

Business Students' Attitudes towards Consumerism, Marketing Practices and Government Regulations: A Comparative Study of Poland and Turkey

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Abstract

Consumerism has received a certain amount of attention in marketing literature however attention has been mostly focused on consumerism issues in developed countries. The purpose of this research is to study and compare attitudes towards consumerism in two developing countries; Poland and Turkey. Paper and pencil questionnaires were distributed to business students at a Polish university and a Turkish university. The data were analyzed to make comparisons between the attitudes of university students towards consumerism, marketing practices and government regulations in Poland and Turkey. The empirical findings of the two quantitative studies indicate both significant differences and similarities between Poland and Turkey. This paper presents an initial focus on an important area of consumerism research, by comparing quantitative results of two developing countries.

Keywords: Consumerism; Marketing practices; Turkey; Poland.

1. Introduction

Consumerism has attracted a considerable amount of interest since the 1960s in the marketing literature. Several published studies have attempted to compare and contrast the attitudes of specific groups of consumers in both the east and west towards consumerism. However, attention has not been focused on consumerism issues in developing countries where consumerism is still growing. When looking at the earlier cross-national studies in consumerism, it is seen that few comparative studies include countries in transition such as Poland, which has established a new social order, but has not been able to change all aspects of its social structure, including official institutions and established legal practices. This study is a cross national study conducted in Poland and Turkey. Although Turkey is not a post-communist country, Turkey's economy was characterised by a heavy reliance on state intervention before 1980. Turkey accepted the concept and principals of a free market economy in 1980.

This study aims to examine the changing market and consumer attitudes towards consumerism, marketing practices and government regulations since the transition to a free market economy in both Poland and Turkey, highlighting similarities and differences. This paper begins with a brief overview of consumerism literature; the next section presents a discussion of why these two countries were chosen for the study. The third section introduces the research survey instrument used to define the terms of the constructs of interest, and the related scale measures. The remainder of the paper discusses the empirical survey findings, and provides insights as to the contribution of this field of research to businesses that are willing to operate in Poland, Turkey and/or similar markets. The paper concludes with research contributions, limitations and recommendations for future study.

2. An Overview of Relevant Literature

Consumerism can be defined as “a social movement designed to augment the rights and powers of buyers in relation to sellers” (Kotler, 2000). Kotler (2000) names the six major factors that contribute to the rise of consumerism as structural conduciveness, structural strains, growth of a generalised belief, precipitating factors, mobilisation for action and social control. According to Lysonski et al. (2003), consumerism, in essence, deals with consumer issues regarding a range of marketing related issues. The past 20-30 years have witnessed several conceptual and empirical studies, exploring consumer attitudes towards consumerism, marketing systems and government practices, both at national and cross-cultural level. National studies mainly focused on U.S. results. Significant findings such as those of Barksdale and Darden (1972) showed that most U.S. respondents (70%) thought that most manufacturers did not handle consumer complaints well. Kroll and Stampfl (1986) categorise U.S. consumers into 4 different consumer profiles according to their perceptions of consumerism.

As consumerism research progressed, attention mainly focused on empirical, cross-cultural or cross-national studies. Most of these studies focused on comparing different countries' results with the results gathered from U.S. samples (Arndt et al., 1980; French et al., 1982; Barksdale et al., 1982; Klein, 1982; Wee and Chan, 1989; Lyonski and Zotos, 1989). Another research stream includes studies comparing the results of non-American countries with each other (Darley and Johnson, 1993; Chan et al., 1990). Darley and Johnson (1993), in their empirical research, compare Singapore, India, Nigeria and Kenya on the basis of attitudes towards consumerism. Despite slight differences between countries, they found that all consumers have negative attitudes towards consumerism. Chan et al. (1990), in their research comparing consumer attitudes in Australia and Hong Kong, state that consumers in Hong Kong have more negative attitudes towards consumerism than Australian consumers.

Kaynak (1985) and Thorelli (1982), point out that very little attention has been devoted to consumerism in developing or less-developed countries. Varadarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) found that Indian consumers have a negative attitude towards consumerism and that they supported government regulations. Uray and Menguc (1996) stated that Turkish consumers have a negative attitude towards consumerism issues in general. Bhunian et al. (2001) suggest that young consumers with a business education background have a more positive attitude towards consumerism than other participants. In another study conducted in Saudi Arabia, Assad (2007) found that consumerism was diffused throughout society because of the influence of local and global factors. Lyonski et al. (2003) compared the results of 1986 and 2001 samples from New Zealand. They found that in 2001 consumers had become more consumer oriented and environmentally-conscious.

3. Why the comparison of Poland and Turkey?

Since 1980, Turkey's economy has undergone significant transformation. This period is known as 'opening up' and economic policies are now based on export oriented industrialisation and liberalisation. The period since 1980 has seen a move away from a domestic demand orientated importing market to an export orientated market. At the same time, the Turkish economy has begun to integrate with world finance and commodity markets. Since 1990 in particular, Turkey has become an important country in terms of foreign capital investment. It is possible to identify this period as the time when the transition to the free market economy began; it is also the time that attempts were made to establish basic rules and regulations for this system. With reference to this, laws regarding fair competition were passed in 1994, and legislation for the protection of consumer rights was passed in 1995.

As in Turkey, Poland also adopted the policy of economic liberalisation (a free market economy). Poland's transition to a free market economy and its opening up began in 1989 and is still successfully being implemented. In real terms it has a high-spending consumer society and the largest growth rate among the OECD countries - this increases Poland's importance daily (Aluchna, 2007).

In addition to this, being a geographical bridge between Germany and the former Soviet Republics, and linking Eastern Europe to the West of Europe gives Poland a strategic importance. Due to this advantage, Poland has attracted foreign capital investment since the latter half of the 1990s. Polish society's ever increasing purchasing power, along with the increased spending by Russians, Belarusians and Czech citizens has led to Poland having great market potential. Because of the need for basic rules for the free market economy system in Poland, and for fair competition and protection of consumer rights, laws came into force in 2000. Poland's introduction of the European Community legal system has led to more comprehensive consumer protection along with tighter legal constraints.

The tribunal which is responsible for consumer rights in Turkey is part of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (www.sanayi.gov.tr); while in Poland, the institution which is responsible for consumer protection is called the 'Competition and Consumer Protection Office', this office is a satellite of central administration and the Chair is appointed directly by the Prime Minister; however, the office remains independent (www.uokik.gov.pl). Products such as toys, food and cosmetics are covered by safety rules established by Polish law. The Act on General Product Safety of 12th December 2003, Journal of Laws No. 229 item 2275 is applied to other products. This act keeps the market free of goods that are not safe, and obliges the producer to meet certain requirements which include accurate product labelling, research, and the publication of information that enables customers to assess any harmful effects. In addition, if a producer later discovers that a product already on the market is unsafe; under this act they have a legal obligation to inform the appropriate authority.

The President of the Office of Competition and Consumer Protection has the authority to make producers recall any unsafe products from the market, to order investigations and rule on practices which contravene the rights of consumers, and to take action if a sale takes place which flouts laws or accepted practice (www.uokik.gov.pl/consumerprotection). Although the institutions for fair trade and consumer protection in the two countries have different structures, they both have the right to establish general consumer rights, administer sanctions and impose penalties. In addition to these institutions in Turkey and Poland, there are consumer protection associations (Non Governmental Organizations-NGOs) and consumer ombudsmen.

In addition to this growth in government intervention, when observing the actual market in Poland it is seen that consumerism resembles consumerism in the United States and Western Europe. American and Western stores have a presence in the current Polish market. The shelves in the stores are filled with a wide variety of goods (Nowak). The evolution of consumerism in Turkish market is similar to the Polish market. In Turkey, supermarkets from western countries such as France, the UK and Germany are present in the market. There are also department stores from the UK and boutiques from Spain and Sweden. In Poland, supermarkets from Germany, and small expensive boutiques are mixed in with Polish department stores. Young generations of Poles and Turks are particularly open to shopping with global retailers. In both countries, there are numerous open-air markets and local shops. They have more alternatives and can find goods quite easily. Also, consumers do not have to wait in long lines to purchase goods.

All of the above changes have led to businesses taking new views and having a different understanding of marketing practices in Poland and Turkey, while taking into account possible consumer dissatisfaction. In recent years, unfair practices towards consumers have been stopped not only by consumer protection laws, but also by the reflective practices of contemporary establishments as well as effective consumer organisations. Objections by consumer associations and some consumers against unfair market practices, and demands for resolution of the issues have generated public interest, while related businesses have been encouraged to find solutions, and relevant state institutions have begun to take action. Therefore, businesses have increasingly begun to show interest in consumer rights and the protection of these rights. It can be seen that in particular, objections made by consumers have had a major effect on and a critical role in the way marketing is perceived and conducted by some businesses.

4. Research Methodology

As noted earlier, this research focuses on an understanding achieved through the analysis of empirical survey data that compare the attitudes of consumers in two developing countries (Poland and Turkey), and consumerism is evaluated accordingly.

4.1. Sampling Design

A convenience sample of university students was targeted in both countries. The two samples were matched in a number of areas although it is not possible to fully match two samples (Douglas and Craig, 1983). Both samples had no significant age or gender differences. Both samples consisted of students enrolled on a business administration degree programme at their respective universities. This means they would have better understanding of both the concept of consumerism and the questionnaires.

4.2. Questionnaire Design and Administration

Data were collected using a uniform and structured questionnaire for both Poland and Turkey. The research instrument used to measure consumer attitudes toward marketing and consumerism in this research was originally developed by Barksdale and Darden (1972). The same instrument was used in several replication studies (Barksdale et al., 1976; Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Varadarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Darley and Johnson, 1993; Varadarajan et al., 1994; Lyonski et al., 2003). Using an existing measurement instrument that has been extensively field tested was viewed as preferable to developing a new instrument. A slightly modified version of the questionnaire consisted of 40 “Likert-type” statements. The participants were asked to rate each item on a 1-5 Likert scale, with 5 being “strongly agree” and 1, “strongly disagree”. There was also a guiding principle that a score of 3 represented a “neither agree nor disagree”. Items included in the research instrument were related to seven areas of consumer perceptions as follows: (1) Business philosophy; (2) Product quality; (3) Advertising; (4) Prices and price control; (5) Other marketing activities; (6) Consumer problems and responsibilities; (7) Consumerism; (8) Government regulation. In the second part of the questionnaire demographic data were collected.

The survey was a paper and pencil questionnaire. Students from both Turkish and Polish universities were provided with English language surveys, thus translation bias was eliminated. Both the Polish surveys and the Turkish surveys were administered by the author. The Turkish surveys were collected from students at the authors' home university (Cukurova University); while the Polish surveys were collected at a business university located in the capital city of Warsaw during one of the author's field research studies (Lazarski University).

A total of 117 usable surveys for the Turkish sample, and 102 usable surveys from the Poland sample were retained for analysis. SPSS 18 software was used to run the analysis. The sample statistics, means and standard deviations for all theorised constructs are shown in Tables 2–9.

5. Findings

Firstly, the differences between the two countries are investigated. The mean value of all variables (attitudes towards product quality, advertising, price and price control, government regulations, consumer orientations, consumer problems and responsibilities, consumerism and other marketing activities) for Poland and Turkey are compared. A t test was used to explore whether these differences in mean values for Poland and Turkey are significant. Apart from two variables - 'attitudes towards product quality' and 'attitudes towards consumer problem and responsibilities' - all variables seem to have differences in mean values for Poland and Turkey. For the t test, Levene's test is employed to investigate whether group variances are equal or not. The results of Levene's test are as follows; the p value is calculated as more than 5% for all variables, and it is found that the two groups' variances are equal to a significance level of 5%. It must be added that the t test results were evaluated accordingly.

Insert table (1) about here

As is shown in Table 1, there is no significant difference between Polish and Turkish respondents' attitudes towards product quality and attitudes towards consumer problems and responsibilities at a significance level of 5%. However, the perception of the various aspects of consumerism differed significantly by country for business philosophy, advertising, price and price control, other marketing activities, consumerism and government regulations at a significance level of 5%.

5.1. Attitudes towards Business Philosophy

There was a significant difference between the Polish sample and the Turkish sample with respect to business philosophy. As summarised in Table 2, respondents from both groups feel that manufacturers operate on the philosophy that the consumer is always right, while Turkish participants indicated a greater level of agreement. While Turkish respondents feel that manufacturers seldom shirk their responsibility to the customers, Polish respondents have a sceptical attitude towards this statement.

Insert table (2) about here

Although both samples believe manufacturers are more interested in making profits than serving customers, they recognise that competition facilitates fair pricing for products.

5.2. Attitudes towards Product Quality

Mean attitude scores toward product quality suggest two noteworthy findings. Firstly, there were no significant differences between the two samples which indicates a similarity in attitudes towards product quality. Secondly, both samples tend to agree that manufacturers make an effort to design products that fit consumer needs, and the quality of most products has improved. The degree of this agreement; however, is stronger for the Turkish sample than for the Polish sample.

Insert table (3) about here

According to the results of a survey by Barksdale et al. (1982), in some countries such as Israel and Norway, most consumers view improvements in product quality as more important than style changes. In this research, it was found that Polish respondents rate improvements in product quality more highly than Turkish respondents.

5.3. Attitudes towards Advertising

As reported in Table 4, Turkish respondents have a more favourable perception of the dependability of advertised products in comparison with unadvertised ones, than Polish respondents. Polish respondents view the dependability of advertised products with considerable scepticism. Turkish respondents believe that manufacturers' advertisements are reliable sources of information about product quality and performance, whereas Polish respondents neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

Polish respondents do not believe that most product advertising is believable or that it presents a true picture of the product. Poles exhibited sceptical attitudes toward advertising in general.

Insert table (4) about here

5.4. Attitudes towards Price and Price Control

As shown in Table 5, both groups are sceptical about fair pricing policies. Both groups feel that the high prices of products compared with current wages and income levels are a fact of life in Turkey and Poland. The Turkish sample feels that government regulations are effective means of keeping prices at a reasonable level, while Poles do not totally agree with this view.

Insert table (5) about here

5.5. Attitudes towards Other Marketing Activities

In Table 6, attitudes of respondents from both groups towards other marketing activities are compared. Turkish respondents have a higher level of agreement with all the statements except one. Both Polish and Turkish respondents are sceptical regarding the statement that the marketing system in their country operates more efficiently than those of other countries.

Insert table (6) about here

5.6. Attitudes towards Consumer Problems and Responsibilities

In Table 7, the mean values for attitudes related to consumer problems and responsibilities are presented. The results in Table 7 clearly indicate that there are no significant differences between Turkey and Poland in terms of attitudes toward consumer problems and responsibilities. In a relative sense, both samples are not likely to agree that consumers are willing to pay higher prices for environmentally friendly products. In addition, the Turkish sample indicates that concern for the environment influences product choice to a greater extent than it does for the Polish sample. Turkish respondents disagree more than Polish respondents with the statement that consumer problems are less serious now than in the past.

Insert table (7) about here

5.7. Attitudes towards Consumerism

Consumerism has evolved as a consumer movement in developed countries. In these countries firms tend to have greater responsibilities in serving society because of the constant pressure. However, the consumer movement has begun to evolve as a force in the Turkish market. This is quite evident from a previous longitudinal study on this subject (Demirci Orel and Zeren, 2009) as well as Turkish consumers' responses to statements on consumerism.

Insert table (8) about here

In this study, Turkish respondents also believe that consumerism is an important issue and it will be more important in the future, the Polish respondents were less likely to believe this. Both samples appeared to be positive about manufacturers being more sensitive now than they were in the past; however, Polish respondents do not feel that getting something fixed is easy when they have problems with the product. Polish respondents believed that organised consumer movements have not been an important factor in changing business practices and procedures, while Turkish participants indicated a lower level of agreement with this statement.

5.8. Attitudes towards Government Regulations

With respect to the government's role in protecting consumer interests, Turkish respondents appeared to be more positive than Polish respondents regarding government intervention. Turks believe that government should have more responsibility for regulating the advertising, sales and marketing activities of manufacturers, and should also perform independent tests of competing brands and publish the results. Both samples agree that government can establish minimum standards for product quality. Although both samples believe that self-regulation of business itself is preferable, participants from Turkey indicated a lower level of agreement with this statement.

Insert table (9) about here

6. Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that Poles and Turks have some similar and some different perspectives of consumerism, marketing practices and government regulations.

It was found that there were no statistically significant differences between both samples' attitudes towards product quality and consumer problems and responsibilities. While both groups stated that the average consumer is not willing to pay higher prices for environmentally friendly products, Turkish respondents indicated agreement that concern for the environment influences product choices. On the other hand, Polish respondents have sceptical attitudes toward the effect of environmental concerns on product choices. These results illustrate that Turkish people who hold favourable attitudes toward environmentally friendly products, do not want to pay higher prices; while in Poland, participants seem to have less environmental awareness. There are also interesting differences between the two countries regarding other factors:

Respondents from Turkey feel that manufacturers operate on the philosophy that the consumer is always right. Polish respondents agree with this statement to a slightly different level. Such responses indicate respondents' belief that firms are becoming consumer oriented. The general pattern of responses from the Polish sample to questions about the operating philosophy of businesses reveals a moderate level of consumer scepticism. Poles exhibited sceptical attitudes toward advertising in general. Barksdale et al. (1982) note that regardless of nationality, most consumers do not believe that advertised products are more dependable than unadvertised ones. The results of the survey of Polish respondents seem to be consistent with the cross-national survey conducted by Barksdale et al. Many other studies – Barksdale and Darden (1972), Barksdale, Darden and Perreault (1976), Barksdale and Perreault (1980), Barker (1987), Varadarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) – indicate that consumers' perceptions of advertising continue to be negative or sceptical in different countries. Varadarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) explain that negative views about advertising seem to be a universal phenomenon. In this study; however, it was found that Turkish respondents view most advertisements as dependable, believable and reliable sources. In Turkey, before the 1980s, marketers were accustomed to setting the terms, while consumers did not have a voice. Consumers also used to believe that marketers and producers were misleading them. However, after the 1980s, and particularly after the developments in marketing in the 1990s, especially with the influence of television advertising; consumers began to feel more trust in producers and sellers.

They began to think that if a product could be advertised then the company must be powerful with significant capital, and that these kinds of company would not try to mislead their customers. The results of the survey reveal that the Turkish sample feels that government regulations are effective means of keeping prices at a reasonable level, while Poles do not totally agree with this view. According to the results reported in Tables 5 and 9, consumer attitudes towards prices and price control, and government regulations show that the participants from Turkey seem to be in favour of government regulations. It seems that when Turkish consumers are not satisfied with the business practices, they are in favour of government intervention on behalf of consumers. Poles seem to be less likely to favour government intervention. They do not want the Polish government to impose more controls on the marketplace. This may result from the old political characteristics of Poland. The centrally planned socialist system forced more government intervention in the business practices of firms. After the transformation, the people in Poland felt free in their social lives and do not want government intervention; so this could make them less favourable toward government regulation of business. On the other hand, it has been traditional for many years in Turkish society to view the government or state as a father figure; therefore, if businesses do not respond to consumer needs responsibly, Turks expect that government institutions will fulfil this regulatory role.

Turkish respondents believe that consumerism is an important issue and it will be more important in the future, more so than Polish respondents. Turks appear to have more positive attitudes towards consumerism. According to the other research findings, Poles; (1) feel that organised consumer movements have not been an important factor in changing business practices and procedure (2) feel that the problem of exploitation of consumers by businesses deserves more attention than it receives (3) appeared not to believe that getting something fixed is easy when they have problems with the product (4) seem to be sceptical about the operating philosophy of businesses. These opinions expressed by Polish respondents do not reflect the stage of development of the consumer movement in that country. Kaynak (1986) has noted that consumerism cannot develop until consumers believe problems exist in the marketplace. In this study Poles were found to be sceptical or slightly negative in most of their attitudes towards marketing, consumerism applications of businesses and government regulations. This means that there is more anxiety and dissatisfaction among Polish respondents than Turkish respondents. It can be said that Poles believe that there are more marketing, regulatory and consumerism issues to be solved.

To summarise, the results from this study indicate that in both Poland and Turkey, there have been significant changes in consumerism applications and consumer perceptions towards consumerism since earlier movements. Nonetheless, businesses must continue identifying and addressing any significant consumer complaints that may arise and proper solutions should be developed. If consumer benefit is the ultimate aim, awareness of consumerism should continue to develop in both countries.

6.1. Research Limitations and Future Directions

The main limitation of the research is working with a student sample. There has been extensive debate as to the appropriacy of using university student samples in both academic and practitioner research (McKenzie, 2008). The most serious criticism associated with a sample of university students is the manner in which the findings can be generalised. This criticism is often dependent upon proper sampling processes using “real people” rather than students, particularly in consumer research (Calder et al., 1981; Wells, 1993; McKenzie, 2008). Phau and Cheong (2009) state that students as a sample are a suitable alternative for the purpose of modelling underlying behavioural processes. Churchill (1995) further states that student samples have relatively homogenous respondents which helps to control random sources of errors and reduces the potential for Type II error. Rotfeld (2003) indicates that the use of students as a study sample should not be interpreted as a limitation of a study. On the contrary, as McKenzie (2008) proposes, the reasons why they should be used need to be properly explained.

In this research it was thought important to study the attitude of young individuals with a scientific background as a particular segment of the population, firstly because both countries have young populations. Secondly, this considerable young population has the potential of influencing the future developments in this field. Furthermore, the fact that business students in both Poland and Turkey are familiar and comfortable with understanding and answering consumerism questions, was of great importance. Finally, the focus of this study was presenting comparisons of two relatively homogeneous groups in two countries in a field of increasing importance in terms of consumerism. Thus, it was decided that the university students’ evaluations of attitudes towards consumerism, marketing practices and government regulations is highly appropriate and relevant for this type of research. However, future research could achieve different findings with another group of society. Another limitation of this study concerns the sampling. Convenience sampling was used in this study. Even though the sampling method adopted in this study contains limitations in terms of generalisation as compared to other probability methods of sampling, it was logically assumed that the sample represented a significant population for the study of consumerism. It is predicted that further research efforts are needed to examine attitudes towards consumerism before generalisations can be made.

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Table 1. Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances

Variables	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	
Business Philosophy	Equal variances assumed	0.002	0.963	5.890	217	0.000	0.37707	0.06401
	Equal variances not assumed			5.874	210.228	0.000	0.37707	0.06420
Product Quality	Equal variances assumed	3.325	0.070	0.076	217	0.939	0.00448	0.05886
	Equal variances not assumed			0.077	216.995	0.939	0.00448	0.05833
Advertising	Equal variances assumed	0.576	0.449	6.413	217	0.000	0.46526	0.07255
	Equal variances not assumed			6.393	209.838	0.000	0.46526	0.07278
Price & Price Control	Equal variances assumed	0.617	0.433	3.090	217	0.002	0.27230	0.08813
	Equal variances not assumed			2.992	160.929	0.003	0.27230	0.09102
Other Marketing Activities	Equal variances assumed	0.494	0.483	6.345	217	0.000	0.36626	0.05773
	Equal variances not assumed			6.266	197.171	0.000	0.36626	0.05845
Consumer Problems & Responsibilities	Equal variances assumed	0.927	0.337	-1.152	217	0.250	-0.06748	0.05855
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.156	215.124	0.249	-0.06748	0.05838
Consumerism	Equal variances assumed	1.044	0.308	4.558	217	0.000	0.25168	0.05521
	Equal variances not assumed			4.493	194.103	0.000	0.25168	0.05601
Government Regulations	Equal variances assumed	0.219	0.640	2.573	217	0.011	0.20217	0.07858
	Equal variances not assumed			2.575	213.581	0.011	0.20217	0.07852

Table 2. Attitudes towards Business Philosophy

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Most manufacturers operate on the philosophy that the consumer is always right	3.66	0.975	3.22	0.981
Manufacturers seldom shirk their responsibility to the consumers	3.50	0.816	3.04	0.730
Despite what is frequently said, “Let the buyer beware” is the guiding philosophy of most manufacturers	3.48	0.915	3.13	0.753
Competition ensures that consumers pay a fair price for products	3.65	1.101	3.30	1.003
Most manufacturers are more interested in making profits than in serving consumers	4.02	1.025	4.16	3.168

Table 3. Attitudes towards Product Quality

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
In general, manufacturers make an effort to design products to fit the needs of consumers	3.98	0.765	3.63	0.855
From the consumer's point of view, style changes are not as important as improvements in product quality	2.91	1.091	3.26	1.014
Manufacturers do not deliberately design products which will wear out as quickly as possible	3.19	1.050	3.25	0.763
Over the past several years, the quality of most products has not improved	2.78	1.084	2.87	1.166
The wide variety of competing products and brands makes intelligent buying decisions more difficult to make	4.03	0.870	3.47	0.898
For most types of products, the differences among competing brands are insignificant and unimportant	2.46	1.126	2.84	0.952

Table 4. Attitudes towards Advertising

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Generally, advertised products are more dependable than unadvertised ones	3.80	1.100	3.32	0.987
Manufacturers' advertisements are reliable sources of information about the quality and performance of products	3.63	0.979	3.07	1.110
Most product advertising is believable	3.44	0.986	2.90	1.010
Manufacturers' advertisements usually present a true picture of the products advertised	3.25	0.964	2.54	1.012

Table 5. Attitudes towards Price and Price Control

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
High prices of consumer goods are caused primarily by wholesale and retail middlemen taking excessive profits	3.66	0.948	3.26	0.843
Considering the wage rates and income levels today, most consumer products are priced fairly	3.05	1.121	3.09	0.857
Government price control is the most effective way of keeping the prices of consumer products at a reasonable level	3.63	1.055	2.83	1.144

Table 6. Attitudes towards Other Marketing Activities

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Generally speaking, the products required by the average family are easily available from convenient locations.	3.83	0.780	3.32	0.822
In general, the quality of repair and maintenance service provided by manufacturers and dealers is improving.	3.81	0.830	3.39	0.846
The games and contests that manufacturers sponsor to encourage people to buy their products are dishonest	3.39	1.082	3.14	0.955
Generally, product guarantees are backed up by the manufacturers who make them	3.88	0.832	3.17	0.845
Overall, the (name of the country) marketing system operates more efficiently than those of other countries	2.97	0.928	3.03	0.884

Table 7. Attitudes towards Consumer Problems and Responsibilities

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
The information needed to become a well informed consumer is readily available to most people	3.50	1.022	3.34	0.906
The average consumer is willing to pay higher prices for products that will cause less environmental pollution	2.87	1.207	2.98	1.043
The problems of the consumer are relatively unimportant when compared with the other questions and issues faced by the average family	2.97	1.025	3.01	0.928
Many of the mistakes that consumers make in buying products are the result of their own carelessness or ignorance	3.56	1.038	3.24	1.007
Consumers often try to take advantage of manufacturers and dealers by making claims that are not justified	3.32	0.808	3.15	0.883
The problems of consumers are less serious now than in the past	2.80	1.226	3.28	1.018
Concern for the environment does not influence the product choices made by most consumers	2.79	1.097	3.28	.905

Table 8. Attitudes towards Consumerism

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Manufacturers seem to be more sensitive to consumer complaints now than they were in the past	4.03	0.850	3.62	0.902
When consumers have problems with products they have purchased, it is usually easy to get them fixed	3.36	1.004	2.92	1.021
The exploitation of consumers by businesses deserves more attention than it receives	3.49	0.897	3.40	0.721
Consumerism is an important issue today	4.34	0.733	3.94	0.781
Organised consumer movements have not been an important factor in changing business practices and procedures	2.56	1.086	3.16	0.817
In the future, consumerism will be more important	4.49	0.727	3.72	0.958

Table 9. Attitudes towards Government Regulations

Statements	Turkey		Poland	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
The government should test competing brands of products and make results of these tests available to consumers	3.95	0.899	3.48	0.952
The government should set minimum standards of quality for all products sold to consumers	3.28	1.376	3.38	1.178
The government should have more responsibility for regulating the advertising, sales and marketing activities of manufacturers	3.90	1.020	3.37	0.974
In general, self-regulation by business itself is preferable to stricter control of business by the government	3.24	0.971	3.32	0.822