Consumer cynicism toward management's handling of uncertainties a study in the aviation sector

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Abstract. Managing uncertainty, which is an inevitable reality in the working life of businesses, will inevitably benefit the success of the company. Looking at the sources of the concept of uncertainty in businesses; It is handled in four different categories as marked variability, predictable uncertainty, unpredictable uncertainty and chaos. The emergency and additional are necessary condition for a manager to be able to identify uncertainty and learn. When the consumer buys a brand, there may be inconsistency between the promises of the brand and the experiences obtained. The fact that the consumer, who has many negative feelings about the brand, has these thoughts is called consumer cynicism in the marketing process. It can convey the negative situation experienced by the consumer to other consumers through word of mouth or communication with digital marketing channels. With this study, it is tried to determine the effect of the cynicism thoughts of the consumer against a brand or product in the process of coping with the uncertainties of the management. Data were obtained from 410 participants by convenience sampling method. In the findings, the situation of the manager was effective in the process of the cynical thoughts of the consumers in the process of managing the uncertainties of the enterprise. Another striking issue is that demographically; men have a more cynical attitude. This can be easily resolved by the manager. Among other variables, besides education level, cynical behaviors are observed in some of the sub-variables of managerial uncertainty and age. **Keywords:** Managerial Uncertainty, Consumer Cynicism, Aviation.

1 Introduction

In the commercial world, we observe that there is constant change and differentiation and that the problem of competition and its intensity are growing. Depending on this situation, the economic turmoil brings along uncertainties. The airline industry, where constant attention and customer happiness are priorities, will be explored in this study, which aims to solve this managerial ambiguity in terms of consumer cynicism. In this study, it is crucial to focus on the aviation industry because there will be significant financial costs associated with any interruptions. It is therefore intended to look into how managerial uncertainty affects

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consumer cynicism. This study's application in a few aviation-related businesses that are functioning in the province of Istanbul was looked into in accordance with its goals. There is no study in the literature that addresses these two ideas in the context of aviation, but because it has been determined that there may be a connection between them, it has been looked at in the aviation industry that pays attention to consumer cynicism.

2 Management Uncertainty

The idea of uncertainty, which refers to the condition of doubt, is well recognized to exist throughout the universe. This has an impact on every aspect of the company's operations (Neyişçi, 2008) and is a basic problem with potentially grave repercussions, particularly in the context of sustainability and efficiency. On the one hand, the environment has a role in this predicament, but on the other side, psychological factors might also play a role (Bordia, vd., 2004). A situation in which a person is unable to make sense of things because there is insufficient information is known as uncertainty (Stanley Budner, 1962). The frequent renewal of commercial life adds another layer of complication for managers on top of the complexity and unsolvability of businesses. This may cause uncertainty and reduce the company's effectiveness and performance (Tınaztepe, 2010). Lack of information makes it impossible to understand the cause-and-effect relationship between the management's problems, demonstrating the impossibility of foreseeing events with a similar pattern in the future (Milliken, 1987). Heisenberg's article from 1927, which was similar to these assertions, also gained a position in the field of science. Uncertainty, which also serves as the foundation for postmodern thought, means that no measurement techniques can ever be created as a result of uncertainty (Gleick, 2003). Innovation, complexity, and insolubility are the three main drivers of uncertainty, according to Kajs and Maccollum (2009). The speed of innovation throws into question the validity of knowledge as well as its very existence. There is uncertainty in a process if a situation cannot be properly quantified and conceptualized. Managers worry and panic since they have to deal with this issue regularly (Sarı and Dağ, 18 2009). In regard to uncertainty, social norms, religion, the law, and the arts appear to be control mechanisms. Uncertainties are viewed by managers as a typical business procedure. This circumstance makes uncertainty worse. As a result, the manager's approach has an impact on the business continuity. Uncertainty is divided into three sub-dimensions in Tınaztepe's study (2010): individual, collective, and organizational. If we briefly discuss this, individual uncertainty is the inability of a person to obtain information about themselves or the disarray of that information (Gifford, Bobbitt and Scolum, 1979). Within the group, there are relationships between people. Due to conflicting, complex, and limited knowledge, a strategically ambiguous scenario breeds uncertainty within the organization (Norton 1975). It is evident that different organizational structures within a corporation experience business, operational, and strategic uncertainty. Open avenues of communication are crucial in this situation (Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia and Irmer, 2007). Organizational uncertainty is the state in which a management lacks the knowledge essential to address change in a setting where the person has worked since before, they were even born (Daft, 2010). The manager's sense of uncertainty influences his or her decision-making process (Freel, 2005). Status, impact, and reaction are the three different elements of organizational uncertainty. Employees demonstrate their comfort with taking risks when supervisors' level of uncertainty avoidance is low (Litvin, Crotts and Hefner, 2004). Because individuals want to guarantee their jobs with certainty about the future, uncertainty, which is the process of unpredictability or unknowability regarding the future state of an event or action (Sarı, 2007), is bad for people (Grenier, Barette and Ladouceur 2005). In this situation, the management either seeks ways to deal with the uncertainty or flees from it. The new method should be coordinated with the conclusions to be reached from a variety of uncertain scenarios seen in the past, and

environmental factors should be monitored collectively. It will be able to give a framework that can readily change without being damaged thanks to proper management in this way. In today's world, when information is a crucial component for a business, while they work to maintain their existence and stay ahead of the competition, the lack of information raises greater worries. According to Hofsted (1980), technology will do away with this. Uncertainties will be eliminated and management will become more managerially strong when information can be obtained via the internet and social media.

3 Consumer Cynicism

Social scientists have studied cynicism in many different ways, and it has philosophical roots. This theory, which has several variations, is said to have originated in Ancient Greece as a way of living with ideas and dates back to Socrates, who lived in the fifth century BC (Luck, 2011: 15). In its broadest sense, cynicism refers to a person's individuality and can be categorized in a variety of ways. Cynicism can be classified as personality, social, political, and organizational in this way. Since the 1940s, cynicism has been associated with distrust, skepticism, expectation, and disappointment. This association has been studied in fields other than marketing and consumer behavior, such as psychology (Cook & Medley, 1954; Smith & Frohm, 1985), social and political sciences (Agger et al., 1961; Cappella & Jamieson, 1996; Kanter & Mirvis, 1989), organizational behavior, and social and political sciences (Agger et (Abraham, 2000; Andersson, 1996; Dean et al., 1998). When customers purchase a brand-related goods from a company, their attitudes often reflect cynicism because the brand's promise does not match what they really receive. It has evolved into a new situation from the concepts of trust, skepticism, and alienation in a manner similar to how consumer behavior entered the literature in the early 2000s as consumer behavior. For businesses looking to acquire a competitive edge in the aviation industry, which occupies a significant position among the service industries, having devoted and delighted consumers is becoming increasingly crucial, just as it is in all other sectors. Cynicism is vital for the reputation of the business and the viability of the firm through reaping long-term financial advantages, depending on the service received by the customer. Despite having a firm belief, the unpleasant feelings it experiences have an impact on the level of trust that may be built in a connection. It is crucial for service providers to influence the market's skeptical consumers' behavior. Cynicism typically manifests as a distinct idea in social sciences that study ideas, actions, and emotions. Consumer cynicism is thought to be a learned and persistent approach to the market, which is perceived to be one that hurts consumers (Helm et al. 2015: 516). The reasons given for consumer cynicism were examined, and it was found that opportunism and cunning were given priority. Based on this, the framework designed to handle three concepts—"general opportunism," "opportunism toward consumers," and "deception"—can be used to evaluate consumer cynicism (Helm et al.,2015: 517). The technique is taught and becomes a constant, unique circumstance that affects the market when the consumer also recalls the non-cynical situation (Helm, 2006: 4). These consumers likely come to believe certain things about how the market is run in a corrupt system, including how the market is shaped, how trust works, and how the legal system functions (Helm, 2006: 28; Helm et al., 2015: 516). Distrust and skepticism are felt most strongly in the service sector as a result of the discontent that results from a mismatch between the values and aims of the customer and the business. The defense mechanism is revealed by the situation's persistence. According to Mikkonen et al. (2011), who describe it as social critique and consumer resistance, it is also demonstrated as aggressiveness or coping because of the situation's transforming effect. In other words, it functions as a protection system that the consumer developed to defend himself from this circumstance (Chylinski and Chu, 2010). Here, the cynical attitude might also be directed at a product brand or a vendor. However, as mentioned in (Helm, 2004;

Helm, 2006: 349), cynical consumers may exhibit significant devotion to a brand they trust regardless of their prior negative consumer experiences with the company or brand. When a customer feels that she is not being treated fairly by a seller who attempts to sell an inappropriate outfit as being attractive while the customer is trying on a product in the store, the customer may exhibit consumer cynicism. The customer may express this by generalizing and advising caution.

4 Method

Consumer cynicism results from the disconnect between what companies promise and what customers anticipate, which breeds uncertainty, mistrust, and deceit. An issue that needs to be controlled is the business's lack of information, uncertainty, and management's worry. The aviation industry, which emphasizes profitability and sustainability, is essential since it manages this scenario for the clients it serves because there isn't a study like this one in the literature.

4.1 Model and Hypotheses

After a review of the relevant literature, the following are our hypotheses:

- **H1:** There is a significant and negative relationship between managerial uncertainty and consumer cynicism.
- **H2:** Managerial uncertainty has a significant and negative effect on consumer cynicism.
- **H3:** There is a significant and positive relationship between managerial uncertainty and consumer cynicism.
- **H4:** There is a significant and negative relationship between managerial demographic variables and consumer cynicism.

The model determined to cover our hypotheses is shown below:

Fig. 1. Model Created for the Research.

4.2 Universe and Sample of the Research

Consumers who use services provided by companies in the aviation industry in the province of Istanbul make up the research universe. By utilizing the questionnaire form, which was chosen between July and August 2022 using the convenience sampling approach, customers who receive services in this area were used as the sample. 420 questionnaires were collected and 10 of them were excluded from the evaluation due to their unsuitability. Three sections make up the questionnaire form used to examine the hypotheses. Gender, age, education, and monthly income are all included in the first section's demographics. The "Organizational Uncertainty Perception Scale," created by Schweiger and DeNisi (1991) and translated into Turkish by Tınaztepe (2010), was applied in the second section. The questionnaire form contains the scale developed in 2015 by Helm, Moulard, and Richins—which contains 8 different propositions and the same name (consumer cynicism scale) — then translated into Turkish by Bozoklu and Ermeç (2020). In the scale we used, Cronbach Alpha values were found to be 0.77. This scale, developed by Schweiger and Denisi (1991) and translated into Turkish by Tınaztepe (2010), where the validity and reliability were established, was taken from the study of Polat (2015) and used to assess the degree of organizational uncertainty in

the third section. This scale's Cronbach Alpha value, which consists of 21 assertions, was found to be 0.859. Again, the 17-item questionnaire scale's Cronbach Alpha value was found to be 0.888.

5 Result and Analysis

The IBM SPSS 25 package application was used to evaluate the analysis of the collected data. The data were analyzed using factor analysis in regard to the variables, correlation analysis to establish the relationship between the variables, and an equation model developed to look at the mediating role of managerial uncertainty on the relationship between consumer cynicism.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis.

	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Organizational Uncertainty Scale	**0.933**
Consumer Cynicism Scale	**0.926**

According to the Cronbach Alpha coefficient ratios of the research, it was concluded that the organizational uncertainty scale was 0.933 and the consumer cynicism scale was 0.926.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Participants.

		N	**%**
Gender	Female	229	45
	Male	237	55
Age	26-35	117	25
	36-45	201	33.3
	46-50	112	18.3
	51-55	18	11.7
	55 and older	18	11.7
Staff	Subordinate Staff	239	70
	Medium Staff	204	18.3
	Senior Staff	23	11.7

Within the scope of the study, it was noted that 229 of the participants were female and 237 were male. According to age ratios, there were 117 individuals between the ages of 26 and 35, 201 between 36 and 45, 112 between 46 and 50, 18 between 51 and 55, and 55 or older. In the study, there are 23 members of the subordinate staff, 204 members of the medium staff, and 239 members of the senior staff.

Table 3. T-Test Table for Gender Related Variables and Consumer Cynicism Scale.

Levels	**Gender**	**N**	**Average**	**S.S.**	**t- value**	**p- value**
General Opportunism	Male	229	2.94	1.02	-.262	.811
	Female	237	2.96	.915		
Deception Behavior	Male	229	2.49	1.28	-.266	.815
	Female	237	2.53	1.24		

General opportunism (p=0,811>0,05) and deception behavior (p=0,815>0,05) did not show a significant difference depending on gender status as a result of the t-test used to assess the differences of the consumer cynicism scale according to gender.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance Table for Age Variables and Consumer Cynicism Scale.

Levels	Age	N	Average	S.S.	t- value	p- value
General Opportunism	26-35	117	3.09	.958	1.969	.119
	36-45	201	2.91	.988		
	46-50	112	2.34	.896		
	51-55	18	3.18	.857		
	55 and older	18	3.09	.958		
Deception Behavior	26-35	117	2.88	1.313	6.325	.000
	36-45	201	2.39	1.18		
	46-50	112	2.29	1.188		
	51-55	18	2.72	1.243		
	55 and older	18	2.88	1.18		

The table above displays the results of the conducted analysis of variance test. When we look at the results in the table, we can see that age has no discernible effect on general opportunism (p=0,119>0,05). Deception behavior was observed to vary with age (p=0,000<0,05).

Table 5. Analysis of Variance Table on the Consumer Cynicism Scale with Staff Variable.

Levels	Staff status	N	Average	S.S.	t-value	p- value
General Opportunism	Subordinate staff	239	2.94	.909	.831	.500
			2.89	.988		
	Medium staff	204	3.07	.904		
			2.98	1.05		
	Senior staff	23	3.21	.963		
Deception Behavior	Subordinate staff	239	2.35	1.18	3.674	.006
			2.42	1.18		
	Medium staff		2.82	1.28		
			2.55	1.34		
	Senior staff		3.34	1.61		

General opportunism (p=0,500<0,05) did not differ according to the level of staff as a result of the analysis of variance carried out to examine the change in the consumer cynicism scale in relation to the degree of staff. It was determined that there was a statistical difference in deception behavior based on staff level (p=0,006<0,05).

Table 6. t-Test for Gender Variable and Managerial Uncertainty Scale.

Levels	Gender	N	Average	S.S.	t-value	p- value
General Opportunism	Male	229	2.93	.925	-2.130	.034
	Female	237	3.08	.876		
Deception Behavior	Male	229	2.95	.984	-.451	.655
	Female	237	3.01	1.01		
	Male	229	3.12	1.14		
Taking a Long Time for Feedback	Female	237	3.06	1.11	.576	.581

The general uncertainty of causal relations varies according to gender, according to the results of the t-test used to establish whether there is a difference in managerial uncertainty according to gender (p=0,034<0,05). Lack of Information Clarity (p=0,655>0,05) and Taking a Long Time for Feedback (p=0,576>0,05) levels did not vary by gender.

Table 7. Analysis of Variance Table for Age Variables and Managerial Uncertainty Scale.

Levels	Age	N	Average	S.S.	t-value	p-value
General Opportunism	26-35	117	3.07	.816	1.959	.119
	36-45	201	3.12	.755		
	46-50	112	3.16	.714		
	51-55	18	3.27	.596		
	55 and older	18	3.29	.979		
Deception Behavior	26-35	117	3.19	.883	6.335	.000
	36-45	201	3.24	.907		
	46-50	112	3.48	.834		
	51-55	18	3.45	1.01		
	55 and older	18	3.37	.982		
Taking a Long Time for feedback	26-35	117	3.36	1.02	1.013	.382
	36-45	201	3.38	.866		
	46-50	112	3.33	.965		
	51-55	18	3.32	.854		
	55 an older	18	3.46	.877		

The t-test used to evaluate whether managerial uncertainty varied with age revealed that the general uncertainty of causal relations differs according to age (p=,119<0,05). There was no difference in the levels of Taking a Long Time for Feedback (p=,382>0,05) and Lack of Information Clarity (p=,000>0,05) depending on age.

Table 8. Analysis of Variance between Staff Variables and Managerial Uncertainty Scale.

Levels	Staff status	N	Average	S.S.	t-value	p-value
General Opportunism	Subordinate staff	239	3.12	.765	.189	.839
	Medium staff	204	3.12	.781		
	Senior staff	23	3.22	.576		
Deception Behavior	Subordinate staff	239	3.24	.874	.310	.751
	Medium staff	204	3.17	.993		
	Senior staff	23	3.34	.998		
Taking a Long Time for feedback	Subordinate staff	239	3.34	.949		
	Medium staff	204	3.34	1.06	.725	.480
	Senior staff	23	3.64	1.131		

The t-test used to evaluate whether managerial uncertainty varied with staff revealed that the general uncertainty of causal relations differs according to staff (p=,839<0,05). Lack of Information Clarity (p=,751>0,05) and Taking a Long Time for Feedback (p=,480>0,05) levels did not vary by staff.

Table 9. The Relationship Between Consumer Cynicism and Managerial Uncertainty.

P-value calculated for model significance is 0.000.						
Scales	**Levels**	**B**	**Standard Error**	**Standard B**	**t-value**	**p-value**
Consumer Cynicism	(Constant)	2.193	.217		10.549	.000
	General Opportunism	.215	.072	.162	2.474	.013

	Deception Behavior	-.113	.064	-.127	-1.638	.100
Managerial Uncertainty	General Uncertainty of Causal Relations	-.017	.053	-.016	-.119	.813
	Lack of Information Clarity	.037	.049	.038	.466	.658
	Taking a Long Time	.068	.055	.082	1.210	.241

Regression analysis was used to assess consumer cynicism and managerial uncertainty, and it was found that both variables were significant in creating a regression model (p=0,00<0,05). According to calculations, it was found that there was no association between general opportunism (p=0,000), deception behavior (p=,013), general uncertainty of causal relations (p=0,813), lack of information clarity (p=,658), taking a long time (p=,241), and dimensions (p>0,05).

6 Discussion Conclusion

The goal of this study was to ascertain the level of consumer cynicism in the service industry and how it manifests itself in behavior. Consumers who use the aviation industry and reside in Istanbul were the subjects of the study. In this study, which looked at how managerial uncertainty affected consumer cynicism in the aviation industries where customers obtain services, it was found that the degree to which consumers were cynical of the company depended on how the manager dealt with uncertainty. According to the correlation analysis used within the scope of the research, it has been found that there is a positive and low-level relationship between the lack of information clarity in the sub-dimensions of managerial uncertainty and cynicism as well as a low-level negative relationship with the sub-dimension of consumer cynicism. Consumer cynicism in the marketing outcomes of air transportation corporations operating in the sphere of service coincided with the managerial circumstances within the scope of the research. Studies like this one might be carried out in the manufacturing industry to ascertain.

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