

The Impact of Psychological Factors on Consumer Buying Behavior and an Empirical Application in Turkey

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Abstract

In this study, the influence of psychological factors on consumer buying behavior is investigated. The effect of psychological factors on buying behavior of consumers, who become much more important day by day, is tried to be measured. Turkey has seven regions. From each region two provinces are selected by random sampling method. A face to face survey was conducted on 100 people from each province and in total 1400 people participated in the survey. The information obtained from the results are analyzed and interpreted by the computer packet programs.

Keywords: consumer, psychological factors, motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes

1. Introduction

All of us are consumers. We consume things of daily use; we also consume and buy these products according to our needs, preferences and buying power. These can be consumable goods, durable goods, specialty goods or, industrial goods. In our globalizing world the competition among the firms producing the same goods and services have intensified and the consumer, who is considered the principal focus point in a modern business approach, become more and more important. Consequently, knowing the consumers become a necessity for firms.

In this study, the psychological factors which have a significant influence on consumer buying behavior are examined in three parts. First, the general concepts are enlightened briefly. Then, the psychological factors that affect the consumer buying behavior are studied in a theoretical way. Finally, the results of the survey, which was conducted in Turkey, are analyzed and interpreted.

2. General Concepts of Consumer and the Consumer Behavior

Marketing starts with the needs of the customer and ends with his satisfaction. When everything revolves around the customer then the study of consumer behavior becomes a necessity (Khan, 2007). In the modern marketing, the customers have great options to select so persuasion of the customers by the marketers has a vital impact on their buying. In order to persuade the consumers, the marketers have to study the consumer behavior. The factors that affect the consumer buying behavior are categorized as cultural factors, social factors, personal factors and psychological factors. In this study, the psychological factors were investigated.

Consumer is the one who consumes the goods and services produced. As such, consumers play a vital role in the economic system of a nation because in the absence of the effective demand that emanates from them, the economy virtually collapses. Customer is a person, company, or other entity which buys goods and services produced by another person, company, or other entity (Durmaz & Jablonski, 2012).

Consumer behaviour might be the following: The mental, emotional and physical activities that people engage in when selecting, purchasing, using and disposing of products and services so as to satisfy needs and desires (Priest, Carter, & Statt, 2013).

3. Psychological Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviour

Successful businesses understand how to leverage the different factors that influence consumer buying behavior

to effectively market their products and maximize sales. Studies show that there are generally four main factors that play a role in the consumer's buying behavior. These factors include cultural factors, social factors, personal factors and psychological factors. The psychological factors that influence an individual's decision to make a purchase are further categorized into the individual's motivations, perceptions, learning and his beliefs and attitudes (Callwood, 2013).

3.1 Motivation

Motivation is an activated internal need state leading to goal-directed behavior to satisfy that need. Accordingly motives can be defined as relatively enduring, strong, and persistent internal stimuli that arouse and direct behavior toward certain goals (Trehan, 2009).

The starting point in the buying process is recognition of need. A need may be defined as lack of something useful. A person can be motivated to buy a product for convenience, for style, for prestige, for self-pride or being at par with others (Khan, 2007). If the marketers know what creates motivation, they may be able to develop marketing tactics to influence consumers' motivation to think about, be involved with, and/or process information about their brand or ad (Smoke, 2009).

3.1.1 Maslow's Theory of Motivation

Abraham Maslow suggests that human needs are arranged in a hierarchy from the most basic needs to the higher level needs. When the basic needs which are most pressing are satisfied they won't be a motivator and people start to seek the ways to satisfy the higher level needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is shown as below; (Jonsson, 2010).

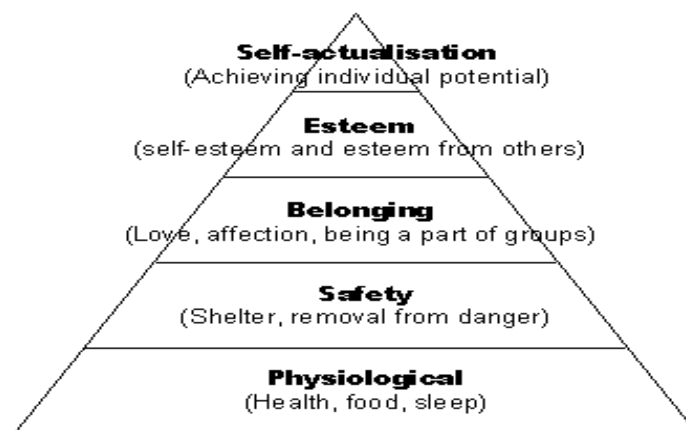


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Jasso, 2013)

1) Physiological needs

These needs are the basic needs such as food, water, sleep, warmth.

2) Safety needs

People need to feel safe in a particular environment.

3) Social needs

Human beings want to be loved and to be accepted by others. They want to attend groups, unions and contact with others.

4) Esteem needs

People want to be admired and respected.

5) Self-actualization needs

People who have all other needs below the pyramid want more and more. These needs show how you regard yourself and how you are regarded.

3.1.2 Balance Theory

The balance theory is a cognitive consistency theory that looks how inconsistent attitudes can motivate

individuals to be persuaded. It suggests that people have both attitudes toward (sentiment relations) and connections to (unit relations) other people, objects, ideas or events. How the relations are organized will determine whether or not they are balanced (Gorman, 2004).

3.1.3 Drive Reduction Theory

According to the drive reduction theory (Hull, 1943), behavior is directed towards reducing the tension that is associated with unpleasant drives, which are themselves caused by needs arising from tissue deficit (Lake, 2009).

3.2 Perception

Perception is called as the energy which makes us aware of the world around us and attaches a meaning to it after a sensing process. Each human being in the world sees his/her surroundings differently. Several people have the same ideas about a specific event. No one can see or feel the 100% of all things. Ever wonder why people buy certain products? It is all about perception. Perception is how consumers understand the world around them based on information received through their senses. In response to stimuli, consumers subconsciously evaluate their needs, values and expectations, and then they use that evaluation to select, organize and interpret the stimuli (Connolly, 2010).

The marketplace's perception of a brand or industry is extremely important, which is why big brands work so hard to ensure that the general perception surrounding them and their industry is as positive as possible. As a result, companies like Gillette, will pay David Beckham to 'model' their products. By aligning the way people feel about Beckham, with the Gillette brand, Gillette can improve the perception of their brand or reinforce what's already positive about it (Taylor, 2006).

3.3 Learning

Learning describes changes in an individual's behavior arising from experience. In every circumstance our perception is conditioned by our prior experience, for it is this which constitutes our preparatory set or expectations and the framework into which we seek to place and organize new stimuli. In other words, we have learned from our earlier experience and seek to maintain balance or consistency by relating to and interpreting new stimuli in terms of past or learned stimuli (Blythe, 2008).

The practical significance of learning theory of marketers is that they can build demand for a product by associating it with strong drives, using motivating cues, and to the same drives as competitors and providing similar cues because buyers are more likely to transfer loyalty to similar brands than to dissimilar ones (Lamb, 2010). There are two types of learning; (Lee, 2007)

- 1) Experiential Learning: Experiential learning occurs when an experience changes your behavior.
- 2) Conceptual Learning: Conceptual learning is not acquired through direct experience.

3.4 Beliefs and Attitudes

Kotler defines belief as "descriptive thought that a person holds about something" and attitude as "a person's enduring favorable or unfavorable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea". Individuals can have specific beliefs and attitudes about specific products and services (Sarangapani, 2009).

Marketers are interested in the beliefs that people formulate about specific products and services because these beliefs make up product and brand images that affect buying behavior. If some of the beliefs are wrong and prevent purchase, the marketer has to launch a campaign to correct them. A consumer may believe that Sony's Cyber-shot camera takes the best HD video, is easiest to use, and is the most reasonably priced. These beliefs may be based on knowledge, faith, or hearsay. Consumers tend to develop a set of beliefs about a product's attributes and then, through these beliefs, form a brand image-a set of beliefs about a particular brand (Lee, 2007).

People have attitudes regarding religion, politics, clothes, music, food, etc. Attitude of consumer also influences the consumer behavior. If consumer's attitude towards a product is favorable, then it will have positive effect on consumer behavior. The marketers discover prevailing attitude towards their product and try to make it positive, and if it is already positive, then try to maintain it (Hoyer & Deborah, 2008).

4. Application

4.1 Purpose and Scope of Research

The purpose of this study is by shedding light to the managers of founded and will be set up business and especially to the marketing department, which provides to development of country and which leads that the consumers are better known by them and beter quality goods, services and ideas will be presented In the 1950s, "contemporary (modern) marketing concept" expresses the consumer-oriented businesses. What, when, where and at what price and why wants consumers, these questions were asked firstly about forty years ago. In other words, get to know people have become more important.

4.2 Methods and Sample

In this study as data collection method questionnaire was preferred to obtain objective data and to interpret the first order, that person is the source or first hand. Questionnaire has been prepared according to the 'funnel' technique, which means from general to special. Assumption of this technique, when the special questions are asked at first place to the surveys, they will be probably avoided.

Research data, by sampling the group of Turkey consumers, consist of multiple choice questions for the questionnaire.

4.3 Limiting of Investigation

In the survey, from each region two provinces are selected by random sampling method. A face to face survey was conducted on 100 people from each province and in total 1400 people participated in the survey. Although it was aimed over 1400 people, reasons like limited time, financial problems and difficulty of doing research in another country are the limits of this survey.

4.4 Results Analysis and Interpretation

The data obtained were analyzed through computer program package "frequency" and the results were interpreted according to this method.

1) Do You Generally Like Shopping?

Table 1. Enjoy shopping

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Extremely satisfied	362	26.2
Satisfied	547	39.6
Neutral	318	26.2
Dissatisfied	108	7.8
Extremely dissatisfied	48	3.5
Total	1383	100.0
Missing	17	
Total	1400	

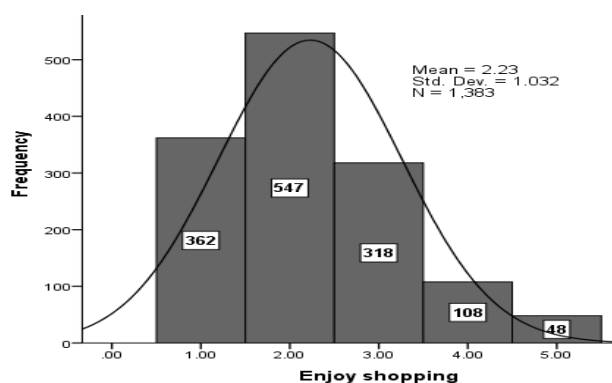


Figure 2. Enjoy shopping

With this question is intended to detect the like degree of consumer shopping. As shown in Table 1 and figure 2, 1383 people responded to this question, 547 people (39.6%) had enjoyed shopping satisfied, 362 people (26.2%) extremely satisfied, 318 people (26.2%) is neutral While, 108 persons (7.8%) did not like, and 48 persons (3.5%) stated they did not like at all. According to these data, it could be said that the vast majority of those who surveyed (65.8%) enjoy shopping.

2) Do You Have Any Information About The Consumer Protection Law And Consumer Right?

Table 2. Be informed of consumer protection laws

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	758	55.1
No	562	40.9
Other	57	4.0
Total	1377	100,0
Missing	23	
General total	1400	

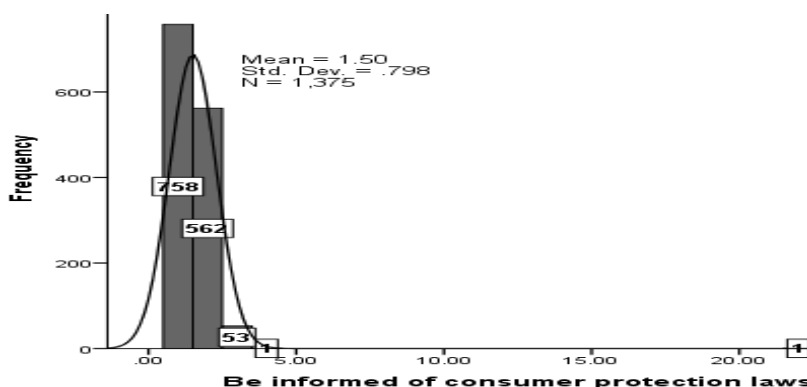


Figure 3. Be informed of consumer protection laws

We aimed to learn whether consumers have knowledge about their rights and while 562 (40.9%) people said that they didn't know about consumer protection law and consumer rights; 758 (55.1%) people said they knew. It can be seen from the results that consumers have information about the consumer protection law and consumer right.

3) I do shopping to make myself happy. I don't care what other people think.

Table 3. Buying for happiness

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Certainly no agreed	257	18.7
No agreed	290	21.1
Undecided	135	9.8
Agreed	361	26.2
Certainly agreed	333	24.2
Total	1376	100.0
Missing	24	
General Total	1400	



Figure 4. Buying for happiness

In this question the purpose is to learn whether consumers do shopping to make them happy without thinking other peoples opinion. As seen in Table 4; 361 (26.2%) people do their shopping to make themselves happy; 333 (24.2%) people certainly do their shopping to make themselves happy; 290 (21.1%) people don't do shopping to make them happy; 257 (18.7%) people certainly don't do shopping to make them happy.

According to this result it can be said that majority of the respondents do their shopping to make themselves happy without thinking others opinion.

4) The most important thing for me is that sellers convince me in every case on the goods and services that i will take.

Table 4. Convince the seller

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Certainly no agreed	281	20.5
No agreed	353	25.7
Undecided	257	18.7
Agreed	333	24.3
Certainly agreed	148	10.8
Total	1372	100.0
Missing	28	
General Total	1400	

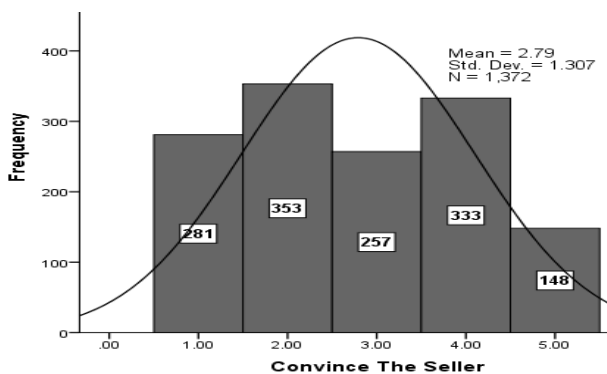


Figure 5. Convince the seller

The aim is to learn whether sellers convince is important for participants. Table 5 shows that; 353 (25.7%) people didn't agree; 333 (24.3%) people agreed; 148 (10.8%) people certainly agreed and 281 (20.5%) people certainly didn't agree.

As a result it can be said that participants think that sellers convince is not important for them on the goods and services they will take.

5) The most important thing form is enjoying me in buying goods and services.

Table 5. The importance of self-rating

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Certainly no agreed	205	14.9
No agreed	249	18.1
Undecided	58	4.2
Agreed	126	9.2
Certainly agreed	739	53.7
Total	1377	100.0
Missing	30	
General Total	1400	

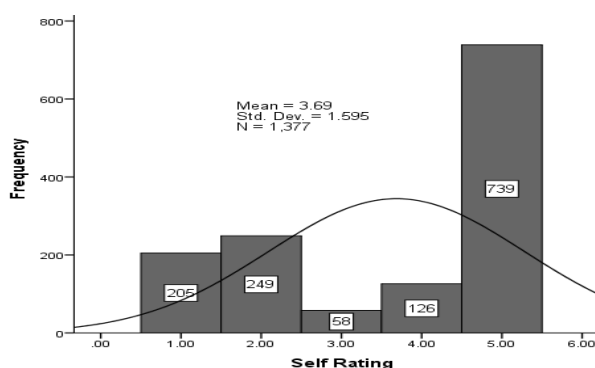


Figure 6. The importance of self-rating

Our aim is to learn how enjoying is important for participants in buying goods and services. As seen in Table 5 and figure 6; 739 (53.7%) people certainly agreed by saying that enjoying themselves is the most important thing; 126/(9.2%) people agreed; 249 (18.1%) people didn't agree and 205 (14.9%) people certainly didn't agree. It can be concluded from these results that enjoying is the most important criteria for most of the respondents.

6) Your education level?

Table 6. Training effect

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Illiterate	43	3.1
Primary school	366	26.6
High school	537	39.0
University	411	29.9
Postgraduate	18	1.3
Total	1375	100.0
Missing	25	
General Total	1400	

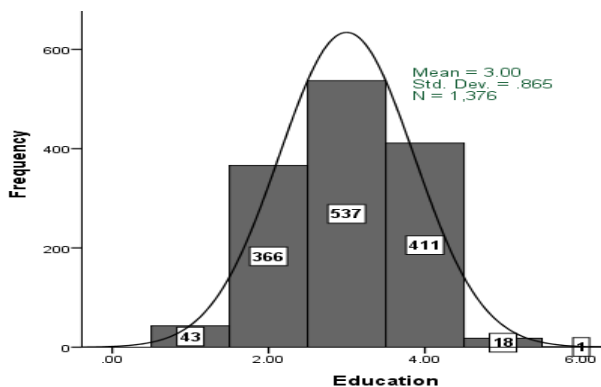


Figure 7. Training effect

With this question we wanted to learn participants’ education level. As seen in Table 7; 537 (41.48%) people are high school; 411 (29.9%) people are university; 366 (26.6%) people are primary school; 43 (3.1%) people are illiterate and 18 (1.3%) people are postgraduate.

7) Your occupation?

Table 7. Professional impact

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Teacher	106	7.7
Officer	198	14.4
Worker	259	18.8
Free occupation	242	17.5
Unemployed	104	7.5
Other	470	34.1
Missing	21	100.0
General Total	1400	

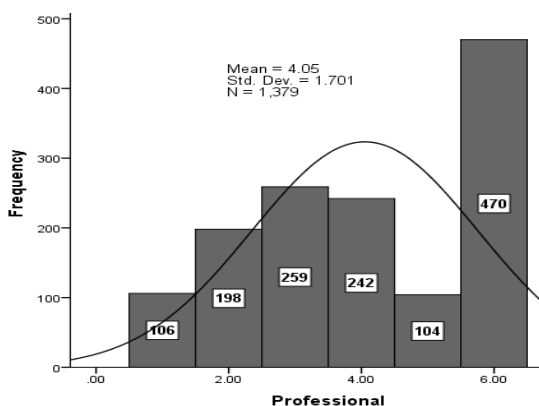


Figure 8. Professional impact

In this question the aim is to learn the occupations of participants. As shown in Table 5; 470 (34.1%) people have other jobs than these, 259 (18.8%) people are worker; 242 (17.5%) free occupation; 198 (14.4%) people are officer; 106 (7.7%) people are teacher and 104 (7.5%) people are unemployed.

8) In which group does your age take place?

Table 8. Effect of age

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Between 18-25	406	29.5
Between 26-35	420	30.5
Between 36-45	352	25.6
Between 46-55	137	10.0
56 and above	57	4.1
Total	1372	100.0
Missing	28	
General Total	1400	

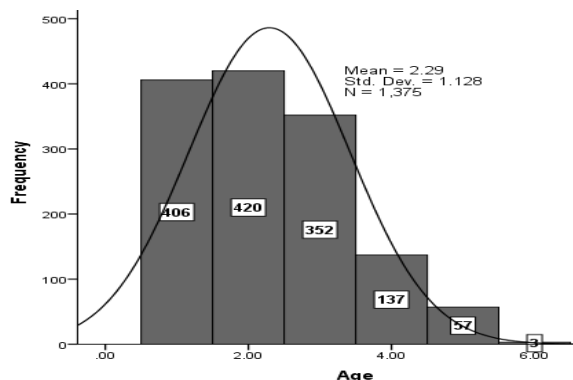


Figure 9. Effect of age

The aim of this question is to learn ages of respondents. As seen in Table 9; 406 (29.5%) people are between 18-25; 420 (30.5%) people are between 26-35; 352 (25.6%) people are between 36-45; 137 (10%) people are between 46-55 and 57 (4.1%) people are 55 and above.

According to this result majority of the respondents are young's who are between 26-35.

9) Marital status?

Table 9. Marital status

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Single	558	40.6
Married	759	55.3
Widow	56	4.1
Total	1372	100.0
Missing	28	
General Total	1400	

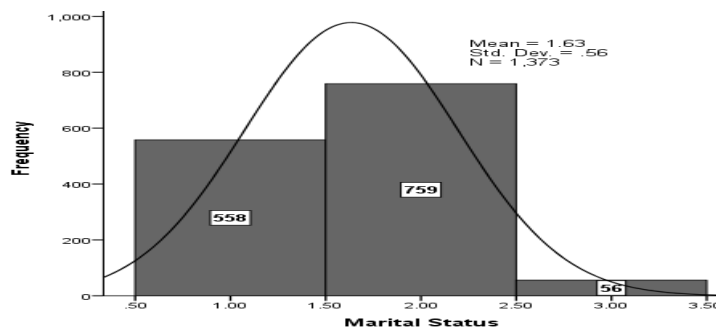


Figure 10. Marital status

We wanted to learn marital status of respondents with this question. As seen in Table 10; 558 (40.6%) people are single; 759 (55.3%) people are married and 56 (4.1%) people are widow. It can be seen that more than half of the respondents are single.

10) Gender?

Table 10. Gender effect

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Female	590	40.6
Male	781	55.3
Other	1	4.1
Total	1372	100.0
Missing	28	
General Total	1400	

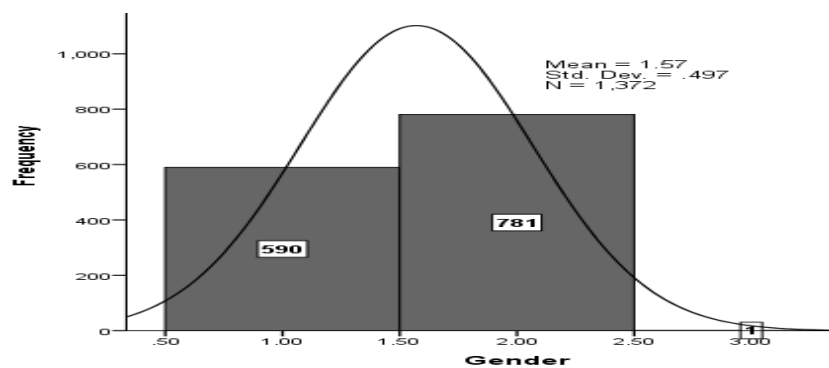


Figure 11. Gender effect

The aim of this question is to determine sexes of respondents. As seen in Table 11; 781 (55.3%) people are male; 590 (40.6%) people are female, As a result majority of the respondents are male.

5. Conclusion

We can sum up the results of data analysis of interviews with 100 people from each 2 cities of 7 regions in Turkey.

- Most of the consumers in Turkey love shopping.
 - Approximately more than half of the consumers know about consumer law and rights.
 - Consumers do the shopping in order to feel happy and they do not care about what other people think.
 - While buying goods and services, sellers do not have much effect on consumers.
 - While buying products the most important thing is consumers' own regards. (approximately 62% of them.)
- Here is the demographic structure of the participants;
- Most of the participants are high school graduates.
 - Participants have very wide range of occupations.
 - Participants who are between 26-35 ages ranges take the first place.
 - Most of the participants are married.
 - More than half of the participants are men.

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