

THE BRAND EQUITY'S ROLE IN E-LOYALTY FORMATION AND THE
EFFECTS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGEMENT QUALITY: A
RESEARCH ON THE BASIS OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION



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OCTOBER, 2020

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RESEARCH ON THE BASIS OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION

BY

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MASTER THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER DEGREE

IN

GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER, 2020

PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find out the effects of brand equity and, customer relations management quality on e-loyalty for a well-known brand MIELE within a brand purchase funnel approach.

Survey participants were chosen from customers in a sales branch of the brand. Brand equity is measured by its sub-dimensions such as brand identity, brand association, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image and brand quality. Data gathered with structured questionnaires are analyzed by using correlation and regression techniques.

Findings showed that customer relations management quality has no determination on e-loyalty. But, brand identity dimension of brand equity had moderate level of positive determination on e-loyalty. On the other side, perceived brand quality had negative effect on e-loyalty. Regarding research findings, brand managers are advised to pay special attention to brand identity and perceived product quality in the management of durable goods in electronic market.

Keywords: Brand purchase funnel, brand equity, customer relations management, e-loyalty, home appliances.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, tanınmış bir marka olan MIELE için marka satın alma hunisi yaklaşımı çerçevesinde marka değeri ve müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi kalitesinin e-sadakat üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır.

Anket katılımcıları markanın bir satış şubesindeki müşterilerden seçilmiştir. Marka değeri, marka kimliği, marka çağrışımı, marka bilinirliği, marka sadakati, marka imajı ve marka kalitesi gibi alt boyutları ile ölçülmüştür. Yapılandırılmış anketlerle toplanan veriler, korelasyon ve regresyon teknikleri kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir.

Bulgular, müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi kalitesinin e-sadakat konusunda bir belirleyiciliği olmadığını göstermiştir. Ancak, marka değerine ait marka kimliği boyutu, e-sadakat üzerinde orta düzeyde olumlu bir belirleyiciliğe sahiptir. Öte yandan algılanan marka kalitesi e-sadakati olumsuz etkilemektedir. Araştırma bulguları ile ilgili olarak, marka yöneticilerine, elektronik pazarında dayanıklı malların yönetiminde marka kimliğine ve algılanan ürün kalitesine özel önem vermeleri tavsiye edilmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Marka satın alma tüneli, marka değeri, müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi, e-sadakat, ev aletleri.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CRM – Customer relations management
- MIELE - The company was founded in 1899 by Carl MIELE and Reinhard Zinkann.
- n - Subsample size
- TPB - Theory of planned behavior



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Objective of the Research

This study mainly aimed to find out the effects of brand equity elements and customer relations management quality on e-loyalty for a well-known brand MIELE. A hypothesis testing approach with the help of quantitative data is used to meet research ends.

1.2 Importance of the Study

The demand for technology products is continuously rising in highly competitive markets. Brand positioning in these markets are used for sustainable sales. Marketers efforts on branding resulted in many studies on consumers' brand equity perceptions and their effects on e-loyalty to understand technology consumers' behaviors. But the studies that controls the effects of customer relations management quality which are said to be critical predictor of e-loyalty are rare in especially household markets.

This research is supposed to directly contribute to the literature by testing relationships among consumers' brand equity and customer relations management quality perceptions and e-loyalty. MIELE as a household appliances brand in retail market was chosen as research field due to its steady growth. Since, finding the right channel between the customer and the company by the use of internet and database support in a direct relationship is common in durable goods market. The results of the study are expected to contribute to similar brands in the market since the mutual trust

in interactions in durable goods where repair and services create an important source of income (Yıldırım & Panayırıcı, 2016, p. 97).

1.3 Presentation of The Contents

The study had five main parts. In the first part, research objectives are introduced. In the second part, conceptual and theoretical background of the study will be built by definitions of the research variables and the relations among them. Third part is for covering the research methodology applied in the study. In the fourth part, analysis and findings of the research are reported. In the last part research results are discussed and evaluated regarding similar findings.

2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The concepts and theories in their background used in the design of the study are covered in this part of the thesis. First, the brand purchase funnel concept is covered. Then, the brand concept is examined with its subdomains. Finally, customer relations management quality and e-loyalty are explained.

2.1 Brand Purchase Funnel

Radical changes in consumer behavior in recent times are acknowledged to increasing of products and invention of internet. As a result, markets are highly interactive, transparent, and sensitive to consumer. So marketing efforts should focus on building long term consumer relationships using the brand as an intangible asset. Brand performance management could thus help explaining today's evolving consumer decision process where classical buying cycle approach is insufficient. Consequently, brand purchase funnel is established (Dierks, 2017, p. 6)

Brand purchase funnel is a model including multiple stages of a choice process. The stages are named as brand awareness, brand familiarity, brand consideration, brand purchase and brand loyalty by McKinsey and Company (Perrey et al., 2015, p. 133). Consumers have special drives in each stage of brand funnel regarding the behavioral decision theory. Today it is believed that in order to explain typical consumer behavior brand funnel approach should be revised partly.

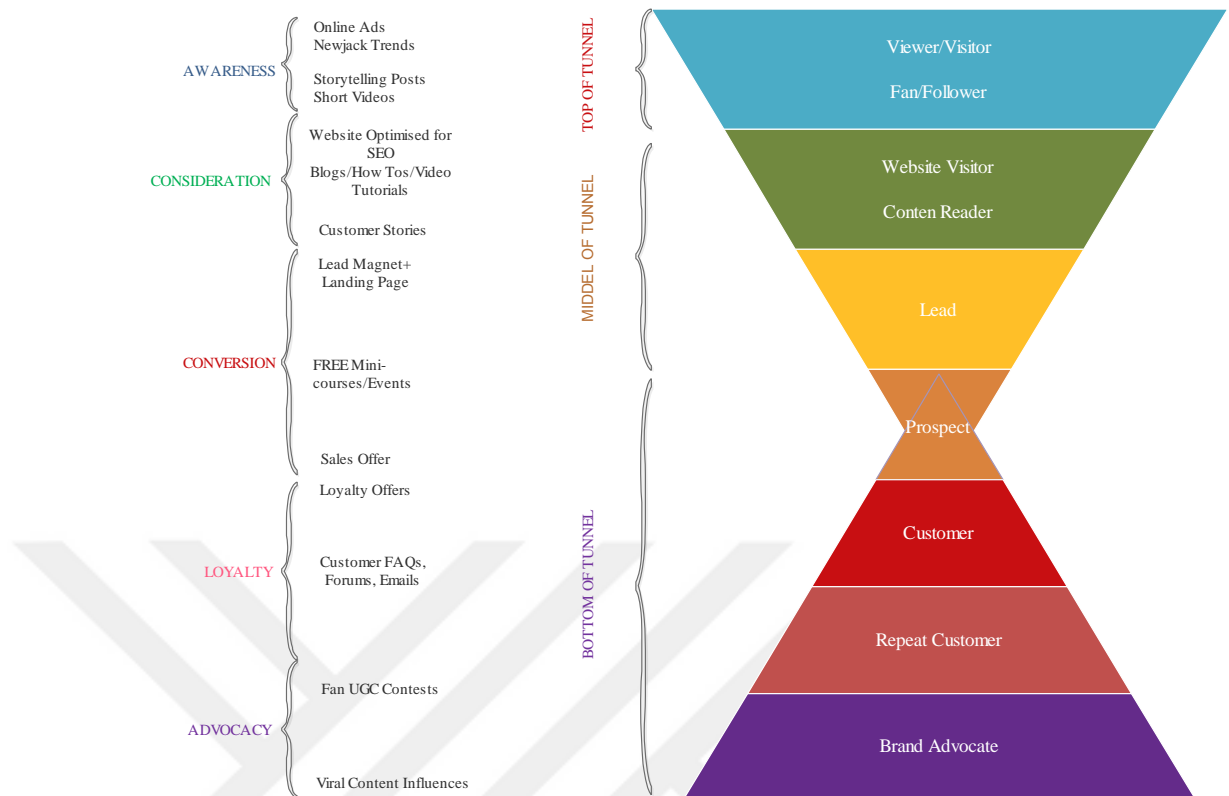


Figure 1. How to Optimize Your Digital Marketing Funnel

Cooler Insights. (2020, August). *How to Optimize Your Digital Marketing Funnel*.

<https://coolerinsights.com/2016/09/how-to-optimize-your-digital-marketing-funnel/>

In a digital setting brand purchasing funnel captures various points that prospective customers in a website. These points are categorized into three broad sections as top of funnel, middle of funnel and bottom of funnel. In the funnel online visitors are targeted to be converted into customers on a downward progress in which ultimately reach at nurturing level.

Research reports on brand choice show that repeated purchase is an antecedent of brand choice and brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Planned customer relationship management is a necessary method for his success.

Customer relations management is a philosophy and strategy that is focused on

customer satisfaction. It requires collecting and processing customer information in efficient methods in order to meet customer requests, maintaining continuous communication and aiming long-term customer loyalty based on trust and must be implemented by all units of the company (Yıldırım & Panayırıcı, 2016, p.12).

2.2 Brand Related Concepts and Brand Management

Kotler, Armstrong & Opresnik (2018) defines brand as a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these, that identifies the products or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiates them from those of competitors.

Product is real but brand is something in people's minds. People can tell the difference between goods by the help of brand. The branding are the techniques to keep brand alive in the mind of people (Hawley, 2000).

Brand name, brand mark and trademarks are instruments used to answer consumers' who, what and why questions about the brand. The branding efforts are supposed to teach consumers that the brand is not same as others in the category. When the branding efforts has the first-priority among options to create a differentiation. In case it fails to make a distinction then pricing becomes the only option for increasing sales (Evans & Berman, 2005). The applied studies and the taxonomy made by various authors on brand related concepts seemed to have no consensus yet.

Authors examining brand concepts from differing point of views contributed to theory in different ways. One of the theories in the back of the brand management studies was theory of planned behavior theory. TPB is a theory linking a person's beliefs and behaviors. In TPB it was stated that the intentions and behaviors of and

individual are shaped by the attitude toward behavior, perceived behavioral control and subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991). Accordingly, consumers' decisions depend more on outside and uncontrollable factors such as subjective norms.

A strong brand recognized and preferred by the customers would help firm to have competitive advantage (Wood, 2000). A well-managed brand is supposed to teach customers about product's identity, function and importance (Kotler & Keller, 2007). As the brand serves to help customer make their mind and choose among products and services it increases sales of the firm as well (Kotler, 2003). Since brand equity and sub dimensions are all about the outside factors affecting consumers' purchasing decision, a brand equity strategy is required to manage perceived and real benefits of the brand. Firms should have an adequate brand management strategy to have new customers (Wood, 2000).

2.3 Brand Equity

Brand equity is a whole composed of brand assets and liabilities that are related to a brand name and symbol. Brand equity may increase or reduce the value of a product or service for its consumers. According to Aaker, four components of brand equity are **brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand association and perceived quality** (Aaker,1991). This study was designed on the basis of Aaker's taxonomy of brand equity with four components with a minor addition of **brand identity**. Brand association and brand identity are the two structures that were supposed to measure brand image in general.

Brand equity is defined by another approach as something that have abstract and concrete value and features and be formed by the consumers' thoughts on product (Blackstone,1993).

Kepferer (1997), defined brand equity as a whole of the parts as brand awareness, level of significance, level of trust, level of empathy, level of liking, level of perceived quality and the attractiveness and richness the brand evokes.

In Keller (1993)'s definition, brand equity is a *differentiated effect of a brand knowledge that determines the reaction of customers to the brand's marketing activities*. Keller believed that brand equity is made up of two parts as brand awareness and brand image (Keller, 2001).

Brand equity comes into scene with consumers' familiarity with the brand and strong, positive and unique brand associations in their memory (Keller, 1993).

According to Hoeffler & Keller (2003) the brand equity includes brand awareness, brand credibility, brand image, brand engagement, brand community and relationship to brand.

Yoo & Donthu (2001) declared a four-component structure in their analysis on brand equity. They named these factors as *brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, and perceived service quality*.

Brand equity definitions were classified into two categories as the definitions from the consumers' perspective and the definitions from the financial point of view. Brand equity is defined as a relationship between consumers and the brand from the consumers-oriented point of view and a financial asset that accrues wealth to firm from the financial point of view (Pappu, Quester & Cooksey, 2005).

In this study the taxonomy in the latest applied studies regarding consumers' perspective was adopted. Brand equity as the biggest domain encompassed brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image and service quality perceived (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Brand image as a sub dimension had its own three subdimensions as brand identity, brand personality and brand association (Wijaya, 2013).

According to consumer-based brand equity approach the power of a brand comes from the accumulation of the experiences with the brand in a long period of time. Customers may have these long-term experiences via feelings, audio and visual inputs. The sources of brand power are customers cognitive and emotional experiences. Marketers, in order to build a strong brand, should ensure that customers will have experiences resulting similar opinions, feeling, perceptions, beliefs, opinions and images to the ones expected in marketing programs. In consumer-based brand equity approach it was believed that brand knowledge makes customers respond differently to brand marketing. Thus, consumers' positive reaction to an identified brand's product and its marketing is expected. When customers are in favor of a new brand, they may be insensitive to price rises and lack of advertisements willing to demand the brand in other distribution channels. When consumers' reactions are not in favor of the new brand and its marketing activities then the brand is said to have negative consumer-based brand equity. Well managed brands with positive brand equity has some consequences as listed by Keller (2012, p. 69):

- Well perceived product performance
- More loyal customers
- More competitive marketing ability
- Larger profit margins
- Decreased risks in crisis times in market
- Consumers with inelasticity to rises in the prices
- Consumers with elasticity to fall in the prices
- Opportunities for having new licenses.
- Opportunities to have brand extensions.
- More trade cooperation and support
- More effective marketing communication

2.3.1. Brand awareness.

Brand awareness may be defined as the ability for a buyer to recognize or recall a brand as a member of a certain product category (Aaker, 1991). Thus, brand appraised consumers are supposed to both recognize and recall the brand when they are introduced in a group of products in which other brands exist (Rossiter, 2014; Keller, 1993).

One of the major aspects of brand knowledge is brand awareness. It refers to the strength of the brand in the memory of consumers. Consumers should be able to identify the brand under various conditions (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). Recalling and recognition are two dimensions included in Brand awareness.

Recognition requires consumers to tell the brand as they have experienced before. Recognition works when consumers are introduced with products in a category and are supposed to make a choice. Recall requires consumers to remember the brand when introduced with a product category. Recalling works when consumers are outside the store and no products present (Rossiter & Percy, 1987).

2.3.2. Brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty stands for the long-lasting desire of customers to maintain a valued relationship with a brand. Brand loyalty could be explained from both the attitudinal and behavioral perspectives. Trust to brand is considered to be a part of loyalty (Moorman et al., 1992). Brand loyalty is considered to be a structure made of three parts called as attitudinal, behavioral loyalty and trust.

2.3.3. Brand image.

Brand image is a three-dimensional structure including brand identity, personality and brand associations. In this study only brand identity and brand association have taken place in the research model.

2.3.3.1. Brand identity

The brand identity denoted a brand or a product's tangible identities that consumers use them to identify and tell it among others. These may be colors, smells, logos, slogans etc. (Wijaya, 2013). The mental perception of a brand is affected by the self-concept at the same time (Kuenzel et al., 2008). It was assumed that there is a concordance between consumer's self and personality of the brand so that customer-brand identification occurs. The level of conformity depended on the level of commitment, trust, and customers' brand satisfaction, Customer trust refers to the consumer's reliability to the brand commitment related the emotional and psychological attachments to the brand (Dimitriadis et al., 2014). Consumers' identification with a brand brings about support and affiliation to the organization (Hughes et al., 2010). Color, symbol and similar elements that build brand identity positively effects brand loyalty when tangible brand is considered (Jin et al., 2019). Brand identity for services have visual and verbal dimensions (O'Cass & Grace, 2004).

2.3.3.2. Brand associations.

Consumers may have associations between a brand and any other thing in their memory (Aaker,1991). The brand associations get stronger as the experience and exposures with a brand increases (Aaker & Keller, 1990). But the volume of exposures does not guarantee the formation of brand association (Aaker,1991). These associations create brand image when they are organized in a meaningful way. Brand associations is a sub dimension of brand image.

2.3.4. Perceived service quality.

According to Zeithaml et al., (2006) service quality is the entire judgment about the success level of a firm's performance providing services. Customers evaluated service quality on a scale with various dimensions that contribute to satisfaction levels of customers. The service quality perceived has five dimensions named as reliability quality, responsiveness quality, assurance quality, empathy quality and quality of tangible things (Brink & Brendt, 2004). Recent research demonstrated that quality of product and post-purchase services have an indirect effect on e-loyalty with the means of satisfaction and trust in electronic sales (Ziaullah et al., 2014).

2.4 Customer Relations Management Quality

CRM quality is the quality of the management process in which all of the relations possible between customer and the firm including all elements of communications and interactions are managed. It mainly targets to draw, develop and keep successful relations with customers (Grönroos, 2007; Berry, 1995). Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh (2016) investigated the CRQ under two sub dimensions named as commitment and trust. Customer relationship management quality is perceived as an important tool in having customer loyalty. Thus, in order to maximize customer loyalty, companies try to manage unique needs and expectations of individual customer (Kotler, Armstrong & Opresnik, 2017, p.141).

Customer relations management is taken as an important field of study in retail sales management since it brings all interactions with customers into analyses to determine the right needs and wants of the customers (Telli, 2020, p.63,66).

2.5 E-Loyalty

E-loyalty is a technique used for transferring the message about characteristics, features and information of a product from producer to buyer using web-based technologies in marketing. E-loyalty, in other words online loyalty is defined as the buying intention of customers from an online store and keeping this intention for future repeat visits and purchases. E-loyal customers will not prefer another online store (Flavia'n et al., 2005; Cyr et al., 2004). The antecedents of e-loyalty are trust to quality (Bilgihan, 2016) satisfaction and value perception of customers similar to brand loyalty (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003).

The operationalized definition in this study was “customers loyalty perception to an online store with revisit intention in the future”. E-loyalty is a concept in the frame of e-Services. E-service is an interactive or an internet-based service delivered to online customers which requires strong customer-service provider relationship (Luarn & Lin, 2003). E-loyalty meaningfully changes according to gender of customer (Dittmar et al., 2004).

2.6 Research Model

This research mainly targeted to reveal the associations among brand equity, customer relations management quality and e-loyalty. Research adapted an explorative manner using quantitative data analysis. Research variables that are used to meet research ends are designed in a way to find out the effects of brand equity on e-loyalty and the effects of customer relation quality between them. Brand equity and its' substructures and customer relations management quality are independent variables in the model. The ultimate dependent research variable is E-loyalty in the study. Graphical demonstration of the model did not include some other demographic

variables used in the design such as age group, gender, educational level, income level, MIELE purchasing frequency in a year. The research model in Figure 1. is based on the theoretical and conceptual framework discussed in the literature review of the study.

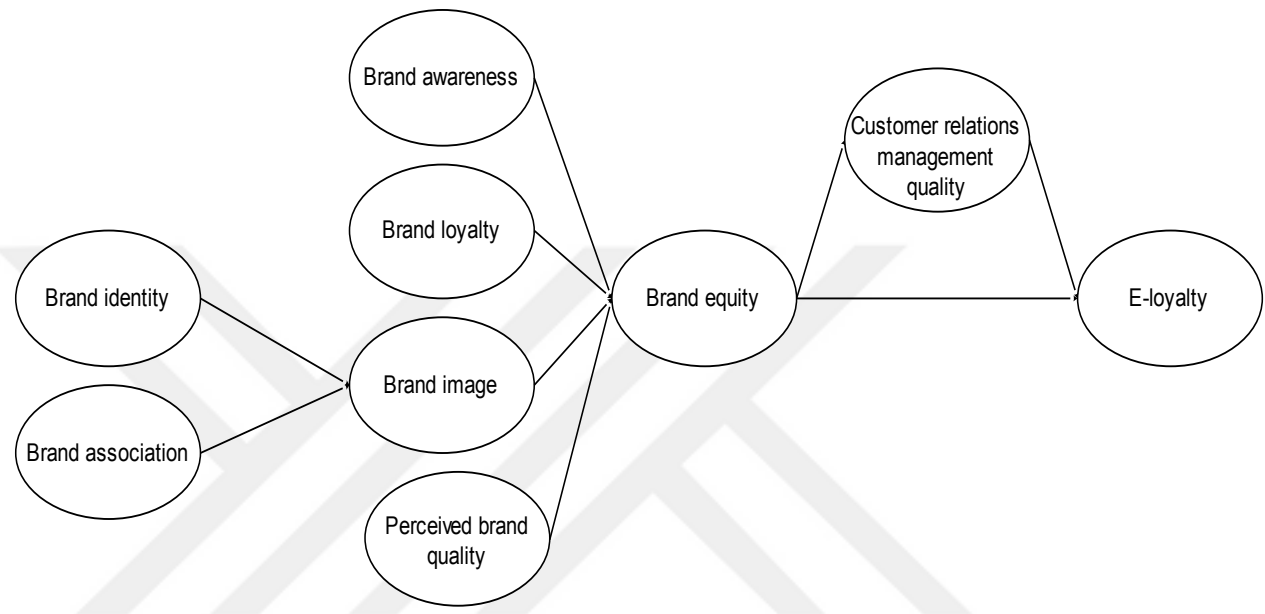


Figure 2. Conceptual Research Model

The model is made up of two parts. The first part of the model is composed of brand equity and its antecedents that has its background in Aaker's brand equity model (1991). Aaker claimed that there is a relationship among the four elements of brand equity as brand association, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand awareness. Second part of the model stated that brand equity should be well managed to harness loyalty whether conventional market or e-market applies to all (Keller, 2012, p.69).

Various hypotheses are composed considering all possible associations basically testing Aaker's brand equity model with an exceptional role of customer relations management quality.

2.7 Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses derived from the conceptual and theoretical discussions on brand equity, customer relations management quality, e-loyalty within research model were formed in direct effects style. The hypotheses from H₁ to H₆ aimed to test relationships among research variables:

“H₁ = Brand equity has a positive determination on MIELE customer relations management quality”.

“H₂ = Brand association has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”.

“H₃ = Brand awareness has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”.

“H₄ = Brand loyalty has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”.

“H₅ = MIELE service quality has negative determination on e-loyalty”.

“H₆ = MIELE customer relations management quality trust has positive determination on e-loyalty”.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section of the study, methods and procedures used in the analyses are examined. Survey method was adapted in this study to gather primary data from the field to illuminate customers' behaviors in the market. Primary research data gathered by a questionnaire including well-known scales was analyzed by applying statistical analysis techniques to reveal the structures of brand equity, consumer relations and e-loyalty and relationship among them.

3.1 Sampling and Data Collection Process

Consumers who purchased a refrigerator, washing machine or a similar household product from MIELE brand at least once in 5-year period in İstanbul are determined as the population of the study. The size of the population is not certainly known since it's a matter of privacy of MIELE. The participant consumers of the brand MIELE who are chosen on random and voluntary basis within the criteria explained above constituted the sample of the study. Convenience sampling method is adapted in determining the individuals participating. Sample size is intended to be ($n > 30$) for parametric testing considerations.

Survey data will be gathered by questionnaire forms filled by voluntary consumers in a store in İstanbul where MIELE is on sale for long years. The participants are filtered by asking if they have any purchasing experience with the MIELE brand before. Since the store chosen for the study was a retailer of MIELE for a long time, the rate of response was over 70% during form filling process.

3.2 Research Design

This is an explorative research with quantitative data. The sample size is limited but adequate for parametric tests ($n > 30$). Measurement tools are previously tested, validated and structured questionnaires.

Arbitrarily chosen 37 participants answered questions on volunteer basis. The relationships searched among three structures including brand equity, customer relations management quality and e-loyalty are illustrated in the research model.

3.3 Instruments for Measurement

A survey questionnaire including the original versions of various marketing measurement tools is used in the study. The items in all of the scales were translated into Turkish and back to English by language experts before execution. The questionnaire had two sections. In the first section, demographic variables that took place are age, gender, educational level, income level, MIELE product purchasing sequence in 5-year period and, life quality in participants' neighborhood. Marketing scales on brand equity, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, brand identity, brand association, perceived service quality, customer relations management quality and, e-loyalty were placed in the second section of the form. All of the scales used in the study are designed into five-point Likert style grading regardless of the scaling method used in their original forms. None of the items are reversely coded in the form. The scale is presented in English language as Survey Form (App. A). The same form is presented in Turkish language as Survey Form for Turkish Sample (App. B).

3.3.1. Brand equity scale

Brand equity is evaluated as a composition of the parts included in the whole. So, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image and service quality will be separately graded and evaluated as the dimensions making up brand equity.

3.2.1.1. Brand image scale.

Brand image favorability is measured by the using two sub-scales as brand identity and, brand associations scales. The third sub-scale called brand personality was excluded in this study.

Brand identity scale.

The items to measure identification of a brand, measured consumer-brand identification indeed. This measure included **five items** from various studies (Kuenzel et al., 2010; Lam, 2009).

Brand associations scale.

Simple brand associations, incorporating brand recognition is measured with a **three-item** scale. Brand associations scale aims to determine the strength of a link to a brand functioning as the quantity of processed information and the quality of the processed received information (Keller, 1993).

3.2.1.2. Brand awareness scale.

A **three-item** brand awareness is used in the survey form. Brand awareness should have brand recall and brand recognition aspects (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). Recalling having a bigger array than awareness refers to certain brand characteristics measured by the items such as logos, images and symbols.

3.2.1.3. Brand loyalty scale.

Wang (2007)'s **attitudinal brand loyalty scale** was adapted for this study. The scale had **five items** asking participants to determine the degree of trust, commitment and switching costs in brand context.

Wang (2007)'s **six-item behavioral brand loyalty scale** with a high value was adopted for the study. Items of the scale focused on the concept of proportion of brand (product) cooperation and word-of-mouth behavior. The measurement construct included **six items**.

The final scale used in the study consisted five items in attitudinal brand loyalty scale and three items from behavioral dimension. The **eight-item** composite scale is supposed to measure brand loyalty in general.

3.2.1.4. Perceived service quality scale.

The consumers' perceptions of service quality are measured by using **tangibility, reliability and responsiveness** dimensions of the **15-item scale** developed by Zeithaml et al., (1996). The researchers operationalized service quality and created a construct with five dimensions. Each dimension consisted 5 items. Satisfactory reliability scores are reported for the subscales; tangibility quality, reliability quality, responsiveness quality, assurance quality and empathy quality.

3.3.2. Customer relations management quality scale

Customer relations management quality perception of consumers are measured by using Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh (2016)'s **9-item** (5+4) customer relations quality multidimensional scale. In this study trust dimension of the scale was used with and additional item. So, the final scale had 6 items measuring trust in customer relations management.

3.3.3. E-Loyalty scale

Srinivasan et al., (2002)'s unidimensional e-loyalty scale was used as the basis of the e-loyalty instrument in the study. So, the scale consisting used in the study consisting **five items**. Developers used items from the scales of various researchers (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Gremler, 1996). The wording of the scale is adopted to our brand. The items of the scale investigate attitudinal and behavioral aspects. In this study trust dimension of the scale was used with and additional item. So, the final scale had 6 items measuring trust in customer relations management.

3.4 The Statistical Analysis Plan and Tools

First of all, descriptive techniques such as means, frequencies and percentages were used to get a clear idea about the sample and its tendencies. Then, direct relationships in the model were tested by using linear regression by the help of SPSS software.

4. ANALYSES AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

The statistical analyses used in the study are two folds as descriptive and analytical. In the first group, research sample and variables are described in ratios. In the second group, data refining process and hypothesis testing techniques are applied.

4.1 Findings About Research Sample

The summary of sample characteristics is shown in Table 1. According to the table, of the 37 participants, 21 were females (56,8%) and 16 were males (43,2%). Majority of research participations were from 31-50 age group (62,2%). Based on the results, 40,5% of the respondents had high school degree, 48,6% of them have an undergraduate degree and 10,8% of them have a graduate degree. 29,7% of them had monthly income less than 5000TL, 35,1% of them had 5001-10000TL and, 35,1% of them had more than 10001TL. Participants reported a quite similar level of monthly income. In summary, the majority of the survey sample are comparatively rich, middle aged females with undergraduate degree.

Table 1
Research Sample Descriptive Information

		count	%
Age group	until 30	7	18,9
	31-50	23	62,2
	51 over	7	18,9
Gender	Female	21	56,8
	Male	16	43,2
Education level	high school	15	40,5
	Undergraduate	18	48,6
	Graduate	4	10,8
Income level	less than 5000TL	11	29,7
	5001-10000	13	35,1
	10001 and more	13	35,1
Neighborhood life quality	First quality	14	37,8
	Second quality	12	32,4
	Third quality	11	29,7

The parameters in Table 1. presents in total the general characteristics of MIELE store customers. Participants are categorized into three groups by the neighborhood's life quality as first, second and third quality groups according to a study that examined city life quality from various aspects in İstanbul (Şeker, 2011). Beşiktaş, Kadıköy and, Şişli took place in the first group. Fatih and Üsküdar were in the second group. Ataşehir, Beykoz, Kağıthane and, Ümraniye constituted the third group. Most of the participants (37,8%) claimed to be inhabiting in the first life quality neighborhood.

4.2 Findings About Research Variables

Research variables that are tested in the research model are presented with minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation values in Table 2.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of All Research Variables

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
brand ident	1,40	5,00	3,23	0,99
brand assoc	3,00	5,00	4,08	0,69
brand image	2,38	5,00	3,55	0,78
brand aware	3,00	5,00	4,37	0,60
brand loyal	3,00	4,91	3,98	0,55
servqual tangible	3,20	5,00	4,25	0,58
servqual reliable	3,00	5,00	4,39	0,53
servqual responsible	3,60	5,00	4,28	0,43
perceived brand quality	3,47	5,00	4,31	0,44
brand equity	3,13	4,91	4,05	0,46
crm quality trust	2,50	5,00	3,88	0,58
e-loyalty	2,00	5,00	3,84	0,75

On a scale 1 is for Strongly Disagree to 5 is for Strongly Agree

Descriptive findings in Table 2. support that MIELE customers are quite in a positive disposition toward MIELE as brand equity ($x = 4,05$) and perceived brand quality ($x = 4,31$) mean values are above the average positive. The highest positive brand equity elements were brand awareness ($x = 4,37$) and, brand association ($x = 4,08$). The lowness of MIELE customers' brand identity evaluations might be due to insufficient color, slogan and symbol identification of MIELE in Turkish sample. Consequently insufficient emotional and psychological attachment of customers are expected to less affiliation with the brand.

E-loyalty minimum value was calculated as the lowest in the data set ($\text{min}=2,00$). It is researcher's comment that this could be due to insufficient volume of electronic encounters of MIELE customers in Turkey.

Brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty and brand equity mean values are calculated by sample groups and listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Mean Values of Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity

		brand ident.	brand assoc.	brand image	brand awar.	brand loyalty	brand equity
		x	x	x	x	x	x
Age	until 30	3,17	3,67	3,36	4,00	3,74	3,83
	31-50	3,03	4,13	3,44	4,38	3,95	4,03
	51 over	3,97	4,33	4,11	4,71	4,34	4,36
Gender	female	3,30	4,03	3,57	4,30	4,01	4,03
	Male	3,15	4,15	3,52	4,46	3,94	4,08
Education	high school	3,24	4,07	3,55	4,29	3,99	4,03
	undergraduate	3,17	4,02	3,49	4,41	3,95	4,05
	graduate	3,50	4,42	3,84	4,50	4,11	4,14
Income	less than 5000TL	2,78	3,85	3,18	3,97	3,80	3,77
	5001-10000	3,25	4,21	3,61	4,54	3,89	4,07
	10001 and more	3,60	4,15	3,81	4,54	4,23	4,27
Purchase seq.	Once	3,02	3,95	3,37	4,15	3,90	3,93
	two times	3,12	4,08	3,48	4,39	3,92	4,03
	three times	3,58	4,22	3,82	4,58	4,14	4,21
Neighborhood life quality	Highest quality	3,43	4,14	3,70	4,33	4,01	4,07
	middle quality	2,67	3,97	3,16	4,31	3,77	3,88
	low quality	3,60	4,12	3,80	4,48	4,17	4,22

On a scale 1 is for Strongly Disagree to 5 is for Strongly Agree

Table 3. demonstrates that the oldest group participants do have higher mean values regarding brand identity ($x = 3,97$), brand association ($x = 4,33$), brand image ($x = 4,11$), brand awareness ($x = 4,71$), brand loyalty ($x = 4,34$) and, brand equity ($x = 4,36$).

Female participants are better than males in identifying MIELE brand ($x = 3,30$). Male participants are more aware of MIELE brand than females. Male

participants have the highest positive brand association ($x = 4,15$) and brand awareness ($x = 4,46$). On the other hand, females have the highest brand identity ($x = 3,30$), brand image ($x = 3,57$) and brand loyalty ($x = 4,34$).

Participants holding higher degree of education have more positive tendency than less educated groups in all aspects of brand equity ($x = 4,14$). Participants having higher income level have more positive tendency than lower income level groups in all aspects of brand equity ($x = 4,27$). Participants with more purchasing experience have more positive disposition than participants with less purchasing experience in all aspects of brand equity ($x = 4,21$). Participants from low-quality neighborhood have more positive disposition than participants from middle and high-quality neighborhood in all aspects of brand equity ($x = 4,22$).

Perceived brand quality is calculated from tangibility, reliability and responsibility points of view by sample groups and listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Mean Values of Perceived Service Quality Dimensions

		servqual tangible	servqual reliable	servqual responsible	perceived brand quality
		x	x	x	x
Age	until 30	4,20	4,25	4,20	4,21
	31-50	4,23	4,41	4,39	4,35
	51 over	4,34	4,46	4,00	4,28
Gender	female	4,11	4,32	4,24	4,23
	Male	4,43	4,48	4,34	4,41
Education	high school	4,33	4,27	4,32	4,31
	undergraduate	4,29	4,46	4,32	4,36
	graduate	3,75	4,56	3,95	4,10
Income	less than 5000TL	4,07	4,18	4,18	4,14
	5001-10000	4,18	4,35	4,22	4,24
	10001 and more	4,46	4,62	4,43	4,51

Purchase seq.	Once	4,31	4,27	4,31	4,29
	two times	4,20	4,52	4,27	4,33
	three times	4,23	4,40	4,27	4,31
Neighborhood life quality	High quality	4,11	4,41	4,16	4,23
	Middle quality	4,23	4,35	4,28	4,29
	Low quality	4,44	4,41	4,44	4,42

On a scale 1 is for Strongly Disagree to 5 is for Strongly Agree

Table 4. illustrates the groups of participants with most positive MIELE service quality evaluation. The most positive overall MIELE service quality evaluation was made by middle aged ($x = 4,35$), male ($x = 4,41$), undergraduate degree holder ($x = 4,36$), with highest income level ($x = 4,51$), having two times purchasing experience in the last five years ($x = 4,33$) and, inhabiting in the low life quality neighborhood ($x = 4,42$).

The most positive quality evaluation for the MIELE service quality's tangibility aspect was made by participants of old ($x = 4,34$), male ($x = 4,43$), high school degree holder ($x = 4,33$), highest income group ($x = 4,46$), with one time purchasing experience ($x = 4,31$) and, low neighborhood life quality ($x = 4,44$) group.

The most positive quality evaluation for the MIELE service quality's reliability aspect was made by participants from old ($x = 4,46$), male ($x = 4,48$), graduate degree holder ($x = 4,56$), highest income group ($x = 4,62$), with two times purchasing experience ($x = 4,52$) and, low neighborhood life quality ($x = 4,41$) group.

The most positive quality evaluation for the MIELE service quality's responsibility aspect was made by participants from middle-aged ($x = 4,39$), male ($x = 4,34$), undergraduate degree holder ($x = 4,32$), highest income group ($x = 4,43$), with one time purchasing experience ($x = 4,29$) and, low neighborhood life quality ($x = 4,42$) group.

Customer relation management quality and e-loyalty means are calculated for various sample groups and listed in Table 5.

Table 5
Mean Values of CRM Quality Trust and E-Loyalty

		crm quality	e-loyalty
		trust	
		x	x
Age	until 30	3,88	3,94
	31-50	3,76	3,68
	51 over	4,26	4,26
Gender	female	3,84	3,96
	male	3,93	3,68
Education	high school	4,04	3,76
	undergraduate	3,73	3,82
	graduate	3,92	4,20
Income	less than 5000TL	3,74	3,69
	5001-10000	3,78	4,02
	10001 and more	4,09	3,78
Purchase seq	once	3,90	3,68
	two times	3,72	3,88
	three times	4,01	3,97
Neighborhood life quality	High quality	3,87	4,03
	Middle quality	3,65	3,45
	Low quality	4,14	4,02

On a scale 1 is for Strongly Disagree to 5 is for Strongly Agree

Table 5. shows the groups of participants with most positive customer relations management quality evaluations and e-loyalty to MIELE. The most positive customer relations management quality evaluation was made by oldest ($x = 4,26$), male ($x = 3,93$), high school degree holder ($x = 4,04$), with highest income level ($x = 4,09$), having three times purchasing experience in the last five years ($x = 4,01$) and, inhabiting in the low life quality neighborhood ($x = 4,14$).

The most positive e-loyalty evaluation to MIELE was made by oldest ($x=4,26$), female ($x=3,93$), graduate school degree holder ($x=4,20$), with middle income level ($x=4,02$), having three times purchasing experience in the last five years ($x=3,97$) and, inhabiting in the high life quality neighborhood ($x=4,03$).

4.3 Findings About Survey Items in the Scales

Survey items placed in the scales are individually described in percentages to have a general idea about the participants' tendencies.

4.3.1. Brand identity

Responses for five survey items questioning brand identity for MIELE are illustrated and evaluated in the figure below (see Figure 3).

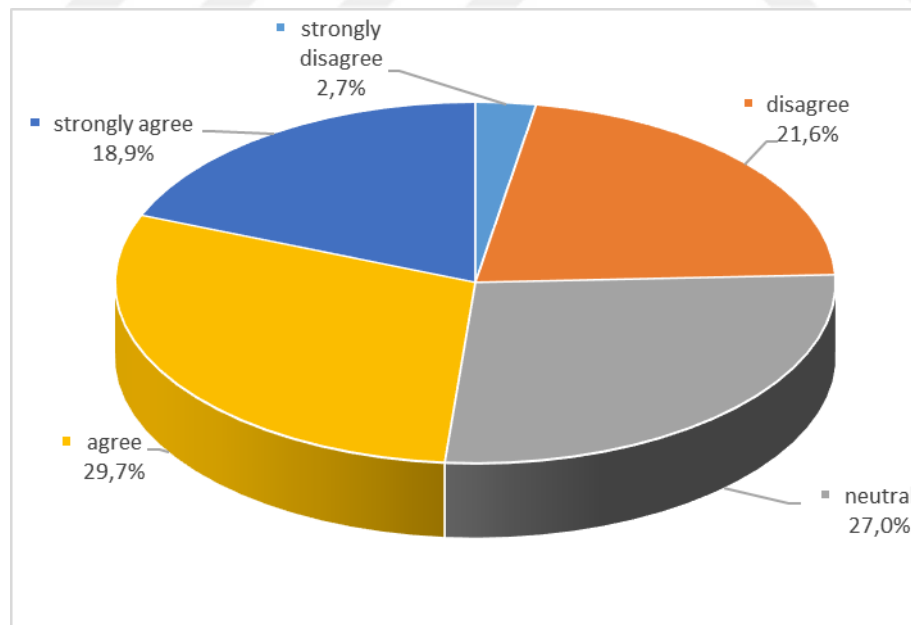


Figure 3. Pie Chart of "I am very interested in what others think about MIELE product" in Percentages.

The percentage of highly self-monitored MIELE customers seemed to be too low. On the other side, majority of MIELE customers were neutral (27%) or agreed (29,7%) on being interested in what people think about MIELE that is their interest in MIELE is free of what others think about it. Regarding the attitudes in percentages it can also be said that MIELE customers extensively form up MIELE brand identification with their very own attitudes and seeks for no external approval.

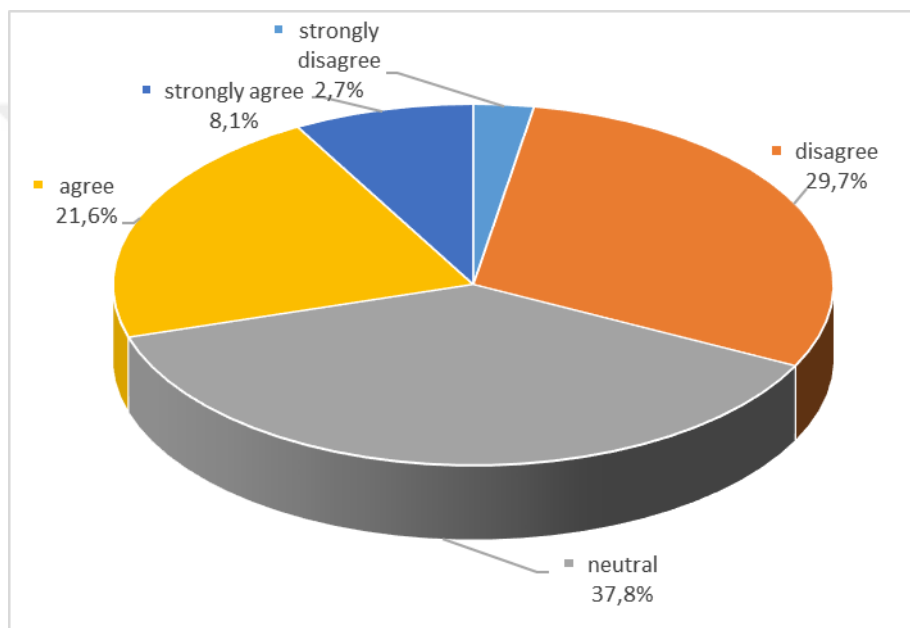


Figure 4. Pie Chart of “MIELE product’s successes are my successes” in Percentages.

The majority of MIELE customers tend not to identify their achievements with MIELE’s market success being neutral (37,8%) about identifying themselves with the success of the product. No clear tendency is observed regarding the distribution of thoughts about MIELE and individual success identification with MIELE as a brand.

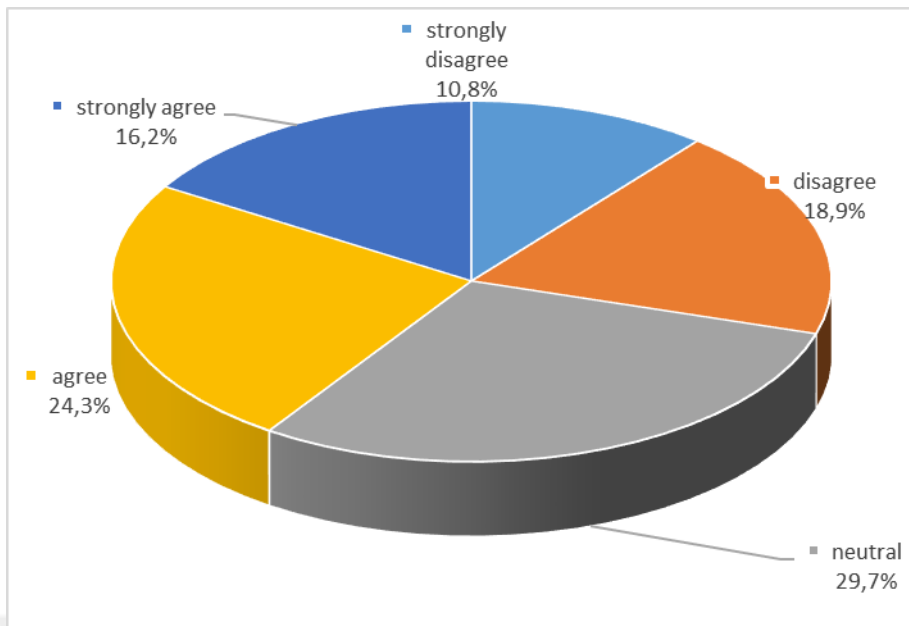


Figure 5. Pie Chart of “I would experience an emotional loss if I had to stop using MIELE product” in Percentages.

Percentages do not indicate that MIELE customers has a strong emotional attachment with MIELE as a brand (29,7%). This means that MIELE customers could experience other brands without emotional dissonance.

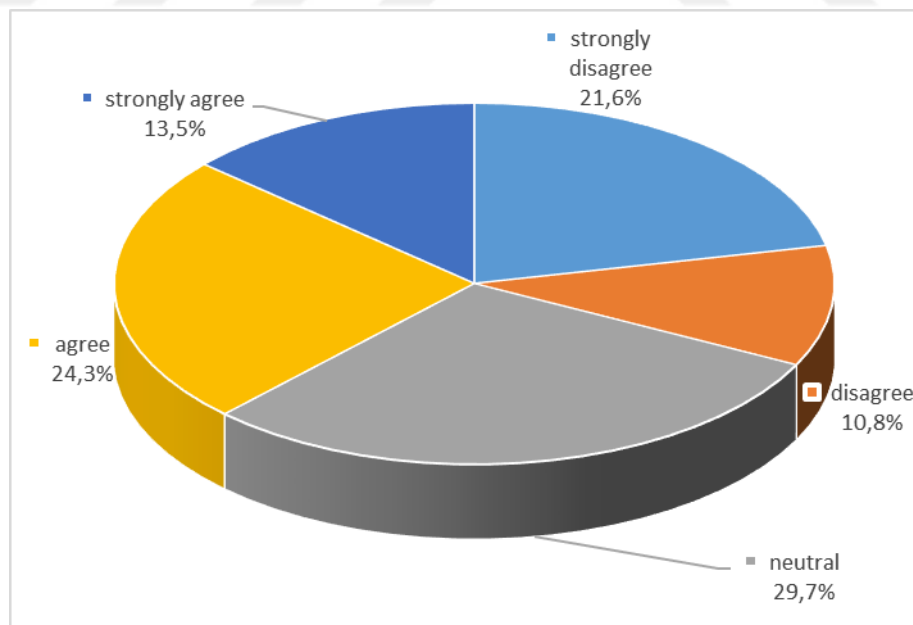


Figure 6. Pie Chart of “I believe others respect me for my association with MIELE product” in Percentages.

Percentage figures show that MIELE seems to be brand that people have associations with a social respect attainment (24,3%) that is MIELE brand partly serve to satisfy their need for status as a symbol.

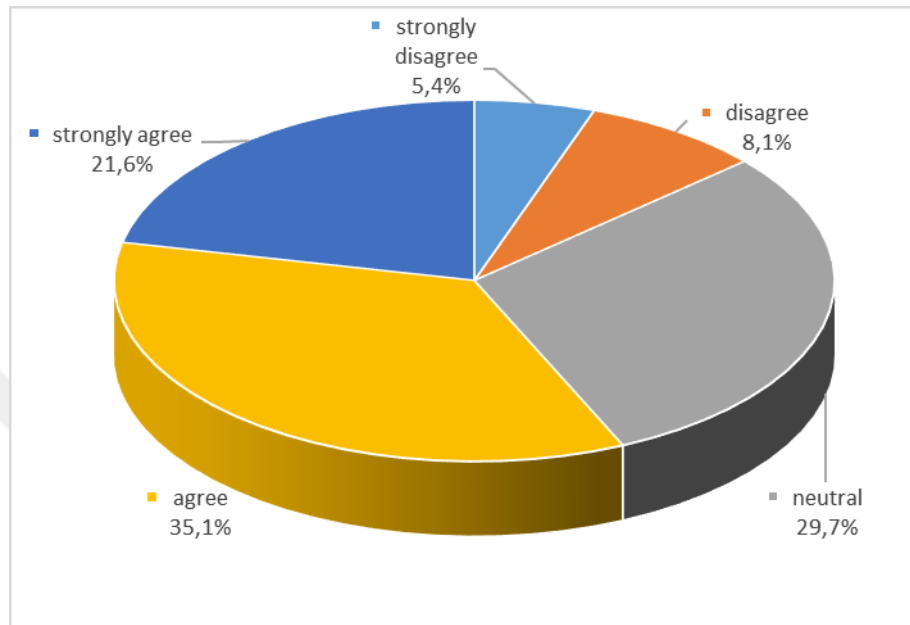


Figure 7. Pie Chart of “I perceive myself as a valuable partner of MIELE product” in Percentages.

The highest percentage (35,1%) on the figure above shows that MIELE customers tend to perceive MIELE brand as a partner. In other words, MIELE customers feel themselves as a partner of MIELE who could share both pros. and cons. of the brand.

4.3.2. Brand association

Responses for three survey items about brand association for MIELE are illustrated and evaluated below.

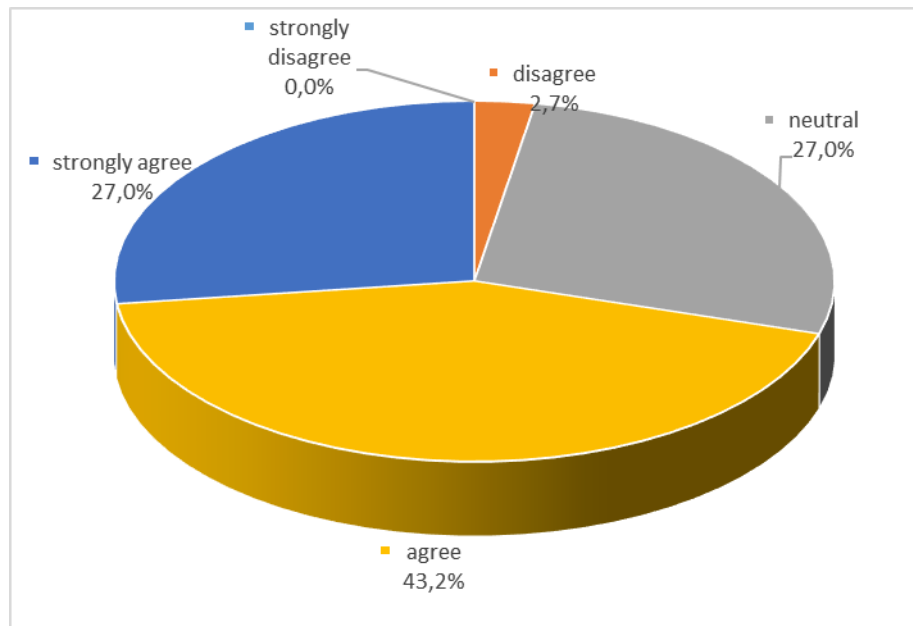


Figure 8. Pie Chart of “Some characteristics of MIELE come to my mind quickly” in Percentages.

The highest percentage of positive response (43,2%) showed that MIELE brand is easy to be remembered by some of its characteristics. Regarding attitude theory, this indicated that customers’ attitudes about MIELE brand was strong.

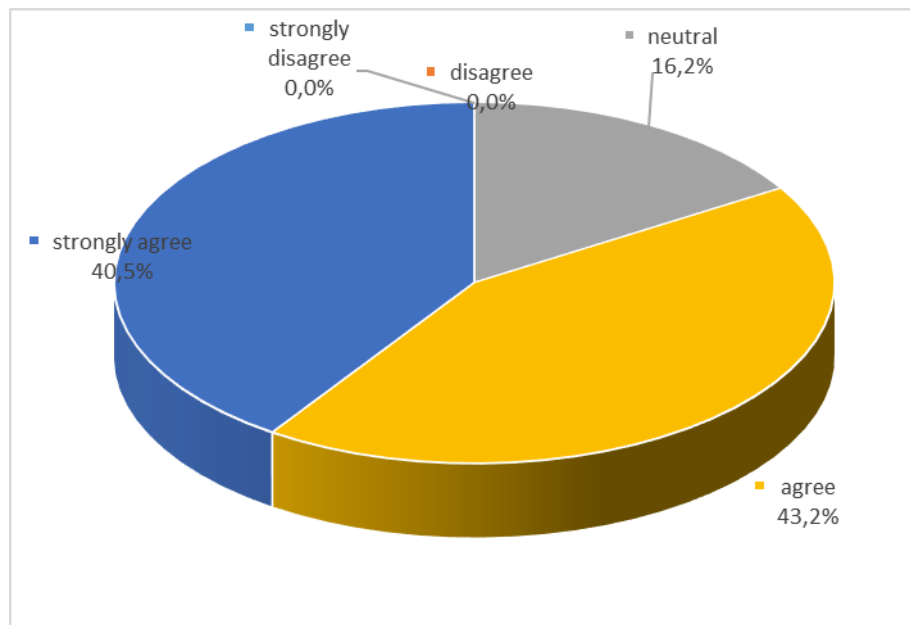


Figure 9. Pie Chart of “I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of MIELE” in Percentages.

The highest percentages of agreement (43,2% and 40,5%) showed that MIELE brand is easy to be remembered by some of its characteristics. This meant that MIELE is a well-known brand with its symbols.

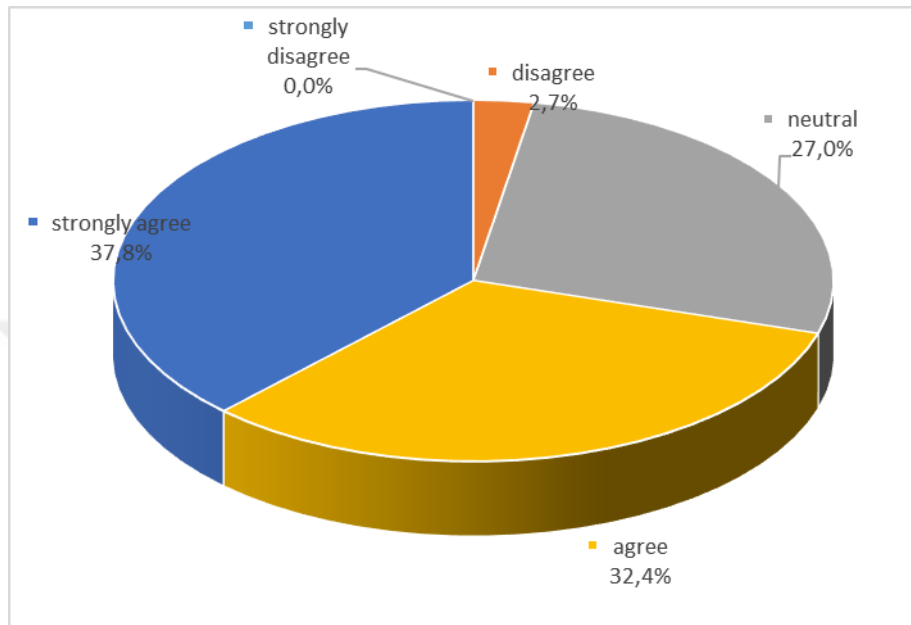


Figure 10. Pie Chart of “I have no difficulty in imagining MIELE in my mind” in Percentages.

The positive attitudes figures (32,4% and 37,8%) showed that customers keep a strong brand image in their mind. That means they could easily differentiate MIELE.

The most effective *brand association* factor was found to be Symbol and logo of MIELE.

4.3.3. Brand awareness

Responses for three survey items questioning brand awareness for MIELE are illustrated and evaluated below.

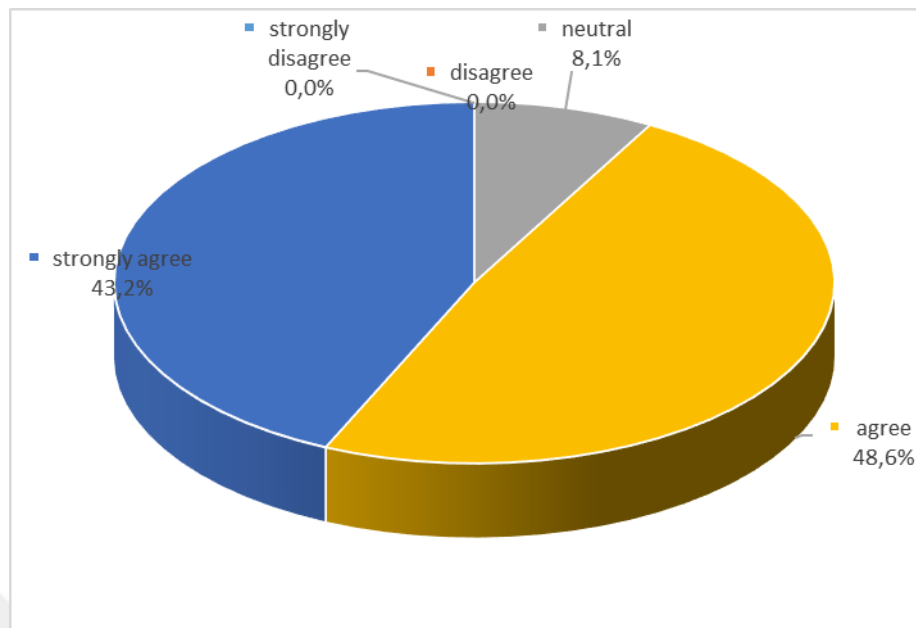


Figure 11. Pie Chart of "I know what MIELE looks like" in Percentages.

The graph shows that majority of participants agree (43,2% and 48,6) that they are aware of MIELE brand and they know what it is.

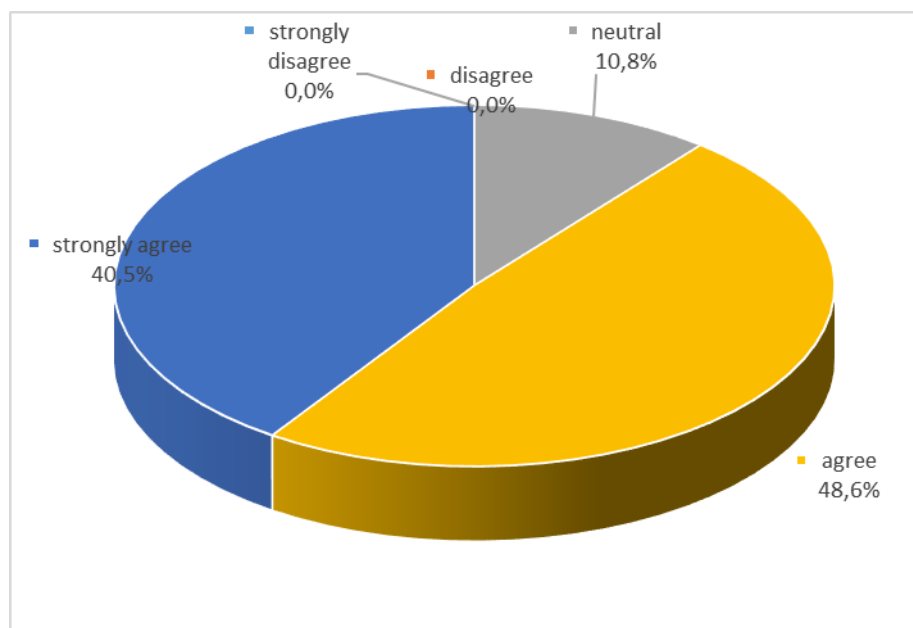


Figure 12. Pie Chart of "I can recognize MIELE among other competing brands" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 89,2% of MIELE customers claims to have strong recognition of MIELE among its competitors.

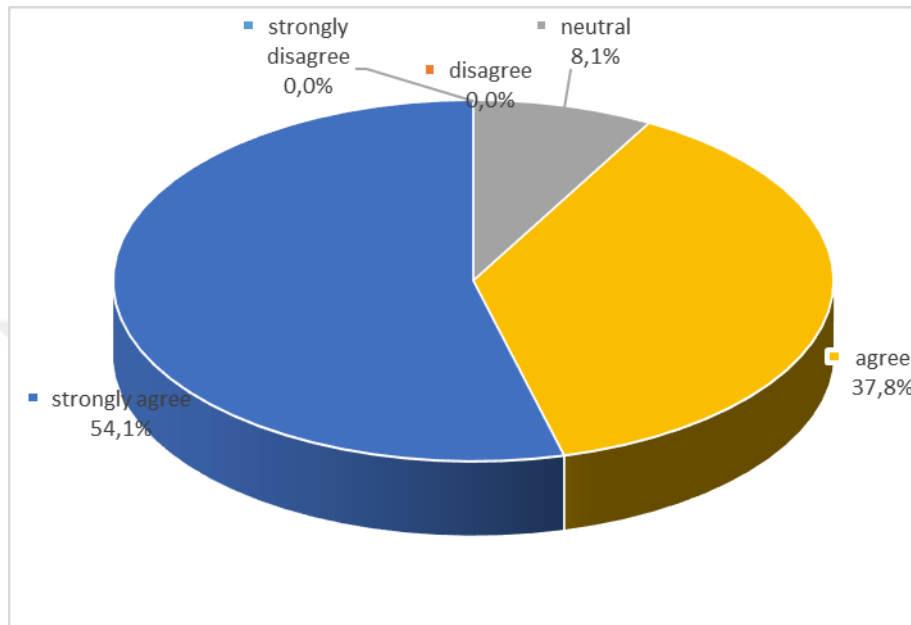


Figure 13. Pie Chart of “I am aware of MIELE” in Percentages.

The 43,2% and 48,6 percentages of MIELE customers seemed to have basic awareness about MIELE as a brand. All of three *brand awareness* factors were found to be equally effective in forming brand awareness for MIELE.

4.3.4. Brand loyalty

Responses for eight survey items questioning brand loyalty for MIELE are illustrated and evaluated below.

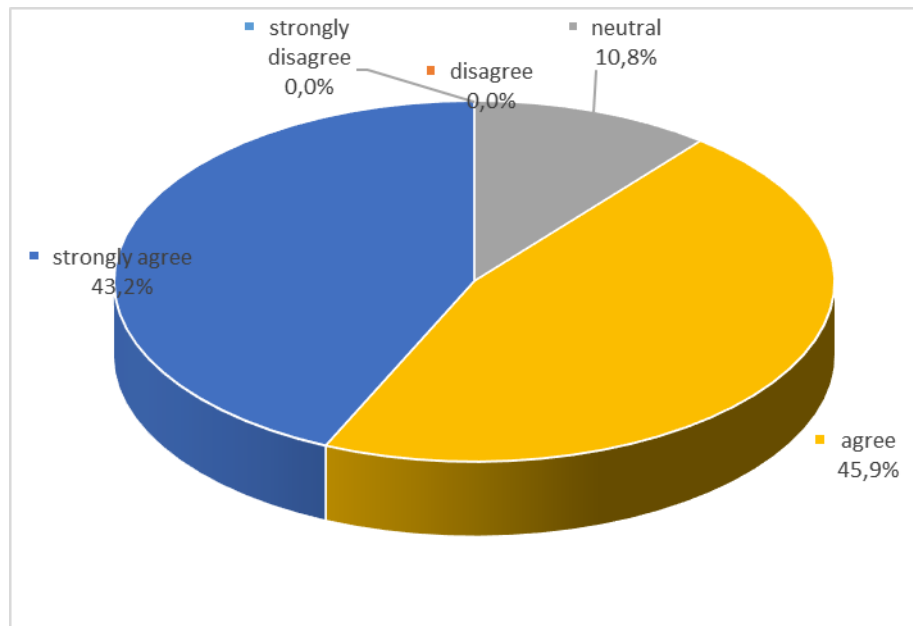


Figure 14. Pie Chart of “MIELE cares about their customers” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 89,1% of MIELE customers believe that MIELE as a brand cares about their customers.

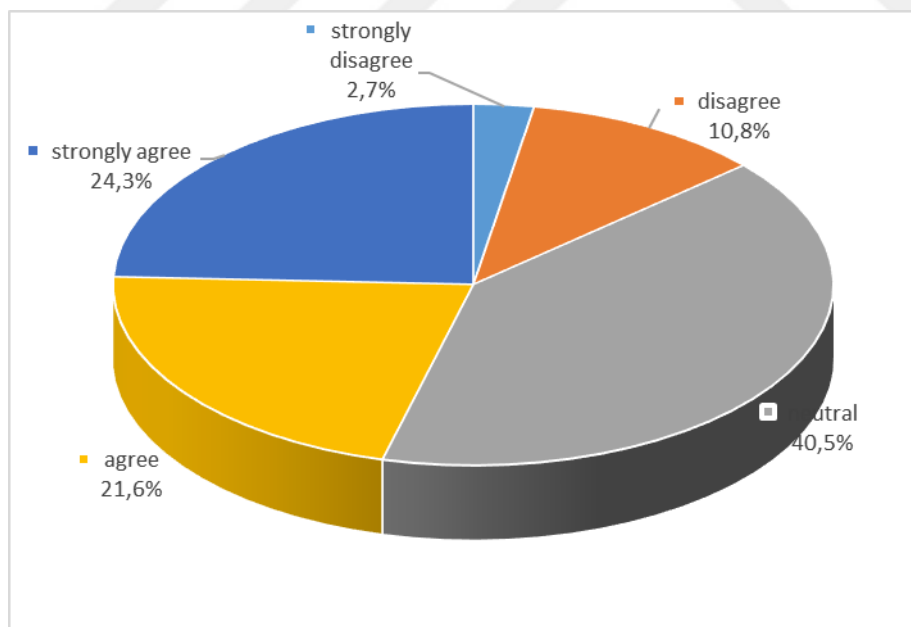


Figure 15. Pie Chart of “I am emotionally attached to MIELE” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 48,6% of MIELE customers are emotionally attached to MIELE as a brand.

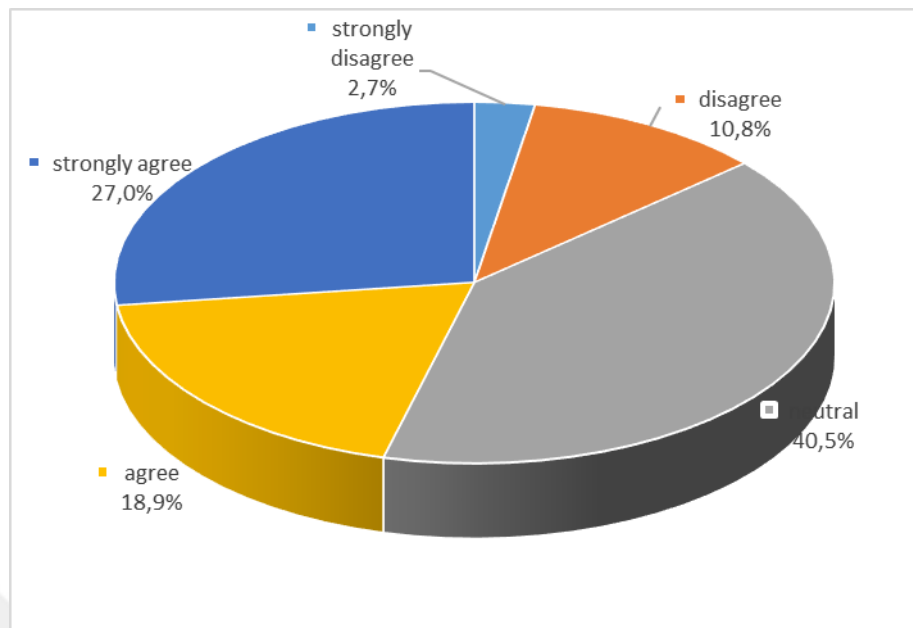


Figure 16. Pie Chart of "I have a sense of belonging to MIELE" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 48,6% of MIELE customers have a sense of belonging to MIELE as a brand.

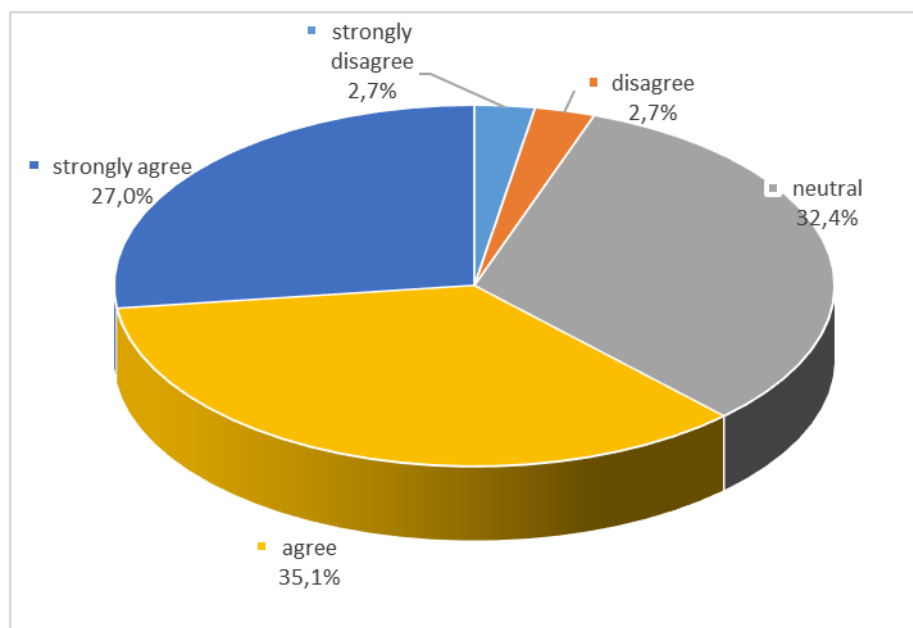


Figure 17. Pie Chart of "The costs in time and effort of changing from MIELE to another one are high for me" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 64,8% of MIELE customers found that the costs in time and effort of changing from MIELE to another brand are high for them. This means loyal customers have strong loyalty attitudes towards MIELE as a brand.

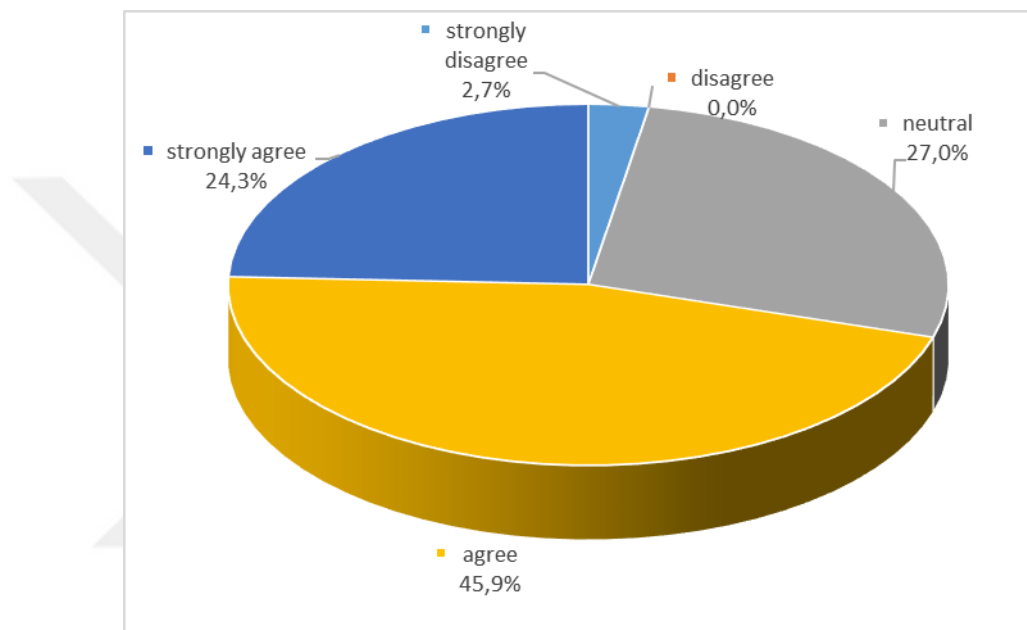


Figure 18. Pie Chart of "I often encourage other people to stay at MIELE" in Percentages" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 72,9% of MIELE customers attempt to influence others in favor of MIELE as a brand.

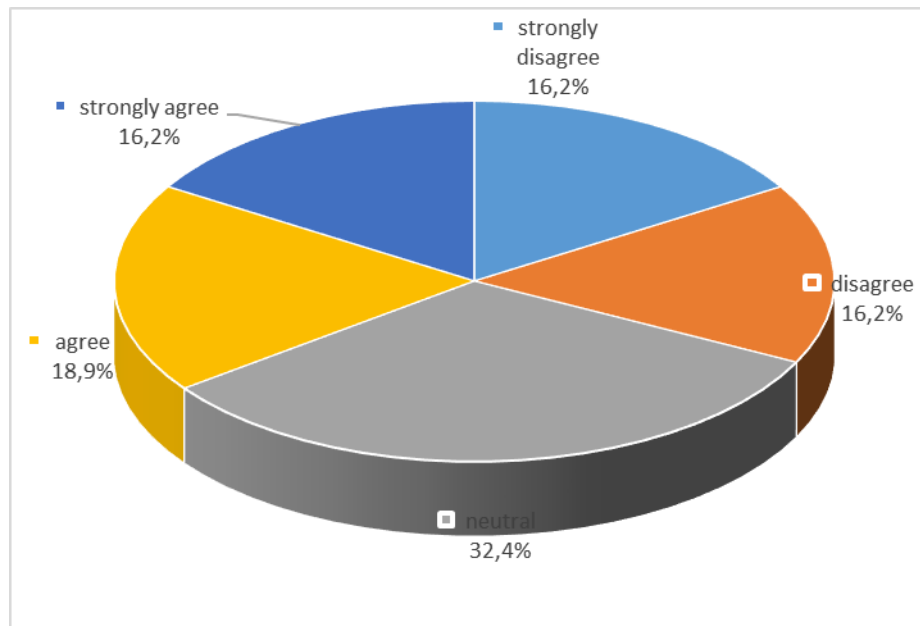


Figure 19. Pie Chart of “I would like to receive any information (letter, promotional material or e-mail) from MIELE company regularly” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 51,3% of MIELE customers are eager to have one-way communication from MIELE company regularly.

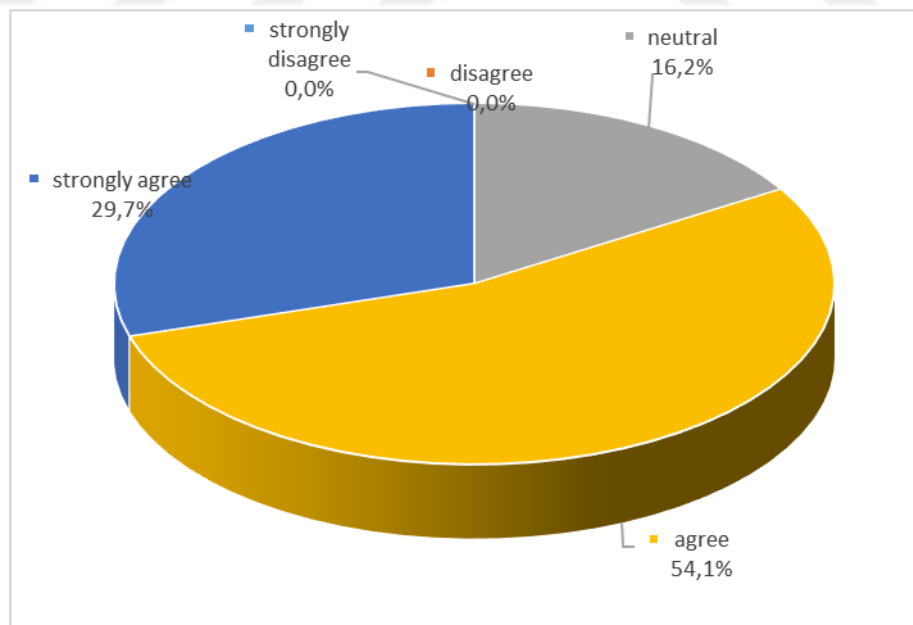


Figure 20. Pie Chart of “I will always tell to other people positive words about MIELE” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 83,8% of MIELE customers try to influence others in favor of MIELE as a brand.

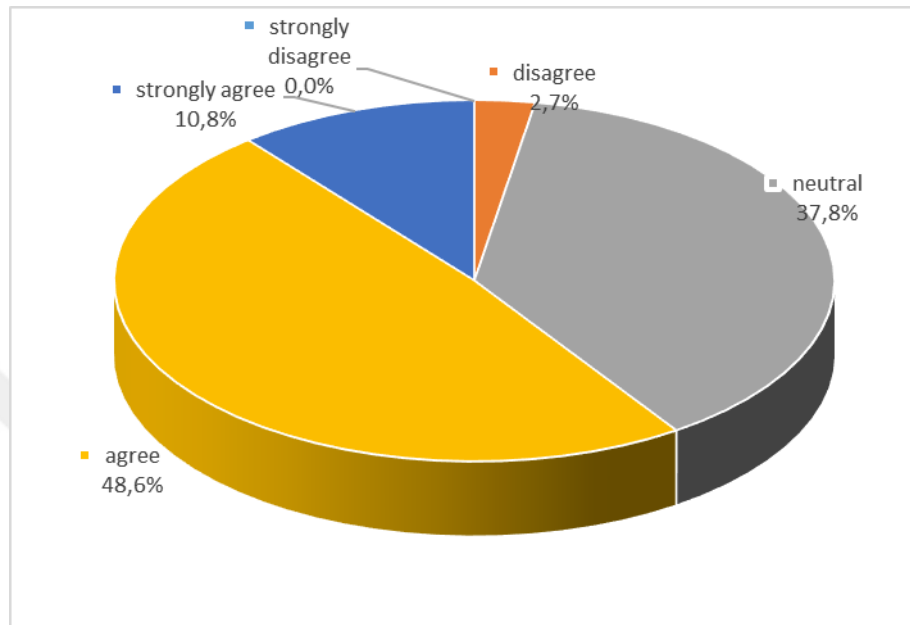


Figure 21. Pie Chart of “I take pride in telling other people about my experiences with MIELE” in Percentages

The graph shows that 59,4% of MIELE customers as experienced consumers of MIELE are proud of telling others about MIELE as a brand. The most effective loyalty aspects are found to be carefulness of MIELE (89,1%) and customers’ intention to be positive speakers (83,8%) of their brand.

4.3.5. Tangible service quality

Responses for five survey items questioning tangible aspects of service quality of MIELE brand are illustrated and evaluated below.

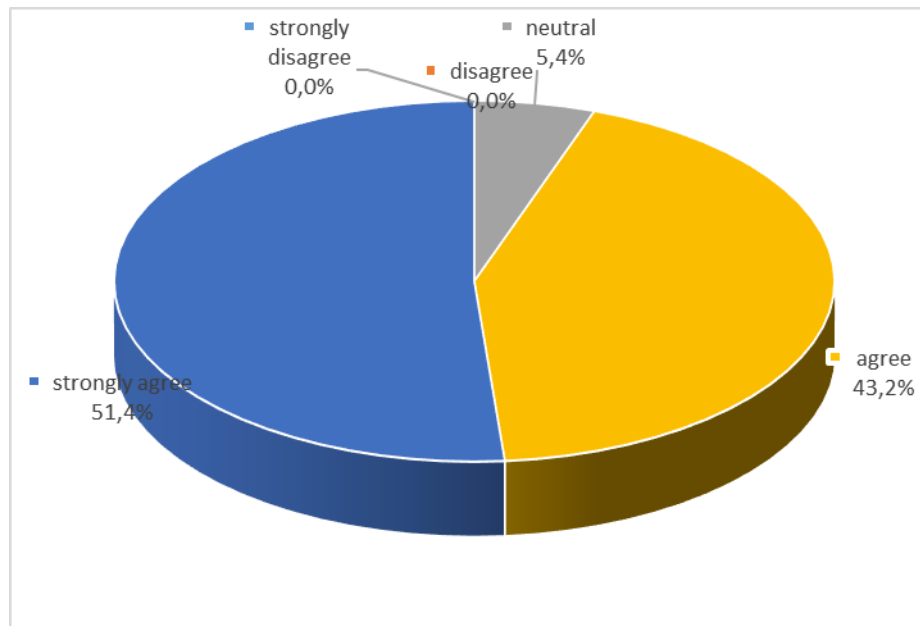


Figure 22. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE has up-to-date equipment” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 94,6% of MIELE customers thought that MIELE has modern equipment in service.

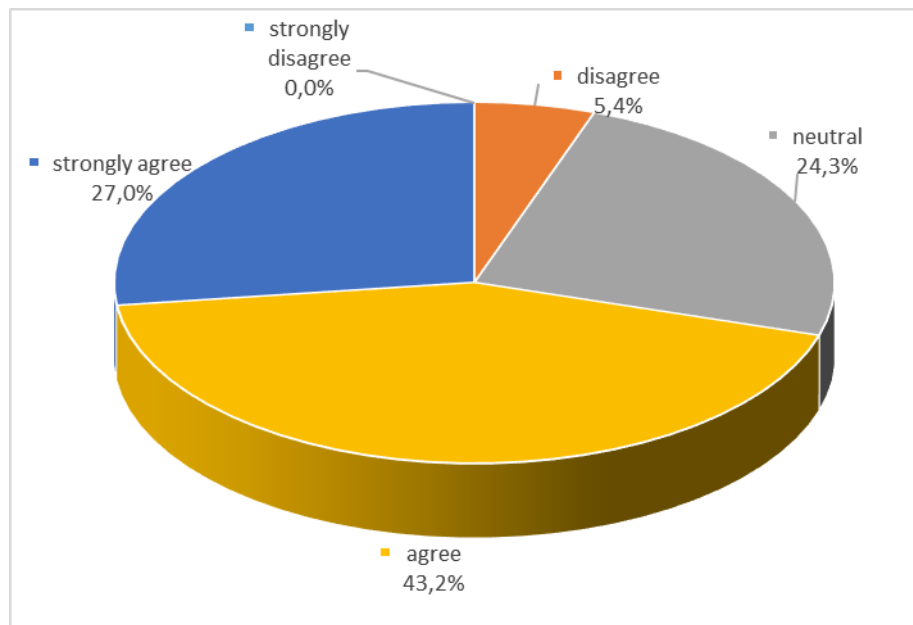


Figure 23. Pie Chart of “The physical facilities such as signage and grounds of the dealership of MIELE are visually appealing” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 70,2% of MIELE customers thought that physical facilities of MIELE such as signage and grounds of the dealership are visually appealing.

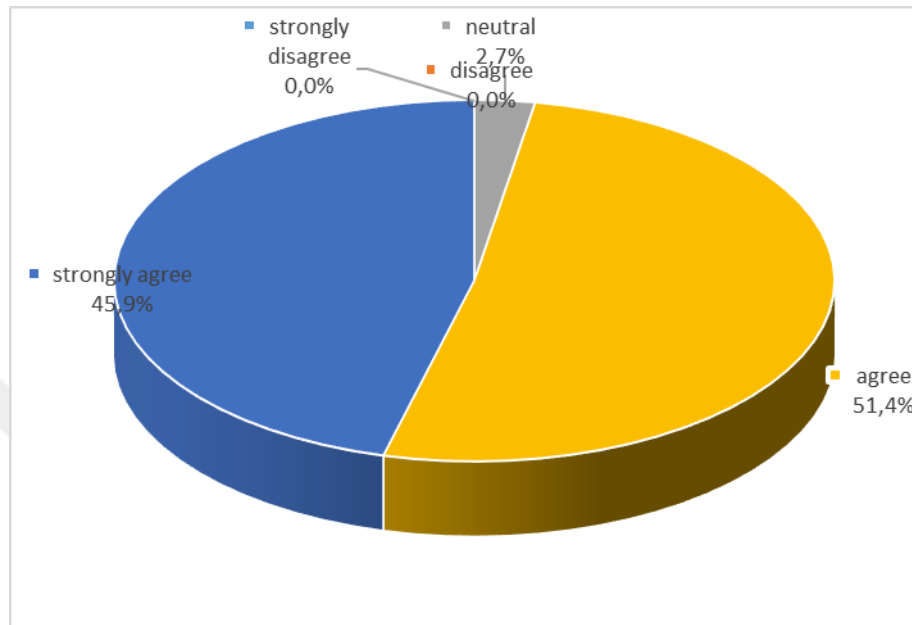


Figure 24. Pie Chart of "The employees of the dealership of MIELE are well dressed and always appear neat" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 97,3% of MIELE customers thought that employees of the dealership of MIELE are well dressed and always appear neat.

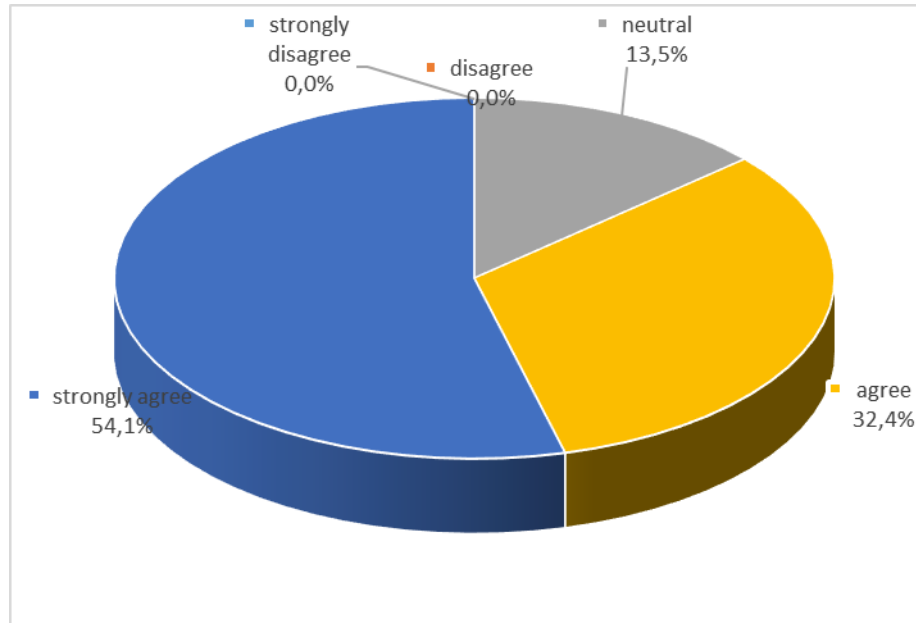


Figure 25. Pie Chart of “There are sufficient parking and waiting space at the dealership of MIELE” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 86,5% of MIELE customers thought that MIELE has sufficient parking and waiting space at the dealership.

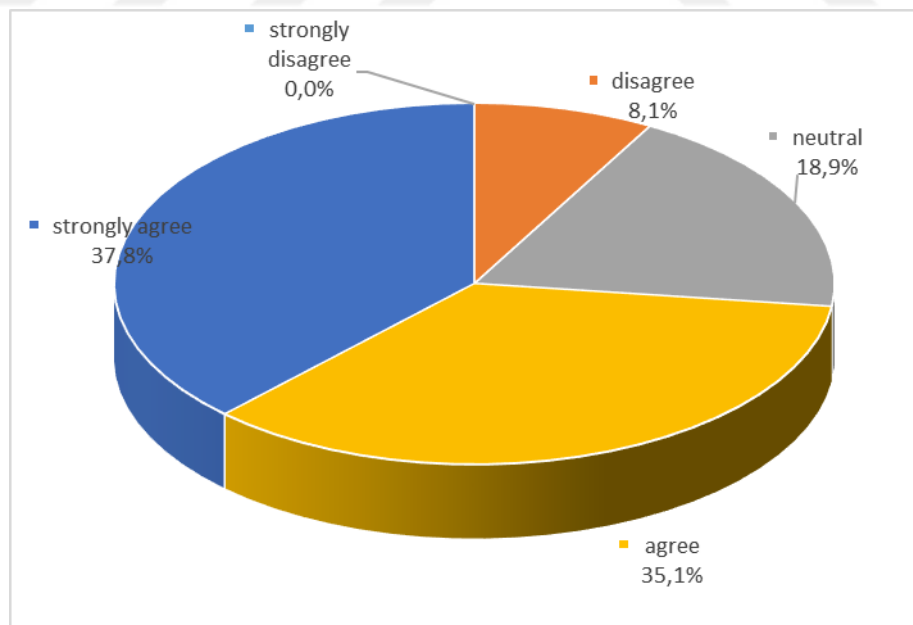


Figure 26. Pie Chart of “The invoices and promotional material of the dealership of MIELE are neat and distinctive” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 72,9% of MIELE customers thought that invoices and promotional material of the dealership of MIELE are neat and distinctive. Modern equipment and well dressed personnel are most distinctive tangible quality elements.

4.3.6. Reliability of service quality

Responses for five survey items questioning reliability aspects of service quality of MIELE brand are illustrated and evaluated below.

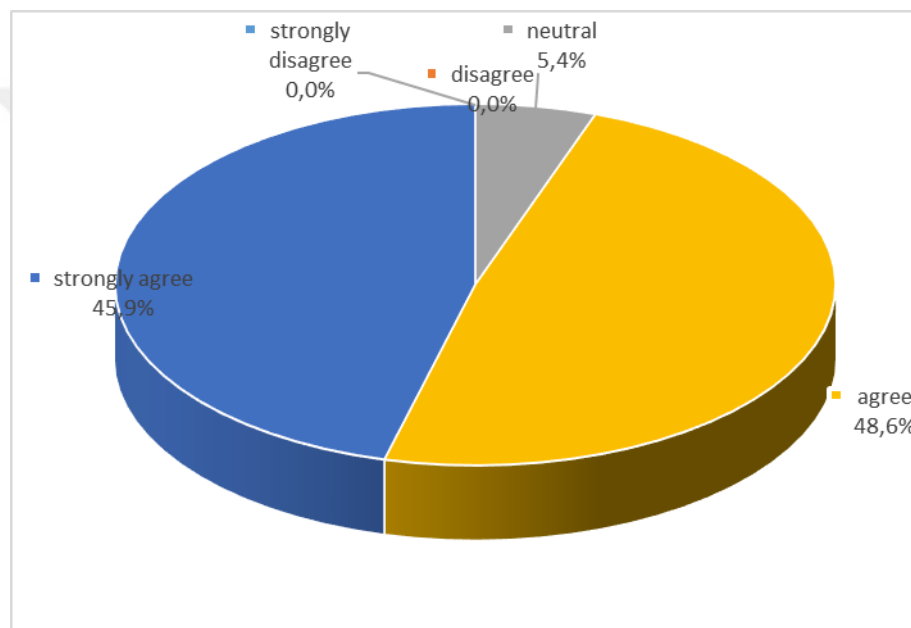


Figure 27. Pie Chart of “When the dealership of MIELE promises to perform a service by a certain time, it does so” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 94,5% of MIELE customers thought the dealership of MIELE is punctual that people may rely on.

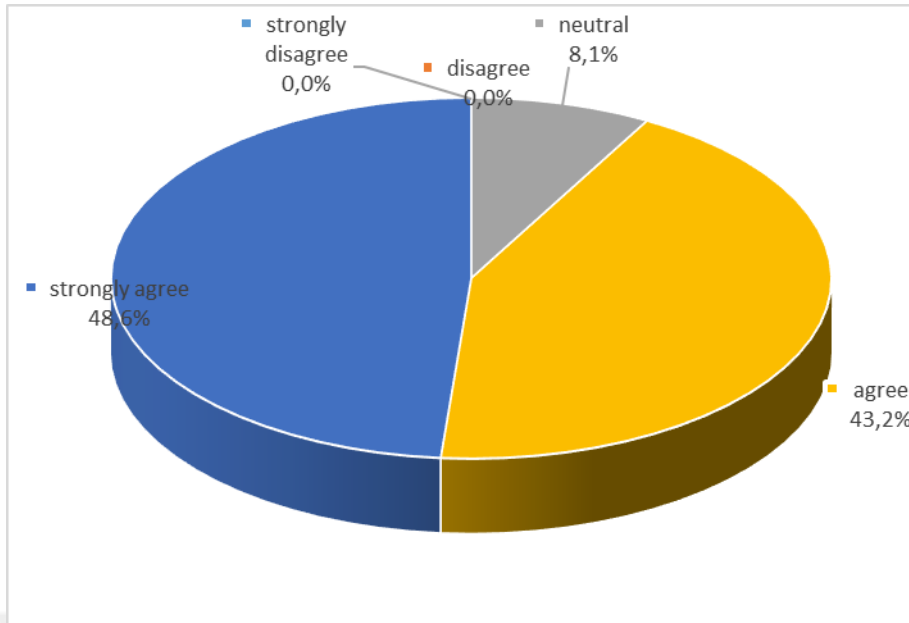


Figure 28. Pie Chart of “When I have problems, the dealership of MIELE shows sympathy and reassurance” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 91,7% of MIELE customers thought that the dealership of MIELE handles customer complaints with sympathy and reassurance.

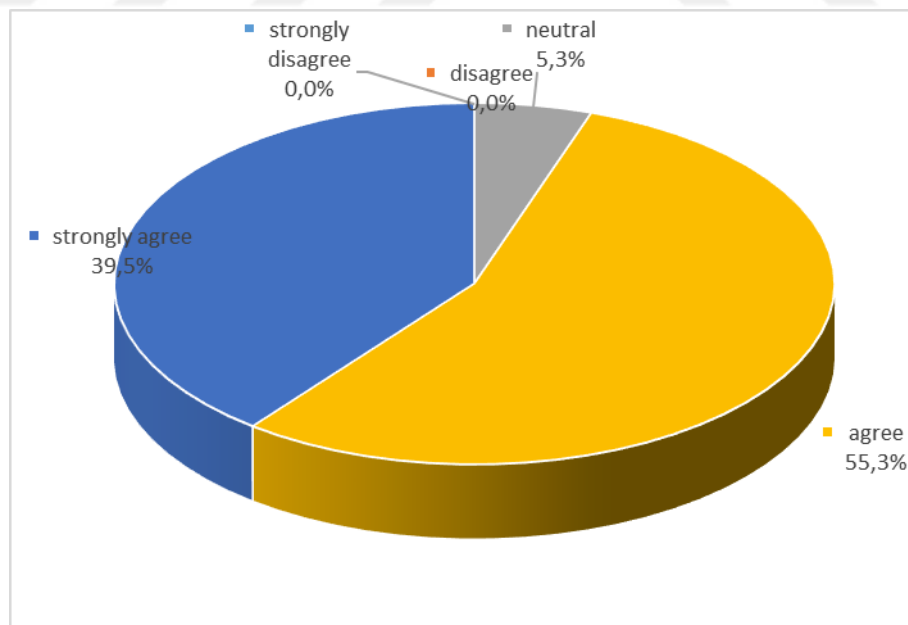


Figure 29. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE is dependable” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 94,8% of MIELE customers thought that one can depend on the dealership of MIELE.

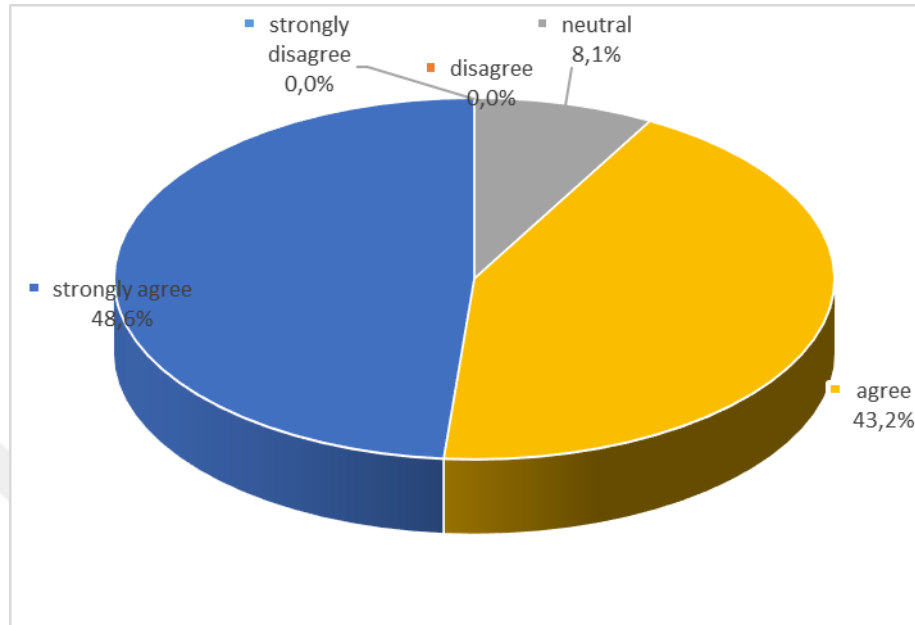


Figure 30. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE provides its services at the time it promises to do so” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 91,7% of MIELE customers thought that dealership of MIELE keep promises in terms of timing.

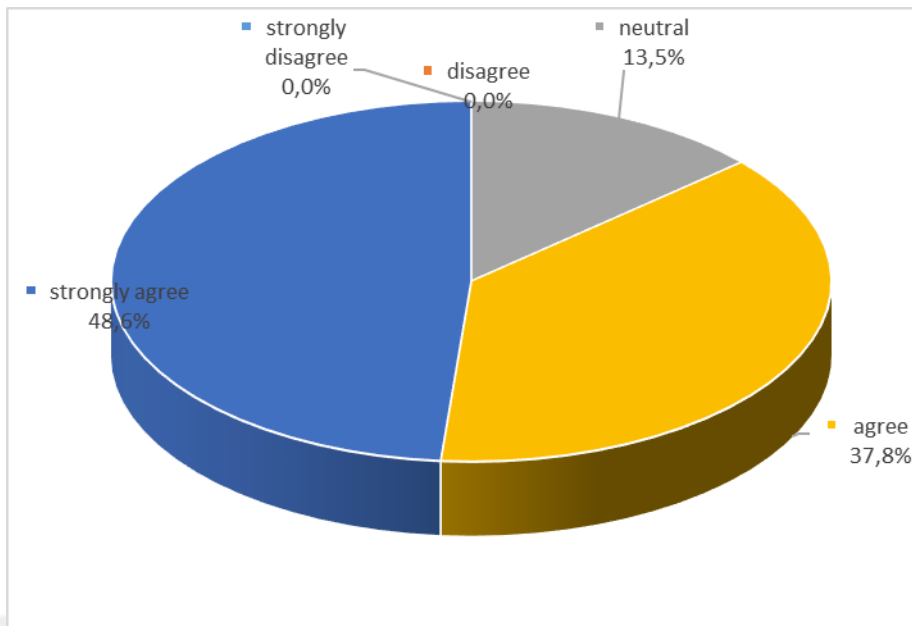


Figure 31. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE keeps its records accurately” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 86,3% of MIELE customers thought that dealership of MIELE has a good record keeping system.

4.3.7. Responsiveness of service quality

Responses for five survey items questioning responsiveness aspects of service quality of MIELE brand are illustrated and evaluated below.

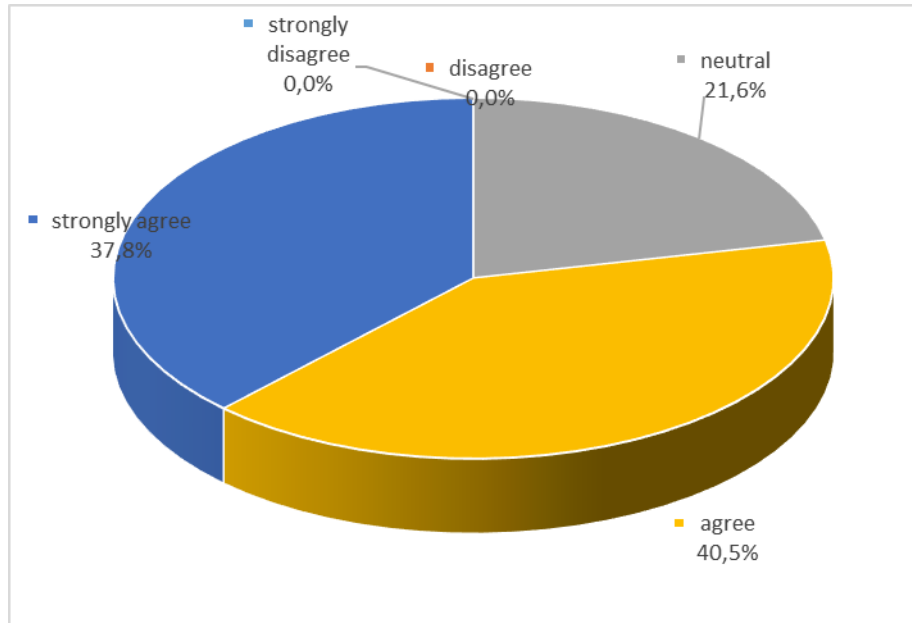


Figure 32. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE keeps customers informed about when and how services will be performed” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 78,3% of MIELE customers thought that dealership of MIELE keeps customers informed about when and how services will be performed.

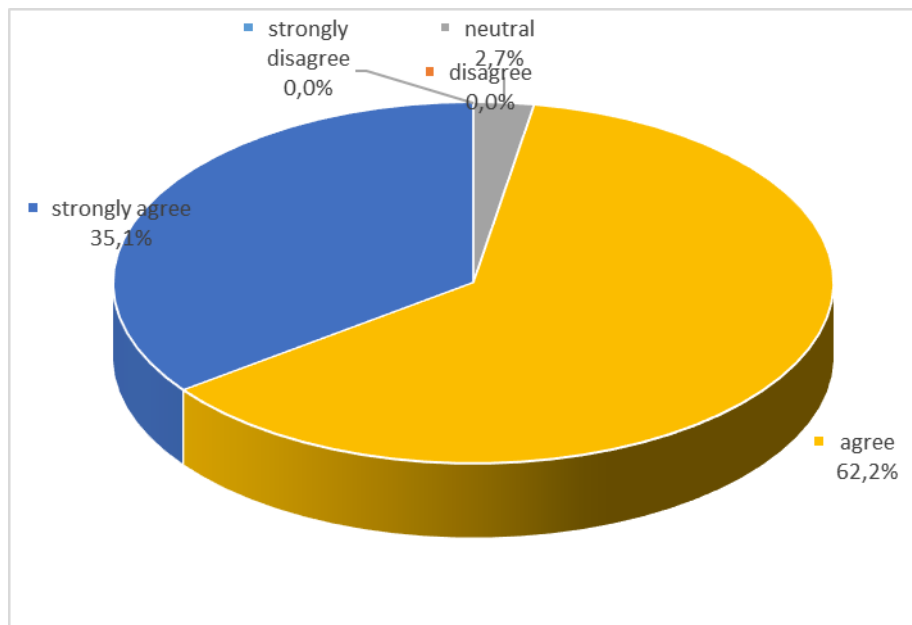


Figure 33. Pie Chart of “Employees in the dealership of MIELE are always willing to help its customers” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 97,3% of MIELE customers thought that employees in the dealership of MIELE are always willing to help its customers.

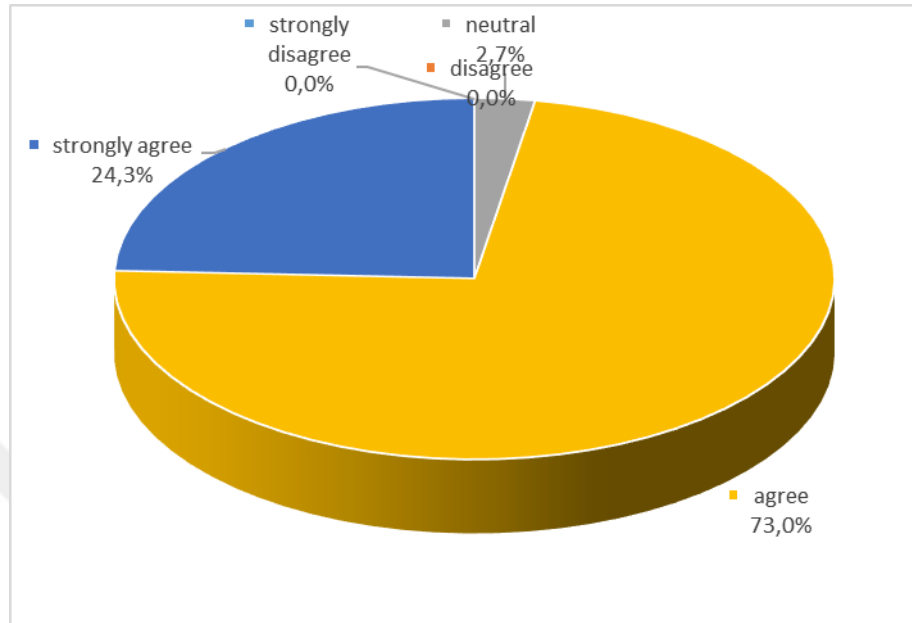


Figure 34. Pie Chart of "Employees of the dealership of MIELE are never too busy to respond to customer's requests" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 97,3% of MIELE customers thought that employees of the dealership of MIELE are never too busy to respond to customer's requests.

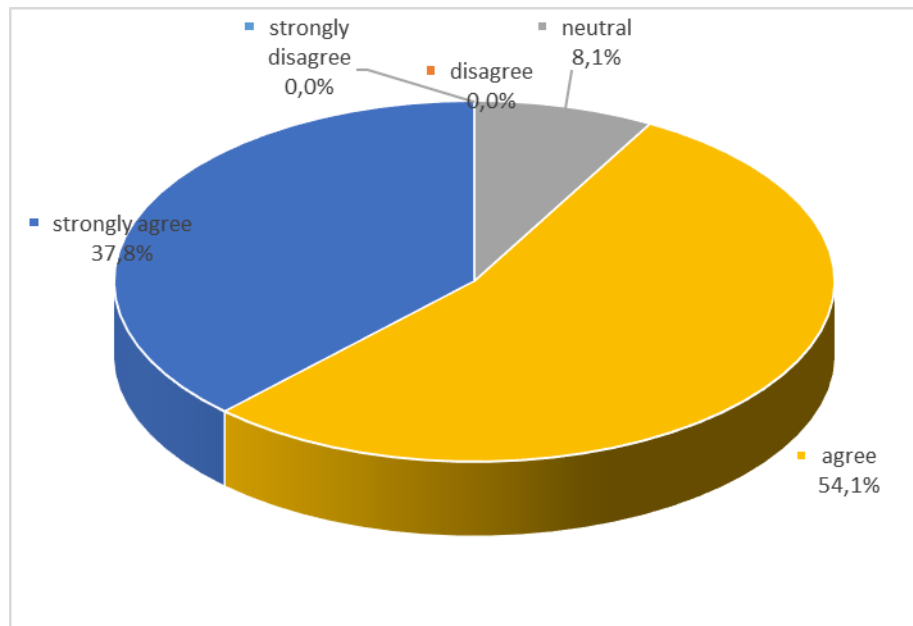


Figure 35. Pie Chart of “The dealership of MIELE manages complaints in a fast and efficient manner” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 91,9% of MIELE customers thought that dealership of MIELE manages complaints in a fast and efficient manner.

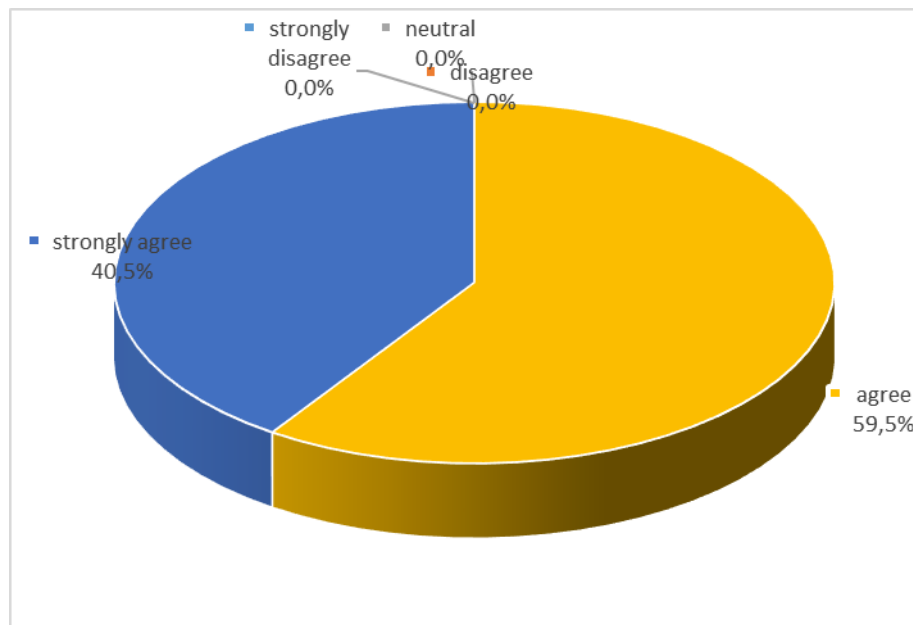


Figure 36. Pie Chart of “Employees provide personal attention to customers at the dealership of MIELE” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 100% of MIELE customers thought that employees provide personal attention to customers at the dealership of MIELE.

4.3.8. CRM Quality trust

Responses for six survey items questioning CRM quality of MIELE are illustrated and evaluated below.

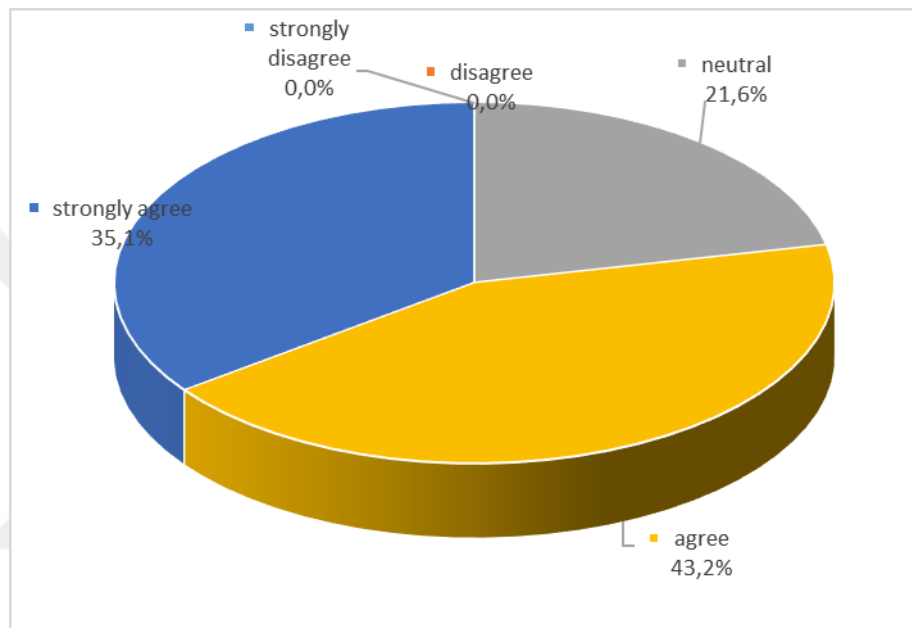


Figure 37. Pie Chart of “I think that MIELE’s CRM is positive” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 78,3% of MIELE customers thought that MIELE has a positive CRM.

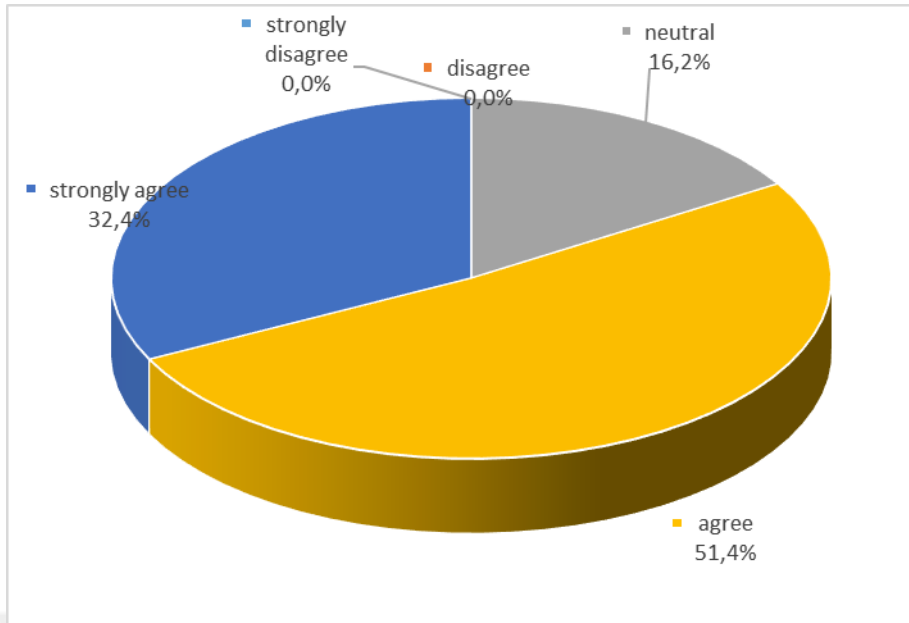


Figure 38. Pie Chart of "The dealership of MIELE is always honest and truthful to its customers in after sale" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 83,8% of MIELE customers found that dealership of MIELE is always honest and truthful to its customers in after sale.

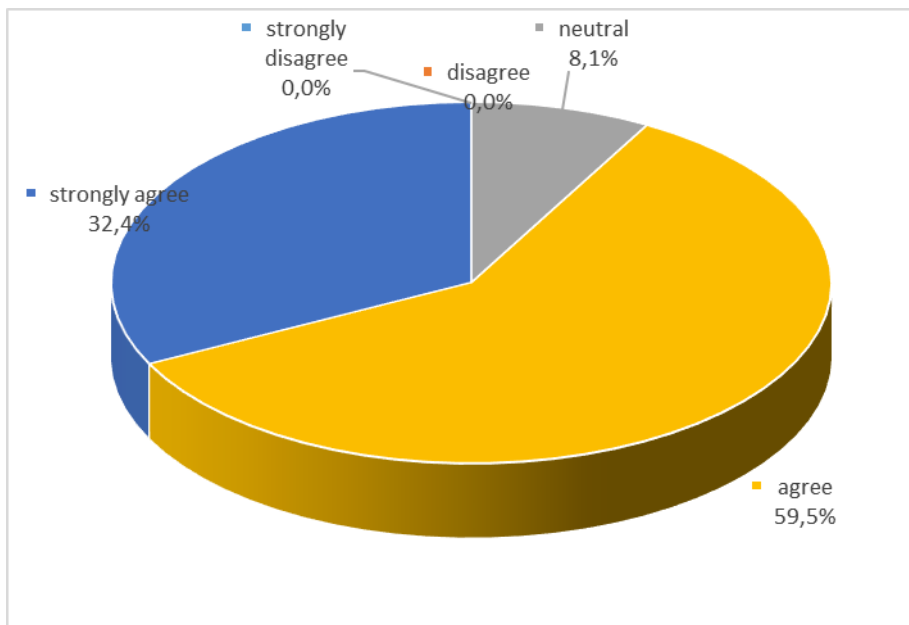


Figure 39. Pie Chart of "MIELE CRM staff are reachable after sale" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 100% of MIELE customers thought that CRM staff are reachable after sale.

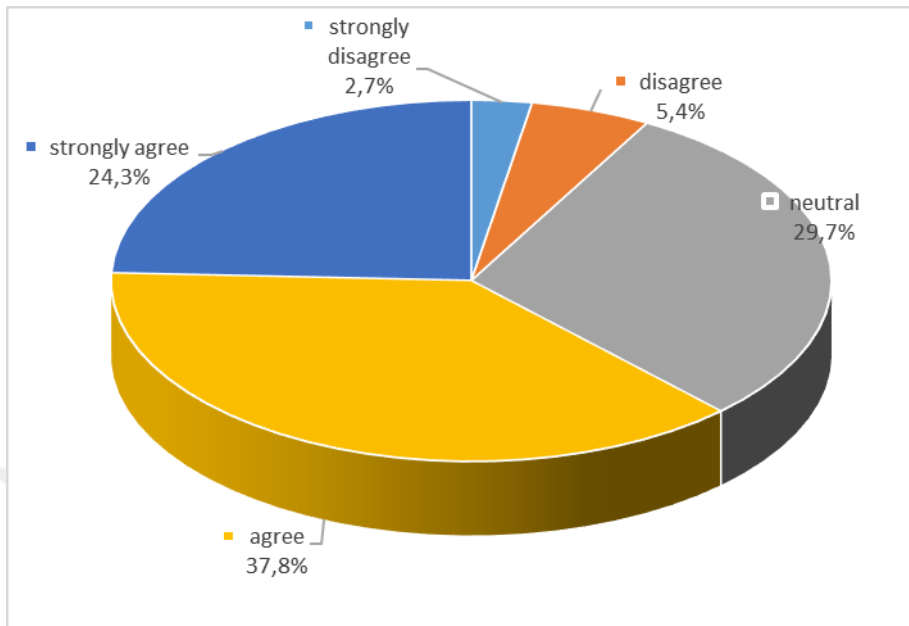


Figure 40. Pie Chart of "MIELE CRM has promotions time to time" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 64,8% of MIELE customers thought that MIELE CRM has promotions time to time.

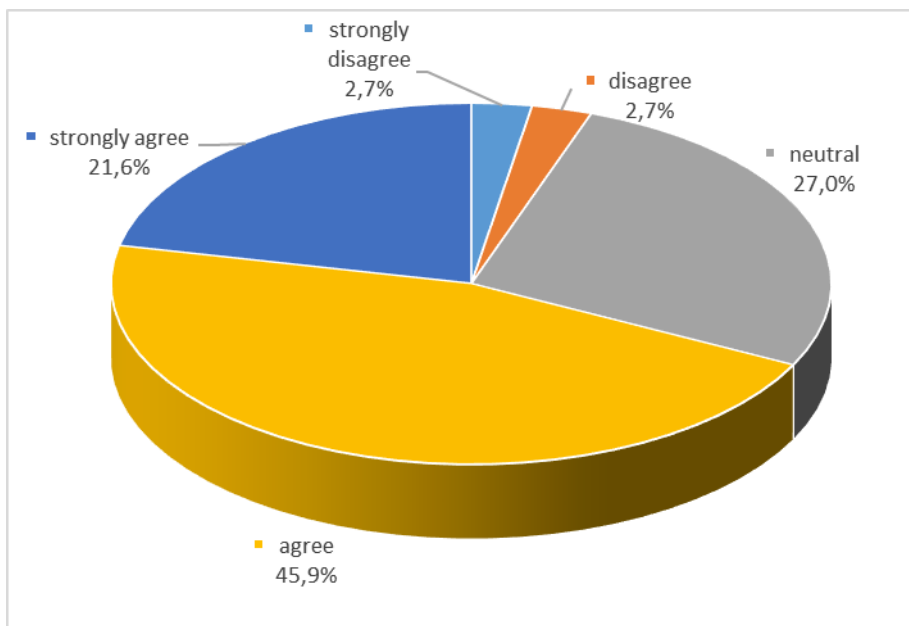


Figure 41. Pie Chart of "MIELE CRM has promotions for special occasions like birthdays, wedding anniversary and new year celebrations" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 70,2% of MIELE customers found that CRM has promotions for special occasions like birthdays, wedding anniversary and new year celebrations.

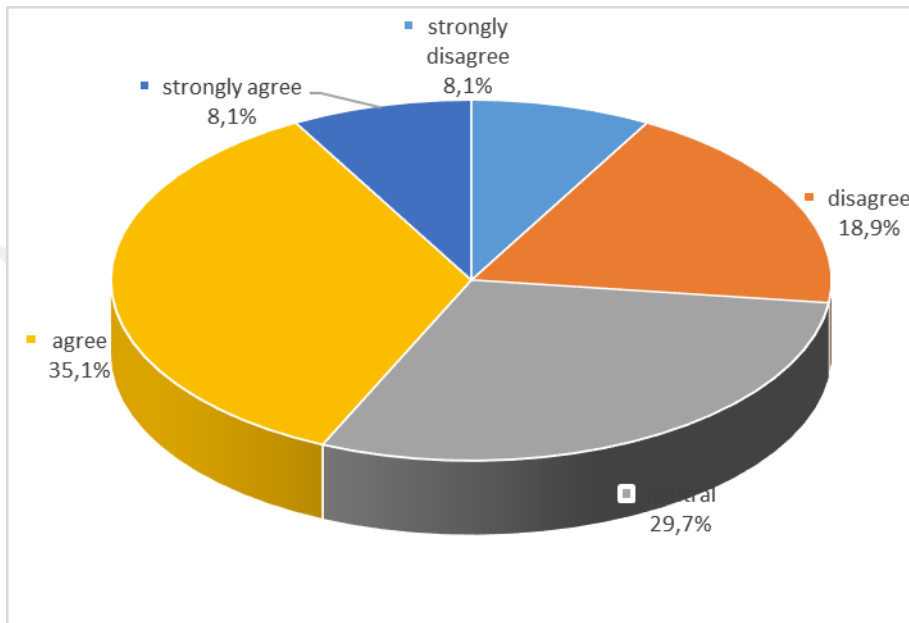


Figure 42. Pie Chart of “MIELE CRM has price advantages for loyal customers” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 72,9% of MIELE customers found that CRM has price advantages for loyal customers.

4.3.9. E-loyalty

Responses for five survey items questioning E-loyalty to MIELE are illustrated and evaluated below.

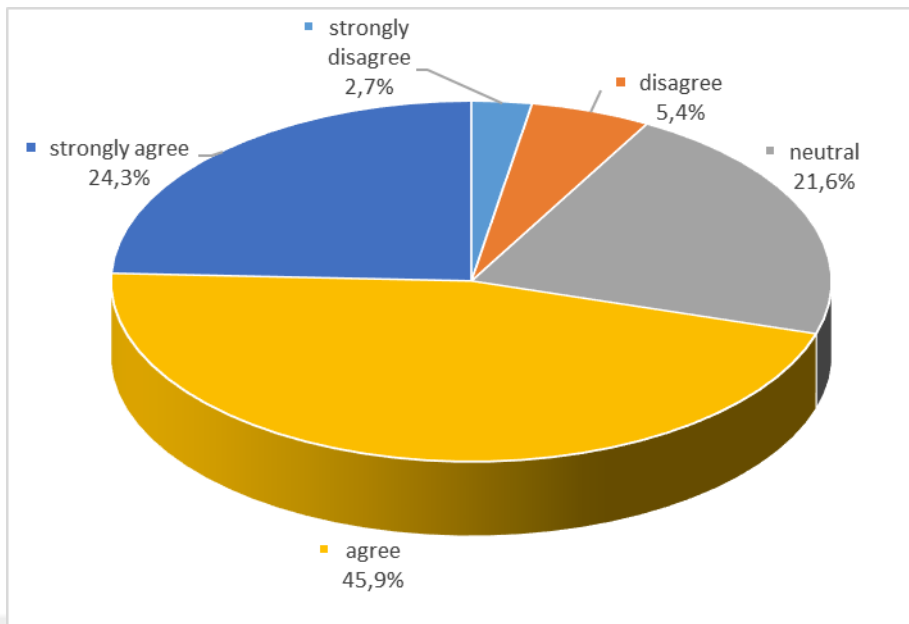


Figure 43. Pie Chart of “I feel I save time shopping MIELE from internet” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 72,9% of MIELE customers felt that they save time shopping MIELE from internet.

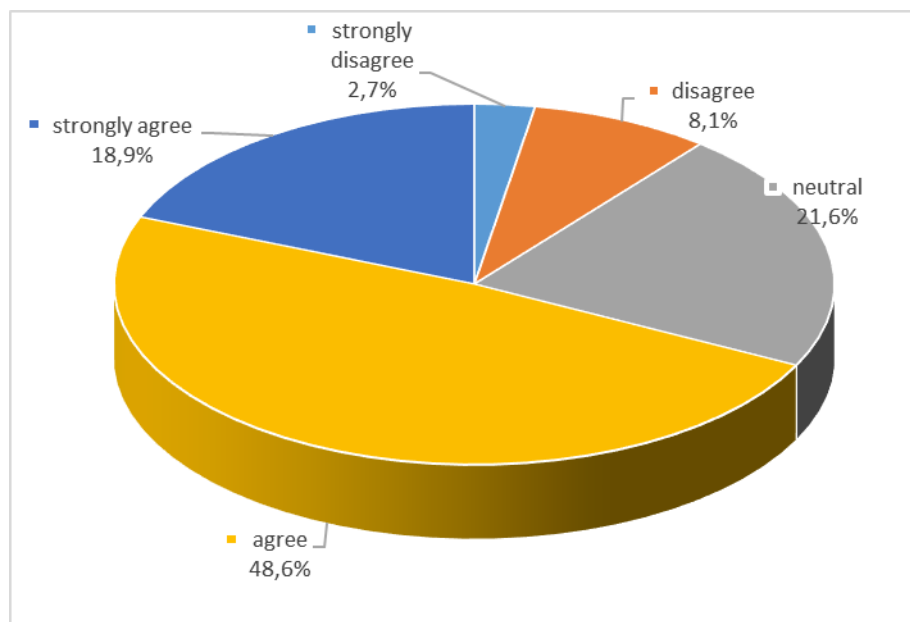


Figure 44. Pie Chart of “I think that shopping at MIELE website can provide appropriate service” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 70,3% of MIELE customers thought that shopping at MIELE website can provide appropriate service.

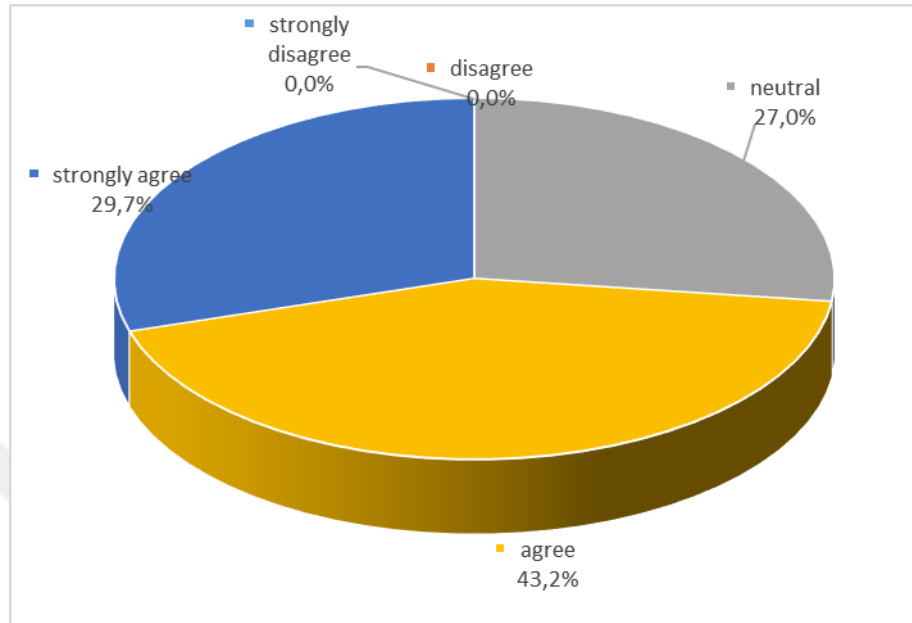


Figure 45. Pie Chart of "The internet vendor of MIELE offers a large number of products" in Percentages.

The graph shows that 100% of MIELE customers thought that internet vendor of MIELE offers a large number of products

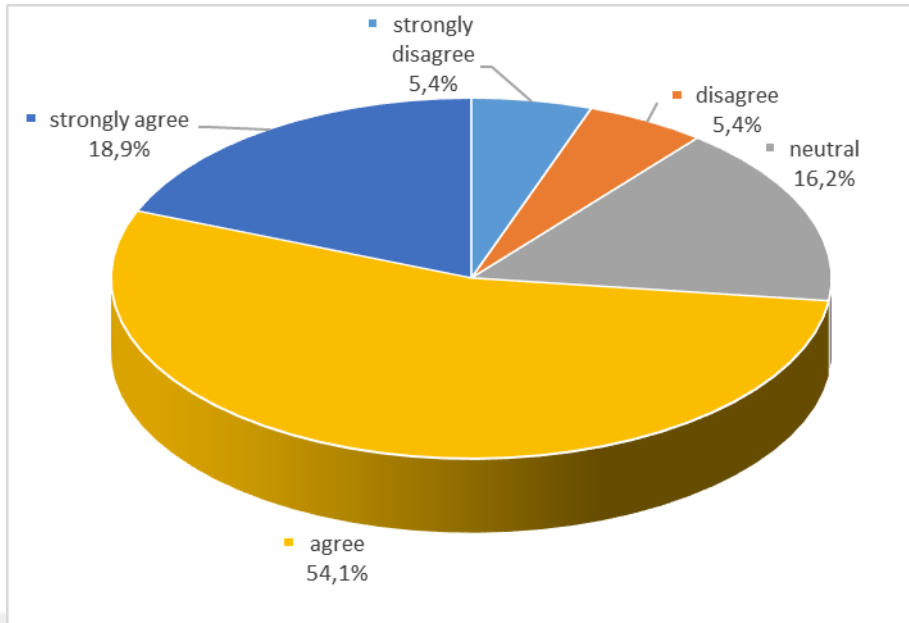


Figure 46. Pie Chart of “I am able to effectively evaluate each alternative from MIELE web” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 78,4% of MIELE customers thought that they are able to effectively evaluate each alternative from MIELE web.

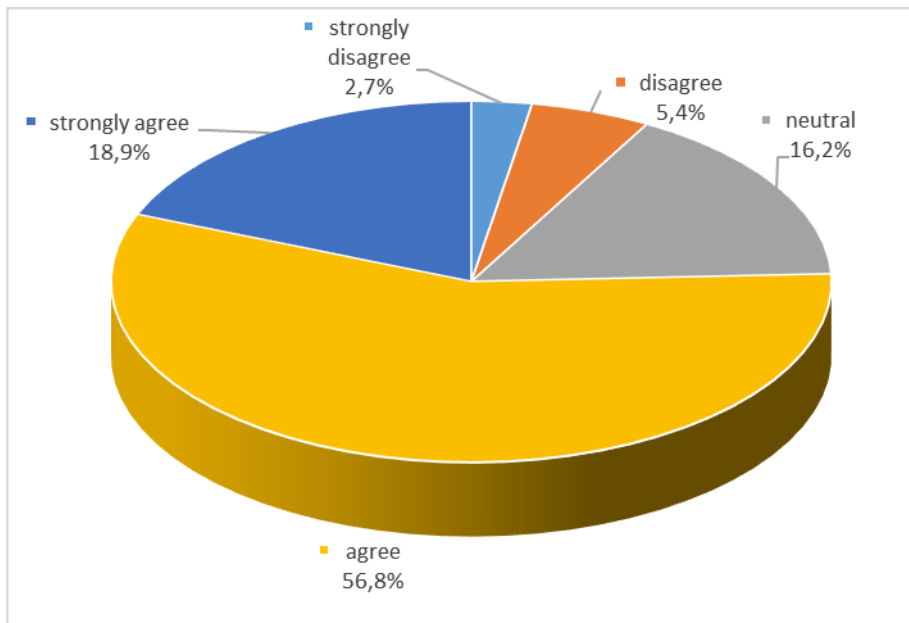


Figure 47. Pie Chart of “I feel I do not waste time shopping MIELE products from internet” in Percentages.

The graph shows that 57,7% of MIELE customers felt that they do not waste time when shopping MIELE products from internet.

4.4 Reliability of Research Scales

Reliability scores are calculated to reveal internal consistency of research scales with the research data. Table 6. presents Cronbach Alpha coefficients of research scales.

Table 6. Internal Reliability Alpha Scores of Scales

Scale	Items	α
Brand Identity	5	0,90
Brand Association	3	0,80
Brand Awareness	3	0,92
Brand Loyalty	8	0,84
Service Quality	15	0,91
CRM Quality Trust	6	0,77
E-Loyalty	5	0,88

All of the Cronbach alpha scores are found to be satisfactory ($\alpha > 0,60$) that means all sub-scales used in the survey are internally consistent and there found no items to be excluded in the scales (Bowling, 2002).

4.5 Correlation Among Research Variables

Pearson correlation analysis was executed to reveal the strengths and directions of the relationships among research variables. Results of the analyses are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Correlations Among Research Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Brand Identity	1	.505**	.141	.708**	.367*	.672**	.613**
2 Brand Association		1	.433**	.640**	.486**	.590**	.133
3 Brand Awareness			1	.372*	.352*	.298	.009
4 Brand Loyalty				1	.567**	.708**	.365*
5 Perceived Brand Quality					1	.576**	-.138
6 CRM Quality Trust						1	.292
7 E-loyalty							1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation scores in the shaded cells showed that there is a moderate level of correlation among research variables. Moderate level of correlation among research variables allowed analyses to be continued with hypotheses testing.

4.6 Hypotheses Testing

VIF values in a linear regression equation where e-loyalty is dependent and all others are independent variables are calculated. Brand identity, brand association, brand awareness, brand loyalty, service quality, CRM quality trust VIF values are found in acceptable thresholds (VIF<5). Table 8. shows the highest VIF value as

3,167 for brand loyalty. It was concluded that the data set is suitable for regression analysis as far as multicollinearity concerned.

Table 8. Multicollinearity Among Research Variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	4.717	1.004		4.700	.000		
BRANDident	.535	.147	.700	3.651	.001	.407	2.455
BRANDassoc	-.178	.189	-.162	-.941	.354	.506	1.978
BRANDAWAR	.080	.177	.064	.451	.656	.746	1.341
BRANDLOYAL	.261	.300	.190	.871	.391	.316	3.167
PERCEIVED	-.797	.276	-.465	-2.891	.007	.579	1.726
BRANDQUALITY				2.891			
CRMQUALITY	.041	.257	.032	.159	.874	.376	2.660
TRUST							

a. Dependent Variable: E-LOYALTY

Moderate level of correlations and multicollinearity below thresholds among research variables allowed to set a linear regression equation. The hypotheses from H1 to H6 that aimed to test relationships among research variables are tested by using linear regression equation in which e-loyalty is dependent variable. Results of analysis are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Regression Analysis Results

Independent variables	β	T	p	F	Model(p)	R ²
(Constant)		4.700	.000			
Brand identity	.535	3.651	.001			
Brand association	-.178	-.941	.354			
Brand awareness	.080	.451	.656	6,13	0,000	0,55
Brand loyalty	.261	.871	.391			
Service quality	-.797	-2.891	.007			
CRM quality trust	.041	.159	.874			

a. Dependent Variable: E-LOYALTY

Test results showed that only *brand identity* and *service quality* have statistically meaningful determination on *e-loyalty*. According to regression scores, brand identity has positive moderate determination on e-loyalty that means e-loyalty of MIELE customers rises as brand identity increases. On the other side service quality has a negative strong determination on e-loyalty that means e-loyalty of MIELE customers decrease as service quality perception increases.

Thus, H₁ hypothesis stating “Brand identity has a positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty” and H₅ hypothesis stating “MIELE service quality has negative determination on e-loyalty” were fully supported.

On the other side, H₂ hypothesis stating “Brand association has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”, H₃ hypothesis stating “Brand awareness has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”, H₄ hypothesis stating “Brand loyalty has positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty”, H₆ hypothesis stating “MIELE customer relations management quality trust has positive determination on e-loyalty” are not supported.

4.7 Tested Research Model

Initial research model was tested by all of the effect paths and in the and many effect paths were found to be not existing. The remaining elements and effect paths are illustrated in Figure 48.

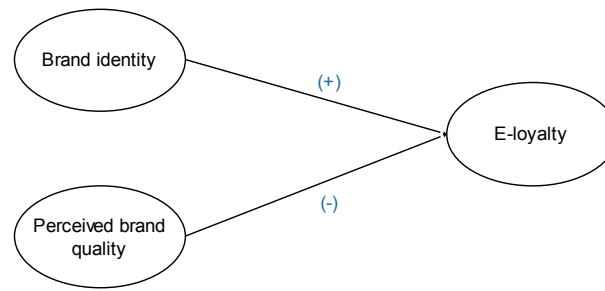


Figure 48. Tested Research Model

Some of the expected effect paths in initial research design were not supported by the results of the present study. Consequently, only two determination paths were remained in the last research mode. First, significant influencer was brand identity was found to have positive determination on MIELE e-loyalty and contributed to related literature. Second, perceived brand quality was found to have a negative significant determination on e-loyalty.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In order to make a conclusion, first, the study results were discussed and compared with similar research findings. Then, theoretical contribution and practical implications of the study were stated. Lastly, the limitations of the study were denoted.

Taking all of the five **brand identity** attitude items into consideration it could barely be observed that MIELE customers partly identify themselves with MIELE brand by reporting the highest positive attitude percentages in partnership item. In other words, MIELE customers tend to identify themselves as partners of the brand. This identification is found to be the most powerful among all other items. Support and affiliation to MIELE could be expected due to general positive tendency. It was observed that the most effective **brand association** forming factors were symbol and logo of MIELE. A positive brand association could be expected regarding customers' positive attitudes in all three association aspects. In summary, powerful partnership perception and their MIELE symbol and logo are found to be the major factors forming up MIELE **brand image**. Since positive attitudes are the most popular choices, it is clear that majority of participants have MIELE **brand awareness** which means they both recognize and recall MIELE as a brand. Carefulness of MIELE and customers' intention to be positive speakers of their brand is found to be the most effective **brand loyalty** aspect.

MIELE's service quality is highly positive in terms of personnel dress and modern service equipment from the **tangibility** point of view. Dealership punctuality and dependability are found to be the most positive service quality aspects from the **reliability** point of view. Personal attention is found to be the most positive service quality from the **responsiveness** point of view. Regarding average values, MIELE's

service quality perception as a brand is highly and positively evaluated by customers.

Findings indicated that **CRM quality** is found to be trustable. The most positive CRM trust elements are found to be honest, truthful and reachable staff after sale. Findings about e-loyalty of MIELE has put forth that customers have a e-loyalty over average. The most effective e-loyalty element is found to be wide range of online product availability of MIELE internet vendor.

Findings about the relationships among research variables showed that **brand identity** has positive moderate determination on brand e-loyalty. In other words, brand loyalty of MIELE's customers rises as brand identity increases. This was an expected result and it was supported by the results of a previous research that noted brand identity of Asiana Airlines has positive determination on its brand loyalty (Jin et al., 2019). Jin et al., had findings that support a research design in which brand identity have a positive determination on three sub-factors of brand association (2019). In the last part of the same design, researchers claimed that brand association positively effects brand self-identification and brand self-identification claimed to have a positive impact on brand loyalty.

Research findings about **service quality** showed that it has a negative strong determination on brand e-loyalty that means e-loyalty of MIELE customers decrease as their service quality perception get positive. This finding has been supported by two similar research results (Bilgihan, 2016; Ziaullah et al., 2014;). Ziaullah and others (2014) made a research on Chinese University students as one of the biggest groups of on-line shoppers. They found that, quality of product and delivery services of a brand have a direct effect on e-satisfaction and e-trust both of which in turn significantly determines customers' e-loyalty. Bilgihan (2016) stated that trust of

online shoppers is the most important determinant of e-loyalty in the results of his survey with randomly chosen 2500 Gen Y online customers who are known as the most emotional and least loyal customers compared to all other generations. He added that brand equity is the primary indicator of e-loyalty. The direction of the effect was found to be negative in the case of MIELE. This could be due to different sample characteristics of the present study. Researcher's subjective evaluation is that MIELE customers believe that it is a very strong brand that have no defects in its products that requires post purchase services. MIELE service quality's negative effect on e-loyalty lacks for unique explanation as there were no similar findings in the literature.

There were many antecedents that were found to have no significant effect on e-loyalty in the final evaluation of the results. **Gender** of customer and **customer relations management quality** were found to have no significant change on e-loyalty of customers (Luarn & Lin, 2003; Dittmar et al., 2004; Sokmen, A. & Baş, M., 2019). Besides, **brand association, brand awareness and, brand loyalty** was found to have no determination on customers' e-loyalty. These findings were not supported regarding similar recent survey findings in the related literature (Phong, Hanh, & Minh, 2020; Oppong & A Phiri, 2019). Findings about the **purchasing sequence** demonstrated that it had no meaningful effect on loyalty in electronic terms by contradicting the previous research findings that indicated loyalty is built up as purchases increase (Oliver, 1999; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). The lack of support from literature is considered to be due to Turkish sample's misperception of wording in Turkish brand association, brand awareness and customer relations management quality sub-scales.

Overall evaluation of findings could be summarized that customers with a strong positive brand identity are e-loyal customers and service quality of the brand in

question has a negative effect on their loyalty. In other words, Since, MIELE had a strong positive brand identity it may have e-loyalty from its customers. But beliefs about MIELE's service quality worsen e-loyalty.

Implications to Theory and Practice

This research is one of few in the field that examines the effects of many variables as antecedents of the brand loyalty of a well-known durable goods in Turkey. It has contributed to the theory by verifying Theory of Planned Behavior that brand identity played the role of disposition to loyalty behavior.

The study presented an unexpected finding contrary to what is known claiming that perceived service quality's influence on loyalty is negative. In case, this was not due to a measurement or a sample determination error, this could provide insights to the field indicating that there may be new and unknown variables reversely mediating or moderating loyalty behavior. It is quite possible that Turkish customers approach to foreign brands may have unknown psychological motives such as inferiority complex and keeping up with the neighbors both of which are common in Turkish culture. The rise in Turkish customers' e-loyalty in a scenario where the post purchase service of MIELE gets worse, could be due to a belief that MIELE has an extraordinary quality that requires no after-sale services.

Based on the findings of the study marketing and brand managers are advised to pay special attention to brand identity and perceived product quality in the management of durable goods in electronic market. These are named to be responsible for changes in e-loyalty of customers. It should be noted that purchasing brand funnel is a non-stop continuing process in which loyalty may have unexpected antecedents. Companies should take into consideration that e-loyalty of their brands in

overseas markets may be affected by unanticipated variables depending on the culture of the market.

The customer's belief in MIELE's product quality is very high that the statements about its service quality do not attract the attention of the customer. But, the ratio of MIELE internet purchasers are comparatively low. In our opinion customers do not prefer online purchase since MIELE products are large scale products which are hard to reinstall in case of wrong purchases. So, customers want to buy the right product to avoid costs of changes. Therefore, marketing managers are advised to increase internet sales by improving the quality of websites for their products. For example, physical dimensions of durable goods should fit to customers' place. Designing websites with accurate and easy-to-understand technical information about products and their installation in customers' house should be aimed. Websites that are prepared with augmented reality and detailed product comparison features could encourage MIELE customers in purchasing and develop loyalty.

Research Limitations

When reading the findings of the study, two major limitations should be taken into consideration. First, the sample size was limited and did not have a variety that suits with a consumers' research in the field of brand attitudes. The choice of the participants from one market location in one city for survey sample were considered as a restricting factor on generalizability of research findings. The small survey size was due to budget limitations of the study since research did not have any external support. Secondly, internet exposure and experience patterns of participants are not surveyed in the questionnaire considering that it would be the subject of another research. All these could have a restricting effect on the generalization of survey

findings that could be avoided by increasing the volume and variety of the sample and proliferation of research tool with additional sub-scales questioning internet usage.

Recommendations for Future Research

E-loyalty of a durable goods brand MIELE was the dependent variable of this research. Future researchers are recommended to test three alternative designs similar to present design but with minor differences. Thus, the knowledge about the antecedents of e-loyalty could be expanded.

First, the size of the present survey could be increased by either once or two times testing of the present study in a similar design. This way customer relations management quality, brand association, brand awareness and, brand loyalty could be tested once again as an antecedent of e-loyalty.

Secondly, the effects of some other brand related domains such as brand personality, brand promise, brand position and, brand story that are not included in the present study could be tested as antecedents of e-loyalty.

In the third alternative, researcher could try another brand from service sector using the same research variables of the present study. This could possibly shed light to the dynamism of brand loyalty from other point of views.

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Appendix A Survey Form

Data gathered by the use of this form shall be used for scientific purposes only. The answers will not be shared by others and they will be evaluated in scientific publications as a whole. Thank you for the time for filling in the form.

Emine KÜTÜK
Graduate student

Demographic Information

Please choose only one option that suits to you for each question given below.	
1	Age 20-30 (1) 30-50 (2) 50- and over (3)
2	Gender () Female () Male
3	Educational degree High school (1) Undergraduate (2) Graduate (3)
4	Monthly income in TL. 5.000 and lower (1) 5.000 - 10.000 (2) 10.000 and over (3) TL.
5	The purchasing frequency of MIELE in 5 year period 1 time (1) 2 times (2) 3 times (3)
6	The place of living (street / city).....

Perceived Tangible Service Quality						
1	The dealership of MIELE has up-to-date equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The physical facilities such as signage and grounds of the dealership of MIELE are visually appealing.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The employees of the dealership of MIELE are well dressed and always appear neat.	1	2	3	4	5
4	There are sufficient parking and waiting space at the dealership of MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The invoices and promotional material of the dealership of MIELE are neat and distinctive.	1	2	3	4	5
Perceived Reliability Service Quality						
1	When the dealership of MIELE promises to perform a service by a certain time, it does so.	1	2	3	4	5
2	When I have problems, the dealership of MIELE shows sympathy and reassurance.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The dealership of MIELE is dependable.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The dealership of MIELE provides its services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The dealership of MIELE keeps its records accurately.	1	2	3	4	5
Perceived Responsiveness Service Quality						
1	The dealership of MIELE keeps customers informed about when and how services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Employees in the dealership of MIELE are always willing to help its customers.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Employees of the dealership of MIELE are never too busy to respond to customer's requests.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The dealership of MIELE manages complaints in a fast and efficient manner.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Employees provide personal attention to customers at the dealership of MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5

Please choose only one option that suits your opinion for each of the statements given below.		Completely disagree	Disagree	Nor agree neither disagree	Agree	Completely agree
Brand awareness						
1	I know what MIELE looks like	1	2	3	4	5
2	I can recognize MIELE among other competing brands.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am aware of MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
Brand loyalty						
1	MIELE cares about their customers.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am emotionally attached to MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have a sense of belonging to MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The costs in time and effort of changing from MIELE to another one are high for me.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I often encourage other people to stay at MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I would like to receive any information (letter, promotional material or e-mail) from MIELE company regularly.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I will always tell to other people positive words about MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I take pride in telling other people about my experiences with MIELE	1	2	3	4	5
BRAND IMAGE Brand identity						
1	I am very interested in what others think about MIELE product.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE product's successes are my successes.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I would experience an emotional loss if I had to stop using MIELE product.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I believe others respect me for my association with MIELE product.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I perceive myself as a valuable partner of MIELE product	1	2	3	4	5
BRAND IMAGE Brand associations						
1	Some characteristics of MIELE come to my mind quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of MIELE.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have no difficulty in imagining MIELE in my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
E-Loyalty						
1	I feel I save time shopping MIELE from internet.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I think that shopping at MIELE website can provide appropriate service.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The internet vendor of MIELE offers a large number of products.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am able to effectively evaluate each alternative from MIELE web.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel I do not waste time shopping MIELE products from internet.	1	2	3	4	5
CRM quality–Trust						
1	I think that MIELE's CRM is positive	1	2	3	4	5
2	The dealership of MIELE is always honest and truthful to its customers in after sale.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE CRM staff are reachable after sale.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE CRM has promotions time to time.	1	2	3	4	5
5	MIELE CRM has promotions for special occasions like birthdays, wedding anniversary and new year celebrations.	1	2	3	4	5
6	MIELE CRM has price advantages for loyal customers.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B Survey Form Used for Turkish Participants and Coding

Bu form ile alınan bilgi bir bilimsel arařtırmada kullanılacaktır. Verdiğiniz yanıtlar hiç kimseye paylaşılmayacak sadece bilimsel yayınlarda topluca deęerlendirilecektir. Zamanınızı ayırdığınız için teőekkür ederiz.

Emine KÜTÜK
Yüksek Lisans öęrencisi

Lütfen aőağıdaki seçeneklerden size uyan sadece bir seçeneęi iőaretleyiniz.	
1	Yaőınız *20-30 (1) * 30-50 (2) * 50- üstü (3)
2	Cinsiyetiniz (1) Kadın (2) Erkek
3	Eęitim düzeyiniz Lise (1) Lisans (2) Lisans üstü (3)
4	Yaklaőık aylık geliriniz 5.000 altı (1) 5.000 - 10.000 (2) 10.000 – üstü (3) TL.
5	MIELE ürününü 5 yıl içinde satın alma sıklığınız 1 defa (1) 2 defa (2) 3 defa (3)
6	Yaőadığınız yer (mahalle / ilçe) /

Lütfen, MIELE marka <u>hizmet kalitesi</u> için verilen her ifadede düşüncenizi yansıtan sadece bir seçeneęi iőaretleyiniz.		Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Maddi - Hizmet Kalitesi						
1	MIELE marka bayileri modern ekipmana sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE marka bayilerinin görsel olarak bilinirlięi ve bulunurluęu yüksektir.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE marka bayilerinde çalışan personel düzgün görünümlüdür.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE marka bayilerinde park yeri ve bekleme salonu olanakları yeterlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
5	MIELE marka bayilerinde faturalandırma ve promosyon bilgilendirmeleri açık ve anlaşılırdır.	1	2	3	4	5
Güvenilirlik - Hizmet Kalitesi						
1	MIELE marka bayiler vaat ettikleri hizmet sürelerine uyar.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE marka bayiler, bir sorun yaőadığımda bana sempati ve güven verici bir yaklaőım gösterir.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE marka bayiler, güvenilirdir.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE marka bayilerde hizmet süreleri hakkındaki verilen sözlere sadık kalınır.	1	2	3	4	5
5	MIELE marka bayilerde kayıtlar doęru tutulur.	1	2	3	4	5
Duyarlılık - Hizmet Kalitesi						
1	MIELE marka bayiler, müşterilerini verilen hizmetlerin nasıl ve ne kadar sürede yapılacağı konusunda sürekli bilgilendirir.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markasının bayilięindeki çalışanlar, müşterilerine her zaman yardım etmeye isteklidir.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE marka bayisinin çalışanları hiçbir zaman müşterinin isteklerine cevap vermek için çok meőgul deęildir.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE markasının bayilięi őikayetleri hızlı ve etkin bir şekilde yönetir.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Çalışanlar, MIELE markasının bayilięindeki müşterilere özel ilgi gösterir.	1	2	3	4	5

	Lütfen, MIELE markasının farklı yönleri için verilen her ifadede düşüncenizi yansıtan sadece bir seçeneği işaretleyiniz.	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
	Marka farkındalığı					
1	MIELE markasının neye benzediğini biliyorum	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markasını diğer rakip markalar arasında tanıyabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE markasının farkındayım.	1	2	3	4	5
	Marka sadakati					
1	MIELE markası müşterilerini önemsiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markasına duygusal olarak bağlıyım.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE markasına ait olduğum hissine sahibim.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE markasından diğerine geçmek için harcanan zaman ve çaba maliyeti benim için yüksektir.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Genellikle başkalarını MIELE markasında kalmaya teşvik ederim	1	2	3	4	5
6	MIELE markasından düzenli olarak her türlü bilgilendirme (mektup, promosyon malzemesi veya e-posta) almak isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Her zaman başkalarına MIELE markası hakkında olumlu konuşacağım.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Başkalarına MIELE markası deneyimlerimi anlatmaktan gurur duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
	MARKA İMAJI Marka kimliği					
1	Başkalarının MIELE marka ürün hakkında ne düşündüğü beni çok ilgilendiriyor.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markalı ürünün başarıları benim başarılarım gibidir.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE markalı ürünü kullanmayı bırakmak zorunda olsaydım duygusal bir kayıp yaşardım.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE markalı ürünlere olan yakınlığımdan dolayı başkalarının bana saygı duyduğuna inanıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Kendimi MIELE markalı ürünün değerli bir üyesi olarak görüyorum	1	2	3	4	5
	MARKA İMAJI Markayla ilişkilendirmeler					
1	MIELE markasının bazı özelliklerini hemen hatırlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markasının sembol veya logosunu hemen hatırlayabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE markasını kafamda canlandırmakta zorlanmıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
	E-Sadakat					
1	MIELE markasını internette satın almakla zaman kazandığımı hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE markasını internette satın almakla iyi hizmet aldığımı düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE markası internet satıcısı çok sayıda ürün sunmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE markanın her bir ürününü internet sitesinden etraflıca değerlendirebiliyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
5	MIELE markalı ürünleri internette satın almakla zaman kaybetmediğimi düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
	Müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi kalitesinde güven unsuru					
1	MIELE in müşteri ilişkileri ile irtibatlı olunmasını olumlu buluyorum	1	2	3	4	5
2	MIELE in satış sonrası müşteri ilişkileri personeli müşteriye karşı hep dürüst ve doğrudur.	1	2	3	4	5
3	MIELE müşteri ilişkileri personeli, satış sonrasında aradığımda ulaşılabiliridir.	1	2	3	4	5
4	MIELE müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi, çeşitli zamanlarda promosyon sunarlar	1	2	3	4	5
5	MIELE müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi, doğum günü, evlilik yıldönümü, yılbaşı vb özel günlerde özel promosyonlar sunar	1	2	3	4	5
6	MIELE müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi, sadık müşterilerine fiyat avantajı sunar	1	2	3	4	5