66	4.63	0.78
11. widely known	45	19	7	7	3	1.81	1.14
12. more hygienic	39	22	10	7	3	1.93	1.14
13. widely available	48	21	12	-	-	1.56	0.74
14. have a high market image	48	20	7	4	2	1.67	1.00
15. fresher	30	28	15	8	-	2.01	0.98
16. more used	50	13	12	6	-	1.68	0.99

1. strongly agree, 2. generally agree, 3. neither agree nor disagree, 4. generally disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

67.7% for pepperoni).

While consumers' use of private brand milk and dairy products is 20% and above for milk and yoghurt (30.0% for milk; 22.6% for yoghurt), for white cheese, cheddar and butter this percentage is 10%, that is as low as it is for private brand meat products (18.9% for white cheese;17.1% for cheddar; 13.4% for butter). On the other hand, consumers buy manufacturer brand milk (57.1%), white cheese (53.0%), cheddar (52.5%), yoghurt (68.7%) and butter (69.9%).

All of the 217 consumers were found to prefer buying fresh fruit and vegetables in bulk. Private brand canned fruit and vegetable consumption was found to be 17.1%, while it was 62.2% for manufacturer brands. It was found that consumers prefer manufacturer brand dried and frozen fruit and vegetables, and that they produced these type of products themselves at home. The private brand consumption rate of tomato paste, ketchup, and mayonnaise was found to be increasing (approximately 20%) compared to fresh fruit and vegetables (28.6% for tomato paste; 21.2% for ketchup; 24.4% for mayonnaise). The consumers' private brand consumption of fruit juice was 13.3%, pickled olives 18.4%, and jam-marmelade 22.1%. The consumers' private brand consumption of vegetable oils was approximately 10% (10.6% for olive oil; 11.1% for sunflower oil), but for corn oil and margarine this ratio was approximately 30% (29.0% for corn oil and 30.9% for margarine).

Consumers' consumption of private brand flour and floury products (with the exception of biscuits) was found to be higher than was the case for other food product groups. Of all the consumers, 38.7% preferred private brands for flour, 42.4% for rice, 45.2% for bulghur and 37.8% for macaroni. However, only 6.0% prefer private brand biscuits.

All the consumers expressed that they prefer to buy fish in bulk, and that they prefer manufacturer brands for canned or frozen fish.

The consumption of private brand sugar and sugary products was found to have reached a high level. 51.6% of the consumers buy private brand sugar, 47.9% buy lump sugar and 45.6% buy honey of a private brand.

The consumers preference for private brand tea and coffee varies between 20 - 30%. They prefer to use private brand tea (22.1%); tea bags (35.5%); herbal-fruit tea (28.1%); Turkish coffee (26.8%) and instant coffee (38.7%).

The consumers' preferences for private brand non-alcholic beverages was 30.4% for mineral water/soda; 17.1% for fruit mineral water and carbonated drinks, and 7.4% for cola. The consumers' consumption of private brand cola was found to be especially low.

Private brand preferences for food products in the other products category were found to be 34.1% for pulses, 47.9% for salt, 34.1% for spices, and 13.4% for nuts and dried fruits.

It is observed that the consumers preferred private brands more in the case of solid and dry products. This indicates that preference for private brands is easier with dry products for which risk and elasticity are smaller. The 155% increase in private brand pulse consumption (between 2000 - 2009) year indicates this fact (http://www.sabah.com.tr, 2009b).

Table 3 presents the analysis of the agreement reponses to 16 statements that the manufacturer brand consumers gave related to their manufacturer brand pre-

Table 4. Private brand food product preference analysis of manufacturer brand food consumers (Likert scale).

Options	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Stand.Dev.
1. quality	-	6	27	21	27	3.85	0.98
2. low price	18	32	19	7	5	2.37	1.11
3. reliable	2	7	41	15	16	3.44	0.99
4. diverse	7	5	7	14	48	4.12	1.30
5. attractively displayed	-	-	12	13	56	4.54	0.74
6. attractiveness	24	14	9	18	16	2.85	1.54
7. suitably packaged	12	24	20	14	11	2.85	1.27
8. much advertised	-	-	9	17	35	4.57	0.69
9. intensively promoted	-	3	24	10	44	4.17	0.98
10. imitation of manufacturer brand products	14	11	33	7	16	3.00	1.31
11. widely known	-	12	3	29	37	4.12	1.04
12. more hygienic	3	3	26	19	30	3.86	1.08
13. widely available	18	14	15	6	28	3.15	1.59
14. have a high market image	-	8	12	10	51	4.28	1.05
15. fresher	9	6	30	12	24	3.44	1.29
16. more used	-	-	7	-	74	4.83	0.57

1. strongly agree, 2. generally agree, 3. neither agree nor disagree, 4. generally disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

ferences. According to the table, the manufacturer brand food product consumers totally agreed that manufacturer brand food products are qualified (1.28 mean), generally agreed that these products are intensively promoted (2.75 mean), are undecided about their low price (3.48 mean) and attractiveness (3.46 mean). The statements that the consumers totally agreed with are those that state that manufacturer brand food products are reliable (1.54 mean), diverse (1.81 mean), suitably packaged (1.86 mean), widely known (1.81 mean), more hygienic (1.93 mean), widely available (1.56 mean), have a high market image (1.67 mean), and that the consumers are more used to these manufacturer brand products (1.68 mean). The statements that manufacturer brand food products consumers generally agreed with are those that state that these products are carefully and attractively displayed (2.02 mean), much advertised (2.23 mean) and fresher (2.01 mean). Moreover, they somewhat agreed that these products are the imitations of other manufacturer brand products.

Table 4 presents the private brand food products related perceptions of consumers who buy manufacturer brand food products. Manufacturer brand food product consumers generally agreed that private brand food products are low price (2.37 mean), not attractive (2.85 mean) and suitable packaged (2.85 mean). Yet, these consumers were undecided about whether the quality of a private brand food product depends on its manufacturer (3.44 mean), whether private brand products are the imitation of manufacturer brand products (3.00 mean), whether they are widely available (3.15 mean), whether they are fresh (3.44 mean), whether they are hygienic (3.86 mean), and whether private brand food products are qualified (3.85 mean). Furthermore, while the manufacturer brand food product consumers somewhat generally disagreed that private brand food products are diverse (4.12 mean), are intensively promoted, 4.17 mean), are widely known (4.12 mean), and have a high brand image (4.28 mean), they disagreed that private brand food products are carefully and attractively displayed (4.54 mean), are much advertised (4.57 mean) and that they are more used to these products (4.83 mean).

The analyses of private brand food product consumers' preferences for manufacturer and private brand food products are presented in Tables 5 and 6. As Table 5 indicates, the private brand food product consumers totally agreed that private brand food products are of quality (1.43 mean), reliable (1.49 mean), low priced (1.93 mean) and that they are more used to these products (1.94 mean). The statements that private brand food product consumers generally agreed with are those that state that private brand food products are suitably pac-kaged (2.40 mean), more hygienic (2.39 mean), widely available (2.36 mean), and fresher (2.15 mean). The consumers were undecided as to whether private brands are more diverse (3.03 mean), carefully and attractively displayed (3.20 mean), are not attractive (3.24 mean), are widely known (3.41 mean), and whether these pro-ducts have a high brand image (3.75 mean). In addition, the consumers generally disagreed that private brand products are much advertised (4.53 mean), intensively promoted (4.59 mean) and that they are the imitation of manufacturer brand products (4.66 mean).

The private brand food product consumers' responses to 16 manufacturer brand food product related statements are presented in Table 6. It is observed that the

Table 5. Private brand food product preference analysis of private brand food product consumers (Likert scale).

Options	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Stand. Dev.
1. quality	94	25	17	-	-	1.43	0.71
2. low price	51	56	17	12	-	1.93	0.92
3. reliable	86	34	16	-	-	1.49	0.70
4. diverse	10	14	85	16	11	3.03	0.92
5. attractively displayed	4	34	45	37	16	3.20	1.04
6. attractiveness	8	18	66	22	22	3.24	1.06
7. suitably packaged	24	42	62	8	-	2.40	0.85
8. much advertised	-	11	9	13	103	4.53	0.93
9. intensively promoted	-	9	7	15	105	4.59	0.86
10. imitation of manufacturer brand products	-	-	23	-	113	4.66	0.75
11. widely known	16	18	25	48	29	3.41	1.29
12. more hygienic	12	59	65	-	-	2.39	0.65
13. widely available	25	37	74	-	-	2.36	0.78
14. have a high market image	4	17	25	53	37	3.75	1.08
15. fresher	24	67	45	-	-	2.15	0.70
16. more used	41	62	33	-	-	1.94	0.74

1. strongly agree, 2. generally agree, 3. neither agree nor disagree, 4. generally disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

Table 6. Manufacturer brand food product preference analysis of private brand food product consumers (Likert scale).

Options	1	2	3	4	5	Ortalama	Stand.Dev.
1. quality	76	47	13	-	-	1.54	0.67
2. low price	-	-	18	22	96	4.57	0.72
3. reliable	75	33	20	8	-	1.71	0.93
4. diverse	86	38	12	-	-	1.46	0.65
5. attractively displayed	25	53	30	24	4	2.48	1.07
6. attractiveness	-	12	30	25	69	4.11	1.04
7. suitably packaged	40	45	21	22	8	2.36	1.23
8. much advertised	38	66	16	16	-	2.07	0.93
9. intensively promoted	17	36	42	29	12	2.88	1.15
10. imitation of manufacturer brand products	-	-	25	13	98	4.54	0.79
11. widely known	75	40	8	9	4	1.73	1.04
12. more hygienic	42	66	20	8	-	1.96	0.83
13. widely available	62	50	16	4	4	1.81	0.96
14. have a high market image	51	49	20	12	4	2.04	1.07
15. fresher	38	60	26	8	4	2.12	0.98
16. more used	24	37	49	18	8	2.62	1.10

1. strongly agree, 2. generally agree, 3. neither agree nor disagree, 4. generally disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

private brand food product consumers totally agreed that manufacturer brand food products are diverse (1.46 mean), qualified (1.54 mean), reliable (1.71 mean), widely known (1.73 mean), more hygienic (1.96 mean), and more widely available (1,81 mean). The consumers also generally agreed that manufacturer brand products are carefully and attractively displayed (2.48 mean), suitably packaged (2.36 mean), much advertised (2.07 mean), fresher (2.12 mean), intensively promoted (2.88 mean), that these products have a high brand image (2.04 mean), and that they are very used to these products (2.62 mean). In addition, private brand product consumers generally disagreed that these products are not attractive (4.11 mean), that manufacturer brand products are low priced (4.57 mean), and that they are imitations of other brand prıoducts (4.54 mean).

Except for some judgements, no statistically significant differences were found between the consumers' attitude towards manufacturer brand food products and their purchasing these products. Both manufacturer brand food product consumers and private brand food product consumers agreed that manufacturer brand food products are qualified products. However, manufacturer brand consumers expressed a stronger degree of agreement. Both consumer groups disagreed that manu-facturer brand products are not low price. The degree of agreement with this statement was expressed more highly by the private brand product consumers. Both consumer groups agreed that manufacturer brand products are reliable, though the degree of agreement was higher for the manufacturer brand product consumers. Furthermore, both consumer groups agreed that manufacturer brand products are also diverse. That these products are carefully and attractively displayed was agreed with by both manufacturer brand product consumers and private brand product consumers. Both consumer groups disagreed that manufcaturer brand poducts are not attractive. Both the private brand product consumers group and the manufacturer brand product consumers group agreed that manufacturer brand product packaging is suitable. Yet, the degree of agreement was expressed more strongly by the manufacturer brand product consumers. That manufacturer brand products are much advertised is a statement both consumer groups agreed with. Both the manufacturer brand product consumer group and the private brand product consumer group were undecided as to the intensiveness of promotion of manufacturer brand products. However, the consumers disagreed that manufacturer brand products are imitations of the other brands. All the consumers agreed that manufacturer brand products are more widely known. Another statement that all the consumers agreed with is that manufacturer brand products are more hygienic. The two consumer groups' degrees of agreement on this item were very close to each other. Both groups also agreed that manufacturer brand products are widely available, fresher and have a high brand image. While the manufacturer brand product consumers agreed to be used to these products, the private brand product consumers are undecided about this statement.

In the study, some significant differences were observed between the respondents' private brand product related attitudes and their purchasing these, with the exception of some statements. While the private brand product consumers found private brand products to be of quality, the manufacturer brand product consumers were doubtful. Similarly, in a study by Kurtulu (2001), it was found that consumers who did not purchase private brand products had doubts about these products. In a study by Doyle (1993) conducted in the USA, on the other hand, it was found that half of the consumers believed that manufacturer brand prodcuts and private brand products are of the same quality. Although both the private brand and manufacturer brand product consumers in this study agree that private brand products are low price, the degree of agreement is higher among the private brand product consumers. A study by Aksulu (2000) revealed that private brand product consumers are price sensitive. While the private brand product consumers found these products reliable, the manufacturer brand product consumers were more undecided. While the manufacturer brand product consumers considered the display of private brand products inadequate, the private brand product consumers were undecided about this issue. Consumers of both manufactuer brand and private brand products were undecided on whether private brand products are not attractive. While the private brand product consumers agreed that private brand products are suitably packaged, the manufacturer brand product consumers were undecided about this issue. The consumers who bought both manufacturer brand products and private brand products in both consumer groups disagreed that private brand products are much advertised. Similarly, both consumer groups believed that private brand products are not intensively promoted. While, the private brand product consumers did not consider private brand products to be an imitation of manufacturer brand products, the manufacturer brand product consumers appeared more undecided on this issue. Both consumer groups expressed their doubts as to whether private brand products are widely known. In a sudy by Yurttut (2001), it is stated that the consumers who were asked questions on how widely known private brand products were, expressed that they learned about these products from their retailer (87%) and that they preferred private brand products (73%). While the manufacturer brand product consumers disagreed that private brand products are hygienic, the private brand product consumers agreed with this statement. Whereas the manufacturer brand product consumers were undecided about the availability of private brand products, the private brand product consumers agreed that they are available. The consumers who use both private and manufacturer brand products disagreed that private brand products have a high brand image. While the manufacturer brand product consumers disagreed that private brand products are fresh, the private brand product consumers agreed. The private brand product consumers agreed that they are more used to private brand products; in contrast, the manufacturer brand product consumers diasgreed.

Conclusıon

It can be said that manufacturer brand product consumers give more importance to brand and quality, whereas private brand product consumers are more sensitive to price and more open to trying new brands. In order to encourage customers who buy manufacturer brand products but avoid private brand products to buy these products as well, it is suggested that retailers employ strategies that are different from merely maintaining low prices and making the products available. First of all, the misconception that prevails in the consumers' mind that low price products are not qualified needs to be changed either by building quality images for brands or by explaining through different campaigns that low prices are a result of the absence of advertisement costs rather than the absence of quality. In order to make private brand products more widely known, low cost promotion instruments such as product promotion stands in the store, as well as careful display of products are suggested. Private brand products are expected to become at least as attractive as manufacturer brand products provided that effective marketing communication, adequate packaging and product diversity is offered to the consumers.

Market brands that have provided utilities and presented alternatives to consumers, producers and retailers must be evaluated accurately. In addition, because of low income per capita and faltered distribution of income in Turkey, it is estimated that the share of market brands will be increased in the future.

Regional development differences affect consumer and retailer preferences. Moreover, the changes in the consumers' preferences for private brand products will reflect differently onto small, middle and large size retailers. In fact, as the private brand products sale opportunities of large size retailers will increase especially in developed cities, it will become increasingly difficult for middle and small size establishments to survive in the market. At this point, the retailer sector needs to assess its own dynamics well.

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