

TURKISH FEMALE AND MALE CONSUMERS' SHOPPING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

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This study investigated shopping attitudes and behaviors of consumers in Izmir, Turkey (N=242). The enjoyment of shopping and mood for going shopping varied between female and male consumers. Female consumers more than male consumers preferred to go shopping in a good mood. This shows that hedonic value of shopping either increases or decreases according to their gender. It also played a major role for the preference of online or offline shopping. The Internet was preferred for shopping purposes by males more than females. The usage of the Internet for shopping by male consumers supports the earlier statements on hedonic value. Liking or disliking sellers' suggestions depended on whether shopping is online or offline. Shopping center visitors enjoyed a seller's suggestion more than online shoppers.

Keywords: Gender, shopping enjoyment, shopping mood, online and offline shopping, sellers' suggestion.

Introduction

Turkey is located in the Middle East and a EU candidate with a total of 71.517.100 population size. The city of Izmir is located in the Aegean area and is the 3rd biggest city of Turkey with a population of 3.795.978 ("Regional indicators TR31", 2008). Izmir is a commercial and economical centre of the country and therefore has an important role in the Turkish economy (Kompil and Çelik, 2006a; Kompil and Çelik, 2006b).

Supermarkets have existed in Turkey since the 1950s with the establishments of Migros and Gima (Kavlak, n.d.). Turkish state regulated the food retailing in 1960s and Izmir Municipality founded a consumer cooperative under the name of Tansas (Lemeilleur and Tozanli, n.d.). During the 1980s, Turkish retail sectors were limited with small scale and family owned shops. The available options for Turkish consumers were nothing more than *bakkal* (convenient store), *manav* (grocery store), *kasap* (butcher), small supermarkets and bazaars during these periods of time. After the 1980s, social and economic transformation accelerated in Turkey (Aslan and Aslan, 2008) and some supermarkets and hypermarkets appeared especially in big cities. Forum Bornova which has been developed as a shopping and life centre by Multi Development Türkiye is one of them. The centre opened in October 2006 in Izmir and since then had attracted many consumers not only from the large part of the city, but also from other cities of Turkey ("Forum Bornova", n.d.).

Today, supermarkets and hypermarkets in Turkey contain every kind of goods including 40-45 thousand varieties which can be found abroad (Kavlak, n.d.). Large retail firms offer cheaper

prices, premiums, and benefits to the consumers and in this competitive environment it has been difficult for the small stores to compete against the giant retail firms (Aslan and Aslan, 2008).

In addition to markets, hypermarkets, and shopping centers, fairs –in which some recreational activities can be found- are convenient ways of promoting products and services and they are common activities in Izmir. Trade fairs enable retailers to meet current and potential customers, allow customers to use their five senses, and offer a suitable site for combining other promotional activities (Koldas, 2006). The first recorded and well known international fair in Turkey is Sergi-i Osman in 1863 in Istanbul (Sulun, 2004). Among Fairs in Turkey, Izmir fairs have a unique importance. Izmir trade fairs gather different nations, cultures and activities and have been considerably contributing to Turkish national economy more than 76 years (“Izmir fair”, n.d.). Izmir International Fair is one of them and will open its gates to national and international retailers for 80th times and thereby was open between 8 and 18th of September 2011 (Sulun, 2004). Ozkelle (2006) states that expo fairs contribute to cities’ architecture, economy, education, and art; and therefore, they are necessary elements in the creation of new and developed cities.

In entering the market of Turkey, it is important for marketers to learn how certain aspects of consumers’ attitudes and behaviors change by sex so that they can appropriately segment, target, and position their products. The purpose of this study is to discover shopping enjoyment, shopping mood, online and offline shopping, as well as a relationship between sellers’ suggestion and a brick and mortar shopping.

E-shopping is an increasing trend in Turkey (Celik and Yilmaz, 2011) and a research result by Akagun-Ergin and Ozdemir-Akbay (2008) shows that a significant difference exists between male and female consumers’ online shopping frequency. Thus, in addition to brick and mortar shopping, another investigation area of this study will be whether or not there is a behavioral difference between male and female consumers in e-shopping.

In the following sections, the related literature will be offered and hypotheses will be advanced; then, research methodology and findings will be explained; and finally, conclusions and future implications will be drawn.

Literature Review

Shopping as Leisure

For many years, shopping has been considered as a rational process and seen from the utilitarian perspective. In recent years, shopping has been seen from a different perspective which is called a hedonic perspective such as shopping for leisure and recreation, or the emotional roles of mood and pleasure in shopping (Bäckström and Johansson, 2006; Cardoso and Pinto, 2010; Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010).

According to the hedonic perspective, shopping is considered as one of the most enjoyable leisure time activities, as it provides an opportunity for social interaction such as talking with staff members of the store or enjoyment of negotiations for bargaining (Sohail, 2008). Although non-store outlets are now widely available, consumers prefer shopping in stores. This persistence of store shopping can be explained as consumers’ store shopping enjoyment (Dholakia, 1999; Cox, Cox, and Anderson, 2005). That is the reason why shopping centres have been increasingly including ‘entertainment’ into their marketing strategy which gained popularity over the past years (Sit, Merrilees, and Birch, 2003). Alreck and Settle (2001) state that giant outlets provide

children's play grounds, cafeterias, snack bars, fast food restaurants, and various styles of in-store entertainments and activities.

Sit, Merrilees, and Birch (2003, p. 84) report that:

Shopping centre management has sought to alter consumers' perceptions of shopping to be a community recreational activity, for seeing and being seen, for meeting and passively enjoying the atmosphere. Thus many shopping centres have incorporated food courts, cafes, and restaurants on the centre property, either inside or on outparcels.

Rajagopal's (2009) study on behavior of urban shoppers reveals that attributes of shopping malls such as ambiance and promotional activities increase traffic to the malls. A study in Turkey is based on Kurt's (2008) research in the role of store atmosphere on customer loyalty. Kurt found that customer loyalty increased in terms of increase in the level of perceived store atmosphere. Erkip (2005, p. 95) researched the rise of the shopping mall in Turkey and mentioned 'leisure' as one of the important motive for going shopping:

One of the important findings of the latter research is that leisure has become more dominant in the activities in a mall. This seems to be the case in many non-Western cases, including the Turkish mall. People spend longer hours in a mall for socializing, family gathering and recreation and are willing to commute to the mall from distant districts.

According to Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) results ("Aile yapisi arastirmasi", 2006), going shopping (28.1%) is an activity that Turks frequently do more than other activities such as visiting relatives (24.9%), visiting neighbors (23.4%), visiting friends (14.3%), going on a picnic (7%), going to a restaurant (5.5%), and going to the cinema/theatre (2.8%).

Howard (2007, p. 661) cautions that:

retailers have to compete with many alternative destinations for their customers' spending. More shopping centres exist and there are more non-retail destinations too, as consumer interest in cars, holidays, and all kinds of leisure activities from eating in restaurants to holidays in exotic locations grows.

Morgan (2006) takes the concept one step further and contributes to the hedonic perspective of shopping by stating that retailers should provide unique and memorable stores with their distinctive settings, food and drink complementary offerings, story telling to customer's children. That is, retailers should supply Disney-like mix of approaches in the stores in order to create magnificent visitor experience. Kurt (2008, p. v) agrees with Morgan on visitor experience and explains her opinion in the following statement:

Customers expect to have a satisfactory shopping experience and enjoy their shopping in an attractive environment. One of the key factors influencing customers' shopping experience is store atmosphere, referring to the physical feeling a customer gets when visiting a store. Store atmosphere provides retailers to make customers feel satisfied and effects customers' decisions about spending more, shopping again and becoming more loyal.

Shopping enjoyment is an important indicator on how long a consumer will stay in a shopping environment. Alreck and Settle (2001) suggest that if shoppers stay in a store longer, they are exposed to more varieties in a store, and hence they will be more likely to buy them. However, there are some contradictory opinions to this notion. Stoel, Wickliffe, and Lee (2004) studied a relationship between attributes at the mall and time spent there and found that attributes of the mall positively influence time spent at the mall, but this was not resulted in money spent in the mall.

Women are involved in shopping more than men (Anselmsson, 2006). Shopping has been historically considered a feminine activity and some men avoid it just to preserve their masculinity (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004). In addition, while shopping is a gendered activity and men are avoiding shopping (Dholakia, 1999), it is seen as an enjoyable leisure activity by women (Anselmsson, 2006).

Aydin (2010) studied hedonic value of shopping according to gender, size of settlement, and income in Turkey and found that females more than males, consumers who live in bigger living areas more than smaller areas, and consumers who earn higher income than lower income showed more hedonic value of shopping.

Jackson, Stoel, and Brantley (2011) in their investigation of gender differences in mall shopping found that females displayed greater levels of hedonic shopping value, more positive attitudes towards entertainment options, and mall hygiene factors.

Lascu, Manrai, Manrai, and Babb (2001) state that if women have a domestic role, it is very natural that they will be responsible for major household activities and purchase decision making. Males and females differ from each other from many perspectives and these differences are found in their shopping attitudes and behaviors. There is a saying that “men buy and women shop” and an investigation of this proclaim (Kuruvilla, Joshi, and Shah, 2009). The common idea based on “men buy and women shop” shows us that females spend more time in shopping, compare more products to each other, consult to sales people, try and taste products, and finally buy it. Males, on the other hand, quickly try to find what they look for, do not spend so much time for comparisons, and grab what is available at the time of purchase (Gunes, 2007). In light of the literature review, the hypotheses are decided as follows:

H1: The majority of consumers enjoy shopping.

H2: Female consumers enjoy shopping more than male consumers.

Shopping Mood

People try to create and keep up positive moods and get away from negative moods by engaging themselves in numerous activities such as watching television, eating, shopping, exercising, listening to music, or going to a movie (Kacen, 1994; Hess, Kacen, and Kim, 2006). Mood has a significant effect on shopping behavior. Consumers' moods may have influence what and when they will buy, who they shop with, how long they shop and how much they spend (Swinyard, 1993). Consumers may prefer shopping both in a good mood (to maintain it) and in a bad mood (to get rid of it) (Kacen, 1994). Happiness may motivate some consumers for shopping, while sadness or stress may do the same job on others. However, “A consumer in a bad mood may tend to view shopping activities differently from one in a good mood, particularly if the shopping activity is personally relevant” (Swinyard, 1993, p. 271). Raghunathan and Corfman (2004) found that while positive mood encouraged consumers' variety seeking behaviors, negative mood was resulted in increased shopping. Chuang, Kung, and Sun (2008), on the other hand, found in their studies that it was a negative emotion that drove consumers to look for more variety in their consumption decisions than a positive emotion. In addition to this, mood management at the point of purchase (POP) is an important part of marketing, as positive mood may influence information acquisition, brand comparison and evaluation, and purchase. Therefore, maintaining positive mood at the POP may encourage shoppers' variety seeking behaviors and may lead to expected shopping outcomes (Gardner, 1985). In this study, shopping mood was investigated. That is, it was researched that either male consumers or female consumers say “I am feeling good, let's go shopping” or “I am feeling bad, let's go shopping” or

“I need the item, let’s go shopping”. We assume that female consumers associate shopping with joy and entertainment more than male consumers. As a result of this enjoyment, female consumers may prefer shopping in a good mood (a hedonic perspective), while male consumers do this when it is necessary (an utilitarian perspective). The third hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Female consumers prefer shopping in a happy mood, while male consumers prefer shopping when they need the item.

Online-Offline Shopping

Research results show that male consumers show more tendency to shop online than female consumers. Alreck and Settle (2001) looked into store shopping versus online shopping and found that women were more positive toward store shopping, while men were more positive toward Internet shopping. Passyn, Diriker, and Settle’s (2011) and Rodgers and Harris’s (2003) examinations on gender and online shopping revealed that females were less emotionally satisfied with e-shopping than males. Slyke, Comunale and Belanger (2002) reason that Web based online advertiesments of products and services should focus one male oriented Web sites in order to attract male shoppers, as many research results provide a positive relationship between online shopping and gender. Hansen and Jensen (2009, p. 1154) have researched a relationship between online clothing purchases and the role of gender. They have found that “Less fun significantly affected online clothing purchases for men purchasing clothing for themselves, but not for women doing the same”. Hasan (2010) investigated gender differences in online shopping attitude and found that online shopping was appealing to men more than woman.

Dholakia and Chiang (2003, p. 171) explain this gendered difference between online and offline shopping: “... shopping is considered a ‘female typed’ activity whereas technology is considered to be in the male domain”. Slyke, Comunale, and Belanger (2002) support the frame of opinion reflected by Dholakia and Chiang and report that males are associated with IT (Information technology) while females remain passive users of IT. TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute) results for 2010 support Dholakia and Chiang’s explanation and reveal that 33.2% of females and 53.4% of males use computer in Turkey. TUIK also reports in the same research that 31.7% of females and 51.8% of males use Internet (“Women in”, 2010). In the US and Europe, a large number of consumers shop online (Monswé, Dellaert, and Ruyter, 2004). However, this number is far less in Turkey. According to one of the latest results of TUIK, people who shop via the Internet is 15% and people who don’t is 85% in Turkey (“Her 100 evden”, 2010). Furthermore, the majority of the investigations in many countries confirm that male consumers are involved in online shopping more than female consumers. There are, however, contradictory research results on gender difference in online shopping in Turkey. According to a recent study by Algur and Cengiz (2011) up on the risk and benefit perceptions of online shopping of Turkish consumers, female consumers shop online more than male consumers. On the other hand, Kaan Donmez who is the General Manager of Hepsiburada.com researched the members of their sites and reported that 75% of the e-shoppers in Turkey were males (“Online alisverisi erkekler”, 2006). As a result of the literature review, it can be said that men, in general, look for short time in purchasing, while women see it as a pleasurable activity; and therefore, it is hypothesized that males will prefer online shopping more than females.

H4: Male consumers are involved in e-shopping more than female consumers.

“Following the need recognition stage of the buyer decision process, consumers often seek information to guide their purchase alternative selection process” (Ozdipciner, Li, and Uysal, 2010, p. 515). Consumer information search includes gaining knowledge on product, service, store, or purchase situation (Thiagarajan, Ponder, Lueg, Worthy, and Taylor, 2009). “An additional factor in consumer decision-making in a retail environment is the recognition of the role of store sales personnel” (Granot, Greene, and Brashear, 2010, p. 802). The salesperson is an important mediator between the retailer and the consumer and their characteristics and attributes influence customer satisfaction and repurchase (Darley, Luethge, and Thatte, p. 2008). Akaydin’s (2007) research on the role of retail store atmosphere in Turkey uncovers that human factor is found to be the most important factor among the other factors of a store atmosphere. As Gardner (1985) underlines there is influence of some small actions on shoppers’ moods and in turn behaviors such as a sales person’s smile.

The proliferation of competing brands made product information given in purchase situation important (Kowatsch and Maass, 2010). Kowatsch and Maass (2010, p. 697) state that:

Consumers depend on precise and comprehensible product information at the point of sale. For example, consumers with food allergies need to know about the ingredients of groceries and consumers that buy a memory card for a digital camera need to know if both products are compatible with each other. Product information therefore strongly influences purchase behaviour as found by consumer research for in-store shopping situations.

Many companies have been moving towards a service-based business model (Kindström, 2010). Customer-oriented (Darian, Wiman, and Tucci, 2005) or service-oriented selling behavior has positive impact on products and shopping habits (Chang, Yang, and Yu, 2006) and ‘customer service’ is sometimes provided by salesperson’s interactions with customers (Paulins, 2005).

Emotive aspects of the consumer’s experiences with the products can be explained by hedonic consumption (Cardoso and Pinto, 2010; Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010), which is also related to the mood of consumers. From hedonic perspective, shopping is seen as a leisure activity which involves meeting with people and more human touch in its conversation, such as a seller’s suggestion. Therefore, people who like a seller’s suggestion may prefer to go to a shopping centre more than people who prefer e-shopping. One of the aims of this research is to understand why some consumers behave in a dissimilar way to sellers’ suggestion.

H5: Consumers who prefer going to a shopping center like a seller’s suggestion more than consumers who prefer e-shopping.

Methodology

This survey has been conducted in public places such as stores and cafeterias in Izmir, Turkey. Convenience sampling procedure was employed. The moderators explained to the respondents that their purpose for conducting this study was to collect data for analyzing market characteristics. The moderators contacted 261 of the respondents and 251 of them accepted to be included in this study. Out of 251 of the questionnaire, 242 of them were in a usable format.

Closed-ended questions were used to obtain demographic data and shopping related opinions and activities. For example, “In which mood, do you want to go for shopping?” was asked to examine shopping mood. For this question, the respondents had “happy”, “unhappy”, “when needed”, and “unsure” options.

The independent variables were the respondents’ demographic profiles; and the dependent variables were the participants’ shopping related opinions and behaviors. For analyzing data, the

SPSS statistical package was used. The data was analyzed by using frequencies for the demographic characteristic of the respondents; and cross tabulation chi square for shopping attitudes and behaviors. The results of cross tabulation chi square were analyzed with significance at .05 level.

Findings

1. Descriptive Results

1.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The respondents' age profile includes younger consumers more than older ones. 42.6% of the respondents were between the ages of 18-24 years old. Female respondents were 76.4% and male respondents were 23.6% of all respondents. The majority of the respondents were university graduates (55.4%) and high school graduates (30.2%). 13.2% of them were under 544 TL earners, 25.6% of them earned between 544-1499 TL, 21.5% of them earned between 1500-2499 TL, 14.9% of them earned between 2500-3499 TL (1 TL is approximately \$1.5).

2. The Cross Tabulation Chi-square Results

The cross tabulation chi-square was computed between demographics and media use of the respondents and the questions. The significant results were explained in the following sections.

Hypothesis 1 & Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 1 predicted that the majority of consumers enjoyed shopping. Findings showed that 83.5% of the respondents liked going shopping; 12.4% of them didn't like going shopping; and only 3.7% of them were replied the question as unsure. The H1 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that female consumers enjoyed shopping more than male consumers. Female respondents (94.6%) showed more favourable attitude than male (47.4%) respondents toward going shopping ($\chi^2=74.327$, $df=3$, $p=.000$). The H2 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that female consumers preferred shopping in a happy mood more than other moods, while male consumers preferred shopping when they needed the item. Male respondents wanted to go shopping ($\chi^2=21.295$, $df=4$, $p=.000$), when they needed the item (63.2%); while female respondents wanted to go shopping when they were happy (44.3%) more than other moods. The H3 was confirmed.

Table 1. The Cross Tabulation Chi-square Results for Gender.

	Gender
Shopping enjoyment	.000*
Shopping mood	.000*
Shopping online & offline	.002*

*The results are significant at $p < .05$

Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 4 predicted that male consumers were involved in e-shopping more than female consumers. Females (97.8%) preferred going to a shopping center ($\chi^2=12.756$, $df=2$, $p=.002$) more than males (87.7%). Using the Internet for shopping purposes was a growing trend for males (12.3%) more than females (1.6%). The H4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that consumers who preferred going to a shopping center liked a seller's suggestion more than consumers who preferred e-shopping. According to the significant correlation between preference for shopping activities and liking a seller's suggestion ($\chi^2=40.170$, $df=8$, $p=.000$), consumers who went to a shopping center (26.8%) liked a seller's suggestion more than consumers who used the Internet for shopping activity (20%). The H5 was supported.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Implications

The major limitation of this study is that convenience sampling has been operated and this means that the results of this study cannot be generalized to Turkey. However, as it is discussed below, the results reveal some important aspects and characteristics of consumers in Izmir, Turkey.

The findings support the previous studies in a way that the majority of consumers enjoy shopping (Dholakia 1999; Sit, Merrilees, and Birch 2003; Cox, Cox, and Anderson 2005; Erkip 2005; "Aile yapisi arastirmasi" 2006; Bäckström and Johansson 2006; Sohail 2008; Cardoso and Pinto 2010; Kang and Park-Poaps 2010) and female consumers enjoy shopping more than male consumers (Dholakia 1999; Lascu, Manrai, Manrai, and Babb 2001; Bakewell and Mitchell 2004; Anselmsson 2006). This study supports the proclaim that shopping has been considered as a gendered activity and females enjoy shopping and see it as a recreational activity (Dholakia, 1999; Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004; Anselmsson, 2006).

One of the investigations of this study is based on a relationship between 'mood for going shopping' and 'gender of consumers'. There was a significant connection between 'gender and mood for going shopping'. Female consumers tended to go shopping when they were in a 'happy mood' more than other moods. Male consumers, on the other hand, tended to go shopping when they needed an item. This result supports the fact that 'shopping' has been considered as one of a recreational, leisure, or entertainment activity by female consumers more than male consumers because of female consumers' tendency to go shopping when they are in a good mood which may be considered as an indicator that they enjoy shopping more than male consumers. Male consumers, in contrast, see shopping as an activity which has to be done when it is needed and when it is necessary (Dholakia, 1999; Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004; Anselmsson, 2006; Gunes, 2007). From this point of view we can say that, generally, male consumers preferred utilitarian shopping; while female consumers preferred hedonic shopping.

Some recreational activities are found in shopping centres that combine some hypermarkets, stores, multiplex cinemas, and restaurants in Izmir. In those massive shopping environments, point of purchase materials or other attention gathering stands should be designed more carefully in a way to attract the attention of positive mood holders and keep up their variety seeking behaviors (Raghunathan, and Corfman, 2004) and they should be more entertaining and stimulating those consumers who arrive at the store in a good mood. From time to time, either the importance of interpersonal communication is underestimated or the salespersons are not

selected properly by some Turkish marketers. It is recommended that stands ought to be designed with talkative, friendly and cheerful sales people (Gardner, 1985; Darley, Luethge, and Thatte, 2008). Although, sometimes it is ignored, shopping environment should be strategically planned so that consumers may spend the most of their times in the shopping environment. The more stay means the more spending. As suggested by Alreck and Settle (2001), as long as consumers find a reason to stay more in a shop, this may be resulted in more trial and more purchasing behaviour.

The city of Izmir is especially famous with its fairs from marble and shoes to automobile, and communication technologies. If we Google the word of *Izmir fuarlari* (Izmir fairs), 464.000 results are found. And we know as a result of this study that female consumers in Izmir tended to brick and mortar shopping. This shows us the importance of fairs in Izmir and using it effectively and strategically for female consumers' shopping orientation.

The research result confirms that online shopping was appealing to men more than women ("Online alisverisi erkekler", 2006; Hasan, 2010). This result also supports the notion that females shop in a good mood, because they do not hesitate to spend time, effort, and energy for visiting a shopping center; but, males shop when it is needed and urgent and they prefer to shorten the shopping time and trip by using the Internet (Hansen and Jensen, 2009). Some offers to encourage Internet usage such as price reductions or exclusive premiums for new comers (Slyke, Comunale and Belanger, 2002) may be an efficient way of attracting younger female generation who may be more willing to use both computer and Internet; but, it is certainly not a convenient way of attracting older Turkish female consumers, as they devote themselves to cooking, shopping and raising children (even though some of whom have an outside job) and therefore are least likely to use home computer and Internet ("Women in", 2010).

According to hedonic aspect of shopping, shopping is seen as an enjoyable activity which includes meeting with people, spending time in shopping centres, and allowing shopping conversations while shopping. It is not surprising that consumers who preferred going to a shopping centre liked sellers' suggestion more than consumers who used the Internet for shopping purposes which once again support the hedonic aspect of shopping (Cardoso and Pinto, 2010; Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010).

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