T.C.

ISTANBUL OKAN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE SCIENCES

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ENGLISH BUSINESS PROGRAM

ROUA AOUNI

THE NEW DIGITAL DECADE COVID-19 IMPACT ON DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

THESIS ADVISOR

Asst. Prof. Ceyda OVACI

ISTANBUL, December 2022

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COVID-19 pandemisinin gelişiyle birlikte, kısıtlayıcı bir düzenleyici karantina, işletmeleri kapanmaya zorladı ve onları müşterilerine çevrimiçi kanallar aracılığıyla ulaşmak için pazarlama stratejilerini dijital pazarlama yaklaşımlarına değiştirmeye ve tüketicileri bu süreçte satın alma alışkanlıklarını değiştirmeye zorladı. dönem. Bu araştırma çalışmasında, bu tezin temel amacı, pandeminin dijital pazarlama üzerindeki etkisini incelemek, tüketici davranışına odaklanmak; dijital pazarlama müdahalesinin bir göstergesi olarak sosyal medyanın etkisiyle birlikte, pandemi öncesi, pandemi sırası ve post-pandemi olmak üzere üç önemli dönemde satın alma alışkanlıklarındaki farklılıkları ayırt ediyor. Üç aşamanın inceleme zaman çizelgesi şu şekilde olacaktır: Pandemi öncesi, pandeminin ortaya çıkmasından hemen önceki dönemi belirtir. Son olarak, pandemi sonrası dönem, karantina sonrası şu ana kadar olan dönemi temsil eder. Bu bağlamda literatür taraması dijital pazarlama, tüketici davranışları ve pandemi konularını kapsamaktadır. Ardından, Türk tüketicilerinin temeli olan 313 katılımcıya, satın alma davranışının üç aşamasındaki farklılıkları karşılaştırmaları için bir anket verildi. Yapılan analiz sonucunda, COVID-19 pandemisinin tüketicinin satın alma alışkanlıklarını etkilediği, mağaza içi alışverişten online alışverişe kadar alışveriş yöntemlerini dijitalleştirdiği ortaya çıktı. Pandemi döneminde sosyal medya kullanımının pandemi öncesi ve sonrası döneme göre artması, dijital pazarlamanın iş dünyası tarafından giderek daha fazla uygulandığını gösteriyor. Bu aynı zamanda dijital pazarlamanın, pandeminin başlangıcından bu yana tüketicinin çevrimiçi satın alma davranışındaki kaymanın da bir nedeni olduğunu gösteriyor. Hatta pandemi nedeniyle tüketicilerin zihniyet, yaşam tarzı gibi hayata dair algıları da etkilendi.

Anahtar kelimeler: COVID-19, Dijital Pazarlama, Tüketici Davranışı,OnlineSatın Alma Davranışı, Sosyal Medya

Tarih: 28 Aralık 2022

ABSTRACT

THE NEW DIGITAL DECADE
COVID-19 IMPACT ON DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITSINFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, a restrictive regulative quarantine has forced businesses to shut down and has pushed them to change their marketing strategies to digital marketing approaches to reach their customers through online channels and forced consumers to change their purchasing habits during this period. In this research study, the main objective of this thesis is to inspect the impact of the pandemic on digital marketing, shedding focus on consumer behavior; distinguishing the differences in purchasing habits, in three significant periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic, along with the influence of social media, as an indication of digital marketing interference. The examination timeline of the three phases would be as follows: pre-pandemic indicates the period right before the pandemic occurrence. Lastly, the post-pandemic era represents the post- quarantine period until the present moment. In this context, literature review covered digital marketing, consumer behavior and the pandemic. Then, 313 respondents—the basis of Turkish consumers—were given a questionnaire to complete to compare the variations in their three phases of purchasing behavior. As a result of the analysis, it was found out that COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the consumer's purchasing habits, digitalizing its shopping methods from in- stores to online shopping. The use of social media has expanded during the pandemic compared to the pre-and post-pandemic era, indicating that digital marketing was practiced increasingly by business. This also indicates that digital marketing was also a reason for the shift of consumer's online purchase behavior since the beginning of the pandemic. In fact, consumers' perception of life such as mindset, lifestyle, has also been influenced because of the pandemic.

Key words: COVID-19, Digital Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Online Purchase Behavior, social media.

Date: 28 December 2022

ABBREVIATIONS

WHO : World Health Organization
SMM : Social Media Marketing
SEO : Search Engine Optimization
SOR : Stimulus – Organism - Response

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

By late 2019, the globe had been rocked by a new pandemic wave that had taken it by storm. The pandemic has arrived at a time when digitalization is at its peak. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization, or WHO, declared that a pandemic was in an emerging state. Since the world began the quarantine period for health safety reasons, to prevent it from transmitting, the deadly fast-spreading virus has had an impact on causing many businesses to close, driving marketing to shift all its traditional strategies into digital strategies. On the one hand, marketers had to improve their strategies and procedures to reach their customers online by making use of consumers' excessive use of social media channels to stay in touch and advertise their goods during the lockdown. On the other hand, during the outbreak, an excessive use of online channels was seen in many nations throughout the world, paving the door for online purchasing habits acquisition. In other terms, the pandemic has altered consumer purchasing behavior. This new purchasing behavior has radically acquiesced and transformed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and possibly post-pandemic, as it now being called. This study's objective is to determine how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected digital marketing focusing on consumer purchasing behavior by distinguishing differences in purchase behavior habits in three significant periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post- pandemic, using social media; as an indication of digital marketing practices presence. In this context, investigating how preceding buying patterns during the pandemic influenced consumers' online purchasing behavior through using social media. The following is the exact timeframe for the three phases: The term ‘pre-pandemic’ refers to the time immediately preceding the beginning of a pandemic. Meanwhile, the term “during pandemic’ represents the quarantine period, which runs from March 2020 to August 2020. Ultimately, the ‘post-pandemic’ era spans the post-quarantine period until the present. In terms of the future, the pandemic is transforming the future of marketing in the same way for consumer behavior. It is getting digitized in every aspect, introducing the 'new digital decade’.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study's literature review, the light will be shed on previous articles, research papers, and studies that are similar to the topic, and will give an insight into the aim of this study. The following written chapters will reflect on the background research of this study as it aims on providing an ultimate understanding of this research.

2. MARKETING OVERVIEW

The following chapter will be an introduction to marketing as an evolution from a historical background, and as a concept.

2.1. MARKETING EVOLUTION

As the internet world evolves, marketing has evolved throughout the years further. The Industrial Revolution marked the beginning of the development of marketing as we know it today. This phase began in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was a time of rapid social change, motivated by innovation in the science and technology industry (Hardy, 2016). Marketing guru Philip Kotler theorizes that marketing has evolved in five stages since the beginning of the industrial revolution. The era of production, the era of products, the era of sales, the era of marketing, and the holistic era (WEB_8,2020).

2.1.1. The Production Era

The production age is the very beginning of Marketing. At this stage, companies focused on mass production and efficiency, producing as much as possible at the lowest possible cost (Merritt, 2019). Consumers preferred available products at a low cost.

2.1.2. The Product Era

After the production period, the product concept was born. The era of quality-oriented products.

A good product is supposed to "sell" without the need for outside intervention. According to Merritt (2019), marketing used to be more about relying on the qualities of the product itself to draw customers rather than achieving cost leadership and universal distribution.

2.1.3. The Selling Era

From massive production to the quality of the product, marketing has turned to the selling era where businesses "selling what they make, rather than making what the market wants to purchase" is how Kotler describes this., (Merritt, 2019). At this point, marketing was perceived as an aggressive promotion, where companies had to promote their products to convince customers to buy a product even if they didn't find it necessary.

2.1.4. The Marketing Era

The selling period has given way to the marketing era. At this point, businesses concentrated on creating goods that consumers desired rather than just attempting to convince people to buy what they were selling (Merritt, 2019).

2.1.5. The Holistic Era

It initiated the contemporary marketing era. Where “everything matters” as Kotler stated. Production, distribution, and advertising are all included into a company's marketing strategy so that it can react quickly and effectively to market changes or opportunities. (Merritt, 2019).

2.2. MARKETING CONCEPT

Attempting to find the foremost suitable definition for marketing; there are numerous definitions in different research. The fact that a lot of authors view marketing from different angles; there’s no specific presentation for marketing found. However, when the question “What is marketing?” is introduced, the first thought that comes to mind is that marketing implies to advertising, at some point. Marketing is comparable to an online gram; notwithstanding, the essential answer would be as Armstrong et al., (2015) stated in ‘Marketing: Introduction’ is the process within which businesses generate value for their consumers and establish solid relationships with your clients to gain value from them in return. Additionally, marketing is managing profitable customer

relationships (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011). Kotler & Armstrong (2011) claim that marketing is a social and management activity that assists individuals and businesses accomplish their objectives by generating and exchanging value with other people. From a business or a specific context perspective, marketing involves building profitable, value-den exchange relationships with customers. As a result, marketing is the process through which organizations provide value for customers and build trusting relationships with them to collect value from them in exchange. As previously mentioned, selling a product or advertising is one of all marketing's many pillars. Based on Kotler and Armstrong (2011), marketing is the process through which businesses generate value for consumers and cultivate strong customer connections to acquire value from customers in return. By creating value and building an honest understanding of customers' needs and demands, which ends up in building a decent relationship between the company and customers. In the same context, as per Pride and Fetrell (2009) marketing also includes the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods and services to facilitate positive exchange relationships with customers in a dynamic environment as well as establish and uphold positive relationships with stakeholders.

2.3. DIGITAL MARKETING

An introduction to the notion of digital marketing and to online strategies will be provided in the following subchapter.

2.3.1. Digital Marketing Concept

Marketing has been seen as a dynamic field; an ongoing, fast, and creative sector. Within the past decade, companies are shifting their identity presentation to the world; nowadays it is presented on the internet: on a website or social media platforms like a Facebook page, or an Instagram page. Companies have switched billboards, newspaper ads, and TV commercials to a web page that contains every detail that reflects the company's mission and vision, which makes it easier for customers to access that. This is often when the term 'digital marketing' has come to the fore. With the arrival of the internet and smartphones in the last ten years, the notion of marketing has been

reintroduced to have an online presence. Based on Altındal (2013) research, it is stated that digital marketing relates to the use of the internet, smartphone devices, and other interactive platforms to support and promote a brand in ways other than traditional media tools like television, radio, and magazines. In this case, digital marketing is becoming the new form of marketing. From a historical background view, (Robinson, et al., 2007) claim that digital or online advertising has experienced phenomenal growth since its inception in 1994. For the past decade, digital marketing, also known as, online marketing has been progressing, developing, and spreading in manners that aim at easing the customer's reaching process for companies, as well as easing the customer's experience online. To define the term digital marketing more; (Gibson, 2018, p.1) defined it as a strategy that offers an individual or a business the chance to connect with clients through the application of unique ways that incorporate technology and conventional marketing strategies. In addition, some research suggested that managing internal and external digital communications is a component of managing digital marketing, which is defined as achieving marketing goals using digital technology that may help achieve goals from both an internal and external perspective (Chaffey, 2014, p. 5). Digital marketing is no longer just a subset of traditional marketing; it is now a brand-new phenomenon that combines mass production with customization to achieve marketing objectives (Pieiro & Martnez, 2016).

2.3.2. Traditional Marketing vs Digital Marketing

While examining the pros and cons between offline marketing and online marketing, it appears that digital marketing is in favor of businesses more than traditional marketing. It is well known that traditional marketing is the most common configuration of marketing. It is a non-digital form of products and services promotion. Meanwhile, digital marketing consists of advertising or promoting services and products using digital platforms to reach and engage with their consumers. Traditional and digital marketing have considerable contrasts. It is mentioned by (WEB_1, 2018),that digital marketing reduces costs, gives quick results, reveals higher exposure to advertisements, and easy to analyze engagement for a better next-time strategy. According to the research results of Bhayani & Vachhani (2014), Das & Lall (2016), and Bailey (2020) summarized by Ismat Ara Eti & Md. Murshedul Bari (2020), reflects on some differences using

the comparison between traditional and digital marketing shown in the table below:

Table 2.3.2 Traditional Marketing vs. Digital Marketing

Area	Traditional Marketing	Digital Marketing
Target Audience	Direct connection with local customers.	Touch the aimed audience globally from all over the world.
Marketing Tactic Documentation	i. Having more of a one-on-one connection to notify brands. ii. Delivering the physical version of products, servicesdescription.	i. The physical attendance of the marketers is not at all mandatory. ii. Delivering the description in digital version over the internet.
Consumer Interface	Very less interaction.	More interaction.
Marketing Budget	Involved printing, radio, TV ads which create more cost.	Less costly because all is online.
Communication	One-way of communication is involved.	Exchange, two-ways of communication is involved.
Product and service price	Negotiated with each customer.	Set by the seller for all customers.

Based on the results of the table 2.2.2, digital marketing is a more open, direct, broad, and fastened way to customers. It creates a global-direct, reciprocal, and interactive relationship between marketers and customers.

2.3.3. Digital Marketing Strategies

In the following subchapter, the discussion will be mainly about some of most common and used digital marketing methods or tactics, search engine optimization, content marketing, social media marketing, influencer marketing and email marketing. This subchapter aims to provide further insight related to digital marketing strategies by giving definitions, and explanations based on other literature.

2.3.3.1. Search Engine Optimization

To begin with, search engine optimization, or SEO, is one of the different digital marketing strategies or tools. It is a significant tool in the online marketing process. Search engine optimization, SEO, is defined as the technique of improving web pages in a way that increases their placement in organic search results, (Schultheiß, et al., 2020). As a concept, SEO aims to optimize websites so they can meet the ranking criteria of search engines such as Google, (Schultheiß, et al., 2020). When talking about research engines, the first clue that comes to mind is Google, Yahoo, or Bingo, as the utility of a search engine is to deliver the results to internet users. From an insightful perspective of determining what an SEO is; according to (Yalçin, 2010)'s background investigation, a search engine is a category of software that gathers information about websites. The website's content, the coding used to create the web page, and the links it provides are all examples of HTML as a result. The associated data that has been gathered is indexed and kept in a database. Moreover, the term "search engine optimization" is very widely used and well-known online. Making a website appealing to a search engine involves presenting its code and content in a way that the search engine will interpret as addressing a particular query from a (human) searcher (Charlesworth, 2009). Keywords and original unique content are some basic and well- known factors in SEO algorithms. It is essential to have great content on the website of a company, for example, for better search engine results to appear first in the search results bar. In other words, when the right keywords are being used to write about a product, for instance, the algorithm may be in favor by classifying those words pushing the published written content to rank on the first pages on the search page. The search result is called ‘organic search result’. As per Wixom & Todd (2005), there are numerous elements, including content, that affect SEO organic listings among other things, a website's page rank, tags, inbound links, and keywords. Choosing theright words to describe your product with distinctive, related, and accurate words, the better it is for the brand’s research to attract more website visitors, which it may lead to potential customers.

2.3.3.2. Social Media Marketing

Social media increasingly plays a significant role in marketing. Social media marketing or SMM, has become the most popular marketing approach used by marketers to reach their customers by establishing a dynamic, interactive, and direct exchange between both parties, brands, and

customers. Regarding the quantity and variety of platforms as well as users, social media is developing (Piñeiro & Martínez, 2016). People use social networks to exchange material like as photos, videos, texts, thoughts, news, personal blogs, for social networks, and communications purposes. The most well-known social media applications are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and others. Furthermore, according to (WEB 3, 2021), social media is a computer-based technology that enables individuals to communicate with one another through online groups and networks. From a production perspective, social media is internet-based and provides users with immediate electronic content transfer. Personal details, papers, films, and images are examples of content. Using web-based software or web applications, users connect with social media on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. These tools are widely used for communication. Marketers strive to capitalize on this trend, social media, since it enables them to engage with end consumers opportunely and directly compared to more conventional communication methods, at a lower cost, (Kaplan & Haenline, 2010). In marketing, social media is currently a growing phenomenon. From this perspective, marketers are starting to see the value of incorporating social media into their marketing plans and campaigns to reach out to customers, (Nadaraja & Yazdanifard, 2013). Simply put, using social media platforms to advertise a business and its goods is known as social media marketing. (Nadaraja & Yazdanifard, 2013). According to Nair (2011), social media marketing involves sharing content, thoughts, viewpoints, insights, media, relationships, and connections between customers and businesses using online technologies. In social media, customers are an inescapable factor. They tend to be a key factor for brands to identify their customers' needs, wants, and desires. Customers tend to participate in discussions by commenting on a post, liking it, and sharing it too. Meanwhile, marketers take the advantage of this by detecting, classifying, and understanding the requirements of clients. This engagement enables brands and businesses to produce vast, accurate, and even customized marketing metrics, as well as other relevant data, to learn about their consumers' preferences.

According to Nadaraja & Yazdanifard (2013), customers may develop goods and services that they want to match their personal requirements with the help of social media marketing agencies that personalize information for individual customers. From this perspective, (WEB_11, 2021), has compiled five pillars indicated by Buffer to better comprehend the social media marketing cycle and its base as a digital marketing strategy. The five pillars are cited are the following:

- Strategy: The strategy includes goals, social media platforms to utilize, and the kind of content to post.
- Planning and Publishing: Businesses should develop content strategy (will there be videos, for instance? photos? How much of the content is there? When will it be made available on the platform?
- Listening and Engagement: Keeping track of comments made by users, clients, and other parties regarding the postings, brands, and other assets owned by the company. Utilizing a social media engagement tool might be necessary for this.
- Analytics and Reporting: Engagement and reach analytics are crucial since knowing how many people see your posts on social media is a crucial aspect of using them.
- Advertising: Getting social media adverts is a great way to expand and market a company.

2.3.3.3. Influencer Marketing

Due to the rise of social media in the last ten years, the term "influencer" changed over time. However, it is not a new term to introduce at the same time; it has always existed before the rise of social media; celebrities are a type of influencer, for example. Marketers have noticed the value of social media platforms and how easily they can target potential customers for their product online, to reach them and then directly or indirectly influence them. Online resources, social networking sites serve as portals for social influence that affect consumer decision-making. Users' online social interactions, such as liking commenting, and sharing content, thoughts, or experiences, have an impact on society through these platforms (AKAR et, al., 2015). This makes social media influencers the most frequently used digital marketing approach in the present day.

Influencer marketing, also known as influence marketing, is a type of social media marketing that involves product placement and endorsements from influencers, people, and organizations with a purportedly high level of competency or social impact in their industry. In addition, social media influencers are online personalities with a significant number of followers or an online community base who can readily influence their followers via social media. Furthermore, influencer marketing is described as a sort of marketing in which marketers and brands invest in certain influencers to generate and/or promote branded content to the influencers' own following as well as the target

customers of the businesses (WEB_12, 2017). In addition, around 75% of marketing experts now utilize social media influencers to generate word-of-mouth (WOM) about their goods and services (Vyatkina, 2020). According to (WEB_13, 2018)'s research data on Social Media Today, influencer marketing was viewed as an effective approach for marketers by 94%, because it can produce a ROI (return on investment) that is up to 11 times higher than traditional advertising.

Based on Vyatkina (2020) research, there are supposedly four sorts of fundamental influencers:

- Mega-influencers: The social media celebrity, or worldwide famous celebrities, with over a million followers on their social media account. They are frequently famous due to their identity. Utilizing their influence to increase brand recognition.
- Macro-influencers: On their social media platform, influencers with between 100,000 and 1 million followers are featured. This offers the most important marketing advantages because to its exceptionally high content quality, highly focused market coverage, and the willingness to collaborate.
- Micro-influencers: Micro-influencers are those who have a following of 1,000 to 100,000 people. The following number may appear small, but the genuineness of their online community is good. A small but devoted following gives such influencers a high degree of trust, authenticity, and engagement from their audience. It is more profitable for marketers to collaborate with this group, because of the cheap cost, rather than collaborating with mega influencers.
- Nano-influencers: This group owns less than 1,000 followers. They do, however, wield considerable power and have a direct relationship to/within a certain group. For instance, the most reliable individual in each field might be a nano-influencer. They have the highest level of involvement but provide the least amount of coverage since their advertising looks to be useful guidance.

In exchange for a plug in one of their videos and on other social media sites like Instagram, many well- known bloggers now happily accept free products from brands. Others are even paid to create sponsored content or videos and promote products to their followers. That is mostly how influencer marketing and social media marketing appear to be connected at some point.

2.3.3.4. Content Marketing

To reach your target audience, it is claimed that content marketing is the process of planning,

developing, distributing, sharing, and releasing content, (WEB_10, 2021). The ultimate purpose of content marketing is to inform the audience about a specific product whilst still offering an insightful solution to their problem. In addition, content marketing is based on storytelling, creating content, and getting engagement from the target audience, as well known as customers, to optimize, analyze, and therefore build a strategy accordingly, to build visibility and reputation of the brand. The fact that content marketing is related to search engine optimization in a waythat if brands do not create the relevant and most presentable content for their audience, it will never be discovered. Content marketing is mainly about creating content that can be in a form of a photo, video or audio, or a written context, allowing brands to be found in search engines; the quality of the content gives value to the brand's identity, by aiming at making content to go viral to get morevisibility. In fact, (WEB_10, 2021), summarized the content marketing cycle as follows:

- Research Insights: At the beginning of the cycle, marketers must do research to collect and gather insightful data from other resources.
- Goal Setting: At this step, marketers must set a goal. In this phase, identifying and prioritizing the niche of the desired consumer for the certain product is important.
- Planning content: Marketers set all the measures to achieve desired planned outcomes.
- Content creation: It is the next phase in the cycle. This level is focused on creating content.
- Content curation: It is based on attribution of published content to other sources. This content tactic is commonly used for two reasons: to enrich the current content of the brand providing the same value. The second reason is to expand their reach.
- Content Distribution: The following step is the sixth phase which consists of publishing and marketing the content.
- Engagement: After launching the planned content on the social media platform, engagement is the most important step, because engaging with your target audience is a gesture of appreciation in return, which technically boosts your content and the rank on social media platforms.

Figure 2.2.3.4. The Content Marketing Cycle
(Source: Brad chuck, MARKETING 2021)

2.2.3.5. Email Marketing

According to Piñeiro & Martínez (2016) research, Email is used to transmit adverts and other commercial information as part of the internet marketing strategy known as email marketing. This communication method is utilized by the business to attract new customers or retain existing ones. The fact that the objectives behind email marketing are various, however Piñeiro & Martínez (2016) have set the most common ones as the following:

- Diverting traffic to our website: It could be the home page or a particular section inside.
- Promoting a special action: Either the advertising of new services, exclusive discounts, specials, the downloading of software, etc. Specific websites are typically built when the objective is to enhance traffic or some type of web-based special marketing.
- Cost savings: Email marketing supports order management and information to the customer regarding the status of such orders, as well as the provision of customer support services at a lower cost than other communication channels.

- Brand popularity and image: Email marketing, like other online campaign types, is well adapted to cultivate brand popularity and image among customers.

2.3.4. Importance of Digital Marketing

Without a doubt, businesses are now incorporating digital marketing into their marketing strategy in addition to traditional marketing. The significance of digital marketing in practice expands, and businesses increasingly make use of the diverse wide range of tools and advantages that may add value to brands and businesses' strategies, and revenues in return. The fundamental goal of digital marketing is to advertise services, products, as well as the good of a certain brand or a business through digital channels, media platforms. There are various reasons to drive businesses in adopting digital marketing strategies under specific circumstances set by Akar & Kayahan (2007,pp. 43-44):

1. Sales: Revenues can be increased through digital marketing practices. One of its main goals is to be used to reach consumers whom businesses are unable to reach through traditional marketing methods. Digital marketing also helps businesses to use digital channels to launch more goods and services than traditional outlets.
2. Service: By offering more value on products, digital marketing adds extra value to supplying product development details by providing additional perks via online forums, online discussions, and reviews.
3. Conversation: One of the main special characteristics of digital marketing is that it allows a space for conversations through online channels. Thanks to digital marketing, it allows consumers to get closer through a two-way contact mechanism, e-mails, online forums, polls, market analysis, conversations in chat rooms, etc. As information can be shared through online public relations activities.
4. Saving: Saving money is one of the many benefits of using digital marketing. Also, online communications, sales, and service transactions eliminate personnel, print, and postal charges.
5. Recognition: Brands can expand their reach and get more recognition through online channels. It gives branding more opportunities and more perspectives.

The main objective of digital marketing is to reach a bigger audience at a low cost. This distinguishes digital marketing from the traditional method: expensive and limited. Brands and businesses can take advantage of this to build their brand online, especially by using social media platforms. The perks or advantages of implementing digital marketing as a fundamental marketing strategy are becoming more and more spread through businesses now: whether small businesses or very well-recognized famous brands.

2.3.5. Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumers

With all the benefits that digital marketing adds to business, it is an unavoidable fact that it does not bring any impact or benefit to consumers in return. Companies may build successful customer engagement when they understand the reasons behind their digital choices (Paswan, 2018). Based on Yasmin et al.'s (2015) research, it is concluded that digital marketing has the following implications or advantages for consumers:

1. Keep up with the latest products or services: Consumers can get all the information about their products and services online through digital marketing.
2. Greater engagement: It allows consumers to engage and be engaged with, by reading the company's website, though getting informed about products and services, and being ableto give feedback.
3. Clear information about the products or services: Consumers can receive clear detailed information about a company's products or services. This provides a clear communication way with consumers by avoiding misinformation.
4. Easy comparison with others: Digital marketing offers a greater advantage by allowing consumers to compare products prices.
5. 24/7 Shopping: The availability of the internet, of course 24/7, allows consumers to order any service or product at any given time, with no restrictions.
6. Distribute the details about the products or services: It allows consumers to share the content of a product and a service with other consumers online. Using digital media can only ease the exchanging information process of a certain product's characteristics with others.

7. Apparent Pricing: Through digital marketing channels, companies may introduce prices of products and services, which make the pricing process simple and transparent to consumers. As allowable, companies can change their pricing and/or deliver specific and special products and services.
8. Enables instant purchase: Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing eases the purchasing process for consumers. For instance, mobile applications, or a well instructed, easy to follow buying experience on websites.

2.4. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Despite the growth of social media and digital marketing techniques to draw in and acquire customers, these tactics have impacted and shaped consumers' frame of mind. The following chapter will shed light on insights on consumer behavior and consumer buying behavior.

2.4.1. Consumer Behavior Concept

Before delving into any of the other research findings in this study, the term "consumer" must be clarified. It is commonly known that every single individual in this world is a consumer. The general reference of definition is as follows; based on multiple interpretations of the term consumer by various authors, consumers are the individuals' making decisions regarding nutrition and foods, daily life items, clothes, housing, interior merchandise, and luxury items to drive physical, psychological, and social needs under the guise of financial satisfaction., (Rousseau et al., 2001, p.82). In addition, the terms consumer and customer share the same connotation. In addition, consumer behavior is defined as the study of individuals, organizations, and groups' acquisition, purchase, and use of products, services, experiences, or ideas to meet their wants and desires, (Kotler & Keller, 2012). In fact, consumers may be grouped into clusters of traits such as income, psychological manners, demographic manners, personal and habitual manners, and so on.

2.4.2. Consumer Purchase Behavior

In recent years, the over usage of digital channels has contributed to changing consumer behavior. The concept of buying behavior was developed by Rani (2014) from research into the acts and decision-making of those who purchase and use items. In addition, as per Labrecque (2013), the

digital era is marked by widespread use of new technology and ongoing connectivity via the Internet, all of which have had a substantial impact on alterations in consumer behavior. In the context of this research, consumers are being influenced by the enormous amount of content they encounter every day, whether through visual content like a photo or a video, or by looking for a specific information in search engine such as Google, or simply through pop-up ads which interrupt users while watching a video or scrolling down their home page in their social platforms. Statistics show that over the previous few years, consumers' overall media consumption has increased (Nielsen, 2011). The awareness of consumers has risen over the past decade; the gained knowledge gave consumers power to alter marketing strategies, specifically digital strategies, as in contradiction it made marketers more challenging as stated Labrecque (2013) stated. It is therefore more challenging for marketers to raise consumers' awareness because of the rise in information available. It is mentioned that there are various processes involved in consumer behavior based on Ramya's (2016) research. The individual in what he is and the customer in his decision-making process, buying habits, purchasing behavior, the brands he buys or the retailers he visits are both influenced by a variety of factors, specificities, and features. Some of the mentioned factors are as the following:

- Internal or psychological factors.
- Social factors.
- Cultural factors.
- Economic factors.
- Personal factors.

The figure 2.4.2 by Kotler & Keller (2012) represents the theory of consumer behavior and how it is represented from marketing stimulus to the final purchasing decision:

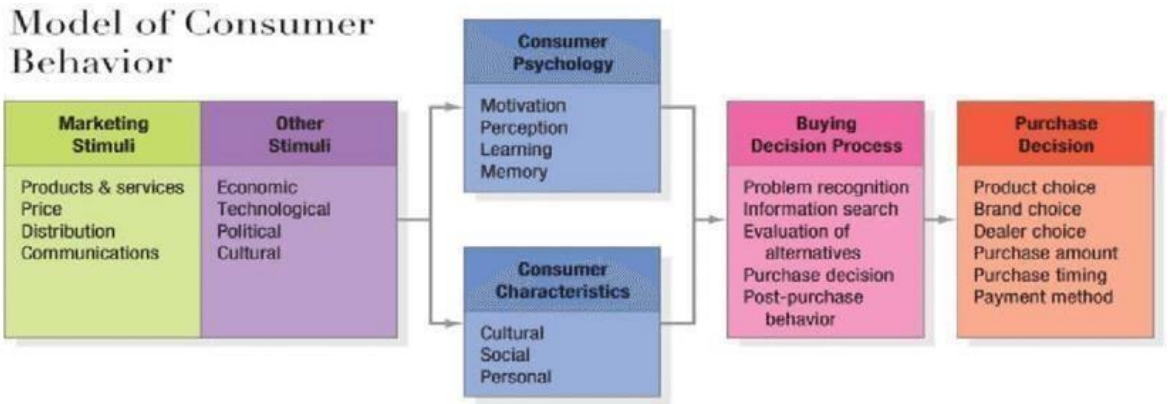


Figure 2.4.2. Model Of Consumer Behavior

(Source: Kotler & Keller, 2012)

The previous figure represents the model of consumer behavior. It is an approach to a process which reveals the various components that may leave an impact on the consumer's purchase decision. For further explanation, this representational figure of consumer behavior starts with:

1. Marketing stimuli and other stimuli: it encompasses all the marketing interactions that the consumer faces, including all the Marketing 4Ps. The marketing 4Ps are Product, Price, Place and Promotion. As for other types of stimuli, it could be technological, cultural, political, economic etc.
2. The Buyer's Black Box: It consists of the consumer psychology and characteristics. It can be determined by the pre-purchasing phase process of decision-making. The consumer's psychology can be determined by motivation, perception, learning and memory. As for consumer's characteristics, it can be determined by:
   a) Cultural factors such as the buyer's values, knowledge and beliefs, rituals and traditions related by the society of the consumer.
   b) Social factors like the environment the buyer have grown up in such as family and friends which are an important influence on the buyer, because the needs of consumption can differ and vary from one's life stage to another depending on the situation.
   c) Personal factors can also play an important role in the pre-purchase decision-making process.

3. Buying Decision Process:

a) Problem recognition: The first stage where the consumer aims to identify a problem or a need to be fulfilled by a certain product. Internal or external stimuli can influence it. In that way, consumer tends to go ahead and purchase it to fulfill that need.

b) Information Search: it represents the second stage where the consumer tends to make research about the product after recognizing the need. The sources of information gathering can vary; it can be gathered from family, friends, internet research, or from social media platforms.

c) Evaluation of alternatives: After spotting out the need and gathering the necessary information, the consumer tends to search for alternatives of the products. When it comes to searching for alternatives, the consumer makes a comparison between the different existent features of similar products and the actual product he tends to purchase.

d) Purchase Decision: Once the consumer has set his mind on the product and after evaluating the alternatives, he tends to make the decision to purchase the final selected product.

e) Post-Purchase behavior: The consumer will try the product, as the product will be evaluated; performance vs. expectations. In case the product met the needs and consumers were satisfied and pleasant with it, they are likely to buy it over, on the opposite hand consumers who express dissatisfaction of it will likely return and complain about it (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Here there are three results of evaluation: if performance meets expectations, or if performance outdoes expectations result with satisfaction. If performance fails expectations therefore it would result with dissatisfaction. In this case, after using the product the consumer can finally make his general opinion towards the product.

In the figure 2.4.2, the last step purchase decision mainly delivers the same explanation of purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. Based on this brief analysis, marketers must make a study to gather the needed information for a better understanding of their consumers 'needs. As known, consumers are different; therefore, this process may vary from one consumer to another based on external circumstances and traits that may influence the consumer's decision-making process such

as cultural, social, personal, and psychological whilst purchasing.

2.5. PANDEMIC OVERVIEW

The following chapter will give insights mainly about the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak history. With the research of other literature made for the same topic, the pandemic's influence on digital marketing as well as consumer behavior during three different phases: before, during, post-pandemic.

2.5.1. Pandemic Background

In the early 2020's, a transmittable virus, known as Coronavirus or COVID-19, has started spreading in China as little did the world know that it will become a global pandemic case that determines millions of lives across the globe. From a historical perspective, COVID-19 epidemic is the fifth pandemic that the world has had to face since the 1918's flu pandemic or rather to be called the Spanish flu (Liu et al., 2020). The official name of this new-deadly virus is SARS-CoV-2. It was named by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses based on phylogenetic analysis. It is figured that this virus is caused by an animal virus; later, it has adapted the ability to be transmittable from one human to another. According to some research and based on the several cases the world has witnessed, the COVID-19 virus attacks the respiratory system, as it can be suspected from the different symptoms that can be shown as fever, dry cough, diarrhea, and physical fatigue (Liu et al., 2020). Later in December 2019, Wuhan, China, reported the first outbreak cases. The World Health Organization (WHO), after months of this virus's rapid growth and transmission in several nations, proclaimed a pandemic to have started on March 11, 2020. The world has entered the quarantine period ever since. The quarantine period lasted for three months mainly, where people had to stay home to avoid any human interactions to diminish the spread of the virus. This deadly virus has forced shifts in various domains such as the economic sector, tourism, health and well-being, entertainment, education, and even life at home. Noticeably, businesses had to shut down as marketers had to cope with new challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic integration in life. Meanwhile, consumers' purchasing behaviors have suddenly changed; from basic purchasing mindset, to what is called 'hoarding buying', or 'panic buying'.

As it is cited by Kirk & Rifkin (2020), hoarding behavior, as distinct from compulsive hoarding; meanwhile, Frost & Gross (1993) described it as the process of gathering and preserving many belongings (i.e., more than is necessary for immediate requirements) for future use. The implications of the pandemic were witnessed by the world, at this point.

2.5.2. The Impact of the Pandemic on Digital Marketing

From a marketing perspective, it is declared that digital marketing has a major impact on businesses because of COVID-19. A study by Hootsuite & We Are Social (2020) demonstrated that e-commerce activity from any highly visible device thanks to the pandemic (Eti & Bari, 2020). Additionally, according to Bari (2020), digital marketing shortens the distance between businesses and their employees. In this matter, digital marketing has helped or managed new marketing strategies which have helped with the 'keep-your-distance-rule' and to be immune from COVID-19's interaction consequences. During the quarantine period, people were restricted to be at home for safety measures purposes, among a large audience, social media advertising raised awareness (Patil et.al, 2021). In fact, big and small enterprises would have struggled to approach their consumer base globally throughout the pandemic; it would have cost marketers so much money to promote at least a product. Different social media tools mentioning the most important ones like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram, and even Zoom have noticeably helped not only in sharing information and being able to make Education process continues at home, but it has also aided in expanding client reach and boosting revenue. This pandemic's arrival demonstrates for SMEs, or small and medium- sized businesses, the value of social media marketing and other forms of internet marketing, (Kumar & Ayedee, 2018), (Kumar & Pandey, 2018). Based on the research made by Ms Anumol (2020), this unexpected shift has pushed marketers to think outside of the box, and to try to create a digitized bond between them and their consumer base. Through this, marketers have shifted from creating marketing strategies to digital marketing strategies', taking advantage of the massive usage of social media platforms by users during the lockdown. From this point, as study was conducted by Gowda K M (2020) gathering all the points in which digital marketing were utilized amidst the outbreak of the pandemic:

1. Increased Social Media engagement was made possible for increased Social Media Marketing: During the lockdown, people spent most of their time scrolling down and up

in their different social media platforms for different purposes like trying to be updated of the COVID-19 situation or consuming shared content by different influencers, online-shopping, or educational purposes. This expanded high usage of social media platforms has redirected marketers to make new marketing strategies to reach their customers online through their own social channels like Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram, (Ms Anumol, 2020).

2. The switch from K.P.I performance to customer's long-term value: K.P.I or Key Performance Indicators. Based on (WEB_4, 2014),'s brief definition of this technical term; it is a form of performance measurement known as a key performance indicator (KPI) or performance indicator. KPIs assess the effectiveness of a company or the accomplishment of a specific activity, such as a project, program, product, or other endeavor. With the blast of the COVID-19, marketers have put a major focus on long-term goals of customer's lifetime value, as well as highlighting on K.P. I's for the long-term run.
3. Increase demand on Content and Video Content creation during COVID-19:
    a) During the quarantine period, individuals preferred spending their time more looking at their phone screens and scrolling through their social media platforms. The world is already familiar with video content creation, shared on YouTube mostly. However, the difference here is that short-term video creation went viral during quarantine, shared by TikTok and Instagram targeting different fields. For Marketers, this shift from pictures to videos content has given them the opportunity to represent their brands in a trendy way too.
    b) A.I.-based chatbots are becoming increasingly important: The conditions that have been imposed on the world, there has been an increase in online activity. Companies have integrated A.I, or artificial intelligence, via a pre-programmed chat room that may assist and lead users through the website. It was obvious that the number of chatbots surged unexpectedly, opening the door for chatbots to become customer virtual assistants.
    c) Focus of Experiential Marketing: Because individuals are spending more time online during the lockdown, marketers need to concentrate on making the customer's online experience even better; otherwise, if the homepage, landing page, or virtual world does

not give a good experience, the consumer might be bored quickly. Therefore, marketers place a high value on giving customers a wonderful online experience whenever they visit the website, participate in a webinar, visit a hub of well selected content, visit landing pages, etc.

d) Surge in demand for O.T.T. Content Hubs: The high demand for viewing of Over- The-Top Content Hubs such as Netflix and Hulu surged. The increased demand for all these O.T.T platforms presents an opportunity for digital marketers to market and sell their products and services via these platforms. For example, McKinsey (2020) has mentioned that digital adoption across sectors has increased dramatically. Disney+ generated a subscription base in seven years that Netflix had taken seven years to achieve.

e) Increased Product Research among customers: People have been spending more time online investigating products and services in recent months. As a result, it is driving firms and marketers to successfully manage their online reputation and be attentive to customer reviews and demands to minimize any potential backlash.

Furthermore, remote working, learning, and shopping have also expanded in a digital manner. Prior to the pandemic, dependency on digital was rising, and a significant portion ofthis online adoption is expected to continue when the virus is passed.

2.5.3. The Impact of the Pandemic of Consumer Behavior

The COVID-19 pandemic has turned the world upside down, it is obvious that it has significantly affected consumer behavior, based on previous studies. As previously mentioned, a consumer is a person who is dependent on the feeling of satisfaction after identifying his needs and desires in purchasing a product. Valaskova et al, (2015) argued that consumer behavior is a fundamental and continuous decision-making process of finding, obtaining, using, evaluating, and rejecting products and services. Previous studies have demonstrated that consumers have different approaches towards consumption in times of crisis. In fact, the market dynamic has been changing ever since the pandemic started assumingly until the present moment. As the pandemic has left an impact on digital marketing, it is inevitable that it would not impose any effect on consumer behavior, e-commerce has significantly increased due to the pandemic as more consumers continue

to shop online (Stanciu, et, al, 2020). They are required to do so by the COVID-19 pandemic, which could have a significant effect on consumer behavior. To decrease the pandemic's transition, people were asked to stay at home. The research of Kim (2020) shows that immediate goods and social contacts, which are more practical and affordable, are the two main reasons people choose to shop in physical places over online retailers. In this matter, this was not the most favorable case during COVID-19 pandemic. To understand the impact of the pandemic on consumer behavior, the following subchapters will give more insights about this matter.

2.5.3.1. Emotional Threat

It is common knowledge that at times of crisis consumers get exposed to psychological factors that result in changing their behavior. Due to the pandemic, an emotional threat of fear and anxiety that COVID-19 pandemic has carried forcing consumers to change their purchasing methods. This factor alone has pushed customers to switch from in-stores to online shopping to avoid human interaction while shopping. Those who feel a great deal of anxiety and consider the situation to be very unsafe will stay at home and shop online (Dubbelink et, al., 2021). On the other hand, customers who like to purchase in real stores must also become used to doing so online (Milaković, 2021). Customers may also show self-efficacy by accepting the prospect of online shopping, or by considering the pandemic as an opportunity to discover new means of ability to order and purchase online (Milaković, 2021). Based on various research, some literature suggested that in some cases, consumers tend to develop new needs based on internal or external factors. In this context according to Örs (2021), depending on the circumstances of the case, there must be a motive or a motivation presence, which is a driving force for the emergence of a problem (need) beyond the personal characteristics and perceived values, which are important factors in the purchasing of the consumer, and the realization of the action to solve this problem. In this case, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed consumers to develop new needs, caused by fear and anxiety. These two factors have been integrated in the consumer's consciousness as an immediate response to the unknown danger or emotional threat that might be implemented by the pandemic.

2.5.3.2. Purchase Habits

Crisis situations have the power to drastically alter our ideas and behaviors, as history has shown (Reeves et al., 2020). Although it is expected that habits or behavior will rebound, it is inescapable

that certain habits will end and vanish because customers discovered a more easy, economical, and accessible alternative as during natural catastrophes that occurred. For instance, digital adoption, such as online learning and commerce (Sheth, 2020). A study conducted by McKinsey (2020) in mid-March based on implemented surveys in 45 countries, aiming to understand the implications of COVID-19 pandemic on consumer sentiment and stated behavior. Turkey was included in the survey of this study. Based on the findings of the collected data between collected from April 7-9, 2020, during the "quarantine" period; the results showed that Turkish consumers were concerned about personal health, how long this crisis would last, and its impact on the economy too. The results indicated in the figure 2.4.3.2. below that 58% and 56% of consumers have strongly agreed to cut back and to be careful on how to spend money, while some percentages of consumers have expressed how COVID-19 has negatively impacted their financial situation. The pandemic has resulted in spending awareness amongst consumers at this point. Consumers became more financially aware about their spendings. This can result in a change of purchase habits.

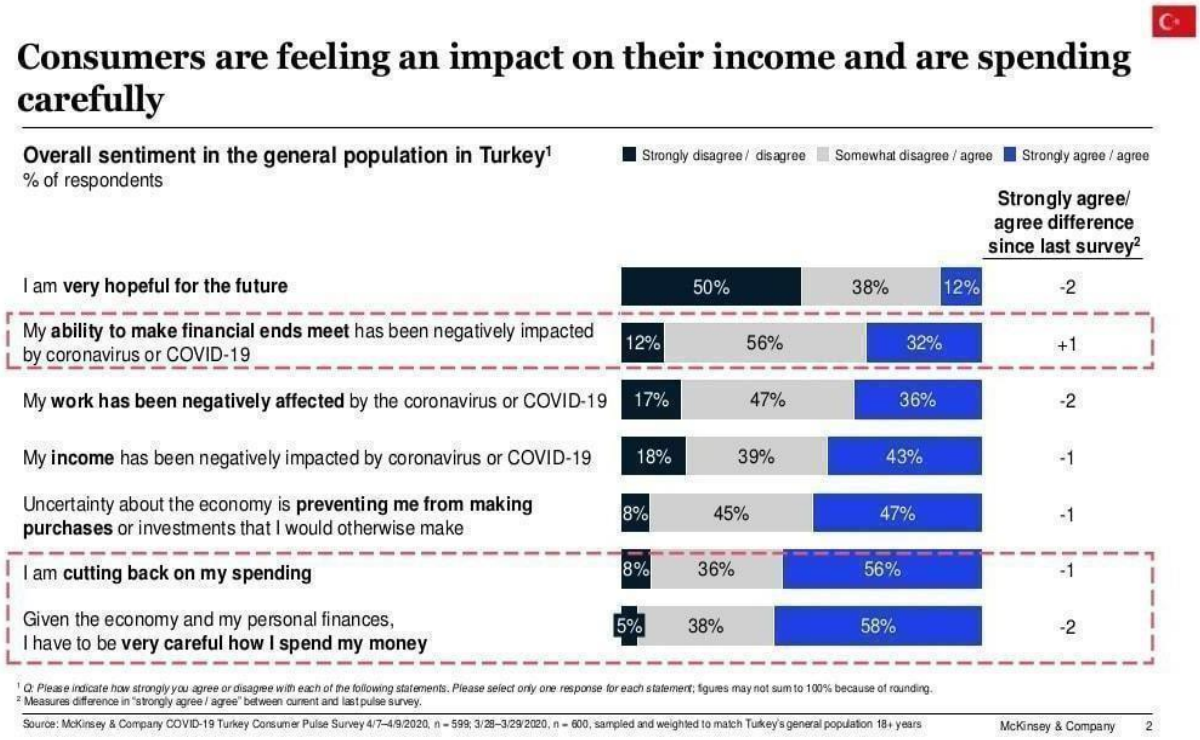


Figure 2.4.3.2. Turkish Consumer Sentiment During Coronavirus

Source (McKinsey, 2020)

Within the framework of this investigation, a considerable transition in consumption method occurred among Turkish consumers. According to the data shown in figure 2.4.3.2, Turkish consumers predict a shift in purchasing methods from 'in-store' to 'online' for the following items: housekeeping, basic living necessities, personal care goods, food, and entertainment. This buying behavioral shift peaked during the COVID-19 phase and is predicted to endure for at least a short length of time.

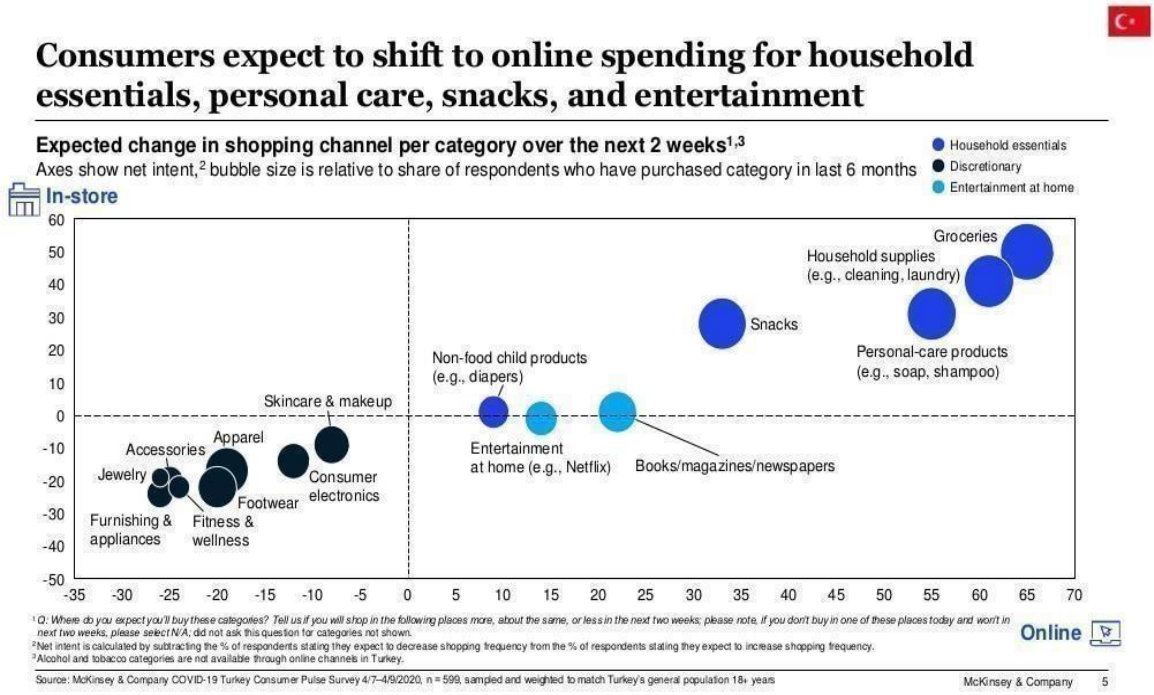


Figure 2.4.3.2. Turkish Consumer Sentiment During Coronavirus

Source (McKinsey, 2020)

As the globe attempts to transition away from a survival mode lifestyle, as mentioned in some research, some experts fear that the unexpected habits that have been imposed on consumers, the adjustment in consumer behavior, may be permanent along with lasting longer after the pandemic. Aside from the behavioral shift, there is another alteration to mention: the shopping method. One of the most visible changes in consumer behavior across the world has been in the way people shop. As the world embraced ecommerce, online grocery apps, and even social media platforms. In Turkey, for example, Trendyol and Hepsiburada are the most well-known digital commerce websites, while Yemeksepeti and Getir are the most popular online market applications. Furthermore, while the digital shift had a favorable influence on social levels by allowing individuals to retain distance and have less human connection in physical stores, some people

refused to utilize the online approach and chose to cling to their normal shopping attitude regardless of the scenario. For example, according to a McKinsey survey in Turkey, approximately 93% of Turkish consumers believed that it would take them up to more than two months to return to a normal situation following the pandemic; the adjustments to the situation may result in the loss of old habits as well as the adoption of new ones. The following graph depicts the relevant statistics:

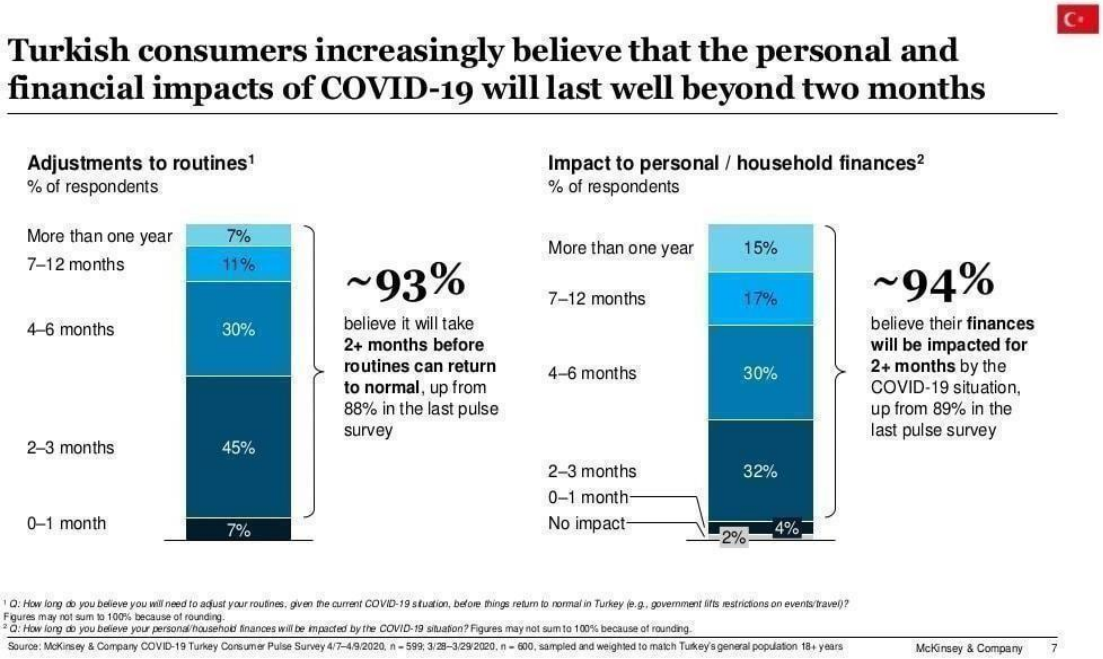


Figure 2.4.3.2. Turkish Consumer Sentiment During Coronavirus

Source (McKinsey, 2020)

At this point, it is undeniable to say the pandemic has an influence on buying habits. Consumers became more financially aware, more digital oriented when shopping, and shopping priorities have changed too.

2.5.3.3. Use of Social Media

Social media has always been present in consumers' lives. Amid the pandemic, social media has played an important role resulting in a transformation in the consumer's mindset, shopping, and consumption habits too. Social media users have changed from trying to be "perfect" in an Instagram post to being more realistic and less polished about how they lived during the pandemic. The unrestrained use of social media can play a factor in shifting consumer behavior towards

online shopping. Young adults are now most consumers who spend money online, which has an impact on how businesses must operate because they are more likely to shop through social media (Shopify, 2021). When talking about social media, it is also referable to social media marketing, which is a digital marketing strategy, as mentioned previously, that brands and marketers used it to reach their consumers online. Social media marketing aims at the creation of interactions with consumers in the digital settings where they already spend time; businesses can enhance their customer experience by analyzing customers and their conversations, (Evans, et. al, 2010). It is an undeniable fact that social media usage has increased since the beginning of the pandemic; people used social channels to get updated about the pandemic situation, or to get to know the new safety measures that should be followed, or simply to get entertained by scrolling through content. In addition, businesses turned to digital channels to keep in contact with their customers, and to promote their services starting the pandemic; social media provides businesses with a way to build brand recognition for their goods and services (Mason et al., 2021). According to Shopify's statistical study (2021), 54% of younger consumers who purchase from independent retailers discover brands via social media. Social media has transformed into a shopping point; for example, Instagram adjusted its platform with a "view shop" feature, where it can lead consumers directly to the website where they can purchase the product. As 28% of younger online shoppers said they purchased via social media (Shopify, 2021). At this point, small or big businesses had to adjust their marketing strategies to meet their customers' needs through social media channels by building awareness of their services and products using advertising and paid adsto reach a broader audience and to target more future customers. For instance, brands had to influence consumers by sharing valuable content that would influence them to either: search about the product, talk about the product with others, purchasing it, or to post about expressing post-purchase satisfaction. The excessive usage of social media during the pandemic might have an influence on the way or method consumers shopped: online shopping. During the pandemic, the most popular social media application has boosted is TikTok, becoming the world's most fast-growing social media platform in the world. It can be said that TikTok is considered as an effective advertising channel with a large customer reach and a long-term customer retention channel. This is an opportunity for advertisers and businesses to promote their products, (Long et al., 2022). The most known trend at that period was '#TikTokMadeMeBuyIt', where users post what they have bought thanks to

recommendations about products on the site, has been used 7 billion times, (BBC News, 2021). As it is now demonstrated that Tik Tok is a powerful social media tool for any brand to use to talk about a product or a service and let customers talk about it too. The power of social media and its usage has been seen as a transformational point in the way consumers shop now.

Turning to social media, not only for entertainment reasons, but also for e-commerce, shaping the online consumer behavior. According to the study made by eMarketer (2020), it was found that up to 51% of US adults are using social media at higher rates during the pandemic. The pandemic has altered the social media habits of consumers; the report has also showed the following statistics: In the early days of the outbreak, Instagram experienced a 70 percent rise in live streaming.

- YouTube usage jumped by 15.3%
- TikTok usage grew by 15.4 %

Social media has created endless opportunities for brands to keep connected with their online customers, and to promote their products regardless of the time of crisis such as the pandemic.

2.5.3.4. Online Purchase Behavior

With the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the online purchasing culture underwent fast transformation. As the internet evolves for different kinds of reasons, shopping also has been infected by the internet, that is when e-commerce, online shopping, has been introduced to the world. Online shopping is the process of purchasing products/services on the Internet, (Kütz, 2016). Online shopping has become an easy shopping method for people to purchase things: transferring from in-stores to virtual marketplace. This type of trade has become very popular nowadays for consumers to buy their products. In fact, online purchasing existed before the occurrence of the pandemic. People did buy products from online stores, websites, etc., however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has seen a pique. In Accenture's survey research (2020), it was found that digital commerce has also seen a boost as new consumers migrate online for grocery shopping – a rise that is likely to be sustained post-outbreak. Due to the difficulty of the situation where people had to face this deadly virus, they were asked to stay at home for strict safety measures so the virus spreading could get control of. Hence, this external threat which was imposed on people deviated their consumption priorities, motivations, and habits.

As an outcome, consumers established new habits, amplifying social and online purchasing trends that have been on the increase for years (Nosto, 2022). Based on the investigation made by Rahmanov et al (2021); the authors have developed six stages of the changes occurred on consumer behavior starting since the pandemic:

1. Stage 1: Consumers have begun purchasing things that will aid in immune preservation during quarantine: vitamins, different supplements, and so on.
2. Stage 2: Consumers focused on the basics. They focused more on health and protection products such as disinfectants and face masks.
3. Stage 3: Begin actively preparing for quarantine by purchasing basic needs such as food, cold medications, and personal care goods. The stage is marked by a rise in consumer baskets.
4. Stage 4: Consumers are at home, due to the strict safety measures, and the role of online purchasing has grown.
5. Stage 5: As a result of growing costs and shortages in several categories of commodities, consumers have become more prices sensitive.
6. Stage 6: People have returned to their normal routines, but the habits formed during the quarantine have remained (including the tendency for online shopping), in favor of regular and active social contact in the digital world.

In fact, the previously mentioned consumer purchase behavior stages can reflect upon the increase of online purchase behavior or the sudden switch to it. In the Nosto (2022) survey, their findings have found that 67% of consumers say their online purchasing has increased since the start of the pandemic, meanwhile 27 % of respondents say their online shopping has increased a lot. In the same context, 91 % revealed that they're likely to continue their online purchasing in the future, in the post-pandemic era. This reflects on the concept that the pandemic might have shifted the consumer's purchasing behavior from physical purchasing behavior to online purchasing behavior.

2.5.3.5. Consumers' Perception of Life

The turbulence that the pandemic has caused to the world has created a world of uncertainty, that it is hard to predict what is going to happen next, but it can change the way individuals/consumers see, think, or purchase. Therefore, the perception of life that once individuals/consumers have shared may not be as same as it is now. Beside the created memories of the quarantine period that

will be transmitted from one generation to another, this might be the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in a short time. However, the post- pandemic era, a non-negotiable fact that this virus has a deep long-term impact on individuals. Shaikh (2020) argues that after the COVID-19 pandemic, there could be permanent changes in consumer behavior accompanying changes in marketing strategies as a result. To understand how the pandemic has changed individuals/consumers' perception, before the pandemic, individuals/consumers have had a simple view of life; their basic needs such as food, clothing, or housing were met. Those essentials were available and accessible. However, this all has changed with the occurrence of the pandemic. In fact, as discussed in the previous subchapters, the stocking and the panicking purchasing made by consumers happened because of their fear of the non-availability of those necessities anymore. Durmaz and Dağ (2021) have discussed that the crisis times are those in which the most basic requirements, such as food, housing, and health care, are met. Consumers, both employed and unemployed are frequently concerned with fundamental elements such as food, housing, and health. As a result, consumer spending moves from thoughtless impulse purchases to purchases of existential necessities. In the post-pandemic era, all of what had happened during the quarantine may imply some long-term shifts, as mentioned previously. According to Deloitte's Insights research (2021) has stated that in the post-pandemic era, the world is witnessing the following changes:

1. Remote working: The future of work might be a combination of in-person, remote, and hybrid labor.
2. Consumers are more likely to engage in remote working, online shopping, and usage of streaming services more than they did before the pandemic. As they are keen on traveling more and eating out more.
3. Economical threat: It is more likely that if the economy does not heal from the pandemic, individuals with a low income may find difficulties to spend on health insurance, retirement,
   and transportation too.
4. Consumers' purchase behavior is changing stockpiling goods and accumulating them are expected to be decreasing, and the COVID-19 threat is not imposing any more danger on individuals because of the vaccination process.

Consequently, as much as the pandemic has caused a psychological effect on the world, sudden behavioral changes in consumption ways as a short term that does not mean that its impact would not last for a long term.

2.5.4. Overview of Consumer Purchase Behavior in Pre, During, and Post- Pandemic

This subchapter will introduce a brief overview of consumer purchasing behavior during three periods: before the pandemic phase, pandemic phase, and post-pandemic phase, as one of this research's objectives. This overview combines two studies; a background study gathered three theories related to consumer behavior analyzing the consumer in three periods as mentioned before. It was examined by Satish et al. (2021). The second study is much of a practical approach inspected by Kirk, and Rifkin (2020), of consumer behavior during three phases: reacting, coping, and adapting. This combination of both pieces of research will add to this literature as well as the research purpose of this study; to further explain the journey aspect of the consumer's purchasing behavior and how it is changing due to the pandemic. The figure 2.4.4 represents the conceptual consumer behavior in the pre, during and post pandemic, designed by Satish et al (2021), it will guide the analysis of this subchapter.

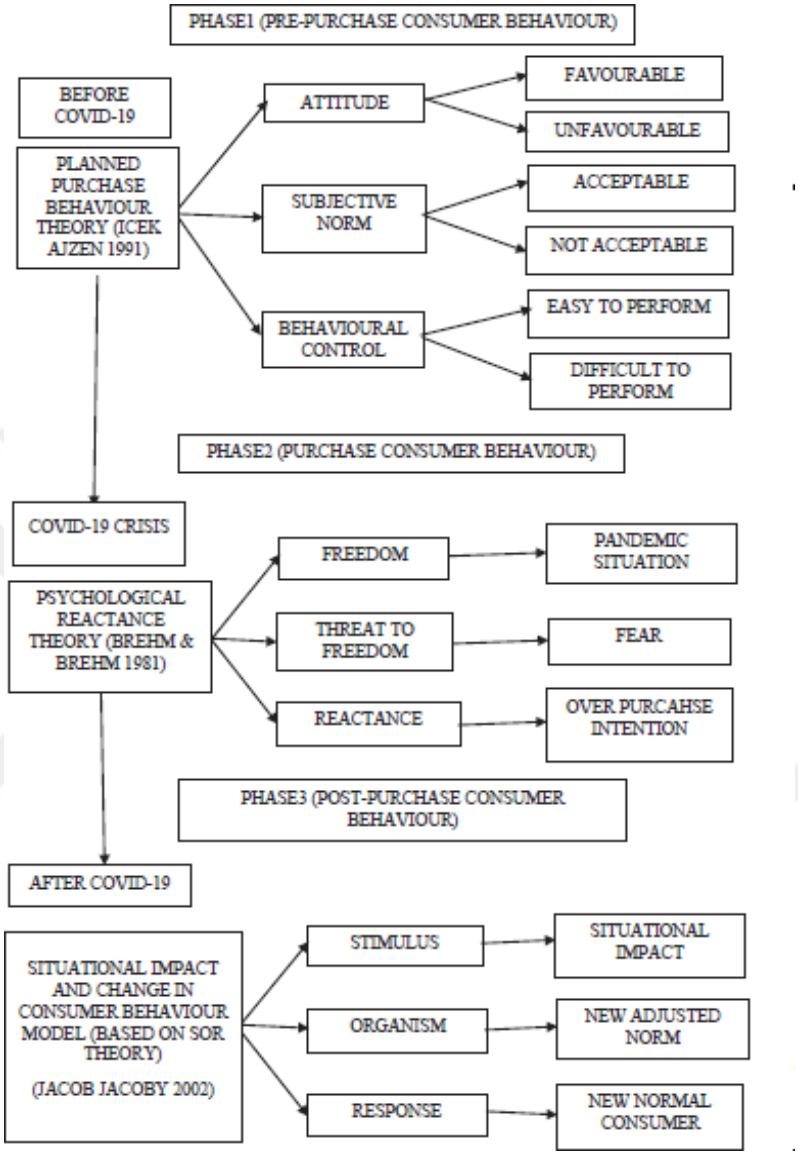


Figure 2.5.4. Conceptual Model of Consumer Behavior in The Pre, During, and Post-Pandemic
(Source: Satish et al.,2021)

2.5.4.1. Before Pandemic

This phase represents the pre-purchase consumer behavior, which is the period before the time of crisis. Based on the literature made by Satish et al. (2021), it was found that the planned purchase behavior theory by Ajzen in 1991 is the most applicable to describe this phase. The theory of planned behavior is an extension of the theory of reasoned action. It is the most objective model of theory in understanding consumer behavior which was used in numerous research concerning consumer purchase behavior. According to the theory's observation, Ajzen aimed to give a better

apprehension of an individual's behavior and social values. In addition, this cognitive-based-theory puts forward the comprehension of an individual's action of certain behavior. A consumer's behavior can be determined by variables or norms which can lead him to perform a certain action such as personal attitude, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control, as all can be related to the individual's intention. For a better understanding, we will tackle each norm individually. Initially, personal attitude; refers to our attitude towards a particular behavior. It is the sum of all our knowledge, attitudes, and prejudices, positive and negative that we think of when we consider the behavior, (WEB_7, 2021). For instance, a person's attitude towards shopping might be that shopping is good, it enhances the mood, it makes the person to feel good, meanwhile, it is tiring, and it takes a lot of time and energy, and the person can spend more money. This leads consumers to internally start making the purchasing decision. Secondly, the subjective norm is the second determinant of the theory. It represents other people's views on that certain attitude or behavior. It is not what other people think but our perception of others', (WEB_7, 2021), in this case, people's perception towards shopping.

The last norm is the perception of behavioral control or perceived behavioral control. This is the extent to which we believe we can control our behavior, (WEB_7, 2021). This control can be determined by our knowledge and recognition of our internal factors like determination and ability, and external factors such as resources and support. The possibility of behavioral achievement must, in part, be determined by the opportunities and resources that are accessible to a person, Ajzen (1991). As discussed in the theory, our perception of behavioral control has two effects: it affects our intentions to behave in a certain way i.e., the more control we think we have over our behavior, the stronger our intention to perform the behavior. It also affects our behavior directly; if we perceive that we have a high level of control we will try harder and longer to succeed, (WEB_7, 2021). To understand the consumer's behavior based on this theory before COVID-19, Satish et al. (2021) observed that planned purchase behavior theory, on the one hand, considers only the impact of personal, social, and cultural factors on consumer behavior. The authors have taken the attitude, subjective norm, and perceived control behavior under investigation. They have described the attitude as the subjective evaluation of the consumer in performing the intention as it analyzes the outcome of the actual behavior, (Satish et al., 2021). It is also mentioned that subjective norms are the social pressure that a consumer encounters while deciding on purchasing goods. The

consumer's beliefs vary with the influence of norms and standards followed by peers and social groups, (Satish et al., 2021). In other words, consumers tend to get influenced by others while deciding on purchasing items. Perceived behavior control is the individual access to necessary resources such as skills, opportunities, and time to engage or perform a particular behavior. As this explains the alternation in decisions in which the consumer makes during purchasing from time to time such as favorable vs. unfavorable, acceptable vs. not acceptable, or easy to perform vs. difficult to perform. It was also argued that, in the light of COVID-19, the theory of planned behavior is not efficient to predict the consumer's behavior in this case. Even though this theory is the most relevant to the personal, cultural, and social factors which may predict the consumer purchase behavior, it would not be relevant to ascertain and predict consumer behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic situation, (Satish et al., 2021).

As the understanding of consumer purchasing behavior journey, the next two phases during pandemic and post-pandemic will be examined based on the conceptual framework and other literature that studied consumer purchase behavior during and post-pandemic.

2.5.4.2. During Pandemic

To begin to understand the journey or the mechanism of consumer behavior during a pandemic; Kirk and Rifkin (2020) suggested that there are three main stages consumers have gone through since the pandemic has occurred; react, cope, and adapt. Nonetheless, during the pandemic phase, the react and coping stage will be the focus of the analysis. The occurrence of the pandemic happened on 11th March 2020 when the World Health Organization announced the global emergency state addressing people to stay at home by applying strict safety measures to control the situation. At this point, people entered the react phase. Consumers became aware of the danger that may threaten them as many emotions of frustration, fear, anxiety, and panic took place in the consumer's psychological mindset, creating the following notion of emotional threat that the COVID-19 virus imposed on them. As an outcome, consumers began to be 'panic buying', and 'hoarding shopping. In fact, according to Nistorescu and Puiu (2009) consumer purchase behavior tends to change during difficult, stressful moments of a crisis because of a change in the perceived levels of risk if crises were directly linked to risk. Moreover, the sudden inflected emotional impact has caused so much frustration that as a result of the widespread panic buying, many supermarket shelves were bare., (David et, al., 2020).

From a theoretical perspective, Satish et al (2021) viewed that Psychological Reactance Theory (PRT) is the projection of the react phase. This theory was proposed by Brehm in 1966 stating that freedom of behavior is an important, beneficial, and pervasive aspect of people's lives; when that freedom is threatened, they become motivated to restore it Brehm (1966). The most important factors on which this theory is established are three components: freedom, threats to freedom, and reactance and freedom restoration. In this context, when one's freedom is threatened; a sense of motivation will be generated to restore the threatened freedom, and this is the core element of psychological reactance theory. And this has been projected in the react phase, where the pandemic has caused an emotional threat to consumers which they felt their freedom is being menaced.

Primarily, freedom is the first variable; it asserts that psychological reactance theory comes from the assumption that people have sets of free behaviors in which they can engage in the present or future, (Brehm, 1966). There are two conditions in which people consider freedom in certain behaviors; the first one is when there is an awareness of the freedom, and the second is capability, which means when people feel that they can validate it. The second variable is threats to freedom. It comes from the assumption that freedom restriction is aversive (Brehm, 1966), and creates a motivation to restore the lost freedom (i.e., psychological reactance). For instance, threats can be in any form; if they threaten a person's freedom, then it is a threat. In this case, the pandemic situation is envisaged as a threat to consumers; where a set of contradicted emotions were imposed on the consumer; at this level, this will lead us to the final component, which is reactance and freedom restoration. This is when consumers tend to have this impeccable intention of over-purchasing. For example, the case of panic purchasing. Not to forget to mention, not only the fear of the pandemic has caused this panic status on consumers, but social media has also played a crucial role in provoking more turbulent emotions. During the COVID-19 crisis, monitoring and coverage by the media were incessant, increasing the level of perceived risk and finally causing consumers to immediately change their behaviors, (Jones, 2020). In this context, previous studies have found that the fear of an unknown deadly infectious virus can have a severe psychological effect on persons, leading to an increase in the anxiety and stress of individuals, (WEB_5, 2020). In most countries, an uncontrollable behavior of consumers is called, panic buying. The term "panic buying" occurs when customers are found to be stocking up on goods to avoid the effects of a possible future shortage, (WEB_6, 2020), who added that panic buying is the practice of

making massive purchases of consumer items in response to an impending threat or natural disaster, (Yuen et al., 2020). Consequently, a purchase occurred, and the shelves of supermarkets were often emptied after the sudden spike of COVID-19 positive cases in the later winter and spring of 2020 (WEB_6, 2020). Within these circumstances, it is crucial to say that imposed psychological factors can play a major role in leaving an emotional impact on consumers, which can lead them to react instantly to external threats by, in this case, panic buying, hoarding, or even changing their shopping methods like online shopping for instance. Consequently, consumers attempted to regain their lost freedom. According to Satish et al. (2021)'s reasoning for the theory based on the COVID- 19 situation, the authors have seen that this theory would be more pertinent to estimating consumer behavior during the COVID-19 situation because it focuses on the effects of threats on consumers' freedom and consumer actions to restore that freedom. As the theory accounts for the effect of psychological factors such as threat, fear, and anxiety on consumers, it fails to project the long-term effect too.

During the second stage, cope; consumers mainly tried to exert control in other domains, subconsciously changing to new purchasing behaviors over time. The coping stage is divided between during pandemic, and post-pandemic. During the first half, consumers were trying to cope with the new situation during the pandemic. It was noticeable that a major spike occurred in e-commerce or online shopping since the COVID-19 pandemic happened. Consumers have shifted their shopping methods from in-stores to online shopping during quarantine as it has been the suitable choice to respect safety measurements. People have been forced to live differently, and as a result, they are also shopping differently and spending their time differently, (Forbes, 2021). Consumers became more like online consumers.

2.5.4.3. Post-Pandemic

After august 2020 when the global lockdown has been seen lifted in most countries until the present time, people seemed to be coping with the new situation; the second half of the 'coping' process. The old aspects of life before the pandemic have been re-integrated or re-introduced again in this new form of lifestyle shaped by the pandemic during the lockdown. By analyzing the key factors influencing consumer behavior before and during the COVID- 19 situation, the extent of change in consumer behavior and pattern can be observed and determined, (Satish et al., 2021). This is when phase three or what is called post-pandemic consumer behavior is introduced. The authors

viewed that the most accurate theory which can predict consumer behavior in the post-pandemic era is the stimulus-organism-response theory or SOR theory. The reason for selecting this theory is that it focuses on how situational stimuli can cause a long-lasting impact on consumer behavior and purchase pattern. It considers the changes in the environmental factors and assumes that the consumer buying behavior will change over time with the change in the environment, (Satish et al., 2021).

Fundamentally, this theory's concept of the environmental stimulus (S) will result in an emotional response (O) stimulating a behavioral response (R), (Satish et al, 2021). To explain this theory, stimulus (S) consists of the environment as encountered by the individual at a particular moment in time (Jacoby, 2002). Based on the study case, the stimulus is the COVID-19 pandemic itself, imposing a situational impact on all consumers. Stimuli alter the consumer's mental and organismic states changing the consumer's approach and behavior. It consists of the external environment, which could be perceived, processed, and interpreted by the consumer (Satish et al., 2021). The organism has been described as the realm where we subconsciously process incoming stimuli, internally activated stimuli, or both, (Jacoby, 2002). Initially, an organism creates a particular responsive behavior in a consumer and is responsible for stimulating the formulation of purchase intention, (Anisimova et al., 2019). The authors have called this organism a "new adjusted norm"; where consumers are they tend to build a new way of coping with the situation. This is where the last factor comes along, response. Response to the stimuli depends upon the situational descriptors. The three situational descriptors, that is, pleasure, arousal, and dominance, capture the emotional responses to an environmental stimulus, (Satish et al. 2021). As a reaction to the COVID-19 situation, a new normal consumer will be born, based on those external circumstances. As further matters, the transition between the coping and the adapting phases has shown that consumers have changed the way they purchase during this period, as these two phases may quite hold similar meanings. Reeves et al. (2020), discussed that pandemics and any sort of crisis may cause long- term imprint on consumers; major disruptions can cause fundamental shifts in social attitudes and beliefs, which pave the way for new policies, ways of working, and consumer needs and behaviors, some of which persist in the long run.

This is when the adapting phase happens. Following the same context, consumers have relied on using online services such as online shopping for food, hygiene supplies, clothing, and daily

groceries to decrease social contacts and to prevent themselves from going to supermarkets, pharmacies, as we can already see significant shock-driven shifts in purchasing patterns, (Reeves et al., 2020). According to the investigation made by Reeves et al. (2020); the data has shown that purchasing patterns in the US have shifted in groceries and pharmacy products have increased by more than 50% compared to pre-crisis levels, and online shopping on Amazon has also increased. The adapting phase has introduced the new normal, new norm, or a new lifestyle to the world, where nearly every aspect of life had to change to suit the situation. As consumers adapt to the new normal, even some of the worst moments of the pandemic may bring about long-lasting positive outcomes, (Kirk, Rifkin (2020). This new normal tends to be introducing or creating a new life perception or a new system integrated into the consumer's life.

2.5.5. The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Purchase Behavior During the Pandemic

Social media marketing (SMM), which provides a variety of techniques to target customers more efficiently, should receive special attention while examining the situation of digital marketing in the COVID-19 epidemic, (Dubbelink & Herrando, 2021). Digital marketing platforms including email marketing, social media, online advertising, and mobile networks can enhance the consumer shopping experience by simplifying the ordering, buying, and paying for of goods to save customers' time and money. (Qazzafi, 2019). In this context, digital marketing has a massive influence on consumer’s purchasing habits, under the influence of social media or online advertising, even before the pandemic arrival. Brands and marketers tended to use this marketing strategy to apply their marketing activities through their online channels, to remain in direct contact with their target audience, who are potential customers. Through a variety of channels, including email marketing, online advertising, social media marketing, and mobile marketing, digital marketing enables advertisers to contact consumers with their products (Qazzafi, 2019). By the arrival of the pandemic, as mentioned before, many businesses have entered the state of hibernation where they have remained inactive for a while, and that is when they have turned into using different digital marketing strategy such as social media marketing, online advertising. Not only to reach their potential customers, but to build an online community for their brands that would play an inevitable part in increasing their sales through online channels. Because of this sudden

lifestyle changing event, the pandemic, brands had to come up with a quick alternative to save the date. Businesses may improve their customer experience by studying customers and their interactions, as SMM aims to create engagements with consumers in the digital settings where they already spend time (Evans, el. at, 2010). In addition to this, According to Yazdanparast et al. (2016), the importance of having an online presence has grown because of the pandemic, and businesses can develop online brand equity by cultivating a favorable perception of their brands through various types of customer involvement.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, information about the purpose and importance of the study, sampling, research model and hypotheses, measurement instruments, data analysis and limitations were mentioned, analyzed, and written. The questionnaire development is discussed in the data collection part. Lastly, sampling and data analysis methods will be introduced.

3.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.1.1. Main Objective

Due to the pandemic, businesses had to close, and consumers were pushed to remain at home. During this period, businesses had to adopt new marketing strategies; meanwhile consumers had to create new purchasing habits during the first global lockdown period, such as online shopping; online purchase behavior. In addition, digital marketing has played a crucial role in altering consumer behavior, through social media. The main objective of this thesis is to investigate the impact of the pandemic on digital marketing, focusing more on consumer purchasing behavior; distinguishing the differences in purchasing habits, in three significant periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic, along with the influence of social media, as an indication of digital marketing interference. In other words, the study aimed at exploring how the old purchasing habits during the pandemic has affected consumer's online purchasing habits when using social media for digital marketing purposes.

3.1.2. Sub-Objectives

The sub objectives of this research thesis are classified as the following:

1. What is the difference of consumer online purchasing behavior between three periods: pre-during-post pandemic?

2. Has the pandemic posed an impact on digital marketing through social media usage? Did it contribute to changing consumers' online purchase behavior?
3. Has the emotional threat imposed by COVID-19 pandemic changed the consumer purchasing behavior since the pandemic's beginning?
4. Has the emotional threat imposed by COVID-19 pandemic changed the consumer purchasing behavior since the pandemic's beginning?
5. Has the arrival of the pandemic created a new perception of life to consumers' purchasing behavior in the post pandemic?

3.2. RESEARCH METHOD

To meet the research's objectives, the study used a quantitative methodology. To collect information, a survey was carried out online. There were 28 questions in the survey form. Based on the research model the survey tried to collect information serving four topics. The first part of collected information was about consumer's emotional threat and fear towards COVID-19. Purchase habits and intentions along with online purchase are covered in the next two sections. In the following section, social media usage is included. As the last part of the survey contained basic demographic variables like age, gender, education, marital level. The following tables represent the factors or the variables, explanations, the selected questions which have served this research profoundly, and the source.

3.2.1. Emotional Threat

Because of the pandemic, COVID-19, sentiments of fear and anxiousness increased during the start of the global epidemic, resulting in panic buying and changes in consumer purchasing patterns and intentions. This component can assess how COVID-19 has psychologically influenced consumers to change their usual purchase patterns and intents to adapt to new ones. The table 3.2.1 below presents the related questions.

Table 3.2.1. Emotional Threat

Statements	**Source(s)**
When the coronavirus was heard globally, how much of a threat did you think the coronavirus posed to you?	Biroğul (2021)
Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements: -I am most afraid of coronavirus-19. -When watching news and stories about coronavirus-19 on social media, I become nervous or anxious -It makes me uncomfortable to think about coronavirus-19 -I am afraid of losing my life because of coronavirus-19	Örs (2021)

3.2.2. Purchase Habits

The following section tackles the consumer's shopping frequency usage online and offline, covering consumer's shopping preferences. For example, purchase techniques, regardless of whether offline or online, device usage, and shopping channel application. To study the variation in consumer frequency and preferences throughout three time periods, the scale of some of the previously mentioned questions is shown in table 3.2.2 below.

Table 3.2.2 Purchase Habits

Statements	**Source(s)**
Have you ever shopped online?	Turan (2011)
What is your preferred mode of shopping?	Matz (2021)
How often did you shop online before the pandemic?	Biroğul (2021)

3.2.3. Online Purchase Behavior

The questions in this part are designed to identify customers' online purchasing behaviors, levels, and intentions before, during, and after the epidemic. This component will identify changes imposed on consumers because of COVID-19, as well as how their motives for purchasing/not purchasing online have changed since the pandemic's arrival, with an emphasis on the three pre-, during-, and post-pandemic periods. The questions were chosen to fulfill the purpose of this research, as stated in table 3.2.3 below.

Table 3.2.3 Online Purchase Habits

Statements	**Source(s)**
Which channel did you use most for your online shopping?	Matz (2021)
Which products would you buy more online before, during, and post-pandemic? (Please select up to 5 product groups in each period)	Biroğul (2021)
Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for NOT purchasing these products through online channels before the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.)	Biroğul (2021)
Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for purchasing these products through online channels during the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.)	Biroğul (2021) Javadi (2021)
Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for purchasing these products through online channels post-the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.) Please evaluate the following statements based on your online purchase level now: -I do make more online purchases compared to the pre-pandemic period. -I do use online channels more compared to pre-pandemic period	Biroğul (2021) Javadi (2012)

3.2.4. Use of Social Media

The section that follows discusses social media usage as an example of digital marketing practices. As stated in the sub-hypothesis section, social media can play a significant role in influencing customer purchase behavior during COVID-19 and even now. In this section, the questions listed in table 3.2.4 below will assess the following factors: social media usage behavior, post-purchase satisfaction items, product identification (store) information search items, and product purchase items. The questions are crucial within the context of the timeline: before the epidemic and thereafter.

Table 3.2.4 Use of Social Media

Statements	**Source(s)**
What type of social media do you use the most?	Paiman (2021)
How long do you spend on social media in 24 hours?	Paiman (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you used social media to identify needed products before the COVID- 19 pandemic.	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media to identify needed products:	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you used social media to gather information to compare products before the COVID-19 pandemic	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social mediato gather information to compare products	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you used social media to purchase products before the COVID-19 pandemic.	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media to purchase products	Mason et al. (2021)
Please rate the degree to which you used social media as a medium to express post-purchase satisfaction or dissatisfactionbefore the COVID-19 pandemic.	Mason et al. (2021)

Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media as a medium to express post- purchase satisfaction or dissatisfaction.	Mason et al. (2021)

3.2.5. Consumers' Perception of Life

COVID-19 is expected to bring about a variety of changes in people' lives, with some adopting a new lifestyle pattern. In fact, it is impossible to dispute that many people's lifestyles have altered because of COVID-9; however, this differs from person to person. Because of all the effects that COVID-19 has had on consumers' perception of life, new needs, consumption mindset etc. The table 3.2.5 below indicates all the related questions.

Table 3.2.5 Consumers' Perception of Life

Statements	**Source**
"I will continue my online shopping in the same way in the post-pandemic period." Do you agree with the statement?	Biroğul (2021)
Please evaluate the following statements: -My lifestyle has changed with the pandemic. -My changing lifestyle brought new needs with it -After the pandemic, I needed products that I do not usually use	Örs (2021)

3.3. SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1. Sampling

In this research, a convenience sampling method has been chosen and applied in which the samples were selected because they are accessible and easy to recruit, also this method of sampling does not require too much time, or money. The selected sample includes a variety of people who are either students, full time, or part-time employees, or unemployed with different genders like female or males or prefer not to say, along with different educational, marital levels.

3.3.2. Data Collection

The research data of this study is collected via Google Docs Survey program. The questions were prepared and shared on various social media platforms like Instagram, and LinkedIn. The questionnaire was also sent via email to the university's administration to different staff members and students too, targeting Turkish consumers: as a consumer base. Data collection process started on January 10th until February 10th. The collected data was uploaded to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 platform for making the necessary analysis and evaluation.

3.4. RESEARCH MODEL

The conceptual model of the study, shown in figure 3.4, represents the dependent and the independent variables of this research. The research's hypothesis of the study was developed focusing on the model seen below.

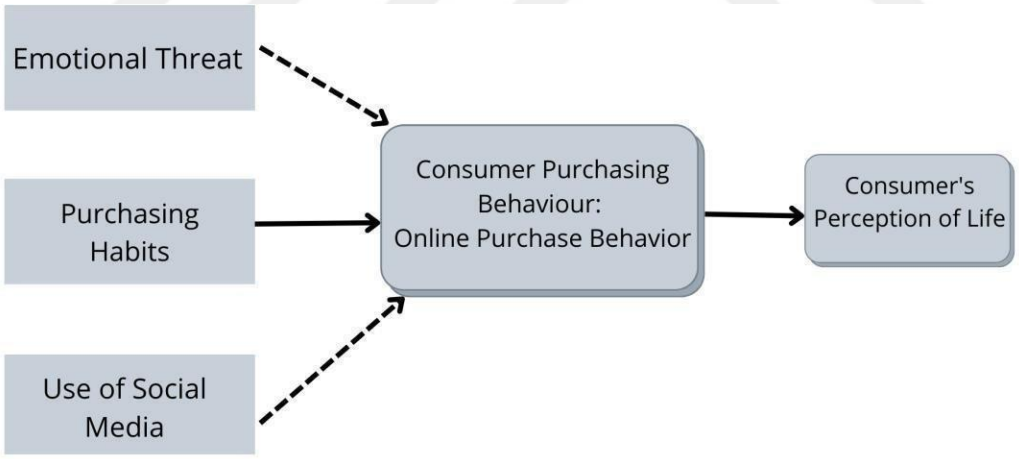


Figure 3.4. Research Model

3.5. HYPOTHESIS

According to the research model above in the figure 5, the hypotheses are as the following:

Table 5. Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statement
H1	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic).
H2	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (During Pandemic).
H3	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic).
H4	Purchase habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic).
H5	Purchase habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (During Pandemic).
H6	Purchase habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic).
H7	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic).
H8	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior(During Pandemic).
H9	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic).
H10	Online purchase behavior has a relationship with consumers' perception of life (Before Pandemic).
H11	Online purchase behavior has a relationship with consumers' perception of life (During Pandemic).
H12	Online Purchase Behavior has a relationship with consumers' perception of life (After Pandemic).
H13	Emotional threat has a direct impact on online purchase behavior.
H14	Use of social media has a direct impact on online purchase behavior.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The following chapter will show the analysis of the data collected through the given survey. It will be designed as the following: the analysis of demographic questions; age, gender, occupation, educational, and marital status. Then, reliability tests and simple linear regression will be tested based on the hypothesis type. Finally, the hypotheses will be analyzed along graphics designed from the questionnaire for further insights about the research's objectives.

4.1. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPENTS

In this part, table 4.1 represents the general results of the participants' demographic results. Use of social media is also included in the table. Each demographic variable has its own analysis and a graphic for better demonstration.

Table 4.1. Demographic Analysis of The Participants

Variables	*M*	*SD*	*f*	*%*
Age (years)				
Below 18	-	-	30	9.6
18-25	-	-	170	54.3
26-34	-	-	72	23
35-44	-	-	26	8.3
Above 45	-	-	15	4.8
Gender				
Male	-	-	85	29
Female	-	-	228	71
Marital status				
Single	-	-	262	83
Married	-	-	51	17

Qualification				
High School	-	-	50	17
Bachelors	-	-	130	41.5
Masters	-	-	103	34
Doctorate	-	-	24	7
Occupation				
Student	-	-	164	52
Employed	-	-	116	37
Unemployed	-	-	23	7
Other	-	-	10	04
Have you ever shopped online?				
Yes	-	-	294	93
No	-	-	19	07
How long do you spend time on social media in 24 hours a day?				
One to two hours	-	-	67	21
Two to three hours	-	-	85	27
More than three hours	-	-	161	52
What type of social media you use the most?				
Facebook	-	-	40	13
Instagram	-	-	145	46
WhatsApp	-	-	41	13
YouTube	-	-	34	11
LinkedIn	-	-	5	1
Messenger	-	-	15	4.8
TikTok	-	-	23	7.3
Snapchat	-	-	10	3.2

Note. M=Mean; SD=Standard Deviation; f=frequency; %=percentage

4.1.1. Age

The table 4.1.1 below represents the age variable data distribution of the questionnaire.

Table 4.1.1. Age

Age	Percentage	Participants
Below 18	9.6%	30
18-25	54.3%	170
26-34	23%	72
35-45	8.3%	26
Above 45	4.8%	15
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

In terms of age, the participants were distributed. Most of the participants group aged between 18-25 represents (54.3%) of the total number of participants. The second highest age group ranges between 26-34 with (23%). It can be concluded, due to the circumstances of the pandemic, that young people or young adults who are 18 years old and older are possibly more likely to use social media more and do online shopping during the pandemic, and post-pandemic. The figure 4.1.1 is a graphic representation of the age variable for more graphical illustration.

Figure 4.1.1. Age

4.1.2. Gender

The table 4.1.2 below represents the gender variable data distribution of the questionnaire.

Gender	Percentage	Participants
Male	29%	85
Female	71%	228
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

In terms of gender, the data is distributed, logically. The results show that females are 71%, and Male represent 29%. The figure 4.1.2 is a graphic representation of the gender variable for more graphical illustration.

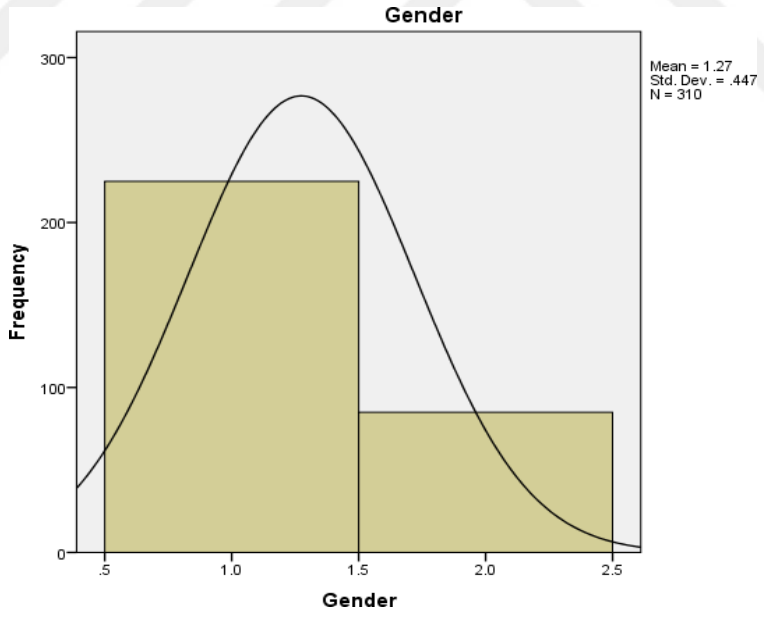


Figure 4.1.2. Gender

4.1.3. Marital Status

The table 4.1.3 below represents the marital status variable data distribution of the questionnaire.

Table 4.1.3. Marital Status

Marital Status	Percentage	Participants
Single	83%	262
Married	17%	51
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

In terms of marital status, the questionnaire data consists of single people and other participants are married with only 17%. It is fair to say that, based on the age group, that young adults are mostly single, and this can reflect on their purchasing behavior, more social media usage: less responsibility, more up to date with the latest social media trends. Their purchase behavior can be changed. The figure 4.1.3 is a graphic representation of marital status variables for more graphical illustration.

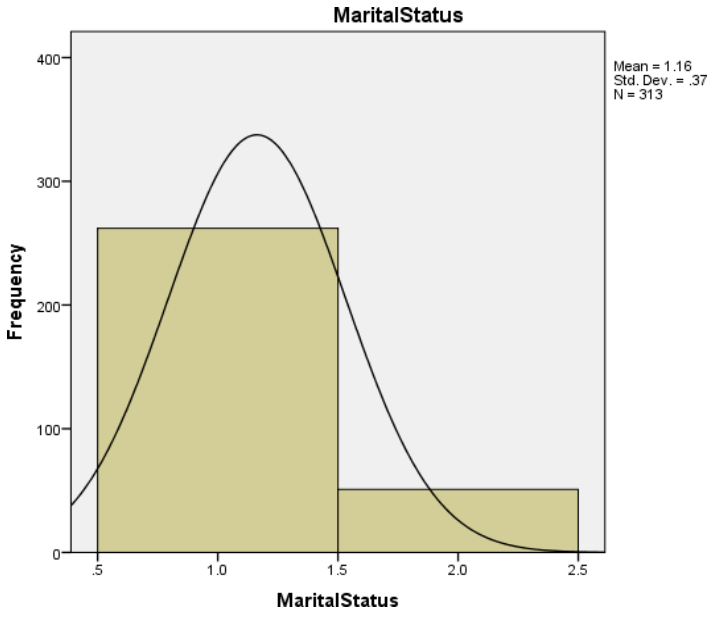


Figure 4.1.3. Marital Status

4.1.4. Educational Qualifications

The table 4.1.4 below represents the Educational Qualifications variable data distribution of the questionnaire. Most participants are at least with a bachelor's degree level representing 41% of the total participants' percentage. 34% hold a master's degree or at a master's degree level. The participants who are below 18 years old form 17% of the educational level. At last, 08% hold a PhD or Doctorate. The figure 4.1.4 is a graphic representation of marital status variables for more graphical illustration.

Table 4.1.4 Educational Qualifications

Education Qualifications	Percentage	Participants
High School	17%	50
Bachelors	41%	130
Masters	34%	103
Doctorate	08%	24
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

The figure 4.1.4 is a graphic representation of marital status variables for more graphical illustration.

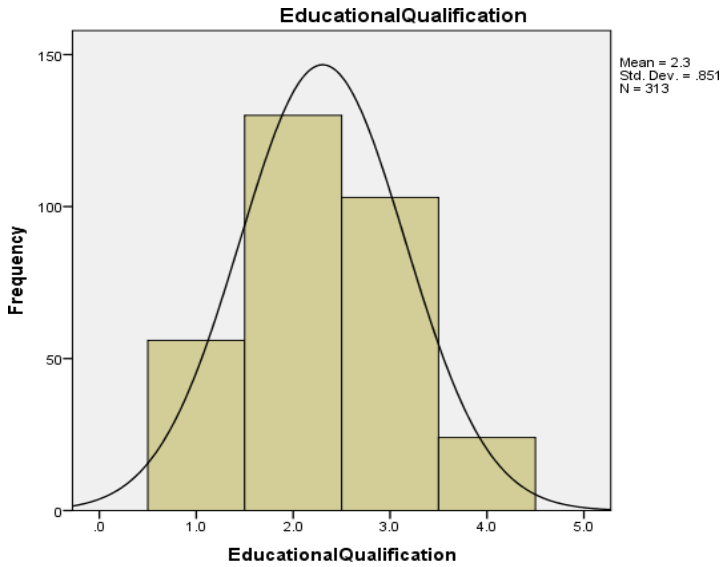


Figure 4.1.4 Educational Qualifications

4.1.5. Occupation Status

The table 4.1.5 below represents the occupation variable data distribution of the survey.

Table 4.1.5 Occupation

Occupation Status	Percentage	Participants
Student	52%	164
Employed	37%	116
Unemployed	07%	23
Student	04%	10
Other	52%	164
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

In terms of occupation status, the results show that most of the participants are students representing 52% and 37% are employed. The figure 4.1.5 is a graphic representation of occupation status variables for more graphical illustration.

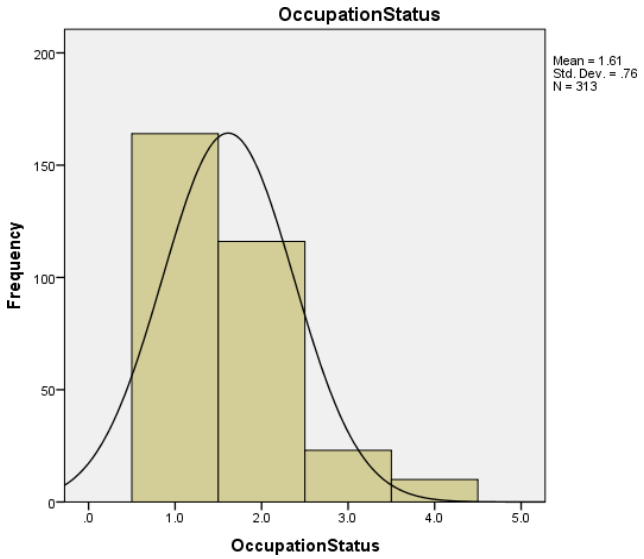


Figure 4.1.5 Occupation Status

4.2. ONLINE PURCHASE BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANTS

This sub-chapter aims to identify the percentage of current online purchase behavior of the respondents. The table 4.2 below indicates the percentage distribution of the participants.

Table 4.2 Online Purchase Behavior

Online Purchase Behavior	Percentage	Participants
Current Online Shoppers	93%	292
Non-Online Shoppers	07%	19
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

Based on the distribution table, the percentage of the current online shoppers is highly significant by 93%. Meanwhile, non-online shoppers hold only 07% of the entire participant group. In fact, this reveals that participants still preserve an online purchase behavior in post- pandemic. The figure 4.2 is a graphic representation of the “Online Purchase Behavior” variable for more graphical illustration.

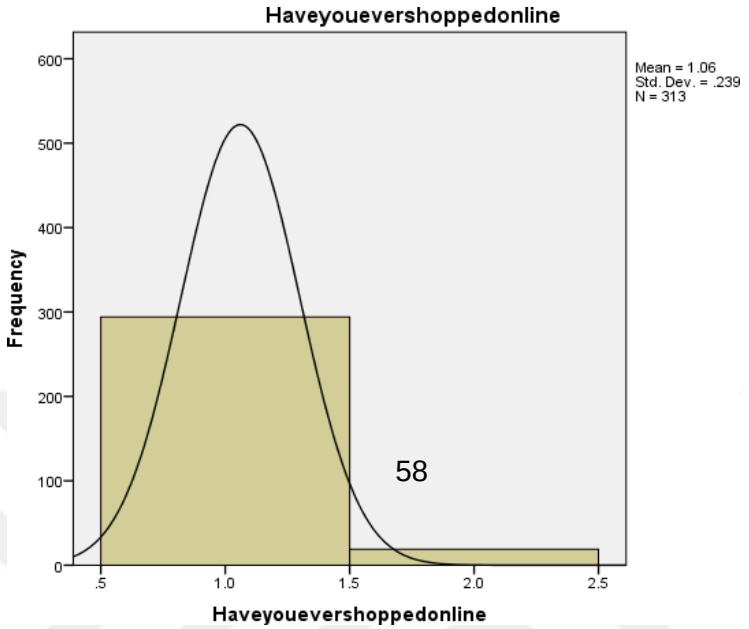


Figure 4.2 Online Purchase Behavior

4.3. SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANTS

4.3.1. Frequency of Social Media Usage

The following section reveals the use of social media frequency analysis of respondents. According to the question of "How long do you spend on social media?".

Table 4.3.1 Frequency of Social Media Usage

Use of social media	Percentage	Participants
1-2 hours	22%	67
2-3 hours	27%	85
More than 3 hours	51%	161
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

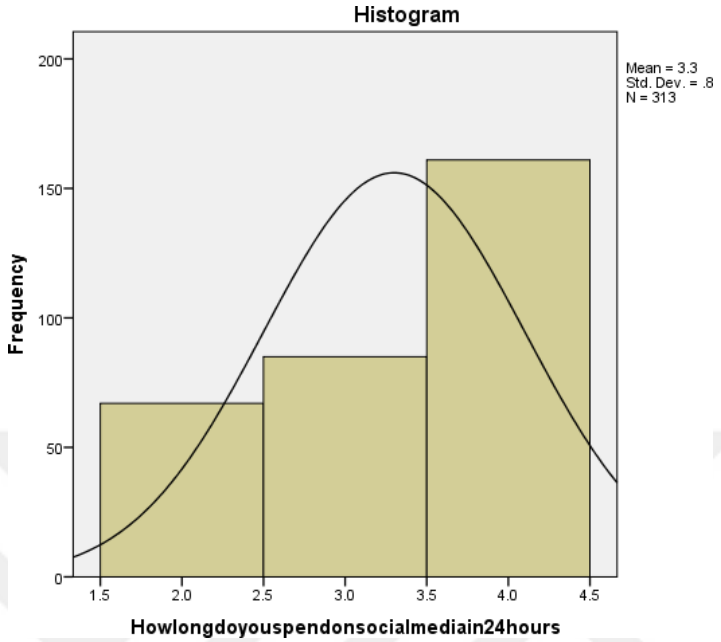


Figure 4.3.1. Frequency of Social Media Usage

The figure 4.3.1 is a graphic representation of frequency of social media usage variable for more graphical illustration.

4.3.2. Social Media Platform

In terms of social media platform choice, participants were asked to choose their most used social media channel among many platforms. The data analysis from the Table above shows that many participants, 145, use Instagram the most representing 46%. Meanwhile, Facebook and WhatsApp hold the second position, with a tie, of 13% each. YouTube is in the third position where 11% of respondents use it. TikTok is being used by only 7.3 of users. Messenger, Snapchat, and LinkedIn are in the last three positions representing 4.8%, 3.2%, and 1% in succession.

Table 4.3.2. Social Media Platform

Social Media Platform	Percentage	Participants
Facebook	13%	40
Instagram	46%	145

WhatsApp	13%	41
YouTube	11%	34
LinkedIn	1%	05
Messenger	4.8%	15
TikTok	7.3%	23
Snapchat	3.2%	10
	Answered	**313**
	Missing	**0**

The figure 4.3.2 is a graphic representation of social media platforms distributed for more graphical illustration. According to the table 4.3.2 analysis and the figure 4.3.2 above of the data distribution, Instagram is the most used social media platform by participants.

Logically speaking, respondents who used social media for more than 3 hours may be spending it on Instagram most of the time, then, Facebook, WhatsApp, or YouTube. This may also indicate that brands and marketers are successfully targeting their consumers through Instagram, as it indicates that they are running successful digital marketing, social media marketing, and campaigns to connect with their target audience aiming to reach for more.

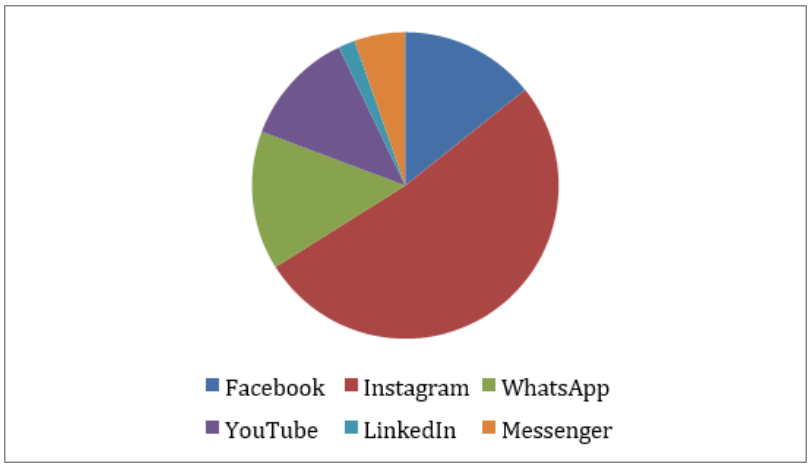


Figure 4.3.2 Social Media Platform

4.4. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Cronbach alpha was used to determine the items' reliability in the research. It is used to determine the relationship between items in a scale. The alpha value near 0.7 is considered good reliability. Values that are more than 0.7, between 0.7-0.9, are regarded as high in reliability, while values less than 0.7 are regarded as low reliability. For this study, a reliability test was conducted on each item. As a result, all the constructs in the present research are trustworthy and reliable, as indicated below in Table 4.4. According to the criteria stated above, the results showed that all the scales have good reliability. “Online Purchase Behavior” (Cronbach α: 0,810) indicating the highest reliability of all items. Meanwhile, “Emotional Threat” and “Use of Social Media” stated high reliability. However, “Consumers’ Perception of Life” has a moderate reliability (Cronbach α:0,619). Finally, “Purchase Habits” has a low reliability with (Cronbach α: 0,307).

Table 4.4 Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics Analysis			
Construct	**Cronbach Alpha**	**Cronbach Alpha based on standardized items**	**No. of Items**
Emotional Threat	.774	.778	5
Purchase Habits	.307	.309	3
Use of social media	.727	.729	12
Online Purchase Behavior	.810	.815	8
Consumers’ Perception of Life	.619	.624	3

4.5. MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION ANALYSIS

A standard deviation is a number that tells us to what extent a set of numbers lie apart (WEB_9, 2016). In other words, the standard deviation indicates the average of variability in the data. It shows how far each score is lying from the mean value. There are two conditions; a high standard

deviation means that the value is far from the mean. Meanwhile, if the standard deviation suggests a low standard deviation value, then it indicates that the values are clustered and closer to the mean value. For this research, the standard deviation test was conducted on all variables: dependent and independent. The results are shown in Table 4.5 below. Consequently, "Emotional Threat'' shows a standard deviation (SD value=1.348) which is low value compared to the mean value (M value=2.332). The next variable is "Purchase Habits" resulting in (SD value =0.738) a very low value compared to the mean (Mvalue=2.727). Meanwhile, Use of social media scored a standard deviation value of (SD value =0.820) as it is another significant low value compared to its mean value (M value=2.493). Another variable "Online Purchase Behavior" with a moderate low value far from equal to the mean (SD value=1.803), (M value=2.649). Lastly, "Consumers' Perception of Life" demonstrated with (SD value=0.673) lower than (M value =2.232). Based on all the findings of this test, all the tested items have indicated a significantly low standard value from the mean value. The results signify that all the items' values are clustered and closer to the mean. It also shows that all the participants are showing similarities within their responses in all proposed questions. It indicated that they share similar opinions, and they approach things in a common way. For instance, since "Emotional Threat" results proved that are closer to the mean value, it means that all the participants shared the same feelings, emotions of fear and anxiety towards the pandemic. Same view applies to all other items.

Table 4.5 Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Threat	2.332	1.348
Purchase Habits	2.727	0.738
Use of social media	2.493	0.820
Online Purchase Behavior	2.649	1.803
Consumers' Perception of Life	2.232	0.673

Mean and standard deviation of constructs (N-313)

4.6. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ANALYSIS

Because it is critical to discuss and assess the number of items on the scale, the reliability of each scale construct and the average range of scores, the above table displays the mean score as well as the lowest and maximum range of participants' scores on each construct. The mean value of all items on the scale is close to each other in value. As the range of 7-point Likert scale was “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” used in this survey, the findings are showing that majority of the participants were near “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”.

Table 4.6. Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Scale	α	k	Range		*M*	*SD*
			Potential (Max)	Actual (Min)		
Emotional Threat	.774	05	25-32	07-35	2.33	1.34
Purchase Habits	.307	03	06-18	07-21	2.72	0.73
Use of social media	.727	12	18-24	07-35	2.493	0.82
Online Purchase Behavior	.810	08	06-36	07-56	2.64	1.80
Consumers’ Perception	.619	03	12-18	07-21	2.23	0.67

Note α = reliability coefficient, k = no. of items in scale and subscale, M= mean, SD= Standard deviation

4.7. PEARSON CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The Pearson correlation measures the strength of the linear relationship between two variables, William et al (2020). To this study, a Pearson correlation has been applied to test the relationship between all variables. The Pearson test aimed to investigate the relationship between all variables, over the course of three periods: pre-pandemic, during-pandemic, and post-pandemic.

4.7.1. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis

4.7.1.1. Pre-Pandemic Pearson Correlation Analysis

The table 4.7.1.1 below presents the correlation analysis of all variables in the pre-pandemic.

Table 4.7.1.1 Correlation Analysis in Pre-Pandemic

Pre-Pandemic	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1-Emotional Threat	.233	.244	.544*	.091*
2-Purchase Habits	-	.213	.021	.161
3-Use of social media	-	-	.342*	.001
4-Online Purchase Behavior	-	-	-	.276
5-Consumers' Perception of Life	-	-	-	-

All the correlations between the variables are shown in table 4.7.1.1 above. According to the results of the pre- pandemic era, it is observed that "Emotional Threat" has a significant positive relationship with "Online Purchase Behavior" (P=.544*), also with "Consumers" Perception of Life" with (P=.091*). Meanwhile, "Use of Social Media" demonstrated a significant positive relationship with "Online Purchase Behavior" (P=.342*). This can be interpreted that, Emotional Threat caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and imposed on consumers has influenced consumers' perception of consumption and life as well, during the very last days before the occurrence of the lockdown. This can also be explained by the panic buying that happened before the quarantine period. Furthermore, the higher the emotional threat imposed by COVID-19; the higher online purchase behavior will be. On the other hand, the positive significant relation between Use of social media and Online Purchase Behavior can be explained that there was a certain frequency of social media usage and online shopping through social media channels in the pre-pandemic era, but at a certain frequency.

4.7.1.2. During Pandemic

The table 4.7.1.2 down below represents the analysis of the correlation of all scales during the pandemic. The results are showing that “Emotional Threat” has a positive significant relationship with “Purchase Habits” (P=.321*), “Online Purchase Behavior” (P=.309**), “Use of Social Media” (P=.161*), and “Consumers’ Perception of Life” (P=.431*). These results indicate that during the pandemic Emotional Threat has played a crucial role in influencing consumers’ purchase habits by switching to another purchasing habit or method: online shopping. Moreover, it can interpret those participants who had an emotional threat because of COVID-19, their frequency of social media usage during pandemic increased as a result their online purchase behavior has also increased. Therefore, this affected their lifestyle, their perception of life, and they started buying some products online that they usually used to buy in-store, or do not buy at all. In the same context, “Purchase Habits” has showed a significant positive relationship with “Use of Social Media” (P=.430*), “Online Purchase Behavior” (P=.280*), and “Consumers’ Perception of Life” (P=.472*), which means that people’s purchasing habits have increased with online purchasing during the pandemic. Another statistically significant positive relationship occurred between “Use of Social Media” and “Online Purchase Behavior” by (P=.233*), and this indicates that there is an interrelation between the usage of social media and online purchase behavior during the pandemic.

Table 4.7.1.2 Correlation Analysis during Pandemic

During Pandemic	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1-Emotional Threat	.321*	.161*	.309**	.431*
2-Purchase Habits	-	.430*	.280*	.472*
3-Use of social media	-	-	.233*	.311
4-Online Purchase Behavior	-	-	-	.276
5-Consumers’ Perception of Life	-	-	-	-

4.7.1.3. Post-Pandemic

In the post-pandemic era, the correlation results indicate that “Purchase Habits” shares a positive correlation with “Online Purchase Behavior” (P=.321*), and “Consumers’ Perception of Life” (P=.562*). In addition, “Online Purchase Behavior” has a significant positive correlation with “Consumers’ Perception of Life” (P=.456*). The explanation of the previous results would be that in the post-pandemic era, after quarantine, consumers’ view of consumption and life has been influenced by the pandemic: their regular and normal pre-pandemic purchase habits have been influenced by the pandemic as they had to look for another shopping alternative which is online shopping. At this point, their online purchase behavior has been clear as it became the new consumption lifestyle for them. The results are indicated in the table 4.7.1.3 below:

Table 4.7.1.3 Correlation Analysis in Post-Pandemic

Post-Pandemic	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1-Emotional Threat	.411	.233	.121	.272
2-Purchase Habits	-	.423	.321*	.562*
3-Use of social media	-	-	.177	.011
4-Online Purchase Behavior	-	-	-	.456*
5-Consumers’ Perception of Life	-	-	-	-

4.7.1.4. Pearson Correlation Assumptions

The above tables of correlation tests; 4.7.1.1, 4.7.1.2, 4.7.1.3, are showing that the assumptions of Pearson product moment correlation are fulfilled.

- All variables should be consistent, which means the data obtained should be on a ratio or interval scale. The data in this study is on continuous measurements for all scales.
- The scatter plot was used to verify the normality assumption, revealing

that the data is normally distributed and scattered.

- Theassumption that there would be no severe outliers was also tested.
- The assumption of independent observations was also fulfilled because the data was collected independently from the same participants.
- Using the line of correlation, the assumption of a linear connection was likewise satisfied. The figure 4.7.1.4 indicates graphic illustration of the scatter plot normality test.

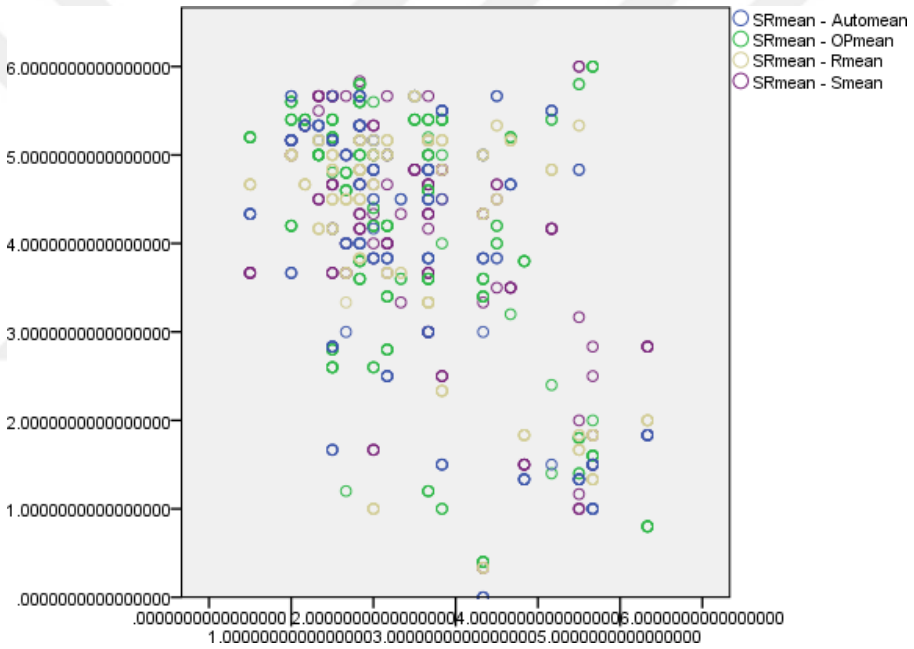


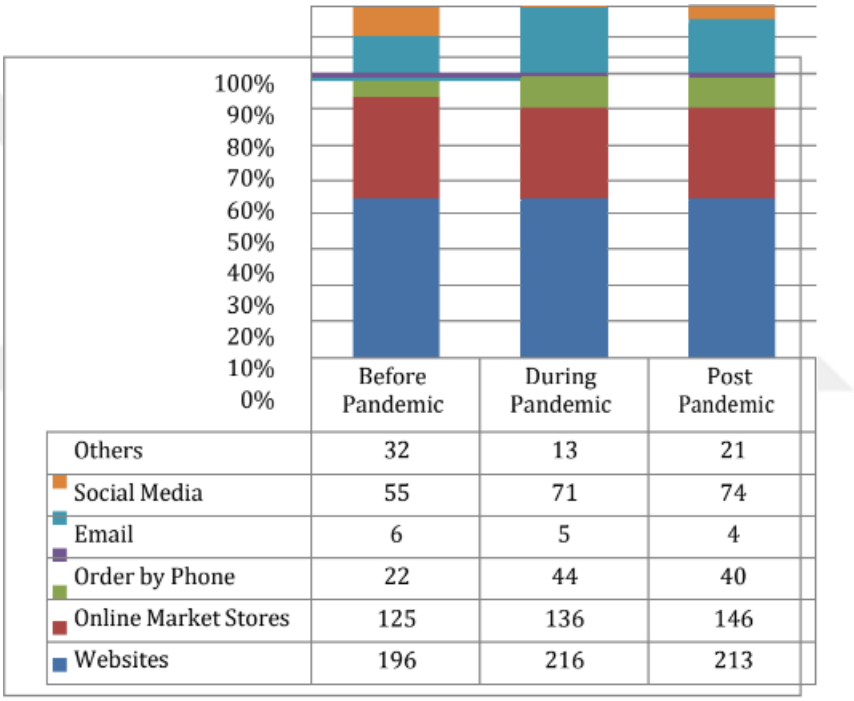
Figure 4.7.1.4 Scatter Plot of Normality Test

4.8. ONLINE PURCHASE BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS IN PRE, DURING, POST-PANDEMIC

One of the main sub-objectives of this research study is to distinguish the differences in the consumer purchasing behavior in three significant periods: before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and after the pandemic. For this purpose, a comparison analogy is being demonstrated in the following sub-chapters.

4.8.1. Shopping Platform in pre, during, and post-pandemic

In terms of shopping platforms, there are several methods that consumers could reach out and purchase their wanted products from. Some of these methods other than social media channels, websites, online market stores or market applications, ordering by phone etc.



	Before Pandemic	During Pandemic	Post Pandemic
Others	32	13	21
Social Media	55	71	74
Email	6	5	4
Order by Phone	22	44	40
Online Market Stores	125	136	146
Websites	196	216	213

Figure 4.8.1 Shopping Platform in Pre-, During, Post-Pandemic

The figure 4.8.1 is revealing the ratio of different online platforms that customers chose before, during and post pandemic. The two most widely used shopping platforms were websites 62.62% (196) participants, and online marketplaces 40% (125) respondents, in all three periods. After that during the pandemic and post pandemic periods, social media appeared to be a significant competitor as third major platform 22.68% (71) participants, along with websites and online market stores, which they have been used increasingly, (216)69% and (136) 43% respectively during the pandemic. In addition, in post-pandemic era those platforms were used as the following

percentage indicates: (213) 68% for website, and online market stores for about 46% (146), meanwhile social media platforms indicated a little increase in its percentage 23% (74) compared to the pre-pandemic era. This analysis demonstrates that websites and online stores have been successfully fulfilling customers' online purchasing needs during the pandemic. As in the post-pandemic period, it seems that consumers continued to choose social media platforms for shopping. However, their most preferable shopping platform would remain websites, in all three periods.

4.8.2. Preferred Mode of Shopping Before, During and Post Pandemic

After inspecting the shopping platform of consumers, the figure 4.8.2 below is a representation of what consumers preferred method or mode of shopping in three periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic. The data indicates that before the pandemic consumers mostly preferred both methods: online and offline shopping However, participants used more of offline shopping by 132 (42%) respondents compared to the online shopping 33 (10.5%) respondents. It indicates that customers have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, they changed their purchasing behavior and people started using online resources for shopping during the pandemic, 184 (58.78%) participants stated that they have used online shopping more. After the pandemic, customers started using both sources and only 10% of customers reported that they only use offline sources.

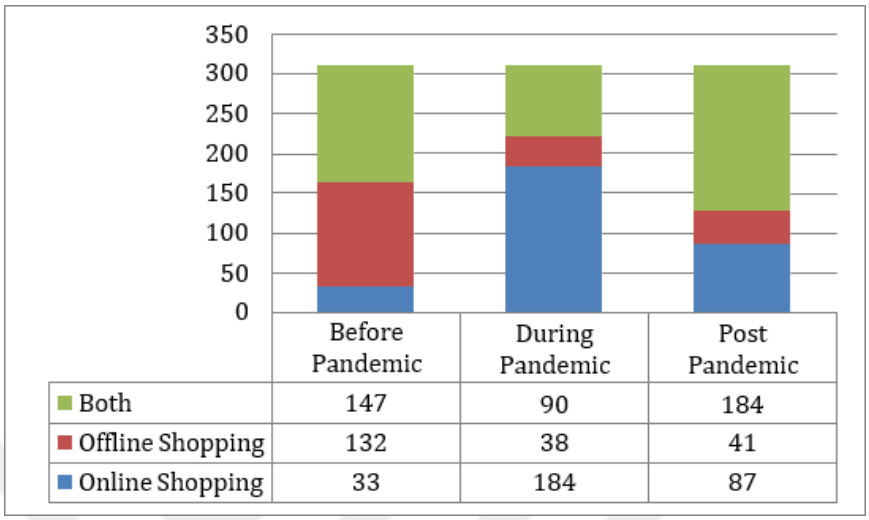


Figure 4.8.2 Preferred Mode of Shopping Before, During and Post Pandemic

Since, the above two graphs figure 4.8.1 and figure 4.8.2 have shown how use of online sources has increased during and post-pandemic, the current study has examined what was the most common reasons people didn't buy much through online sources and what are the most common reasons people are using social media and online purchasing platforms a lot after pandemic. For this purpose, three demonstrations have been given below.

4.8.2.1. Pre-Pandemic: No Online Purchasing Behavior

The figure 4.8.2.1 below indicates the multiple reasons why people avoided using online platforms and social media channels for shopping before the COVID-19 pandemic. The two most common reasons were that customers were unsure of the quality of the products without being there in the market physically and, they thought that buying offline is easy as they can return products instantly if they do not like it. Also, 13% people believed that it requires a lot of effort to buy online and 33% people also believed that shipping charges are the reasons they did not buy online before the pandemic.

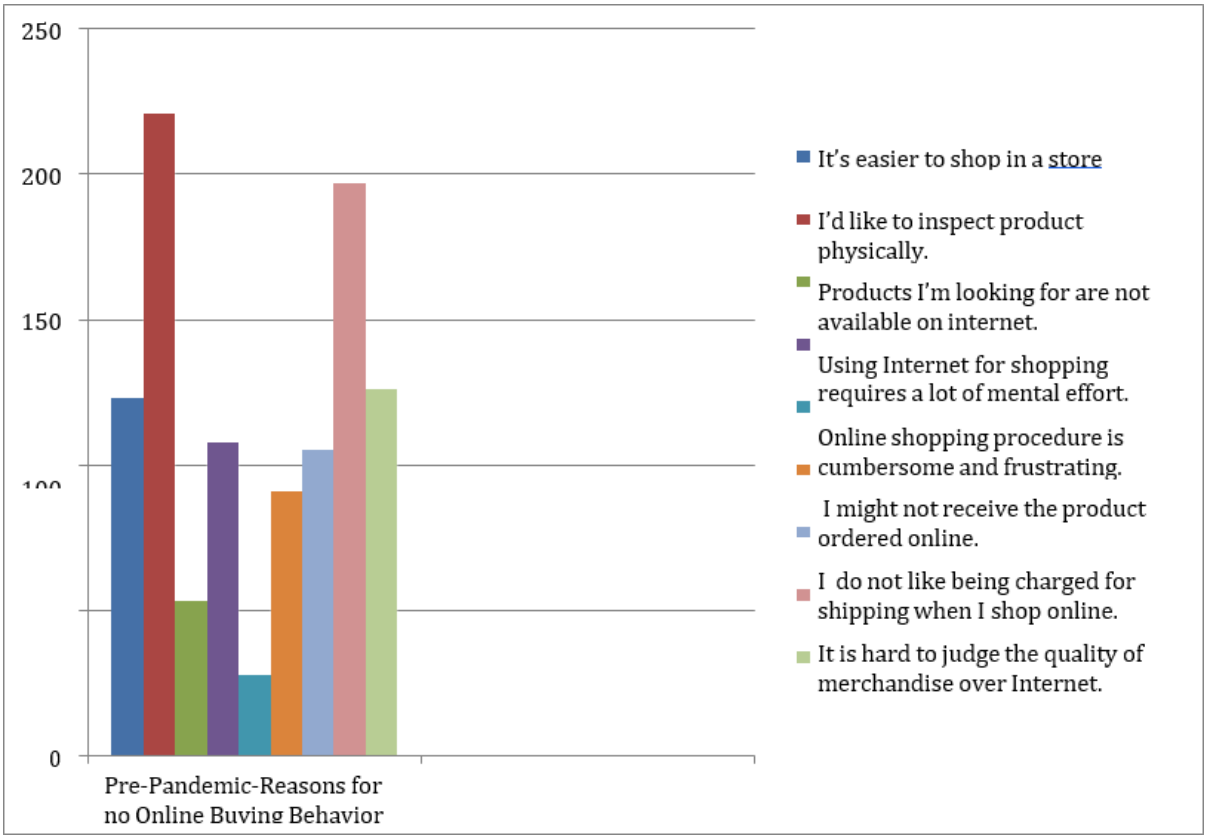


Figure 4.8.2.1. Pre-pandemic – No Online Purchase Behavior

4.8.2.2. During Pandemic: Online Purchasing Behavior

The figure 4.8.2.2 is showing the major reasons customers started purchasing online during the pandemic. The analysis results are revealing that the most common reasons and customers' motive to purchase online were that they didn't need to go to market in a crowd, and this related to the imposed safety health measurements taken by the government. There is a list of other situations that the participants of the current study chose as a reason to buy products online during COVID-19 pandemic. Another reason worth mentioning is that consumers believe that it is easier for them to reach products on a single platform such as websites, online market applications or even social media, as demonstrated before. Also, participants expressed that online shopping saves them time. From this perspective, it is safe to say that consumers' mindset has started to shift from offline shopping to online shopping due to the imposed emotional threat of the pandemic. As they have started to cope with the pandemic situation by finding a more suitable shopping alternative which is online shopping; their online purchase behavior has increased at this point.

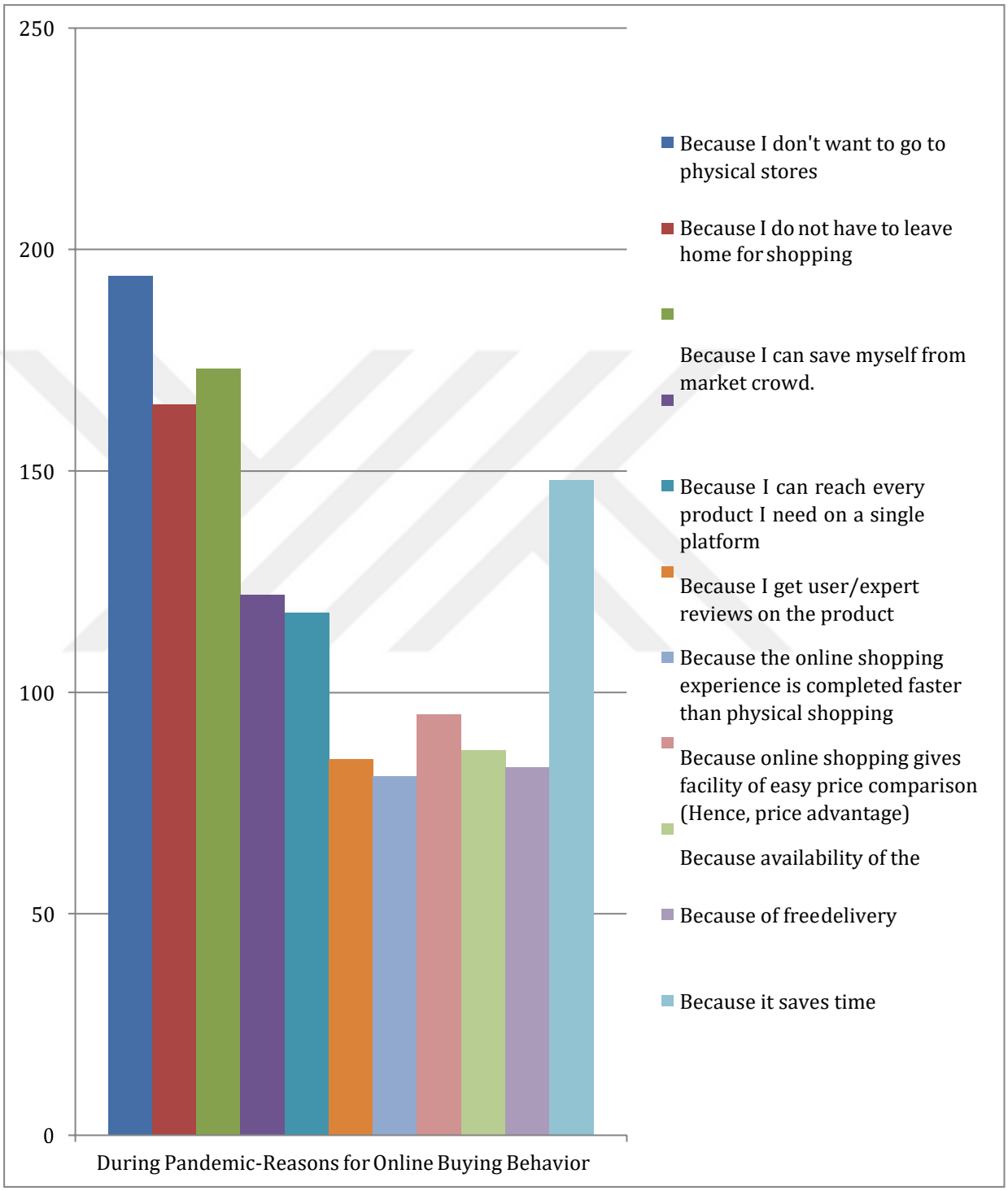


Figure 4.8.2.2. During Pandemic- Online Purchase Behavior

4.8.2.3. Post-Pandemic: Online Purchasing Behavior

Regarding the post-pandemic situation, participants were asked the same questions, but they were indicated to choose their reasons for why they are shopping online in the present time, post-pandemic era. The figure 4.8.2.3 below indicates the difference in during and post pandemic purchasing behavior. The difference between during pandemic and post-pandemic are not various; in fact, the reasons likely remained the same. Participants have indicated mainly the same reasons of why they tend to shop online during the pandemic. Most common ones indicated that they still don't want to go to physical stores, leave the house, and they wanted to save themselves from crowded places. However, some other reasons; most participants in post- pandemic said that they buy online because the online shopping experience is completed faster than physical shopping. As the most motive for their online purchase with the highest percentage, 159 respondents, was because it saves them time. Despite the little differences in during pandemic and post-pandemic, it mainly indicates that adopted online buying behavior during the pandemic has developed, grown, and mainly remained in the post-pandemic era. The difference in pre-pandemic purchasing behavior and post pandemic purchasing behavior was obvious and it can be concluded that consumers' perception of life and purchasing behavior and habits changed during and after pandemic and more consumers found online shopping easy, reliable, cheaper, time saver and faster.

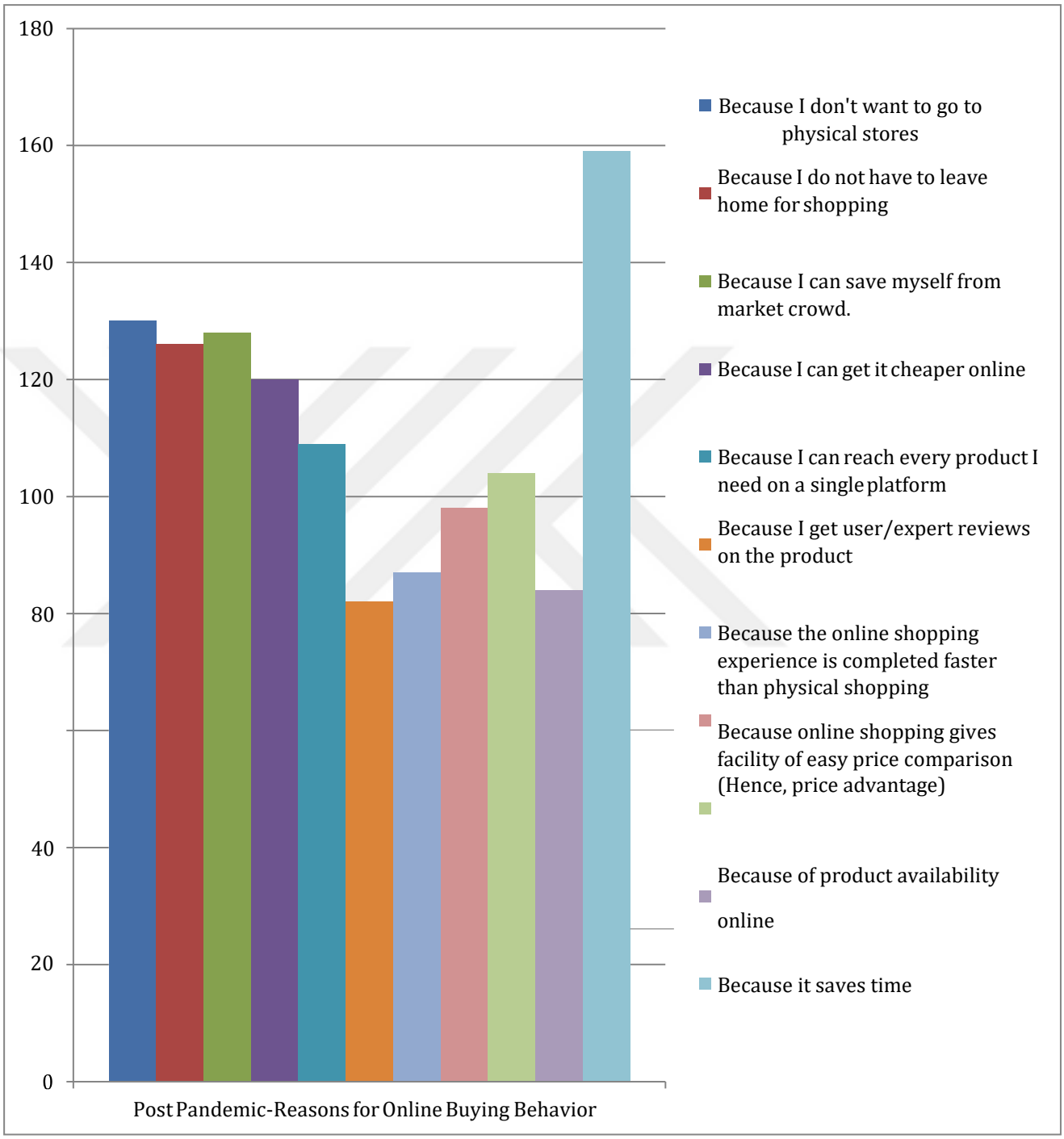


Figure 4.8.2.3 Post Pandemic- Online Purchase Behavior

In addition, participants were asked whether they will continue their adopted online purchase behavior adopted during the pandemic through the following question: "I will continue my online

shopping in the same way in the post-pandemic period.". Through the graphic 4.8.2.3. down below, it seems that the majority percentage of the participants, 41% stated "Agree", while only 20% of them stated "Strongly agree". However, it also seems that another group, 25%, had mixed feelings and were hesitant between "Neither Agree nor disagree".

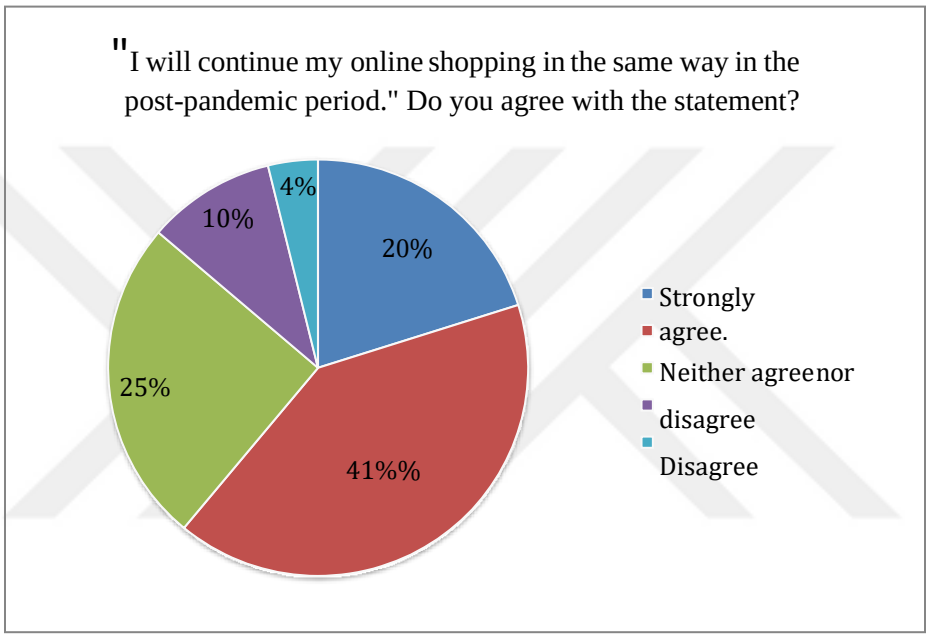


Figure 4.8.2.3. "I will continue my online shopping in the same way in the post-pandemic period." Statistics %

Moreover, due to the pandemic consumers had to change a lot of their habits, as mentioned before. In the same terms, the pandemic has brought new needs, new adopted habits for them to adopt and to live by, altering their perception of life itself, by creating a new lifestyle consequently. In fact, (87), 28%, of participants have 'agreed', and 24% 'Strongly Agree" that the pandemic has changed their lifestyle; meaning that not only did their purchasing habits get influenced by the pandemic, but their mindset. Meanwhile, only 5% have 'disagreed' on this statement. The graph 4.8.2.3 indicates the statistics of how much participants felt that their lifestyle has changed due the pandemic, their perception of life, their consumption perspectives, and their needs.

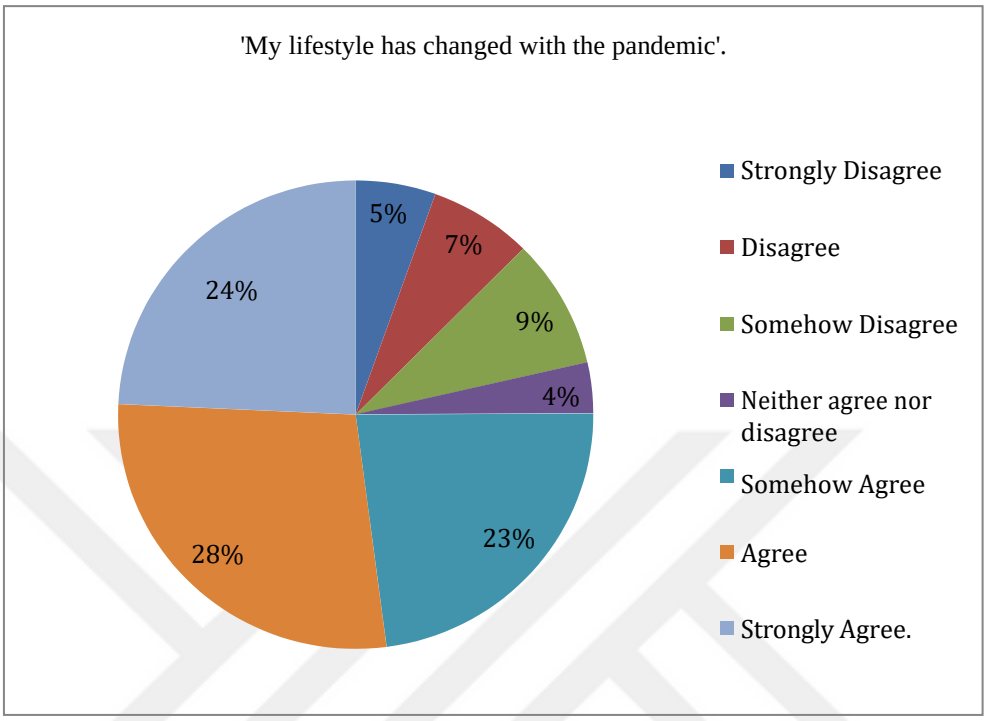


Figure 4.8.2.3 Participants Sentiments Towards Life Perception

4.9. FREQUENCY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND ONLINE PURCHASE BEHAVIOR

The use of social media and its frequency may or may not indicate the online purchase behavior of consumers. However, it may indicate the interference of digital marketing practices through online channels: social media. For this matter, an analogy was conducted of frequency of social media usage on online purchase behavior in three significant periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic. The basic aim for this comparison is for two reasons: the first one is to investigate the relationship between the frequency of social media usage and online purchase behavior, during and post-pandemic compared to there-pandemic era. The second reason is to see how digital marketing is being implemented and its relationship with online purchase behavior, through this analogy.

4.9.1. Pre-Pandemic

The figure 4.9.1 below is showing that the participants who used social media 2-3 hours before pandemic bought more using online sources. This means that there was no excessive use of social media before the pandemic to purchase online. In addition, it is safe to say that before the pandemic online users did not consider social media channels as an online purchase platform. This also indicates that even though digital marketing existed before the pandemic, however it was not implemented for online purchases purposes. In addition, consumers had more time as there was no emotional threat imposed; to work, to do their daily chores, plus they use social media in a very moderate percentage. In this era, consumers tended to do their shopping in-stores, as explained in the previous subchapter. In the figure 4.9.1 below, it indicates that in the pre-pandemic era, consumers preferred "Offline shopping" or also called in-stores as evidence to the pre-pandemic period.

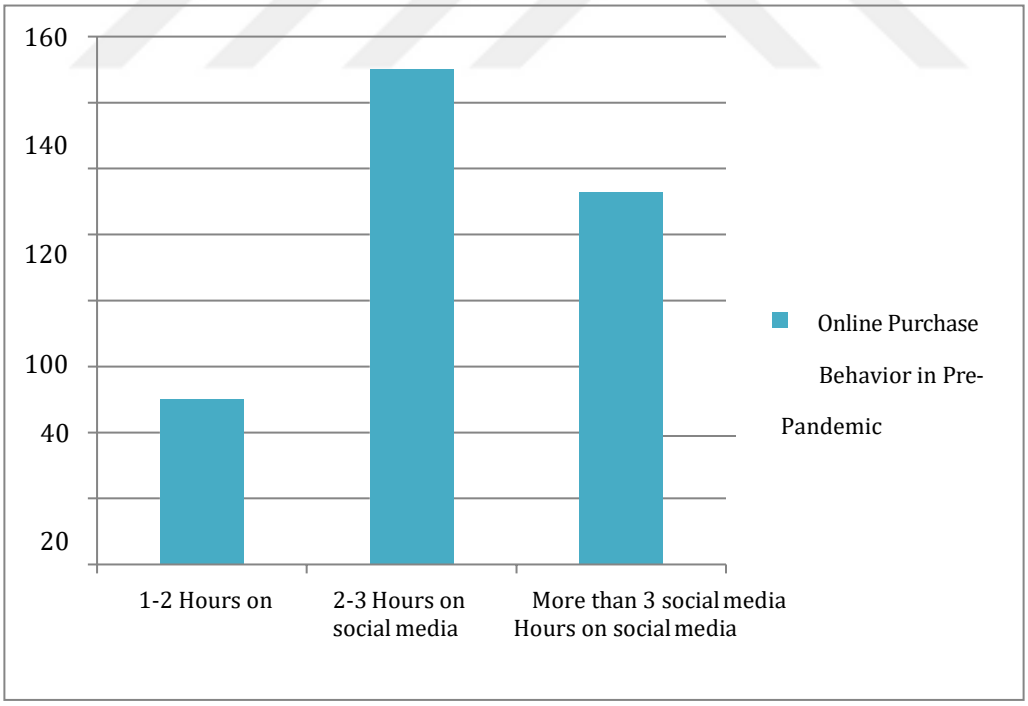


Figure 4.9.1 Online Purchase Behavior in Pre-Pandemic

4.9.2. During Pandemic

During the pandemic, the graph is showing that the frequency of social media use increased among online users, because they had enough time to use social media. The graph 4.9.2 is also showing that they used social media (more than 3 hours); the more consumers used their social media platforms the more their online purchase behavior increased. In fact, this also indicates that brands and marketers attract consumers through social media channels by targeting them on specific platforms. For instance, the most used social media platform chosen by participants is Instagram. Therefore, due to the circumstances, marketers tended to apply digital marketing strategies to convert their target audience to website, online market apps and social media platforms themselves to proceed with the online shopping process. As shown in the previous figure, figure 4.8.1, and that participants' platform choice revealed an increase in purchasing from the previous mentioned platforms; the most obvious increase with 'social media'. Meanwhile, as indicated in the previous subchapters' results, consumers deviated to online shopping instead of offline shopping for the previous mentioned reasons. From this perspective, consumers used social media, websites, and online markets applications for online shopping. From a marketing perspective, this analogy of this specific phase reveals that marketers started implementing or applying digital marketing strategies due to the COVID-19 circumstances; meaning that social media is presented as a direct exchange or an intermediary between marketers and consumers, where marketers lead their target audience or online customers to brands' website or online applications to proceed with purchasing process.

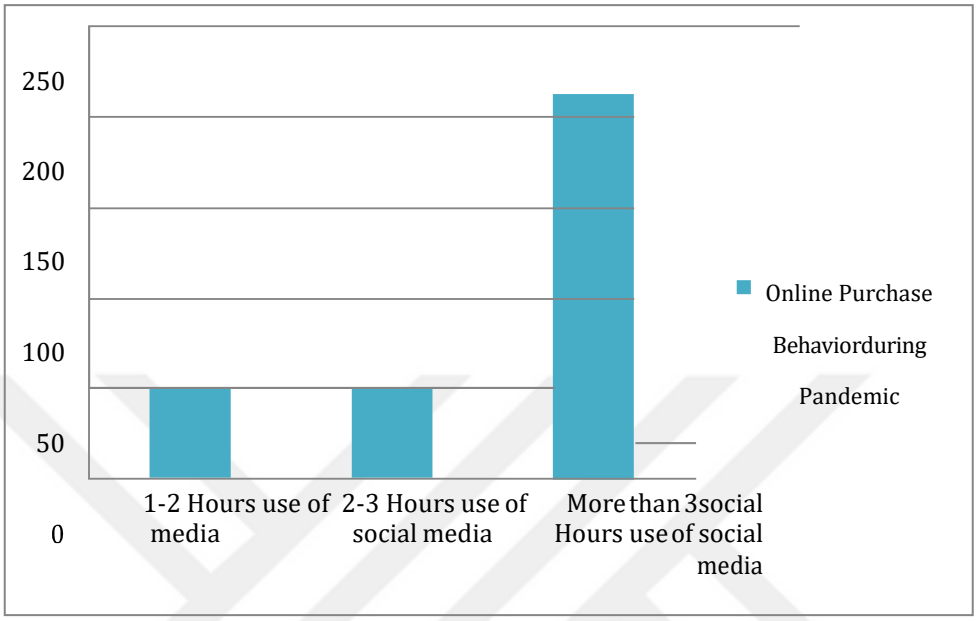


Figure 4.9.2. Online Purchase Behavior During the Pandemic

4.9.3. Post-Pandemic

The figure 4.9.3 is showing that the frequency of social media use (2-3 Hours) had the most online buyers, which means that participants used social media for 2 to 3 hours to buy more online during the pandemic compared to the post-pandemic era. This may be explained that after the lockdown period, consumers tried to get back to reality where they had to adapt with the new situation in the post-pandemic era; this explains the decrease in the social media usage in this phase. Based on the previous analysis, participants tended to do their shopping from both: online and offline resources. In fact, consumers kept their online purchasing behavior in the post-pandemic phase, buying from websites, online market applications, and social media platforms too. As this indicates, that digital marketing strategies kept on developing in the post-pandemic era.

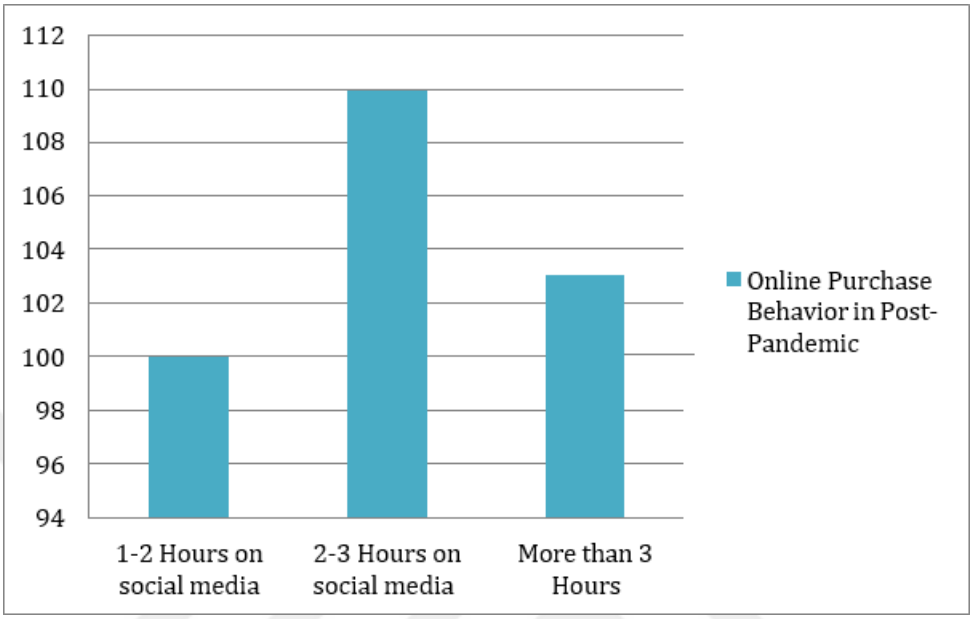


Figure 4.9.3. Online Purchase Behavior Post-Pandemic

Moreover, according to the survey's results, most participants have admitted that they are using social media channels, and they make more online purchases now than the pre- pandemic era. The graphic 4.9.3.1 below presents the findings of the social media channel usage and online purchase of participants:

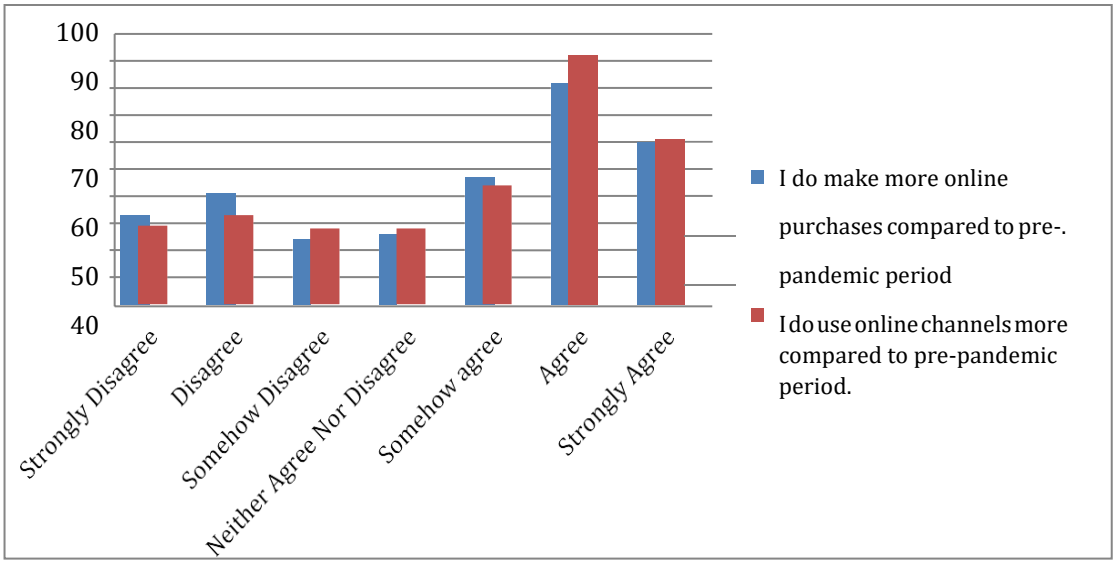


Figure 4.9.3. Online Purchase Behavior Post-Pandemic

The results shown in figure 4.9.3.1, along with the figures 4.9.3, 4.9.2, and 4.9.1, indicate the following points:

- Consumers used more online channels, social media platforms in the post-pandemic era than the pre-pandemic era. Based on Figure 4.9.4, 92 respondents agreed on this statement. This indicates that frequency of social media usage has increased because of the pandemic. Meanwhile, only 61 participants have strongly agreed on the statement.
- Online purchase behavior in the post-pandemic has increased. A wide range of participants, 82 respondents, out of 313 participants, also indicated that they make more online purchases compared to the pre-pandemic phase. Also, 60 respondents have strongly agreed that their online purchase level has grown in the post-pandemic.
- Due to the occurrence of the pandemic, consumers' purchase habits have changed and evolved as well; their online purchase behavior has increased, as well as their use of social media.
- The usage of social media indicates that due to the pandemic, businesses have started implementing digital marketing strategies to reach their customers online. And not only did consumers use social media for entertainment reasons, but also for online purchasing. In fact, social media played an intermediary role between marketers and online consumers; this explains the rise usage of social media during the pandemic, and the increase of shopping from websites, and online markets applications too.

Another indication of pre-pandemic and post-pandemic of online shopping from social media in the figure 4.9.3.1 below, participants indicated that they are now shopping online from social media than they did in before the pandemic.

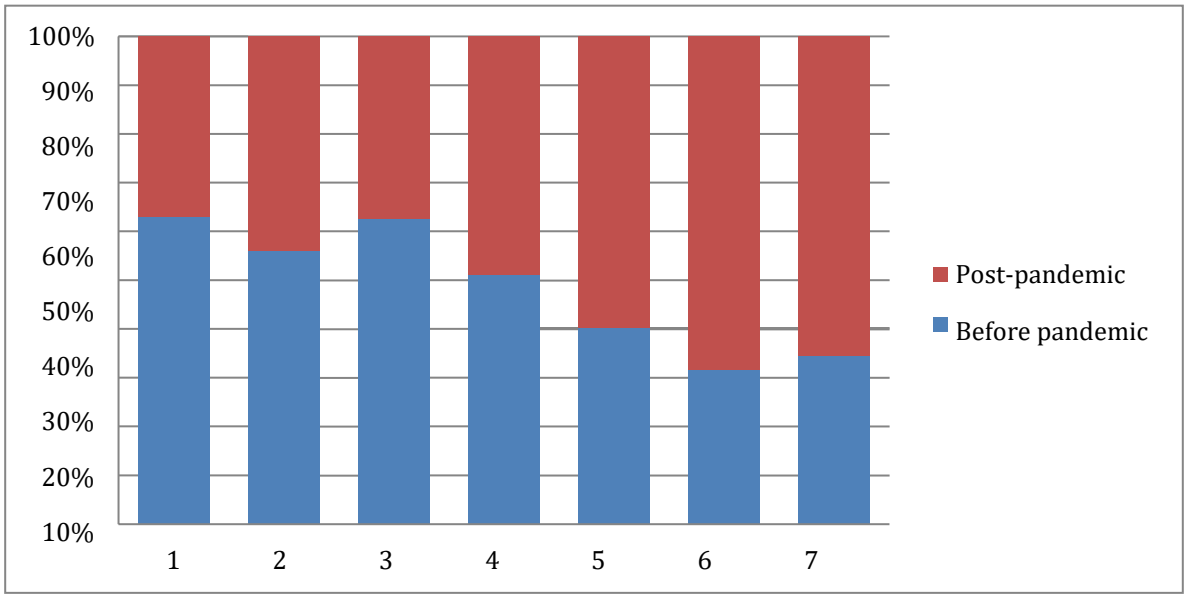


Figure 4.9.3.1 Social Media Shopping Reference

4.10. SIMPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

To test the impact of 'Emotional Threat' and 'Use of Social Media' on "Purchase Habits" a simple linear regression test was conducted. The following results are stated in the table 4.10 below:

Table 4.10 Simple Linear Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	29.727	2.770		10.731	.000
	Emotional Threat	.523	.091	.314	5.728	.000
	Purchase Habits	-.107	.210	-.027	-.507	.002
	Use of social media	-.027	.054	-.027	-.500	.008
	Consumers' Perception of Life	.432	.032	.311	10.632	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Online Purchase Behavior

Predictors	ΔR^2	*B*	*SEB*	*B*
Emotional Threat		.523	.091	.314*
Purchase Habits		.107	.210	.027
Use of social media		.027	.054	.027
Consumers' Perception of Life		.005	.032	.313*
Total	**.287**			

Note: N=204, ΔR^2=Change Rsquare, β= Beta, SEB= Standard Error Beta $^{***}p<0.001$,

$^{**}p>0.001$, $^{*}p>0.01$

The table 4.10 is showing that “Emotional Threat” was a significant predictor of “Online Purchase Behavior” of customers during pandemic, with (.314 Beta value and P=.000 significance). The “Purchasing Habits” has been seen as another significant predictor of Online Purchase Behavior with P=.000. The ‘Use of Social Media’ was moderately significant predictor of “Online Purchase Behavior and “Consumers’ Perception of Life” also impacted Customers’ Online Purchase Behavior as it has been seen significantly impacting dependent variable with (.313 Beta value and P=.001) which is the symbol of “Highly Significant’. The figure 4.10 is a graphic representation of a simple linear regression test distributed for more graphical illustration.

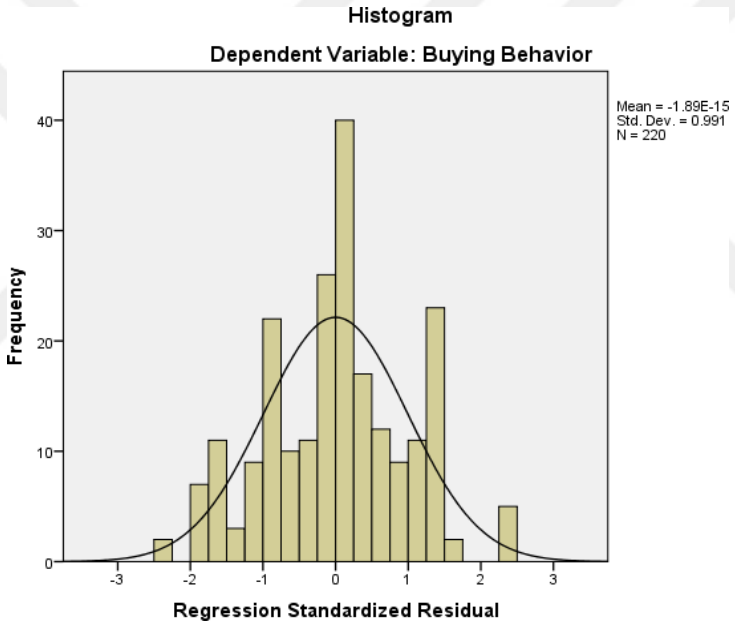


Figure 4.10 Simple Linear Regression

5. HYPOTHESIS

#H	Hypothesis	Result
H1	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H2	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (During Pandemic)	ACCEPTED

H3	Emotional threat has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic)	REJECTED
H4	Purchase Habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic)	REJECTED
H5	Purchase Habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (During Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H6	Purchase Habits has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H7	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior (Before Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H8	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior (During Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H9	Use of social media has a relationship with online purchase behavior (After Pandemic)	REJECTED
H10	Online purchase behavior has a relationship with consumers 'perception of life (Before Pandemic)	REJECTED
H11	Online purchase behavior has a relationship with consumers 'perception of life (During Pandemic)	REJECTED
H12	Online purchase behavior has a relationship with consumers 'perception of life (After Pandemic)	ACCEPTED
H13	Emotional threat has a direct impact on online purchase behavior	ACCEPTED
H14	Use of social media has a direct impact on online purchase behavior	ACCEPTED

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

After the literature and the data analysis that served this research, the study will be concluded and finalized in this chapter. It will also give further insights in managerial and theoretical implications, and further suggestions for future research studies about the same focus area.

5.1. DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

In this study, the main objective was to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital marketing, giving an inner scope study on consumer purchasing behavior. There was a lack of background studies about the impact of the pandemic on digital marketing, however, a lot of studies focused on studying consumer purchasing behavior only in a specific era: during the pandemic, or post-pandemic. As some other studies accomplished a comparison between the latter two phases. This research aimed to detect the difference in consumer purchasing behavior in three significant phases: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic, within the scope of digital marketing under the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Analogies were applied for this context in the literature. After the results given by the data analysis, the difference in consumer purchase behavior, online purchase behavior, was distinguished in these three phases, as well as digital marketing implications were found. The literature has given a deep insight on this point, and a lot of authors have agreed that consumers are unpredictable when it comes to external and internal threat: their purchasing habits alter based on the situation.

In the pre-pandemic era, participants of this study tended to put physical shopping in favor of online shopping. Even though 46% (147) of participants indicated that they used both online and offline shopping in the pre-pandemic phase. In fact, in the same phase, 42%

(132) respondents chose “offline shopping”, while only 33 participants, 10%, used online shopping. This indicates that online purchase behavior of consumers did exist in the pre- pandemic era; however, it was not used as frequently for most of the participants. The main reasons for most respondents to not choose online shopping before the pandemic were that they would like to inspect the product physically, as it is also hard for them to judge the quality of the merchandise over the internet, or that they will have a problem returning the product bought online. In this study, it was found that use of social media has a direct impact on online purchase behavior in one of the hypotheses. In the pre-pandemic phase, 48% of participants indicated that they used social media channels for 2 to 3 hours per day. This usage percentage may reveal that there was no excessive usage of social media to buy online, or from social media platforms for example. As this may unveil that, during this phase, digital marketing was not really implemented by brands and companies to make people buy their products online. In the pre-pandemic period, consumers’ online purchase behavior activities were very low. Digital marketing was not really the go-to marketing strategy, as both consumers and marketers tended to use in-stores shopping, and traditional marketing in return.

From this context, a lot of literature studies have studied consumer behavior in times of crisis. All the studies have shown that consumer’s psychology shifts when there are external or internal stimuli that may play an inevitable role in altering their purchasing behavior. A lot of other researchers have suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic is an external psychological threat on consumers. In this study, the fear and the anxiety that were imposed on consumers was called “emotional threat”. Emotional threat has played a major impact on the consumer’s purchasing habits and driving them to change their purchasing habits towards online purchasing behavior. The survey of this study has covered the part of fear and anxiety created by the COVID-19 pandemic and how much threat it has imposed on participants in “When the coronavirus was heard globally, how much of a threat did you think the coronavirus posed to you?” question, 30.7% participants voted “High”. This indicates that the emotional threat exposed to people has made them turbulent and scared. This deadly virus pushed people to stay in-doors, and for businesses to shut down, brands and companies were pushed to come up with new marketing strategies, as on the other hand, consumers were seen “panicking” purchasing, leaving shelves empty at the market stores. The safety measurements taken drove consumers to change their purchasing habits over time, as

suggested in other studies. During the pandemic phase, quarantine period, the participants of this study 184, nearly 59% have chosen online shopping as their preferred method of shopping. Meanwhile, offline shopping's percentage has decreased to 12%. This indicates that consumers have considered an online purchase behavior because of the circumstances. Since, they were asked to stay at home, their main causes to shop online during the pandemic where they don't want to go to physical stores, 61% (194), they want to save themselves from the crowd 55% (173), and because they believed that online shopping experience is faster than the physical shopping 47% (148). The mentioned reasons were very logical and reasonable due to the circumstances. Meanwhile, participants used websites, 69% (216), and online market stores 44%, (136) as their preferred online shopping platform. Marketing has witnessed a sudden boost of new digitized strategies applied by brands and marketers to reach their customers through online platforms such as social media, resulting in an increased usage of social media during the pandemic. Because of this study, it is noticeable that social media usage has witnessed a sudden usage boost during the pandemic. Participants used social media for more than 3 hours per day, 68% (213). Due to the situation, during quarantine, people had a lot of time while they had to remain in-doors as this explains their social media usage boost. Conditional to this study's findings, participants' online purchasing behavior revealed that they've not only used websites and online markets' applications to make their purchases, but social media platforms option has shown a significant increase. 22%

(71) participants indicated that they used social media to purchase online during the pandemic, while 55, 17.57%, participants used social media channels for online shopping before the occurrence of the pandemic. Meanwhile, websites and online market stores usage have increased from the pre-pandemic era, as mentioned earlier. This explains that marketers implemented digital marketing strategies or campaigns, as mentioned in the literature, were successfully established; marketers have implemented digital marketing strategies and online campaigns on social media channels directing their target audience or customer base to brands or companies' websites or online market stores to do the purchasing process. In other words, social media has played an intermediary role to convert sales. In this same context, it also reveals that consumers' online purchase behavior increased with their social media usage. At this point, consumers have gotten used to the situation as they have found an alternative for their old purchasing habits, online shopping, and they have started to cope with the pandemic situation. It explains the online purchase

behavior level increase during the pandemic. As it also indicates that use of social media has an impact on online purchase behavior, and that the hypothesis indicated in sub-objectives of this research such as the increase of social media usage indicated that there were digital marketing implications, implying that digital marketing has been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic impacting consumer behavior consequently in change towards online purchase behavior; the sub-objectives of the study are fulfilled.

The post pandemic phase indicates the after-quarantine period until the present time. A lot of studies have investigated consumer behavior and the implications of COVID-19 pandemic on consumers in the post phase. Many studies found that consumers will remain with their online purchase behavior that was adopted during the lockdown or during the pandemic. In this study, participants' online shopping method has shown a decrease. Participants indicated that they now use both methods: offline shopping, and online shopping. Still, the percentage of online shopping, 27.8% (87) is higher than offline 13% (41). This might reveal that acquired online purchase behavior during the pandemic is still on-going in the post-pandemic era. Most of the participants' reasons for why they are shopping online now are not very far from during pandemic. However, the only different reason, which is the most selected option, was stated that it saves time 50.8% (159). Consumers now have lived and gained the online purchase experience, they have grown within this adopted behavior, which has shown them that they can save a lot of time doing online shopping of their products rather than spending time inspecting products in an actual store. However, compared to the quarantine period, people used social media less frequently. Their social media usage fell back to 2-3 hours per day. This decrease can be explained by the freedom people have gained when they started to get back to their old habits and life, after quarantine. However, this may not indicate that their online purchase behavior has decreased in return. In this study, it was revealed that 26.20%, (82) participants have agreed that they make online purchases as well as 30% (92) using online channels more than in the pre- pandemic era. This indicates that online purchase behavior is staying and persistent in the post-pandemic era. On the other hand, 21.4% have indicated a 'high' agreement on purchasing from social media platforms compared to the pre-pandemic era. This can also unveil that marketers are now more and more integrating digital marketing strategies in their campaigns, and this can be proven by the increase of shopping from online channels in the post-pandemic era. In addition, 41% of participants have agreed that they

will continue their online purchasing habits in the post-pandemic era, as 20% have strongly agreed with the statement. Some studies have implemented this question in different forms for the sake of confirming whether the online purchase behavior adopted during the pandemic will persist afterwards or not. In comparison to other studies, this high rate aligns with the other results. Therefore, consumers' perception of life is changing too after quarantine.

When referring to perception of life, it can indicate to new needs, new mindset, new perception, or view about consumption of life itself. A lot of studies have implied that the COVID-19 epidemic has brought new needs to consumers too. In this study, 27.8% (87) participants revealed that their new lifestyle has changed with the pandemic, agreeing that it has brought new needs with it. Meanwhile, 19.16% (60) stated that in the post-pandemic, they found themselves needing products that they usually do not use. All the hypotheses of this research confirm the main objective and the sub-objectives of this study.

5.2. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

As a result of this research, considering that the effect of the pandemic has not yet ended, however, it can be obvious that the pandemic had an impact on both digital marketing and consumer purchasing behavior. Based on the findings of the study, it will be good for marketers, brands, and companies to implement more digital marketing strategies in their marketing campaigns. In fact, online purchase behavior existed before the pandemic indicates that despite the existence of digital marketing at the period, however, marketers tended to use offline or traditional marketing. In addition, times of crisis, such as the pandemic, have shown that external threats may lead or push both companies and consumers to find alternatives. Meaning that online practices, during this decade, have proved that they are the future and that it is a must now for all businesses to implement digital marketing and to work more on targeting their audience by creating online communities. Therefore, creating a new online consumer base by applying online campaigns through social media since it is the mediator between brands and consumers.

5.3. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The COVID-19 virus has welcomed us by the beginning of this new decade. A lot of things have

changed since the pandemic knocked on the world's door. Before the pandemic, marketers have been using traditional marketing strategies to influence consumers to purchase a particular product. Even though the world has been improving from a technological aspect, because of the internet, brands and companies were seen on social media platforms for example, but never been used in favor of 'selling' a product. Meanwhile, consumers have had their own and regular purchasing habits, routines, and life perspectives. People went to local stores, supermarkets to buy their products, regardless of the low ecommerce movement before the pandemic. However, amidst the pandemic, and the sudden changes that have imposed on the world has shifted everything. Businesses were closed, and the only alternatives we had included the word 'online' before it, online education, remote working, online shopping, online delivery etc. As a lot of factors can change the way we consume, the same thing implies on marketers. Marketers had to shift their strategies to reach their customers online by using digital marketing as the new form of marketing. Every action we took as consumers was unpredictable because of the circumstances, as brands and marketers had to take new actions in return. Using social media channels can be a good way to reach customers online, since during the pandemic, the world has been all over it to keep updated with the latest covid-19 news, or for entertainment reasons. For consumers to have or to adopt new purchasing habits, it takes time. The quarantine period, during the pandemic, people had time to find new shopping alternatives due to the dreadful situation. Consumers' purchasing behavior has become online purchase, which it was predicted that it may remain even after the post-pandemic, as suggested in some research. And even for marketers to remain developing and implementing digital marketing as their main marketing strategy. Therefore, not only the way marketers view marketing has changed, or the way consumers' purchasing behavior has changed too, but also the way we perceive life now as a combination of needs, consumption, and as a lifestyle. This has altered too with the beginning of the digital decade.

5.4. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research study has only been limited to the Turkish consumer base. All the 313 successful respondents are limited within this study. Assuming that all answers are reliable for this study. It

aims to investigate the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital marketing and consumer behavior, with much more focus on consumer behavior on three periods: before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and post the pandemic, the same inter scope focus on the consumer part can be repeatedly implemented on other participants of another country. Knowing that, consumer behavior can vary from one place to another. Therefore, the results of this study may be different from another's, even within the same questions' forms for future studies recommendations, the "Purchase habits" variable was not seen as reliable as the other variables, due to the lack of resources in this field of study. Therefore, for future reference, it should be re-designed and if the reliability is indicated high, the analysis can be conducted.

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APPENDIX: Questionnaire

Dear respondents.

Thank you for your valuable time to participate in this research.

The purpose of this questionnaire is for academic research, only. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on consumer purchasing behavior during three phases pre-pandemic, during pandemic and post-pandemic: in the case of online shopping There is no intention to use personal information, it will only be used for scientific research and under high security level. Thank you.

**Demographic questions:

Gender	Female	Male	Prefer not to say

Age	Below 18	Between 18-25	Between 26-34	Between 35-44	Above 45

Educational Qualification	High School	Bachelor’s degree	Master's Degree	PhD/Doctorate Degree

Occupation Status	Student	Employed	Unemployed	Other

Marital Status	Single	Married

When the coronavirus was heard globally, how much of a threat did you think the coronavirus posed to you?	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am most afraid of coronavirus-19.					
When watching news and stories about coronavirus-19 on social media, I become nervous or anxious					
It makes me uncomfortable to think about coronavirus-19					
I am afraid of losing my life because of coronavirus-19					

Have you ever shopped online?	Yes	No

What is your preferred mode of shopping?	Offline Shopping	Online Shopping	Both
Before COVID-19			
During COVID-19			
Post-COVID-19			

How often did you shop online before the pandemic?	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Which channel did you use most for your online shopping?	Website/application ofthe relevant brand.	Marketplaces (Online marketplace stores)	Order by phone (Orders made by calling)	E-mail	Social media platforms (Facebook shop, Instagram shop etc.)	Other
Before COVID-19						
During COVID-19						
Post COVID-19						

Which products would you buy more online before, during, and post-pandemic? (Please select up to5 product groups in each period)			
	Before COVID-19	During COVID-19	Post COVID-19
Clothing and Accessories			
Electronics and Computer Cosmetic			
Market and Food			
Furniture and Decoration			
Education-Book-Stationery			
Constructional Materials			
Travel and Accommodation			
Health products			
Baby products			
Disinfectant-Mask			
Hobby Products			
Sports equipment			

Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for NOT purchasing these products through online channels before the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.)
It’s easier to shop in a store.
I’d like to inspect product physically.
Products I’m looking for are not available on internet.
Using Internet for shopping requires a lot of mental effort
Online shopping procedure is cumbersome and frustrating
I might not receive the product ordered online
I do not like being charged for shipping when I shop online
It is hard to judge the quality of merchandise over Internet
I will have problem in returning product bought online (Will have to send the product back through some shipper and wait to see if the retailer accepts it without any hassle)

Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for purchasing these products through online channels during the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.)
Because I don't want to go to physical stores.
Which statement(s) best describes the reasons for purchasing these products through online channels during the pandemic? (Choose all as applicable.)
Because I don't want to go to physical stores.
Because I do not have to leave home for shopping.
Because I can save myself from market crowd.
Because I can get it cheaper online.
Because I can reach every product I need on a single platform.
Because I get user/expert reviews on the product
Because the online shopping experience is completed faster than physical shopping.
Because online shopping gives facility of easy price comparison (Hence, price advantage)
Because I use online shopping for buying products which are otherwise not easily available in the nearby market or are unique (new)
Because of free delivery.
Because it saves time.

Please evaluate the following statements based on your online purchase level now:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I do make more online purchases compared to pre-pandemic period.							

I do use online channels more compared to pre- pandemic period							

Please evaluate the following statements based on your online purchase level now:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My lifestyle has changed with the pandemic.							
My changing lifestyle brought new needs with it							
After the pandemic, I needed products that I do not usually use							

"I will continue my online shopping in the same way inthe post-pandemic period." Do you agree with the statement?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

What type of social media do you use the most?	Facebook	Instagram	WhatsApp	Youtube	LinkedIn	Messenger	Tiktok	Snapchat

How long do you spend onsocial media in 24 hours?	Less than one hour	One to two hours.	Two to three hours.	More than three hours

The following questions are on of the scale of 1 to 7 (Low, High)

Please rate the degree to which you used social media to identify needed products before the COVID- 19pandemic.
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media to identify needed products:
Please rate the degree to which you used social media to gather information to compare products before the COVID-19 pandemic
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media to gather information to compare products.
Please rate the degree to which you used social media to purchase products before the COVID-19 pandemic.
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media to purchase products
Please rate the degree to which you used social media as a medium to express post-purchase satisfaction or dissatisfaction. before the COVID-19 pandemic.
Please rate the degree to which you currently use social media as a medium to express post- purchase satisfaction or dissatisfaction.