

Research Article

Understanding the Depressed Consumer: A Quantitative Study on the Consumption Patterns of Individuals in Depression

Depresyondaki Tüketiciyi Anlamak: Depresyonlu Bireylerin Tüketim Kalıpları Üzerine Nicel Bir Araştırma

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Abstract

Understanding the psychological structures of consumers is of great importance for a well understanding of the Post-Modern society, which is also called the consumption society. Because now there are brands competing to sell their products rather than consumers competing for having products. When this situation is considered together with Post-Modern consumer behaviours, it seems inevitable for brands to understand the psychological conditions of consumers in their target markets. In a sense, these developments with a Realist Approach perspective have made interdisciplinary studies a necessity in postmodern science.

In this study designed in this context, the effects of depression levels of consumers on their consumption style were researched. For this purpose, the globally accepted Consumer Styles Inventory and Beck Depression Inventory were used. During the research process, the data obtained from both scales were tested in terms of correlation and cause-effect relationship with quantitative methods. The findings of the study show that there is no correlation between depression and Consumer Styles Inventory in a cumulative sense. In other words, a change in the depression levels of the consumers does not change the consumer behaviour as a whole. However, when it is focused to the sub-factors of the Consumer Styles Inventory, it has been observed that there is a high correlation between price focusing and depression level. Other sub-factors of the Consumer Styles Inventory were also evaluated in this context. Additionally, the relationship between depression levels and demographic variables is presented as secondary findings.

Keywords: Depression, Consumer Behaviour, Beck Depression Inventory, Consumer Styles Inventory, Psychology, Marketing.

Öz

Tüketim toplumu olarak da adlandırılan Post-Modern toplumun doğru bir şekilde anlaşılması için tüketicilerin psikolojik yapılarının anlaşılması büyük önem taşımaktadır. Çünkü artık ürünleri elde etmek için rekabet eden tüketicilerden ziyade ürünlerini satmak için rekabet eden markalar söz konusudur. Bu durum Post-Modern tüketici davranışları ile birlikte düşünüldüğünde markaların, hedef pazarlarındaki tüketicilerin psikolojik durumlarını anlamaları kaçınılmaz görünmektedir. Bir bakıma Realist Yaklaşım

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perspektifli bu gelişmeler Postmodern bilimde ise interdisipliner çalışmaları bir gereklilik haline getirmiştir.

Bu bağlamda tasarlanan bu araştırmada tüketicilerin depresyon seviyelerinin tüketim tarzlarına etkileri araştırılmıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda dünya çapında kabul görmüş Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri ve Beck Depresyon Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sürecinde her iki ölçekten elde edilen veriler korelasyon ve neden sonuç ilişkisi açısından nicel yöntemlerle test edilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları kümülatif anlamda depresyon ile Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri bir ilişki olmadığını göstermektedir. Yani tüketicilerin depresyon seviyelerindeki bir değişim bütün olarak tüketici davranışlarını değiştirmemektedir. Ancak Tüketici Tarzları Envanterinin alt boyutlarına inildiğinde fiyat odaklılık ve depresyon seviyesi arasında yüksek korelasyon olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Tüketici Tarzları Envanterinin diğer alt boyutları da bu bağlamda değerlendirilmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak depresyon seviyeleri ve demografik değişkenlerin ilişkisi de tali bulgular olarak sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Depresyon, Tüketici Davranışları, Beck Depression Envanteri, Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri, Psikoloji, Pazarlama.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, it is not possible to evaluate human decisions and behaviours separately from psychology. Because, although behaviours are reasonably causal, there are also psychological factors in the background of these reasons. For this reason, studies that address consumer behaviour in a psychological context are of great importance, especially in today's markets where understanding the consumer is a necessity.

It has been known since the 1990s that consumers are not scientifically rational, and psychological factors play an important role behind these irrationalities (Jansson-Boyd, 2010). With this change in scientific understanding, psychological factors behind human behaviours have become an area that is frequently investigated within the framework of postmodern science, which has ontologically ignored the rational approach (Damasio, 1994; Frijda, 1986). Marketing as an applied science of economics was also affected by these developments and conducted interdisciplinary research in order to adapt the variables related to psychology to its own field. Because marketing as an applied science that cannot get away from the Realist Approach is of great importance to conduct research with a psychological perspective. As a matter of fact, marketing science, which has positive results from psychological approached researches, continues its research and applications in highly specialized areas such as "retail therapy" (Atalay & Meloy, 2011; Kang & Johnson, 2011; Plastow, 2012).

While these developments are seen in the psychology literature, specific areas have emerged regarding interdisciplinary studies carried out with psychology science. Because there is no direct integration of human psychology with marketing science as a whole. In this context, positive and negative emotions in the context of directly emotions (White, 2015; Chuang & Lin, 2007), effects of emotions on decisions in the context of neuropsychology (Shiv, 2007), consumption patterns in the context of personality types (Albanese, 1993) and even psychopathological phenomena such as mania studies on consumer decision effects (Hirschman & Stern, 1998) have been carried out. Finally, Fast and Slow Thinking Theory, developed by the collaboration of Tversky and Kahneman, won the Nobel Prize in Economics (Kahneman, 2018). These and similar studies show and support the importance of interdisciplinary studies between psychology and marketing sciences.

When the marketing literature is examined, the emotions that affect consumer behaviour are examined in two parts as positive and negative emotions (Taylor, 2009). In this scientific deepening process, scales such as Spontaneous Mixed Emotion Experiences developed by Carrera and Oceja (2007) were also brought to the literature. In this study, how the phenomenon of depression in the pathological sense affects consumer decisions was examined within the framework of consumer decision types as a specific field. It is known that negative emotion-states, which are the subject of research in this study, have short and long-term effects on consumer behaviour (Khan, 2010). For example, it is observed that individuals with depression

frequently postpone purchasing health-related purchasing decisions (Kidwell, Hardesty & Childers, 2008) and avoid purchasing behaviour due to stress and regret in technological products due to product risks resulting from purchasing (Morris & Luce, 1997). In classical approaches, there are also findings indicating that negative feelings at the time of decision-making develop negative attitudes towards the brand (Bell, 2011). On the other hand, there are findings showing that negative emotions cause an increase in risk taking, especially in individuals with low cognitive needs (Lin, Yen & Chuang, 2006). From these findings that support this study, it is understood that as a multifaceted phenomenon, emotions that affect individuals' decisions and behaviours differently should be tested in detail by marketing science (Achar et al., 2016).

A literature review on depression and a more detailed review have been made under the related title. However, lastly, it would be appropriate to mention the basic statistics on depression in this section. A 2017 report shows that 322 million people living with depression were identified in the world and these numbers are increasing. In a different study, depression is shown as the most frequently diagnosed mental illness by psychiatrists (Young et al., 2014). In addition, there is a striking increase in the number of individuals with depression in low and middle-income countries (Friedrich, 2017). Again for 2017, the SSRI's known as antidepressants are used by eight million people in Turkey (T24, 2017). These negative statistics show that the consumer decisions and behaviours of individuals with depression should be closely examined. Because it is inevitable to have individuals with depression with meaningful common features in the target markets determined by the brands, and consumers with these characteristics should be examined as a decision and behaviour pattern. In this study, the differences in consumption decision and behaviour patterns of depressed consumers were investigated, beyond the judgment of "depressed people tend to shop", which is widely known in the society.

In this study, firstly a literature review for depression and the Beck Depression Test used in the research, and then a marketing literature review for postmodern consumer behaviour and Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) was conducted. Finally, the findings obtained with these two scales were analyzed comparatively.

1. Depression And Beck Depression Test In The Context Of Marketing

1.1. Neurotic Depression

According to the dictionary of the American Psychological Association (APA), depression is defined as extreme pessimism, sadness and hopelessness in daily life (American Psychological Association, 2015). According to DSM V (The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), which is mostly used for pathological diagnosis and criteria, depression is defined as symptoms of for at least two weeks (1) depressed state for most of the day, (2) decreased interest in activities, (3) losing or gaining weight, (4) excessive insomnia or sleepiness, (5) psychodynamic provocation or slowing down almost every day, (6) fatigue, (7) feeling of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt, (8) difficulties in thinking or focus, (9) presence of symptoms of recurrent thoughts of death (DSM V, 2013). Depression, which is diagnosed through these symptoms by psychology and psychiatry sciences, affects objective behaviours through subjective values as emotional situations (Russell & Carroll, 1999). The research subject of this study consists of depressive reactions among the psychoneurotic disorders examined in section C of DSM criteria. In this context, psychoneurotic reactions correspond to behaviours in which anxiety is dominant (Morgan, 2013). In this context, it should be kept in mind that neurotic depressions are differentiated from psychotic depressions (Kutash, 1965) and psychotic depressions were excluded in this study in terms of marketing science.

When the underlying emotions of depression that affect human behaviour are examined, although depression, anxiety, and stress are accepted as different phenomena in psychology literature (Akın & Çetin, 2007) and are measured with different scales, there is a moderate relationship between these three variables (Richter, Werner, Heerlein, Kraus & Sauer, 1998; Brown, Chorpita, Korotitsch & Barlow, 1997). Although psychopathologically depressed individuals are guided

with different diagnoses and treatments according to the severity of the depression they are in, this type of distinction was not made because the purpose of this study was to examine the effects of behavioural typologies on consumption patterns; instead, the scores of the participants in the depression diagnosis scale were evaluated correlatively.

1.2. Beck Depression Inventory

There are four scales most widely used in depression diagnosis in the world. These are the General Health Questionnaire (includes a sub-dimension for depression), the Beck Depression Scale, the Zung Depression Scale, and the Depression Scale for Epidemiological Studies (Boratav, 2003; Kırıl, Mavruk & Kırıl, 2020: 41). For this reason, it is possible to say that Beck Depression Inventory is a globally accepted scale. Although Beck Depression Inventory is a scale developed by Aaron T. Beck (1961), it has attracted great attention since its first publication and has been used in more than 500 clinical studies (Beck & Steer, 1984). The scale, which was revised and reorganized during this process, was revised in 1978 (Beck, Rush, Shaw & Emery, 1979). The same scale was finally revised in 1996 and started to be used as BDI-II (Beck Depression Inventory II) (Beck, A.T., Steer, R.A. & Brown, G., 1996). The scale, which is widely used in many countries, has spread over a wide geography with the adaptation studies for the countries used for this purpose. One of these adaptation studies is the adaptation for Turkey by Hisli (1989), and in this study, the adapted scale developed by Hisli was used. Since this research was carried out on university students, the study of Hisli, which is an adaptation study developed on university students, was preferred.

In the related adaptation study test-retest, concurrent validity and construct validity methods were performed with the MMPI-D scale (Hisli, 1989). As a result of the harmonization study, the split-half reliability was found to be $r = .74$ and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient as $r = .80$, and it was stated that these findings were close to widely accepted studies from the West (Hisli, 1989). Finally, it was determined that the adapted scale was compatible with the original study and Western adaptations in the gender variable (Hisli, 1989).

Beck Depression Scale consists of 21 questions and determines depression based on the following factors: depressive mood, pessimism, sense of failure, dissatisfaction, feelings of guilt, feelings of punishment, self-hatred, self-blame, desire to be punished, crying attacks, irritability, social withdrawal, indecision, bodily image, inability to do work, sleep disorder, fatigue, appetite loss, weight loss, somatic anxieties and loss of libido. The main factors of these components are vegetative, emotional, cognitive and motivational symptoms of depression (Arkar & Şafak, 2004). Since this study investigates the change in consumer behaviour caused by depression, not depression itself, it is of great importance that it is a scale that includes emotional and cognitive components.

2. Post-Modern Consumer Behaviours And Consumer Styles Inventory

2.1. Post-Modern Consumer Behaviour

In order for this study to be understood correctly, it is necessary to first understand Post-Modern consumer behaviour in the context of this research. Because this study, which aims to contribute to the literature with the motto of "a good theory is practice (Lewin, 1952)", it is necessary to state its acceptances about today's Post-Modern consumer behaviour. Because with the transition to the Post-Modern structure, the social structure has revealed new economic expectations (Jameson, 2004).

Post-Modern consumer patterns in marketing literature refer to the consumer who has moved from a passive to an active position, shopper, selective, communicator, character discoverer, pleasure seeker, rebellious and activist (Thomas, 1997). These behavioural patterns of consumers cause the scope of the product concept to expand and turn into a form that is difficult to draw (White, 1959). As a result of this process, the product has become defined as the "customer creation process" (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris, Piercy, 2017). All these developments show that

consumption decisions and behaviours are carried out not only on functionality but also on cultural, sociological and psychological factors. In other words, psychological factors played a decisive role in the form of decisions in the period when decisions were made based on functionality, but today, in addition to this, the product and consumption itself have taken a psychological form. Because the products that have become the subjects of social life are interpreted by the individual psychology of the consumer. As a matter of fact, making cultural definitions of products in the pioneering studies in 1959, the period when Post-Modern society first began to appear (White, 1959) confirms this argument. As a result of all these developments, besides the functional features of products and brands, the intangible values they undertake have gained importance (Szmigin, 2003). These abstract meanings were studied in the babes of religious, spiritual (Moufham & Lichrou, 2019), anti-religious (Schembri & Firat, 2018), tattoo culture (Raggiotto, Mason & Moretti, 2018), symbolic design (Yang, 2018), semiotic science of desire (Hietanen & Andehn, 2017), anthropology (Sherry Jr., 1986-87), and many other similar fields in the context of consumer behaviour. The main reason underlying these developments is the existence of the consumer type who wants to know what values brands have (Kitchen & Uzunoğlu, 2015). This situation shows that brands trying to reach the demand should understand the consumers. As a matter of fact, in this study, it was investigated whether there is any change in the consumption decisions of depressed individuals due to depression. In this context, the Consumer Styles Inventory regarding consumer decision styles was used. For this reason, before the findings and comments regarding the research, an evaluation of the Consumer Styles Inventory should also be made.

2.2. Consumer Styles Inventory

Although the use of different scales through interdisciplinary research starts with Postmodern science, there are scales for understanding and classifying the research object within each discipline before these developments. For marketing science, it is also possible to classify consumers in a meaningful way in terms of decision and behaviour in the context of marketing (Lysonski, Durvasula & Zotos, 1996). One of the scales developed by Splores (1985) for this purpose is the Consumer Styles Inventory. This scale was finalized by Splores and Kendall in 1986.

There are three characteristics that dominate the literature for marketing science to classify consumer behaviours: psychography, consumer types approach and consumer characteristics. Among these approaches, psychographic variables are used extensively and more than a hundred psychological characteristics related to consumer behaviours have been identified (Lastovicka, 1982; Wells, 1974). Consumer characteristics approaches differ from other approaches by focusing on the cognitive characteristics of consumers (Westbrook & Black, 1985). This study also directly investigates depression as a psychological variable with the Consumer Styles Inventory, which was originally developed in the context of consumer characteristics.

The Consumer Styles Inventory consists of 11 components: perfectionism, brand orientation, innovation-fashion orientation, entertainment-pleasure orientation, price orientation, shopping without thinking, knowledge confusion, habit orientation, time saving, dislike for shopping, indecision. The study of adaptation of the scale to Turkey (Dursun, Alınçık & rowdy, 2013) consist of 9 factors and 22 questions. This adapted scale, which was also developed by Dursun, Alınçık and Kabadayı (2013), was used in this study. The 9 factors of this scale are perfectionism, brand orientation, innovation-fashion orientation, price orientation, mindless shopping, information confusion, habit orientation, avoiding shopping and indecision.

3. Effects Of Depression On Consumer Styles: A Quantitative Interdisciplinary Research

3.1. Method

In the study, Consumer Styles Inventory and the Beck Depression Inventory were applied to 203 participants in Turkey's Konya province. In the demographic information section, information

about gender, age, marital status, educational status, self-perception of economic freedom of the participant and economic freedom perception of those around participants were asked. In the last part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether there is any ongoing psychiatric treatment and drug use. The aim here is to exclude individuals diagnosed with depression from the scope of the study, especially due to behavioural changes in the pharmacological treatment process. Because the types of antidepressants used can vary greatly, and these specific situations have been considered as a separate research topic. Then, the Consumer Styles Inventory, which consists of 22 questions, applied with a five-point Likert scale, and finally the Beck Depression Inventory consisting of 21 questions applied with a four-point Likert scale were applied. Although the subject of this study is not directly related to psychopathological cases, the necessary explanations were given to the participants in order to distinguish these individuals, and in addition, these explanations were added in writing at the beginning of the Beck Depression Inventory part. The aforementioned adaptation studies of these scales were used as is without any changes.

Before the findings of the study, it would be appropriate to give demographic information and distribution in this section. For this reason, age group, gender and marital status of the participants are shown with a cross table in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information.

	Frequency	Percent
Female	113	55.7
Male	90	44.3
Total	203	100.0

	Frequency	Percent
Single	198	97.5
Married	4	2.0
Divorced	1	0.5
Total	203	100.0

	Frequency	Percent
15-17	3	1.5
18-25	197	97.0
30-39	3	1.5
Total	203	100.0

In addition to the information contained in Table 1, for a more detailed presentation, educational status, economic freedom and economic freedom-milieu information are presented below in Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4:

Table 2. Educational background information of the participants.

	Frequency	Percent
High School	1	.5
Bachelor's	195	96.1
Master	7	3.4
Total	203	100.0

Table 3. Information of the participants' feeling of self-freedom in economic terms.

	Frequency	Percent
Never	14	6.9
Rarely	30	14.8
Sometimes	62	30.5
Usually	66	32.5
Always	31	15.3
Total	203	100.0

Table 4. Information on the economic freedom of their environment to find the participants.

	Frequency	Percent
Never	10	4.9
Rarely	22	10.8
Sometimes	63	31.0
Usually	83	40.9
Always	25	12.3
Total	203	100.0

			Freedom-environment				
Education			never	rarely	sometimes	usually	allways
High school	Economic freedom	allways	1				
	Total		1				
Bachelor's	Economic freedom	never	4	4	4	0	0
		rarely	4	7	12	4	1
		sometimes	0	10	31	18	3
		usually	0	0	13	46	4
		allways	0	0	1	12	17
	Total		8	21	61	80	25
master		never	1	0	1	0	

Economic freedom	rarely	0	1	1	0
	sometimes	0	0	0	3
Total		1	1	2	3

When the accumulation of demographic information is examined, it is seen that the majority of the sample consists of single, bachelor's degree and aged 18-25. For this reason, it should not be ruled out that the findings of this study are more valid within this age group. A mixed distribution is observed in variables other than these.

As a method, the data obtained from the participants were first processed with descriptive and frequency analysis, and the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was applied in the process of determining normality and verified with the Lilliefors Test. While the Consumer Styles Inventory scale displayed normal distribution, the Beck Depression Inventory scale did not exhibit normal distribution as expected, as it is a diagnostic questionnaire.

The distribution of the participants regarding depression levels is also an important variable to discuss the findings of the study. For this reason, the depression levels and distribution of the participants are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Depression results of the participants

	Frequency	Percent
Minimal Depression	36	17.7
Mild Depression	76	37.4
Moderate Depression	79	38.9
Severe Depression	12	5.9
Total	203	100.0

As seen in Table 6, 76.3% of the participants consist of individuals with mild and moderate depression. Participants with minimal depression were 17.7%, and participants with severe depression were 5.9%. Although the proportion of participants with severe depression is the lowest in the main population, considering the proportion of individuals with severe depression in the population, it is seen in accordance with practice.

Finally, Pearson correlation, Post Hoc, and Anova tests were conducted to test the accuracy of the research hypotheses. Findings obtained at the end of this analysis process are presented in the "Findings" section of the study and interpreted in the "Discussion and Conclusion" section.

3.2. The Importance and Hypothesis of Research

Practical developments regarding Post-Modern consumer behaviours and the literature show that products and/or brands have now become subjects of developing relationships with consumers, not only as a means of meeting the needs of consumers. For this reason, not only the images that brands try to create, but also the psychological conditions of the consumers have become the determinants of this relationship. Because while a depressed individual experiences significant differences in the relationships he/she develops with his/her social environment, he/she may also experience differences in the relationships he/she develops with brands. This situation should be understood by both the consumers who create the demand and the brands that want to sell their products. In this context, the research subject of the study has a great importance.

Another importance of the research is that it has a methodological content. Developments in the postmodern science period show that interdisciplinary studies are more successful in explaining

the practice within the framework of the Realist Approach. As a matter of fact, for this reason, methodological interdisciplinary studies have become widespread in Postmodern science period. This study is important in terms of both using an interdisciplinary method and researching an interdisciplinary and specific subject within the framework of Postmodern science.

The hypothesis of this study is that depression levels cause a differentiation in consumer consumption styles. The reason for this is that the science of psychology has determined that depression has a significant impact on people's causal processes as a cognitive process as well as their effort-demanding decisions (Conway & Giannopoulos, 1993; Hartlage, Alloy, Vazquez & Dykman, 1993; Silberman, Weingartner & Post, 1983). In addition, studies that found that changes in emotions have significant effects on both low-participation decisions (Clare, Schwarz & Conway, 1994; Forgas, 1995) and high-participation decisions (Darke, 2002) also support the hypothesis of this study.

3.3. Findings

In the findings section, the main findings obtained depending directly on the hypothesis of the research were examined first. However, in addition to this, secondary findings were obtained in the research. These are also examined under the title of secondary findings.

3.3.1. Main Findings

In the study, correlation and Anova analysis were used to understand the relationship between Consumer Styles Inventory and Beck Depression Inventory. Throughout these analyses, depression data were accepted as independent variables, while consumer styles data were considered as dependent variables. Because the aim of the research is to understand the effects of depression on consumption styles. In this context, the cumulative correlation analysis is shown in Table 6 and the correlation analysis of the sub-dimensions of the Consumer Styles Inventory is shown in Table 7.

Table 6. Beck Depression Inventory and CSI Correlation Results

		CSI Total	Beck Total
CSI	Pearson Correlation	1	.078
	Sig (2-tailed)		.268
	N	203	203
BDI	Pearson Correlation	0.78	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.268	
	N	203	203

As can be seen in Table 6, no correlative relationship was found between consumer styles and depression.

Table 7. Depression and CSI sub-factors correlation findings.

		Perfectionism	Brand-Focus	Innovation-Fashion	Price-Focus	Mindless-Shopping
Perfectionism	Pearson Correlation	1	.354**	-.120	-.123	.094
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000	.088	.080	.183
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Brand Focus	Pearson Correlation	.354**	1	-.162*	-.225**	.168*
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000		.021	.001	.017
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Innovation-Fashion	Pearson Correlation	-.120	-.162*	1	.060	.009
	Sig (2-tailed)	.088	.021		.393	.901
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Price-Focus	Pearson Correlation	-.123	-.225**	.060	1	-.147*
	Sig (2-tailed)	.080	.001	.393		.036
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Mindless Shopping	Pearson Correlation	.094	.168*	.009	-.147*	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.183	.017	.901	.036	
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Indecision	Pearson Correlation	.225**	.322**	-.201**	.101	.143*
	Sig (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.004	.153	.042
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Information Confusion	Pearson Correlation	.177*	.233**	-.098	-.040	.115
	Sig (2-tailed)	.012	.001	.164	.569	.104
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Habitual	Pearson Correlation	.319**	.305**	-.149*	-.028	.052
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.034	.690	.457
	N	203	203	203	203	203
Depression	Pearson Correlation	.000	.002	.024	.074	.038
	Sig (2-tailed)	.999	.974	.735	.294	.590
	N	203	203	203	203	203

As seen in Table 7, there is no correlation between depression and perfectionism, there is a low level of correlation between brand focus and innovation-fashion focus, a high level of price focus correlation and finally a moderate correlation between mindless shopping.

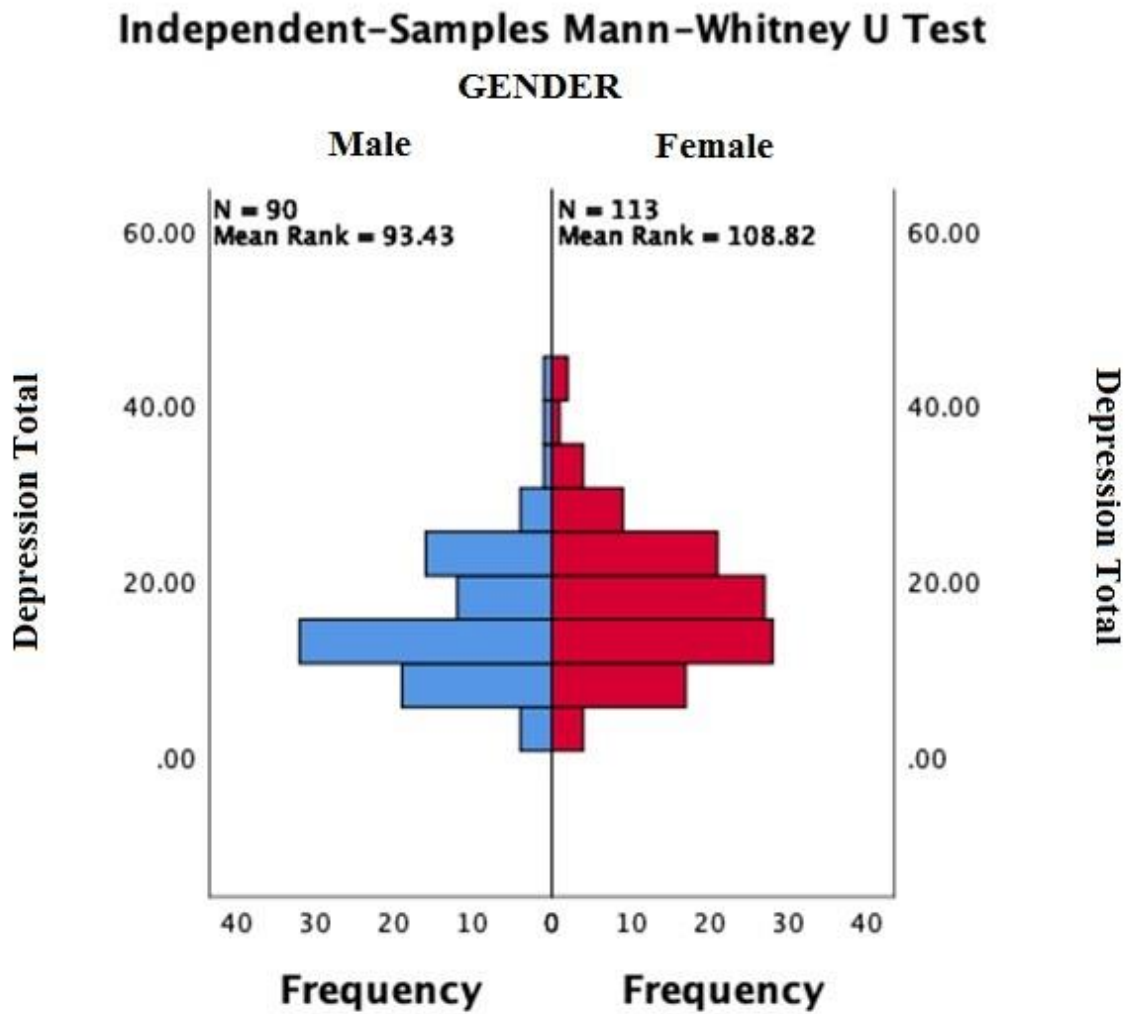
As an analysis of variance, One-Way Anova was determined with a value of .268 that there was no significant cause-effect relationship between depression and consumer styles.

3.3.2. Secondary Findings

In this section, although not directly related to the main findings of the study, significant relationships were found between demographic information and depression are shown. A meaningful relationship was found between depression and gender. This relationship is shown in the

Graphic

1.



Graphic 1. Depression and gender relationship graphic

As seen in Graphic 1, while female and male participants show similar characteristics at the level of mild to severe depression, the number of female participants with moderate and severe depression levels is more than male participants.

Finally, a meaningful relationship was found between depression and its participants being found economically free by their milieu ($r = .005$). While the lowest depression scores are generally seen

in participants who are found economically independent by their milieu, the highest average depression score is sometimes seen in individuals who are economically free by their milieu. However, there was no significant relationship between depression and whether people found themselves economically free. There was no significant relationship between age, marital status, educational status and depression.

3.4. Discussion And Conclusion

The findings of the study show that there is no significant relationship between consumer styles and depression in the cumulative basis. However, when the Consumer Styles Inventory was examined in terms of its sub-factors, it was found that there were some correlations. While no relationship was found between perfectionism and depression, a low level of relationship between brand focus - fashion focus and depression, a high level of relationship between price focus and depression, and finally, a moderate relationship between thoughtless shopping and depression was found. These findings mean that depressed individuals increase price-oriented purchasing decisions and behaviours. The fact that the most prominent relationship is in the focus of price requires brands to pay attention to price levels in sectors where consumer depression is increasing. If the depression levels of the consumers increase, it should not be expected that their expectations from the product will differ from the industry standards. It seems more logical to focus on prices instead.

Since the general meaningful relationship after perfectionism is the relationship between careless shopping and depression, the increasing depression indicates that consumers shop more carelessly. This situation can be explained by the decrease in the interest of depressed individuals towards their environment.

The secondary findings of the study show that there is no relationship between depression and age, marital status, educational status, self-perception of economic freedom. The relationship between these variables and depression should also be interpreted. First of all, it should be noted that the reason why the relationship between depression and age, marital status and educational status could not be determined is related to the sample preferred for the main research subject of this study. Therefore, the insignificant relationship in this study should be interpreted as a neutral effect for different studies between these relationships.

However, despite the fact that whether the participants find themselves free in economic terms does not have a relationship with depression, the relationship between depression and whether their milieu finds the participants economically independent indicates that the participants have a social focus. In other words, it is important for the participants to be found economically free by their milieu rather than whether they find themselves economically free.

As a result, it has been determined that consumers with increased depression pay more attention to prices and therefore brands should review their price policies. According to these findings, a decrease should be expected in the sales of brands that apply high price policies. In addition, brands should consider that a moderate correlation between careless shopping and depression. Because, the increase in careless shopping behaviour due to depression with a moderate correlation can be turned into an advantage with a careful marketing policy.

3.5. Recommendations And Limitations

Although the study measures the relationship between depression and consumer decisions and behaviours over two globally accepted scales, it should not be overlooked that the findings were obtained from the Consumer Styles Inventory and the Beck Depression Inventory. In addition, the reasons behind the depression of depressed participants were ignored in this study. These situations should be considered as the limitations of the study.

The relationship that the research found between price focus and depression makes specific studies in this area a suggestion. In addition, it is a suggestion of this study to examine the

relationship between psychological conditions such as narcissism, which are common in today's Post-Modern society and consumer behaviour. Because each interdisciplinary study examining the specific forms of consumers will contribute to the Postmodern marketing literature in the context of understanding the consumer behaviour of marketing science.

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Araştırma Makalesi

Understanding the Depressed Consumer: A Quantitative Study on the Consumption Patterns of Individuals in Depression

Depresyondaki Tüketiciyi Anlamak: Depresyonlu Bireylerin Tüketim Kalıpları Üzerine Nicel Bir Araştırma

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Post-modern toplum yapısında tüketim karar ve davranışları toplumsal bir olgu haline gelmiştir. Başka bir ifade ile ürün ve markalar birer birey olarak algılanmakta ve tüketim davranışları işlevsellikten ziyade toplumsal bir ifade ve benliğin ortaya koyulması amacı ile gerçekleştirilmektedir. Bu bağlamda değerlendirildiğin günümüz pratiğindeki tüketici davranışları psikolojik bir arka plana sahiptir. Bu sebeple pazarlama alanında psikoloji bilimini de içeren interdisipliner çalışmalar bir zorunluluk haline gelmiştir. Tüketici davranışları ile psikolojik durumların incelenmesi süreci söz konusu olduğunda günümüzde yaygın bir biçimde görülen depresyonun tüketici davranışlarına etkilerinin incelenmesinin önemli bir araştırma konusu olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Özellikle bireylerin depresyondayken daha fazla tüketime yönelmesi popüler bir tartışma konusudur. Ancak bilimsel derinleşmenin doğru bir biçimde sağlanması için depresyondaki bireylerin tüketim karar ve davranışları kalıplarında bir değişimin olup olmadığının incelenmesi gerekmektedir.

Bu bağlamda tasarlanan bu çalışmada tüketicilerin depresyon seviyelerinin tüketim tarzlarına etkileri araştırılmıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda dünya çapında kabul görmüş Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri ve Beck Depresyon Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın hipotezi ise “Depresyon seviyeleri, tüketicilerin tüketim tarzlarında bir farklılaşmaya neden olmaktadır.” şeklinde belirlenmiştir.

Araştırmanın 203 kişiden oluşan örnekleminin demografik değişimlerin gösterdiği yığılması incelendiğinde örneklemin büyük çoğunluğunun 18-25 yaş arası, bekar ve lisans mezunu katılımcılardan oluştuğu görülmektedir. Araştırma sürecinde her iki ölçekten elde edilen veriler korelasyon ve neden sonuç ilişkisi açısından nicel yöntemlerle test edilmiştir. Yöntem olarak katılımcılardan elde edilen veriler öncelikle tanımlayıcı ve frekans analizleri ile işlenmiş ve normallik tespiti sürecinde One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Testi uygulanmış ve Lilliefors Testi ile de doğrulanmıştır. Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri ölçeği normal dağılım sergilerken, Beck Depresyon Envanteri ölçeği, bir tanı anketi olması sebebiyle beklendiği üzere normal dağılım sergilememiştir. Son olarak belirtmek gerekir ki çalışmada Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri ile Beck Depresyon Envanteri arasındaki ilişkinin anlaşılması için korelasyon ve Anova analizleri

uygulanmıştır. Bu analizler boyunca depresyon verileri bağımsız değişken kabul edilirken, tüketici tarzları verileri bağımlı değişken olarak kabul edilmiştir. Çünkü araştırmanın amacı depresyonun, tüketim tarzları üzerindeki etkilerini anlamaktır.

Araştırmanın bulguları kümülatif anlamda depresyon ile Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri bir ilişki olmadığını göstermektedir. Yani tüketicilerin depresyon seviyelerindeki bir değişim bütün olarak tüketici davranışlarını değiştirmemektedir. Ancak Tüketici Tarzları Envanterinin alt boyutlarına inildiğinde fiyat odaklılık ve depresyon seviyesi arasında yüksek korelasyon olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Tüketici Tarzları Envanterinin diğer alt boyutları da bu bağlamda değerlendirilmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak depresyon seviyeleri ve demografik değişkenlerin ilişkisi de tali bulgular olarak sunulmuştur.

Araştırmanın ana bulguları depresyon ile mükemmeliyetçilik arasında herhangi bir korelasyon olmadığı, marka odaklılık ve yenilik-moda odaklılık arasında düşük düzeyde korelasyon olduğu, fiyat odaklılık yüksek düzeyde korelasyon ve son olarak da düşünmeden alışveriş arasında orta düzeyde korelasyon olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu bulgulara göre depresyon ile tüketici tarzları arasında bir yüksek bir korelasyonun olmadığını göstermesi sebebiyle neden sonuç ilişkisini ölçmek amacıyla regresyon analizi yapılmamıştır.

Araştırmanın tali nitelikli bulguları ise depresyon ve cinsiyet arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu göstermektedir. Daha özellikli bir ifade ile hafif şiddetli depresyon düzeyinde kadar kadın ve erkek katılımcılar benzer özellikler gösterirken, orta ve şiddetli depresyon düzeylerindeki kadın sayısı erkeklerden fazladır. Son olarak ise depresyon ve katılımcıları, çevreleri tarafından ekonomik anlamda özgür bulunması arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir. En düşük depresyon puanları genellikle çevreleri tarafından ekonomik anlamda özgür bulunan katılımcılarda görülürken en yüksek ortalama depresyon puanı bazen çevreleri tarafından ekonomik anlamda özgür bulunan bireylerde görülmektedir. Yaş, medeni durum, eğitim durumu ve ekonomik özgürlük ile depresyon arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmamaktadır. Ancak bu durumun nedeni çalışmanın araştırma nesnesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Yani yaş, medeni durum ve eğitim durumu ile depresyon arasında ilişkinin tespit edilememesinin nedeni, bu araştırmanın esas araştırma konusu itibarıyla tercih edilen örnekleme ile ilgilidir.

Genel olarak değerlendirmek gerekirse bulgular depresyonlu bireylerin satın alma karar ve davranışlarında fiyat odaklılığını artırdığı anlamına gelmektedir. En belirgin ilişkinin fiyat odağında olması, tüketicilerde depresyonun arttığı sektörlerde markaların fiyat seviyelerine dikkat etmesini gerektirmektedir. Tüketicilerin depresyon seviyelerinin artması halinde üründen beklentilerinin sektör normallerine göre farklılaşması beklenmemelidir. Mükemmeliyetçiliğin ardından genel anlamlı ilişkinin düşünmeden alışveriş ile depresyon arasındaki ilişki olması nedeniyle artan depresyonun, tüketicilerin daha dikkatsiz bir biçimde alışveriş yaptıklarını göstermektedir. Bu durum ise depresyonlu bireylerin, çevrelerine yönelik ilgilerinin azalması ile açıklanabilir niteliktedir.

Sonuç olarak depresyonun yükseldiği tüketici gruplarında markaların, fiyatlarına daha çok dikkat etmesi gerektiği ve bu sebeple markaların fiyat politikalarını gözden geçirmeleri gerektiği tespit edilmiştir. Bu gibi durumlarda özellikle yüksek fiyat politikası uygulayan markaların satışlarında bir düşüş beklenmelidir. Buna ek olarak ise düşünmeden alışveriş orta düzeyde bir korelasyon tespit edilmesi de markalar tarafından göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Çünkü düşünmeden alışveriş davranışındaki orta düzeyli bir korelasyonla artış olması dikkatli bir pazarlama politikası ile avantaj haline dönüştürülebilir nitelik taşımaktadır.

Her ne kadar araştırma dünya çapında kabul görmüş iki ölçek üzerinden depresyon ve tüketici karar ve davranışları arasındaki ilişkiyi ölçse de bulguların Tüketici Tarzları Envanteri ile Beck Depresyon Ölçeği üzerinden elde edildiği göz ardı edilmemelidir. Buna ek olarak depresyonlu katılımcıların depresyonlarının arka planındaki nedenler bu çalışmada göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu durumlar çalışmanın sınırlılıkları olarak kabul edilmelidir.

Araştırmanın fiyat odağı ile depresyon arasında tespit ettiği ilişki ise bu alandaki özellikli çalışmaları bir öneri haline getirmektedir. Buna ek olarak narsisizm gibi günümüz Post-Modern toplumunda yaygınlaşan psikolojik durumlar ile tüketici davranışları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi de bu çalışmanın bir önerisidir. Çünkü tüketicilerin özellikli formlarını inceleyen her bir interdisipliner çalışma pazarlama biliminin tüketici davranışlarını anlama bağlamında Postmodern pazarlama literatürüne katkıda bulunacaktır.