

# Consumers' Emotional Responses to Brands and Branded Products

Armağan Karahanoğlu, Middle East Technical University, Turkey  
Bahar Sener, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

*Abstract: This paper presents the outcomes of research investigating the relationship between brand and product emotions and the qualities of products that evoke these emotions. The study comprised a literature review followed by a sizeable empirical study carried out with domestic irons. Overall it aimed to investigate the dimensions of emotional experience of users within product and brand experience contexts, for which relevant theoretical bases of psychology, design and marketing literatures were combined. The empirical work involved three groups of 35 participants, with each group exposed to images of five domestic irons. The first group was assigned original unaltered products, the second group products having an altered brand name, and the third group products having brand names deleted. Participants were asked to rate their emotions evoked by the products according to a predefined list. The resulting data were processed and cross-compared using SPSS software and content analyses methods. One of the outcomes of the study was evidence of how brands (as names and as visual product language) influence people's emotions towards irons. In addition, the perceived brand hierarchy in the Turkish iron market was revealed. The results give valuable insights into the practical impact of branding, product identity and product emotions.*

Keywords: Product Experience, Emotional Branding, Product Emotions, Brand Emotions

## Introduction

**I**N THE 19TH century, merchants who provided the same packaged goods needed to differentiate their products from each other so that their customers knew which make of product they were buying. As a result, the merchants gave names to their products and so started the custom of branding. They probably did not predict that what they did to sell the product would become an integral part of modern day marketing and design strategies.

Today, our lives are full of offers of new kinds of products with different brand names. These products bring new product experiences that may be adventurous, surprising or even dreadful. Consequently, a more comprehensive understanding of product experience and brand has been constituted and its scope has been widened into understanding users' emotional needs alongside their functional and social needs. Thus we may say that this new understanding is associated with positive, experiential and emotional usage, rather than just utilitarian.

Users' emotional experiences with products have attracted the attention of many researchers in the fields of both design and marketing. The researchers have focused on emotional experiences of users by utilizing perspectives that are distinct to their academic domains. For example, market researchers are interested in the emotions of consumers across many elements

of the total brand experience, spanning the products themselves, the retail environments and advertisements. On the other hand, design researchers investigate in detail the emotional experiences of users that arise directly from products and which are attributable to product design. Design researchers are also interested in how people interact with products and how they react emotionally from those interactions.

Despite recent efforts, there still exists a need to better explain the relationship between users' emotional responses towards brands, and the products of those brands, from both marketing and design perspectives. Literature related to these areas supplies a useful theoretical base of emotional experiences, including emotions that are elicited from brands and products. The overall importance of consumer emotions in product purchasing and use is separately stated in design and marketing literatures.

This paper presents the outcomes of research investigating the relationship between brand and product emotions and the qualities of products that evoke these emotions. The study comprised a literature review making reference to theoretical bases of psychology, design and marketing, followed by a sizeable empirical study carried out with domestic irons. Overall the study aimed to investigate the dimensions of emotional experience of users within a combined product and brand experience.

## Understanding User Emotions

Emotion is understood as a very complex term that has no single universally accepted definition. The term has been the focus of many psychological studies, which have attempted to understand what emotion is, and how emotions are evoked. Consequently, numerous definitions of emotions have been suggested and different theories have formed the basis of discussion by psychologists.

The earliest definitions of emotion appeared in the domains of religion and philosophy. Philosophers including Aristotle, Descartes and Kant emphasized emotions and classified them in the form of *discrete* emotions (Dormann, 2003). A contemporary definition of emotions refers to complex reactions that engage both our minds and our bodies (Dormann, 2003), and which result in positive or negative affective feeling states (Fridja, 1988, in Dormann 2003). Alternatively, Ortony, A. & Turner, T.J. (1990) define emotions as “valenced reactions to events, agents, or objects, with their particular nature being determined by the way in which the eliciting situation is construed” [p.13]. Similarly, Kalat and Shiota (2007) define emotions as reactions to something outside the body in the social environment, requiring the processing of complex information. Thus we may say that emotions arise from complex evaluations of events or, in other words, by way of the personal meanings that we construe from events.

Emotions play an important role in people's lives, since they guide, enrich and enable life, and provide meaning to everyday existence (Cacioppo *et al.*, 2001, in Desmet, 2002). A full understanding of people's emotions towards products and brands is not possible if the marketing perspective is excluded. However, design and marketing literatures hold important differences in how they define the person who uses a product and the experience the person has a product. The marketing perspective does not mention ‘user’ or ‘use’ as is the case with design, but instead employs the terms ‘consumer’ and ‘purchase’.

Marketing researchers deal with the experience that consumers have during the purchase and after-purchase of a product or a service. They are especially interested in motivations

for purchases, and the rationale consumers have for repurchasing a product or purchasing other products of the same brand. This focus leads market researchers to understand the underlying reasons behind product purchases and to analyze consumer behavior and satisfaction. Market research is therefore often viewed as an effective way to understand consumer needs and to inform aspects of new product development such as design specifications, price, distribution and promotion. On the other hand, the special focus of design researchers and designers is on the experience that people have during the use of a product. For this reason, product language, decisions on product form, and the building of realistic product usage scenarios are all key elements in the design perspective. However, design and marketing perspectives overlap in the common area of *eliciting emotions* from ‘users’ or ‘consumers’.

## A Design Perspective on Product Experience and User Emotions

Attention to the emotions of users had been a neglected area of design practice for many years until a surge of interest at the turn of the millennium (Desmet, 2002). The study of emotional responses of users towards products has become an established area of design research in the last decade. Numerous studies have been conducted under the name of ‘product emotions’ and ‘product experience’. In 1999, the Design & Emotion Society was established as an international network of researchers, designers and companies sharing an interest in experience-driven design. The network was established to exchange insights, research, tools and methods that would support the consideration of emotional experience in product design.

Accompanying the increased interest in product emotions has been a fuller understanding of product experiences, from which emotions are evoked. Studies have been made into what exactly ‘experience’ is, and its placement in the design and emotion literature has led to the hybrid term ‘emotional experience’.

‘Experience’ as a term within product design encompasses studies of product experience, experience design, and interactions. One of the reasons for growing interest in experience in design is the increase in the number of technological devices that people now own and are required to operate (Demir *et al.*, 2006). As technology develops, different kinds of technological products are introduced into the market for consumer use. Interactions with products have both physical (e.g. handling) and psychological (e.g. being frustrated) dimensions. For this reason, in literature product experience has been discussed with reference to positive and negative, or pleasant and unpleasant experiences of users when interacting with a product (Demir *et al.*, 2006).

In product design, experience refers to the affective response of a person during the interaction with a product (Demir *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, we can say that product interaction occurs at different levels, which may be ‘instrumental’ (e.g. using, operating), ‘non-instrumental’ (e.g. playing with) and non-physical (e.g. observing, remembering). The experience of the user with the product is shaped by characteristics of both the user (e.g. personality, skills, background) and the product (e.g. color, shape, texture) (Demir *et al.*, 2006). In addition, the context in which the interaction takes place also influences the experience (Desmet & Hekkert, 2007).

Forlizzi and Batterbee (2004) summarize contemporary models and theories of experience as related to products and design. Three approaches related to experience of products are: product-centered models; user-centered models; and interaction-centered models. *Product-centered models* have products as their main focus and describe the kinds of issues that de-

signers should consider while designing a product, service or environment. They give checklists or guidelines for features that a product or service should possess in order to create a positive experience. *User-centered models* focus on people. They try to improve our understanding of people by offering descriptions of the kinds of things people focus on whilst interacting with products and how people generally behave with products. *Interaction-centered models* focus on the interaction itself as a conduit between product and user, and try to describe facets of that interaction that directly affect experience.

To give an overall framework on what product experience comprises, Desmet & Hekkert (2007) suggest three components: aesthetic experience, experience of meaning, and emotional experience (Figure 1).

The three types of experience presented in Figure 1 have mutual relations. However, two of the relations, ‘meaning and emotion’ and ‘aesthetics and emotion’, are remarkable in alerting us to the point that meaning and aesthetics can both elicit emotions. Importantly, every person can assign different meanings to a product, which in turn may result in different emotional responses. One person may think that a certain branded product is modern and challenging and may experience attraction, whereas other person may find the branded product cold and impersonal and may experience dissatisfaction. Similarly, aesthetics – as simply the receipt of multimodal sensorial information from a product – can also affect an emotional experience in people, since aesthetic experience involves pleasure and displeasure. For example, seeing a colorful or tactually interesting pair of shoes may directly evoke attraction and desire, without any recourse to more considered meanings.

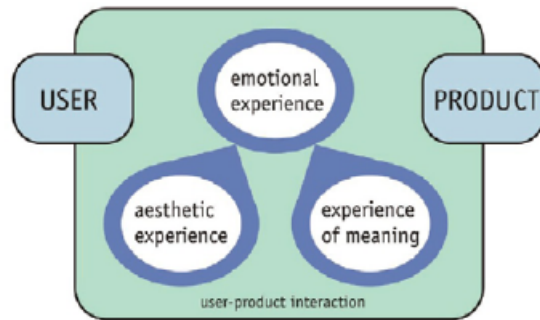


Figure 1: Framework of Product Experience (Desmet & Hekkert, 2007)

## A Marketing Perspective on User Emotions

Mozota (2003) argues that marketing, like design, is the process of matching customer needs with want-satisfying goods and services. This suggests that the two perspectives of marketing and design share the idea of developing an understanding of customer needs, and both try to satisfy those needs to establish a positive customer relationship. Mozota states that marketing and design both aim to build a product strategy that differentiates one company from its competitors and thereby create a competitive advantage. In a customer relationship, design is viewed as one way of creating a noticeable difference in product ownership and usage, with those differences ideally being perceived as beneficial and desirable by consumers. On

the other hand, branding is viewed as one way of creating differentiation to compete in the marketplace and to repeatedly attract consumers' attention. In other words, design deals with the way consumers interact with a product and seeks to ensure that the interaction and specification is 'right' for the target users; whereas marketing deals with the way consumers buy and repurchase products of a given brand.

Brand experience can be designed only up to a certain extent (e.g. through a combination of retail environments, advertising, products and services), since some elements of brand experience are beyond a company's control (e.g. word of mouth, a journalist's comment) (Adamson, 2006; Brand Glossary, 2006). However, consistent consumer interactions and repeated purchases and consumption that form a clear, differentiated and holistic experience can help to create strong and resilient brands (Boyle, 2006; Brand Glossary, 2006).

Marketers are aware that consumers have emotions that are attributable to the experience of a brand, and that those emotions are influential on purchasing decisions (Berkman *et al.*, 1996; Gobe, 2001; Edwards & Day, 2005; Lindstrom, 2005; Gobe, 2007). Marketers use this information to direct their campaigns to convince consumers to buy their products and services (Evans *et al.*, 2006). Evans *et al.* point out that most advertisements represent a product or service of a brand in such an emotional and persuasive way that consumers are lured into thinking they should buy or use the advertised item, even if they know it is not really needed for sustaining their lives. Such persuasion of course is not necessarily founded on a genuine need, and so consumers can be encouraged to want or desire a brand based on less substantial criteria. Gobe suggests that brands communicate with people on three emotional levels (Figure 2).

1. *Head Communication*: **speaks to desires and needs.**
2. *Heart Communication*: **captures a sense of shared values and connection.**
3. *Gut Communication*: **laps into intuitive desires that generate a drive and badge-like attachment to a brand.**

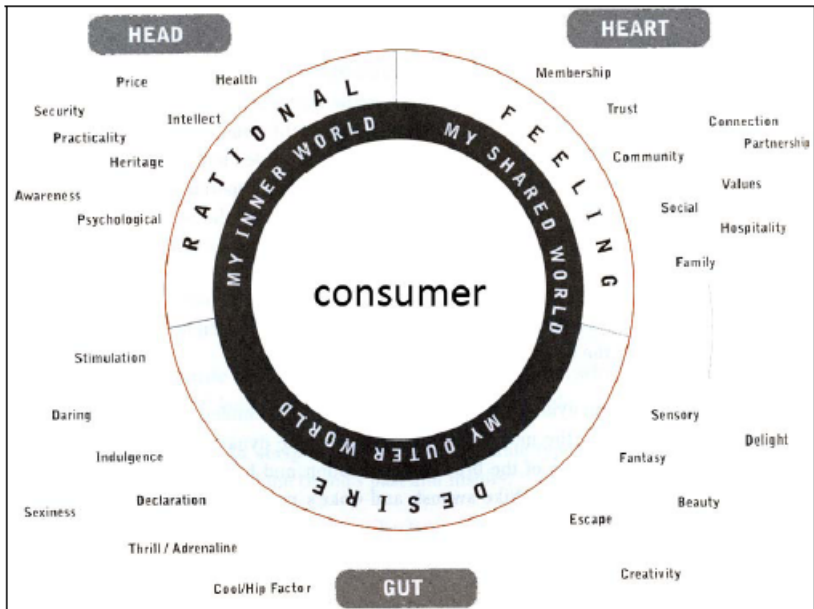


Figure 2: Levels of Emotional Branding (Reproduced from Gobe, 2007)

The three levels summarize the concept of ‘emotional branding’ from the perspective of a consumer. *Head communication* is about rational connection with the brand (e.g. price, practicality), *heart communication* is about feelings towards a brand (e.g. feeling trust, sharing values), and *gut communication* is about desiring a brand (e.g. achieving escape, looking cool/hip). Although the three levels explain how consumers interact with and connect to a brand, there still remains a gap between the brand and the consumer, in relation to how the connections can be built effectively.

### The Empirical Study

An empirical study was conducted to help explain the relationships between emotions of users, product qualities and the brands of products. Images of branded products were shown via a computer screen and participants were asked to respond to the images using a questionnaire and post-questionnaire interview.

#### **Selection of Products and Brands**

In order to study the relationships, a consumer product produced by five different brands was selected. The product was required to meet the following criteria: it should be capable of use by anyone irrespective of age or gender; it should be produced by more than one company; Turkish people (the target user group) should be familiar with it; it should have obvious functionality and be simple to use; its interaction should be physical and not driven through a digital interface; and finally, its qualities (e.g. color, shape and material) should be easily perceived at a quick initial glance.

According to these criteria, several potential products and brands were identified. Small home appliances were found to meet the most criteria from the list. Following discussions with research colleagues, a 'domestic iron' was selected as the product to be used in the study. In order to find out which brands were available in Turkey, visits were made to various shopping centers in Ankara. Then, a list of the most frequently encountered brands, including both national and international brands, was created. From the list, two national and three international brands were selected for study. This resulted in five branded irons as the subjects of the empirical study, which was believed to be a sufficient number to gather useful information but without exhausting the research participants.

In order to study the effect of brand names on users' emotions, the five irons were manipulated into three distinct sets. Set-1 consisted of the five irons with their original brand names in place (Original - O); Set-2 consisted of the five irons with their brand names purposefully altered (Mixed - M); and Set-3 consisted of the five irons with their brand names deleted (None - N). In Set-2, the altered brand names were placed onto the digital images of the irons at a location exactly matching the original brand name in as photorealistic a manner as possible, using Adobe Photoshop. This was to avoid obvious alteration of the brand names.

#### *Selection of Participants*

The participants for the study were recruited by e-mail and telephone. In total, 105 participants (67 female, 38 male) participated in the study, with ages ranging from 20 to 60, and with a mean age of 30. The empirical work involved three groups of 35 participants, where each group was exposed to images corresponding to one of the three sets of irons. Group 1 participants evaluated the Set-1 (O) irons; Group 2 participants evaluated the Set-2 (M) irons; and Group 3 participants evaluated the Set-3 (N) irons.

#### **Selection of Emotions**

The empirical study required the participants to give information about their emotions towards selected domestic irons. To enable this, an emotion-scale was created based on a review of the emotion scales used in psychology, marketing and design literatures, with particular attention paid to product evaluation. As there exists no consensus amongst the literature on a definitive set of emotions or an emotion scale for use in research studies, a combination of the emotion sets suggested in various sources, including design (Dormann, 2003; Desmet, 2002), psychology (Bänziger *et al.*, 2005 in Scherer, 2005; Youngstrom & Green, 2003) and marketing perspectives (Richins, 1997; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991) was adopted. The list of emotions provided by Scherer (2005) formed the main basis for the study and was modified to include those other emotions commonly used in the citations just indicated. The final set of 19 emotions comprised:

*admiration, anger, boredom, content, desire, disappointment, disgust, fear, happiness, interest, joy, pleasure, pride, relief, sadness, satisfaction, shame, surprise, tension/stress.*

#### **Venue and Equipment**

The research was conducted either at the participants' houses, the participants' offices or, if possible, the participants were invited to the researchers' office. A typical session with a single participant took between 10 and 25 minutes. A 15.4" screen laptop was used to show

images of the selected irons to the participants. To record the interview sessions, a Philips 512 MB Go-Gear voice recorder was used. The research did not require any other special setting. All sessions were conducted in the participants' native language (Turkish). It was therefore necessary to translate the emotion sets from English to Turkish and, where deemed necessary, more than one word was provided to deliver as clear translation as possible.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The participants' general ideas about brands of domestic irons, their emotions towards particular brands and products of those brands, and the reasons behind those emotions were investigated in the study. The study was conducted in three parts. Part 1 (*Brand Awareness*) aimed to reveal an overall result on what the participants thought about various brands of domestic irons. The participants were asked to rate the products of ten brands, including the brands of products that would be shown in Part 2 (*Emotion Evaluation*). The aim of Part 2 was to understand which emotions were evoked by which products. In this part, participants were asked to rate their level of emotional evocation against the previously mentioned list of 19 emotions. A five-point Likert scale was used. Part 3 (*Product Evaluation*) aimed to understand the reasons behind the evocation of certain emotions. The participants were interviewed during a post-questionnaire session and encouraged to talk about why they stated negative and positive emotions, and specifically in relation to those emotions they gave high positive or negative scores. Parts 1 and 2 were delivered as a self-administered questionnaire so that the results could be statistically analyzed.

During product evaluation, the participants were requested to look at the computer monitor to view the images of the domestic irons, and then to fill out the emotions questionnaire. The evaluation process started with the first product, and continued until all the five products were scaled and evaluated. To avoid any order effect (Krosnick and Duane, 1987), for each participant the order of the presented products was altered.

### **Results and Analysis**

The resulting data from 105 participants were analyzed separately for each of the three product groups. The findings for each group were then processed and cross-compared using SPSS software and content analyses methods. The aim was to elicit information on possible relations between (i) brands that form certain impressions of, and emotions towards, irons bearing that brand name, and (ii) the change in negative/positive emotions associated with each iron as featured in the three groups.

#### **Results of Brand Awareness**

The results of Part 1, the brand awareness investigation, showed that four of the brands (i.e. Brand 5, Brand 2, Brand 3, and Brand 6) were regarded as between 'good' and 'very good'; the following four brands (i.e. Brand 7, Brand 8, Brand 1 and Brand 9) were regarded as between 'average' and 'good'; and the remaining two brands (i.e. Brand 4 and Brand 10) were regarded as between 'bad' and 'average' (Figure 3). None of the brands were regarded as between 'very bad' and 'bad'. The products of the bold colored brands (i.e. Brands 1 to 5) were carried forward to Part 2 of the study.



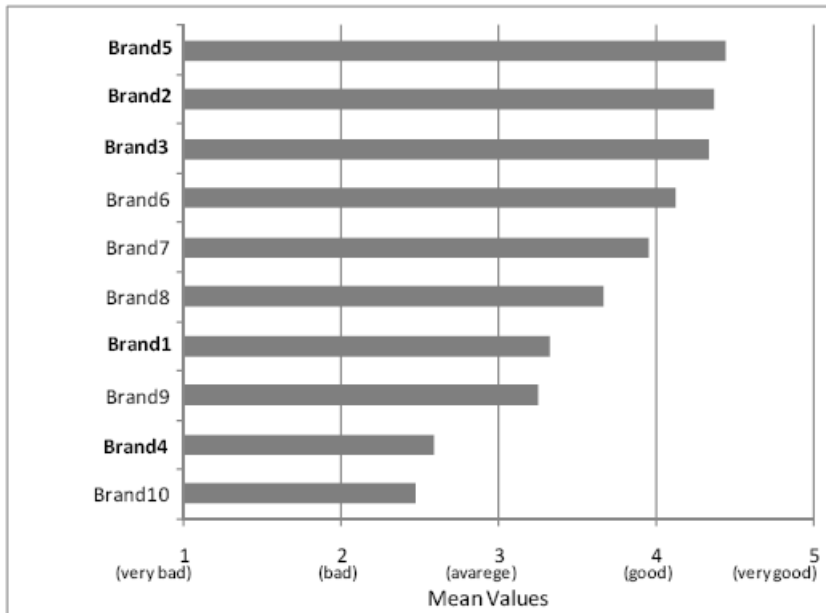


Figure 3: Results of Part 1: Brand Awareness

### ***Results of Emotions Evaluation and Product Evaluation***

The emotions listed in the emotion evaluation scale were categorized according to their relevance to one another by using the two-dimensional cluster analyses function of SPSS software. This was to show which emotions were relatively close (related) to each other and which were apart (unrelated). To illustrate the results, two-dimensional emotion clusters (Figure 4) and a dendrogram of emotions (Figure 5) were created. Figure 4 shows the distribution of emotions: dimension 1 shows the level of closeness of emotions to one another and dimension 2 shows the frequency of the closeness. Figure 5 shows the closeness of each emotion with the other emotions.

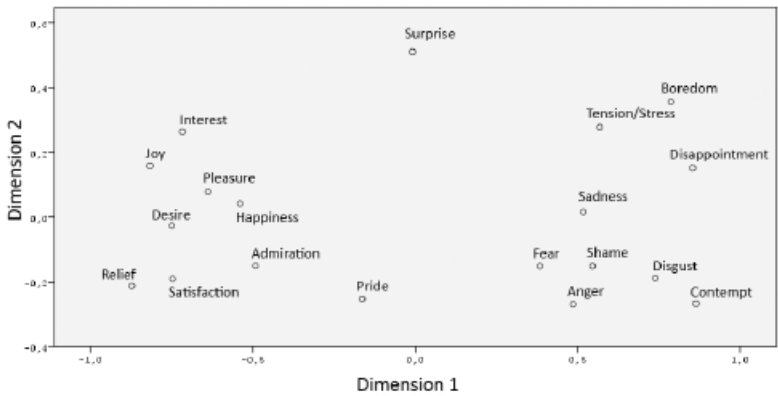


Figure 4: Results of Part 2: Two Dimensional Emotion Clusters

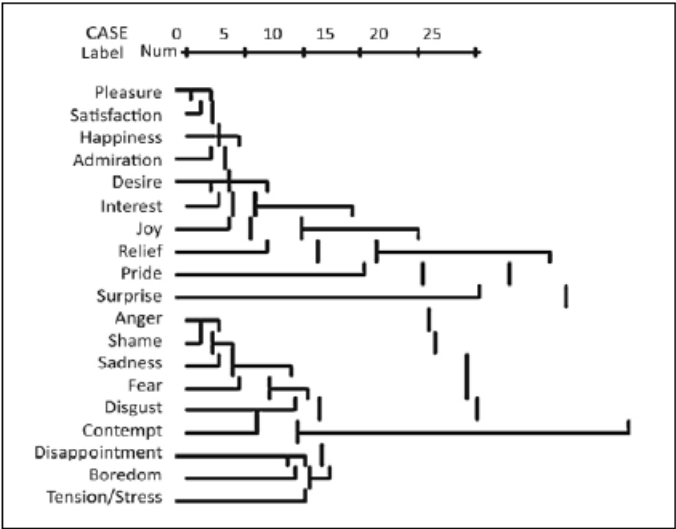


Figure 5: Results of Part 2: Dendrogram of Emotions

As can be seen in the figures, the first cluster consists of positive emotions ‘*pleasure, satisfaction, happiness, admiration, desire, interest, joy, relief, pride*’ and these emotions are close to each other respectively. The second cluster consists of negative emotions ‘*anger, shame, sadness, fear, disgust, contempt, disappointment, boredom, and tension/stress*’. Similar to the positive emotions, the order of negative emotions shows the level of closeness to each other. The third (solo) cluster consists only of ‘*surprise*’. Surprise can have both positive and negative connotations in Turkish, whereas in English this difference can be emphasized by the use of ‘positive surprise’ and ‘negative surprise’ (Scherer, 2005). Therefore, it was treated separately from the first and second clusters.

To analyse the emotion reports of the 105 participants, the one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) and post-hoc test functions of SPSS software was used, showing the statistically

significant differences between emotion sets. This was done to understand if there are any differences between answers of participants of different product sets. The analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in reported emotions for three of the irons as they passed through the O, M and N product groups; a mean difference of 0.05 was taken as the base. However, it should be noted that the aim of the study was not limited to findings where a statistically significant difference in emotions could be detected. Therefore, to identify differences that would be meaningful to discuss, the threshold mean-difference value was reduced to 0.03. Based on the results, two tables were created: Table 1 illustrates changes in evoked emotions according to changes in brand (i.e. comparing the results of M and N groups against O group), and Table 2 illustrates the content analyses results. In Table 1, only the results that have 0.03 threshold mean-difference values were included. The observed differences are illustrated in Table 1 as positive or negative level changes. For each emotion, 'POS' indicates that the mean value from the first set was higher than that from the comparison set, whilst 'NEG' indicates vice-versa. No indication (a blank space) was used if there was no difference between the sets.

Table 2 shows the number of participants who talked about various qualities of the irons during their interviews. The interview data revealed the participants' reasons for their emotional responses to the irons. These data were content analysed and categorized into four main groups spanning brand qualities, emotional qualities, functional-usability qualities and visual qualities.

It can be observed from Table 1 that, for each iron, the differentiated emotions varied across the three product sets. For example, for Iron 3 it can be seen that the participants reported positive emotions at the highest level for the M set and at the lowest level for the N set for some of the listed emotions, and vice-versa for negative emotions. In support of this, the statistical analyses showed that Iron 3 elicited significantly 8 emotions out of 19 (*pleasure, satisfaction, admiration, desire, interest, relief, pride and boredom*), each of which were elicited at a minimum level within the N set. The statistical differentiation was between the M and N sets for all of the listed emotions; but in *admiration, relief, satisfaction, and boredom*, there was also a statistical differentiation between the O and N sets.

When the visual qualities are explored in depth, it can be observed that the participants talked about the *color, form, general appearance, technology, and transparency* for most of the irons. It can also be observed that those participants who saw the brand name on the product also talked about the positive or negative effect of the brand. The participants also mentioned emotional qualities, such as '*being fun and cute*' for some of the products. Functional/usability related qualities of the products, such as '*function of control buttons*' and '*being functional*', were also mentioned. In general, emotional and functional-usability qualities were not mentioned as much as brand and visual qualities.

Table 1: Emotional Difference Based on Data Comparison between Brand Modified (M), no Brand (N) and Original Brand (O) Product Sets

	IRON 1			IRON2			IRON3		
	(O) - (M)	(O) - (N)	(M) - (N)	(O) - (M)	(O) - (N)	(M) - (N)	(O) - (M)	(O) - (N)	(M) - (N)
Pleasure					POS		NEG		POS
Satisfaction					POS	POS		POS	POS
Happiness								POS	POS
Admiration					POS	POS		POS	POS
Desire			NEG					POS	POS
Interest		NEG							POS
Joy					POS	POS		POS	POS
Relief		NEG			POS	POS		POS	POS
Pride					POS	POS			POS
Surprise									
Anger	POS								
Shame									
Sadness				NEG					
Fear					POS				
Disgust		POS						NEG	
Contempt	NEG			NEG				NEG	NEG
Disappointment		POS	POS	NEG		POS			
Boredom		NEG	NEG					NEG	NEG
Tension/Stress				POS		POS		NEG	NEG
	IRON4			IRON5					
	(O) - (M)	(O) - (N)	(M) - (N)	(O) - (M)	(O) - (N)	(M) - (N)			
Pleasure	NEG				POS	POS			
Satisfaction	NEG	NEG			POS				
Happiness		NEG							
Admiration	NEG				POS	POS			
Desire	NEG	NEG	POS						
Interest	NEG	NEG							
Joy	NEG	NEG							
Relief	NEG	NEG			NEG				
Pride	NEG		POS						
Surprise			POS			POS			
Anger									
Shame	POS	POS							
Sadness	POS	POS							
Fear									
Disgust	POS	POS							
Contempt	POS	POS		POS		POS			
Disappointment	POS	POS							
Boredom	POS		NEG		NEG	NEG			
Tension/Stress									

POS means the mean difference is positive, NEG means the mean difference is negative

Table 2: Number of Participants over 35 Mentioning Certain Product Qualities

	IRON 1						IRON 2						IRON 3					
	O	O	M	M	N	N	O	O	M	M	N	N	O	O	M	M	N	N
	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)
brand	4	3	5	12	0	0	8	1	12	0	0	0	6	0	16	0	0	0
emotional	9	3	5	1	3	1	8	4	4	2	3	2	3	1	4	1	1	3
functional	4	5	1	2	4	3	4	8	6	6	4	5	12	2	6	1	2	7
visual	19	18	14	19	19	14	19	17	16	19	9	23	30	5	21	12	12	17
	IRON 4						IRON 5											
	O	O	M	M	N	N	O	O	M	M	N	N						
	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)	(pos)	(neg)						
brand	1	14	17	4	0	0	12	2	11	3	0	0						
emotional	1	3	1	7	3	0	1	1	7	2	2	1						
functional	0	4	4	5	3	6	13	2	6	2	15	1						
visual	3	31	8	27	9	25	24	9	23	9	26	6						

Pos: positive statements; neg.: negative statements

## Discussion

In the analyses, it was observed that positive and negative emotions towards the irons were mostly between 1-point (any) and 3-point (average) levels. This can be related to the fact that ironing as a domestic task is often viewed with negativity and the emotions towards the products may have been affected by this perspective. However, it was surprising to find that in general the level of positive emotions towards the irons was higher than the level of negative emotions.

According to the brand awareness results, users perceive that products of certain brands are better than products of others. Even if they do not use a product of a brand, the participants were still able to express positive or negative thoughts towards the brand. In other words, users have experience of brands that extends beyond product experience. Even if the participants had never experienced a specific brand, they could still express an opinion. For example, somebody who has never driven a BMW car can still be positive towards BMW. It can be said that the brand of a product has a close relationship to the emotions of users evoked by products of that brand.

The brand awareness results also showed that when users have positive ideas towards a brand, the product of the brand evokes more positive emotions than when the same product is presented non-branded. In contrast, for brands revealed to leave a negative effect on consumers, the intensity of positive emotions decreases and the intensity of negative emotions increases compared to products of brands that have a positive effect. For some brands, users can be positive, but the product can disappoint the user, in which case negative emotions are felt towards the product. In relation to this, when users have negative ideas towards a brand, but the product turns out to be better than the user had expected, it can be seen that overall positive emotions are evoked by the product. All of these relationships are based on how users perceive a brand and how they think the product of that brand *should be*. As stated,

the study showed that users may feel disappointed when they come across a product of a brand that does not match their expectations, while they may feel pleasure when the product matches or exceeds their expectations.

Most of the participants who saw a brand name on a product that is perceived to be good, stated positive emotions towards the product they evaluated. The results also showed that those participants who saw no brand name on a product, stated less positive emotions than those who saw a brand name on the same product. Accordingly, when the product qualities (mostly visual qualities) were not considered to be outstanding (e.g. when the users did not like the form, color or material of the product), the results changed according to the brand name they saw on the product. When the users saw a brand name that is perceived to be good, the product elicited positive emotions more than negative. However, when users saw a brand name that is perceived to be bad, then the product elicited negative emotions more than positive. Moreover, for these products, not seeing a brand name on the product mostly elicits positive emotions. Some brands were perceived as average by the participants, in which case the emotions of most of the participants were affected by the visual qualities of the product in question. It can be said that seeing a brand name affects the way users perceive product qualities, and that emotions are a result of how users perceive products *in relation to brands*. In other words, branding is sufficiently powerful to adjust people's evaluations of a product compared to evaluations made solely on the basis of product form and features independent of brand. A product form, appearance, interaction and so forth may be excellent, average, or poor emotionally, but the research has shown that a positively perceived brand can compensate a poorly perceived product, whilst a negatively perceived brand can compound a poorly perceived product.

The research revealed that brands affect the emotions of participants towards products as much as the visual qualities of products. However, the density of the change was different for different items: some of the participants were not affected by the brand at all, some were affected positively and some negatively. With these findings, the effect of products and of brands of the products on emotions can be listed as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Degree of Influence of Emotions for Each Product**

Product	Source of Emotion	Influence Degree
Iron-1	Brand 1	Negative
	Product	Positive
Iron-2	Brand 2	Positive
	Product	Negative
Iron-3	Brand 3	Positive
	Product	Positive
Iron-4	Brand 4	Negative
	Product	Negative
Iron-5	Brand 5	Positive
	Product	Positive

Consequently, it is possible to organize the studied brands into four categories. Figure 6 illustrates the relationships between the brands and product emotions evoked by the irons in the study. The categorization of consumers as suggested by Berkman *et al.*, (2005) is relevant to mention here. Although their categorization is based on only a generalised product-brand level, it can also be integrated into brand-product emotions. In relation to this, users of Brands 5 and 3 in this study can be named as ‘brand loyalists’ (Berkman *et al.*, 2005) as both the product and the brand positively affect emotions. These users have a high level of involvement with both the product and the brand and they readily accept both the brand and any products of the brand. The users of Brand 2 can be named as ‘brand routine buyers’. They buy and use the products without much attention, as they only care for the brand of the product. The product of this brand negatively affected emotions, whilst the brand itself positively affected emotions. Users of Brand 1 can be named as ‘information seekers’ as the only positive influence on emotions arose from the product itself. ‘Information seekers’ do not feel positive towards the brand, but can be content with the product. Finally, the ‘brand switchers’ of this study are associated with Brand 4. In this case, both the brand and the product negatively affected emotions. Brand switchers are those people who are not satisfied by either the product or brand experience and easily switch to an alternative brand.

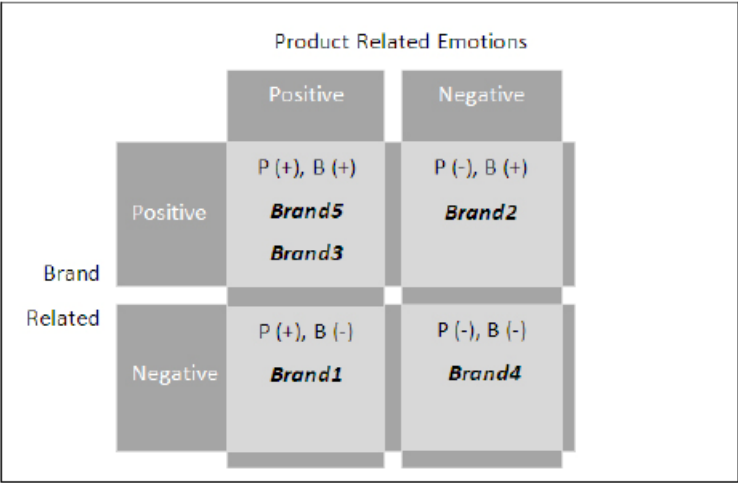


Figure 6: Relationship between Brand and Product Emotions found in this Study

Conclusions

Users or consumers have an idea about how the products of a brand are or should be. When product qualities overlap with expected qualities, the results evoke positive emotions towards brands and products. However, when the expected product qualities cannot be realised by the product, the results evoke both positive and negative emotions: positive towards brands and negative towards products. Meanwhile, users expect average-quality products from some brands, and when the products are experienced as better than expected, the evoked emotions can be both positive and negative again, but this time positive towards products and negative towards brands. Finally, when users are disappointed by both a brand and the product of this brand, the result is negative emotions towards both.

The literature review revealed that product emotions and brand emotions are investigated within the domains of design and marketing literatures. The empirical study exemplified the relationship of these two literatures. Accordingly, there is a close relationship between brands of a product and emotions elicited from branded products. In some cases, when the visual qualities of the product are found appealing, users do not ask for the brand of the product in order to feel positive towards that product. However, in general, positive pre-judgment about a brand affects product emotions positively, and vice-versa. Also, the underlying reasons for emotions were revealed as visual qualities of the product, the brand of the product, and emotion-related and functional-usability related qualities. Product qualities constitute valuable data for product designers to understand the expectations of users. Aside from the generated data, the empirical study has demonstrated an effective method usable for determining links between brand and product emotions, which can be applied to product planning and strategy projects.

When designing a new product, brand image, visual qualities, usability-functional qualities, and emotional qualities can each be combined so as to try to elicit certain emotions and experiences in users. Since this paper has revealed the connection of negative emotions with



product qualities and brand image, designers may refer to these qualities to avoid unintended negative emotions in users. In other words, the designer can define emotion-related product qualities, by analyzing the brand image and needs and expectations of users from a specific brand.

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### **About the Authors**

*Armağan Karahanoğlu*

Middle East Technical University, Turkey

*Dr. Bahar Sener*

Middle East Technical University, Turkey



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