

THE LUXURY FASHION CONSUMPTION AFTER PANDEMIC:
THE CASE OF TURKEY



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2022

LUXURY FASHION CONSUMPTION AFTER PANDEMIC:

THE CASE OF TURKEY

Thesis submitted to the

Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

International Trade Management

by

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Boğaziçi University

2022

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ABSTRACT

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While it is still too early to quantify the overall financial damage from COVID-19 on the industry, the pandemic has certainly shaken some fundamental aspects of the luxury industry. Most probably, some of these changes are permanent. The claim extends to brands that have not yet fully transitioned to a vertically integrated distribution model. Moreover, start-ups that need wholesale channels to reach new customers and finance the development of their full collections are in the range. In the face of new challenges, they are likely to adopt aggressive trade and discount policies, which can at least in the medium term undermine the luxury positioning of brands without a concession model. Also, startling and innovative marketing strategies are in the focus of brands. Many luxury fashion brands promoted their new collections by organizing online fashion shows on their websites and social media platforms. As the customer behavior has changed in the course of the pandemic, customer relationship management increased its value in brand management. Sales of luxury fashion products also decreased due to the closure policies and the travel restrictions during the pandemic period. However, studies show that a new customer group, a more conscious and selective customer base with more special tastes, entered the market. In this thesis, we aim to explore the effects of Covid-19 on the luxury consumption using the case of Turkey. A questionnaire was designed to analyze the determinants of luxury consumption during the course of pandemic. The findings reveal that economic conditions are highly effective in consumption behavior in luxury fashion market.

ÖZET

Pandemi Sonrası Lüks Moda Ürünleri Tüketimi:

Türkiye’de Vaka Çalışması

COVID-19'un sektördeki genel mali zararını ölçmek için henüz çok erken olsa da, pandemi kesinlikle lüks endüstrisinin bazı temel yönlerini sarstı. Büyük olasılıkla, bu değişikliklerin bazıları kalıcıdır. İddia, dikey olarak entegre bir dağıtım modeline henüz tam olarak geçmemiş markaları da kapsıyor. Ayrıca, yeni müşterilere ulaşmak ve tam koleksiyonlarının gelişimini finanse etmek için toptan satış kanallarına ihtiyaç duyan start-up'lar da ürün yelpazesindedir. Yeni zorluklar karşısında, en azından orta vadede imtiyaz modeli olmayan markaların lüks konumlandırmasını baltalayabilecek agresif ticaret ve indirim politikaları benimsemeleri muhtemeldir. Ayrıca ürkütücü ve yenilikçi pazarlama stratejileri de markaların odak noktasındadır. Birçok lüks moda markası, web sitelerinde ve sosyal medya platformlarında online defileler düzenleyerek yeni koleksiyonlarının tanıtımını yaptı. Pandemi sürecinde müşteri davranışları değişirken, müşteri ilişkileri yönetimi marka yönetimindeki değerini artırdı. Pandemi döneminde uygulanan kapatma politikaları ve seyahat kısıtlamaları nedeniyle lüks moda ürünlerinin satışları da azaldı. Ancak yapılan araştırmalar, yeni bir müşteri grubunun, daha bilinçli ve seçici bir müşteri kitlesinin, daha özel lezzetlerin pazara girdiğini gösteriyor. Bu tezde, Covid-19'un lüks tüketim üzerindeki etkilerini Türkiye örneği üzerinden araştırmayı amaçlıyoruz. Pandemi sürecinde lüks tüketimin belirleyicilerini analiz etmek için bir anket tasarlandı. Elde edilen bulgular, lüks moda pazarında tüketim davranışında ekonomik koşulların oldukça etkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is an epidemic that affects all people around the world in many ways. During this epidemic process, it has caused many negative consequences not only in the field of health, but also in the social and economic fields. With the COVID-19 pandemic, companies have had other priorities, as can be expected. Sustainability is not newsworthy in the current situation, as the public relations departments of the companies have new stories to share with the process. Many major fashion houses have announced that they will release only two collections a year. Major fashion weeks have also left their place to digital shows. In short, the fashion world pressed the 'reset' button to be restructured. Although these efforts were appreciated, the economic dimension of the business deepened with the rapid growth of the epidemic. In the fashion world, where spring-summer collections are exhibited one after the other under normal conditions and showcases that are no different from works of art, a leaf did not move. Luxury brands appeared before us with their home wear products and very expensive masks with their logos on them, but it was time to face the radical change waiting at the door. Fashion houses have started to announce that they will reduce collections one by one, that they will not follow fast fashion, and that they will produce from fabrics that are of higher quality and can be used for many years. The coronavirus has also offered the fashion industry an opportunity to renew itself and reshape the industry's value chain. In the luxury industry, consumers are expected to gravitate towards truly qualified and timeless pieces, as we saw in the 2008 economic crisis. Most consumers have demanded minimalist investment products. While the leading luxury stores in the

sector were negatively affected by the changing customer behavior, especially global brands managed to positively affect their markets by turning to online sales. While the COVID-19 global epidemic affected the purchasing preferences of consumers, it also changed the marketing strategies of apparel businesses like other businesses. With the spread of the pandemic, the luxury fashion industry worldwide and in Turkey, all sales fell from February to March 2020. Due to these declines, retailers planned to develop new strategies to meet their financial deficits. They developed different marketing strategies such as downsizing in retail, paying attention to ethical understanding, establishing collaborations, and establishing solid relations with customers by giving importance to social media. Businesses started to digitize rapidly and either created virtual markets or started to give importance to social media sales. In this process, the biggest form of marketing has been online shopping platforms, and all brands, big and small, have taken quick and important steps to bring their products to their customers by establishing their own virtual stores or taking part in existing platforms according to their customers' behaviour. While some luxury brands continued their production by following appropriate strategies during the pandemic period, some brands stopped their operations by following different policies.

In the first part of the study, luxury consumption was focused, and in the other part, the effect of the pandemic on customer change was mentioned. In the application part, a survey study on luxury consumption in Turkey was conducted and the effects of post-pandemic customer behavior were presented to the reader.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining luxury consumption

Definition of luxury is not a well-defined issue. Luxury concept is connected to the people's personality, status, the level of income, culture, socio-economic structure, social class and even personal expectations. Moreover, there are concepts that do not have the financial value. Some people define the luxury as time, health, peace, so exact definition is not possible. On the other hand, value is one of the most general and extensively used word in the social science disciplines. Value has been perceived a key concept in the marketing sphere. This term is mostly related to products or services which have special quality, becoming rare, expensive, feeling precious, being unique, tailored, elegancy, and also these luxury products have most signature items. Luxury consumption is known as selling dreams to the consumers and gaining brand loyalty. Without figuring out the description of luxury brand and luxury, a comprehending of the luxury customer value notion isn't accomplished. It could be argued that luxury consumption does not have certain description in academia (Jung Choo et al., 2012). Luxury concept is ambiguous. Mostly this term is interrelated with fashion industry, cosmetics sector, expensive cars, luxury travel, jewellery and billion-dollar art gallery. Luxury good consumption is mostly associated with economic factors, so income level is highly important for the luxury purchasing behavior. However, there are other motivations that can trigger the purchasing behavior.

Since 1940, significant part of consumer purchasing behavior has been motivation. Consumers' intentions and real behaviors depend on the motivations.

Consumers' plans to buy luxury fashion products and brand loyalty to the luxury products shape luxury consumption. Because the luxury fashion consumption has a relationship with high quality, exclusiveness, high price, and social status, it can be perceived as the example of "symbolic consumption" goods (Giovannini, Xu & Thomas, 2015).

High quality, high price and non-essential goods, and services that can be perceived rare, prestigious, specific and also these luxury products offer high levels of status symbol, these attributes are explained as the key identifiers of luxury brands. High level of utilitarian value is supposed as significant for all luxury goods and cost/sacrifice based value is perceived to be unrelated to customers (Tynan, McKechnie, & Chhuon, 2010).

There's no generally accepted definition of luxury brand. For instance there is no definition of "luxury", "luxury brand", and "luxury marketing" in the American Marketing Association's dictionary. Academicians have worked on what composes a luxury brand without a certain consensus. Academia widely defines luxury brands depend on consumer perceptions, experiences and the literature largely defines luxury brands based on consumer perceptions and/or stable issues like marketing activities and product features. Some strategic tactics such as premium pricing and excellence quality seem like being luxurious, all of these actions can not result in a selected luxury brand, and also these selections are determined by the consumers' perceptions. There are five main elements, and these five elements are significant to any luxury brand. From the theoretical perspective, a luxury brand is presumed: It is named a branded good or service that depends on the consumers' perception. Being a luxury brand deserves to have a high quality, a prestigious image that offers original value with material or emotional benefit, a prestigious image in

the market built on qualities such as craft, workmanship or service quality, and high prices should be sacrificed. In addition, luxury brands define a deep emotional bond with their consumers as a strategy (Ko, Costello, & Taylor, 2010). Luxury goods and luxury brands have different perceptions and forms in academia. Luxury products make possible their potential consumers' psychological and functional needs to be compensated, the primary factor discriminating luxury goods from non-luxury goods is related to satisfaction of psychological needs. In addition to these needs, luxury consumption is subjective because the benefit that is gained by the luxury products can change by situation (Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2009).

People who purchase luxury goods choose these products to impress the others, luxury consumption is made for social signaling targets. There are three main effects that cause people to prefer luxury consumption. Generally, a Veblen effect occurs when the consumer decides to buy luxury products because of its increasing price, consumer demand is parallel with the increasing price. The other important effect is the snob effect. It is explained by the preference of consumer to the goods increases when the quantity of these goods decreases. Snob effect is related to the passion for having a unique product to obtain prestige. Bandwagon effect influences the consumers' purchasing decision for luxury goods, when they notice the popular luxury goods are the goods everyone must have. Bandwagon effect on the consumption of luxury product has a relationship with the status consumption (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2011; Kastanakis & Balabanis 2012). Luxury consumption is significant for having social status and respect for some people. For instance, having a Hermes Birkin bag is the prestigious value for a woman. Women prove themselves with buying very expensive luxury bags and jewelry. A brand that is very popular in celebrities, influencers, bloggers causes consumers to purchase products

from this brand. Social media is a big power for luxury world. It is argued that social communications influence economic choices. Luxury good consumers are those who have brand loyalty and they want to be adopted by the high society or to revive a certain image.

Features of luxury consumption are different for people and countries; different countries have different reasons for buying luxury goods. They prove that luxury consumption consumers are motivated by the simulant key drivers on the economical, functional, personal and social formats of luxury. In addition to different countries' tendency to luxury consumption, high prices are linked to the highest quality, but, there is no scientifically relationship between having high prices and high quality (Rod, Rais, & Schwarz, 2015).

Kapferer (1997) claimed that the ingredients of a luxury brand like: “quality, beauty, sensuality, exclusivity, history, high price, and uniqueness”. While, Antoni et al. (2004) suggested critical factors: “excellence, brand aura, and desirability”. Reinmoller (2002) separates luxury goods from non-luxury goods by asserting that luxury products have high level of features whereas, Antoni et al. (2004) offer a list covering: “excellence, brand aura, and desirability”. Reinmoller (2002) distinguishes luxury products from standard by “use of material, processes, packaging, distribution and promotion” to ensure customers “pleasure and indulgence” feeling. Luxury products and brands are composed by the values that determine the critical success factors of luxury (Brun & Castelli, 2013). These factors are comprehended by the potential luxury consumer to sustain the consumption of luxury goods.

Excellence is significant value for the customers, and it is linked to superior quality of the luxury goods and related services which is critical to sustain premium payment from the customers. Brand aura is explained by the sustainable excellence

during the time. Brand aura authorizes the brand to obtain a powerful reputation. Consumers put the brand to the first class position. To acquire luxury status, powerful, recognizable, and lawful aura is required.

Desirability is the other value that is important for luxury brands. Luxury good firms must compose desirability and they must give importance to the sustainable desirability. The characteristic of desirability is the powerful aesthetic appeal. This aesthetic appeal is linked with traditional values, but it is known modern. High price is another attribute of desirability that empowers social status of the customers. In addition to all features, the rarity and uniqueness also increase the desirability for the customers (Brun & Castelli, 2013).

2.2 Conspicuous consumption

Conspicuous consumption is made to fulfill consumers' material needs and especially social needs like prestige. Social needs are almost significant like material needs for some people; conspicuous consumption has different advantages to the customers in social life.

Conspicuous goods companies like cars, bags, perfumes, watches bring to the fore their luxury goods' exclusivity, when the social needs of consumers are satisfied. In the literature, status and conspicuous consumption look the same, it is said that people who desire to have social status in the society prefer these items (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

The most famous suggestion is based on Veblen's theory, there is a common inclination to conspicuous consumption, the reason why wealthy people purchase expensive goods because of their expensivity is related to indicate their wealth. Veblen's theory alludes to positive linkage between consumers' wealth and

conspicuous consumption (Braun & Wicklun, 1989). Although the conspicuous consumption is significant, academic researches and theoretical models in this field are restricted. Customers prefer conspicuous consumption to prove their identities and this consumption improves one's sociable prestige via showing wealth signals and corresponding richness to others (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

A lot of evidence proposes that Blacks and Hispanics dedicated most of their spending for consumption goods that visible to other people. Cars, clothing, bags and jewelry are the items of visible consumption, unlike Blacks, White people give less importance to conspicuous consumption (Charles, Hurst & Roussanov, 2009; Rod, Rais, & Schwarz, 2015). There is also another dimension that determines the conspicuous consumption. Women are the critical individuals of this status world. It is hypothesized that some women orient expensive products to give signal to the other women, flashy handbags and shoes from famous luxury designer brands help women to prove themselves and their reputation (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014).

To market luxury fashion companies' sustainability principles and endeavors to prosocial millennials, it is significant to give the luxury and sustainability message of the luxury brand for the now and the future (Rolling & Sadachar, 2018).

Impressions could influence another customer's behavior toward the luxury brand (Asch, 1946). Also impressions and expectations about the luxury goods have been exposed to the changes. When the time passed, luxury consumption attitudes, the nature and the classification of luxury products have shifted over time. Since the early 1990s, the marketing management of the luxury products and services has been expanding and changing in a crucial way. Luxury is an unstable category because the steadily changing nature of luxury products market, it is also taken into consideration as component of the cycle for luxury fashion. To satisfy the expanding consumer

market of luxury goods, it is significant to sustain expanded product offerings (Borstrock, 2014 & Wu, Chen, & Nguyen, 2015). It is significant to describe the luxury time period that was common and it has been enriched by the comments and understandings that shapes today luxury concept. The eighteenth century as luxury was founded is an important starting point. To give meaning the luxury consumption, it is critical to understand value of the luxury and its history (Borstrock, 2014). In these periods, luxury goods were discriminated like ornamental building, furniture, books, pictures, inexpensive jewels and baubles (Berg & Clifford, 1999).

2.3 Classification of luxury products

Today's luxury content has changed a lot with the changing dynamics of the world. Expensive bags, shoes, cars, private jets, designer clothes, jewellery, travels and even self-care products brands are the goods and services of today's luxury consumption. However, in this thesis, all luxury goods will not be taken into account, selected items of luxury consumption are focused and examined. These luxury fashion items that are taken into account in this thesis are designer bags and shoes, clothes. Jewellery brands like Chopard, Van Cleef Arpels, Cartier and Bulgari, expensive watches like Patek Philippe, Richard Mille are significant for luxury consumption, however, in this thesis, research is done in Turkey, existence of the stores and awareness of the selected brands are crucial, they are not taken into account to the research. Many previous studies that have been conducted for the luxury fashion consumption, they have given more focus on the supply side in their studies.

There is also another classification about luxury in the literature: new luxury and old luxury. New luxury is described as having quality, taste desire with high levels than normal fashion product, but, they do not have unreachable expensivity.

However, old luxury is related to exclusiveness, they are not accessible for every rich people. Goods' prices are located to only top 1 to 2 percent of customers that can be afforded by them (Fiske & Silverstein, 2005).

Hence, to represent specifically selected and certain data related to the brand for assistance to the consumers that generate the covetable impression can affect consumer behaviors to a brand. Buckley (2015) argued that marketers of luxury sector must have conscious for focusing on luxury market customers' aspirations and impressions, this situation is significant to be understood that every generation has own luxury experiences and feelings. For instance, the Y generation gives importance to the sustainability, consuming luxury fashion products in a sustainable way is significant and positive behavior for this generation. Different generations and periods can have different luxury perspectives and characteristics. However, the luxury brand with sustainable principles can be observed negatively by the some luxury customer groups (Rolling & Sadachar, 2018).

Technology is developing and consumer behaviors are changing over the time, many famous luxury brands like Chanel have oriented to digital communication, also another iconic luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Tiffany regularly make their sales online. However, the digitalization trend is not been limited in an online way, digitalization is the rich term, it encompasses many new experiences physical and online, for instance Burberry has applied digitalization to the classical brand outlets. Marketers of luxury fashion must have recognition about the significance of digitalization, digital channels contribute to the development of the brand, it is known as a strategy for brand management. Digital marketing is crucial strategic subject for the luxury brands and it is not the additional point for the company's strategies, digital marketing requires well- focused projects to reach

global success (Heine & Berghaus, 2014). The reason why classification of luxury has modified much over time can be explained by the digitalization. The world has become different after the digitalization, so the aspirations, needs, wants of the luxury brand customers have changed.

To understand the classification of luxury products, the research has been conducted by setting a threshold, and with determined variables in the article. Product fashionableness, brand reputation, selling volume per year, product complexity (high or low), and company size are the variables to understand the classification, some variables are highly connected to the literature, but some variables reflect different characteristics from country to country. Also, outsourcing strategies of the brands are different, luxury brand companies sometimes prefer the outsourcing strategies to reach the professional skills and competencies that are experted, this outsourcing strategy can be related to CSF. According to this paper, sustainability of the high standards for the luxury brand can be achieved with paying attention to supply chain processes, also this view is related to Bernard Arnault's (CEO of the LVMH group) recommendation for the success of global luxury brands (Caniato et al., 2011).

Categorization of luxury brands is observed. For instance, categorization has two main ways for the brand's logo, signature, and trading marks. The significance of brand is referring to a brand's logo with dissimilar conspicuousness levels. Some luxury brands prefer visible, huge logos for their products. Consumers who are willing to purchase these logos are accepted conspicuous, opulent, pretentious, gaudy, and logo-oriented consumers. It is important to show luxury brand's logo easily, or trading marks are requirement when they purchase a luxury product. These types of consumers want to see their status in the eyes of other segmented people.

Unlike this type of consumers, some consumers give prominence to the product's functionality, they are known as less conspicuous consumers. Low brand significance does not indicate that the consumer wants a low status, the aspiration can be related to private status. Manufacturers of the luxury goods want to reply these contrasts in customers. They produce the quiet and loud designs of the luxury products (Han et al., 2010). Loud version for brands is related to have logos and signatures that are visible, but, quiet version of products are not ostensible (Bagheri, 2014). "Loud" consumers who prefer products with visible logos are the example of conspicuous consumption. Brands have different strategies, some brands prefer to sustain their luxury products' exclusiveness, they decrease the store number, they target to be unreachable; however, some brands follow different policy with opening new stores to reach many customers. This situation can be explained by the brand preference about being accessible or inaccessible (Wu et al., 2015).

Scarcity value is a significant strategy for the luxury brands apply. Luxury products manufacturers aim to introduce limited editions to serve exclusivity to the customers of niche market. Luxury brands distinguish these ultra-luxury collections with exclusiveness in distribution and high prices, these ultra-luxe products have limited number and they locate on specific stores, so it is difficult to reach these luxury products. Inaccessible luxury is observed more elitist luxury. For instance, some brands like Burberry and Gucci have introduced limited edition handbags as a marketing strategy (Walley et al., 2013 & Wu et al., 2015). Nowadays individuals can purchase a bag, an expensive watch, a pair of shoes from the specific luxury brands to indicate their social classes. These luxury brands are seen the symbol of high status and wealth for some people. A woman who carries a Gucci hobo bag gives much different signals about her social status that a woman who has a Coach

hobo bag. Coach brand is observed more accessible to the consumers than Italian brand Gucci (Han et al. 2010). To have superior conclusions, in this thesis, survey consists of both inaccessible and accessible luxury with different luxury brands. The brands that were selected as luxury brands must have the luxury product attributes, they are carefully selected and researched. The researchers claimed that the concept of luxury is unstable. Its changeable nature is influenced by time and culture. In the past, luxury was linked with champagne, caviar, designer dresses and expensive cars, but now this term is more ambiguous. Affluence is increasing and the luxury consumption is not only preferred by the elite segment because of the effects of social media and increasing luxury consumption. To give meaning of the change is significant to predict the future and customers' expectations (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2018).

2.4 History of luxury

Sub-cultures, demographic variables like gender and geographic location and time influence the concept of luxury customers' purchasing behavior (Jain, Roy & Ranchhod, 2015). Moreover, cultural norms affect consumers' purchasing motivation for luxury goods, while the symbolic attributes of the luxury brands are influenced by the cultural differences (Christodoulies, Michaelidou & Li, 2009). Differences in financial, social, cultural and demographic circumstances are influencing to be reached different data and conclusions in different time and economic periods. Comprehending the development and the changes of the luxury concept from past to now is significant to resolve and analyze the behavior of luxury consumption. The roots and the history of luxury consumption must be critically examined and understood to give meaning to whole articles and researches. This

thesis targets to inform about luxury consumption for fashion sector after coronavirus in the case of Turkey with giving wider information. Like other analyses that have been conducted for luxury consumption, the luxury consumption should be examined with historical roots and its evolution specifically.

Related with this luxury subject, social arrangements in one country may influence another country's attitudes in different ways. Luxury alterations that are political and sociable can lead to domino effect. For instance, French Revolution had almost affected whole European and eastern countries with respect to economical and sociological perspectives. Societies' behavior from the socioeconomic perspective is influenced by revolutions that are industrial. French Revolution has radically affected luxury consumption habits. Although conspicuous consumption and desires for luxury consumption were common in France, luxury atmosphere was only appropriate for UK and functionality was convenient for Russia and UK. Every country has adopted luxury consumption in different ways. Trader class with high level of manufacturing actions empowered another classes for luxury consumption. This situation has led to access upper class standards and luxury consumption for lower classes (Ramos, 2011 & Jain, Roy, & Ranchhod, 2015).

The sector of clothing has been exposed to the most noticeable changes; volatility has occurred in this area of clothing. The importance of dressing in Paris from working class has prominently increased in the century. The importance of clothing has increased at different rates for different classes of women (working classes and non-working classes). Specifically, women had more dresses if their income level was over the poorest class. Fashion has been associated with femininity in the eighteenth century. The objective of clothing has changed for a century. While clothing has symbolizing a status of person, it has turned into indication of fashion

for women. However, these changes has led to criticism about lower- class tailoring arrogance that it was hard to comment and to evaluate an individual's class according to his/her dressing style. Except for the very poor people, many people have accessed to the luxury goods and services that were once reached by the elites in France from the 1730s to the Revolution. Anxieties for luxury can be followed to the startings of registered Western history. From Genesis through Plato to Augustine, this notion has been adapted to many cultural environments until the beginnings of nineteenth century while preserving primary binary associations: ambition for the unnecessary products and communal chaos. Luxury notion has been the center of intense attention and interpretation in France during the eighteenth century (Maza, 1997).

Evolution is defined as comprehending change and how its drivers are happening as the studies that are branch or futuristic (Mannermaa, 1991). Luxury notion is unstable and the luxury changes against time and culture. Formerly, luxury was combined with champagnes, caviars, designer dresses and expensive cars. In today's era of increasing wealth, luxury is indefinite and luxury is no longer the property of the elite. Hence, to predict the future it is significant to give meaning to the change of luxury. Luxury fashion industry has been exposed to a modification from tailoring clothes to ready to wear haute couture clothes to the available fashion model. Increasing income and the associated wealth growth have become the propulsive force of the society. It is an important sign of success for society and it has a task to support consumers related to firms, luxury brands and governments. The importance of old-time luxury values like tradition and nobility has decreased. Nowadays luxury has turned into the notions about experience, authenticity, high quality of life and monetary value lost its dominance. Desire and experience have gained focus, it is also explained by the emphasis on personal processes like travel

and self-care. However, it is hard to describe luxury in these days because the luxury language has transformed. Expensivity in today's luxury is not seen as a necessary dimension, it focuses on to reach a mass market, not traditional market. It is based on personality, authenticity and experience (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2018).

Returning to Classical Greek opinion, to sustain a luxury life was an anxiety because of the belief that luxury was not healthy, nurturing femininity and luxury life was harmful for people and society. Men who sustained a luxury life were seen feminine and weak, they have thought about these men as an unfavorable to be a warrior, to defend polis (country in ancient Greece). In addition, luxury was perceived to provoke malevolent aspirations that moved society beyond need satisfaction concerns. Aspirations were unlimited and grasping, so, they were quite different from the basic needs, and they have caused unjustified comparison, jealousy and discussion, desire for luxury consumption had to be controlled. Plato viewed luxury consumption as a threat for society's system and order, luxury was an issue to be required control and arrangement. The Romans adopted significant thought and conjectures on luxury consumption from the Greek, but they extended this luxury field with their self -subjects and to arrange this field, they have developed institutionalization tools. Roman moralists and legislators were interested in luxury issues. Their debates on merit and deterioration appeared in reply to the collapse of Rome perception and also caused to the first laws of consumption. Luxury was perceived as a tool to satisfy private desires rather than public expenditure, they have commented that private luxury encouraged ambition and greedy and it could damage to the society order (Csaba, 2008).

Plato's idea has continued for years. Luxury was thought to impoverish a society. Aristotle has expanded on Plato's opinion by noting that the scramble for

luxury consumption has caused to rising pressure on the country to push war to satisfy whole luxurious wants. Luxury hypothesis has gained a tremendous popularity as weakening power after the Roman Empire has collapsed. Luxury lifestyle was seen the main reason of the collapse of the Roman Empire. The theory of weakness has been developed by the medieval Church Fathers. From the sins perspectives, the Platonian argument has been christianized. The French revolution meant not only a radical turning point for French power balances; it has become the orientation of luxury consumption. Rising of capitalism has had a strong relationship with luxury consumption (Hilton, 2004). With the French Revolution, this soundless revolution showed itself. Luxury consumption behaviors are triggered by capitalism. Rising of the trade relations has created a rich bourgeoisie class. Materially, they were able to adapt to the consumption behaviors of the nobility, however the combination of luxury consumption types and location has damaged to the increasing of their position. The French revolution has changed the construction and nature of the luxury, the relationship between power, location and luxury has been ended and the luxury consumption has become more reachable (Mortelmans, 2005).

Thorstein Veblen has discovered the term that is related to consumption attitudes more than a century ago in his book (*Theory of the Leisure Class*). Even though his classic book was seen as a criticism for meaningless consumer attitudes in capitalist world, Veblen stated that the showing off with luxury goods has realised throughout societies and ages (Sundie, Kenrick, Griskevicius, Tybur, Vohs & Beal, 2011).

Veblen's thoughts and theories were not the initial concepts. Several theories of Thorstein Veblen appear in continuing discussions or they are used in modern researches. His conspicuous consumption notion has been selective exception. While

he was the inventor of the concept, he definitely isn't the primary economist to compose writings about such an attitude. Adam Smith commented about the wealth is the desire for richness based on the thinking and good thought about richness, also, Karl Marx stated that conspicuous consumption could be evaluated as a work obligation and a sign of confidence to gain more capital (Memushi, 2013).

Conspicuous consumption is common attitude for many economists, sociologists, marketers and psychologists, and it has been thought the component of daily language. The notion is generally utilized in an indefinite descriptive meaning to refer to the consumption types that are not utility, or simply to those that are considered excessive, luxury, or wasteful. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the issue, scientific studies that have been sustained in this topic are low. In fact, although there are some views about conspicuous consumption, the starting of the literature review of this field has been seen with a Veblen work. Veblen describes (and makes negative comments) conspicuous consumption and conspicuous leisure, and he stated that this consumerism of social-class is wasteful and profitless, Conspicuous consumption does not add benefits for economy and productivity. A notion has been explained by the attitude of consumers who prefer to purchase goods with high price while they have a chance to prefer cheaper products with similar satisfaction –Veblen effect- demonstrates the significance of Veblen's work. The Veblen effect has been noted in many studies (Memushi, 2013; Rod et al., 2015).

He determines the behavior that affects to people's decision for conspicuous consumption, this decision is influenced by not only direct effects, but also this consumption decision is affected by indirect effects from following societies' preferences. To extend Veblen's opinion, it can be said that there are two segments of people who are willing to pay for luxury products: Snobs and Followers. Snobs

pay more money for the luxury products to feel wealthy although the product has the same quality. Followers are another group of luxury consumption that make extra payments to take an example by their role models. Demand for luxury consumption is usually determined by another people's demands. When a luxury good or service is essential, it is seen an increase in demand, while the expensivity of the product rises, people prefer more consumption. There is a particular benefit to competing for a commodity which is uncommon and limited. Someone's utility and benefits are connected to others' utility. Individuals' decisions for luxury consumption have been affected by the sociological concepts like the social status (Rod et al., 2015).

2.5 The counterfeit market and the luxury goods

Luxury consumption is evaluated as a behavior that can be good or bad from the economical and sociological perspectives, eventually this consumption has been taken into account with encouraging reasons. Determination of the exact reason for luxury consumption is a bit complicated. Sometimes, the reason of behavior can not be explained by the one effect. More than one factor can influence the luxury consumption. Consumer's behavior for luxury consumption is affected by the changes in economic conditions, different time periods, some crises and even consumers's psychology. It could be said that the majority of those who prefer luxury consumption are young people. Advances in technology changed the luxury consumption behaviors as a whole. Some companies offer opportunities to their customers to rent a luxury product such as dresses and expensive bags for special occasions.

There is another important issue that has an effect on preference for luxury consumption, counterfeit market and counterfeit goods. Clothes, designer shoes and

bags, expensive watches and jewelry are known as the most remarkable items of counterfeit market. The products of many world-famous fashion brands like Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Burberry, Prada, Hermes, Chanel, Dior, Saint Laurent are usually imitated. There are many studies that have focused on the counterfeit goods' supply part in contrast to demand side. There are some elements that influence the buying decision of customers between counterfeits and non-counterfeit goods. Luxury fashion designer products are imitated across the world (Yoo & Lee, 2009).

People prefer to purchase luxury brands and counterfeits because they see the luxury consumption as a signal of social status and value expression. Counterfeit products are selected because people want to pay less for same appearance (Rod et al., 2015). However, there are some people that are against the use of imitating products, they believe that purchasing fake products is deceiving themselves. In contrast to this opinion, there are some people who evaluate purchasing counterfeit goods as a logical behavior, and they choose to pay less for same function. This counterfeit market is also a sector all around the world.

The purpose of selling imitating luxury goods is actually to do business of the goods that have low quality and non-original instead of high quality, original goods. Counterfeiting of famous fashion brands and the designs' copying are different, they are examined in different law rules linking to copyright and trademarks of fashion products' designs. However, brand counterfeiting imitates the whole product design and whole authenticator marks of brand so that they pass as original in the market. When consumers have a conscious about purchasing original brand product, advocacy behavior starts (Wall & Large, 2010).

Information and behavior have influenced the buying behavior of customers for non-counterfeit goods. Education and marketing campaigns have struggled to

diminish the effects of purchasing counterfeiting products and to orient customers for original apparel products. People who have information, behavior and concern about counterfeit goods do not prefer imitations of luxury products (Marcketti & Shelley, 2009). Eventually, existence of counterfeit goods has a negative influence on luxury brands' products. However, to analyze of the consumers' behavior is not easy, tests are needed to measure the behavior.

2.6 Covid-19 pandemic crisis and its effect on luxury fashion sector

Understanding the luxury consumption is difficult, there are many motivators to construct luxury attitudes. However; economical, functional, individual and social elements change from one country to another country. Also, after Covid-19 pandemic has occurred, different countries have had taken different measures to be protected by the Covid-19 outbreak. Luxury sector has been severely affected by coronavirus, but, every country has applied different restrictions and rules during pandemic. So it can be said that from country to country, luxury consumption has been influenced differently across the world.

When the Covid-19 outbreak has occurred in the beginning of 2020, consumers' behavior for shopping has converted from common attitude for shopping to stocking behavior. Because of the safety measures for Covid-19 outbreak like falling in store accessibility, demand for different distribution channels has increased. Social distance regulations have created greater impact on customers' preferred shopping channels. In addition to these variations in shopping channels, people have enjoyed and informed about the online shopping and its safety in the case of pandemic even they are members of the old generation. Safety measures and restrictions for staying home during the pandemic have caused many orders for

delivery and this situation has led to business expansion by tens of percent. Online shopping rate for Czech Republic has increased from 39% to 54% compared to previous year. The Covid-19 outbreak has affected businesses across the world. Increasing of online shopping and online stores have damaged to the companies, this process has been thought to shape to the companies to be taken decision to close physical stores and to change usual shopping behaviors. Individual groups who were born in identical period and shared similar values, opinions and expectations are belong to same generations and belonging to a certain generational group determines the luxury consumption behaviors and online shopping behavior. Generation is also a significant factor that plays role in luxury consumption even after pandemic (Eger, Komárková, Egerová, & Mičík, 2021).

Covid-19 outbreak and extended effects of the coronavirus have altered the balance of world in an only few months. Individuals' lives have changed after pandemic and this Covid-19 outbreak damaged to the world economy. Coronavirus outbreak's long-time influences are not established, but its effects on retailing are critical. Foods, vegetables and health are necessities to be served by their retailers. In this outbreak period, these goods are demanded more when they are served to the customers at home while some difficulties were sustaining like inventory, management of supply chain, delivering to the customers and sustaining their actions with safety rules. In addition to these necessary goods and services, non-obligatory goods like clothes and shoes have experienced a significant decrease in sales, and new methods in online shopping are developed to access and to convince consumers to keep their existence. Some product ingredients have been changed by manufacturers and retailers to fulfill the demands that have been occurred after Covid-19 outbreak. To sustain the existence in this non-obligatory goods market, it is

significant to compensate short-term expectations and forecasting what will happen for retailers after Covid-19 outbreak.

While the pandemic was occurring, some new attitudes were accepted by retailers and consumers and these behaviors became the new-normal. Retailers have arranged the attributes of their supply chain, inventory and delivery. They have aimed to be more efficient and serving customers successfully, it is significant to perceive modifications and their effects to conclusion. After the covid-19 outbreak, new economic reality has occurred. Economies have depressed and job losses have increased across the world. Because of the job losses, customers have started to spend less than before, and this situation has damaged to other businesses and people who had a regular job. Luxury and high-end brand consumption has been affected worse during this pandemic than value-oriented brand consumption. It is significant to distinguish essential item and luxury item in the eyes of customers, also, their consideration about what is luxury is prominent. Constructing luxury brands and keeping relationships with customers in an online way have gained importance after Covid-19 outbreak. Also, there is another important issue that can be related to behaviors after pandemic crisis is protecting employees' health and safety. Some questions for Covid-19 measurements are about wearing masks for customers and employees, using more robots to protect employees from the close communication with customers. The personalization-privacy paradox is a marketing issue that has been debated for many times, this paradox likely could change its direction to health-privacy dispute. To measure customers' temperature prior to entering a store and getting their privacy data and current location are the discussed topic at the beginning of the pandemic (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020).

Europe luxury market remained in steady in the early two and a half months of the year even though there were significant differences across countries. The Italian market has been affected worst because quarantines have caused to double-digit sales decreases in the country. First periods of the pandemic, owing to tourism and consistent local demand, sales generally increased in France, Spain, Germany and the UK. Before the restrictions in these regions have been brought to provide safety and to prevent the spread of the virus, customers' trust has been shaken. Closing of many stores and safety measurements in various countries have changed the way of shopping to online. Even the American luxury market has been severely damaged during the pandemic period (D'Arpizio, Levato, Fenili, Colacchio & Prete, 2020).

2.6.1 Some strategies for luxury brands

Large number of luxury fashion brands that have entered to the market with declining sales due to economic recession have caused to some difficulties for luxury companies. Based on an extended past and tradition, luxury brands nevertheless led the way in significant trends. They have been located as the top of the fashion stream in customers' opinion, but they affected the remainder of the industry with high esthetic value and improvement with sustaining traditional methods of luxury fashion management. Luxury fashion brands have trusted their traditional ateliers, at the same time, they did not neglect to follow the trending and popular styles. Luxury fashion management reinvented innovative style not only into core products, but also customer relationship management, marketing strategies and more with today's strategies. Due to luxury fashion industry is perceived with superior value, high return and loyal customers, competition started to be triggered by downstream

industries. To sustain luxury brand's quality at the same standard globally is difficult thing for luxury industries. Following the effective marketing strategies is significant for future of the luxury brand. Because of the intensity in the industry, some luxury brands have started to seek unexplored markets in China to compensate their low sales in Europe and America. Efficient retail network and launch of second brand series are also other strategies that luxury fashion industries follow. Luxury fashion brands followed the some strategies like collaboration with celebrities, famous luxury designers, and artists to deliver unique value to their loyal consumers. To obtain their customers again, luxury brand companies prefer to open temporary stores and to launch limited products. Nowadays social media is a big power, and luxury fashion companies have passed to new social media strategies to attract customers' attention and communication with customers in online. Using some social media sites like Twitter and Facebook was the very common behavior for many luxury fashion brand, this strategy is considered as a business development tool. As luxury fashion brands and customers keep and make strong relationships through social media sites, innovation of technology has added utility to the luxury fashion industry. Moreover, luxury brands can promote themselves and give information in daily communication with customers. Initially, the luxury market took an inactive behavior for technological strategies and their attractive power for customers and did not think to work these online strategies. Luxury brands feared technology would rule them. Eventually, technology is a big power, and it could be thought as a threat, but, sustaining a successful marketing strategy, technology is obligatory. Globally famous luxury designer houses like Louis Vuitton is conducting online fashion shows broadcasting, some brands like Chanel, Gucci and Ralph Lauren have created their applications working with Apple. Also, many luxury houses have social media

accounts, and they post their daily activities and their products online. Because technology is keeping relationships with customers without restrictions, outdated one-way communication has abandoned. In today's world, customers have many alternatives that can be chosen, this situation is also possible for luxury fashion industry. Being loyal to a certain luxury brand is quite difficult. So, brands should follow current and effective marketing strategies, and they need to keep powerful relationships with their consumers (Kim & Ko, 2010).

2.7 Motivators of luxury consumption

To give meaning the existence of counterfeit goods and consumption, it is significant to understand the roots of this behavior, they are encouraged by financial, functional, personal and social elements like luxury consumption. Differences in spending money for luxury goods depend on the culture, location and individuals' characteristics. These variations can be explained by cross- country differences. To exemplify, personal aspects are significant for India, Brazil, Italy and the USA. German customers are motivated by high quality and performance, these characteristics are related to functionality. Also, unlike Spain and Italy, consumers in India are more likely to perceive others' luxury brand perceptions. Expensivity and exclusivity are the significant factors for French customers. Luxury consumers are categorized by four different sets. Luxury lovers who are willing to be special to compensate their strong desires. The second one is status-seeking people who aim to influence other individuals, they give less importance to functionality. Also, there are some consumer groups, the satisfied unpretentious who purchase luxury goods for personal reasons. Lastly, rational functionalist buys luxury items only for products' quality. Age is determinant factor for luxury, because younger people are willing to

purchase highly expensive luxury products for status and reputation (Rod et al., 2015).

Luxury fashion consumption, individuals' income and wealth are connected. If a person with low income gives attention to conspicuous consumption and social status, he/she likely could purchase the counterfeit goods. Money is determinant factor for people. Sometimes, people's characteristics and opinions about paying much money for luxury products can influence the buying decision. Some people prefer to buy imitations of luxury fashion items even though they have enough money. This situation occurs not because there is not enough money, but because people think that those products do not deserve that money just because of the brand and label. By purchasing imitation products, they find a solution to their concerns about the necessity of wearing a luxury brand in front of the society. Factors such as a person's character, age, family he grew up in, manners, education, city of residence, use of social media, circle of friends, and the value he attaches to originality in the brand determine whether the person will buy the original products of luxury world brands. However, some people feel that when they buy imitations of luxury goods, they do not respect themselves and devalue themselves. It has been found in many academic studies that people who are intensely fond of luxury consumption frequently prefer these products for psychological reasons such as the feeling of worthlessness in their subconscious. Although low-income or do not have a reasonable income to access those luxury brand products, many people try to have these products for different motivations. Luxury consumption is a very difficult and complex subject to explain based on many different dynamics.

Detailed and extensive researches are needed to indicate motivations of customers for luxury fashion goods. Individuals' perception of luxury value and

motivators for luxury fashion brand depend not only on status, success, difference, and a number of social conditions of people expectations to affect individuals, but they are also linked to the financial, functional, and individual aspects of the luxury brand. Luxury consumption can be explained by social and individual values in concur with functional and financial values, it is significant to locate whole cognitive and emotional aspects together. Financial dimension is directly related to economic issues. It deals directly with the monetary aspects that can be stated in dollars and cents. Price value and high-quality relationship are kept positively while purchasing luxury fashion product (Wiedmann et al., 2007).

Functional dimension is based on luxury items' self-benefits like product's quality, being rare, long-term availability of the product, having an aesthetic look, and being a product that does not harm the environment. This attribute of the luxury products is related to long-term availability, product's quality and rarity values. Long-term availability of the product provides confidence and logical preference to the customers when they choose to purchase an expensive product. Product's quality is the attribute that distinguishes luxury products from non-luxury products, privileges of the products and realizing brand's promises for customers can be linked to product quality (Wiedmann et al., 2007).

Individual dimension is linked to customers' personal attributes like hedonism, materialistic behaviors and self-identification attitudes that affect luxury fashion consumption. This consumption is mostly realized by the consumers to feed their inner desires. Hedonic value is mostly associated with personal satisfaction and pleasure while using these highly expensive luxury products. People who have materialistic needs and character prefer possessions of these luxury products. Self-identification attitude is associated with integration of symbolic attribute of luxury

item and customers' identity. Social dimension is related to the social image, having a prestige, accessing to high status in the society, to follow role-models and reputation. To purchase the luxury fashion products due to social dimension is based on keeping powerful social image in the society. Conspicuous consumption and concerns for being prestigious can determine the purchasing behavior. Conspicuous consumption is associated with having a status and brand-oriented value judgments. This factor is very effective as it is believed that buying these luxury goods will determine the position of people in society. However, prestige value is perceived as a signature in a person's quality of life, since the condition of being prestigious is required in order to be included in social classes and groups (Wiedmann et al., 2007). Many studies research about the effect of consumers' gender as a motivator that determines the luxury consumption behavior. Many of the studies indicate the relationship between gender and hedonic values for luxury consumption. Women are inclined to purchase more luxury products than men because of their hedonic motives. In physical stores and online shopping, women are willing to purchase luxury items in contrast to men. Impressive motives that cause luxury products' purchasing are more prominent for women. Gender is significant factor for luxury fashion consumption. Many French and Italian fashion brand companies highly focus on female customers, and a proportional majority of collections and fashion shows are primarily targeted at women. Classical economic theory accepts logically behaved individuals and purchasing behavior for luxury products depends on the increasing benefits, it doesn't explain the rationale behind the money spent on expensive luxury goods, even though there are more affordable products with almost the same features. However, as seen in many academic studies, there are actually psychological reasons behind luxury consumption. Expressive and impressive

dimensions of purchasing luxury behavior are the values that cause to motivate people for world-renowned luxury brands. People who want to feel important and valuable in the eyes of the others prefer these impressive motivators. They believe luxury consumption as a signal of wealth, high status and reputation. Mostly, three important dimensions that push people to buy luxury products can be explained by being rare, the desire for convenience, and the want for communicate one's own identity. Consumers of luxury fashion brands want to be fully satisfied and reward them in the best way they believe they deserve (Hudders, 2012).

Purchasing behavior of consumers for expensive luxury fashion products can be explained by expressive and impressive motivators. Cheap items have sometimes similar functionalities with luxury items, but, they do not give psychological satisfaction to the customers. When people want to describe themselves to the important individuals, using expressive motivators as a communicator works in these situations. Luxury goods are observed as an interactive tool to express people's identity and status in the society. People who prefer luxury items mostly choose these goods because of their psychological meanings in the society. The masses who prefer luxury consumption products invest their money in these products because they believe that using that product represents quality and wealth in front of the society, not functionality. People who prefer to buy luxury products evaluate the products' utility as a psychological satisfaction, high status and social acceptance. The luxury fashion goods are seen as communication tool. This type of communication gives some messages related to wealth, status and people's character. In fact, the roots of luxury are based on expressing people's wealth, status and reputation in the society with some expensive items. These can be realized by providing exclusiveness feeling in the goods and selling high price goods to the

customers. Mainly by purchasing luxury goods communicating stems from the need to feel belonging to a certain class. This type of people perceives having the luxury items as a sign of status and identity. Many marketing strategies use these expressive motivators to attract customers' attention for luxury goods. They arranged marketing campaigns, advertisements and collaborations with using these expressive motivators. Giving signal to other people with using these products is prominent, but customers also choose these products to reach premium quality. Hedonic value of luxury goods is supporting tool of communication in the society. Many companies use the power of expressive motivators to increase their profits and sales. To understand the luxury consumption, it is significant to comprehend the underlying causes of this consumption (White, 2015).

Basic classification is done to denote individual, social, functional and economical values as fundamental elements of luxury consumption. However, different classifications and categorizations are used in research to fully understand the existing values and data. The underlying reason for luxury consumption can be complex and may be caused by many reasons, or it can be caused by a single reason or desire that is not comprehensive.

Utilitarian, hedonic, expressive, relational and cost/sacrifice values are explained by the reasons that cause to customers' buying decision for luxury fashion goods and as this framework is generic in nature its application for luxury goods requires further development.

In order to understand the underlying theoretical relationships, many studies on luxury consumption need to be examined. Utilitarian value is mostly related to functionality, usability and superiority of the product and craftsmanship can be given the example of utilitarian value. The symbolic/expressive value is examined together

by the effects of bandwagon, snob and Veblen effects. Also having a status and prestige in the society, feeling special and wealthy and having a certain identity in public are associated with symbolic/expressive value. In addition, the desire for self-reward, having original pieces and self-worth can be considered as a natural result of this value. Hedonic value can be linked to some feelings like enjoyment and contentment because of having aesthetic items that customers experience when they purchase these luxury products. Some strategies that brands follow to keep strong relationships with their customers and to gain their loyalty and trust form the basis of relational value. This value type is associated with brand's communication with the society and the customers, some individuals give important to relationships and services that luxury brands provide. Cost/sacrifice value claims to offer its customers unique rare products with a perfectionist approach (Tynan et al., 2010).

There are many studies that aim to indicate the relationship between customer value and brand. To show relationship between brand and customer values, some studies and surveys were conducted. Luxury fashion brands like bags, shoes are different from another luxury items like car, wine and luxury hotels. Customer value for luxury fashion is categorized under four main values. These are utilitarian, hedonic, symbolic and economic values. Although the luxury fashion sector is further categorized in four basic values, these four basic values are also classified into subgroups within themselves. Utilitarian value is divided into two categories, excellence and functional. Aesthetics, pleasure and experience values build hedonic value. Symbolic value is classified with two values. The main four value model for customer value and brand relationship is more superficial than subcategorized models. Luxury fashion products consumption has more relationship with utilitarian value than hedonic value, this situation is explained by the aesthetic appearance of

luxury fashion consumer goods is the main condition. Price is determinant for prestige, and also social values and conspicuous values are categorized differently according to this factor. When a customer associates high price and being more prestigious, conspicuous consumption works at this point. However, if there is no direct proportion between price and prestige or if they are independent of each other, then we can talk about the effect of social value. There exists a relationship between brand value is perceived as a tool for self-expression. The personality of brands and their expressive power in front of the public are believed. Also, in this luxury fashion products' consumption, functionality of the product is less important than product's symbolic and social brand value (Jung Choo et al., 2012).

Luxury products' customers buy highly expensive products despite not being in a wealthy position to pay these high prices. At a time when today's social media is so widespread and luxury consumption products are a symbol of prestige, it is no longer difficult to reach luxury even for low-income people. The luxury fashion products are preferred to determine people's status and value in the society, especially luxury bags and shoes for women are purchased to be shared on their social media accounts. Economic dimension of these products is not a problem for this type of people that have psychological drivers for luxury products. Hedonic utilities of luxuries are important as well as status and prestige. (Hudders, 2012). Characteristics of people, brand recognition and motivators of luxury consumption behavior are taken into account when determining the relationship between the consumption of luxury fashion products and the effects of generation, age, sex and country differences.

Customers of Generation Y are increasing group and they have invested their money for luxury fashion products in the United States market. Although this

Generation Y is quite young, they consume more luxury than older generations.

When the baby boomer generation looked at it, luxury to them meant aristocracy and just unnecessary expensive pricing. Generation Y consumers evaluate luxury fashion consumption as a right. Although their economic situation is not suitable for luxury consumption products, they do not consider luxury as an inaccessible and special consumption (Giovannini et al., 2015).

Generation Y gives importance to materialistic behaviors, purchasing luxury products for status and brand consciousness. Public self-consciousness and brand consciousness are associated in a positive way. Also, this generation has a high self-esteem. Public self-consciousness is explained by taking purchasing decision about luxury fashion consumption according to the guidance and purchasing behavior of the people around. However, being brand conscious and being loyal to brand are not the same attributes. Generation Y is not attached to their habits like the older generation people. This situation also affects luxury brand consumption habits. Brand self-congruency is related to consume luxury fashion products that customers keep powerful connection. Sometimes brands are likened to people and people may prefer brands that they find close to themselves and like because of this factor (Giovannini et al., 2015).

The parents of Generation Y have been known as “helicopter parents” who had better economic conditions (Fingerman et al., 2009). Generation Y prefers luxury fashion products for brand consciousness and status. There is a relationship between high levels of materialism and status consumption. Also, another dimension is reference group. People who are more motivated by reference group prefer intensely luxury consumption. Prestige sensitivity is the other dimension that affects people’s luxury decisions positively (Kim & Jang, 2014). Differences in country and

culture also affect the consumers' luxury purchasing behavior. Some motivators for luxury consumption behavior can be different among countries and cultures even when other conditions like individuals' age and gender are held constant (Wu et al, 2015).

Women give more importance to purchasing luxury products than men. Differences in gender on luxury products' consumption is related to expressive value of these luxury items. When a luxury good has a public self-consciousness, women's status motives come into play at this point. For example, lipstick, foundation cream and mascara consumption are considered more necessary than facial cleansers. This situation can be explained as putting the opinions of others ahead of their own skin health (Hudders, 2012).

2.8 Cross cultural consumer perspective differences

It is often argued that the motivation for reaching to high status can be provided by the preservation of the "face", this concept is common behavior in Asian cultures. This face concept is the tool of communication and characteristic behavior in Eastern cultures. Western and Eastern customers purchase goods for different psychological reasons. Western customers give more importance to individuality in contrast to social concerns. However, Eastern countries focus on the status and power displaying publicly, and they purchase these luxury goods to prove themselves in front of the public. They choose luxury products according to expressive motives. In contrast to the United Kingdom, young female customers in Taiwan will invest more of their money for luxury consumption. Because they observe this consumption as a necessary situation for self-identity in their culture, they will be motivated more to purchase these goods. Also, in Turkey, people spend their money for luxury

consumption to indicate their position in the society by these products. This is a habit of collectivist society (Wu et al, 2015).

Country's luxury purchasing behavior tendency is related to cultural values. Street survey been conducted in United Kingdom. The luxury market was categorized into two types. First is accessible luxury. It can be expressed by the wealth rising in the middle class. In this type of luxury, products are more attainable than absolute luxury. Also, this market targets the groups of people who share wealth passion. Pricing in this accessible luxury is reasonable in contrast to absolute luxury. However, absolute luxury market wants to serve only for elitists, it aims to be unreachable and unique. Their opinion is based on accessibility for only wealthy people in real terms, not masses. Five main elements of luxury fashion brands have helped to recognize the luxury behavior of people. First element is affected, and it chooses to purchase luxury fashion products because of the brand name. Second is characteristics and it can be associated with luxury fashion product's quality, aesthetic appearance and functionality. This element composes brand loyalty from luxury fashion products' customers. As it has been mentioned many times in many academic studies before, status element is explained by having social value in the society. If luxury is realized according to much more planned behavior, involvement element will be activated. Last element is gifting, it's quite different. The luxury fashion products' purchasing process is realized for giving gifts for another. People evaluate this kind of products as unnecessary priced products, but, they want to symbolize status with these products, they prefer this gifting to make someone else satisfied (Walley et al, 2013).

Cross-cultural consumer perceptual differences also impact people's luxury purchasing behavior. To give meaning these differences, some countries are

examined with details. These countries that are made research are France, Germany, India, Hungary, Japan, Slovakia, Italy, Spain, Brazil and United States. This study should be extensive and wide to reach acceptable results. Four main values of luxury products' consumption are used when these ten cases are examined. In this study, the effects of these four values on luxury consumption changes from country to country are clearly shown because some eastern and western countries and the effects of their culture can be found in this study. Some countries are categorized according to their development level: developed and developing countries. To understand the luxury consumption patterns in Turkey, it is significant to know the tendency of developing countries' luxury purchasing behavior. Globalization has also created a new issue for countries. Luxury customer segmentation varies more for one country than many countries. Globalization of luxury industry is significant, but, the characteristics of country and customer segmentation across countries must be analyzed effectively. The basic goal is to measure the functionality and validity of four basic value of luxury consumption, and, this model is appropriate to conduct a survey. Every value has different significance across countries, but these values are acceptable.

According to survey that is conducted, inside the country the luxury consumption ratio changes from person to person. Also, it is appropriate to use customer groups to determine international segments. Sharing the same country's culture may affect the development of similar consumption habits. When the questionnaire and the established theories are examined, it is reached that it is possible to classify the customers according to the countries and to determine the possible luxury consumption habits according to these groups (Hennings, et al., 2012).

Luxury fashion customers' segments are determined by examining four main elements of luxury value. These values are appropriate for understanding cross-

cultural customers' differences on luxury consumption behavior. The concept of globalization works under some conditions, the fact that customers from different countries have more similarity in luxury product choices and tastes than customers in the same country shows that they have this concept. Depending on the sociocultural structures and economies of the countries, the importance order of the perception of each value changes. For instance, financial element is the most important value for French customers. French customers believe that the association between financial value and luxury consumption is strong. It is a common thought in France that only a small number of people can access special and expensive products. However, some countries do not support this opinion like Germany and United States. Functionality of luxury products is highly important for German people. The quality and usefulness of the product are much more important than the prestige and status symbol it provides in front of the society for German society. Individual element is highly important for United States, India and Brazil. Customers of these countries prefer to use these luxury items because they give importance to individuality and personal happiness. Hedonism and materialism are observed mostly in these countries. Unlike countries where the social value of luxury is the reason luxury is preferred, in some countries such as Spain, Germany and Slovakia, the reason for luxury production consumption is not associated with social factors. In addition, differences in eastern and western cultures cause people to give different values to different elements of luxury. While Italians do not prefer luxury goods to have status in front of the society and to act according to the opinions of other people, Indian customers prefer these products for social values (Hennings et al., 2012).

Luxury fashion products' customers that were selected by ten countries are categorized under four groups. These are the customers who are named by the

luxury-lovers, the status-seeking hedonists, the satisfied unpretentious and rational functionalists. Most of the 4 groups gather in the luxury lovers with 28.8% rate of all luxury fashion customers. In fact, not every customer that makes up this customer group is high-income. According to the research, it has been determined that Brazilian, American, Hungarian and Indian people are the majority in this group. From the perspective of luxury lovers, the functional value of the luxury product is not as important as the social, financial and individual values of the luxury product. This group shows luxury purchasing behavior because they want to have rare, special products and to feel more privileged than other people by owning these products. The status-seeking hedonists are the other group that has 19.5% ratio in the model. Customers are existed in this group from medium income level to high income level. Mostly the customers that make up this group are American, Japanese and Brazilian. In contrast to significant effects of social and individual value for this group, the impact of financial and functional values on the customer base of this group, albeit a small one, can be mentioned. Impressive dimensions of luxury like having a status in front of the society and using luxury products to have prestigious are the most important criteria for this group of people. The second majority after the luxury-lovers is the satisfied-unpretentious customers with nearly 27 percent in the model. Customers of countries such as Spain, Hungary and Slovakia form this group with their low economic conditions. Individual value is the most effective value for this group. The reason of their purchasing behavior is based on individuality, not impressing others. The status-seeking hedonists show a luxury purchasing tendency because of social reasons, they do not care self-reasons. The last group is rational functionalists. Like its name, they give the most importance to product's functionality. Their ratio value in the whole model is the lowest with 18%. They

want to purchase the product that has ultimate quality (Hennings et al., 2012). The main four value model of luxury is suitable to measure the ratios of countries' and cultures' willingness to purchase for these products. It can be said that proportion of values' importance changes according to countries' location, their cultural values, individuals, effect of globalization, and income situation of people who live in the country.

2.9 Consumers' attitudes and behaviors during Covid-19 outbreak

Economic issues are significant factor that affect customers' luxury purchasing behavior. To generalize economic situation worldwide is critical to reach reasonable approaches. Sometimes there are economic crises that directly affect luxury fashion consumption around the world, and epidemics change consumption habits at a significant level. Epidemics and crises do not only have economic effects. Psychological and behavioral changes that develop in consumers during these crisis periods also affect financial issues and related sectors throughout the country and the world. This thesis focuses on the behavioral changes of luxury industry customers after covid-19 outbreak has occurred. Coronavirus is a disease that shakes the world seriously and causes loss of life and psychology of many people, which is expressed in high numbers. This disease has not only damaged people and industries financially, it has also made many people question their priorities and what is necessary for their psychology. The order of importance of personal wishes and needs has changed after the pandemic.

In particular, the luxury consumer industry has been one of the industries most affected by the coronavirus. Since luxury consumption is not a compulsory need in general, it is mostly preferred due to psychological reasons such as status,

personal satisfaction and reputation, it has been significantly affected by the pandemic. During the quarantine, the stay at home policy was followed and many shops and shopping centers were closed, and the physical sales rates of luxury fashion brands decreased. However, as this sector was negatively affected by the coronavirus disease, some marketing and social media strategies reversed the declines in these sales. According to the quarantine measures taken, many luxury brands around the world have tried to reduce this damage caused by the coronavirus by following different strategies. However, luxury consumption is an industry with a very different customer base and different dynamics. Due to this different characteristic structure, the responses of luxury fashion products to crises and their recovery times require a detailed awareness and analysis that cannot be compared with other industries (Jung Choo et al., 2012).

2.9.1 The history of coronavirus

Coronavirus has started in Wuhan, China in the last months of 2019, and this virus has become a pandemic in a short time. The first observation of coronavirus in Turkey is March 11, 2020. After the first experience of people for coronavirus in Turkey, many precautions were applied to stop the diffusion of this coronavirus. One day after this date, schools stopped providing physical education. In addition, a quarantine requirement was introduced for individuals under the age of 20. Many people have psychological problems due to coronavirus in today's world. According to the survey results that were conducted in article, it was observed that anxiety problems in adolescents who already applied because of psychological problems were 4.39 times more than in normal times. This situation can be explained by the economic crisis and having parents do not have a job, and worsened economic

conditions can damage parents' and their children's psychology. Rising psychological problems for individuals have occurred after pandemic, especially young people. Mostly, younger individuals are seen as healthier. Routine check-ups are not obligatory for young people unless they have major serious or chronic illnesses. However, psychological diseases should be considered as important as physical diseases. In cases where a healthy soul and psychology are ignored, the body also becomes sick. During quarantine periods, it should be the primary aim of the person to see anxiety disorders that develop due to staying at home and fear of virus as a disease and to cure this disease as quickly as possible (Kılınçel, Kılınçel, Muratdağı, Aydın & Usta, 2021). The luxury consumption industry, which is especially demanded by the young people, has also been one of the sectors affected by the increase in psychological problems during the pandemic and quarantine period.

After the first coronavirus case was seen in Turkey, main measures were taken to stop the spread of the virus across the country and the world. Trainings were given to the whole country and the health workers most exposed to this virus. Many channels in social media and communication tools such as television were used in order to convey the information to the widest public. Because hygiene is the main condition to be protected from this disease, the public was informed about the cleaning rules, especially the simplest example, correct hand washing. 14-day quarantine requirement was also applied to those traveling abroad. The condition of not going out unless it is mandatory for the pandemic, which has the most restrictions, and wearing a mask if it is necessary to go out was applied. It was emphasized that people should have a coronavirus test in health institutions in cases such as high fever, cough and fatigue, which are seen as general symptoms of

coronavirus. It has been announced that individuals with coronavirus symptoms should not leave the house and enter crowded environments until the negative test result is obtained. It was also emphasized that people in closed environments should ventilate these environments frequently, washing their hands correctly, general cleaning rules and comply with social distance in order to prevent infection. During the period of these restrictions, while foreign people are momentarily banned from entering Turkey, only Turkish citizens and people with a residence permit in Turkey were admitted to the country. It was determined whether people who entered Turkey from abroad showed symptoms of the coronavirus. Even people with no symptoms were forced to quarantine for 14 days. It was stated that if they do not comply, people will be identified and punished. Stores in public places where luxury fashion products are purchased, such as airports and shopping malls, were temporarily closed and many cleaning measures were taken against the coronavirus in these areas (Demirbilek, Pehlivanürk, Özgüler & Meşe, 2020).

The Covid-19 outbreak first started in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019, as has been stated many times before. However, the coronavirus has severely damaged the balance of the world. It caused the death of many people and left permanent damage to many people, as well as affecting people's psychology, behavior and economy in a negative way. With the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak to many countries around the world, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that countries related to this virus should take urgent measures. There were approximately 1,279,722 verified cases and 72,614 people died from this coronavirus as of April 8, 2020 (World Health Organization, 2020). It was also examined the relationship between the population of people and the number of detected coronavirus cases. According to the consequences of the research that was conducted

in Turkey, it was determined that the number of cases increased according to the crowdedness of the cities. In short, it has been observed that coronavirus cases are more intense in crowded and urban areas. In addition, a value factor identified as causing the rise of the coronavirus is the wind speed detected in the last 14 days, including the day the virus spread. A positive relationship was determined between this wind speed and the rate of increase of the virus. The other different result determined according to the research is the relationship between the number of coronavirus cases and the average temperature in a day. The highest number of cases was observed on the days when the temperature was the lowest. However, to say that there is a negative correlation between the exact temperature and the number of detected coronavirus cases will not be a clear statement since this virus is also observed in many places where the temperature is very high (Şahin, 2020).

2.9.2 Effects of pandemic on economic situation

Today, the demands are perceived by the suppliers and it is desired to establish the production scheme in the most appropriate way. In today's consumer society, having a product that is normally considered as demand is seen as a necessary condition for social status from the perspective of some people today. For this reason, demands can now be perceived as needs. The Covid-19 pandemic crisis also caused “New Normal” concepts during its period, affecting many industries as well as affecting luxury fashion consumption, causing customers to develop new behavior patterns. According to the research, the aim is to examine and identify the changing consumer behaviors after the pandemic crisis, which started after March 11, 2020, the date of the first coronavirus case detected in Turkey. Since the coronavirus epidemic has a very important effect around the world, it has been the subject of research with very

different variations depending on countries and individuals. Maslow asserted her famous theory, “hierarchy of needs” in 1943. Maslow explains this theory based on the existence of individuals. When the data in the research is examined, it is observed that there is an increase in online sales in the luxury fashion consumption sector compared to 2019. For some customer segments, luxury fashion consumption is as important as physiological needs, which are actually considered as the first step according to Maslow's hierarchy. The place of the importance of luxury consumption in this pyramid also varies depending on the character, culture, economic situation, country of residence and psychological state of the person. In the first months of 2020, online sales have increased in designer clothing, bags and shoes, which are considered in the luxury consumption category, compared to 2019’s first months. Despite the first sensations of this Covid-19 outbreak in the world, the growth trend in luxury consumption in January 2020 did not disappear. However, with the spread of the pandemic, the luxury fashion industry worldwide and in Turkey, all sales fell from February to March 2020. Due to these declines, retailers planned to develop new strategies to meet their financial deficits. They developed different marketing strategies such as downsizing in retail, paying attention to ethical understanding, establishing collaborations, and establishing solid relations with customers by giving importance to social media (Duygun & Şen, 2020).

With the increasing use of digitalization and social media, business models that have become easier in the sharing economy have developed in the last decade. In short, the sharing economy offers the customer the option of bartering or leasing the same product instead of the price to be paid by purchasing. With the increase in the use of the internet recently, there has been an increase in rental options in luxury fashion consumer products. Since the sharing economy offers luxury product rental

options and has a recyclable effect, it can make it difficult to determine the customer base that really prefers luxury consumption products and to understand wealthy individuals with social status. These new and facilitated economic models emerged after the global economic crisis in 2008. However, these models, also called platform economies, have had some devastating effects on companies. The origin of the platform economy is to provide a permanent flow with new customer base by making luxury fashion products with very high prices accessible with rental options. These fashion platforms are also referred to as an environmentally friendly business model, as they contribute positively to sustainability in both environmental and economic terms. Although it is perceived as inappropriate by some people to examine these new types of platforms during the coronavirus period, such business models have already emerged as a result of economic crises. Rental platforms, which are shown as a way to use luxury fashion products in an affordable way, have also been supported on social media because they are environmentally friendly. Due to the coronavirus, which changed the balance of the world overnight, luxury rental platforms targeting more working and traveling segments were also damaged due to quarantines. Owing to the necessity of staying at home during the pandemic, people have turned to home wear. With the onset of the pandemic, spending in the fashion industry in major markets such as United States and England decreased by more than 50 percent. Although it was not as damaged as small businesses, large companies were also affected by the pandemic and followed policies such as reducing the salaries of their employees, dismissal of employees and reducing their advertising budgets in order to close the economic deficits. The fashion industry needs to be able to combat the negative effects of the pandemic and keep the industry alive by following the right strategies. During and after the quarantine period due to the pandemic, customer

demand for luxury fashion products rental platforms decreased. However, it is thought that the luxury fashion world will be kept alive by following effective strategies for sustainable fashion understanding (Brydges, Heinze, Retamal & Henninger, 2021).

2.9.3 Effects of pandemic on consumer behavior

The luxury fashion industry is significant for many related businesses like retail sector around the world. Being able to fully understand the high-profile customer base that can meet the demand and the perception of globalization is very important for this industry to progress. Since the luxury fashion industry has different dynamics to other sectors, it is thought that it can overcome the crisis, pandemic and uncertainties. After the global financial crisis in 2008 and the SARS epidemic in 2002, the luxury fashion world faced the coronavirus outbreak. Luxury fashion brands are applying convenient strategies to overcome this coronavirus crisis. While some luxury brands continued their production by following appropriate strategies during the pandemic period, some brands stopped their operations by following different policies. Since this Covid-19 crisis is a serious crisis that affects the whole world and people's psychology and consumption behavior, brands have aimed to overcome the damage of the pandemic by following the right marketing strategies. If the necessary strategies are not followed, there will be no market even if the pandemic ends. Brands used appropriate strategies to combat with the crisis according to their brand policies. Luxury brands have developed different strategies against the pandemic. For example, Hermès and Prada implemented a worldwide growth strategy by launching the operations of new stores in different countries, but Stella McCartney followed the opposite policy. Despite being both luxury global

brands at its core, Stella McCartney has followed a different strategy that is called cost rationalization by shutting down the brand's ancient store in Moscow. Christian Dior separated the brand logo and accessory operations from the general operations of the brand in order to carry the brand to the top of the world. While some luxury fashion brands have made a lot of changes during the coronavirus crisis, some brands such as Bottega Veneta has aimed to maximize product quality. Luxury fashion brands that have successfully overcome the coronavirus crisis have given importance to the demands and wishes of their customers and preserved their brand reputation. The behavior of customers who have been affected economically and psychologically by the coronavirus epidemic has also changed. The luxury consumption expenditures of the economically affected customers also decreased. Because people who had a home quarantine period during the pandemic changed the priority order of their luxury expenditures, which they saw as wishes. In addition, the restrictions imposed on going abroad during the pandemic period also affected the consumption of luxury fashion products. Sales of luxury fashion products also decreased due to the fact that foreign customers were not allowed into the country due to travel restrictions during the pandemic period. The most valuable luxury fashion brands in the world, determined by ranking lists from Forbes and Luxe Digital around the world, have been determined to show how luxury fashion brands are overcoming the coronavirus (Forbes, 2020; Luxe Digital, 2020). According to Forbes, the selected brands were chosen because of their impact and popularity on individuals (Xie & Youn, 2020).

Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Hermes, and Gucci have been selected as luxury fashion brands in the determination of Forbes' "World's Most Valuable Brands" list. Since the four most luxury and valuable fashion brands were determined according

to this selection of Forbes, Luxe Digital's list of the top 15 luxury brands on the online platform in 2020 was utilized to select other luxury fashion brands. Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Chanel, Christian Dior, Balenciaga, Armani, Saint Laurent, Burberry, Prada and Hermes brands became my luxury fashion brands determined according to Luxe Digital's list. However, the 4 luxury world brands identified in Forbes maintained their popularity in this list as well. These top ten luxury fashion brands followed a number of marketing strategies to cope with the covid-19 outbreak. When the strategies followed by luxury brands during the pandemic period were analyzed, they were gathered under six general headings. These are donating products, monetary donations, strategies for price determination, strategies developed for the online market, effective communication with the customer as a luxury brand principle, and strategies to keep the customer's interest alive by organizing fashion days and fashion shows. Donated items are actually one of the general strategies followed by many luxury fashions brands during the Covid-19 outbreak. The contents of these donated products are products such as masks, gloves and disinfectants that can help in providing hygiene for protection against the pandemic. Luxury brands gained confidence by announcing that these products would be distributed. LVMH and Kering group are the two primary luxury fashion groups discussed in the research. Among the top ten chosen luxury brands, Louis Vuitton and Christian Dior are members of the LVMH group, while Gucci, Saint Laurent and Balenciaga are the members of the Kering group. Price increase in luxury products is one of the general strategies applied for years. Price increase in order to protect the luxury brand value and reputation has become a marketing strategy implemented by many luxury world brands. In fact, this price increase is an ideal strategy to identify

the customer base that distinguishes the luxury brand from other brands and that attaches importance to social values (Xie & Youn, 2020).

Chanel and Louis Vuitton are the first two luxury fashion brands to attract customers using the pricing strategy. In fact, to clarify this price increase strategy, customers hear that there will be a price increase for products such as bags, and they go to the store before this price increase and aim to buy the products before the price rising is realized. For example, after Chanel explained that it would increase the price of its products, customers waited in line in front of the store to purchase luxury fashion products before the price hike. This situation can be explained by the reverse selling influence. Also, rising prices of luxury fashion products could further differentiate between high quality luxury brands like Chanel and their competitors. After e-commerce became the hub for the retail world, many luxury fashion brands were hesitant to adopt this system. In fact, although real luxury fashion brands such as Burberry have adopted this system, some brands did not act in a hurry to switch to the e-commerce system. However, during the coronavirus epidemic, most luxury brands had to adopt this e-commerce system. Kering, the group that Gucci and Saint Laurent is included, asserted that the rate of e-commerce was determined by 13% of its whole retail products' sales and the rate for luxury fashion products has increased by 6% percent compared to last year (Kering, 2020). Brand communication with luxury fashion customers becomes crucial when a crisis occurs. Luxury brands have tried to communicate effectively and supportively with their customers and employees during the Covid-19 outbreak (Xie & Youn, 2020).

In addition, luxury brands organized various events on their social media platforms to entertain and distract their fans during this stressful period. Examples of these are Gucci's online exhibition during the pandemic period and Dior's podcasts

about designers. Due to COVID-19, activities that are realized with face-to-face communication are not encouraged. Most public areas, such as shopping malls, have been temporarily closed, as entering crowded environments increases the risk of infection. As a precaution against the coronavirus disease, four major luxury fashion brands such as Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Hermes and Gucci during the fashion week period postponed their fashion show events and arranged the fashion shows to be conducted online. Many luxury fashions brands have promoted their new collections by organizing online fashion shows on their websites and social media platforms.

Luxury fashion brands followed effective strategies against the Covid-19 outbreak and tried to be affected by this situation as little as possible. One of the most effective strategies was the strong communication of luxury brands with their customers. Customer relationship management is one of the departments that luxury brands value most (Xie & Youn, 2020).

The coronavirus outbreak has greatly affected the consumption of luxury fashion products. However, in this crisis period, big fashion companies have given importance to sustainability policies. Supply chain management has also become a very critical issue in this process, and it has been divided into five main topics and examined. Design of luxury fashion products, their production process, retail, customers' consumption for these items, and the final of the life were the five parts of supply chain management. Especially, this focus on supply chain management has occurred as a reflection of people's discourses. Although the Covid-19 epidemic has significantly affected the luxury fashion industry, it is debated whether it can be a solution to the sustainability strategy, which has come to the fore as the industry's need for many times (Brydges, Retamal & Hanlon, 2020).

It was noted that sustainability issues are not stable in supply chain management and imbalances experienced at different stages. Along with the economic difficulties caused by the coronavirus crisis, it is thought that sustainable fashion activities implemented by luxury brands will become more widespread and more adopted. However, there are many views regarding this sustainable fashion. Contrary to a group that believes that luxury fashion brands overcome the effects of the crisis with sustainability, there are also those who believe that sustainability will decrease due to economic difficulties during the pandemic crisis. Sustainability strategies for luxury brands are strategies that have economic benefits to companies in the long and short term. The irony could be thought as some luxury fashion brands may actually be able to meet their upcoming sustainability goals, while Covid-19 outbreak shuts down essential operations like production, consumption and transportation.

The luxury fashion industry must use time to reflect and rebuild a more comprehensive, particularly external and sustainable industry (Brydges, Retamal & Hanlon, 2020).

The luxury fashion industry, which was damaged by the pandemic in 2020, recovered in 2021 by following the right strategies. Global consumption of luxury products is expected to increase by 29% compared to 2020, reaching 283 billion euros. It is stated that the luxury consumption market in 2021 has increased by 1 percent compared to the market levels in 2019. According to Bain & Company, it is claimed that the luxury consumption industry will grow between 6 percent and percent annually until 2025, and luxury consumption will reach a figure between 360-380 billion euros in 2025. It is stated that the luxury consumption market, which includes more comprehensive luxury consumption and experiences along with bags,

shoes and clothing, is below the level it achieved in 2019 and reached a figure of close to 1.1 trillion euros. However, this experience and the double-pass industry based on the consumption of goods appear to only make up for half the gap compared to 2019. The luxury consumption market has started to act again, among the reasons that increase this consumption are the emphasis on local consumption, the power of China and the USA to trigger this consumption, the emphasis on online sales and social media during the pandemic period. However, the further growth of the Y generation, the young segment that is expected to make up 70 percent of the luxury industry market by 2025, is cited as a reason for the market to become stronger. After the coronavirus crisis, different meanings were added to the social values of luxury. While luxury fashion brands before the pandemic only meant status and prestige in front of the society, after the coronavirus crisis, brands acted with a sense of responsibility towards society and played an active role in the fight against coronavirus (Bain&Company, 2021).

2.9.4 Effects of pandemic on Turkey

In times of economic crisis, there are customers who withdraw from the market, as well as a new customer group that shows different reactions and enters the market. In fact, the Y generation, who is more demanding on luxury fashion consumption, is a chance for the luxury industry, as well as this younger segment is a more conscious and selective customer base with more special tastes. Another situation that can be said about economic crises is that, for example, an economic problem experienced in a crisis period in Europe and North America can be compensated due to the abundance of opportunities in different countries such as China, Middle East Korea and Turkey (Reyneke et al., 2012). To give an example, luxury brand consumption in

Turkey is mostly carried out by foreign customers. Luxury fashion brand products with high price tags such as Louis Vuitton, Dior, Chanel and Hermes have become more difficult to purchase for Turkish customers due to exchange rate changes in recent years. For this reason, special stores are opened for customers from some different countries. Some customers prefer to buy luxury products in other countries rather than in their own country. Turkey significantly has been influenced by the coronavirus crisis.

Turkey did not lag behind the policies of European countries around the world to deal with this crisis in the right way. The implementation of quarantines, banning the entry and exit of foreign individuals into the country, informing the public about the crisis situation on social media and on television, instilling confidence and positive thinking in the public are indicators of Turkey's correct behavior in the coronavirus crisis. By giving people the confidence that the pandemic will be overcome as soon as possible, the negative effects of the coronavirus epidemic were tried to be reduced. Despite Turkey's successful fight against the pandemic crisis, luxury fashion consumption has suffered in 2020. However, when some global reports are examined, it has been seen that there is a parallelism between the high level of income due to the high young population and the transition to urban life in Turkey, and that these positive aspects are effective in coping with the crises. In addition, tourists from the Middle East region, which constitute the majority of luxury consumption in Turkey, also increased the demand for luxury consumption. Many luxury shopping malls that have been opened recently have targeted an audience for luxury fashion consumption. It is thought that Turkey, like China and the Middle East countries, will compensate for the negative effects of the pandemic in a short time. In this way, when the luxury fashion consumption after the Covid-19

outbreak case in Turkey is examined, compared to western countries, more successful results are expected in the fight against the pandemic. Thus, according to the goal of this thesis, while assessing the consequences, the obtained results must be taken into account.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY, ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

3.1 Model

In this thesis we aim to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on the Luxury Fashion Consumption. In modelling the effects of COVID-19, the studies from the literature are taken into consideration. Then, the probable effects of Covid-19 on consumption are measured in three dimensions: Frugality, Deliberativeness and Future Anxiety.

The luxury consumption behavior is questioned in five dimensions. As reviewed on the previous section, the literature shows that the main drivers of the luxury consumption are generally related to the uniqueness, expensiveness and the symbolic meaning of the item sold. Also, the consumers' feelings such as belonging to a certain class and to able to buy a luxury product arbitrarily when they buy a luxury fashion product can be related to their consumption choices. In that respect, the luxury consumption scale is tested for these five dimensions: Uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a social class. The thesis tests the effects of COVID-19 and the determinants of luxury fashion consumption during the course of pandemic in this model by analyzing the luxury consumption behavior in Turkey.

In order to explore the changes in the consumer behavior regarding the luxury fashion products, we designed a questionnaire that includes three parts. The first part includes some demographic and personal information. Gender, age, marital status, education, perception of the respondent about her/his income, and brand choices of the respondents are asked. The second part is to test the economic, social and personal effects of the pandemic on the consumers. The third part is to analyze the

determinants of the consumption and to test the changes with the course of pandemic. In designing the questionnaire, literature is followed. Designing a questionnaire and constructing the questions are complex process. The way of asking the right questions should be carefully chosen. In constructing the questionnaire direct instruction model was chosen (Sarıs & Gallhofen, 2014). Yet, the polite way of asking the questions was used in the form. The questions are constructed in order to reflect the dimensions of the problem as modeled above. The effects of pandemic are questioned by 16 questions. The first four questions are asked to test the frugality dimension. The next seven questions are related to the deliberativeness dimension. The last five questions are about the future anxiety. The second part of the questionnaire includes 18 questions. The first four questions are about the uniqueness dimension. The next four questions are related to the expensiveness dimension. Questions 9-12 are to test the symbolic meaning dimension. Questions 13-15 are to test the pleasure of being arbitrary in consuming the luxury fashion products. The last three questions are asked to test the dimension belonging to a class. 5-point scale was used in designing the questionnaire following the literature. 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neither disagree, nor agree, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree. The questionnaire was released in Turkish. Both English and Turkish versions are provided at the Appendix. The questionnaire was distributed as online via social media channels. 118 respondents' answers were collected and analyzed in the thesis. The factor analysis is used as the main methodology to test the hypothesis designed. The descriptive statistics and the details of the methods are given in the following sections.

3.2 Method of factor analysis

Statistical data analysis methods were used to examine the relationship among the research variables using IBM SPSS 25.0 program. Descriptive statistics of the personal variables are tested. The relationship between research variables and personal variables are examined. Scores obtained from data measurement tools with demographic variables are also compared.

First, the data set collected was tested if it fits the normal distribution hypothesis by looking at the skewness and kurtosis coefficients. Parametric test methods were preferred in the testing process (Table 1). Afterwards, internal consistency analysis was performed and it was discussed whether there was any inconvenience in using the scales in the study.

After examining the socio-demographic profile of the participants, the descriptive analysis results for the Covid-19 Effect and Luxury Consumption were examined. While comparing the group scores of the variables as they are classified with personal information of the participants, the "independent sample t test" was used under the normal distribution assumption. "ANOVA" was used in the comparisons of three or more groups. In addition, while examining the relationship between the Covid-19 effect and Luxury consumption sub-dimensions, "Pearson Correlation" analysis, one of the parametric test methods, was preferred. The Covid-19 effect of the participants and the predictive status of the Luxury consumption scales' scores were examined by regression analysis. Statistical significance was evaluated at the $p < 0.05$ level in all the results obtained.

3.2.1 Confirmatory factor analysis – CFA

CFA, the Covid Effect Scale, which was previously determined by exploratory factor analysis; thrift, prudence and future concern sub-factors and Luxury Consumption Scale; It tests whether there is a sufficient level of relationship between the factors of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority, which variables are related to which factors, whether the factors are independent from each other, and whether the factors are sufficient to explain the model” (Özdamar, 2004). The validity and reliability of the scale structures used were proven by the analyses and then tested with CFA. CFA was performed for the scale structure and the limit values of fit indexes accepted by Akgün, Büyüköztürk, Özkahveci, and Demirel (2004) were taken as the basis of the research.

Table 1. Fit Index Values of the Covid-19 Impact Scale

	Unrelated	Multi-Factor Model	Breakpoints
χ^2 /sd	2.203	1.935	≤ 5
GFI	.812	.833	
CFI	.881	.910	≥ 0.80
NFI	.805	.834	
RMSEA	.101	.079	≤ 0.05

The fit index values obtained as a result of the confirmatory factor analysis applied to the unrelated model are $\chi^2/df=2.203$, GFI=0.812, CFI=0.881, NFI=0.805, RMSEA=0.101. It was determined that the fit indices specified in Table 4 did not have good fit index values according to the limit values. When the modification index values were examined, it was decided that the relationship between the error covariance values between the 2nd item and 4th item, 1st item and 3rd item, and 9th item and 11th item should be taken into consideration. According to this result, it was evaluated that “item pairs are under the same latent variable and are close to each other in meaning” (Büyüköztürk et al., 2004).

Table 2. Fit Index Values of the Luxury Consumption Scale

	Unrelated	Multi-Factor Model	Breakpoints
χ^2/df	2.055	1.773	≤ 5
GFI	.812	.835	
CFI	.887	.919	≥ 0.80
NFI	.806	.801	
RMSEA	.095	.078	≤ 0.05

The fit index values obtained as a result of the confirmatory factor analysis applied to the unrelated model are $\chi^2/df=2.055$, GFI=0.812, CFI=0.887, NFI=0.806, RMSEA=0.095. It was determined that the fit indices specified in Table 4 did not have good fit index values according to the limit values. When the modification index values were examined, it was decided that the relationship between the error covariance values between the 7th item and 8th item and between the 17th item and 18th item should be taken into account. According to this result, it was evaluated that

item pairs are under the same latent variable and are close to each other in meaning (Büyüköztürk et al., 2004).

Table 3. Skewness and Kurtosis Values of the Scales

Scale	N	Skewness	Kurtosis
Covid Effect			
Frugality	118	-.596	-.227
Deliberativeness	118	-.754	-.100
Future Anxiety	118	-1.150	1.125
Luxury Consumption			
Uniqueness	118	-.330	-.432
Expensiveness	118	.510	-.087
Symbolic Meaning	118	.764	-.320
Arbitrariness	118	.452	-1.014
Belonging to a Special Class	118	.409	-.803

Seçer (2015, p. 28) claimed that the evaluation by looking at the 'skewness and kurtosis' values is a more accurate approach to test the normal distribution.

Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) accept that normal distribution is achieved when skewness and kurtosis values are between +1.50 and -1.50. As a result of the analyses carried out, it was determined that the variables showed normal distribution.

3.3 Hypothesis of the research

The following hypotheses that are related to the demographic distributions and personal differences are tested over the data collected:

- i. The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.
- ii. The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the age of the participants.
- iii. The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the marital status of the participants.
- iv. According to the education level of the participants, the Covid effect levels differ significantly.
- v. According to the perceived income of the participants, the Covid impact levels differ significantly.
- vi. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.
- vii. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the age of the participants.
- viii. Luxury consumption levels of the participants differ significantly according to marital status.
- ix. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the education level of the participants.
- x. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the income level of the participants.
- xi. The frugality levels of the participants predict their symbolic meaning scores.
- xii. Responsiveness levels of participants predict symbolic meaning scores.
- xiii. Participants' anxiety about the future predicted their uniqueness scores.

3.4 Reliability analysis

In this section, internal consistency analysis was conducted for Covid Effect and Luxury consumption, which are preferred as data collection tools. The criteria for Cronbach's Alpha values are as follows;

α value,	$0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$	if	unreliable
	$0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$	if	at low reliability
	$0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$	if	quite reliable
	$0.80 \leq \alpha \leq 1.00$	if	highly reliable.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis Findings

Covid Effect	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Frugality	.888	8
Deliberativeness	.821	4
Future Anxiety	.785	4

Cronbach Alpha values for the dimensions of the Covid Effect scales used in the research are given in the Table 4. It is seen that the Cronbach Alpha value of Frugality is 0.888, and the Cronbach Alpha value of Deliberativeness is 0.821. These values show that the scales are highly reliable and there is no obstacle to their use in the analysis.

In addition, it is seen that the Cronbach Alpha value of the future anxiety is 0.785. This value shows that the scales are quite reliable. Then, there is no obstacle in using it in the analysis.

Table 5. Reliability Analysis Findings

Luxury Consumption	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Uniqueness	.833	4
Expensiveness	.727	4
Symbolic Meaning	.866	4
Arbitrariness	.842	3
Belonging to a Certain Minority	.801	3

Cronbach Alpha values for the dimensions of the Luxury consumption scales used in the research; uniqueness Cronbach Alpha value is 0.833, symbolic meaning Cronbach Alpha value is 0.866, arbitrariness Cronbach Alpha value is 0.842 and belonging to a certain minority Cronbach Alpha value is 0.801. These values are; shows that the scales are highly reliable and there is no obstacle to their use in analysis.

It is also seen that the Cronbach Alpha value of expensiveness is 0.727. This value shows that the scales are quite reliable. Again, there is no obstacle in using the scale in the analysis.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The data that is transferred to the computer environment were checked for missing/wrong values and outliers, and the sample of the study consisted of 118 participants selected by simple random method from the universe. The data of the research was obtained by applying the personal information form together with the statements in the Covid Effect scale and Luxury Consumption scale, and the analysis of the data is provided in the following sections.

4.1 Evaluation of demographic findings

The personal information of the respondents, age, gender, education, marital status and perceived income distribution as well as their brand choices are examined and descriptive statics are provided in the following tables from Table 6 to Table 11.

Table 6. Distribution of Participants by Age

	Personal characteristics	f	%
Age Status	Under 30	27	22.9
	31-40	38	32.2
	41-50	39	33.1
	Older than 50	14	11.9

As seen in Table 6, 22.9% of the participants are under the age of 30, 32.2% are between the ages of 31-40, 33.1% are between the ages of 41-50, and 11.9% are over the age of 51.

Table 7. Distribution of Participants by Gender

	Personal characteristics	f	%
Gender	Woman	91	77.1
	Man	27	22.9

As seen in Table 7, 77.1% of the participants were female and 22.9% were male.

Table 8. Distribution of Participants by Marital Status

	Personal characteristics	f	%
Marital Status	Single	62	52.5
	Married	56	47.5

As seen in Table 8, 52.5% of the participants were single and 47.5% were married.

Table 9. Distribution of Participants by Educational Status

	Personal characteristics	f	%
Educational Status	High School	17	14.4
	Associate Degree	9	7.6
	Bachelor Degree	71	60.2
	Master Degree	21	17.8

As seen in Table 9; 14.4% of the participants are high school graduates, 7.6% have associate degree, 60.2% have bachelor degree and 17.8% have master degree.

Table 10. Distribution of Participants by Perceived Income Status

	Personal characteristics	f	%
Perceived Income	Low	10	8.5
	Medium	91	77.1
	Good	17	14.4

As seen in Table 10; 8.5% of the participants have a low income, 77.1% medium income and 14.4% of the participants have a good income.

Table 11. Distribution of Participants by Brand Tendency

	Personal characteristics	F	%
Brand Tendency	Armani	3	2.5
	Beymen	3	2.5
	Burberry	5	4.2
	Calvin Klein	2	1.7
	Chanel	1	0.8
	Diesel	2	1.7
	Gucci	4	3.4
	Guess	2	1.7
	Lacoste	6	5.1
	Tommy Hilfiger	5	4.2
	Vakko	2	1.7
	Versace	3	2.5

As seen in Table 11; It was determined that 5.1% of the participants are tended to prefer Lacoste, 4.2% Burberry and Tommy Hilfiger, 3.4% of the participants are

inclined to choose Gucci and 2.5% of participants are tended to buy Armani, Beymen and Versace brands.

4.2 Descriptive analysis results for variables

Variables of the research are the Covid effect scales of its dimensions and the Luxury consumption scales of its dimensions. In this part of the study, descriptive statistics of the variables classified according to the dimensions are given.

Table 12. Descriptive Analysis Results for Variables

Scale	N	Min.	Max.	Average	SD
Covid Effect					
Frugality	118	1.25	5.00	3.75	.95
Deliberativeness	118	1.00	5.00	3.75	1.08
Future Anxiety	118	1.00	5.00	4.06	.90
Luxury Consumption					
Uniqueness	118	1.00	5.00	3.59	1.00
Expensiveness	118	1.00	5.00	2.77	1.01
Symbolic Meaning	118	1.00	5.00	2.44	1.19
Arbitrariness	118	1.00	5.00	2.62	1.30
Belonging to a Certain Minority	118	1.00	5.00	2.60	1.20

For the Covid Effect part of the data; the mean of the answers given to the statements of frugality is 3.75 ± 0.95 , the minimum score is 1.25 and the maximum score is 5.00, the total mean of the responses given to the statements of deliberativeness is 3.75 ± 1.08 , the minimum score was 1.00 and the maximum score is 5.00. score of 5.00, the total average of the answers to the expressions of future anxiety is determined as 4.06 ± 0.90 , the minimum score is 1.00 and the maximum score is 5.00.

For the luxury consumption part of the data; the mean of the answers to the uniqueness statements was 3.59 ± 1.00 , the minimum score was 1.00 and the maximum score was 5.00, the total mean of the responses to the expensiveness statements was 1.77 ± 1.01 , the minimum score was 1.00, and the maximum score was 5.00. score of 5.00, the total mean of the answers given to the expressions of symbolic meaning is 2.44 ± 1.19 , the minimum score is 1.00 and the maximum score is 5.00, the total mean of the responses given to the expressions of arbitrariness is 2.62 ± 1.30 , the minimum score is 1.00 and the maximum score of 5.00, the total average of the answers given to the expressions of belonging to a certain minority was determined as 2.60 ± 1.20 , the minimum score was 1.00 and the maximum score was 5.00

4.3 Difference tests

In this part of the study, the differences between the average scores obtained from the variables according to the age, gender, education, marital status and income distribution of the participants who constitute the research group will be discussed.

4.3.1 Findings regarding the covid effect scale

In this part of the study, the differences between the average scores obtained from the Covid Effect scale will be discussed according to the age, gender, education, marital status and perceived income distribution of the participants who constitute the research group.

Table 13. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Covid Effect Scale by Age Variable

Variables	Age Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Frugality	Under 30	27	3.4444	.93	2.732	.047
	31-40	38	3.6776	.84		
	41-50	39	4.0778	.96		
	Older than 50	14	3.6607	1,02		
Deliberativeness	Under 30	27	3.3796	1.08	2.530	.061
	31-40	38	3.6382	1.06		
	41-50	39	4.0833	1.14		
	Older than 50	14	3.8036	.73		
Future Anxiety	Under 30	27	3.9630	1.02	.277	.842
	31-40	38	4.1579	.81		
	41-50	39	4.0427	.96		
	Older than 50	14	3.9940	.78		

As seen in Table 13, in terms of the age of the participants there is a significant difference in the level of frugality ($p < 0.05$). However, there is no significant difference in the level of Deliberativeness and Future Anxiety ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the age of the participants is a determinant variable for the level of frugality, but not the level of deliberativeness and future anxiety. It can also be seen that the level of frugality of the participants in the 41-50 age range has the highest scale among the age groups.

Table 14. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Covid Effect Scale by Educational Status Variable

Variables	Education Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Frugality	High School	17	3.93	.70	3.074	.031
	Associate Degree	9	4.49	.58		
	Bachelor Degree	71	3.72	.92		
	Master Degree	21	3.42	1.18		
Deliberativeness	High School	17	3.68	1.06	1.187	.318
	Associate Degree	9	4.39	.77		
	Bachelor Degree	71	3.71	1.13		
	Master Degree	21	3.63	1.03		
Future Anxiety	High School	17	4.19	.73	1.391	.249
	Associate Degree	9	4.58	.47		
	Bachelor Degree	71	3.98	.97		
	Master Degree	21	3.98	.88		

As seen in Table 14, in terms of the educational status of the participants there is a significant difference in the level of frugality ($p < 0.05$). However, there is no significant difference in the level of deliberativeness and future anxiety ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the education level of the participants affects the level of frugality, but does not affect the level of Deliberativeness and future

anxiety. In addition, it can be determined that the level of frugality of the participants with associate degree education is higher than other education levels.

Table 15. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Covid Effect Scale by Marital Status Variable

Variables	Marital Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Frugality	Single	62	3.78	1.04	.384	.702
	Married	56	3.71	1.14		
Deliberativeness	Single	62	3.70	.95	.614	.541
	Married	56	3.81	.95		
Future Anxiety	Single	62	4.02	.93	.399	.690
	Married	56	4.09	.88		

The effect of marital status on different dimensions of Covid-19 effect is seen in Table 15. In terms of the variable no significant difference is observed in the levels of frugality, deliberativeness and future anxiety ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the marital status of the participants do not affect the level of future anxiety, deliberateness or frugality ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Covid Effect Scale by Perceived Income Status Variable

Variables	Perceived Income status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Frugality	Low	10	3.56	1.51	1.905	.153
	Medium	91	3.84	.88		
	Good	17	3.39	.82		
Deliberativeness	Low	10	3.98	1.34	1.351	.263
	Medium	91	3.79	1.05		
	Good	17	3.37	1.10		
Future Anxiety	Low	10	4.43	.84	1,604	.206
	Medium	91	4.07	.86		
	Good	17	3.79	1.11		

Perceived Income status as seen in Table 16.in terms of variable; no significant difference is observed in the levels of frugality, deliberativeness and Anticipatory Anxiety ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the perceived income levels of the participants do not affect the level of future anxiety, deliberativeness or frugality ($p > 0.05$).

Table 17. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Covid Impact Scale by Gender Variable

Variables	Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	t	p
Frugality	Woman	91	3.69	1.14	1.087	.279
	Man	27	3.94	.87		
Deliberativeness	Woman	91	3.76	.94	.028	.977
	Man	27	3.75	.97		
Future Anxiety	Woman	91	4.08	.93	.426	.671
	Man	27	3.99	.81		

As seen in Table 17, in terms of gender; no significant difference is observed in the level of frugality, deliberativeness and future anxiety ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it was determined that the gender of the participants did not affect the level of frugality, deliberativeness and future anxiety.

4.3.2 Difference tests and findings regarding the luxury consumption scale

In this part of the study, the differences between the average scores obtained from the luxury consumption scale will be discussed according to the age, gender, education, marital status and income-worked status distributions of the participants who constitute the research group.

Table 18. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from Luxury Consumption Scale by Gender Variable

Variables	Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	T	p
Uniqueness	Woman	91	3.57	1.02	.252	.802
	Man	27	3.63	.95		
Expensiveness	Woman	91	2.78	1.00	.220	.826
	Man	27	2.73	1.04		
Symbolic Meaning	Woman	91	2.45	1.24	.048	.962
	Man	27	2.44	1.00		
Arbitrariness	Woman	91	2.59	1.33	.440	.660
	Man	27	2.72	1.24		
Belonging to a Certain Minority	Woman	91	2.63	1.25	.407	.685
	Man	27	2.52	1,04		

As seen in Table 18, in terms of gender variable; no significant differentiation is observed at the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority ($p > .05$). In other words, it can be determined that the gender of the participants do not affect the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority.

Table 19. Differentiation of Scores from Luxury Consumption Scale According to Marital Status Variable

Variables	Marital Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	T	p
Uniqueness	Single	62	3.56	.97	.346	.730
	Married	56	3.62	1.04		
Expensiveness	Single	62	2.79	.97	.195	.846
	Married	56	2.75	1.06		
Symbolic Meaning	Single	62	2.48	1.16	.335	.738
	Married	56	2.41	1.23		
Arbitrariness	Single	62	2.72	1.29	.891	.375
	Married	56	2.51	1.32		
Belonging to a Certain Minority	Single	62	2.60	1.16	.004	.997
	Married	56	2.60	1.26		

As seen in Table 19, in terms of marital status variable; no significant differentiation is observed at the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority ($p > .05$). In other words, it can be determined that the marital status of the participants do not affect the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority.

Table 20. Differentiation of Scores from Luxury Consumption Scale According to Age Variable

Variables	Age Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Uniqueness	Under 30	27	3.59	.99	.063	.979
	31-40	38	3.63	.83		
	41-50	39	3.53	1.22		
	Older than 50	14	3.63	.86		
Expensiveness	Under 30	27	2.85	.96	1.656	.181
	31-40	38	3.01	1.08		
	41-50	39	2.56	.86		
	Older than 50	14	2.54	1.18		
Symbolic Meaning	Under 30	27	2.56	1.27	1.076	.362
	31-40	38	2.64	1.16		
	41-50	39	2.31	1.09		
	Older than 50	14	2.07	1.34		
Arbitrariness	Under 30	27	2.84	1.22	2.453	.067
	31-40	38	2.91	1.32		
	41-50	39	2.41	1.27		
	Older than 50	14	1.98	1.31		
Belonging to a Certain Minority	Under 30	27	2.78	1.35	.314	.815
	31-40	38	2.58	1.19		
	41-50	39	2.49	1.12		
	Older than 50	14	2.64	1.27		

As seen in Table 20, in terms of Age variable; no significant differentiation is observed at the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined

that the age status of the participants do not affect the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority.

Table 21. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from the Luxury Consumption Scale by Education Variable

Variables	Education Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Uniqueness	High School	17	3.13	.96	4.760	.004
	Associate	9	4.42	.77		
	Degree					
	Bachelor	71	3.49	1.00		
	Master	21	3.94	.86		
Expensiveness	High School	17	2.26	.55	3.265	.024
	Associate	9	3.50	1.37		
	Degree					
	Bachelor	71	2.82	.98		
	Master	21	2.70	1.04		
Symbolic Meaning	High School	17	2.46	.66	3.879	.011
	Associate	9	3.53	1.39		
	Degree					
	Bachelor	71	2.23	1.16		
	Master	21	2.70	1.27		
Arbitrariness	High School	17	2.41	1.12	4.109	.008
	Associate	9	3.78	1.48		
	Degree					
	Bachelor	71	2.40	1.27		
	Master	21	3.02	1.21		
Belonging to a Certain Minority	High School	17	2.37	.71	7.656	.000
	Associate	9	3.74	1.44		
	Degree					
	Bachelor	71	2.31	1.17		
	Master	21	3.29	1.00		

As seen in Table 21, in terms of the educational status of the participants; a significant differentiation is observed in the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority ($p > 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the education status of the participants affects

the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority dimensions.

In addition, it can be observed that the participants with associate degree education have a higher tendency to consume the luxury products being related to uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority.

Table 22. Differentiation Status of Scores Obtained from Luxury Consumption Scale by Perceived Income Status Variable

Variables	Perceived Income Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	p
Uniqueness	Low	10	4.00	.88	1.987	.142
	Middle	91	3.49	.98		
	Good	17	3.87	1.14		
Expensiveness	Low	10	2.65	1.43	3.865	.024
	Middle	91	2.67	.93		
	Good	17	3.38	.97		
Symbolic Meaning	Low	10	2.58	1.49	3.575	.031
	Middle	91	2.30	1.07		
	Good	17	3.12	1.41		
Arbitrariness	Low	10	3.13	1.52	2.700	.071
	Middle	91	2.47	1.28		
	Good	17	3.12	1.14		
Belonging To a Certain Minority	Low	10	2.73	1.41	1.485	.231
	Middle	91	2.51	1.14		
	Good	17	3.04	1.37		

As can be seen in Table 22, while there is no significant difference in the level of uniqueness, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority in terms of the perceived income status of the participants ($p > 0.05$), a significant difference is observed in the level of expensiveness and symbolic meaning ($p < 0.05$). In other words, it can be determined that the perceived income status of the participants is a determinant of the luxury fashion products because of their expensiveness and

symbolic meaning. In addition, it can be determined that if the participants feel that they have good income status, they have a higher tendency to consume luxury products due to their expensiveness and symbolic meaning.

The Table 23 and Table 24 summarize the results of the difference tests and the hypothesis. Table 23 shows that age and education levels are influential factors on the frugality tendency as a result of pandemic.

Table 23. Hypothesis Evaluation for the Covid Effect Scale (Difference Tests)

Variables	Frugality	Deliberativeness	Future Anxiety
1. The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.	X	X	X
2. The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the age of the participants.	√	X	X
3. According to the marital status of the participants, the Covid effect levels differ significantly.	X	X	X
4. Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the education level of the participants.	√	X	X
5. Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the income status of the participants.	X	X	X

X: Reject, √: Accept

Table 24 shows that education level and the perceived income are influential factors on the determinants of the luxury fashion consumption.

Table 24. Hypothesis Evaluation for the Luxury Consumption Scale (Difference Tests)

Variables	Uniqueness	Expensiveness	Symbolic Meaning	Arbitrariness	Belonging To A Certain Minority
1. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.	X	X	X	X	X
2. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the age of the participants.	X	X	X	X	X
3. Luxury consumption levels of the participants differ significantly according to their marital status.	X	X	X	X	X
4.. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the education level of the participants.	√	√	√	√	√
5. Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the perceived income of the participants.	√	√	√	√	√

X: Reject, √: Accept

4.4 Pearson correlation analysis

In this part of the study, the relationship between the evaluations of the Covid effect and Luxury consumption are examined with the “Pearson Correlation Analysis”. In the analysis the statistical significance is evaluated at the $p < 0.05$ level, in this thesis. The evaluation criteria of the correlation coefficient are used following Köklü, Büyüköztürk ve Bökeoğlu (2006).

“If $0.00 = r_p$, there is no relationship.”

“If $0.00 < r_p < 0.29$, there is a low level of correlation.”

“If $0.30 < r_p < 0.69$, there is a moderate relationship.”

“If $0.70 < r_p < 0.99$, there is a high level of correlation.”

“If $1.00 = r_p$ then there is a perfect relationship”

Table 25. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results

		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1.Frugality	r_p	1	.819	.498	.136	.090	.268	-.052	.166	.944	.158
	P		.000	.000	.142	.330	.003	.578	.072	.000	.087
2. Deliberativeness	r_p		1	.555	.170	.075	.192	-.082	.067	.916	.111
	P			.000	.065	.419	.037	.375	.471	.000	.230
3. Future Anxiety	r_p			1	.218	.110	.152	.038	.046	.713	.144
	P				.018	.237	.100	.686	.621	.000	.120
4. Uniqueness	r_p				1	.346	.504	.332	.515	.185	.671
	P					.000	.000	.000	.000	.045	.000
5. Expensiveness	r_p					1	.679	.634	.562	.103	.806
	P						.000	.000	.000	.265	.000
6. Symbolic Meaning	r_p						1	.668	.698	.249	.897
	P							.000	.000	.007	.000
7. Arbitrariness	r_p							1	.581	-.045	.801
	P								.000	.627	.000
8. Belonging to a Certain Minority	r_p								1	.127	.829
	P									.172	.000
9.Covid Effect	r_p									1	.161
	P										.082
10.Luxury Consumption	r_p										1
	p										

Looking at the Pearson Correlation test results in Table 25;

- Although the p value is higher than 0.05, it is still in the range of %10 significance level, we can state that there is a low positive correlation between the Covid effect level of the participants and their luxury consumption levels ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and low level correlation was found between the participants' Future Anxiety and uniqueness ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and low level correlation was found between frugality and symbolic meaning ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and low level correlation was found between Deliberativeness and symbolic meaning ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and high level of correlation exists between frugality and Deliberativeness of the participants ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and moderate correlation exists between frugality and future anxiety of the participants ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and low correlation exists between frugality and symbolic meaning ($p < 0.05$).
- Negative and low level correlation was found between frugality and arbitrariness of the participants ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and moderate correlation was found between the participants' Deliberativeness and future anxiety ($p < 0.05$).
- A positive and low correlation was found between the participants' Deliberativeness and symbolic meaning ($p < 0.05$).
- Negative and low level correlation was found between Deliberativeness and arbitrariness of the participants ($p < 0.05$).

4.5 Regression analysis

In this part of the research, linear regression analysis and multiple linear regression analysis are performed to evaluate the “predictability of the participants” scores between Covid effect and Luxury consumption. It is defined as a simple linear regression analysis when a normally distributed unknown numerical variable is estimated from a known normally distributed numerical variable (Kılıç, 2013).

First of all, linearity, normality and homogeneity assumptions are required to be able apply regression analysis. Thus, the data set is examined. No outliers are found in the data and it is determined that there is no extreme value. Durbin-Watson statistics are used to determine whether there is an autocorrelation between the standard errors (Genceli, 1973 :179). It is concluded that there is no autocorrelation between the errors since the Durbin-Watson statistics are in the range of 1.977-2.013.

Table 26. The Effect of Frugality on Symbolic Meaning

	non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			F	R ²
	B	Std. error	B	T	P		
Constant	1.183	.434		2.723	.007	8.967*	.072 ^b
Frugality	.336	.112	.268	2.995	.003		

Dependent Variable: Symbolic meaning

* p < 0.05

According to the results of the regression analysis in Table 26, it is understood that this model is statistically significant and frugality can explain 7.2% of the symbolic meaning variance (R²=.072; F(1,116)=8.967, p<0.05). According to the results found; It was determined that frugality predicted symbolic meaning statistically and positively (β =-0.268, t=2.995, p<0.05). In other words, the frugality levels of the

participants included in the research positively affect their symbolic meaning levels. In addition, when the regression equation is examined and other predictive variables are kept constant; A one-unit increase in the frugality level of the participants will result in a 0.336 increase in the symbolic meaning level.

When the analysis results in Table 26 are examined; Since the frugality levels of the participants predicted the symbolic meaning level in a statistically significant and positive way, “The frugality levels of the participants predict the symbolic meaning level statistically significantly and positively.” hypothesis was supported.

Table 27. The Effect of Deliberativeness on Symbolic Meaning

	non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			F	R ²
	B	Std. error	B	T	P		
Constant	1.654	.389		4.248	.000		
Deliberativeness	.211	,100	.192	2.112	.037	4.460*	.037 ^b

Dependent Variable: Symbolic Meaning

* p<0.05

According to the results of the regression analysis in Table 27, it is understood that this model is statistically significant and Deliberativeness can explain 3.7% of the symbolic meaning variance ($R^2=.037$; $F(1.116)=4.460$, $p<0.05$). According to the results, it was determined that Deliberativeness predicted symbolic meaning statistically significantly and positively ($\beta=0.192$, $t=2.112$, $p<0.05$). In other words, the Deliberativeness levels of the participants included in the research positively affect their symbolic meaning levels. In addition, when the regression equation is

examined and other predictive variables are kept constant; A one-unit increase in participants' vigilance will result in a 0.211 increase in their symbolic meaning level.

When the analysis results in Table 27 are examined; The participants stated that “The Deliberativeness levels of the participants predict the symbolic meaning levels in a statistically significant and positive way.” hypothesis was supported.

Table 28. The Effect of Future Anxiety on Uniqueness

	non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			F	R ²
	B	Std. hata	B	T	P		
Constant	2.605	.418		6.229	.000	5.785*	.047 ^b
Future Anxiety	.242	.101	.218	2.405	.018		

Dependent Variable: Uniqueness

* p<0.05

According to the results of the regression analysis in Table 28, it is understood that this model is statistically significant and future anxiety can explain 4.7% of the variance of uniqueness variance ($R^2=.047$; $F(1,116)= 5.785$, $p<0.05$). According to the results, it was determined that future anxiety predicted uniqueness statistically significantly and positively ($\beta=0.218$, $t=2.405$, $p<0.05$). In other words, the future anxiety levels of the participants in the research positively affect their uniqueness levels. In addition, when the regression equation is examined and other predictive variables are kept constant, A one-unit increase in the future anxiety level of participants will result in a 0.242 increase in the uniqueness levels.

When the analysis results in Table 28 are examined; As the participants' anxiety about the future predicted the uniqueness in a statistically significant and

positive way. “Participants’ anxiety about the future predicted their uniqueness scores.” hypothesis was supported.

4.6 Results

When the personal characteristics of the participants are examined, 77.1% of the participants are women, 52.5% are single, 60.2% of participants have bachelor degree, 77.1% are middle-income, 5.1% of participants are tended to prefer Lacoste. Considering the differences between the average scores obtained from the Covid effect scale, according to the variables of gender, age, marital status, education and perceived income status of the participants in the research group;

- The Covid effect levels differ significantly according to the age of the participants.
- The Covid effect levels do not differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.
- The Covid effect levels of the participants do not differ significantly according to their marital status.
- The Covid effect levels do not differ significantly according to the education level of the participants.
- The Covid effect levels do not differ significantly according to the income status of the participants.
- Sub-dimension of the Covid effect scale, according to the level of frugality in terms of the educational status and age variable of the participants differ significantly, but, age and educational status does not influence the level of deliberativeness and future anxiety.

- In terms of the participants' marital status, income status and gender, the sub-dimension of the Covid effect scale does not differ significantly in the sub-dimension of frugality, deliberativeness and future anxiety ($p > .05$).

Considering the differences between the average scores obtained from the luxury consumption scale according to the variables of gender, age, marital status, education and income status of the participants in the research group;

- Luxury consumption levels do not differ significantly according to the gender of the participants.
- Luxury consumption levels do not differ significantly according to the age of the participants.
- Luxury consumption levels of the participants do not differ significantly according to marital status.
- Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the education level of the participants.
- Luxury consumption levels differ significantly according to the income level of the participants.
- In terms of participants' gender, marital status and age; When analyzed at the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority, no significant differentiation is observed ($p > .05$).
- In terms of the education and income status of the participants; When analyzed at the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority, a significant difference is observed.
- When the predictive status of the participants' deliberativeness, future anxiety, frugality, uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness, and thoughts about belonging to a certain minority are examined;

- Frugality can explain 7.2% of symbolic meaning variance, and it predicts symbolic meaning in a statistically significant and positive way,
- Deliberativeness can explain 3.7% of the symbolic meaning variance, and it predicts the symbolic meaning in a statistically significant and positive way,
- It was found that future anxiety could explain 4.7% of the variance of uniqueness, and it predicted uniqueness in a statistically significant and positive way.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The epidemic that emerged at the end of 2019 caused unavoidable health problems, and the full closure process brought with the measures taken against the epidemic unexpectedly changed the home-office and education conditions of the people. The sudden change in the production-consumption balance has led to questioning and interruptions in consumption habits. As a result of the pandemic, the damage caused by humanity to the environment, waste, recycling and sustainability concepts have come to the agenda, while the increase in the time spent at home has led to changes in consumption and shopping trends. In the study by Erdağı & Eryiğit (2020), it is investigated whether the sub-dimensions that make up the perception of luxury value differ according to gender. According to the Social Structural Theory of Gender, the self-perceptions of men and women differ. That is, while women define themselves in relation to their environment, men's self-definitions are independent of others. Therefore, women attach more importance to the impressions of others. It can be stated that the individual and emotional meanings of luxury products are more important for women. Therefore, luxury products for women are valuable because they provide inner satisfaction and happiness. Interpersonal effects and personal effects that are stated to be effective on luxury consumption parallel our result.

According to a study before COVID-19 by Vapurluoğlu (2011) even though there are similar consumer trends in different countries, cross-cultural results about luxury values indicate that individual, social, functional and financial dimensions of luxury values have some different trends in different countries. Following a similar approach, this thesis aims to analyze the effects of pandemics on the consumer

behavior in luxury fashion market. The thesis has certain limitations such as the number of participants to the conducted questionnaire. However, it contributes to the literature by providing empirical research that analyzes how a crisis such as COVID-19 could change the consumer behavior. In that respect, it provides insights to the companies and policy makers.

In the thesis, which is conducted after COVID-19 the level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority, no significant differentiation is observed. Pang et al. (2021) analyzed luxury sales in Korea after COVID, with symbolic meaning, it was stated consumer frugality and deliberativeness changed behavior. In this study, frugality can explain 7.2% of symbolic meaning variance, and it predicts symbolic meaning in a statistically significant and positive way. Bryedges et al. (2020) has parallel results that the coronavirus epidemic will present a greater challenge to the industry than the recession in 2008, as it is also rooted in the growing middle class since 1990 and level of uniqueness, expensiveness, symbolic meaning, arbitrariness and belonging to a certain minority, a significant difference was detected as we found. However, being different than the results given by Bryedges et al. (2020), Giovannini et al., (2015) found that consumption levels differ significantly according to the income level of the participants as it is supported by this thesis after Covid-19.

The research conducted in this thesis shows that the pandemic has a significant effect on the determinants of the luxury fashion consumption. It looks like that the companies' differentiated strategies from traditional luxury fashion marketing such as offering promotions related to the price tags, or using the attention economics more than trying to use the bandwagon effect will be seen more in the near future.

APPENDIX
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Demographic Information Form	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50 and above
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married
Education	<input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master Degree
How do you evaluate your financial situation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Low Income <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Income <input type="checkbox"/> Good Income
Please mark which brands you prefer more.	<input type="checkbox"/> Armani <input type="checkbox"/> Burberry <input type="checkbox"/> Chanel <input type="checkbox"/> Dior <input type="checkbox"/> Dolce&Gabbana <input type="checkbox"/> Fendi <input type="checkbox"/> Gucci <input type="checkbox"/> Hermes <input type="checkbox"/> Louis Vuitton <input type="checkbox"/> Prada <input type="checkbox"/> Ralph Lauren <input type="checkbox"/> Versace <input type="checkbox"/> Saint Laurent <input type="checkbox"/> Beymen <input type="checkbox"/> Calvin Klein <input type="checkbox"/> Diesel <input type="checkbox"/> Donna Karan New York <input type="checkbox"/> Fred Perry <input type="checkbox"/> Guess <input type="checkbox"/> Hugo Boss <input type="checkbox"/> Lacoste <input type="checkbox"/> Micheal Kors <input type="checkbox"/> Tommy Hilfiger <input type="checkbox"/> Paul&Shark <input type="checkbox"/> Vakko

Crisis Perception Scale	1= Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither agree nor disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
Since the beginning of the Covid - 19 pandemic period, I have focused more on financial matters.	1	2	3	4	5
Due to the Covid - 19 pandemic period, I spend my money more carefully, thinking about my future.	1	2	3	4	5
There have been changes in my purchasing behavior during the Covid - 19 pandemic period.	1	2	3	4	5
I have been more sparing since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic period.	1	2	3	4	5
Due to Covid - 19, I started to consult my close circle about shopping more than before.	1	2	3	4	5
I have more experience in purchasing during the Covid-19 period due to previous crises.	1	2	3	4	5
People around me tend to be sparing, which is encouraging for me.	1	2	3	4	5
Due to the Covid - 19 pandemic period, I am now more careful than before when using a credit card.	1	2	3	4	5
After the Covid-19 pandemic started, I started buying less of everything.	1	2	3	4	5
The social reflection of the socio-economic situation in the country puts pressure on me to be more modest in my spending habits.	1	2	3	4	5
Due to financial restrictions during the pandemic process, I have to make purchases that do not fully meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
Even after the Covid-19 pandemic period has passed, some of my consumption behaviors will be cautious.	1	2	3	4	5
I think the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic period in the country will continue for a long time.	1	2	3	4	5
I think my country is in a social and economic crisis right now.	1	2	3	4	5
I am hopeless because of the Covid-19 pandemic period we are living in.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't think job opportunities will be good this year due to the Covid - 19 pandemic period we live in.	1	2	3	4	5

Luxury Consumption Scale	1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither agree nor disagree	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
I buy a product/service because it is different from others.	1	2	3	4	5
In my purchasing decisions, I consider that the relevant product/service has unique features.	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in products with different features from other products/services.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like a product/service I purchased to be exclusive to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy to buy expensive products/services.	1	2	3	4	5
Finding cheap products/services is not very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not prefer to buy cheap products/services.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer an expensive product/service to a cheap product/service.	1	2	3	4	5
I give importance to the symbolic features of a product/service rather than its functional features.	1	2	3	4	5
If a product/service symbolizes luxury in my environment, I prefer to buy it.	1	2	3	4	5
When purchasing products/services, I consider what they mean to the people around me.	1	2	3	4	5

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