



SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
AND MANAGEMENT
Lund University

Master Thesis

Perception of Design in Sweden and Turkey: A Comparison of Two Culturally Different Countries

International Marketing and Brand Management Masters Programme – M.Sc.

Spring, 2008

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ABSTRACT

Title	Perception of design in Sweden and Turkey: A comparison of two culturally different countries.
Date of the Seminar	4 June, 2008
Course	BUS M08 Master Thesis in International Marketing
Authors	Karakaş, Deniz and Tranmark, Anton.
Advisor	Kedström, Christer.
Keywords	Design, Product Design, Perceptions, Culture, Aesthetics.
Thesis purpose	The purpose of current paper is to identify the differences (if any) between Swedish and Turkish consumers in terms of product design perception and to identify the differences to product design in relating the four dimensions / characteristics: 1.Aesthetical attractiveness, 2.Functionality, 3.Value and 4.Quality.
Methodology	The thesis has a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data from two countries used to expose the differences and similarities in design perception. Then, semi-structured interviews used to understand these results in a more qualitative way.
Theoretical perspective	A theoretical framework was constructed to suit our purpose and serve as an analytical aid, consisting of Cultural, Individual and Product & Market related perspectives.
Empirical data	600 consumer surveys were conducted in two countries (400 in Sweden and 200 in Turkey) as a quantitative data. For qualitative part, 8 semi-structured interviews (5 in Sweden and 3 in Turkey) were conducted.
Conclusion	The findings in this study indicate the existence of a universal perception of design. Despite the culturally different countries that are examined the empirical material consistently display similarities between the two countries. Both the quantitative and qualitative data point to a very similar perception in terms of design. The possibilities of global design are discussed for companies as well as managerial implications and future research.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to expose and explore the perception of design in culturally different countries. The introduction will provide a starting point to understand design perception theories and different dimensions of it as well as provide our research purpose and chosen dimensions to analyze design perception.

1.1 General Introduction

“The heart has its reasons, of which reason knows nothing.” (Blaise Pascal)

What inspires design? Urge to maximize profits? Desire to be a market leader? Or a wish to beautify? These are the fundamental questions and there are no concrete answers to them. Different authors may answer differently. However, in order to have an idea we first have to answer the question “Where does it come from?” There are many great stories about where does design come from. When Alexander Samuelson, the Swedish immigrant, designed the famous Coca-Cola bottle, he found his inspiration in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; the form that inspired him was an obscure cocoa bean! (Waters, 2007). So, one may consider that a good design comes from mother nature, such amazing shapes and forms like egg, water drop, clouds and many others may definitely inspire anyone with soul to imagination and creation! According to Waters (2007), great designs come from “Mother Nature” at the point where it intersects with human nature.

Never in our history were consumers offered such an enormous variety of goods and services as consumers are exposed to today. New products and categories are being invented each year and the number of products offered in each category is growing day by day. Growth of global markets and internationalization of cultures is boosting consumption (Waters, 2007). Do we really need another pair of shoes when we already have more than five? Or a bigger TV? As stated by different authors, design generates *want, desire and love*, not *need* (Bloch, 1995; Waters, 2007). Professor Robert Hayes (Harvard School of Business, 1995) remarked “Fifteen years ago companies competed on price. Today it’s quality. Tomorrow it’s design” (Waters, 2007). However, tomorrow is now! Bruce and Whitehead (1988), who conducted a survey of senior managers, found that 60% of managers refer to design as the most important aspect for new product development and this notion was confirmed in the study of Creusen and Schoormans (2005).

Works of Berkowitz (1987) and Nussbaum (1988) indicate that since the 1930s successful companies have realized that creative and strategically employed design is an important determinant in gaining market leadership. Number of other studies (Black & Baker, 1987; Bruce & Whitehead, 1988; Gemser & Leenders, 2001, Roy, 1994; Thackara, 1997) also showed that many companies experienced a positive relationship between good design and commercial success, and Yamamoto and Lambert (1994) found that it applies even to industrial products. Moreover, product look can create a value in itself, since people prefer to buy products that are attractive.

Marketing managers try to make their products as attractively appealing as possible, yet the notion of beautifying products has always been practiced (Bloch, 1995). Most of the cultures used decorations in their national products such as clothing, weapons and pottery (Becker, 1978). Today we can observe that nearly all products possess aesthetic qualities no matter what their functions are (Holbrook 1980; Holbrook & Anand 1992; Holbrook & Zirlin 1985). The shape and form or exterior of the product is of high importance since it generates the first impression (Nussbaum 1993). Moreover, a well-designed product can quickly communicate its advantages even before a consumer touches it and it might create consumer inferences concerning different product attributes (Berkowitz, 1987; Bloch, 1995; Pilditch, 1976).

Consumers are more likely to purchase products that are more aesthetically pleasing to them. If a consumer is offered a choice that is identical by function and price, he will definitely choose the one with more appealing look (Kotler & Rath 1984; Nussbaum 1988). Beautiful things make our lives beautiful; if one has a unique and slick-designed product, he/she tends to show it off in public, whilst unattractive products might indicate distaste of the owner (Bloch, 1995).

In today's market with strong rivalry, the product should be not only beautifully designed, but it also should have a unique and creative shape and form. Many successful companies are assumed *design-focused*. For example, the first Macintosh computer offered by Apple Inc. stood out of the crowd due to its minimalist design which made the product easy to use and extremely friendly (Forty, 1986). Another example is Swatch, with its distinct wristwatches that come in unusual forms (Hollins & Pugh, 1990).

When such products enter the market they make existing products on the market look obsolete and old-fashioned and following competitors are made out to look as shallow copiers (Midgley, 1977). Even though most of the goods are quickly discarded, aesthetic qualities of more long lasting products may be influential for many years on users and non-users alike as products become part of our sensory surrounding (Pye, 1978; Jones, 1991).

1.2 Problem Formulation and Purpose

As mentioned in the introduction part of this paper, more and more companies are going global entering new markets. Due to the Internet boom, information has become more easily and quickly available to masses than ever before. Now consumers can find and purchase any product they want just with a few clicks of a mouse. Thus, companies are looking for efficient ways of differentiating their offerings, and one of the central tools in business arsenal is efficient product design (Waters, 2007).

One of the most important decisions that managers have to make is how to form organizational structure. Designs usually express the structure of the organization that create them (Innes, 2007). Unlike “pure research” or “art” when creating a product design in a contemporary business context, designer ought to bear in mind number of divergent factors and solve them in an optimal manner (Innes, 2007).

In such circumstances, there is a great need for new and up to date theories and approaches. Therefore, scholars should draw their attentions to contemporary trends in today’s business context.

Despite the fact that product design is crucial to marketing practice and our society as a whole, there are not so many studies conducted in this particular field (Creusen and Schoormans, 2005). However, there are number of works carried out by various authors in the past three decades. Several authors agree that exterior appearance of a product can influence consumer perceptions and choice in different ways; some of them refer to product package in consumer product evaluation and choice (Bloch, 1995; Garber, 1995; Garber et al., 2000; Veryzer, 1993; Veryzer, 1995).

A lot has been written on managerial aspects of product design and how it is related to manufacturing design (Sanjeev, Bordoloia & Guerrero, 2007). Rosenthal (1990) pointed out six different areas of information processing curtail to the product design. In his system, he presents “tool and practices” that fall into six categories: translation, focused information assembly, productivity enhancement, communication acceleration, analytical enhancement, and management control. According to Clark and Fujimoto (1989), as the *production competition cap* among producers is becoming narrower; manufacturers are drawing their attention more closely to design and engineering. Stalk and Hout (1990) state that managers usually focus on the speed of design and quick reaction to market demands and changes (Wheelwright & Clark, 1995; Womack et al., 1990).

Lately several researchers analyzed the effect of using so called ensemble concept (Bell, Holbrook & Solomon, 1991; Holbrook & Anand, 1992). Based on that view, they argue that purchasing one product affects the wish to own other things. A product that looks pleasing in a combination with other objects that the consumer already owns are more likely to be positively appraised and vice versa. According to

Bell et al. (1991) consumers tend to evaluate products by the overall aesthetic value of the group the products belong to, this is especially relevant for the furniture category.

In some earlier studies by (Lobach, 1976; Pilditch, 1976; Schurer, 1971), they described the functions of product-consumer interaction in terms of industrial design. Later in 2005, Creusen and Schoormans analyzed the works of several previous scholars about roles of product appearance for consumers and summarized them into six roles: 1. communication of aesthetic, 2. symbolic, 3. functional, and 4. ergonomic product information; 5. attention drawing; and 6. categorization and described each role.

1.2.1 Product Design and Marketing

Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1987) argue that product design is the most important determinant of sales success. Similarly Bloch (1995) says, "The physical form or design of a product is an unquestioned determinant of its marketplace success. A good design attracts consumers to a product, communicates to them, and adds value to the product by increasing the quality of the usage experiences associated with it." Hence, form or exterior appearance and design of a product is important as a means of communicating information to consumers (Nussbaum, 1993). Product form creates the initial impression and generates inferences regarding other product attributes in the same manner as price does (Berkowitz, 1987).

In addition, product design is an opportunity for differential advantage in the marketplace (e.g., Hammer, 1995; Kotler & Rath, 1984; Löbach, 1976; Lorenz, 1986; Pilditch, 1976; Veryzer, 1995). A number of companies successfully focus on product design as a competitive tool (e.g., Dumaine, 1991; Nussbaum, 1993; Smith, 1994). Several studies indicate the influence of good product design on commercial success (E.g., Black & Baker, 1987; Bruce & Whitehead, 1988; Creusen and Schoormans, 2005; Gemser & Leenders, 2001; Roy, 1994; Thackara, 1997).

According to Bloch (1995), the form or design of a product may contribute to its marketing success in several ways. First, in cluttered markets, product form is one way to gain consumer notice (Berkowitz, 1987; Dumaine, 1991; Jones, 1991). Swatch used a variety of unusual product forms to successfully stand out in the mature market for wristwatches (Hollins & Pugh, 1990). With new product offerings, a distinctive design can render older competitors immediately obsolete and make later competitors appear to be shallow copies (Midgley, 1977). For example, the Ford Taurus, launched in 1986 with a unique rounded shape, soon became one of the nation's best selling passenger cars (Goodrich, 1994).

Second, the form or exterior appearance of a product is important as a means of communicating information to consumers (Nussbaum, 1993). Product form creates the initial impression and generates inferences regarding other product attributes in the same manner as price does (Berkowitz, 1987). For example, the first Apple Macintosh

possessed a compact, simple form to communicate ease of use and an almost anthropomorphic friendliness. Because product form also helps to develop corporate and brand identities, companies, such as Braun, Smith & Wesson, and Ralph Lauren, have distinctive design philosophies that help them develop and reinforce a recognizable corporate character (Forty, 1986).

Third, in addition to managerial considerations, product form is also significant in a larger sense because it affects the quality of our lives. The perception and usage of beautifully designed products may provide sensory pleasure and stimulation. In contrast, objects with unattractive forms may evoke distaste. Essentially an applied art, product design has a greater impact on our daily lives than do other art forms, because we see products every day (Lawson, 1983).

Fourth, product form can also have long lasting effects. Although many goods are quickly discarded, the aesthetic characteristics of more durable products can have an impact for years on users and non-users alike as products become part of the sensory environment, for good or bad (Pye, 1978; Jones, 1991). For example, a 1957 Thunderbird, the Rolling Stones's "Satisfaction" or a Tiffany lamp, still bring delight to consumers decades after their creation, whereas an unattractive satellite dish will be painfully endured by neighbors for years (Bloch, 1995).

Therefore, product design is an unquestioned element of the market place success of the products. Consistently, the receipt of design awards is also positively associated with average profit margins and sales growth (Goodrich, 1994; Roy, 1994). Various researches underline that products communicate various meanings with consumer through their designs. Hence, better design signals something superior about the product in consumers' minds.

1.2.2 Product Design and Aesthetics

Throughout history and in every known culture, people have found pleasure and meaning in the use of their eyes. They have consciously attempted to produce objects of beauty and have delighted in them (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990). In modern society, aesthetic sensibilities are relevant to all products, regardless of their function (Holbrook 1980; Holbrook & Anand 1992; Holbrook & Zirlin 1985). When given the choice between two products, equal in price and function, target consumers buy the one they consider to be more attractive (Kotler & Rath 1984; Nussbaum 1988).

Zafarmand, Sugiyama and Watanabe (2003) explain the effects of product aesthetics on consumers with five states. "First, product aesthetics should attract customers before and during purchasing. Second, it should satisfy and please users after purchasing and during use. The rightness of this state helps the user's good relation with the product that is a psychological factor of product durability. Third, product aesthetics may emotionally affect the user's behaviour and interaction with the product. Fourth, product aesthetics can influence the users' imagination, tastes and attitudes toward the product and its brand, the environment, and the market values. And fifth, product aesthetics not only

reflect the society's lifestyle and cultural values emanating from the socio-economic system, but also can gradually impart the sense of a new lifestyle, real socio-cultural values, and the whole philosophy of sustainability." (Zafarmand et al, 2003, p.177)

In some cases, the product's form also may be constrained by communication goals and objectives. In other words, the form may be required to evoke a particular meaning that supports a brand positioning, company reputation, or anticipated promotional themes. An advertising campaign that emphasizes excitement, for example, may lead designers to choose bright, vibrant colors for the product. In some cases, product form perceptions can lead to a moderately positive response such as simple liking, or they can evoke stronger aesthetic responses similar to those for works of art (Bloch, 1995). John Zoccai, of Reebok, explains "good design makes you fall in love with the product" (Dumaine 1991, p. 86). Holbrook and Zirlin (1985, p. 21) define aesthetic response as a "deeply felt experience that is enjoyed purely for its own sake without regard for other more practical considerations". Aesthetic responses are formed based on intrinsic elements of the stimulus, and they encompass strong attention and involvement (Lewalski 1988; Veryzer, 1993).

Hence, the aesthetical attractiveness of product is an important element for every product. Even if the function of the product is older and there is nothing new to offer, the design and the appearance of the product can change the perception of the product in consumers' eyes.

Nussbaum (2007) underlines the importance of the aesthetics and using beautiful forms when he evaluates the International Design Excellence Award '07 Winners.

"A second big trend was reinvention, often using beautiful new forms to express older functionality. The gold-winning Fuego outdoor grill, by Robert Brunner, is designed to let everyone on your deck or patio gather around the sleek, island-like grill while you cook." (Nussbaum, 2007, p.52)



Figure 1.1 Fuego Outdoor Grill

Similarly, Robin Edman, CEO of Swedish Industrial Design Foundation, underlines the importance of aesthetical attractiveness of a better-designed product:

"Finally we have a product that looks fantastic while embracing the way we socialize and interact around our outdoor grills. The design evokes the fun and excitement of backyard, deck, and patio recreation and dining." (IDEA Website, 2008a)



“The Home Hero Fire Extinguisher that captured a gold for the Arnell Group is so good-looking that people will want to display it--possibly making it more available in case of fire.” (Nussbaum, 2007, p.52)

“This design shows how elegance can enhance function. These designers understand that if a fire extinguisher looks good, users will be more likely to keep it handy.” - Steve Wilcox, FIDSA, Principal, Design Science. (IDEA Website, 2008b.)

Figure 2.2 The Home Hero

1.2.3 Product Design and Functionality

The functional value of a product pertains to the utilitarian functions a product can perform (its use) (Löbach, 1976; Veryzer, 1995). As well as reading verbal product information or asking others, consumers may form an impression about the utilitarian functions and product quality based on a product’s appearance and design (Bloch, 1995; Dawar & Parker, 1994). Hence, product design can communicate its function, and specifications. The utilitarian functions of a product can be directly obvious from its appearance. For instance, a handle can indicate portability, or a bigger hair-dryer can be perceived as more powerful than smaller ones (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005).

In addition, consumers may form an impression about ease of use based on the product appearance and design (e.g., Norman, 1988). Consumers need to try the product in operation in order to adequately form an opinion. Since it is often impossible to try products in shops or on the Internet, product aesthetics serve as an indicator of the ergonomic product value. In order to influence consumer preference positively, it is not sufficient that a product be simply easy to use. It should also *look* as it is easy to use, it should convey this message in its appearance. (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005) Hence, product design can communicate its function and therefore have an effect on consumer perceptions and choices.

1.2.4 Product Design and Value Perception

In his study, Bloch (1995) mentions design and value perception as psychological response, and a cognitive component, to product form and design. He explains these 'product-related beliefs'. The appearance of a product affects consumers' attitudes towards the product and brand (Bitner, 1992; Solomon, 1983). Such characteristics as durability, dollar value, technical sophistication, ease of use, sex role appropriateness, and prestige may be drawn by the product design. Designers usually try to stress on certain design element to create desirable belief in consumers' perception. For example, the all-black shell of the NeXt computer system was designed to elicit perceptions of unmatched power compared with other desktop machines (Nussbaum, 1990). Leather upholstery in luxury cars is increasingly being fitted with generous wrinkles to engender perceptions of softness, genuineness, and comfort. However, sometimes design elements may create completely unanticipated belief. Gorgeous design, capable of winning awards, may lead target consumers to perceive the product as expensive and inappropriate for them (Bloch, 1995). Hence, the appearance and design of the product can create an implication about its value on consumers' minds. Some designs can be perceived as expensive products while they are not indeed, or vice versa.

In addition, product design is a central element in differentiating unique from common products. Thus, consumers with high uniqueness needs should prefer distinctive product designs, even when there are significant costs involved (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). This mostly applies to niche products that are not commonly used. Design of this kind of products should underline exclusiveness; prestige, novelty and the appearance ought to be unique. However, this type of products might lose their benefit within its target market if the product becomes widely used, thus lowering its exclusiveness (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005).

1.2.5 Product Design and Quality

Olson (1972) proposed the quality perception process to have two stages in which consumers first choose surrogate indicators of product quality, (i.e. quality cues) from an array of product-related attributes, and then combine their evaluations of these individual cues into an overall judgment of product quality. Quality cues are categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic cues are part of the physical product such as appearance, colour, shape, and size while extrinsic cues are related to the product, but are physically not part of it, such as price, brand name, etc. Hence, product design as a whole communicates intrinsic cues about product quality and has an influence on consumers' quality perceptions. (Ophuis & Van Trijp, 1995)

"The classification intrinsic-extrinsic has been developed by Olson & Jacoby (1972) because they noticed that the most accurate indicators of perceived quality could be described as 'intrinsic to the product' - i.e. a product attribute which cannot be changed or experimentally manipulated without also changing the physical characteristics of the product itself. Intrinsic quality cues always are closely related to the physical product." (Ophuis & Van Trijp, 1995, p.179)

The product design and appearance as a whole may communicate quality by looking reliable or solid (Srinivasan et al., 1997; Yamamoto & Lambert, 1994). Physical product appearance is an important quality signal for consumers (Dawar & Parker, 1994). As Dickson (1994) notes, "There is also something intangible about quality. It resides in the feel, the look, and the sound of an item. We may not be able to explain it, but we know it when we see it." (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005, p.263)

1.2.6 Design, Taste and Culture

Since companies are operating in markets that are more diverse and putting central importance to product design, knowledge about how different cultures and nations perceive product design and which of the design elements they consider as the most important, is in high demand.

Bloch (1995) indicates that consumer reactions to product form do not occur in isolation. Rather, consumer reactions are moderated by several variables, including consumers' tastes. Hence, consumers' tastes can change their perception of design. A specific product can be identified as a well-designed product for one consumer while others may think that it has a poor design with respect to their tastes and criteria.

Bloch also explains the cultural and social influences on taste. Consumers' preferences for product design are also shaped by cultural and social structures. The acceptance of a certain design, style or shape by a culture is very much dependent upon the culture's values or preferences. For example in modern American society, cleanliness is a very important design element (Forty, 1986). Alexander (1979) discusses the importance of cultural values and norms regarding design because they tend to shape feelings and individual preferences. Cross-cultural differences in design tastes are also common. Colours, materials, and shapes desirable in one culture may be unattractive to consumers in another (Armstrong, 1991; Bloch, 1995; Kron, 1983).

In addition to providing consensual styles of visual form, the culture also affects design tastes based on semiotic considerations (Jones, 1991). According to the perspective advanced by McCracken (1986), designers encode in their creations a meaning derived from the culture, which they intend the consumer to extract. Designers expect consumers to prefer products that communicate meanings that are desirable within a particular culture or subculture. If a culture values high technology, forms that communicate technical sophistication should be preferred. (Bloch, 1995)

Forty (1986) posits that a design can be positively received in isolation, yet be ultimately disliked and avoided because of its poor fit with previously acquired objects. For example, a sleek European coffee maker may evoke positive responses in a store, but not be purchased because it does not mesh with a consumer's country kitchen.

Also, the social setting in which a design is encountered is another moderator of consumer response. Because a product's appearance helps shape the image of the user,

opinions of referents can be a significant influence on consumers' design appraisals (Solomon, 1983). Thus, the persons who are present during an encounter with a product, its purchase, or display may help shape a consumer's reactions to that object (Belk, 1975). A consumer who might hold an unfavourable reaction to a particular form in private might express more positive responses in the presence of peers who express appreciation of the form, or vice versa (Bloch, 1995).

Taking into account contemporary international business trends and several practical reasons, the researchers of this paper have chosen two distinct cultures for investigation, Sweden and Turkey. There are several reasons for choosing these two countries. Practical reasons are that one of the authors of current paper is a native Swede and is familiar with local Swedish culture and society more than the other authors are. Another author is originally from Turkey, who speaks Turkish natively and familiar with Turkish culture. These facts enabled the authors to collect empirical data in both countries without cultural and language barriers.

Moreover, the authors believe that Sweden and Turkey differ significantly by lifestyle, social structure, culture and many other factors. Major religion in Turkey is Islam, whereas in Sweden most of the population is Christian.

1.2.7 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: Sweden vs. Turkey

Many authors agree that Hofstede's framework of dimensions for conceptualising and operationalizing national culture is the most widely implemented one in sociology, psychology, marketing and management studies (Sondergaard, 1994; Steenkamp, 2001).

Individualism–collectivism:

Swedish culture is democratic and transparent. Most of children leave their parents' home once they reach 20-22 and begin their independent life. Turkish culture is assumed more complex and hierarchical, where the community might judge a person's deeds. However, this view is true mostly for rural areas of Turkey. In big cities like those that Ankara and Istanbul represent the culture is shifting to be more democratic. Thus, it is believed that Swedish culture is more individualistic than Turkish culture.

Uncertainty avoidance:

Comparing the living standards and well-fare state of both countries it is assumed that *uncertainty avoidance* is stronger in Turkey.

Power distance:

As mentioned above Swedish culture and society is more transparent and democratic than in Turkey where culture is more complex and hierarchical, which in turn affects family and organisational contexts. Thus, power is more equally distributed in Sweden than in Turkey.

Masculinity–femininity:

Several factors like religion, lifestyle and traditions affect this dimension. In modern Swedish society, young women are becoming increasingly independent in corporate settings. In a family rights and duties are almost equally shared between man and a woman. However, in Turkey, views are more traditional compared to Sweden. In a family, the man usually is the main decision taking authority. Therefore, Turkish culture is more masculine than Swedish culture.

Long-term orientation:

Taking into account all the facts stated above and comparing social structures & infrastructure levels of both countries, one may assume that long-term orientation is slightly stronger in Sweden than in Turkey.

1.2.8 The Purpose

As presented in the previous section, the cultural aspect in design perception is very important and crucial. Studies conducted by presented scholars are very diverse and serve as a departure point for this paper. Most of these studied touch upon the cultural aspect of design perception; yet, they do not explicitly discuss the perception of product design in different cultural settings.

Being inspired by the above works of Bloch (1995) and McCracken (1986), this research being exploratory by nature focuses on understanding how particular cultures perceive design and how they differ in this matter.

Taking the study of Creusen and Schoormans (2005) as a baseline, where they summarise the roles of product design for consumers into six roles (aesthetic, symbolic, functional, ergonomic, attention drawing and categorisation) it was decided to measure how Swedish and Turkish consumers relate product design to:

1. Aesthetic attractiveness,
2. Functionality,
3. Value/price,

4. Quality.

Thus, the purpose of current paper is to identify the differences (if any) between Swedish and Turkish consumers in terms of product design perception and to identify the difference in relating the four dimensions/characteristics (quality, value, functionality and aesthetic attractiveness) to product design.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this section, we will describe our work process and the approach we have used to answer our research question. The different methods we have chosen will be described and argued for and the limitations with our approach and choices will be discussed.

2.1 Work Process

The work with the thesis started with the formulation of a research problem. This process started already in the beginning of the year. From an initial interest in design, the problem formulation evolved to include another of our interests in cultural differences.

The primary data collected for this master thesis consist of both a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews. The survey was collected during three weeks at the end of March beginning of April in Turkey and Sweden. To complement these findings nine qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in the two countries. The interviews were conducted during another three weeks in April and May.

After the collection of primary data, we began the process of analysing all our results. Throughout the whole work process literature have been studied to help us understand our topic and analyze our findings. From the beginning, our knowledge was limited within the areas and as we collected data, we wanted to find support for our findings in how they correspond or differ from previous research.

2.2 Research Process

We decided upon our research proposal from an interest in design and cultural aspects. After an initial literature review, we found this combination to be rather new and unexplored which even more caught our attention. Bryman and Bell (2003) argue that choosing a subject from an own interest is a good approach.

After our initial literature and theory search we decided to focus upon four dimensions of design: aesthetic attractiveness, quality, functionality and value. Aesthetic attractiveness was chosen because of its possibility to differentiate products between one another just by its visual features (Kotler & Rath 1984; Nussbaum 1988; Holbrook 1980; Holbrook & Anand 1992; Holbrook & Zirlin 1985). The functionality of a product's design also has high relevance; the use it signals influences the customer (Creusen & Schoormans 2005; Norman, 1988). When it comes to the quality of a design this becomes important since the quality can be hard to evaluate but the customer creates an opinion considering quality based on both rational and emotional values as well as its tangible and intangible factors (Ophuis & Van Trijp 1995; Olson 1972; Srinivasan et al., 1997; Yamamoto & Lambert, 1994; Dickson, 1994). The value of design is relevant because of its ability to speak to the customer and for example being able to communicate that the product is luxurious or powerful (Bloch, 1995; Nussbaum, 1990).

There could be a danger in limiting us to our four dimensions in the way that we are missing other relevant dimensions. The term design can be hard to define and people could have very different perceptions about the term. This could lead to that we are limiting us to a much too narrow field within design. At the same, this is necessary because of our intention to compare two cultures as well as keeping a focus for the thesis. Moreover, as we argue above we find these dimensions to be the most relevant for our study. We have also kept an open mind for the possibility of finding new dimensions and insights that could help and enrich our study.

The work process / method we have used is the abductive method and this method is a combination between the inductive and the deductive methods but still with its own character (Alvesson & Skoldberg 1994). The abductive approach suits our study since the approach allows you to continuously work with the theory and the empirical material. Our knowledge in the design-area was limited from the beginning. Therefore it has been important for us to throughout the thesis process read theory and to increase our knowledge, during and after the collection of our empirical data. The abductive method enables the empirical data to clarify the theory but they both work together to explain the analysis and result (Alvesson & Skoldberg 1994).

Since we find it hard to finish the work with the theory or the empirical work at a certain time as is implied with the inductive and deductive approaches we find the abductive method relevant for our study. The inductive and deductive approaches could be seen as extremes whereas it in real life is hard to enter a process completely without any prior knowledge. Alvesson and Skoldberg (1994) argue that you have a frame of reference which you see and interpret the world from and that you therefore can not see data without this frame of reference in mind.

2.2.1. Combination of Quantitative and Qualitative Approach

We have used both a quantitative and a qualitative approach to help to reach an understanding of our object of study. Olsen (1992) argues that quantitative and qualitative approaches should not be seen as each other opposites or competitors but that they ought to be used as complement to one another. Holme and Solvang (1997) discuss that a combination of a qualitative and quantitative method can lead to a more diversified and complete picture of the social phenomena you are researching. In addition, Alvesson and Skoldberg (1994) point to the possibility that the use of a combination can lead to that the weak and strong sides complement each other. Since we are conducting a study where we aim to gather understanding within a rather unexplored area, we find the use of a combination of the two methods to be relevant.

Because of the nature of the knowledge we are interested in the research will be based on two approaches; relativism and social constructivism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe 2002). Since we want to compare the Turkish and the Swedish market, we found the quantitative approach relevant. But since we also want to understand the behaviour, perception of design, we also need a deeper understanding and therefore we have also conducted in-depth interviews. The survey was also used as a means of finding

interesting insights, and topics for the in-depth interviews. Therefore, we also believe that, there is a need of a constructionist approach to understand differences between cultures

“From the relativist position, the assumed difficulty of gaining direct access to ‘reality’ means that multiple perspectives will normally be adopted, both ‘triangulation’ of methods and through surveying viewpoints and experiences of large samples of individuals. Even so, it is only a matter probability that the views collected will provide an accurate indication of the underlying situation.” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002, p.34) Hence, a relativist approach will be used in the research to see the statistical differences between Swedish and Turkish design perceptions. In the constructionist position, “the aims of the researcher are to understand how people invent structures to help them make sense of what is going on around them. Consequently, much attention is given to the use of language and conversations between people as they create their own meanings.” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002, p.34) Hence, this approach will be used to see how Swedish and Turkish consumer construct the meaning of well-designed products according to their perceptions and beliefs and the main aim is to understand the differences between these two cultures. We believe that the meaning of design is constructed through and dialectic between an object and a subject and thus the social constructivism approach becomes relevant.

In that sense, we believe that, quantitative data should be backed up with qualitative data to increase the validity of the results and to provide in-depth understanding. Although Easterby-Smith et al. say that “be wary of mixing methods simply for the sake of getting a slightly richer picture, because they may lead to contradictions and confusions.” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002, p.41), they also state that “Increasingly, authors and researchers who work in organizations and with managers argue that one should attempt to mix methods to some extent, because it provides more perspectives on the phenomena being investigated.” In this research, usage of mixed method will provide an exposure of the Swedish and Turkish design perceptions via quantitative data. Meanwhile, qualitative data provide in-depth insights and understanding about the reasons of the differences between the investigated cultures.

According to Thompson et al. (1994) consumers’ beliefs and actions depend on the culture the consumer originate from. Their cultural network forms consumers’ beliefs and actions and they cannot escape these beliefs completely but only modify them. This thinking makes our study important and interesting since the perceptions of design could be dependent upon ones cultural background. However, it could also be argued that the result depends on subjective beliefs and feelings that are hard to measure and depends on the situation. Bryman and Bell (2003) discuss the belief from the last decades that knowledge from marketing research mainly should be produced in accordance with ideas from natural sciences. Here the focus lies upon being able to reproduce the study and its findings and these factors defines the quality of the study. The authors and other researchers (Bryman & Bell, 2003) do however question this thinking when studying human behaviour. This has lead to the use of the term interpretivism where the interest lies on the forces that affect human beings as being socially constructed. The focus here

lies on interpreting human behaviour and the researcher should focus on how actions appear. This approach therefore is more suited for our study where we want to find about the perceptions and behaviour surrounding design. Thompson (1997) supports this approach and believes the focus should lie upon finding the hidden meanings and create an understanding behind things that might be taken for granted. One way to gain access to social constructions is through language, artefacts and documents (Thompson et al., 1994). Our goal is to investigate social constructions that concerns how people think about design and how people makes sense of designed products which makes the social constructivism an useful tool.

2.2.2 Quantitative Approach

As mentioned above we started our empirical data collection with a quantitative survey. A quantitative method is characterized by “hard data” where the purpose is to be able to generalise and compare a certain phenomena (Holme & Solvang, 1997). The quantitative method is more formalized and structured and the researcher has more control over the results (Holme & Solvang, 1997). Holme and Solvang (1997) argue that the quantitative method should be used when you want to be able to say something about the selection you are researching and when you want to investigate the extent of a phenomenon. Our goal has been to compare Turkish and Swedish peoples’ perception of the phenomena design with our survey. There exists an uncertainty when it comes to surveys and quantitative methods concerning that your respondents shall have the same impressions and understanding of the questions (Malhorta & Birks, 1999). It is difficult to say that the impressions are the same since they are based on subjective values and perceptions of reality.

2.2.2.a Surveys

To be able to compare the Turkish and the Swedish perception of design we decided to conduct a survey in both countries. The survey that was used in both Turkey and Sweden included the same questions but some small adjustments were made such as that the surveys in Turkey were translated into Turkish. The survey in Sweden was conducted in English. This could be a limitation for our study when it comes to comparing the results between the two countries. It is possible that the translation could render in some slight alteration of the meaning which could affect the result. It could also be argued that the survey in Sweden should be done completely or partly in Swedish and this was considered. Nevertheless, we decided to conduct all surveys in Sweden in English to reduce the risk of further difficulties in comparing results. The questions were tested upon relatives and friends beforehand to see if they were understandable and relevant.

When conducting the survey two approaches were used. The questions were either asked by the interviewee or handed out to the respondent to fill in them by themselves. The first approach offers the possibility to clarify the questions if the respondents find the question hard to understand (Malhorta & Birks, 1999). This approach could at the same time mean that the interviewee influences the response while the second approach could lead to a

situation were the respondents feel more secure to give his/her responses (Malhorta & Birks, 1999).

The surveys were handed out in the cities of Malmö and Lund in Sweden and in Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey. These cities being larger cities in both countries could affect the result of the survey and it is possible that the result would differ if the surveys for example were conducted in less cosmopolitan areas. An ideal survey collection would be performed in several more areas of both countries with more diversified demographics to be able to generalize the results (Bryman & Bell, 2003). To try to reach an as diversified respondent group as possible the areas where the survey was handed out has been taken into consideration. The time of day and the places has been changed with this in mind. A possibility to reach a more diversified group of respondents could have been to send the survey electronically but with this approach the problem lies in finding appropriate respondents as well a high risk of a low response-rate. Two hundred surveys were collected in Turkey and four hundred in Sweden. The reason that we did not do the same amount in both countries was because of us being two persons in Sweden and only one in Turkey. This could be a limitation in our study when it comes to comparing the results between the two countries.

The survey was divided into two parts with a total of twelve questions (see Appendix 1). The first part (question 1-4) consists of general questions concerning design, statements about our four dimensions. The second part (question 5-10) of the survey concerns with the design of IKEA products in our four dimensions. These first ten questions are all statements that are to be placed on a Likert-scale where one is strongly disagree and five strongly agree. The advantage with using a Likert-scale is that it is simple to construct and administer as well as it is easy to understand and respond to for the respondent (Malhorta & Birks, 1999). The data was entered into the computer program SPSS to help us analyze our findings.

The last two questions of the survey deal with the gender and the age of the respondents. Since we focus on IKEA on the survey we choose to focus on people of both sexes in the ages between 20-45 since we believe this to be their target group. IKEA was chosen because of our belief of the company to be seen as design-focused. Another aspect that caught our attention was the fact that the Turkish IKEA-webpage had a more clear focus on the design aspect of the products. The Scandinavian design was emphasized on the Turkish-site. Swedish and Scandinavian design has received international recognition and could be used seen as a competitive advantage (Mannervik, 1994). The design is characterised as being "good" design whether it comes to textiles, ceramics, glass or furniture and IKEA is seen as being a vital part of this reputation (Edwards, 2008). IKEA therefore is relevant for our study as being a Scandinavian design company with a good reputation. It could also have been interesting to use a Turkish design company for our study. This was considered but we could not find any good companies to use, which made us, only use IKEA. We also did not want to use too many companies because we were afraid that the brands would be too important. Brands importance for peoples' perception of design could be very interesting but it is not our focus in this study.

2.2.3 Qualitative Approach

As a complement for our survey and quantitative research, we decided to perform interviews. Since we are interested in the behaviours and motives surrounding design we needed to get in-depth knowledge concerning this phenomenon. Halvorsen (1992) find interviews to be a good method to use when more in-depth knowledge is needed. He describes that you need to gain trust from the respondents and allow them to describe the phenomena in question in their own words. The actual behaviour of when design is used by consumers is hard to observe and we had to find other ways of making people reflect upon design. The closest we could think of to be see the interaction with design was to use photo elicitation and make respondent reflect over design in an interview situation (Harper, 2002).

2.2.3.a Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview form we chose to use was the semi-structured interview (Bryman & Bell, 2003). A rough structure was created that to keep the interview on track so that we would not loose focus on our topic. At the same time, we worked with making the structure and questions open-ended and in the shape that would allow the respondent to answer rather freely and be able to contribute with insights that we previously not thought of. One of the dangers with face-to-face interviews is the possibility of unconsciously influencing the respondents and their answers (Holme & Solvang, 1997).

Seymour (1992) emphasizes the need to keep a balance in qualitative interviews between an obtrusive and unobtrusive questioning. Where this balance is to be found varies between each person but the strengths of qualitative interviews will be when you are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of how you are able to guide the interview by using the researcher as an instrument. A positive factor with interviews is that you have the possibility to clarify your questions for the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2003). We tried to use open-ended questions in order to make the respondent speak more freely about design. However, we also used a prepared rough structure, mentioned above to not loose focus.

All interviews were recorded so that they could be analysed afterwards. The interviews were also transcribed. Being able to listen to and read the interviews is useful when analysing the empirical material (Bryman & Bell, 2003, Holme & Solvang, 1997).

2.2.4 Photo Elicitation

Photos were used as a helper during the semi-structured interviews in order to help the respondents to freely and spontaneously talk about design. Harper (2002) argues that photo elicitation is a most valuable tool for empirical research. He has found that photo elicitation evokes a different kind of information, feelings and memories from the respondents. Harper (2002) finds photo elicitation to have the possibility to create greater depth to the empirical material than just through conventional words-only interviews. He

believes this to be because of photos possibility in evoking feelings from the respondents and how remembering can be strengthened by photos.

Three categories of different designed products were chosen. The categories were cars, chairs and microwave ovens (see figures 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4). The idea behind the categories was to find similar products and get the respondents to reflect upon their design. The goal was not for the products to be quantitatively representative for the category but for them to be as qualitatively diversified as possible (Halvorsen, 1993). This way we wanted to make the respondents talk about design and think about design. To more easily be able to compare the finding between the two countries we used our dimensions as questions about the design of the products. The three categories were chosen to be different and render varying replies. The car is for example a complex and more high-involvement product compared to the chair and the microwave oven is somewhere in between. We discussed if we should use less complex products where the design could be argued to be even more distinguishing. For example, pens or scissors but we decided to use our categories since we believed they could generate more diversified answers. A car evokes much more feelings and is much more complex technically and this could confuse the respondents which might focus on other things than primarily the design. The categories and chosen photos are presented below. Images in the categories were numbered as in the schema below.

1	2
3	4

Figure 2.1 Image Numbers

2.2.4.a Cars Category



Figure 2.2 Cars Category Images

All photos were made brandless through editing in the computer program Photoshop. The reason to make the products brandless were to make people speak freely about the design of the products and by making the products without brands our expectation was that less preconceived opinions related to the brands would exist. Therefore, we chose to pick photos of products that we found to be less likely to be well-known.

2.2.4.b Microwave Ovens Category



Figure 2.3 Microwave Oven Category Images

For this category, we wanted a product that was not as complex as cars but still technical and where the respondents could reflect upon for example the functionality with this in mind. We wanted the microwave ovens to be different so that different features, styles, lines and so forth would be discussed.

2.2.4.c Chairs Category



Figure 2.4 Chairs Category Images

In the chairs category we wanted simpler chairs that had similarities in its purpose of use but still with distinctions so that the respondents would reflect upon what makes the design of the chairs unique. Chairs number 1 & 4 are from IKEA and lower priced while the two other chairs are more high-design chairs that are more expensive. Number 3 is a chair from the Swedish furniture company Norrgavel and chair number 2 is a chair made by the Danish designer Arne Jacobsen called “Myran”. IKEA-chairs were chosen to be a possible connection to our survey to see if we could find similarities to those results.

In all categories, similar products were chosen in order for the design to be the distinguishing factor. Of course, other factors come into play but by limiting the respondents to think about design, we believe to have achieved a better result.

It would have been interesting to do the same interviews and showing the same pictures but this time showing the brands and telling the respondents the prices and brands of the products. The interviews have clearly proven that brands are important and the answers have been quite different. Another interview with brands could point to the importance of brands. However, since this not is the focus of our study these interviews have not been conducted.

2.2.5. Choice of Respondents

Age, values, gender and education are factors that are important to consider when you choose respondents (Holme & Solvang, 1997). The authors discuss that it is important to try to get an as diversified group of respondents as possible with the above mentioned factors in mind. When we were choosing our respondents our goal was to find people within the same target group that we used for our survey, male and female between the ages 20-45. However, this proved to be difficult and our respondents could be more divided within our age-span. This is because our respondents are acquaintances and mostly around our own age (24-28). It would have been preferable to have a wider age-span but time-constraints and lack of other possibilities has limited us to this approach. According to Repstad (1999), it is important that your respondents should have relevant knowledge in the area that you are researching. Relevant knowledge for our respondents is not specific or professional knowledge within the area of design since we are investigating customers. It could have been valuable to also hear the opinions of professionals in the area, for example at IKEA, to broaden our view and knowledge but we have decided to focus on customers alone. Holme and Solvang (1997) however state that it also has to be considered that the respondents have to be willing to participate and that they should be able to express themselves on the current topic.

2.2.6. Choice of Cultures

The choice of Sweden and Turkey as cultures for this study relates to the fact that the two countries have several factors that make them different which could lead to interesting findings. There are several distinctions between the countries, for example the religion, values and attitude towards nationalism.

We also choose Turkey and Sweden as examples for different cultures because they are our own nationalities in our thesis group. One of the group members is from Turkey and speaks the language and could more easily perform the research there. Another of the group members is from Sweden, which could simplify the Swedish research and analysis. We perceived the cultures to be rather different and to have the potential to offer us interesting empirical data.

It could be argued that we should have chosen countries/cultures that were more unknown and new to all the group members. This way we would not have any preconceived views or beliefs about the cultures and might be able to see things differently. This could however also be seen the other way around that our knowledge about our home-countries could help us in the analysis.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section we will present a model, describe our theoretical framework and the approach we have used to analyze our empirical findings.

3.1 The Proposed Model

In the model below, we present the theoretical framework model, which we aim to use as an analytical tool when analysing our empirical data to satisfy our purpose.

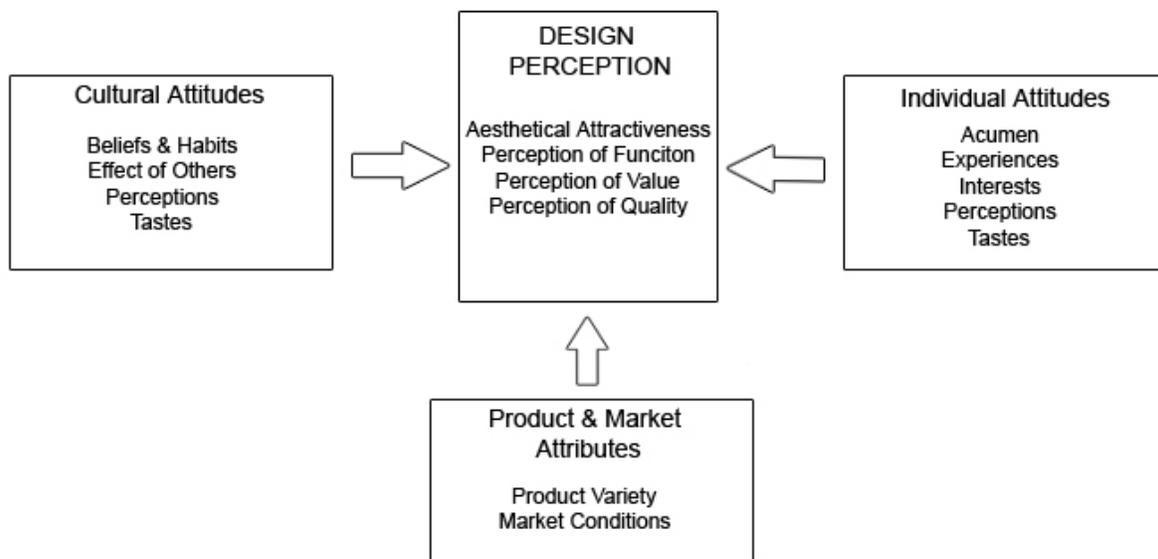


Figure 3.1 Proposed Model for the Study

We present cultural theories to explain cultural attitudes towards the perceptions of consumers coming from culturally different backgrounds. When interpreting the statistical results and the interviews, we should understand the affect of the culture on perception and taste. In addition, cultural beliefs & habits or the effects of the society can play a considerable role in the understanding of the consumers.

Another very crucial part is to understand the individual attitudes. We present theories on personal taste, the way of the products evaluation of the consumers and purchasing habits of the consumers, which can effect the perceptions on the products, which they encounter on the market.

Lastly, we introduce the product & market attributes related issues. Because; the existing situation of the market, and product variety in the market, have an affect on consumers' design perceptions and preferences.

3.2 Cultural Attitudes

Culture has an important influence on consumers' perceptions. Kroeber and Kluckholm (1952) define culture as: "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit and for behaviour acquired and transmitted symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture system may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand as conditioning elements of future action. Culture is something that is shared by almost all members of some social group; that the older members of the group try to pass on the younger members and something (as in the case of morals, laws and customs) that shapes behaviour." Therefore, the *beliefs & habits* about product evaluation or purchasing behaviour, coming from the earlier generations, can affect the individual attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of today's consumers. For instance, when Swedes says that simple and clean design is superior it is partly because their ancestors also believe it is superior. Superiority of simplicity is the characteristic of Scandinavian design. "According to the perspective advanced by McCracken (1986), designers encode in their creations a meaning derived from the culture, which they intend the consumer to extract. Designers expect consumers to prefer products that communicate meanings that are desirable within a particular culture or subculture. If a culture values high technology, forms that communicate technical sophistication should be preferred. Sony offers a line of bright yellow 'sports' radios and tape players to capitalize on cultural acceptance of fitness pursuits and active lifestyles." (Bloch, 1995)

Miroshnik (2002) stresses the importance of Dresser and Carns' following functions of culture: 1) culture enables us to communicate with others through a language that we have learned and that we share in common; 2) culture makes it possible to anticipate how others in our society are likely to respond to our actions; 3) culture gives us standards for distinguishing between what is considered right or wrong, beautiful or ugly, reasonable or unreasonable etc.; 4) culture provides the knowledge and skill necessary for meeting sustenance needs; 5) culture enables us to identify with – that is, include ourselves in the same category with – other people of similar background. If culture affects peoples' way of reasoning with giving them standards to use when they judge things, then it is safe to say that culture affects the people's *perceptions* and *tastes*.

In addition, it is safe to say that opinions of other members of the society, or the culture, have an indirect affect on ones decisions. That *effect of others* can influence the personal perceptions and tastes as well. "Different market segments can have substantially different tastes because of their specific associations with various groups or subcultures (Reingen, Foster, and Brown 1984). Membership in such groups typically involves socialization in matters of taste, and it is not uncommon for subculture members to prefer particular styles and reject others. For example, young urban consumers may have tastes for apparel and home decor that differ considerably from those common among older Americans living in rural areas; and Fussell (1983) posits that upper social class Americans tend to prefer classic designs and those with British origins." (Bloch, 1995)

Ehn and Löfgren (2001) discuss the importance of identity and culture in today's society. Marketing promises to help us find our identity through products. "How we dress, is how we are. How are you?" (Ehn & Löfgren, 2001, p.64) is written in one brand's clothes and wants to tell us what we can find ourselves by expressing us with their style. The authors continue by arguing that identity building is a dynamic process where cultural groups try to find their social position in society. The process can be seen as a negotiation of the positions in the social and cultural landscape. The influence of the surrounding culture is important but the authors also emphasize people's ability to escape existing cages because of individual's creativity and will to cross boundaries.

Cultural belonging is often expressed in artefacts and physical items (Ehn & Löfgren, 2001). These can communicate cultural meaning more clearly than words. Design could be a very strong symbolic cultural carrier. Physical objects get a strong meaning that is interpreted differently depending on your cultural background. In Dick Hebdige's (1979) book "Subculture; the meaning of style" about punk rockers, he explains how everyday objects such as safety pins are given new meaning. Safety pins belong in the home, which represents the family and a safe environment. When they were used as body piercing by punk rockers, they were given a new meaning of something more dangerous and the revolt against the safe home and society. This means that cultural meaning depend on the culture that they are interpreted in and have the possibility to change meaning depending on usage and interpretation.

3.3 Individual Attitudes

Personality is an important determinant of the perception and selection process. "We tend to buy products that are complementary to the perceptions we hold of ourselves" (Whelan & Davies, 2006, p.395). Consumers tend to perceive the products that are reflecting their tastes as superior than others. Hence, individual personalities have an affect on processing the information about products and shaping the decisions of the consumers.

Kotler and Armstrong (2006) say that personal characteristics such as age and life-cycle stage, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle and self-concept have an affect on people's decisions towards products. For instance, Kotler and Armstrong (2006) define the traditional family life-cycle-stage as young singles and married couples with children. However, today, marketers also focus on non-traditional stages such as unmarried couples, singles marrying later in life, childless couples, same-sex couples, single parents and others. Occupation is another aspect; a very simple example from Kotler and Armstrong (2006) is about buying habits of blue and white-collar workers. Blue-collar workers tend to buy more rugged clothes; while white-collar workers buy business suits. Similarly, economic situation has an affect on personal choices; marketers of income-sensitive goods watch trends in personal income, savings and interest rates to understand personal decisions. Personal life style and self-concept is also very important individual attitudes in the product choice process. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006), lifestyle is simply a person's pattern of living as expressed in his or her activities, interests, and opinions, which affect his or her decisions. Self-concept is directly related

with a person's self image and identity; "The basic self-concept premise is that people's possessions contribute to and reflect their identities; that is, 'we are what we have.' Thus, in order to understand consumer behaviour, the marketer must first understand the relationship between consumer self-concept and possessions" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006, p.148).

McGuire (1976) explains the information process in consumers' decision-making and divides the process into different steps. The process begins with the exposure step, he explains this as: "...exposure, deals with the habits of the person that determine the kind of information to which he or she will be exposed" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006, p.303). Therefore, different consumers may look for different aspects of the same products, which can, at the end, affect their evaluation of the product. According to McGuire, the perception step is following the exposure; "...perception, deals with the determination of what part of the information to which a person is exposed he or she effectively receives." (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006, p.303) That means; if a person is, for instance, *design acumen*, then s/he can effectively receive the design message of the product. Next step is the comprehension step, which deals with what and how the received information becomes encoded in the consumers mind. *Personal interests and experiences* may create differences, for instance, if a person likes clean and simple designs then most probably s/he appreciates the simplicity in the design of a specific product while others maybe do not even realize it. "According to Osborne (1986), the development of design connoisseurship requires education, exposure to beautiful things, and motivation. For example, a person may develop design skills in the area of home decor by reading shelter magazines and browsing in furniture stores. Through such experience, a person learns what to look for in a product design and what the important determinants of attractiveness are" (Bloch, 1995).

Similarly, Goldberg (1976) underlines the importance of the relation between personality and preferences. His study on psychographic segments (1976) shows that it is possible to go beyond the simple correlation of personality and relative preference for a broad heterogeneous set of products to predict more specific patterns of consumer preferences and perhaps to predict actual behaviour with regard to specific product choices.

Goldberg (1976) states that there is a relationship between consumer personality and consumer responses: "As a broad orientation to the environment, the degree to which the consumer is, for example, 'aesthetic' will not likely predict how he responds to each and every appearance-oriented product, but rather how likely he is to respond, on the average, to most such products. It should be understood that even a moderate relationship between the psychographic measure and the response criterion could be useful..." (Goldberg, 1976) He found that "...those scoring high on the Consumer Aestheticism-Practicality scale (more aesthetic) would select more of the performance alternatives, appeared to provide a parsimonious explanation for more specific patterns of consumer responses to new products." (Goldberg, 1976) Hence, personal taste on aestheticism plays a role in product choices; similarly, it may be a part of product design evaluation. "Visualizing consumers attend more closely to visual design elements and have clearer preferences in making product choices than do those low in visualizing." (Bloch, 1995)

3.4 Product & Market Attributes

The existing market conditions and the product variety in the market may affect the consumers' design related perceptions and preferences.

“In many instances, a product serves as one component of a consumer's larger assortment of goods, and reactions to a specific product design can be modified by perceptions of fit with this assortment. Forty (1986) posits that a design can be positively received in isolation, yet be ultimately disliked and avoided because of its poor fit with previously acquired objects. For example, a sleek European coffee maker may evoke positive responses in a store, but not be purchased because it does not mesh with a consumer's country kitchen.” (Bloch, 1995) Hence, design preferences of the consumers are related with the *market conditions*. For instance, if classical furniture is common in one specific market for a long time, then probably furniture with very modern design will not fit consumers existing products which leads consumers to ignore or dislike the product's design.

Prior research has shown that the consumer decision to defer choice can be influenced by manipulating the difficulty of choosing among a set of provided options. Specifically, offering several attractive alternatives such that none can easily be judged to be the best increases the tendency to not choose, compared with a choice set in which one of the options dominates (Dhar 1997; Tversky & Shafir 1992). Luce, Bettman, and Payne (1999, Experiment 2) provide an example of a decision that is difficult being manipulated without changing the characteristics of the choice options but rather by presenting participants with a high or low reference point. They find that trade-offs among losses tend to be more difficult than tradeoffs among gains, leading to greater preference for the high quality alternatives. That means, the *product variety* in the specific market can affect the reference points of consumers which leads differences in the perceptions.

“Fluency experiences arise from the ease of generating thoughts and accessing memories, as well as from the ease of processing externally presented stimuli. The fluency of processing can also affect evaluative judgments. The more easily a given target can be processed, the more positively it is evaluated. Thus, any variable that facilitates fluent perception is likely to increase liking, from figure–ground contrast and presentation time (Reber, Winkielman & Schwarz, 1998) to previous exposure (as known since Zajonc's (1968) demonstration of the mere exposure effect). The fluency of processing can also affect evaluative judgments.” (Novemsky, Dhar, Schwarz & Simonsen, 2007, p.348)

3.5 Theoretical Framework as an Analytical Tool

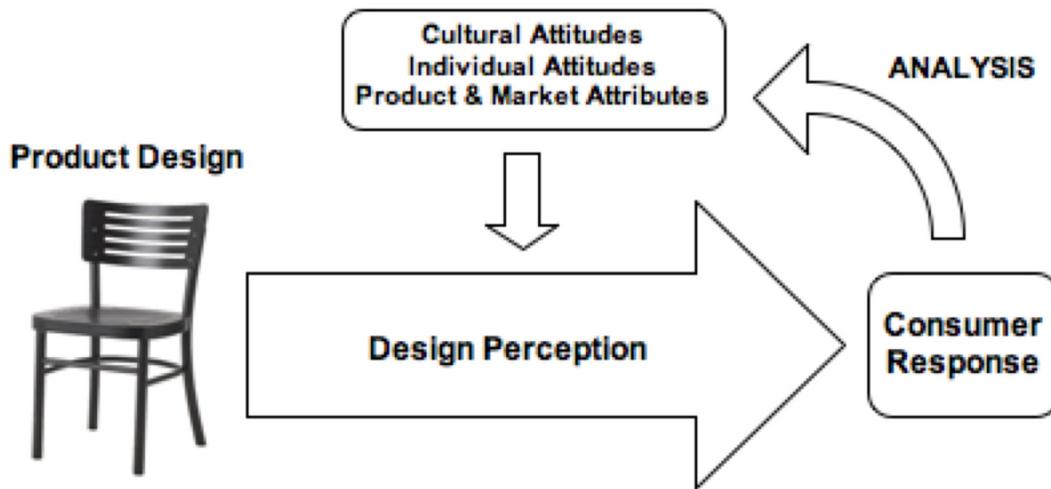


Figure 3.2 Analysis Approach Model

After investigating the above-mentioned attitudes and attributes, we have decided to use our proposed model (See figure 3.1) as an analytical tool to understand design perception in Sweden and Turkey. As illustrated in the figure 3.2 above, we analyse the consumer responses with respect to cultural attitudes, individual attitudes and product & market attributes in their countries, because as explained above, these criteria are the most important influencers on design perception. The reason behind this approach is to explore the sources of similarities and/or differences between two country consumers' responses against the same design objects. Through our analysis, we hoped to understand design perception in these two culturally different countries.

4. ANALYSIS & EMPIRICAL DATA

In this section, we will present our empirical findings and our analysis. The empirical data will be discussed and analysed with guidance from our four dimensions of design and theoretical framework.¹

4.1 Comparison of Survey Results

In the comparison chart, the horizontal numbers are the questions from the survey and the vertical numbers are the resulting average score on the likert-scale.

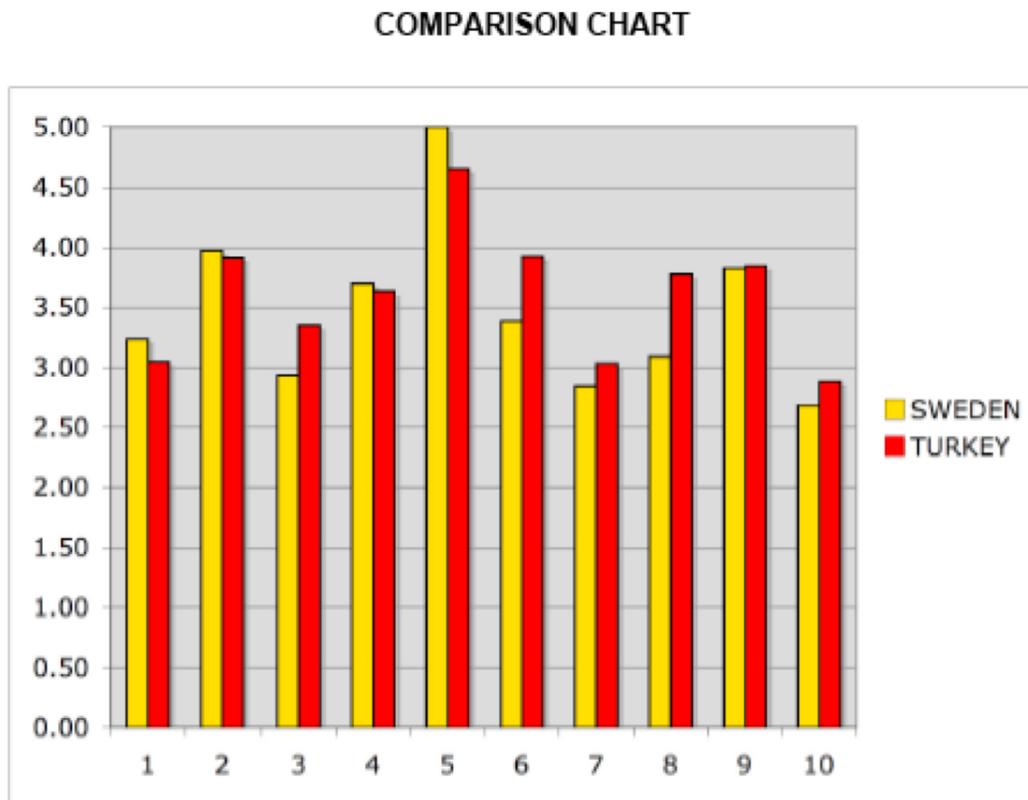


Figure 4.1 Comparison Chart

The chart above shows that the answers from the surveys have revealed very close results from the two countries. Some significant differences will be discussed further below. We will also argue throughout this chapter for the reasons why the results are so similar.

¹ Please note that not all statistical data or text from our interviews will be presented in the main text. All the statistical data and interviews can be found in the appendix.

The table below shows the average scores on the liker-scale measuring our dimensions in Turkey and Sweden.

	QUALITY	AESTHETICS	FUNCTION	VALUE	IKEA
Statement	1	2	3	4	5
SWEDEN	3.24	3.97	2.93	3.70	5.00
TURKEY	3.04	3.91	3.35	3.63	4.65
DIFF.	0.20	0.06	0.42	0.07	0.35

	DES.FOC.	QUALITY	AESTHETICS	FUNCTION	VALUE
Statement	6	7	8	9	10
SWEDEN	3.39	2.84	3.09	3.82	2.68
TURKEY	3.92	3.03	3.77	3.84	2.88
DIFF.	0.54	0.19	0.69	0.02	0.20

Statement	AGE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
SWEDEN	26.3	207	193	400
TURKEY	26.4	100	100	200

Note: The most different aspects are highlighted in the table above.

Table 4.1 Comparison Table

4.2 Significance of Differences

In ANOVA table, significance (Sig.) shows the meaning of the difference between the two countries. If the significance value is lower than 0.5 then it means that there is a meaningful difference between the countries, otherwise the difference do not mean any significance.

The results show us that there are some significant differences between Sweden and Turkey in terms of Quality, Value, Ikea's Design Focus, Ikea's Quality, Ikea's Aesthetics and Ikea's Value. Aesthetics and Value criteria are so close to 0.5, hence there is not much significance. In addition, in terms of Ikea's Functionality there is not any significant difference between the two countries.

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Quality	Between Groups	5.201	1	5.201	5.131	.024
	Within Groups	606.133	598	1.014		
	Total	611.333	599			
Aesthetics	Between Groups	.521	1	.521	.631	.427
	Within Groups	493.773	598	.826		
	Total	494.293	599			
Function	Between Groups	23.801	1	23.801	19.757	.000
	Within Groups	720.398	598	1.205		
	Total	744.198	599			
Value	Between Groups	.521	1	.521	.511	.475
	Within Groups	609.797	598	1.020		
	Total	610.318	599			
IKEA	Between Groups	.701	1	.701	28.179	.000
	Within Groups	14.873	598	.025		
	Total	15.573	599			
IDesign	Between Groups	36.240	1	36.240	35.501	.000
	Within Groups	594.115	582	1.021		
	Total	630.354	583			
IQuality	Between Groups	4.579	1	4.579	5.136	.024
	Within Groups	518.858	582	.892		
	Total	523.437	583			
IAesthetics	Between Groups	58.419	1	58.419	71.891	.000
	Within Groups	472.935	582	.813		
	Total	531.354	583			
IFunction	Between Groups	.071	1	.071	.081	.776
	Within Groups	509.462	582	.875		
	Total	509.533	583			
IValue	Between Groups	9.880	1	9.880	11.036	.001
	Within Groups	521.023	582	.895		
	Total	530.902	583			

Table 4.2 ANOVA Table

4.3 Design – Aesthetical Attractiveness Dimension

When being asked about the first thing that our respondents think of when hearing the concept design, they demonstrated several similarities between the two countries. The dimension that was mentioned most frequently was aesthetical attractiveness.

“Aesthetic value is what comes to mind when thinking about design”. (Johan)²

“At the first look, aesthetical attractiveness of the product is very important.” (Beyhan)

There is only a minor difference between the two countries in terms of design and the aesthetical attractiveness relationship (diff. = 0.06). At the ANOVA table presented earlier, the significance value is only 0.427 which is too close to 0.5 and hence the difference is almost completely insignificant.

Our qualitative findings are also coherent with the quantitative findings. Turkish and Swedish respondents both underline the importance of aesthetical attractiveness in product design and believe that well-designed products should please the eye and catch the interest of the consumers at the market place.

“Seducing the eye to please the customer”. (Johan)

“When it comes to cars. For me, the visual attractiveness is very important. [...] So, in cars, attractiveness is the most important criteria for me.” (Pinar)

“If I need to buy one...I would buy #2. Because, I really like its design. I think it is visually attractive.” (Pinar)

Swedish and Turkish interviewees also showed interest in the aesthetic details of the exactly same products, as shown in the below quote relating to car #3.

“#3 is probably the car with most aesthetical thought behind it...streamlined, big tires, futuristic”. (Johan)

“If I have the money. I guess, I would buy the #3...Even the rims of it looks beautiful.” (Pinar)

² Please note that; all of the direct quotes in italics are from in-depth interviews conducted at various dates in April and May, 2008.

Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative findings are pointing in the same direction. Aesthetical attractiveness has the highest score for both Swedish and Turkish consumers. (Turkey = 3.91 and Sweden = 3.97). This strengthens the argument that design can be used as a competitive advantage for companies. This has previously also been noted in the literature (Mannervik, 1994). The aesthetics of the product is what many of the respondents foremost relate design with as shown in the quotes above.

“Bit more expensive but probably worth it because of the aesthetics.” (Johan)

The respondents did also find aesthetical attractiveness as something that you could be willing to pay more for. This fact has also previously been proved (Kotler & Rath, 1984; Nussbaum, 1988). The emotional dimension aesthetic attractiveness gets the highest score, which proves that design is a powerful tool in influencing consumers. The importance of the aesthetical attractiveness is evident throughout our empirical data. The more rational dimensions quality and functionality have received lower scores as can be seen in figure 8. This fact will be discussed further below.

4.4 Design – Value Dimension

The second highest score after aesthetical attractiveness for both Turks and Swedes is high value. They say that they can pay more for a better-designed product (Turkey = 3.63 and Sweden = 3.70). Like the aesthetical attractiveness aspect, design-value relation is very close between the chosen countries. The ANOVA table shows that, the significance value between Turkey and Sweden is 0.475, which is close to being insignificant. Both countries are thinking the same way within this dimension as well.

Our qualitative findings also show the similarities between the two countries design and value perceptions.

“Can pay more for the design and the modern look. Something you have in an expensive stylish home”. – For chair #2. (Oksana)

“I would buy #2 because its design is very attractive.” (Beyhan)

“If it is a well-designed product with multi function and considerable quality I can pay whatever the price is without any regret at all.” (Beyhan)

“The most expensive because of the design, like Bang & Olufsen. Not like Electrolux”. – For microwave oven #3. (Oksana)

“The most attractive one is #3. I like it very much. [...] If I need to buy one...I would buy #3. Because I really like its design. I think it is visually attractive.” (Pinar)

In the above quotes, Oksana and Beyhan both explain their preference for chair #2. They both emphasize the design as something that they would be willing to pay more for. This also applies to Oksana and Pinar’s arguments about microwave #3 as the most attractive one. Hence, both qualitative and quantitative findings are consistent and show the similarities between the two cultures in terms of the design and value relationship.



Figure 4.2 Microwave Oven #3



Figure 4.3 Chair #2

One fact that was interesting to notice from the cars category was that some cars were perceived to be high-priced when they in fact are not. The respondents even made remarks about the cars as something that could originate from Germany and be a luxurious car while in fact it was a Japanese car that the respondent previously in the interview had declared s/he found to produce cars of inferior standard. This strengthens Bloch’s (1995) discussion that design has the possibility to affect the consumers’ perception of value. When the respondents after the interviews asked about the brands of the cars they were surprised and commented on the importance of knowing the brand of the car. This occurred primarily in the cars category, which could be explained with the cars as high-involvement products. However, it also occurred in the chairs category where we received quite diverse answers to which chair could be the most expensive one.

4.5 Design – Quality Dimension

For the Turks, quality has the least relevance with design in our pre-determined dimensions. In general, they are undecided (3.04) about well-designed products and high quality relation. Although the Swedish perception is little bit higher in this dimension it is also close to undecided with the average of 3.24. ANOVA table tells us there is a significant difference between the two countries (Significance Value = 0.024). However, our qualitative findings show many similarities in this dimension as well. For instance, both countries relate quality with durability. In addition, they choose the same products when they are contemplating the one with the highest quality. This shows that the perceived quality from the images is similar.

“I believe #1 has the highest quality. It looks durable and expensive.”(Beyhan)

“#1 looks like you could kick and jump on it several times without breaking”. (Jonas)

“Could stand a lot of beatings, durable”. ”. – For microwave oven #3. (Oksana)

“I believe #3 is the highest quality one. [...] I would buy #3.” (Ceylan)

In this dimension, the interviews gave many aspects of what was to be quality in terms of design. Some respondents related to originality, some to durability while others discussed the purpose and use of the product to determinants of quality when it comes to design. Ophuis and Van Trijp (1995) explain that quality is a tricky concept that will evoke different feelings and perceptions from consumers. The authors also discuss that consumers define quality from intrinsic cues such as shape, colour and size. This is evident in our interviews where these factors are used on several occasions. For example, one microwave oven (#2) was perceived as larger and for use that is more industrial. The size was mentioned as one determinant of how durable it looked. This phenomenon has previously been noted by Srinivasan et al. (1997) and Yamamoto and Lambert (1994). The physical appearance of a product has proved to be an important determinant of quality throughout our empirical material.

4.6 Design – Functionality Dimension

The design and functionality relation is the dimension with the most perceived difference between the two countries. Swedes are generally undecided about the relationship between a well-designed product and functionality (2.93). The low rating indicates that even some of the Swedish consumers do not agree that there is relation. For the Turks functionality is the third in order of importance for our dimensions. Turks are undecided about the functionality and design relation (3.35) but with a significantly higher score than Sweden. Maybe we can say that Turks agree that a well-designed product means the product should be functional, but it is not necessarily true for everyone. However, although this is the most significant difference, we are able to find similar thoughts in in-depth interviews.

“A functional car should be more easy to manoeuvre.” (Viktor)

“In terms of functionality. If I use the car in the city centre, especially in the Turkish environment, I would choose a smaller one. So...I guess...if I consider the sizes...#1 looks smaller so I would choose that one in terms of functionality. More simple...maybe it looks less safe

because of its look but in Turkey smaller cars has an advantage in terms of functionality.” (Pinar)

In the above quotes, both Turkish and Swedish respondents emphasize the importance of the cars ability to be manoeuvred. Functionality generated many interesting aspects of the dimension from the respondents; the different categories gave new insights into the perceptions of functionality and design. When thinking about the microwave ovens several respondents from both countries discussed the user-friendliness and that it should not be over-complicated.

“Too many buttons with too many choices”. ”. – For microwave oven #4. (Oksana)

“#2 looks like it has more function than others, mostly because of the buttons at the panel. There are a lot of buttons I mean...” (Beyhan)

When discussing cars other factors, such as the number of doors, respondents from both countries related to future needs when you might have a family.

But I mean in terms of functionality I can't really say that if I get a family, it doesn't seem like it has a backseat so it's not that functional. (Per)

“#1 has only two doors which is not so functional I believe.” (Beyhan)

The design of microwave oven #2 received many similar responses from the respondents in both countries. The microwave oven was perceived as something that seems to belong in a professional kitchen in a restaurant or for industrial use.

“#2 looks more industrial. It looks like the first models in the market. I believe it fits better in professional usage rather than houses.” (Ceylan)

“I can see this having, #2 seems more like industrial, like having in a restaurant or something like that, really advanced.” (Per)



Figure 4.4 Microwave Oven #2

The user-friendliness of the products was mentioned as important within this dimension, especially for microwave ovens. The microwave oven should not have too many buttons or too many programs but should instead be simple to use. The opposite was discussed in other categories such as the cars category where functionality was discussed in terms of features such as a GPS-system and DVD-screens. Here it was positive, in terms of functionality, to have more features that are technical. It is interesting that what in one category was perceived as negative in another was positive. Creusen and Schoormans (2005) argue that the product should appeal functional in terms of ease of operations, stability and so on, which can be seen in our responses. It seems however that there are differences in terms of which kind of product it is and the perception of functionality.

4.7 Categories

4.7.1 Cars Category

When discussing the cars the most interesting phenomena was the value perception of the respondents. Where the car originated from was an important aspect for the respondent. Countries such as Germany and Japan were used as determinants of the quality and value of the cars. Since there were no brands on the cars several respondents even got frustrated when deciding which car they thought were the most valuable, this points towards the importance of brands within this category.

There was one car (#4) that received more criticism than the others on all dimensions. The car was perceived as ugly:



Figure 4.5 Car #4

"#4 is my least favourite; the shape is not good, looks like a spaceship." (Jonas)

That the design and aesthetical attractiveness was perceived negatively influenced the rest of the dimensions; the quality, functionality and value also became very negatively associated for this car. This supports the argument that the aesthetical attractiveness is the most important dimension in our findings. It seems that the aesthetical attractiveness guides the rest of the dimensions.

In terms of functionality, the respondents used different views on how to explain this dimension in terms of cars. Functionality was described in terms of ease of use and appropriateness for where you drive. In the hectic Istanbul a smaller car was described as functional while a Swedish respondent discussed how the cars would manage an off-road experience. Another aspect of functionality was how environmental friendly and how much gas the car would require.

“Something you buy when you live in the city and don’t have to go far. Doesn’t take much gas. Newer design, looks like a hybrid. Modern.” (Oksana)

Size was another factor that influenced the respondents’ perception of functionality.



Figure 4.6 Car #2

“#2 looks bigger. Hence, it looks safer. I mean...design...or appearance, affects the perception of safety. So it looks safer because of its design and look.” (Pinar)

Therefore, brands are not everything when it comes to cars but it is obvious that it is a high-involvement product where many factors come into play.

4.7.2 Microwave Oven Category

The dimension that was the most talked about in the interviews when it comes to microwave ovens was functionality. This dimension was received the most attention and several areas of the functionality was discussed. One was that there should a window in order for you to see your food is ready.

“No window, that’s bad. Makes it less functional.” (Oksana)

“#1 looks very attractive. It is important to see inside of the oven to check whether your meal is cooked or not.” (Beyhan)

Another aspect of the functionality that received a lot of attention was how simple the microwave seemed to be to use. The respondents from both countries agreed on that a microwave should have as few buttons as possible and be as user-friendly as possible.

“#2 looks professional. Sleek, without unnecessary features and buttons. No extras, just what you need.” (Viktor)

When comparing the microwave oven category with the cars category it is interesting to see that the evaluation factors differed quite radically. The microwave oven is obviously a much more low involvement product than compared to cars. The factors for favouring a microwave oven were much more rational. The functionality and quality was in focus and the aesthetical appearance did not have the same importance. Value was also important since the respondent did not seem as eager to spend more money than necessary on this kind of product.

4.7.3 Chairs Category

The chairs probably got the most diverse answers in terms of all aspects. The views and answers were very different among the respondents. It is hard to say the reasons for this. Chair #2 was the chair that stood out the most among the chairs and got a lot of attention. Many found this chair to be the most aesthetical attractive one so it seems that being original in your design is something that you get rewarded for. Several respondents said that they would choose this chair because of the way it looks. Interesting enough this chair also received many bad comments on the quality.

*“#2 is the best in design but will brake if you rock on them”
(Jonas)*

“Look better than it's functional and durable but looks great!” (Johan)

The respondents explained the view of the bad quality to originate from personal experiences of the chair breaking. This could however be explained by this chair being very popular in Sweden which has resulted in cheap knock-offs of the original that is in the picture. These knock-offs are often less qualitative. In Turkey, this chair was perceived more positively in terms of quality.

“For #2 [...] It has metal legs, looks like more durable. But I think it is not so comfortable. So maybe its functional value is little bit less than the others.” (Pinar)

However, there were also many other aspects that came into play for our respondents

when choosing their favourite chair. In terms on functionality, it was commented on that, chair #4 had a cushion and would be the most comfortable. Comfort and functionality was often related as closely connected.

“I can say that, #3 is the most simple one. It is directly related with function; I mean it is the simplest chair to sit on. OK...it is not so aesthetic...and I think it does not have to possess high quality. The most important aim of this is fulfilling the functional need.” (Pinar)

“#3 not comfortable at all. The second cheapest.” (Viktor)

In terms of quality, it was important how long the chairs will last. This was often related to the perception of the materials in the design.

“In terms of quality I would say #1 and #3 has very simple materials so they do not look high quality products to me. #4 also the same. But in #3 I think everything is designed well, and it looks more durable and functional because others are made of wood but this one is metal.” (Ceylan)

“In terms of quality...it is made of wood so I do not expect too much quality from it.” (Pinar)

“#4 has the most quality materials and #3 by the looks of the wood.” (Viktor)

4.8 IKEA Aspects

The IKEA - design focus relation is very high in Turkey with the rating of 3.92. That means almost all of the Turks agree that IKEA is design-focused company. However, although some Swedes also find it to be a design-focused company, the relation is not that high in Sweden. The rating is 3.39 and the majority is undecided about Ikea’s design focus. Maybe this is because of their reference points. As mentioned in the theoretical framework part, product variety in the specific market can affect the reference points of consumers, which lead to differences in the perceptions (Luce et al., 1999, Experiment 2). Maybe the Swedish market has more product variety in terms of well-designed furniture, which leads to a high reference point for Swedish consumers while Turks have considerably, lower reference points.

We also believe that branding is affecting the perceptions of the consumers. IKEA is a very well known company in Sweden because of its origin there. However, it is a considerably new entrant on the Turkish market. The country-of-origin could also effect

and change the perceptions. It seems that Turks relate Swedish or Scandinavian companies with Scandinavian design, which leads a better image in terms of design.

“I believe, Ikea’s name adds some value to its products. Maybe it is because it is a foreign company. I believe Turks have better images about foreign products.” (Pinar)

“The thing is I think, perhaps I’m a bit skewed because I’m Swedish where we most likely think about IKEA when we think about furniture but I mean there’s a big leap for the when you look at other companies.” (Per)

Above mentioned factors are explaining the significant difference (.000) between the chosen countries. Therefore, we believe that the difference in this aspect is not directly related with design perceptions of the consumers.

Another significant difference (.000) is the IKEA and aesthetics relationship. The rating of the Turkish results shows that almost all of the Turkish consumers agree that IKEA designs are aesthetically attractive. However, Swedes are undecided about IKEA designs’ aesthetical attractiveness. We see the biggest difference between the two countries in this aspect (diff. = 0.69) with significance value of .000.

The other three aspects concerning IKEA, quality, function and value, are close between Turkey and Sweden (differences 0.19, 0.02, 0.20). Both Swedes and Turks believe that IKEA does not offer high quality products. Turks are close to undecided (3.03) while Swedes are even has lower ratings (2.84). Consistently, qualitative interviews show the similarity:

“In terms of quality. IKEA do not have high quality especially in wooden products. I use lots of IKEA products at my home and I realized that wooden products are easily damaged even the minor hits.” (Beyhan)

“Truly I do not think IKEA products have high quality. But when I think of IKEA product, I do not think of using it for a long time. I think of using it for 2 years or so then change it. IKEA products are not so durable.” (Pinar)

“Not very sturdy or the best material, cheap material. But looks expensive and durable”. (Jonas)

“Looks qualitative but aren’t, by the looks they look qualitative but isn’t”. (Jonas)

“Lower region when it comes to quality but good design”. (Viktor)

Hence, Swedes and Turks showed similar responses when they talked about Ikea's quality. The IKEA and functionality relation also shows similarities between the two countries.

“Effective, functional products. Good cheap furniture”.
(Viktor)

“I do not associate IKEA with cutting edge design, but not ugly, but cheap and functional.” (Jonas)

“I think they're all more or less functional for their purpose. I can't think of any of their products that they sell that is non-functional.” (Per)

“For kitchen accessories. I believe IKEA products are highly functional.” (Beyhan)

“In terms functionality IKEA products are way practical than its competitors.” (Pinar)

“When I say IKEA, first I think about simplicity. In terms of functionality.” (Pinar)

“IKEA products, I believe is mostly about functionality and usage. Not much design, but the ease of use.” (Ceylan)

Concerning the last dimension, the IKEA - value relation, neither Swedes nor Turks are willing to pay more for IKEA products. Quantitative results show that, this relation has the lowest ratings for both countries (Turkey = 2.88 and Sweden = 2.68). Hence, consumers disagree that they can pay more for IKEA designs. Maybe, this perception is mainly because of the pricing strategy of IKEA, they are known for inexpensive products. This could lead to consumers being used to not having to pay a high price for their products while being prepared to pay more for well-designed products.

The qualitative interviews are also consistent with these results.

“Also, they are suitable for limited budgets. So, they can answer your needs but they do not offer anything more.”
(Ceylan)

“ I would pay more for some IKEA products, not for all of them.” (Pinar)

“Have regular good cheap chairs” (Viktor)

“So in terms of price and stuff like that and in terms of functionality it’s a really good bargain.” (Per)

Hence, the two countries show consistent responses in this aspect as well.

4.8 Importance of Cultural Perceptions of Design

The cultural background of a person is a very important factor in the way one perceives the world. Thompson et al. (1994) finds the cultural background to be fundamental in the way people make sense of their world and relate to items around them. They see consumers’ beliefs to be rooted in their cultural network. This cultural network is almost impossible to escape completely and can only be slightly altered (Thompson et al, 1994). McCracken (1986) also believe that the perception of design is dependent upon cultural and social forces. Several of our respondents have identified design of products with events or occasions of their background, for example family dinners etc.

“#4 looks too old-fashioned, reminds me of the chairs at my grandpa’s house” (Jonas)

“Something for the family, with a heavy set husband. I can see everyone chatting away all night long, where you can sit comfortably on that cushion” (Johan)

Jonas talks about one of the chairs that remind him of his grandpa and for Johan one of the chairs makes him think about a family dinner. For Oksana, with a background of living in an Eastern European country, the concept of design itself is connected with luxury.

“Design actually means creativity and something that comes with living in a developed country, a luxury thing” (Oksana)

Cultures and countries are also used as references point for the respondents when talking about design. Several used Japanese cars as an expression to describe the feeling and look of some the cars as well as the microwave ovens, the more technical products.

“Quality-vice it looks like it could be some Japanese cheap shit.”(Johan)

“The most expensive is #3 or #4. Because of the height of the car. Something that could be produced in Germany. #1 or 2 looks cheaper could be a Citroen or a Japanese car.” (Oksana)

Ehn and Löfgren (2001) discuss cultural learning as something that is created through repeated symbolic meanings and practical experiences. Our respondents use cultures to express symbolic meaning of the designs and what they mean to them. Cultures are used as a reference point when talking about design, for example German and Japanese quality perceptions. Design seems to evoke many cultural meanings but also have the possibility to travel across cultural boundaries. As described above, our culturally different countries have displayed numerous similarities. In Ehn and Löfgrens (2001) terms, it seems that both cultures have reached cultural learning about design by common symbolic meanings and practical experiences. Perhaps the marketplace is getting so similar through globalisation that we see the same products so much that we learn to think and appreciate the same things?

4.9 Scandinavian Design

Several (almost all) Swedish respondents used the word “clean” as a description of what they found to be an attractive design.

“Good design to me is clean and simple, stripped down, not too much detail, but still functional.” (Jonas)

“Good design is something, the style is very, simple and clean.” (Oksana)

This description is something that is very much associated with the Scandinavian design (Mannervik, 1994). So it is evident that their really exist a Scandinavian design discourse. This could be seen as a clear example of how the cultural network that Thompson et al (1994) discuss come into play. It is very hard for consumers to escape the beliefs that exist in society.

What is interesting is that not only the Swedish respondents used these expressions, so did the Turkish:

“I would definitely buy #1...#2 look expensive because of its look, #4 is simple and clean. However I would buy #1.” (Beyhan)

This seems to be another example of the similarities of how design is perceived in two culturally different countries. The concept of the simple and clean Scandinavian design has travelled to Turkey. Our empirical material shows similarities in every single dimension between the two countries.

4.10 Results Summary

Our quantitative and qualitative results are consistently showing that Turkish and Swedish design perception is very similar in many aspects. In both countries, aesthetical attractiveness is the most associated aspect with the better design. This aspect is followed by value and design relation aspect. We see a minor difference in the least associated aspects. For Turks, functionality comes in third place and quality is the least associated aspect, however, in Sweden quality comes in third while functionality aspect is the last. Although, there are some minor differences, all ratings are surprisingly close in the two countries and general design perception is looking somewhat similar in that sense. (See figure 4.7)

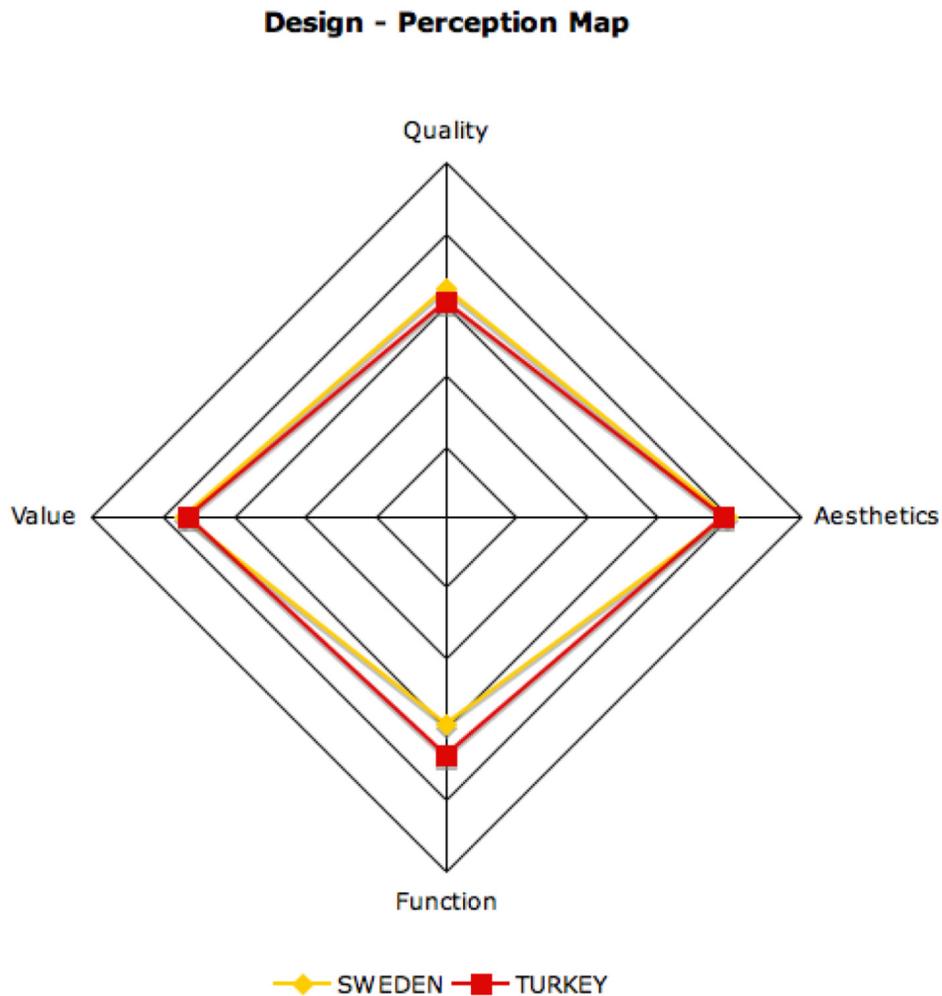


Figure 4.7 Results Summary - Design Perception Map

In terms of IKEA related aspects, some differences can be seen. (See figure 4.8) As explained earlier in this section, we believe that this difference is mainly because of the company image, country-of-origin and branding effects rather than design related issues. The in-depth interviews show very similar responses between the two countries related to IKEA as well, which make us believe that the difference in these surveys might be affected by above-mentioned factors.

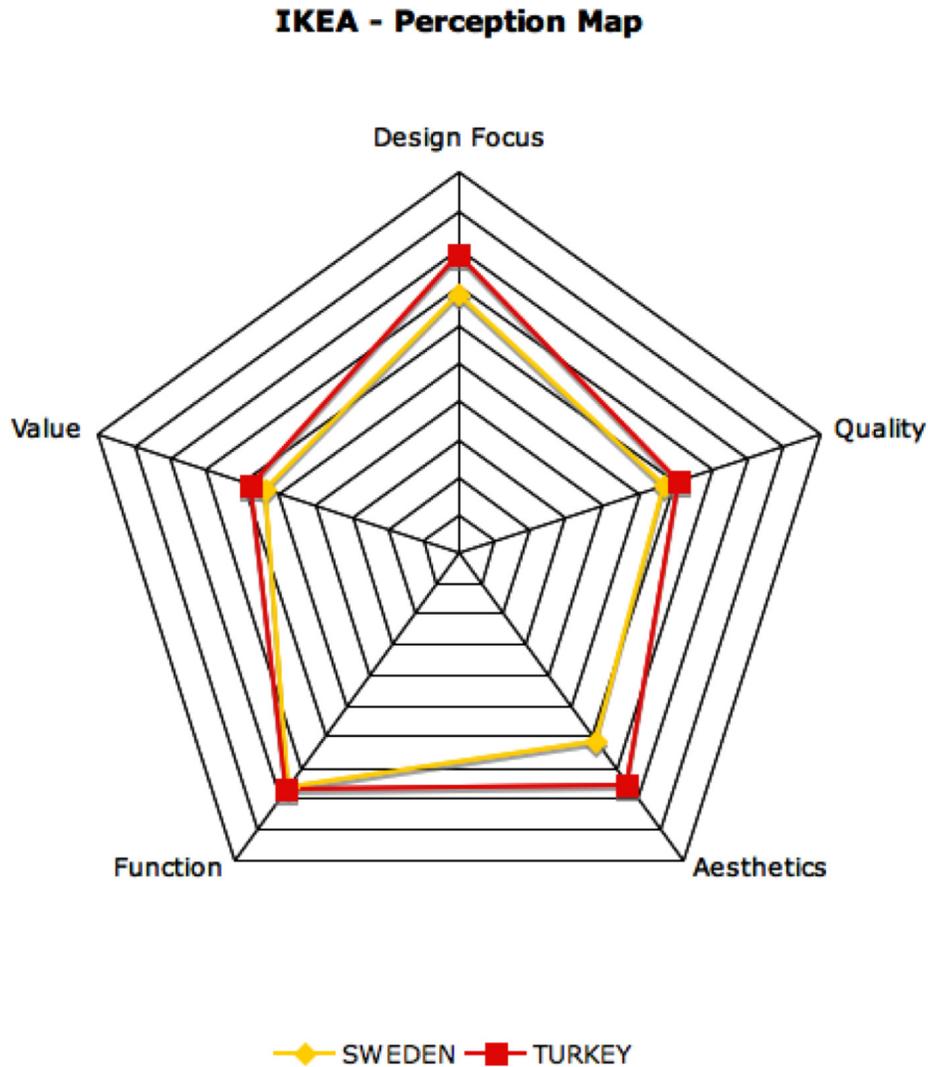


Figure 4.8 Results Summary - IKEA Perception Map

In addition, category-wise, surprisingly similar responses from the interviews about specific products prove that design perception definitely has a universal side. Some certain materials, shapes, sizes and details affect both Turks and Swedes' perceptions in the same way.

The country of origin effect seems to make a difference in all our categories. In the chairs category one chair was incorrectly referred to as being designed by a famous Danish designer. The respondent found this chair to be pretentious and had several of images that the came with being designed in Denmark. For the cars, several respondents refer to cars as possibly originating from Japan. Japanese cars had a negative meaning and were thought to mean less qualitative. Microwave ovens were also negatively commented upon as being Japanese or from an Eastern European country. Companies when designing new products should carefully consider this phenomenon. You will evoke feelings concerning the origin of the products. In our study, this fact was true for both our countries, where similar country-of-origin perceptions were found.

5. CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

In this section, we will present our conclusion for the study and present some managerial implications. In addition, limitations and future research ideas will be presented.

5.1 Time to Think Global

The results of our finding are somewhat surprising to us. We initially believed we would find more clear differences in our results. The two cultures are, as discussed previously, different in many aspects and this lead us to believe we would find several significant differences in terms of the perception of design. Instead, our results point in the complete opposite direction and make us conclude that the perception of design is more universal than we initially thought. Both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews show strong evidence of this fact.

There are numbers of examples of similarities in the perception of design in the empirical material, both in the quantitative and in the qualitative. Our respondents from Turkey and Sweden do for example perceive aesthetic attractiveness as the most significant dimension of design. They also make similar remarks about the aesthetics of the chosen photos and seem to have the same point of reference when it comes to design and aesthetics. The same goes for all the dimensions where even small details have had surprisingly similar comments in both countries. So, maybe design perception and appreciation is becoming increasingly global.

The more emotional dimensions, value and aesthetics, received the highest scores in terms of importance when it comes to design. The rational dimensions, quality and functionality, scored considerably lower and do not seem to have as high relevance for the design of a product. This is another example of the possibilities with design as a marketing tool. Design has the strength to communicate with the consumer on an emotional level. We have seen in our study that the design of cars evoked feelings of German quality while in fact being Japanese. Bloch (1995) says that designers should strive to design products that communicate meanings that are desirable in a certain culture. Our results show that this is possible and that it is possible to “cheat” the consumer in this aspect. It is possible to evoke feelings of a culture that is perceived as qualitative.

Consistently, there are examples of similar global design success stories lately. For instance, Sony’s design superiority; Sony is an international company that has managed to design its product in a successful way for an international audience. They have become known for a combination of the latest technologies with original design (Red Dot Online, 2008). The company has been rewarded with several design awards for their successful products such as Walkman and PlayStation. It has however not just been a success-story for the company, after the millennium, the company struggled (Red Dot Online, 2008). Not until recently have they been able to return to the old winning recipe of innovations

and designs. This since they work with design teams all over the world. They have design teams in Tokyo, Los Angeles, London, Singapore and Shanghai (Red Dot Online, 2008). Development of these internationally appreciated designs has become symbols and cultural assets worldwide. Samsung is another company, which has reached success with using an international design approach that has been able to boost their profits (Ørskov, 2005). Their designers ask consumers in a number of countries about their opinions before they start designing new products or re-designing existing ones. This approach has also proven to be successful. There seem to be a multi-cultural side of design that has the possibility to cross cultural barriers. Well-designed products are only as an acceptable object according to the cultural norms. Good design has the power of affecting and even changing cultures.

Another design trend in today's market is that Western European companies are being influenced by other cultures (Red Dot Online, 2006). African ethno elements such as colours forms and materials are incorporated into Western European design, especially in decorative elements in houses. New symbioses are created where inspiration is drawn between different cultures. These symbioses seem popular and are proof how cultural values and perceptions have the ability to travel across borders.

Globalisation is influencing designers (Red Dot Online, 2006). Products and people travel across the world and knowledge is exchanged across cultures. The cultural exchange increases the interest in foreign cultures, which also strengthen the need for regional and cultural identities. Owe Ronström describes the didgeridoo as a good example of this (Ehn, 1999). The didgeridoo originates from native Aborigines in Australia. The didgeridoo was developed into a global commercial industry by "alternative lifestyles", mostly the "new age" movement. In this context, the didgeridoo had a completely new meaning from the original context. When design and products travel across cultures, new meanings are created and there must be new answers for how to handle this. The global market consists of both global and local markets and both global and local tastes in harmony.

IKEA's success is a perfect example of global design. IKEA turned into a global cult and obsession with the help of its global designs. Anders Dahlvig, CEO of IKEA, says, "Awareness of our brand is much bigger than the size of our company." That is because IKEA is far more than a furniture merchant. It sells a lifestyle that customers around the world embrace as a signal that they have arrived, that they have good taste and recognize value. (Capell, 2005) "If it wasn't for IKEA," writes British design magazine *Icon*, "most people would have no access to affordable contemporary design." The magazine even voted IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad the most influential tastemaker in the world today (Capell, 2005). Hence, it shows that, great designs can influence all cultures and all nations in the same way. Those designs have the power of creating global cults.

In addition, the sales results show that, the global middle class that IKEA targets shares buying habits. For instance, the Billy bookcase, Lack side table, and Ivar storage system are best sellers worldwide. Spending per customer is even similar. According to IKEA,

the figure in Russia is \$85 per store visit — the same as in affluent Sweden (Capell, 2005).

Nevertheless, this does not mean that IKEA ignores cultural affects. IKEA know how to make slight modifications on their bestseller global designs according to cultures. For instance, Julie Desrosiers, the bedroom-line manager at IKEA of Sweden, visited people's houses in the U.S. and Europe to peek into their closets, learning that "Americans prefer to store most of their clothes folded, and Italians like to hang." The result was a wardrobe that features deeper drawers for U.S. customers (Capell, 2005). Another example from U.S. is about sizes. Sofas weren't deep enough, curtains were too short, and kitchens didn't fit U.S.-size appliances (Capell, 2005). Goran Carstedt, the former head of IKEA North America says, "American customers were buying vases to drink from because the glasses were too small". As a result, parts of the product line were adapted to fit U.S. sizes (Capell, 2005). That means, even IKEA have protected their globally appreciated designs in every country, they also adapt them with minor changes to fit a specific culture.

The significant differences that we did find in our survey results could be explained with the fact that we have a large sample. The differences in perception between the two countries concerning the functionality and design aspect, IKEA as a design focused company and IKEA's products being aesthetically attractive or not are statistically significant but in a human or business perspective hardly relevant. The differences are not big enough to be able to draw conclusions and the fact that there are small differences of the perceptions of IKEA between the countries is hardly surprising. The rest of our empirical data also point in the opposite direction of similarities between the two countries in terms of design perception. Therefore, we find the significant differences from our survey results to be of minor importance.

Our categories have also shown that the nature of the product has a lot of meaning when it comes to design perception. The level of involvement that the products represent influences the perception of the design. This phenomenon has been evident in both countries. For high involvement products design seem to be an even more useful tool in terms of influencing the perception of the product. One example of this phenomenon was evident with the cars category where the emotional dimensions value and aesthetical attractiveness were the central dimensions. These dimensions influenced the perceptions of the other dimensions and the perception of the design and product in general. For the lower-involvement products, the rational dimensions had a higher significance. The quality in terms of durability of the chairs and the functionality when it comes to how user-friendly the microwave ovens were are examples of this. The respondents were also much less keen on paying more for these products. Examples were in the chairs category where the respondents identified a chair as an expensive Danish designer chair but could not see the value in this and instead wanted a comfortable chair that would last a long time. So the conclusion that can be drawn from our categories is that the perceptions were similar between the two countries and that the nature of the product is important in terms of design perception.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Design has potential as a managerial and marketing tool. As our study has shown that, design can be perceived as universally attractive. This leads to the conclusion that you have the possibility to develop products that will appeal to people in all kinds of cultures. Sony, Samsung and IKEA are companies that have succeeded in this and much of their success seems to lie in an international thinking when it comes to developing their designs. A well-designed product has the ability to offer something that every culture can appreciate and enjoy. Taking different cultural design aspects under considerations and developing your product from this, seems like a successful approach. This means that you do not have to modify your design according to every cultural taste. Such an approach has possibility reduce costs for companies. However, this does not mean that companies have to ignore specific cultural preferences; on the contrary cultural tastes and preferences from each nation the company is operating in should be thoroughly examined and taken into consideration when designing a global product. Our findings indicate that creation of universally accepted designs is not impossible; it is achievable through finding an optimal compromise among different cultural preferences.

5.3 Limitations

We believe that, there are some limitations that affect our results. First, the Turkish empirical data, both surveys and interviews, comes from Ankara and Istanbul. Ankara and Istanbul are the most modern and developed cities in Turkey; therefore, the results can show more similarities with European countries, and Sweden, than other cities in Turkey. However, we actually believe that, these two cities are the most important markets in Turkey, because they have the biggest populations³ in Turkey. Hence, we believe although this situation can be a limitations for generalization of the results for Turkey, the results are still reliable for the purpose of our study.

Furthermore, half of the surveys in Ankara were collected in the Bilkent University campus and surrounding areas which is an upscale district in Ankara. Other half of the Turkish surveys collected at the new⁴ IKEA – Bayrampaşa Store in Istanbul. However, Swedish interviews were collected at the common spots in Lund and Malmö. Moreover, the quantity of surveys is different in Turkey and Sweden. In Sweden, there are 400 respondents for our survey, but in Turkey, it is limited to 200. Therefore, this inequality created a slight limitation when comparing the results.

In addition, as mentioned in the methodology part, the survey and interviews that was used in both Turkey and Sweden included the same questions, approaches but some small adjustments were made such as that the surveys, and interviews in Turkey were conducted in Turkish. This could be a limitation for our study when it comes to

³ Istanbul:12.573.836, the biggest city in Turkey. Ankara: 4.466.756, second biggest city in Turkey. Source: Turkish Statistical Institute.

⁴ Opened in 2007. It is the second IKEA store in Istanbul.

comparing the results between the two countries. It is possible that the translation could render in some slight alteration of the meaning, which could affect the result.

5.4 Future Research

Empirical data used in current paper was collected from respondents with an average age of 24-27. More than 90 per cent of respondents were under 30. It would be interesting to follow up this study by investigating similar phenomena among people who are over 30, and who represent the target audience for many companies.

Since current investigation was conducted about general design perceptions and perceptions of design in particular categories which are cars, microwave ovens and chairs, we would recommend to further deep study of design perceptions in other product categories in order the findings to be more generalizable across industries. A larger selection of product categories could be interesting to test the perception of design further. This study point to the importance of high/low involvement products and this would be interesting to investigate further with more product categories.

It can be interesting to do a similar study between more cultures to see if the result would be similar to this study. We have been limited to two European countries and to further investigate if there is something that can be called universal or global design it would be interesting to study other parts of the world such as countries in Asia, Africa, South America, etc.

Moreover, results of current paper were drawn from measuring the relevance of four dimensions: *aesthetic attractiveness, quality, value and functionality* in order to keep the research precise and not to overload the respondent. Therefore, it might be interesting to measure the relevance of other dimensions such as *symbolic value, exclusiveness, etc.*

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. The Survey



SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

Lund University

In the next set of questions, you are presented with a statement. You are being asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by indicating whether you: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), are Undecided (U), Agree (A), or Strongly Agree (SA).

Please indicate your level of agreement by circling the appropriate response.

1. A well designed product means high quality product.

SD D U A SA

2. A well designed product means aesthetically attractive product.

SD D U A SA

3. A well designed product means functional product

SD D U A SA

4. I can pay more for a well designed product.

SD D U A SA

5. Are you familiar with the IKEA brand?

YES NO

If YES;

6. IKEA is a design focused company.

SD D U A SA

7. IKEA designs are high quality products.

SD D U A SA

8. IKEA designs are aesthetically attractive.

SD D U A SA

9. IKEA designs are functional.

SD D U A SA

10. I can pay more for IKEA designs.

SD D U A SA

Please indicate your age :

Your gender : F / M

Thank you for your participation!

The results of these surveys will be used in the master thesis work of Karakas, D., Tranmark, A. and Sharipov, A. in Lund University School of Economics and Management. If you have any questions regarding the study please send an e-mail to: deniz.karakas.965@student.lu.se or denizkarakas@hotmail.com

7.2 Interviews

7.2.1 Interviews in Sweden

INTERVIEW 1

Interviewee : Viktor Asplund
 Age : 24
 Gender : Male
 Occupation : Student (Engineering)
 Nationality : Swedish
 Location : Lund, Sweden

General Design:

What comes into mind when you hear design?

“The looks, the aesthetical outside”.

What is good and bad design to you?

“Means that it should be appropriate. A car should not be too bulky but sleek”. “Can’t tell good from bad design. Depends on the category and use”. I go by looks”. “Creative design is something new that hasn’t been made before, for example macintosh compared to the old PCs”. “Should be sleek with not a lot of stuff on it. Old computers were big with a lot of unnecessary details”. “Good design has Minimalistic detail features”.

Cars Category:

Just looking at these cars what comes into mind?

“#3 looks pretty good. the most expensive, like a concept car”. “#4 and 1 look cheap”. “#1 the least expensive”. “#4 the second cheapest and then #2”.

“#1 is the most functional car due to the hatchback”. “The least functional either 2 or 3 because they seem bulky”. “A functional car should be more easy to manoeuvre”. “#4 more functional because of its small size”. They are probably all functional”. “A lot of aspects of functionality”.

“The most multi purpose one is #3. the newest and concept based”. “#1 the most functional when it comes to features”.

“Quality to me means state of the art equipment like a new fresh design”. “#4 the least here, looks cheap, general design. No unique features. Regular headlights. Nothing that sets it apart”. “#3 the most qualitative followed by #2 because of their unique features. Something that sets them aside, for example the headlights. Most uniquely detailed”.

Chairs Category:

Just looking at these chairs what comes into mind?

“#4 is the most expensive because of the straight lines. Recognise it from catalogues. Looks exclusive. Sleak lines. The feeling of it. The lines. No screws in it”. “Completely white, somewhat elegant. The other ones seem to be with cheaper materials”. “#1 has screws showing, makes it look cheap”. “#2 an easy design. Metallic legs makes it look cheap. Looks good but easy and cheap”. “#3 not comfortable at all. The second cheapest”. “#4 and 3 made to put cushions on which makes them look more expensive”. “A neat sleek design. Also with better material”. “#1 and 2 the most functional because of the rounded back support”. As well as support legs. “#4 looks big and heavy with no ergonomics”. “#2 looks like it can’t support much weight”. “The most functional is #3 followed by #1. then 2 and lastly 4”.

“#3 the most attractive one. #1 the least attractive”.

“The worst qualitative is #1. have seen them and are not good. Fall apart after a few years”. “#2 a cheap design without quality”. “#3 and 4 seem to be of good materials. The designs seem good as well when it comes to keeping the pieces together”. “#4 has the most quality materials and #3 by the looks of the wood.”

Microwave Ovens Category:

Just looking at these microwave ovens what comes into mind?

“#2 looks professional. Sleak without unnecessary features and buttons. No extras just what you need. A metallic outside”. “Most expensive. The second most functional”. “I wouldn’t have that in my kitchen”. “Best quality, looks professional”.

“#4 the least expensive. Crappy design. Nothing unique. Bad material. The least functional, lack of ergonomic order. No clean good menu, unorganized. The least attractive, ugly design. Two dots, ellipses. A plastic box – crappy quality. Would never buy this one”.

“#1 the most exclusive. The second most expensive. A metallic outside. Good functionality because of buttons. The most attractive. Looks a bit like cheap going exclusive. The second best quality, metallic finishing. Sturdy, no crappy plastics”.

”3 a good design but with cheap materials. The best functionality, one wheel to set everything”.

IKEA

What to you think of IKEA’s designs?

“They create well-designed furniture overall. In terms of design both good and bad”. They have a very wide variety of products”. “Very unique design”. “Have regular good cheap chairs”. “Lower region when it comes to quality but good design”. “Good looking products to a cheap price. Effective, functional products. Good cheap furniture”.

INTERVIEW 2

Interviewee : Jonas Nilsson
Age : 21
Gender : Male
Occupation : Student (Law)
Nationality : Swedish
Location : Lund, Sweden

General Design:

What comes into mind when you hear design?

“Basically creativity and technology, cell phones and video games. Secondary functional items like sofas and furniture”. Vague concept. “Outward shape to attract the customer”. Visual attractiveness.

What is good and bad design to you?

“Good design to me is clean and simple, stripped down, not too much detail, but still functional”. “stilren”. Minimalistic.

“Bad design is when there’s a lot of unnecessary details”. “Too much things and features”. “Too much in general”. “when they want to display all the items”.

Cars Category:

Just looking at these cars what comes into mind?

“#4 is my least favourite, the shape is not good, looks like a spaceship”. “Not very classy”. “The others look more clean, more stylish”.

“#1 looks clean, crisp. A little bit too big. Looks good. A little menacing”.

And with the dimensions in mind?

Quality: “#1 is attractive, maybe because of size. Look like the most rugged one. Would hold for a off-road drive. Looks sturdy”. “#4 looks plastic and cheap. Not like a quality car”. “#2 & 3 looks like city cars. Not very rugged”. “Qualitative but not outside the city, would not hold off-road”.

Value: “#3 looks the most expensive, with the tinted windows and the shape”. “Looks like a sports-cars, I associate expensive cars with sports-cars”. #4 the least expensive.

Aesthetic attractiveness: “#1 I like the shape”.

Functionality: “#1 since it’s the more rugged one. Could handle more stress. You could probably hit a deer or moose and keep going”. “almost look like a four-wheel drive car”. Durability aspects. “The one with the most features would be #3 (the one that looks the most expensive) based on the looks, sporty”. When it comes to driving. #1 looks the best.

Chairs Category:

Just looking at these cars what comes into mind? And with the dimensions in mind?

"#2 is the most aesthetically attractive. Looks like it's cut of one piece of wood". "Would work really well around a table with other chairs". "you see these chairs everywhere and they fit in all environment". "#4 looks too old-fashioned, reminds me of the chairs at my grandpa's house". "Boring and predictable".

Value: "I would have to say #3 unfortunately, it looks experimental. Not so run of the mill". "Very different than the other. A collection of sticks". "#1 looks the most professional". "Looks the sturdiest and most comfortable". "Not the most attractive, but the best to sit on". "#4 the cheapest looking. Typical IKEA furniture. The most regular of chairs. Traditional, you can find this chair everywhere".

Functional: #1 sturdiest and most comfortable. "#3 the unique chair, the least functional, I know from experience that it's not at all comfortable".

Quality: "#1 looks sturdy, in metal. Very well built". "#2 is the best in design but will brake if you rock on them". "#1 looks like you could kick and jump on it several times without breaking". "The rest looks like they could be ripped apart".

Microwave Ovens Category:

Just looking at these microwave ovens what comes into mind?

Aesthical: "#3 is it see through? Okay, then that makes it my favourite when it comes to design, very cool and clean". #4 least favourite. "I don't like the space concept, with the oval window and the extra buttons".

Value: "#3 looks the priciest, usually with kitchen supplies - if it looks clean and expensive then it probably is". "#2 is either very old or very specialised, looks like you could cook a whole chicken in it" "#4 is the least expensive. Something you could buy at ICA". #1 really high efficiency.

Functionality: "#3 looks easy to operate". "#1 user friendly as well". "#2 looks more like a tank than a oven, like you have to read the manual". "#4 also less user-friendly, looks like it has 400 programmes you have to choose from".

Quality:

"#2 the tank looks old, sturdy and like it would last forever". "#1 & 3 overall the most qualitative. Not overly complicated, will function a long time, has all the features you want". "Fit into the image I have of a good microwave oven".

IKEA:

What to you think of IKEA's designs?

“I do not associate IKEA with cutting edge design, but not ugly, but cheap and functional”. “Your home will look like everyone else’s home. The design is not wow but it’s good products”. “Not very sturdy or the best material, cheap material. But looks expensive and durable”. “Looks qualitative but aren’t, by the looks they look qualitative but isn’t”.

INTERVIEW 3

Interviewee : Johan Petersson
 Age : 25
 Gender : Male
 Occupation : Student (Translation English-Swedish)
 Nationality : Swedish
 Location : Lund, Sweden

General Design:

What comes into mind when you hear design?

“Aesthetic value is what comes to mind when thinking about design”. “Seducing the eye to please the customer”. “Price depends on the material”. “Functionality comes into mind when thinking about design”. “To make an impression by visual design”.

“Functionality important aspect of design. Building things and designing things. Depends on the products in terms of what dimensions is the most important.”

What is good and bad design to you?

“Good design is user-friendly”. “When you don’t have to use manuals, assembling for example”. The handling. “Clean design, for example on webpages”. “Clean white pages with one button to push”. Apple – PC. Apple more user friendly but always takes time to get to know. Simplicity.

Chairs Category:

Just looking at these chairs what comes into mind? And with the dimensions in mind?

“Number 1 looks like it’s supposed to be, should be slick but didn’t reach all the way, the designer has not reached his goal”. Sturdy and will live forever. Well-assembled. Not very comfortable. “I would consider buying this chair”.

2. “the visual design is very nice”. “Will break often if you lean backwards”. Impressions of being delicate. “Look better than it are functional and durable but looks great!” “Fits in many different settings, could be used in a conference room a dining room and so on, basically anywhere”. Multi-purpose. “it’s classic, it looks great”. “I really like the visual design, I looks like a spider”. “the aesthetic value is way higher than the functionality or the quality”.

3. “I don’t like it at all”. “Don’t like the looks of it”. “Stiff hard and something that will break because of all the pieces holding it together”. “looks one generation too old”. “looks like it’s glued together”.

4. "it's got a cushion to sit on – I like that! And a nice long back – that's good as well". "Looks like something that will last". "Probably something that you will find at a dinner table". "Looks sturdy – something that will last". Very durable, sticks between the legs. "Something for the family, with a heavy set husband". "I can see everyone chatting away all night long where you can sit comfortably on that cushion".

"Aesthetically #2 is definitely my favourite. Runner up #1. least favourite is #3. #4 looks okay but not dashing". "if I would buy a chair without knowing the purpose I would buy #2".

Value: "it's not the same which one is the most expensive and which one I would pay the most for". "#3 looks like someone tried to make a cool chair and it is probably really expensive". "Like a hip, cool designer attempted but didn't achieve that at all". Thinks that is the most expensive. "Could be a Danish designer that made it". #1 the cheapest one, but that doesn't mean it doesn't look good. Looks like it's made to look cheap so that anyone can afford it. #4 the second cheapest one. #2 the second most expensive. Would pay most for #2 and the least for #3. "#1 is the cheapest one but that doesn't mean that it doesn't look good, it's made to look cheap so that everyone can afford it".

"Quality with #3 is at its worst, looks like it's going to break in one week". "I know that #2 has bad durability and strength, from my own experience". The second one. #4 definitely the best one. "#1 has wood and metallic and looks strong and durable – the second best one". Would probably last longer than #4 but could become rusty. "#2 och #3 looks fragile".

Cars Category:

Just looking at these cars what comes into mind? And with the dimensions in mind?

"with #1 the aesthetical value is pretty high, there's a thought behind it". "When looking from the front you can see a face and this car has all those elements, looks cool when you can see a face, more organic, smooth and soft". "Quality-wise it looks like it could be a Japanese cheap shit". Pretty high quality. Moderately price, the average person can afford it. "Looks like they have tried to fit as much as possible into a small space". "Most of the essential stuff".

"#2 looks more pricey". "The aesthetical design is much more clean and slick". "It looks like it supposed to be for more mature people, business men or women, looks good though". "Quality-wise it looks good, like it's got a lot of features like GPS". "Probably very functional". "you to know to see the logo"! "looks more like a Chrysler than something Japanese". "Something you could buy if you've got a lot of money". "it's hard to see from design". "if you had a lot of money it would probably be worth it".

"#3 is probably the car with most aesthetical thought behind it, streamlined, big tires, futuristic". "Metallic and shining". "Attractive to younger males". "Cool cars for cool guys, probably very expensive". "has many cool features, dvd screen rather than four wheel drive". "Something to show off rather than use". "Functional since it can take you from a to b". "functional to things that you don't need – add-ons". "you can see the designer behind it has got a lot thought into it". "pricey, looks good".

"#4 looks really crappy". "I mean the visual design is just horrible – it's too high from the ground, the roof is high". "The grill is pathetic". "Like a cheap traditional family car for everyone to afford, but probably very safe". "Something more functional than image/aesthetical".

“Moderately priced – affordable”. “Horrible aesthetics”. “No add-ons, but probably very functional and very safe”. “Safety thought behind it”.

Most expensive #3. cheapest is #4. looks #4 is worst and #3 is the coolest. Functionality #2 the best and #4 is the worst. Quality and functionality hard to separate. Quality #2 or #1 the best. #4 the worst.

Microwave Ovens Category:

Just looking at these microwave ovens what comes into mind? And with the dimensions in mind?

“#1 looks like some kind of OBH nordica – designing good life”. “user-friendly, classic design”. “Functional and robust, but yet aesthetical”. Robust quality. “Looks like a really good product”. “#3 Looks like you could cook a turkey in it”. “Could be for professional use”. “Not many options- but it’s a microwave”. Looks expensive, functional and qualitative. Looks good overall. “#2 looks like a mini fridge or a dishwasher”. “Really ugly with its big digits”. “Futuristic Japanese cooking design”. “a touch screen is positive”. “Looks expensive though it should be cheap, it’s probably over-priced”. “I would never buy or use it”. “#3 looks very good, easy to handle”. “Not top of the line but aspiring to use”. “Bit more expensive but probably worth it because of the aesthetics”. “#4 looks like something from space, ugly, full of buttons, way too many”. Not functional. Cheap. “#2 #4 looks like rubbish”.

Aesthetical favourite is #1, looks cool. #1 the most expensive as well. #2 the most ugly one. #1 the best looking. #1 the most expensive, #4 the least. #4 the least functional and qualitative one. #1 the better in quality and functional. I like #1. #2 & #4 looks like something you buy at a cheap store.

INTERVIEW 4

Interviewee : Oksana Almsudi
 Age : 22
 Gender : Female
 Occupation : Student (Economics)
 Nationality : Swedish
 Location : Lund, Sweden

General Design:

What comes into mind when you hear design?

“Design means actually creativity and something that comes with living in a developed country, a luxury thing”. “Start to develop a design when you have the money to differentiate your products, something more than the original idea”. “Something that makes life a bit easier”. “Something that is designed better than the original idea”.

What is good and bad design to you?

“Good design is something, the style is very, simple and clean. Not hard to use. Sometimes things get too complicated and over-designed and I don’t like that”.

Cars Category:

Just looking at these cars what comes into mind?

"#4 is more like a family car. More safe and easy. Not very expensive. Looks older something from the ninetens".

"#3 looks more like something you would buy when your family is grown up and you want to spend some money on yourself. More expensive. For rich people, luxurious".

#1 is more like a family car. Something you buy when you live in the city and don't have to go far. Doesn't take much gas. Newer design, looks like hybrid. Modern".

"#2 a car you use when you drive on the freeway. Lower and smaller tires. 2 & 3 looks a lot alike. More expensive and luxurious".

"#2 #3 you buy when you have a lot of money".

"The most functional is #1 then 4, 3 and 2 are similar".

Quality: 3 or 2 because they look more expensive and the cars that are more expensive are usually

Value: "the most expensive is #3 or #4. because of the height of the car. Something that could be produced in germany. 1 or 2 looks cheaper, could be a Citroen or Japanese car".

"#4 not attractive. Don't have kids to drive around so I would have no use for this car".

Aesthically attractive: "#3 the best aesthetically".

Chairs Category:

Just looking at these chairs what comes into mind?

Aesthetics: "#2 the most designed one. Modern look. Black, crome legs. Not wooden. The most expensive. Will break more easily, it's not very functional. Could fall apart". "Can pay more for the design and the modern look. Something you have in an expensive stylish home".

"#3 4 just regular chairs".

"For function I would buy #4 because of the cushion that is soft to sit on".

"#1 something you find in dining room in a school. It will last a long time".

"#3 also designed. Don't cost a lot but more expensive than 1 and 4. the second most expensive".

"2 & 4 are the least expensive".

“#1 & 4 very similar. #4 more features. #1 more functional”.

Microwave Ovens Category:

Just looking at these microwave-ovens what comes into mind?

“All of them are as functional”. “#1 looks older, means it doesn’t heat up as much as the others. No plate that spins. Least functional, the least developed”.

“#2 old as well but it’s more designed. Had more time to spend on it. No window, that’s bad. Makes it the less functional”. “Sucks because of size and absence of window. The least functional”.

“#4 is something you use a lot. We have the same at home and at work”. “Touchscreen buttons is good”. “More family. More durable”. “Too many buttons with too many choices”. “The most useful one. Built to last longer than #3. the most functional”. “The best quality because of a lot of buttons”. “Could stand a lot of beatings, durable”.

“#3 looks more designed. Very simple and the newest one”. “With a window. The most attractive because of the simple colour and not a lot of buttons”. “And simple and digital display”. “Second most functional”. “The most expensive because of the design, like bang & olufsen. Not like Electrolux”.

INTERVIEW 5

Interviewee : Per Annerstedt
 Age: : 28
 Gender : Male
 Occupation : Statistiska Centralbyrån (Economics)
 Nationality : Swedish
 Location : Lund – Sweden

Notes: 1. The picture numbers has been changed during the work of the thesis. The pictures in this interview does not correspond with the pictures presented in the methodology part. This was a "test interview". The interview is added here since we still find there to be valuable empirical data in this interview.

2. This interview script has different from others in terms of format. Whole script is presented below.

A: General question – what do you think of design? What comes to mind?

P: Well, generally it’s, well, I see it’s like the form and how things look, more or less. I usually focus much on product design when I think of design. I see certain products, companies.

A: What kind of products?

P: yeah, well any kind of product, general consumer based products. But I must also say that, you know, when I think of design there’s something, someone, who have designed it. It’s nothing that just pops up. It’s a certain idea or something that has created the thing just with a certain idea in mind. That’s what I think.

Az: when you think of a product design for example. What exactly comes to mind, what does this design mean? For example products might differ by design.

P: Yeah, it's of course the form of the product and also the colour and also the material that's the main thing that I look at.

Az: so mostly tangible things.

P: Yeah.

Az: Form you mean shape?

P: Yeah.

Az: alright, and...

A: Is there anything that you think characterize good design? Is there any characteristics or something that defines good design?

P: certain things have certain audiences. So I mean bad design, that's, you know, products or something that doesn't really focus on me but if you want if I should say an example of that, I mean I'm into computers and computers before looked boring you know this beige thing with straight lines and that didn't do it for me. But I mean, yeah.

Az: so personally for you there's straight and simple design is not very attractive?

P: Well it can be, I mean, it's a hard question you know. As I said before it's a certain audience that would like it so I wouldn't say that the design..

Az: We're asking for your opinion.

P: My opinion, okay. I depends, I don't really like those if you come to colour.

Az: okay.

P: I don't like these bright things, I don't like bright colours. I want it, you know, amped don't a bit. And also, I mean, in general. If you have any specific questions.

A: Yeah, we'll get to more specific questions later on.

Az: So we are now focusing on four dimensions concerning design. It's quality, aesthetical attractiveness, how it looks, the price or the value of the product and the functionality. For example design what does design mean to you in these terms? A well designed cup or anything? Does it mean that this product is of high quality or low quality? Like depending on design?

P: Yeah, I, for me personally, you know, relate design to form, aesthetics and stuff like that you know. But of course you have a valid point in saying that the idea of the product and stuff. For me personally sure – how you use it, is it functional? Is very important but I don't really consider price as a part of design actually.

Az: not the price I mean, the value of the product. For example the better design or the more value of the product. In your perception is that way?

P: you know, for me personally I really don't consider that when I think of design. But of course when you study design or something, which I haven't done. But I mean, you know, there are certain things that when

you design a computer system or something like that. It's not a certain form per se. then you can talk about the complexity of the product and stuff like that. I don't know if that really answered your question but..

Az: Yeah, about the price actually the question is can you pay more for better designed products? For example if you have two products and you think than the other is better designed than the other one but all the other characteristics are the same so would you pay more for...

P: sure, sure. Yeah, definitely yes.

Az: it's not a matter of money, so design can win some price for you?

P: yeah yeah, sure. No doubt.

Az: alright, so.

P: but also the form the aesthetics, how functional it is for me.

A: but it's the aesthetics that comes first into mind when you think about design.

P: sure, but also I mean, when I see a product that's what I think of but I also see that it has to have some kind of functionality. The buttons in the right place and stuff like that.

Az: Yeah, so just by looking at the product, there are two products, and by looking at them, they are differently designed and you can't tell if it's more or less functional just by design?

P: yeah.

Az: before trying it out.

P: right.

Az: now, let's move on to some photographs. Let's begin with these ones. Let's make it more interesting men's stuff.

P: so I'm going to look at pictures and say what I think or!?

Az: yeah, kind of. So there are four pictures of four different cars and they have no brands so that they don't confuse you. And now you have in mind those four dimensions that we talked about earlier and there can be any other dimension that you may think of.

P: okay, and you want me to rank these?

Az: kind of but think of each product and look at each of them and say first of all which one is the most impressing or more appealing to you.

P: for these factors you mentioned?

Az: for any factors. Let's say generally.

P: if you help me out I can definitely answer the question at least. Okay, of course this car (#1) strikes me, the red one with the black stripes is the most appealing I think. Even though I said before that it's really strong colours, the form really catch my eye. I think the lines are very nice, nicely done. I can't say anything about the price but it gives me a feeling that it's more expensive than most cars.

Az: Any of these cars?

P: I think so. Perhaps that one (#3) is a little bit high tech. you know you can't really see if you're not inside the car.

Az: Yeah, but just by design.

P: just by outside design I would go for that one (#1). Okay, did I miss anything or...

Az: this is in terms of attractiveness or?

P: attractiveness mostly. You know, functionality perhaps not. It looks like a car that has a lot for requirements for gasoline.

Az: so which one would you think have the highest quality? Like overall quality. Just by looking at their shape, colour of anything?

P: ...when it comes to quality, you know I think design is like a great factor but I also you know quality you also have to add in some other factors such as usage of gasoline, if it possible for someone to rob you, takes the car from you. I think a lot of that when buying bikes for example. I don't want the most attractive one because you know it'll get stolen so. Perhaps this black one (#1) with black stripes is not the greatest idea then. But I mean in terms of functionality I can't really say that if I get a family, it doesn't seem like it has a backseat so it's not that functional. Well so in terms of functionality I would go with the more commonly, for me, usable of accessible car.

Az: yeah, but all of these (#2,3,4) have four seats but they're different anyway.

P: so I would go for that one (#3). It looks nice.

Az: it looks nice!? It looks, does it look more prestigious?

P: no, no, no. it looks more expensive look of it.

Az. More luxurious?

P: I can see myself in that one.

A: You can identify yourself with that one?

P: Yeah, haha, I'm luxurious. No, I'm just kidding but I mean you should strive to have the car that suits your personality, I think. So more in a few years. So I would go with that one. The shaded grey car (#3).

Az: alright, that's in terms of functionality. In terms of quality you said this one (#1), right.

P: in terms of quality if go with number 3 but in terms of design, attractiveness I would choose this one (#1).

Az: and the final, the. Okay for which of these cars would you pay the most price? Imagine you have enough money.

P: okay, as of now. In terms of my needs and stuff I would definitely go with number 1. it probably turns out as a really bad investment but I would go with that one.

Az: me too actually. Okay, so next category. So lets move to more practical things now. You're not married, right!?

P: no.

Az: but some day I think you're going to need a microwave oven.

P: yeah. The number 2, the microwave number 2 sort of looks like my old one that I bought for a hundred kronor a while back.

Az: so you would catch your eye at this really cheap one?

P: no, no, no. it looks really expensive with all the functionality on it so but I had one that you could not look into so you couldn't the tray spinning.

Az: yeah, yeah, okay.

P: and it was huge. I mean you can't imagine how big it was. It was an unreal size. Really thick. It looked like something from, I shouldn't say Russia, but the soviet union... haha. Should I rank them again or?

Az: yeah, if you can. Or maybe more dimensions.

P: yeah, I would probably go with number 1, actually.

Az. 1?

A: as the most?

P: as the most, the most in terms of design and also attractiveness and design, yeah.

A: and why, is there any reason for it?

P: yeah, I mean I think the other ones looks really, not so nice. I really like the form of it and it also seems like it has the most watt, the most power I think. Just by looking at it. It seems like it has more power than number 3 and 4 at least. Perhaps not 2.

Az. In terms of functionality this is better.

P: I can see this having, number 2 seems more like industrial, like having in a restaurant or something like that, really advanced. So I would definitely go with 1.

Az: mm, what about just in terms of attractiveness, the visual?

P: with the visual I would go with 1 also.

Az. And you think this will fit your house and this is beautiful.

P: I mean I like number 3 but it has this horrible, what do you call it?

A: handle, or?

P: yeah, handle. The 4 looks really really cheap. It's not made of plastic but it seems like it, a lot plastic.

A: so for this category functionality seems more important? If you were buying a microwave oven.

P: I don't know, yeah yeah, probably. If you compare it with a car. I don't know, perhaps.

Az: so actually, for which of these would you pay more?

P: If I have an unlimited amount of money I would still buy number one. Even though I don't think it's the most expensive I think number 2 is more expensive.

Az: Well, let's imagine they don't have a price.

P: well, I will definitely go with number 1.

Az: alright that's basically it. So in your perceptions number 1 is actually better than the other ones almost in all these categories.

P: yes.

A: moving on.

Az: next category.

P: wow, you've move found some different kinds of designs or kinds of chairs.

A: same approach as before.

P: I mean here you have an armchair, here you have a certain more or less a chair so it's not really in the same league but I, yeah, I depends on what I need and...

A: but just for the design.

P: yeah, just looking at the design, I mean number 4 looks cool. A little bit like hanging out. I wouldn't pay anything for number 3, it looks old. And I've sat in those chairs and it's not comfy either and you can see that so. I try to be as clear as possible. I think I would go for number 1 actually. Because it looks more comfortable and just in terms of looks...

Az: it looks more comfortable? What about this (#4)?

P: yeah I mean, sure. But in terms of comfortable I don't like sitting that low. So I wouldn't feel that comfortable actually. Sitting so low.

Az: and number 2?

P: I looks really stiff, you know. Perhaps in an office but not in my home, idon't know. In terms of functionality I think I'll go with 1 and also in terms of looks, aesthetics I would go with that one?

Az: do you think it looks like relaxing and bla bla bla?

P: well you can't really compare it to an armchair but I mean yeah it looks comfortable it looks to fill it's purpose as something you can have sort of close to a desk or something.

Az: and in terms of price what do you think? What would you pay more for?

P: yeah, well.

Az: you can rank two this time. If you say I would pay for this one and I also wouldn't mind paying for this one.

P: either 1 or 2 then.

Az: because they're so different and they have slightly different purposes.

P: I would still go with the 1 and 2. mostly number 1 but I can think of taking number 2. because I looks good but I don't want to sit in it.

A: which one do you think is the most expensive?

P: I think that's the most interesting question actually. My perception on what's most valuable or can be priced that much. Actually I would go with number one because it looks more like it's done by a designer. This one, number 2, you know, because they use darker wood and also it seems like the might have some leather in it so it might seem more expensive to produce but I still think number 1 is the most expensive because of the margin with some kind of more developed design strategy.

A: good.

Az: I think it's really interesting when you don't see the brands and discuss the design because if you write IKEA here or something you will think this is not expensive.

Az: in terms of IKEA, if we move to IKEA stuff. What do you think of IKEA? In terms of design, because try to image because you know IKEA very well because you're living in Sweden and it's almost a part of your culture and what do you think of IKEAs design in terms of these dimensions? What do you think?

P: I think they're all more or less functional for their purpose. I can't think of any of their products that they sell that is non-functional. So that's a big part of it and I also think that you get a real good design for I mean for in terms of something that a little bit stands out and makes your life a little bit more exciting.

Az: a little bit more unique.

P: a bit unique. Still even though everyone buys them. I don't think they're really good design actually. Both their aesthetics and also functionality, price of course.

Az: what about the, does it mean quality to you? For example when you see an IKEA chair compared to some other chair? An IKEA chair as you said is really beautifully uniquely designed so does this better design because you say that this design is pretty okay more than good. In these terms does this well-designed product mean quality for you?

P: the thing is I think, perhaps I'm a bit skewed because I'm Swedish where we most likely think about IKEA when we think about furniture but I mean there's a big leap for the when you look at other companies. For example when you buy certain office products or chairs and stuff like that. There's kinnarps which does it, it think they are a little bit better looking and also of course well suited for the situation of sitting for several hours. But I mean then price comes into play and you have to pay at least you know, 200 or 300% more for these kind of products that they sell. So I think here in Sweden it's a huge leap, we don't really have any other company that can compete with them. so in terms of price and stuff like that and in terms of functionality it's a really good bargain. I think you get really high quality for such a low price. But of course those products they have can always be better and certain competitors are yeah I don't know.

Az: yeah I think that was pretty much it. Thank you for your answers!

7.2.2 Interviews in Turkey

INTERVIEW 1

Interviewee : Pinar Boyabatlı
 Age: : 23
 Gender : Female
 Job : Employee of Akbank⁵ (Banking & Finance)
 Nationality : Turkish
 Location : Istanbul – Turkey

General Design:

“First of all, a well-designed product should be usable...functional. Might be aesthetic, to please the eye. But, for me...functionality must be at the first place.”

“In terms of economical value and design...Again, the functionality is the most important criteria for me to pay more for a product...It should match my needs better than the competitor products. Therefore, my pricing criteria is related with functionality.”

“Quality and design do not have to match every time. For instance, there can be a well-designed product made of cheap and less durable materials. There are some products which are eye catching but lack of quality.”

“Well-designed product is aesthetically attractive and if I believe that the product is a well-designed one then it gives the impression of a functional product. Not every time but it can...”

Chairs Category:

“#2 is different than others. In terms of design and appearance. Others are more close to classic products and look like each others. Especially #3 and #4 is very similar.”

“I can say that, #3 is the most simple one. It is directly related with function, I mean it is the simplest chair to sit. OK...it is not so aesthetic...and I think it does not have to possess high quality. The most important aim of this is fulfilling the functional need.”

“#1 looks more neat. Functionality is also exist. I think they spent more time for the design of it...I mean there are some details...upper part is shorter, legs looks longer so it has a little bit different design...but it is not so different...I mean, I do not say this is a high priced product.”

“#4 is also looks simple. But, it has additional cushion on it, so maybe it can be more expensive, because of the extra material. Looks functional as well. In terms of quality...it is made of wood so I do not expect too much quality from it.”

“For #2...as I said it has a different design...It has metal legs, looks like more durable. But I think it is not so comfortable. So maybe it's functional value is little bit less than others.”

⁵ One of the biggest Turkish banks.

“If I need to buy one of these. I would buy #4 first. Because it looks comfortable and functional. Although I believe #2 has a better design, functionality comes first and I buy #4. But I would also consider #2. I choose between two of them.”

“I believe, the highest quality one is #4. But, the most expensive one #2 because of better design and different materials, modern design means higher price.”

Microwave Ovens Category

“#1 is...ordinary, classic microwave appearance. The front cover shows inside, etcetera. You put something and it cooks. But others looks...especially #2 has a lot more metallic look and it looks much more charismatic. It is visually more attractive than #4.”

“#4 is smaller. Aesthetic. Even more aesthetically attractive than #2.”

“The simplest one is #1 in terms of appearance.”

“ The most attractive one is #3. I like it very much.”

“In terms of quality. I would say #2 has the best, because it’s design looks much more durable. Also the most expensive one...again...#2 I guess. It looks bigger and when you look, it looks like it has more function than others. So I think, the most functional one is again #2.”

“If I need to buy one...I would buy #3. Because I really like its design. I think it is visually attractive.”

Cars Category:

“For instance. #1 has an ugly design...for me. I don’t like the front of it. The part between the headlights. I don’t like it.”

“When it comes to cars. For me, the visual attractiveness is very important. I think it is also very important in the whole cars industry. So, in cars, attractiveness is the most important criteria for me. Afterwards, functionality.”

“#2 looks bigger. Hence it looks safer. I mean...design...or appearance, effects the perception of safety. So it looks safer because of its design and look.”

“In terms of quality, I would say #3 again...again because of its look.”

“In terms of functionality. If I use the car in the city centre, especially in the Turkish environment, I would choose a smaller one. So...I guess...if I consider the sizes...#1 looks smaller so I would choose that one in terms of functionality. More simple...maybe it looks less safe because of its look but in Turkey smaller cars has an advantage in terms of functionality.”

“I think the most expensive one is #3. Mostly, because of its bigger size. But I would say it looks gives the impression of better quality materials.”

“If I have the money. I guess, I would buy the #3...Even the rims of it looks beautiful.”

IKEA

“When I say IKEA, first I think about simplicity. In terms of functionality.”

“When you look at the [IKEA] products, some products look very simple, some products look very different...and they are attractive so they affect you. But sometimes, they affect you with their functions.”

“For instance, I bought a dinner table lately [from IKEA] and I did not search for very attractive or fancy one. The most important part was the function for me. So, also, I did not look for a very high quality product. Truly I do not think IKEA products have high quality. But when I think of IKEA product, I do not think of using it for a long time. I think of using it for 2 years or so then change it. IKEA products are not so durable.”

“But in terms of...for instance kitchen accessories...maybe you can use them [IKEA products] for a long time.”

“In terms functionality IKEA products are way practical than its competitors.”

“There some products which you can not find easily in other stores. For instance, I have never seen, in other stores, a tray like product that you use to put your laptop computer on your lap comfortably. So, I think it is a brilliant product. It was 35 TRY, I bought a six person dinner set for 30 TRY for instance. So it is expensive. But if you say I need to choose either of them, then I would choose the laptop thing because it is both functional and very sweet thing, in terms of design, and as I said I have never seen that product before. So I pay more for that type of different products without worrying about the price.”

“ I would pay more for some IKEA products, not all of them. For instance, I can pay more for IKEA sofas because they are functional, comfortable, well-designed and simple not like other bigger furnitures in Turkish market.”

“I believe, IKEA’s name adds some value to its products. Maybe it is because it is a foreign company. I believe Turks have better images about foreign products.”

INTERVIEW 2

Interviewee : Beyhan Güvenkaya
Age: : 27
Gender : Female
Job : Accountant (Alfa Kimya – Textile Chemicals Co.)
Nationality : Turkish
Location : Istanbul – Turkey

General Design:

“A well-designed product should be practical, easy to use, mobile...”

“For instance, we see lots of products at the shop windows, I believe a well-designed product should catch your eye.”

“At the first look, aesthetical attractiveness of the product is very important.”

“In terms of value...If it is a well-designed product with multi function and considerable quality I can pay whatever the price is without any regret at all.”

“I believe that well-design should be modern.”

Chairs Category:

“I believe #2 is the most attractive one because it looks beautiful.”

“#4 is so ordinary. It is a standard chair.”

“I do not like wooden furnitures, I would prefer the one with metal legs.”

“I believe #1 has the highest quality. It looks durable and expensive.”

“I would buy #2 because its design is very attractive.”

Microwave Ovens Category:

“#1 looks very attractive. It is important to see insede of the oven to check whether your meal is cooked or not.”

“#2 looks like it has more function than others, mostly because of the buttons at the panel. There are a lot of buttons I mean...”

“I believe the most expensive one is #3”

“I would definetely but #1...#3 look expensive because of its look, #4 is simple and clean. However I would buy #1”

Cars Category:

“#3 is the most attractive one. It looks simple and gentle in a way. Others are looks more rough. Also I believe, #2 is the most expensive one.”

“I believe #2 is also suitable for families because of its size and therefore it is functional.”

“#1 has only two doors which is not so functional I believe.”

“For the #4...I can say...I don't like its color.”

IKEA

“In terms of quality. IKEA do not have high quality especially in wooden products. I use lots of IKEA products at my home and I realized that wooden products are easily damaged even the minor hits.”

“For kitchen accessories. I believe IKEA products are highly functional.”

“In terms of aesthetic attractiveness, I believe it is very attractive, in the store you can see lots of beautiful products everywhere and I really like spending time at IKEA, sometimes I just lost my sense of time at IKEA.

“I believe IKEA has nice prices.”

INTERVIEW 3

Interviewee : Ceylan Aytek
Age: : 21
Gender : Female
Job : Student (Economics)
Nationality : Turkish
Location : Istanbul – Turkey

General Design:

“Design means originality for me. I mean well-designed products should not be common ones in the market, not mass-produced...different in a way...And, the designer must put something personal in it.”

“A well-designed product is very functional, very aesthetic, easy to use and it can grab attention. Also, it should offer something different than ordinary products.”

“But I think the most important thing is product. Because, if a product can be considered as high quality then it should also be functional.”

“But, a well-designed product cannot create the image quality for me. We cannot say a well-designed product is a high quality product directly.”

“For instance, it can be a visually attractive product but it is not the only thing. The designer must possess some technical background about the product s/he design. For instance, a person who do not have enough knowledge in electronics designs a TV set just saying ‘It will look good’, then this will not work at all.”

Chairs Category:

“I like #2 the most. Because it is different.”

“#3 looks very uncomfortable. Also it has a very common style.”

“#4, 3 and 1 is common everywhere and I think they are similar. So, I believe there is also not much difference between them in terms of value. Maybe, #4 can be more expensive because of the cushion on it. Looks more comfortable.”

“#2 looks more comfortable and functional, I can guess it from the shape of it. Also, there is some design in it, I mean its designer put some personal view in it. But others are common styles, you can find them everywhere.”

“In terms of quality I would say #1 and #3 has very simple materials so they do not look high quality products to me. #4 also the same. But in #2 I think everything is designed well, and it looks more durable and functional because others are made of wood but this one is metal.”

“I think the most expensive one is #2 but I would buy that one if I need to buy one of these, because it has the better look and it looks more functional.”

Microwave Ovens Category:

“I like the #3 the most. It looks more aesthetic. It is beautiful...and I believe it is more advanced model. It looks more functional in terms of use.”

“#2 looks more industrial. It looks like the first models in the market. I believe it fits better in professional usage rather than houses.”

“#1 is like the very first models. There is not much function, only start-stop-timer. It does not offer a well look. It looks like, the company just focus on the idea...I mean its like ‘we produce a microwave oven just buy it’, there is nothing more.”

“#4 also does not look functional. I do not like the buttons on it. Its like they focus on producing a aesthetic product but I think it is not. It is not good.”

“I believe #3 is the highest quality one. The most functional is #2 I guess. But I would buy #3.”

Cars Category:

“#3 is the latest model. It is the newest one. It is aesthetically attractive, it is a newer model then it should be functional. So, I would buy this one in these cars.”

“#4 is also looks like the new car model. Then #1, but those one do not have any good design, they’re not attractive ones. They do no bother with design, also I they do not look functional.”

IKEA

“IKEA products, I believe is mostly about functionality and usage. Not much design, but the ease of use...Also, they are suitable for limited budgets. So, they can answer your needs but they do not offer anything more.”

“In terms of quality, I believe IKEA has the highest possible quality for that prices.”

7.3 SPSS Output

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Quality	1.00	400	3.2325	.97253	.04863	3.1369	3.3281	1.00	5.00
	2.00	200	3.0350	1.07216	.07581	2.8855	3.1845	1.00	5.00
	Total	600	3.1687	1.01024	.04124	3.0857	3.2477	1.00	5.00
Aesthetics	1.00	400	3.9675	.95063	.04753	3.8741	4.0609	1.00	5.00
	2.00	200	3.9050	.81812	.05785	3.7909	4.0191	1.00	5.00
	Total	600	3.9467	.90840	.03709	3.8738	4.0195	1.00	5.00
Function	1.00	400	2.9275	1.10920	.05546	2.8185	3.0365	1.00	5.00
	2.00	200	3.3500	1.07390	.07594	3.2003	3.4997	1.00	5.00
	Total	600	3.0683	1.11463	.04550	2.9790	3.1577	1.00	5.00
Value	1.00	400	3.6925	1.05628	.05281	3.5887	3.7963	1.00	5.00
	2.00	200	3.6300	.90953	.06431	3.5032	3.7568	1.00	5.00
	Total	600	3.6717	1.00940	.04121	3.5907	3.7526	1.00	5.00
IKEA	1.00	400	.9975	.05000	.00250	.9926	1.0024	.00	1.00
	2.00	200	.9250	.26405	.01867	.8882	.9618	.00	1.00
	Total	600	.9733	.16124	.00658	.9604	.9863	.00	1.00
IDesign	1.00	399	3.3835	1.08244	.05419	3.2769	3.4900	1.00	5.00
	2.00	185	3.9189	.83335	.06127	3.7980	4.0398	1.00	5.00
	Total	584	3.5531	1.03982	.04303	3.4686	3.6376	1.00	5.00
IQuality	1.00	399	2.8421	.96033	.04808	2.7476	2.9366	1.00	5.00
	2.00	185	3.0324	.90831	.06678	2.9007	3.1642	1.00	5.00
	Total	584	2.9024	.94754	.03921	2.8254	2.9794	1.00	5.00
IAesthetics	1.00	399	3.0877	.94301	.04721	2.9949	3.1805	1.00	5.00
	2.00	185	3.7676	.80422	.05913	3.6509	3.8842	1.00	5.00
	Total	584	3.3031	.95468	.03950	3.2255	3.3807	1.00	5.00
IFunction	1.00	399	3.8195	1.01621	.05087	3.7195	3.9196	1.00	5.00
	2.00	185	3.8432	.73149	.05378	3.7371	3.9493	1.00	5.00
	Total	584	3.8271	.93487	.03869	3.7511	3.9030	1.00	5.00
IValue	1.00	399	2.6015	.89617	.04486	2.5133	2.6897	1.00	5.00
	2.00	185	2.8811	1.04617	.07692	2.7293	3.0328	1.00	5.00
	Total	584	2.6001	.95427	.03949	2.6125	2.7676	1.00	5.00