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Values and hedonic consumption behavior: A field research in Kirikkale

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Abstract

Values are among the important factors that determine how people act and are motivated. Values are related with consumption behaviors and purchasing processes, too. Recently the concept of hedonic consumption is encountered and researched often. The concept which is termed as hedonic consumption is a part of consumption explained as being happy, pleasure, sensuality or relieving. Present study investigates the relationships among individual values and hedonic consumption behavior; it is aimed to provide information to marketing practitioners and researchers about values. In this study, hedonic consumption is measured by widely used reliable and valid scales. Data is gathered by face to face survey method. Factor analysis for scales and correlation analyses for the possible relationships among values and hedonic consumption are conducted. At the study, 430 valid questionnaires are obtained. According to research, dimensions of values depicted as "benevolence", "universalism", "self direction", "conformity", "tradition", "power", "self security", "spirituality", "stimulation", and "hedonism", and dimensions of hedonic consumptions are; "excitement and escape", "innovativeness" and "pleasure and fun". As a result, it is seen that values of benevolence, selfdirection, tradition, power, spirituality, stimulation and hedonism are related with hedonic consumption.

Keywords: Value and consumption, individual values, hedonic consumption

Introduction

Investigating the reasons of customer buying behavior is a main research area in marketing literature since many aspects of the customer decision process could not be determined

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explicitly. However, it is known that conscious and subconscious processes are effective in consumer's decision making (Zaltman, 2003). In some cases, especially subconscious processes can be much more effective in consumer behavior. When the influencers of customer behavior is investigated; motivation, perception and learning are seen as three main factors. Motivation, perception and attitudes are affected by values directly (Koc, 2008).

It is asserted that values are effective in human behavior by Milton Rokeach at 1973, and classified as instrumental and terminal. As mentioned in the approach, while terminal values are stated as desired situations like comfortable, safe and respectful life, instrumental values refers to intermediate values like ambition, honesty, cheerfulness, politeness, creativeness (Koc, 2008). In marketing literature, neurological processes have been investigated increasingly as customer behavior is mentioned as a black box. Today customers don't want to buy products that don't reflect their values or incompatible with their values (Turel, *et al.*, 2010). So goods and services, which are compatible with customer values have more chance of success in today's competitive environment.

Marketing is a set of managerial activities, which target consumption and meeting customer needs and wants. These activities have to be made in more competitive business situations as time goes by. As a result of increasing in welfare and production possibilities, hedonic consumption is seen as a different kind of purchasing style. Hedonism is related with having pleasant feelings about consumption or selfishness of customers. Hedonic consumption is related with deeper emotions, images and fantasies in consumption behavior (Ozdemir and Yaman, 2007). Today, in addition to rational consumption values, hedonic values are expected more than in the past, as a result of increasing in welfare and expectancies of customers. Determining the different personal attributes and values that leads different value seeking behavior is an important variable for marketing performance (Devrani, 2010) At this point, the customer's personal values, can effect gained values from purchased products. But there is a lack of empirical researches that investigates the relationships among personal values and consumer behavior. In other words, the question of "which values are mostly related with hedonic consumption behavior?" has to be answered.

Cultural values

The concept of culture, as a sum of features that distinguish an individual from others, is an issue that affects human behavior closely. People are affected from values, beliefs, traditions, lifestyles, outlooks of a society that they live and represent their own, unique cultural structure (Hofstede, 1980). Cultural values are norms that lead people represent appropriate behaviors on specified situations like freedom, prosperity, security etc. (Shwartz, 1999) Social behavior, experience and participation of a person occurs in accordance with value priorities. In societies

many people may have similar values, represents their values and goals in their ideas, opinions and choices at organizations (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2007).

Effects of cultural values in consumer behavior are inevitable, since they affect social, personal and psychological properties of people (Manrai and Manrai, 2011). So, culture is an important factor that must be evaluated in marketing decisions, and marketing strategies must be adapted to cultural changes and variables (Jenner, *et al.*, 2008).

In researching values with theoretical and empirical viewpoints, Schwartz's approach is widely used and tested in many studies. This theory draws attention to 10 fundamental values (Schwartz and Boehnke, 2004 Struch, *et al.*, 2002 Fontaine, *et al.*, 2008 Barnea and Schwartz, 1998 Schwartz, *et al.*, 2000). Present study takes into consideration the issue from this viewpoint and don't scrutinize other approaches to value. Theoretical model of the approach is seen in the following figure (Roccas *et al.*, 2002).



Figure 1: Theoretical model of 10 values

The values of people are important factors that affect and motivate behaviors. Giving importance to "Power" as a kind value, refers to controlling and dominating others and resources. "Achievement", which is another kind of value, is being effective and skillful in terms of social standards. "Hedonism" explains the feature of a person as enjoying or liking life or what is done. "Stimulation"; is defined as originality and enthusiasm. "Self direction" contains the concepts like independent thinking, decision making, creativity, freedom etc. "Universalism" is giving importance to entire people and nature with a global perspective. "Benevolence" is protecting and helping people that are related and communicated with. The value of "tradition" is being respectful toward traditional culture and opinions. "Conformity" is the property of compliance to norms and situations. At last, "security" is giving importance to safety of family, nation etc. (Sagiv and Schwartz, 2007; Bardi and Schwartz, 2003).

Hedonic consumption

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) points out that consumption experiences has a nature of symbolic, hedonic and esthetic. According to this paradigm, customers follow emotions, fantasies and fun. On the other hand, traditional data processing approach accept customers as people who make purchasing with rational thinking. But this point of view, can't explain the experiential side of consumption which based upon pleasure and joy (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) Hedonic consumption; defines the multisensory (taste, sound, scent, tactile etc.), fantasy and emotional situations about consumption or products (Hirchman and Holbrook, 1982).

Hedonic purchasing is a dimension of consumption that expressed as being happy, taking pleasure, sensuality etc. (Aydın, 2010). Enjoyfulness, entertainment, daydreaming, thrilling, socializing dimension of human behavior leads customer to make hedonic consumption (Özgül, 2011). In today's modern commercial life, the emotional dimension of the consumption phenomenon is stand out more. Symbolic meanings are loaded to products and brands, customers get pleasure from the consumption and they are not seen as individuals who are look for just rational value. Understanding the reasons of major factors that affect hedonic consumption behavior is important for being aware of the behavior and expectancies about this behavior (Unal and Ceylan, 2008).

Consumption behavior is affected by values that consumers have and some consumers use products as a differentiation symbol especially who lives in a materialistic environment. At this point, taking pleasure from consuming a product or shopping behavior expressed as hedonic consumption. Knowing the nature of hedonic consumption behavior is useful for firms (Özdemir and Yaman, 2007).

Consumer behaviors are resulted from rational consumption motives, when individuals make consumption to obtain maximum economic benefit. On the other hand, consumption behaviors are resulted from emotional motives when people consume to reach personal and subjective goals. In other words, utilitarian motives are related with functional and practical values of behavior, hedonic motives are related with pleasure and gratification side of behavior. So when it comes to hedonistic consumption; relating products with some emotions, relieving feelings or sustaining some emotions are concerned (Dogrul, 2012).

Relationships between values and hedonic consumption

Hedonic consumption can be investigated in terms of cultural values. Hirschman (1982) points out that hedonic consumption differs by ethnical properties. According to study, customers who represent specific ethnic properties (Jewish and English Protestant) have high level of fanciful and fun-seeking consumption motivations. This kind of differentiations can be related with sub

cultural properties (Hirchman, 1982). But these kinds of studies represent a categorical approach the issue. Investigating the hedonic consumption in terms of values would be a wise approach.

Values affect human behavior in many ways. Bardi and Schwartz (2003) conclude that values of stimulation and tradition are strongly related with behaviors. Moreover values of hedonism, power, universalism and individualism are moderately related with human behavior. Furthermore values of security, conformity, success and benevolence are weakly related with human behaviors (Bardi and Shwartz, 2003). As a result of their study, it can be inferred that values are also related with consumer behaviors as a kind of human behavior.

Customers have different values at different levels. This led them to respond different marketing offerings in different ways. Market structures and segments can be analysed based on this fact (Dulgeroğlu, 2008). Value is one of the important factor that affect consumer behaviors. Individual values help people to developed positive attitudes and behaviors toward products that suitable with values or satisfy them. Therefore, being aware of the values of customers and effects of them on consumer behavior will play a facilitating role in creating appropriate offerings for expectations (Devrani, 2010).

In marketing literature, although there are not seen studies that investigate relationships between values and hedonic consumption behavior, relationships among values and some kind of customer behaviors are researched by different viewpoints. Craig *et al.* (2005) asserts that firms are more successful in countries in which people are more similar to national culture at film sector (Craig *et al.*, 2005; 80-103).

Unal and Erciş (2006) assert that since realization of values are important for customers, people prefer product that compatible with values. They concluded that customers with high level of a sense of accomplishment and self-respect; have more new product buying tendency, prefer different shops and brands, specialize about purchasing and rely on shopping experiences (Unal and Erciş, 2006).

Sun *et al.* (2009) claims that hedonic consumption may represent differences among different regions (geographical properties and weather conditions) (Sun *et al.*, 2009). Chan and Wan (2008) states that satisfaction factors of customers and voice style of dissatisfactions are different for customers who have different cultural background (Americans, Chinese). According to study, Americans transfer their consumption related problems to firm, more than Chinese people (Chan and Wan, 2008).

Kim *et al.* (2009) proves that functional purchasing and its effect on family purchasing in terms of convenience products differs by cultural background (Chinese-Canadian, Caucasion-Canadian) (Kim, *et al.*, 2009). These studies are taking into consideration cultural or value properties of people with a general view point and not touch on value dimensions or determinants of consumption differences.

In addition to these, cultural traits can affect hedonic food consumption. In countries in which people have complex and detailed hedonic food culture, traditional values are determinative in eating, drinking and diet behaviors of people. For example, there are hedonic perceptions about taste of products, cultural eating styles, excessive prices etc. (Wansink *et al.*, 2002).

Hartman *et al.* (2006) explains that openness to change and self-development values are directly affect innovativeness and indirectly affect hedonic consumptions by internet (Hartman *et al.*, 2006). According to the literature, it is understood that there is a lack of study that investigates the relationships among individual values and hedonic consumption.

An empirical analysis on the relationships among values and hedonic consumption

Goal and importance of the research

Present study is conducted to explain relationship among individual values and hedonic consumption behavior. By clarifying the relationships among individual values and hedonic consumption variables useful information is tried to obtain for marketers.

Method of the research

The personal values scale is used in the study, which is developed by Schwartz and used by many national and international studies (Bacanlı, 1999). Moreover questions about hedonic consumption is created by the help of Arnold and Reynolds (2003) and Papatya and Özdemir (2012)'s studies. Survey is conducted in centre of the city of Kirikkale of Turkey. Necessary sample size with 5% tolerance is 384.

430 valid questionnaires are obtained with face to face survey. Gathered data are analysed with the SPSS. Descriptive analyses, factor analyses and parametric tests are conducted.

Findings of the Research

Demographic variables

		Ν	%
	Male	177	41,2
Gender	Female	253	58,8
	Total	430	100
	17-25	125	29,1
	26-34	186	43,3
Age	35-43	80	18,6
Age	44-52	32	7,4
	53 and above	7	1,6
	Total	430	100
	0-1500	206	47,9
Income	1501-3000	194	45,1
meome	3001 +	30	7
	Total	430	100

Table 1: Demographic variables

% 41,2 of research attendants consists of males, % 58,8 is female. When age allocation is looked, it is seen that % 72,4 of attendants' (311 people) age is between 17 and 34. In terms of income level; great majority of the attendants are less than 1500 TL (206 people).

Factor analysis

At this step of the study, exploratory factor analyses are conducted for values and hedonic consumption. Reliability analysis for questions which are aimed to measure values shows that question set is reliable and reliability coefficient is 0,96. Moreover KMO value is depicted as 0,92 which shows the efficiency of sample. Factor analysis results indicate 10 factors that explains % 62 of personal values. Factors are named as "Benevolence", "universalism", "self direction", "conformity", "tradition", "power", "self security", "spirituality", "stimulation" and "hedonism".

Factor loadings, Eigen-values, explained variances and total explained variances are seen in table 2.

	Factor Loadings	Eigen value	Explained Variance, %	Total Variance, %
Factor 1: Benevolence		19,35	35,84	35,84
Responsibility	,736			
Loyalty	,700			

Table 2: Factor analysis for values

Usefulness	,683			
Honesty	,670			
Respecting parents and elderly	,583			
Protecting nature	,565			
Open mindedness	,496			
	,490			
Family security Politeness	,494 ,487			
Daring True friendship	,462			
True friendship	,458			
Mature love	,425	2.14	F 01	41 64
Factor 2: Universalism	(20)	3,14	5,81	41,64
Inner peace	,638			
Social justice	,615			
World in peace	,614			
Virtuousness	,611			
Independence	,566			
Good world	,557			
Being competible	,504			
Factor 3: self direction		2,23	4,13	45,77
Freedom	,706			
Creativity	,674			
Selecting own goals	,644			
Self respect	,504			
Factor 4: conformity		1,80	3,33	49,11
Sense of belonging	,717			
National security	,667			
Self control	,518			
Responding to favor	,488			
Factor 5: tradition		1,75	3,24	52,36
Religiousity	,657			
Humility	,632			
Obedience	,538			
Respect to tradition	,534			
Moderateness	,497			
Accepting life	,493			
Factor 6: power		1,62	2,99	55,36
Social power	,745			
Having authority	,657			
Sustaining social presence	,648			
Influence others	,548			
Richness	,528			
Factor 7: self security	, -	1,43	2,64	57,99
Respect for special life and		-,	_,	2.,,,,,
privacy	,730			
Cleanness	,583			
Health	,505			
Justice	,554			
Factor 8: spirituality	,	1,21	2,42	60,24
Forgiveness	,564	1,21	2,12	50,21
A spiritual life	,533			
Unity with nature	,529			
A meaningful life	,403			
Facto 9: stimulation	,+05	1,16	2,15	62,40
Facto 7. Sumulation		1,10	2,15	02,40

A flexible life	,776			
En excited life	,711			
Bonding to needs	,562			
Factor 10: hedonism		1,12	2,07	64,46
Ambitiousness	,706			
Satisfy with life	,621			
Enjoyment	,600			
Overall Alfa				,96
КМО				,92
Sig.				,00,

Factor analysis results for hedonic consumption scale are shown in the following table. KMO and alpha coefficient shows the reliability and applicability of the analysis. The scale explains the % 57 of the hedonic consumption with 3 sub categories which are named as "Excitement and escape", "Innovativeness" and "Pleasure".

	Factor Loadings	Eigen value	Explained Variance %	Total Variance %
Factor 1: Excitement and escape		3,92	26,158	26,158
Shopping gives me the shivers	,808			
To me, shopping is a way of get rid of stress	,740			
While shopping I slipped into my dream world	,725			
Trying new products makes me excited	,724			
I shop more frequently when I have problems	,661			
I go shopping when I want to be a good.	,653			
I just enjoy to go shopping, not for purchased products	,605			
Factor 2: Innovativeness		2,42	16,146	42,304
I go to shopping to see present new products	,648			
I go to shopping to follow new fashion	,644			
I go to shopping on weekend generally	,598			
Making shopping gives me the feeling of escaping from daily life	,597			
I go to shopping 2-3 times a week	,593			
Factor 3: Pleasure-fun		2,26	15,065	57,370
Shopping is really a fun	,775			
I do shopping because I want, not for neccessity	,689			
I usually spend 1-2 hours to shopping	,685			
Overall Alfa				,918
KMO=,				,885
Sig				,000

Table 3: Hedonic consumption factor analysis results

After factor analysis which is conducted to specify research variables in reliable way, correlation analysis was performed to investigate the relationships among values and hedonic

consumption. Meaningful relationships are pointed out as seen in the following table. When correlations between values and hedonic consumptions are scrutinized; it is seen that value subcategories of benevolence, self direction, tradition, power, spirituality, stimulation, hedonism are meaningfully related with hedonic consumption sub categories. The correlation coefficients are low. It can be said that; benevolence is mostly related with innovative consumption, self direction is mostly related with excitement and escape oriented consumption, tradition is mostly related with pleasure consumption. Moreover, it is found that stimulation and hedonism values are mostly correlated with hedonic consumption sub categories of excitement-escape and pleasure.

		Excitement- escape	İnnovative	Pleasure
Benovelence	Pearson correlation	,124(*)	,171(**)	,120(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,015	,001	,019
	N	384	381	382
Universalism	Pearson correlation	,020	,094	,014
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,689	,064	,780
	N	391	388	388
Self direction	Pearson correlation	,110(*)	,107(*)	,020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,031	,038	,703
	N	383	380	381
Conformity	Pearson correlation	,070	,086	,053
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,165	,091	,293
	N	391	390	389
Tradition	Pearson correlation	,207(**)	,035	,033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,492	,522
	N	391	390	389
Power	Pearson correlation	,216(**)	,223(**)	,315(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000
	N	389	383	386
Security	Pearson correlation	,069	,004	-,004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,170	,944	,934
	N	393	390	391
Spirituality	Pearson correlation	,114(*)	,105(*)	,091
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,024	,037	,070
	N	395	392	393
Stimulation	Pearson correlation	,223(**)	,132(**)	,249(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,010	,000
	N	384	383	381
Hedonism	Pearson correlation	,218(**)	,216(**)	,235(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000
	N	387	386	385

Table 4: Correlation analysis

Conclusion

According to research results, values and hedonic consumption consist of sub categories. Factors about values are benevolence, universalism, self direction, conformity, tradition, power,

security, spirituality, stimulation and hedonism. And the dimensions of hedonic consumption are depicted as; excitement-escape, innovative and pleasure.

The relationship between concept of value and hedonic consumption occurs in many different dimensions. To sum up, it is seen that values of benevolence, self direction, power, spirituality, stimulation and hedonism are related with hedonic consumption sub variables. At this point, the strongest relationship is seen between the value of power and having pleasure from consumption.

According to research findings, many value sub dimensions are related with sub categories of hedonic consumption. On the other hand, there is not seen relationship between spirituality and pleasure consumption. Moreover, it is seen that tradition sub dimension is not related with hedonic consumption subcategories of innovation and pleasure. As a conclusion, hedonic consumption which is frequently faced in today's consumer behaviors is related with several individual values although these relations are statistically low. At this point, marketers can stimulate hedonic consumption more easily in cultures or areas in which people have high level power, hedonism and stimulation.

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