INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND CONSUMERS' DECISION MAKING STYLES

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Abstract

The state of decision making consists of one of the important life skills. Whereas decisions made appropriately and timely affect individuals' lives positively, wrong decisions may cause negative effects. In social relationships that have been taking a more complex form with each passing day, individuals are faced with some problems and options and have to maket he most appropriate decisions about themselves.

This study was carried out in order to investigate the choices of individuals residing in Erzincan province, regarding the decision making styles, which is an important subject of today. The sample of the study consists of 387 people and the questionnaires, which include 28 questions were filled in by the participants. The decision making styles are in the form of perfectionism, being brand focused, fashion focused, price focus, shopping without thinking, habit, experiencing informational convergence, avoiding shopping and indecision. In the research, initially a literature search was made about the subject and then the demographic characteristics were compared to the answers given to the decision making styles scale, using the SPSS 20.0 packaged software. In the last part, the findings of the research were appreciated and various results were obtained in the opinions of individuals regarding their decision making styles.

Keywords: Decision making styles, habit, demographic variables

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Bireylerin Demografik Değişkenleri İle Karar Verme Tarzları Arasındaki İlişkinin Araştırılması

Öz

Karar verme durumu önemli yaşam becerilerinden birini oluşturmaktadır. Uygun ve zamanında verilen kararlar kişilerin yaşamlarını olumlu yönde etkilerken hatalı verilen kararlar ise olumsuz etkilere yol açabilmektedir. Her geçen gün daha karmaşık bir biçim alan sosyal ilişkiler içerisinde kişiler bir takım problemler ve seçenekler ile karşılaşarak kendileri için en uygun kararları seçmek durumunda kalmaktadırlar.

Bu çalışma günümüzde önemli bir konu olan karar verme tarzlarına Erzincan ilinde ikamet eden bireylerin tercihlerini incelemek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemi 387 kişi olup toplam 28 sorudan oluşan anket formları katılımcılar tarafından yanıtlandırılmıştır. Karar verme tarzları; mükemmeliyetçilik, marka odaklılık, moda odaklılık, fiyat odaklılık, düşünmeden alışveriş, alışkanlık, bilgi karmaşası yaşama, alışverişten kaçınma ve kararsızlık şeklindedir. Araştırmada ilk olarak konu ile ilgili literatür taraması yapılmış olup ardından demografik özellikler, karar verme tarzları ölçeğine verilen yanıtlar ile SPSS paket programı kullanılarak ilişkilendirilmiştir. Son bölümünde araştırma bulguları değerlendirilerek bireylerin karar verme tarzlarına ilişkin görüşlerinde çeşitli sonuçlar elde edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karar verme tarzları, alışkanlık, demografik değişkenler

INTRODUCTION

Decision making is an action, which people perform throughout their whole lives and which plays a crucial role in determining their futures. In markets where there is cut throut competition, correctunderstanding and meeting consumers' requests and needs has great importance regarding organizations. On the other hand, the way to understand consumers is based on determining the factors that affect the consumer's decision making process in a good way. Consumer behaviors consists of complex processes that are hard to understand. The consumer is influenced by many factors in the internal and external environment while making a decision. The process of decision making was scrutinized with quite different approaches in terms of consumer behaviors.

The decision making process in purchasing, perhaps one of the most important processes of consumer behavior, has been interpreted by many researchers from different perspectives(Kotler,1965). Consumer buying behavior is a highly complex process. The

consumer tries to solve his / her problems under the influence of many internal and external variables as the problem solver and decision maker when performing the buying action. It is known that these variables consist of cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Many methods and approaches have been developed in order to determine how the consumer chooses and decides among many products and services. As a result of the researches, it has been determined that each consumer has a buying style "and that this style is guiding when making a decision(İslamoğlu, 2006: 137).

In markets where there is a big competition inall sectors, it is of vital importance to understand and respond to the needs and demands of consumers in terms of organizations. The way to understand consumers is to determine the factors that influence the consumer's decision making process. In terms of consumer behavior, the decision making process in purchasing has been examined with very different approaches (Aydın,2017:1).

Sproles and Kendall (1985) stated that learning consumer decision-making styles is as important as determining and marketing preferred products. Identify consumer decision-making style as part of mental focus and personality shaping a consumer's decision-making approach (Sproles&Kendall, 1986: 267-268).

There are some approaches which claim that consumers are far away from rationality, that they often decide cognitively, and this is an approach that advocates this idea(Shiv&Fedorikhin, 1999: 290).

According to Bettman and Zins (1977: 75-76), consumers follow two different ways in making a decision. The first is deciding on a set of rules that exist in their memory. The second is making a choice by comparing or evaluating.

In marketing literature, consumer decision-making styles are examined in many studies and shopping styles are handled in different categories such as (Anic et al., 2014: 432), clothes (Cowart&Goldsmith, 2007), food (Anic et al., 2014; Anic et al., 2015) andfinancial products (Howcroft et al., 2003). Consumers tend to follow certain norms under the influence of the social environment, .Consumers may also be exposed to norms in case of group pressure(Simonson&Nowlis, 2000: 65; Verplanken&Holland, 2002).

In the literature, "Consumer Style Scale" developed by Sproles and Kendall is widely used. Sproles and Kendall developed a consumer-style inventory and a model that measures each decision-making feature with six questions. The validity of this model has been tested by applying exploratory factor analysis to the information obtained from a sample of 482 high school students in the USA. As a result of the analysis, consumer decision-making dimensions

that reflect eight basic mental characteristics were formed. Each of these is the main consumer decision-making characteristic and, independently of each other, represent mental approaches to consumption(Sproles&Kendall, 1986: 269-270).

Sproles and Kendall's decision-making styles are as follows:

Perfectionism-High quality focus: Perfectionist consumers prefer products of the highest quality. These consumers are expected to make more careful, systematic and comparative purchases at the purchasing stage.

Brand Focus: Brand and quality conscious consumers. They defend the theory of price = quality. They tend to buy well-known and most expensive products. They usually prefer the most popular and best-selling brands.

Innovation-Fashion Focus: This group of consumers are innovable and fashionable individuals. They feel excited and amused about being in the search for new things. They keep up with the fashion and always keep their style up to date. Having style and diversity is important for these consumers.

Entertainment - Pleasure Focus: Shopping is pleasant for these individuals. It consists of consumers who shop for fun and pleasure. They tend to enjoy shopping. They find it fun to buy and decide without paying attention to the product or brand.

Price-oriented: It consists of consumers who pay attention to the low price of the product and the amount of money to be spent in purchasing decisions. These consumers expect discount times for purchase.

Shopping without thinking-Unplanned Shopping: It consists of consumers who act sloppy in purchasing and decide quickly and without thinking. They don't pay attention to how much money they spend at the shopping stage and whether they make a good shopping in return for the money.

Variety Complex: It consists of consumers who are forced to make decisions based on varieties and information surplus. They find it difficult to decide in the face of too many brands and stores. They are confused by more information.

Habit - Brand Loyalty: It consists of consumers who display buying behavior at regular intervals from favorite brands and stores. They adopta particular brand, and buy it and they do not change it easily (Sproles and Kendall, 1986: 271-274).

Although the decision-making process regarding purchasing has been dealt with for many years from different perspectives, there is a common problem in this field. This common problem is not being able to foresee what brands to choose among alternative brands in the

same product category(Olshavsky&Granbois, 1979: 93; Lawson,1997: 427; Punj&Stewart, 1983).

METHOD

The purpose of the study; to research the decision-making forms of individuals who live in Erzincan province. The decision-making styles of the consumers were appreciated considering the demographic characteristics The study group of the current research consists of consumers living in Erzincan province in 2018. A total of 387 people participated in the study.

The assumptions of the research:it is assumed that the most suitable measurement tools are "decision-making styles'' used in the research.The participants who completed the questionnaire reflected their sincere views. The research sample represents the universe. Limitations of the Research: In 2018, the research was limited to consumers in Erzincan. The data collection tool is limited to a total of 28 questions, 6 of which are demographic.

The data used in the study were obtained by the survey technique. The questionnaire was first used to measure demographic variables and then to measure decision-making styles. Regarding the scale of decision making styles; the article entitled "the scale of consumer decision-making styles: structure and dimensions"(Dursun et al., 2013) was used.. The scale consists of nine sub-dimensions. These are perfectionism, brand focus, fashion focus, price focus, shopping without thinking, habit, informational convergence , shopping avoidance and instability. SPSS 20.0package program was used in the analysis. In the analysis results, p value is considered as 0.05. The "p" value's being less than 0.05 is considered statistically significant in the literature.The category of response of the current scale was subjected to a 5-point Likert-type scale rating and these categories were graded in a wide scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree..

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H_1: There is a statistically significant difference between the gender of consumers and their decision making styles.

H_2:There is a statistically significant difference between the marital status of consumers and their decision-making styles.

H_3:There is a statistically significant difference between the working status of the consumers and their decision making styles.

H₄: There is a statistically significant difference between the ages of consumers and their decision making styles.

H₅: There is a statistically significant difference between the education of consumers and their decision making styles.

H₆: There is a statistically significant difference between the incomes of consumers and their decision making styles.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the consumers who participate in the study.

Table 1. Demographic Distribution of Consumers Participating in the Survey

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Woman	167	43,2
Male	220	56,8
Marital status		
Married	162	41,9
Single	225	58,1
Age		
18-30	241	62,3
31-50	81	20,9
51and more	65	16,8
Working Status		
Working	217	56,1
Not working	170	43,9
Income status		
1-1700tl	227	58,7
1701-5000tl	143	37,0
5000 and more	17	4,4
Total	387	100,0

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 43.2% of the participants were female and 56.8% were male. While 41,9% of these participants were married, 58,1% of them were single. Regarding age distribution, there is a predominantly young age group ; 62% were in the age range of 18-30, 20,9% were in the range of 31-50 and 16,8% were 51 years old and older. While 56.1% of the participants were working, 43.9% did not work. In terms of income, more than half of the consumers were in the low-income group; 58.7% of them earned 1-1700tl, 37% of them had 1701-5000tl and 4.4% of them had an income of 5000 TL and above.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between the gender of consumers and their decision making styles.

Table 2. T-Test Results of the Gender of Consumers and Decision-Making Styles

Variable	Gender	$\bar{X}$	T	p
Perfectionism	Woman	11,3473	0,411	0,682
	Man	11,2045		
Brand focus	Woman	10,7844		
	Man	10,4136	0,853	0,394
Fashion focus	Woman	6,2754	4,496	0,000
	Man	5,0682		
Price focus	Woman	7,6048	0,385	0,914
	Man	7,6273		
Shopping without thinking	Woman	5,9042	3,155	0,002
	Man	5,0000		
Habit	Woman	6,5808	-2,294	0,022
	Man	7,1409		
Informational convergence	Woman	6,3353	0,842	0,390
	Man	6,1364		
Avoiding shopping	Woman	5,1377	-4,563	0,000
	Man	6,2545		
Instability	Woman	5,9281	1,643	0,101
	Man	5,5045		

When Table 2 is examined, significant relationships ($p < 0.05$) were examined when t-test results of the gender of decision-making sub-dimensions of consumers were observed at 95% confidence level; The focus on fashion ($p = 0,000$) was shopping ($p = 0,002$), habit ($p = 0,022$) and avoidance ($p = 0,000$).H1 is accepted accordingly. According to this, women are more fashion oriented than men and do shopping without thinking. Men make more decisions about their habits than women and they avoid more than women.

There was no significant difference between perfectionism, brand focus, price focus, information complexity, life and instability sub-dimensions and gender.

H₂: There is a statistically significant difference between the marital status of consumers and their decision-making styles.

Table 3.T-Test Results of Marital Status and the Decision-Making Styles of Consumers

Variable	Gender	Marital Status	$\bar{X}$	t	P
Perfectionism	Woman	Single	11,0133	-1,737	0,083
	Man	Married	11,6173		
Brand focus	Woman	Single	10,9511	2,075	0,039
	Man	Married	10,0494		
Fashion focus	Woman	Single	5,9244	2,965	0,003
	Man	Married	5,1235		
Price focus	Woman	Single	7,5778	-0,454	0,645
	Man	Married	7,6728		

Shopping without thinking	Woman	Single	5,6889	2,468	0,014
	Man	Married	4,9753		
Habit	Woman	Single	6,9022	0,029	0,977
	Man	Married	6,8951		
Informational convergence	Woman	Single	6,2133	-0,088	0,930
	Man	Married	6,2346		
Avoiding shopping	Woman	Single	5,4933	-2,669	0,008
	Man	Married	6,1605		
Instability	Woman	Single	5,6800	-0,066	0,947
	Man	Married	5,6975		

According to the results in Table 3,significant relationships between marital status and decision-making styles of participants (p <0.05),brand focus (p = 0,039), fashion focus (p = 0,003), shopping without thinking (p = 0,014) and shopping avoidance (p = 0,008) are among the sub-dimensions. H2 is accepted accordingly. While single consumers have the tendency toshop, beingmore brand-focused, fashion-oriented and without thinking compared to married consumers, married consumers avoid shopping more than single consumers.

According to the results of the study, marital status variable, perfectionism, price focus, habit, information complexity are not an effective factor on life and in decision making.

H₃: There is a statistically significant difference between the working status of the consumers and their decision making.

Table 4.T-Test Results of Working Status and Decision Making Styles of Consumers

Variable	Working Status	$\bar{X}$	t	p
Perfectionism	Working	11,3594	0,628	0,530
	Not working	11,1471		
Brand focus	Working	10,1244	-2,372	0,018
	Not working	11,1471		
Fashion focus	Working	5,2028	-3,234	0,001
	Not working	6,0824		
Price focus	Working	7,7005	0,908	0,364
	Not working	7,5118		
Shopping without thinking	Working	4,9631	-3,342	0,001
	Not working	5,9353		
Habit	Working	6,9447	0,422	0,673
	Not working	6,8412		
Informational convergence	Working	6,1198	-1,008	0,314
	Not working	6,3529		
Avoiding shopping	Working	6,1014	3,020	0,003
	Not working	5,3529		
Instability	Working	5,5346	-1,352	0,177
	Not working	5,8824		

In Table 4, t-test was conducted regarding the participants working status and the sub-dimensions of decision-making. As in the gender variable of 95% confidence level, it was seen

that there was a significant relationship between the decision-making sub-dimensions such as fashion focus, brand focus, and shopping avoidance . Thus H₃ is accepted.

Individuals who do not work are more brand-oriented, fashion-oriented, while individuals who work while thinking without thinking avoid shopping.

H₄: There is a statistically significant difference between the ages of consumers and their decision making.

Table 5. Results of Homogeneity Tests regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Consumers' Age and Decision-Making Styles Sub-Dimensions

Homogeneity Test

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	p
Perfectionism	1,552	2	384	,213
Brand Focus	1,564	2	384	,211
Fashion Focus	1,243	2	384	,290
Price Focus	1,329	2	384	,266
Shopping without thinking	4,525	2	384	,111
Habit	1,622	2	384	,199
Informational convergence	,197	2	384	,822
Avoiding shopping	1,853	2	384	,158
Instability	1,000	2	384	,369

When the homogeneity test results regarding the sub-dimensions of consumers' ages and decision-making styles are examined, it is seen that all variables have a homogenous distribution.

Tablo 6. Anova Analysis Results of the Sub-Dimensions of Consumers' Age and Decision-Making Styles

Variable	Age	$\bar{X}$	p	Post-Hoc Comparison	F
Perfectionism	18-30	11,0747	0,157	-	1,859
	31-50	11,2593			
	51 and more	11,9846			
Brand focus	18-30	10,7137	0,424	-	0,861
	31-50	10,0247			
	51 and more	10,7385			
Fashion Focus	18-30	6,0083	0,000	18-30>51ve üzeri>31-50	8,974
	31-50	4,6790			
	51 and more	5,1692			
Price focus	18-30	7,6846	0,697	-	0,361
	31-50	7,5309			

	51 and more	7,4769			
Shopping without thinking	18-30	5,7095	0,012	18-30>51ve üzeri>31-50	4,450
	31-50	4,7037			
	51 and more	5,0615			
Habit	18-30	6,9461	0,079	-	2,558
	31-50	6,4321			
	51 and more	7,3077			
Informational convergence	18-30	6,2324	0,261	-	1,349
	31-50	5,9259			
	51 and more	6,5538			
Avoiding shopping	18-30	5,5851	0,153	-	1,889
	31-50	6,0741			
	51 and over	6,0923			
Instability	18-30	5,7552	0,473	-	0,749
	31-50	5,7654			
	51 and over	5,3385			

According to Table 6, a significant relationship was found between the decision-making styles of consumers and the dimensions of being fashion-focused (or "fashion focus")(p = 0,000) and shopping without thinking (p = 0,012), because p-values were less than 0,05. H4 is therefore accepted. When the means are examined, the young participants between the ages of 18-30 are found to be not only fashion-oriented but also to do shopping without thinking.

H₅: There is a statistically significant difference between the education of consumers and their decision making styles.

Table 7. Homogeneity Test Results of the Sub-Dimensions of Consumer Trainings and Decision-Making Styles

Homogeneity Test	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Perfectionism	1,428	4	382	,224
Brand Focus	1,035	4	382	,389
Fashion Focus	1,346	4	382	,252
Price Focus	1,613	4	382	,170
Shoppingwithout thinking	1,270	4	382	,281
Habit	1,236	4	382	,295
Informational convergence	,764	4	382	,549
Avoiding shopping	1,538	4	382	,190
Instability	1,547	4	382	,188

When the homogeneity test results of the sub-dimensions of consumers' training and decision making styles are examined, it is seen that all variables have a homogenous distribution.

Table 8. Anova Analysis Results of the Sub-Dimensions of Consumer Trainings and Decision-Making Styles

Variable	Educational Status	X̄	p	Post Hoc Karşılaştırması	F
Perfectionism	Primary school	4,9032	0,010	Associate>License>	3,373
	High school	5,2845		Graduate>High school	
	Associate	6,2044		>Primary school	
	License	5,5000			
	Graduate	5,5000			
Fashion Focus	Primary school	4,6129	0,008	Associate>High school>Graduate> License>Primary school	3,475
	High school	5,6293			
	Associate	6,1022			
	License	5,3286			
	Graduate	5,5000			
Shopping without thinking	Primary school	4,7903	0,044	Associate>Graduate>Highschool>License >Primary school	2,473
	High school	5,3017			
	Associate	5,9489			
	License	4,9857			
		5,0000			

Habit	Graduate Primary school	5,3902 6,2097	0,049	Associate>High school>Associate>	2,404
	High school	7,1724		Primaryschool >Graduate	
	Associate	6,8321			
	License	7,2429			
	Graduate	5,0000			

When Table 8 is examined, significant relationships between the training of participants and their decision-making styles ($p < 0.05$); perfectionism ($p = 0,010$), fashion focus ($p = 0,008$), shopping without thinking ($p = 0,044$) and habit ($p = 0,049$) are among the sub-dimensions. H5 is accepted accordingly. While those who received associate degree education are more perfectionist, fashion oriented and do shopping without thinking compared to other groups, in these sub-dimensions primary school graduates are the lowest level compared to other groups. In the habit subscale, high school graduates have the highest average.

Brand focus, price focus, information complexity, shopping avoidance and instability are not shown in the table because they give meaningless results at 95% confidence level.

H6: There is a statistically significant difference between the incomes of consumers and their decision making styles.

Table 9. Homogeneity Test Results for Consumers' Revenues and Decision-Making Styles Sub-Dimensions

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Perfectionism	2,093	2	384	,125
Brand Focus	,192	2	384	,826
Fashion Focus	,119	2	384	,887
Price Focus	2,153	2	384	,117
Shopping without thinking	3,258	2	384	,070
Habit	2,269	2	384	,105
Informational convergence	3,509	2	384	,051
Avoiding shopping	3,613	2	384	,058
Instability	1,989	2	384	,138

When the homogeneity test results of the consumers' training and decision making styles sub-dimensions are examined, it is seen that all variables have a homogenous distribution.

Table 10. Anova Analysis Results of the Sub-Dimensions of Consumers' Revenues and Decision-Making Styles

Variable	Revenues	X̄	p	Post-Hoc Comparison	F
Perfectionism	1-1700tl	5,9031	0,019	1-1700tl>5000+tl>	3,988
	1701-5000tl	5,1049		1701-5000	
	5000tl and more	5,2353			
Avoiding shopping	1-1700tl	5,3172	0,000	5000+tl>1701-1700tl>1-1700tl	10,445
	1701-5000tl	6,3566			
	5000tl and more	6,9412			

When Table 10 is examined, those who have income between 1-1700tl are found to be more inclined to perfection than those in other income groups (p = 0,019), whereas those with an income of 5000 tl and above are found to avoid shopping more than those in other income groups (p = 0,000). H_6 is accepted because there is a significant relationship between income and decision making.

Brand focus, fashion focus, price focus, shopping without thinking, habit, information complexity and instability sub-dimensions are not shown in the table since p values are greater than 0.05 for 95% confidence level.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the present research, women are more fashion oriented than men and do shopping without thinking. Men make more decisions about their habits than women, and they avoid purchases more. While single consumers tend to shop with a more brand-focused, fashion-oriented style and without thinking compared to married consumers, married consumers avoid shopping more than single consumers.Whereas individuals who do not work are more brand and fashipn oriented, , individuals who work avoid shopping without thinking. The young participants between the ages of 18-30 are not only fashion-oriented but also do shopping without thinking. While those who received associate degree education are more perfectionist, fashion oriented and do shopping without thinking compared to other groups, in these sub-dimensions primary school graduates are at the lowest level compared to other groups. In the habit subscale, high school graduates have the highest average. Among the

participants, those who have an income between 1-1700tlare more perfectionist than those in other income groups, whereas those with income of 5000tl and above avoid shopping more than those in other income groups.

Women's passion for fashion and shopping compared to men is known. Married consumers avoid shopping more because they consider family budgets. However, single participants may be able to shop without thinking because their responsibilities are less than married participants.

Decision-making requires a psychological and mental and will-based effort. According to the complexity and simplicity of the decisions, these efforts can be of a quantity and quality that individuals may not always overcome. There are various factors in decision making such as personality, values, perceptions, and attitude towards risk.. A good decision should be effectively efficient, applicable and timely taken.

Since the study is carried out in Erzincan province, it does not provide adequate results to make a generalization; therefore the number of samples and the scope of the research will be increased and therefore, a greater contribution will be made to the field by associating the decision-making styles with different variables.

Similar studies about decision making styles may be applied throughout the country in the form of regional comparison and results may be obtained in a wider framework.

The psycho-social variables regarding the decision making styles treated in the research will be associated and conducting studies more thoroughly will help a better understanding of the decision making process.

The consumer decision making styles may be utilized to divide the target market into sections and to develop marketing components that will be more efficient for each part.

An alternative marketing communication may be prepared and put into practice according to the state of whether the primary consumers of the products and services to be presented to the market are among those who are perfectionist, price focused, fashion focused or those who do shopping without thinking.

Information regarding how the consumers in the target market decide and how they do shopping may provide important competitive advantages to marketing managers.

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