**The Impact of Quality Dimensions and Some Other Critical Factors on Consumers’b Furniture Purchasing Decisions**

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| ARTICLE INFO | **ABSTRACT**  This research examined the influence of quality dimensions and various other factors on consumer choices in the Turkish furniture market, aiming to bridge a literature gap by leveraging theoretical insights and empirical data. Utilizing a detailed survey, the study captured consumer perceptions of factors influencing furniture purchases, focusing on Garvin's eight quality dimensions: suitability, perceived quality, features, aesthetics, service, durability, reliability, and performance. The methodology included a 19-question survey targeting Bursa's population to gather data on demographic characteristics and purchasing influences, which was analyzed via Microsoft Excel. The findings underscored the paramount importance that consumers placed on durability and performance, suggesting a pragmatic approach to furniture buying where functionality trumped aesthetics. A notable preference for sustainable and eco-friendly furniture emerged, aligning with broader environmental trends. Demographically, most respondents were young, university-educated adults, indicating a market segment with distinct tastes and preferences, particularly toward modern-style furniture. These insights advocated for furniture industry stakeholders to adopt marketing strategies emphasizing product durability, performance, and environmental friendliness, aligning with consumer expectations for quality and sustainability. This alignment could be crucial for guiding product development and design to cater to contemporary consumer needs. Demographically, most respondents were young, university-educated adults, indicating a market segment with distinct tastes and preferences, particularly toward modern-style furniture. These insights advocated for furniture industry stakeholders to adopt marketing strategies emphasizing product durability, performance, and environmental friendliness, aligning with consumer expectations for quality and sustainability. This alignment could be crucial for guiding product development and design to cater to contemporary consumer needs. |
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1. Introduction

As society progresses, the evolution of human needs has become increasingly complex and multifaceted, transcending beyond basic survival to encompass a richer tapestry of desires and aspirations. In the early stages of human development, needs were predominantly focused on physiological sustenance and safety – essentials for survival. However, as civilization advanced, these needs evolved, placing a greater emphasis on social belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Today, in a world characterized by rapid technological advancements and a plethora of choices, human needs have further diversified, integrating aspects of digital connectivity, environmental sustainability, and personal well-being. This evolution reflects a shift from mere survival to a quest for a more meaningful, interconnected, and self-aware existence. In this dynamic landscape, individuals seek not only physical comfort and security but also opportunities for personal growth, social connectivity, and a more profound sense of purpose. The evolution of human needs, thus, mirrors the journey of humanity itself –from basic survival to a pursuit of holistic fulfillment in an ever-changing world.

The intricate interplay between human motivation and behavior finds a compelling narrative in Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, a theory that delineates the gradation of human necessities from the basic to the self-actualizing (Lipscomb, 2021). When applied to furniture needs, this hierarchy transcends beyond mere functionality, intertwining with the quality dimensions of furniture to reflect a broader spectrum of human desires and aspirations. Furniture, in its essence, is not just a fulfillment of the fundamental physiological need for rest and comfort but a representation of one’s journey through Maslow’s pyramid. Each quality dimension of furniture – from durability and comfort, aligning with the basic needs of safety and security, to aesthetic design and craftsmanship, resonating with the higher-order needs of esteem and self-actualization – mirrors the multifaceted nature of human needs.

Furniture has been presented in different styles for various uses from the past to the present. In the past, furniture, as a luxury and status symbol, involved intensive handcraftsmanship. The development of design, material, and production technologies has made it possible to offer a wide variety of options to consumers from all segments (Grady et al., 2019). Although furniture in the past was a luxury and status symbol based on its handcraftsmanship, design, and production technology, it can still be used as a symbol of luxury and status even if not functionally necessary (Tutar & Çamlibel, 2010; Grady et al., 2019; Lipscomb, 2021). Therefore, furniture consumers' purchase decisions change based on essential demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and education (Sapolsky, 2017). Consumers’ purchasing behaviors generally aim to achieve the highest yield at the lowest cost, regardless of the product and service (Aron et al., 2019). Therefore, consumers generally prioritize brands widely accepted and preferred by everyone.

1. Material and Methods
2. Methods

The study was designed to snapshot the perceived importance of factors in consumers’ furniture purchasing decisions. The research conducted by Tutar and Çamlibel (2010) on consumer preferences in furniture purchasing decisions in Slovakia has been adapted and altered to survey the Turkish consumer base (National Cancer Institute, 2019). The study was conducted after obtaining official approval from the Physical, Engineering, and Social Sciences Ethical Committee at Bursa Technical University.

Within the scope of this study, a 19-question survey was prepared using Google Forms. The survey form comprised two main sections: Demographic characteristics of consumers (3 questions) and factors influencing their purchasing decisions (16 questions). The demographic factors aimed to be identified were gender, age, and education level since consumers’ furniture purchasing behaviors are influenced by demographic factors such as economic status, educational level, age, and gender (Zambrano, 2016; Evans et al., 2019). The questions regarding the factors influencing consumers’ furniture purchasing decisions were constructed around Garvin’s eight dimensions of quality, outlined in his work titled Competing on The Eight Dimensions of Quality (World Health Organization, 2018). These quality dimensions were suitability, perceived quality, features, aesthetics (design), pre- and post-sale service, durability, reliability, and performance. The impact of quality dimensions on the purchasing decision was also evaluated with the help of some indirect questions that explored the status of consumers’ price sensitivity, shopping frequency, often-shopped-for furniture category, style preferences, and quality considerations while shopping for new furniture items. The survey utilized a 5-point Likert scale (Definitely Yes, Yes, Undecided, No, Definitely No) for the questions that did not require specific qualitative or quantitative answers.

The data collection phase of the study was limited to three weeks, and the data obtained through Google Forms was compiled at the end of the three-week data collection period. Invitations were sent out in sets of 10 (five male and five female invitees) until the target sample size was reached within the data collection phase of the study. The study employed a Hybrid approach that combined Quota Sampling.

1. Results and Discussion

In the study, nineteen questions were directed to the participants to observe the perceived importance of certain factors that could influence consumers’ furniture purchasing decisions and the impact of various quality dimensions. The responses provided by the participants in the survey were summarized in graphical form. At the end of the data collection phase, the total number of invitations sent out amounted to 1600 (800 male and 800 female invitees), of which 384 people participated in the survey, and the responses of 2 people were invalidated due to inconsistencies, resulting in a 24% participation rate.

metin, diyagram içeren bir resim

Açıklama otomatik olarak oluşturuldu

1. Demographics of the study participants.
2. Conclusion

This study aimed to observe the impact of demographic factors such as age, gender, and education level on consumers’ furniture purchasing decisions and the influence of the eight quality dimensions on consumer purchase decisions.

* The demographic information of the survey participants shows that the majority (58%) were female, 66.67% were aged between 18 and 30, and 67% were university graduates.
* The responses to the survey questions showed that 69% of consumers preferred modern-style furniture, with the remaining participants almost equally distributed among retro, custom designs, industrial designs, and other furniture styles.
* 29% of the participants stated that they shop for furniture every 6-10 years, followed by the next 25% who shop for furniture when it becomes unusable, and 22% who renew their furniture every 11-15 years.

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