



YOUNG ADULTS' ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES ABOUT YOUNG BEDROOM FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS

Tuğba ANDAÇ GÜZEL

Kayseri University, Vocational College, Department of Interior Design, Kayseri, TURKEY

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Abstract

Decisions made by young adults regarding the decoration of their bedrooms are not only important in terms of understanding their self-development but also for understanding the prospective consumer profile. In this study, the preferences and attitudes of young adults aged 18–25 years who live in Kayseri province of Turkey regarding furniture and furnishings were analyzed. A survey was designed and implemented and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and cross table. According to the results, young individuals with Kayseri are actively using the internet, preferring branded products, and aesthetically designed products. They are individuals who turn to timeless, functional, and useful products in conditions where the price is at the forefront. Companies operating in the furniture and furnishings sector for young individuals should develop their product designs in terms of aesthetics, functionality, and usefulness if they want to have this customer base. Companies operating in the furniture and furnishings sector for young individuals should develop their product designs in terms of aesthetics, functionality, and usefulness if they want to have this customer base. Also, they should engage in activities to increase promotion and brand value on the internet.

1. INTRODUCTION

People develop and change continuously throughout their lives. Of particular importance is the self-construction experienced during the young adulthood period. According to United States Department of Health and Human Services (2017) the term “young adults” refers to persons aged 18–24. Another concept used in literature to express young adults in this age range is emerging adulthood [1]. According to Fincham and Cui (2010), emerging adulthood is just another term that duplicates ones already found in the literature, such as late adolescence, or young adulthood. Emerging adulthood is a new way of thinking about development from the late teens through the twenties, especially ages 18–25 [2]. Emerging adulthood is a period of life during which individuals are faced with more transitions and life decisions than at any other stage of their lives. Such transitions require a substantial amount of individual efforts, such as goal setting, planning, explorations, decision-making, and commitments, through which young people handle their current life situation and direct their future lives [3].

The spaces in which people live contain traces of their identities and self-construction process. In view of Nielson and Taylor (2011), spaces users refer to individuals who affect the design of a space directly or indirectly. Indeed, a space may serve different purposes depending on the needs of the user. For instance, spaces are often a source of identity and individuality for teens and young adults, whereas they may be seen as soothing and relaxing for adults or comforting and reminiscent places for the elderly. Changes in lifestyles of the users also result in the change of the demography of the house. In other words, a bedroom may change into a child’s room, a teenager’s room, and then a young adult’s room, all of which have significant distinguishing characteristics [4]. Depending on the needs of the user, there might be a play area, a toy storage area, a storage area for other uses, or a studying and computer area [5]. The same spaces may be changed into music, dance, and entertainment areas when the children become teenagers and young adults and used for different purposes when the young adults leave home [4].

Individuals may need to consume several goods and services to perform change and transformations within the space. Consumption refers to the use of goods and services to fulfill people's needs and the consumer refers to the person, institution, or organization with a need to be fulfilled and both money to spend and a desire to spend [6, 7]. To understand consumer behavior, it is important to learn what, why, when, and how the consumers buy as well as how they decide and which factors have an impact on their decisions [8]. Therefore, understanding what teenagers want and how they behave as well as the distance they cover and the changes in the process of being an adult consumer is a significant issue that should be analyzed in terms of consumer behaviors. This process is reflected especially in the cognitive and emotional self-construction of the youths, as well as their behavior in purchasing and consumption. According to Peter and Jerry (2010), self-construction activity is intense especially during youth and adulthood. The youths assume different social roles and self-identities and they frequently buy products to be integrated with these roles. However, the changes in people regarding self-concepts are rarely observed as grow and mature. People buy products to continue to fulfil their established self-concepts even though radical changes are still possible in the years ahead [9].

Young adults, who try different preferences in their self-construction building process, are a major and potential mass of customers for many sectors. A young consumer, gained in this respect, bears the potential of turning into a loyal customer that is likely to purchase for years. According to the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD, 2019), youths between the ages of 15–24 years account for 12,983,097 (16.1%) of the population in Turkey. In fact, Turkey has the youngest population of Europe, which means this is a potentially lucrative segment not only locally but also in terms of the global companies [10]. This potential is also important for the sectors of manufacturing furniture and furnishings. For instance, a young girl has the opportunity to establish her decorating preferences for her own room as well the rest of her household in the years ahead.

1.1. Literature Review

Several academic studies have explored how youths evaluate their personal living space. For instance, Abbott-Chapman and Robertson (2001) investigated which private and public spaces young adolescents in Australia prefer for spending time. The researchers determined that young adolescents primarily prefer a traditional home environment and thus their rooms when they want to be alone with themselves or spend time with their friends [11]. Jones et al. (2007) studied the impacts of gender differences of children on bedroom design and decoration and found that plushes, toys, and the photos of their relatives are common in the bedrooms of girls, whereas items related to sports and the projects, which they designed or would like to design, are common in the bedrooms of boys [12]. Hodgkinson and Lincoln (2008) studied how young adults in their early 20s are affected by the use of online magazines while they design their bedrooms. According to the results, youths understand the potential value of their bedrooms through their review of online magazine content, which has an eye-opening impact on the lives and identities of the young adults [13].

Cagatay et al. (2016) studied the determination of the criteria for interior design and decoration of bedrooms of youths in Turkey. In particular, they found that youths make their own decisions while buying furniture for their bedrooms and that they prefer furniture made of wood and wood-composite materials. They further determined that girls mostly prefer pink and orange colors on the walls of their rooms, whereas boys prefer blue and white colors [14]. Newson (2017) investigated the items that influence the relationship of identity and individualism for the teens in the decoration of their bedrooms. According to the results, the bedrooms of teens are personalized areas and gifts given to them by their families influence the decoration of their rooms. He further determined that the teens reflected the material culture, established by them in the areas they created, on social media [15].

Several academic studies have explored what influences the preferences of the consumer about purchasing goods, and furniture in particular. For example, Lihra et al. (2012) studied the criteria taken into consideration by consumers living in the United States when buying furniture. They concluded that the consumers are mostly price-oriented (50%) and that women place importance on product customization [16]. Serin and Andac (2012) analyzed the factors that affect consumer preferences regarding purchasing furniture based on education and age in Turkey and found consumers place great importance on

functionality, price, and aesthetic characteristics. Further, they determined that the price of the furniture is a very important item for the individuals who graduated from primary and high schools [17]. Andac and Guzel (2017) studied how the children of parents with different demographic origins in Turkey select the furniture and equipment to be purchased for their rooms. Their findings indicated that wood (70%) is the most reliable material preferred by the parents for the rooms of their children and that well-educated and high-income parents are inclined to select furniture that is safe and environmentally friendly [18].

In their study about the preferences of furniture of consumers in Turkey with different demographic origins, Okcu et al. (2017) determined that the consumers act in accordance with their needs. They specified that these consumers emphasize the furniture they would like to buy should be comfortable, useful, and ergonomic [19]. Concerning China's middle-class consumers who would like to have a higher quality of life, Wan et al. (2018) determined they show an increasing interest on eco-friendly products, which also includes environmentally friendly children's furniture. Moreover, these consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products and furniture with eco-friendly characteristics [20].

2. METHODS

2.1. The Aim of the Study

This study analyzes the thoughts, preferences, and attitudes towards personal bedroom furniture and furnishings of young individuals between the ages of 18-25 years living in Kayseri province of Turkey. Studying these issues is important in terms of understanding what matters to youths and how to create a more functional interior environment in which they can feel relaxed and experience a sense of belonging. It is the main purpose of this study to read the preferences and expectations of these individuals regarding the decoration of the youth bedroom and to produce appropriate solutions. These decoration solutions will increase the alternatives for young people's furniture and furnishing preferences. They will also help young people make the right purchasing decisions. Furthermore, it is thought that these solutions will help to develop new strategies in the field of decoration related to production, design, and marketing.

2.2 Data Collection

This study was carried out in Kayseri province. This research was planned to carry out primarily on young individuals aged 18-25 live in Turkey. However, it was necessary to make a sampling study for reasons such as difficult to reach all of these individuals included in the scope of research, limited transportation facilities and time, and budget. For all these reasons, it was decided to limit the research to young people between the ages of 18-25 in Kayseri. In advanced stages are planned for similar studies in other large cities in Turkey. For this study, it was decided to use the purposive (judgment) sampling method. Purposeful sampling is a method used to make the most appropriate part related to the problem of the universe as the subject of observation [21].

This study was conducted in association with several enterprises operating in Kayseri that offer sport and social activities for the young. Consents and permissions required for the survey were obtained from the authorities of the venues. The participants were informed about the survey and their consents were received. A survey form containing a wide range of questions with respect to the decoration of a young adult's room was designed. Initially, a target sample of 384 individuals who visited the spaces was sought. However, the response rate was better than expected and 420 surveys were completed and examined for the study.

2.3. Analysis of Procedures

To obtain quality, objective, and comprehensive data in this study, a face-to-face interview survey method was chosen. Face-to-face interviewing is one of the oldest data collection methods and ensures a maximum level of communication and interaction between the interviewer and respondent making it useful for obtaining quality data. Therefore, it is the most preferred survey method by many researchers. Notably, this method has some disadvantages. For instance, misleading results may be obtained from surveys focused on sensitive issues [22]. Further, Lavrakas (2008) highlighted that given the time constraint, a respondent is

unable to take additional time for the questions in comparison with the alternative methods. However, some disadvantages can be overcome since this method allows the respondent to clarify questions and items in the survey with the help of the interviewer as needed [23]. During the survey, at some points, participants were made explanations about the topics in the survey (material, etc.). With these explanations, it was ensured that the participants did not understand the questions incorrectly. Also, with these explanations, it was aimed to get correct and unbiased answers from the participants.

The survey form consists of four sections. The first section focuses on the demographic features of the individuals, such as age, gender, educational background, marital status, and employment status. The second section asks whether the individual has a personal room in their house as well as their preferences and attitudes concerning purchasing goods for the decoration of their rooms. The third section explores the attitudes and preferences of the young individuals about furniture and furnishings they have used or desire to use for decorating their rooms. In the last part, several statements are offered to explore the impact of the thoughts of the individuals regarding the decoration of their room on their behaviors in the process of purchase. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with these statements on a Likert scale. In view of Sullivan (2009), Likert is a significant rating scale that is commonly used in the surveys for evaluating the attitudes, preferences and subjective statements of the respondents. This scale was developed by Rensis Likert and designed as a set of items. A set of items presents users with statements and standardized response categories on a continuum, such as strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree [24].

The data were analyzed using the WEKA 3.9 statistical software. Waikato Environment for Knowledge Analysis (WEKA) has a general public license and was developed at the University of Waikato, New Zealand [25]. The obtained data is presented through tables and graphics

3. RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Findings

Of the 420 young adults who took part in the survey (Table 1), 52.1% of the participants were females and 47.9% were males, with a strong majority (93.6%) identifying as single. Regarding age, 62.9% and 26.4% of the survey participants were between the range of 21-23 and 18-20 years of age, respectively. Almost half of the sample (42.8%) was comprised of young adults who have obtained a bachelor degree. In terms of employment status, 59.5% reported they do not work and 16.7% were employed in full-time work.

Table 3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Personal Characteristics			
Sex	(%)	Educational Status	(%)
Male	47.9	High School Student	16.6
Female	52.1	College Student	35.7
Age	(%)	Bachelor Student	42.8
18-20	26.4	Working situation	(%)
21-23	62.9	Not Working	59.5
24-25	10.7	Half-Time Working	23.8
Marital status	(%)	Full-Time Working	16.7
Married	6.4		
Single	93.6		

3.2. Findings Regarding the Purchase Process

The second section of the survey explored the preferences and attitudes of respondents before and after their purchase of bedroom furniture and furnishings (Figure 1 and 2). The aim of this research was to determine the origin of the decision to purchase the furniture and decorative products used in their rooms. According to the results, 47.2% of the young adults stated that such a decision originated from themselves,

34.5% stated that it originated from their family or the person they share the room with, and 18.3% of the individuals stated that the decision originated from another decision maker other than themselves (e.g., their parents). When respondents were asked what this decision was based on, more than half of the individuals stated that it originated from the emergence of a recent necessity (52.1%). Similarly, Andac Guzel (2020a), reported that the purchase decision on furniture and furnishing for young people's room was mostly due to the emergence of a new need [26]. Of the remaining individuals, 21.9% stated they needed to replace furniture that had worn out, 14.3% made changes because of a desire to follow the new fashion and trends, and 11.7% stated their original furniture became useless because of a sudden circumstance (burning, fracture, etc.) (Figure 1).

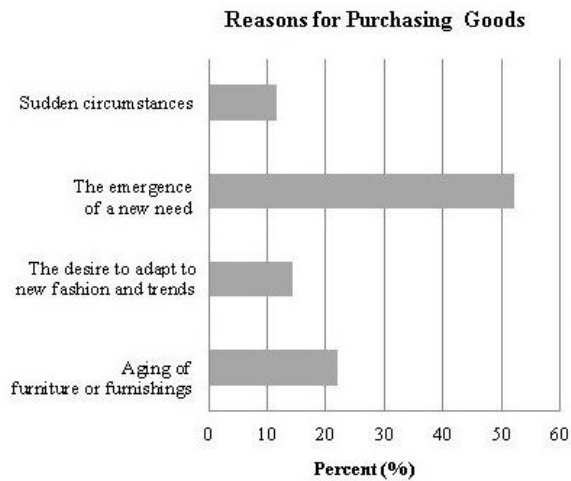


Figure 3.1. Some findings of the decision to purchase young people

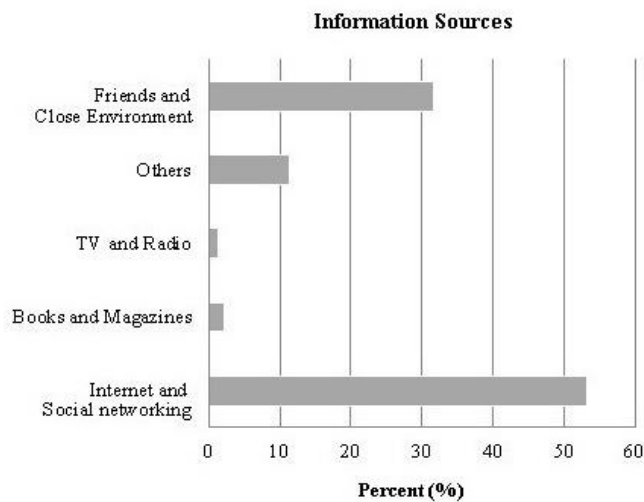


Figure 3.2. Some findings of the decision to purchase young people

When asked about what sources of information they used to make their decision to buy furniture and decorative items for their rooms, more than half (53.3%) stated that they were influenced by the internet and their social networks (Figure 2). Similarly, Andac and Guzel (2017), Andac Guzel (2020a) reported that the Internet has a significant impact on consumers' pre-purchase information. The remaining sources of information included their inner circle (31.7%) and promotions on TV and radio (1.4%) [18, 28].

In terms of branding of recent purchases, more than half of the individuals (51%) stated that the products they use are branded, 31% stated that they are unbranded, and the remaining individuals (18%) stated that

they were tailor-made products by order. Finally, respondents were asked what the most important and dominant factor was for buying furniture in relation to the last piece of furniture they purchased for their rooms. It was revealed that usefulness (31.7%) and aesthetic characteristics (31.4%) were the most important factors, followed by function (21.4%), material quality (8.6%), being fashionable and trendy (6.2%), and brand value (0.7%) (Figure 3). Similarly, Okcu et al. (2017) reported that consumers want the furniture they want to buy to be comfortable and useful. Andac Guzel (2020a) reported that some young individuals want the furniture they want to buy to be comfortable and useful [19, 26].

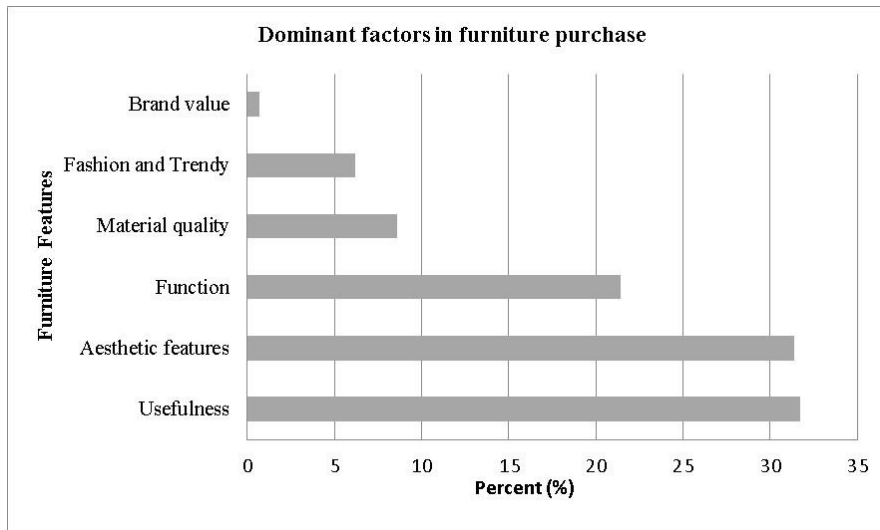


Figure 3.3. The most important and dominant factors in purchase

3.3. User Preferences Regarding Young Bedroom Furniture and Furnishings

In this section of the survey, questions focused on the preferences and attitudes of young adults in the process of using furniture and furnishing for their rooms. Results indicated that more than half of the individuals (57.1%) are satisfied with their furniture and that 32.1% are partially satisfied. It was further revealed that more than half of the individuals are satisfied with the furnishings such as carpet and curtain (56.4%) and that 33.6% are partially satisfied.

Of those who indicated they were dissatisfied with their furniture, almost one-third (32.2%) stated they were dissatisfied due to the design aspect and 16.2% stated they do not like the fashion and style of the items. Material quality (15.7%), usefulness (13.7%), ergonomics (12.1%), and functionality (10.2%) were among the other aspects considered missing or insufficient.

When asked which furniture they would like to change the most among all the furniture in their rooms, 24.3% indicated they would like to change their table or worktable, 19.3% would like to change their bedstead or bed base, and 16.4% would like to change their wardrobe.

It was investigated which furniture, produced from what material, the young individuals subject to study use in their rooms. It was found out that mostly furniture, which is made of particleboard, MDF, etc. (84.5%), is available in the rooms of these young individuals. There are also real wood (12.6%) and metal (2.9%) furniture among the furniture, used in young rooms.

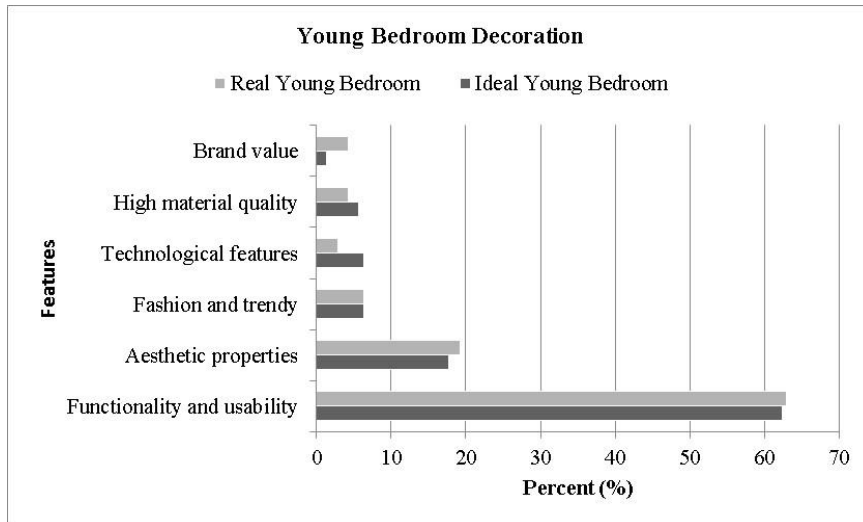


Figure 3.4. Comparison of decoration features of an ideal and real young bedroom

Concerning the most important characteristics an ideal room must have for a young adult, the majority of the respondents indicated that the furniture and all other complementing decorations should be functional and useful (62.4%). Of the remaining responses, 17.7% of the young adults think that the young room must have aesthetic characteristics (color, texture, etc.), and 6.5% of the young adults think that the furniture should have a style that is fashionable and stylish. Technological features (6.4%), high material quality (5.7%), and brand value (1.4%) were among the other characteristics deemed important by the young adults regarding personal bedroom furniture. Of these important characteristics, a majority of the respondents stated that their furniture is mostly functional and useful (62.9%) and few stated that their own rooms have aesthetic characteristics (19.2%) and current fashion and style (6.4%) (Figure 4).

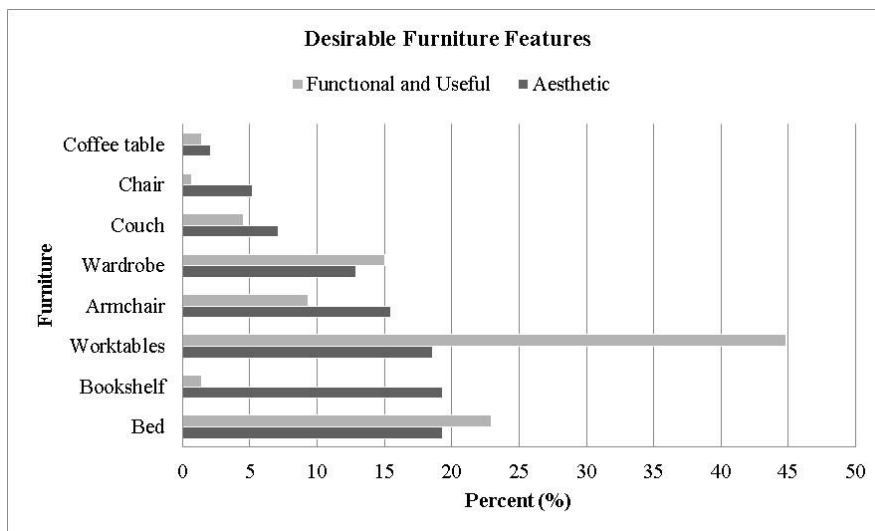


Figure 3.5. Furniture types that young individuals want to be most aesthetic or functional and useful

When asked which furniture in their rooms should have aesthetic characteristics, 19.5% of respondents stated that they mostly desire that their bedstead/bed group furniture, library units (19.3%) with open or closed storage functions, and worktables (18.6%) should be aesthetically superior over other pieces of furniture. The same question was asked concerning other decoration items apart from furniture. The respondents stated that they mostly desire that curtains (19.3%), items that hang on the wall such as paintings and pictures/photos (18.5%), and shelf units (17.1%) should be aesthetically superior over other

pieces of furniture. In addition to this information, ideas of young adults on functionality and usefulness were also investigated. It was determined that young individuals especially desired that the worktable in their room should be functional and practical (44.8%), followed by their bedstead/bed (22.9%), and wardrobe (15%) (Figure 5).

Lastly, respondents were asked which color they like and prefer in the decoration of their bedrooms. In addition, young people were asked to consider the harmony of basic decoration elements such as walls, floors, ceilings, and furniture. A color list is provided for respondents to indicate their color preferences. The three most common responses were blue and its shades (25.5%), gray and its shades (17.1%), and white (15.7%). Other preferred colors were black (11.4%), red and its shades (14%), purple and its shades (7%), pink and its shades (3.6%), green and its shades (2.9%), orange and its shades (2.9%), and yellow and its shades (2.9%). When considering color preferences according to gender, blue and its shades were preferred by both females (42.1%) and males (57.9%) but pink and its shades were preferred only by females (100%). A large majority of females also prefer the color white for decorating their rooms (90.9%), whereas males mostly preferred black (81.3%) and red and its shades (80.4%) (Figure 6).

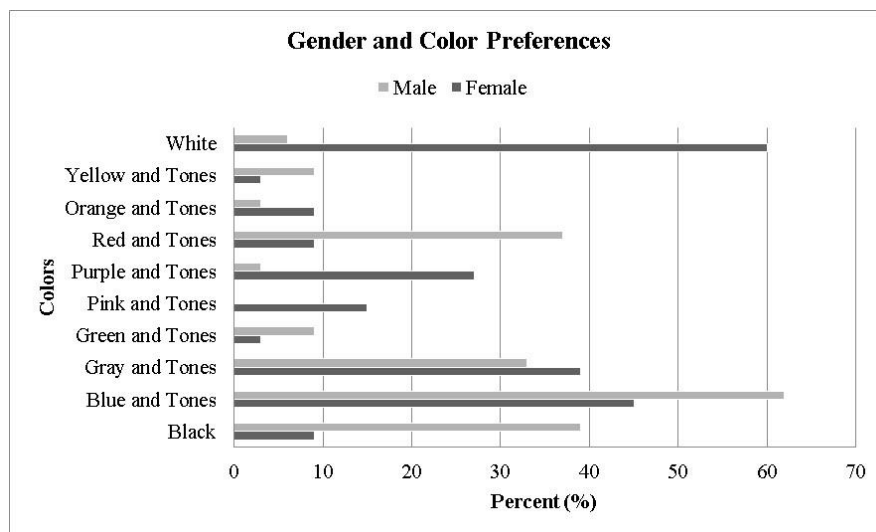


Figure 3.6. Color preferences of young individuals by gender

3.4. Findings on Judgments about Young Bedroom Furniture and Furnishings

In this section of the survey, various judgment sentences were created for analyzing the opinions of the respondents concerning what kind of goods they would like to choose for decorating their rooms. Agreement with sentences was recorded using a Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

According to the results, approximately half of the respondents (50.3%) indicated they are willing to use furniture and decorative items that are designed and made available for the consumer through modern technology. They agree with the statement defending this idea. Further, the young adults surveyed indicated they are well aware of the importance of ergonomic and eco-friendly designs. Moreover, they stated they are aware of the risks created by furniture produced with non-standard anthropometric measurement criteria and unhealthy materials. Overall, they want the furniture they would like to use in their rooms to be well designed in terms of ergonomic design (42.9%) and produced with an eco-friendly conscious (36.4%). Similarly, Roos and Hugosson (2008) reported that young individuals have a more positive approach to eco-friendly labeled products [27]. Andac and Guzel (2017), Wan et al. (2018), and Andac Guzel (2020b) reported that consumers are more likely to buy eco-friendly furniture or furnishing for their homes [18, 20, 28]. Also, Serin and Andac (2012), and Okcu et al. (2017) reported that consumers want the furniture they want to buy to be ergonomic [17, 19]. Additionally, the youths think that using furniture and furnishings that serve more than one function in their rooms is a more reasonable option, and therefore they tend to

prefer this type of furniture for decorating their rooms (48.6%). They agree with the statements defending these ideas.

Different conclusion sentences were developed to analyze the inclinations of young individuals towards aesthetic design. Based on the results obtained, the youths want the color, texture, and shape of the furniture in their rooms to have the aesthetic characteristics of beauty and attractiveness (49.5%). Indeed, some respondents identified these qualifications as those of products that are designed and produced according to current fashion and trends (42.1%), whereas others identified the same characteristics as those of timeless goods with a taste and style accepted at any time (38.6%). They agree with the statements defending these ideas. Andac Guzel (2020a) reported that some young individuals want the furniture they want to buy to be timeless furniture or furnishings [26]. It appears that economic reasons direct the youths to choose furniture with a timeless style, as 35% stated that they must give particular importance to the costs that will emerge when purchasing decorations and furniture for their rooms. These young people strongly agree with the statement defending the idea of price. However, many indicated this consideration restricts their freedom and makes them unhappy (21.4%). Similarly, Lihra and Graf (2007), and Lihra et al. (2012), Serin and Andac (2012), Andac and Guzel (2017), and Kaputa et al. (2018), and Andac Guzel (2020b) reported that price was an important factor concerning consumers' intention to purchase certain furniture [29, 16, 17, 18, 30, 28].

4. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to analyze the attitudes and preferences of young adults between the ages of 18–25 years living in Kayseri province of Turkey regarding the furniture and furnishings they would like to buy and use for decorating their own rooms. The results obtained following the analysis are as follows:

1. Young adults in Kayseri between the ages of 18-25 years make substantial use of social networks before buying furniture for decorating their rooms. Therefore, companies should consider promoting their products on this platform as it would likely lead to gaining new customers.
2. Young adults place importance on the usefulness of a product when they are looking to purchase furniture or a decorative product for their rooms. According to the respondents, an ideal young room should be functional and practical. Therefore, they are inclined to prefer furniture with more than one function for the decoration of their rooms.
3. Aesthetic characteristics is the other main factor that young adults consider when they purchase furniture or a decorative item for their rooms. Notably, the respondents think that the furniture and other decorative furniture in their rooms are deficient in terms of aesthetic design. One reason for this is that price and costs come to the forefront in interior design and furniture selection, which hinders the choices of young consumers and makes them unhappy. Therefore, many young adults direct their purchase preferences to timeless functional products that save them money and offer extra functions or fulfill a need.
4. The color choices of young individuals were also analyzed based on gender. It was concluded that pink and white colors are mostly preferred by females and black and red colors are mostly preferred by males.
5. Finally, furniture designed in coordination with current technological developments was important to young adults in this study. Therefore, companies can increase their sales if they produce furniture with more than one function to fulfill the technological needs of the young.

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