



THE EFFECT OF REFERENCE GROUPS ON INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOR IN THE BUYING PROCESS OF MOBILE PHONES

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**THE EFFECT OF REFERENCE GROUPS ON INFORMATION SEARCH
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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Almabrouk Abdullah Salih MUMIN titled “THE EFFECT OF REFERENCE GROUPS ON INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOR IN THE BUYING PROCESS OF MOBILE PHONES” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master's Thesis.

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16/09/2020

The degree of Master of Science by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Prof. Dr. Hasan SOLMAZ

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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Signature : 

FOREWORD

First of all, I would like to give thanks to my advisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Hasan Terzi, for his great interest and assistance in preparation of this thesis.





“I declare that all the information within this thesis has been gathered and presented in accordance with academic regulations and ethical principles and I have according to the requirements of these regulations and principles cited all those which do not originate in this work as well.”

Almabrouk Abdullah Salih Mumin

ABSTRACT

Reference groups are one of the most important factors that contribute to influencing the behavior of individuals and groups. The human being is affected by his nature and affects the environment in which he lives, especially the people around him, because he is a social being whose life is based on interaction and communication with others and depends on them to satisfy his needs and desires, as it is He derives his culture with all its components through learning and interacting with the group to which his problem belongs, and he has the basic basis on which he bases his behavioral practices. Since the marketing success of business organizations depends primarily on the possibility of identifying customers, knowing their purchasing characteristics and behaviors, and analyzing the factors affecting them. Since reference groups are one of these factors, those responsible for marketing policies must study them and analyze their effects on purchasing behaviors, which helps in formulating targeted marketing strategies that ensure the success and excellence of organizations. This study aimed to address the concepts related to the nature of purchasing decisions, the mechanisms for taking them and their evaluation methods, and to clarify the types of reference groups that affect the purchasing decision of the consumer and focus on the basic groups. The analysis of the data obtained as a result of the questionnaire applied was made. In order to analyze the data, the questionnaire forms were transferred to IBM SPSS 25.0 program first, then with appropriate coding. In the analysis, factor analysis and reliability analyze of the effect scale of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones were made during the purchase process. Descriptive statistics for the scale and scale items were determined. Descriptive statistics are specified as frequency (N), percentage (%), mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum in the analysis.

Key Words: Reference groups, information search behavior, buying process, buying behavior, mobile phones.

ÖZ

Referans gruplar, bireylerin ve grupların davranışlarını etkilemeye katkıda bulunan en önemli faktörlerden biridir. İnsan doğasından etkilenir ve içinde yaşadığı çevreyi, özellikle çevresindeki insanları etkiler, çünkü hayatı başkalarıyla etkileşime ve iletişime dayalı, ihtiyaç ve isteklerini karşılamak için onlara bağımlı olan bir sosyal varlıktır, olduğu gibi, problemini ait olduğu grupla öğrenerek ve etkileşim kurarak kültürünü tüm bileşenleriyle türetir ve davranışsal uygulamalarına dayandığı temel temele sahiptir. Ticari organizasyonların pazarlama başarısı öncelikle müşterileri belirleme, satın alma özelliklerini ve davranışlarını bilme ve onları etkileyen faktörleri analiz etme imkanına bağlıdır. Referans grupları bu faktörlerden biri olduğundan, pazarlama politikalarından sorumlu olanlar bunları incelemeli ve satın alma davranışları üzerindeki etkilerini analiz etmelidir, bu da kuruluşların başarısını ve mükemmelliğini sağlayan hedefli pazarlama stratejilerinin formüle edilmesine yardımcı olur. Bu çalışma, satın alma kararlarının doğası, bunları alma mekanizmaları ve değerlendirme yöntemleri ile ilgili kavramları ele almayı ve tüketicinin satın alma kararını etkileyen ve temel gruplara odaklanan referans gruplarının türlerini açıklamayı amaçlamıştır. Uygulanan anket sonucunda elde edilen verilerin analizi yapılmıştır. Verileri analiz etmek için, anket formları önce IBM SPSS 25.0 programına, sonra uygun kodlamayla aktarıldı. Analizde, referans grupların cep telefonlarının bilgi arama davranışı üzerindeki etki ölçeğinin satın alma sürecinde faktör analizi ve güvenilirlik analizi yapılmıştır. Ölçek ve ölçek maddeleri için tanımlayıcı istatistikler belirlenmiştir. Tanımlayıcı istatistikler analizde frekans (N), yüzde (%), ortalama, standart sapma, minimum ve maksimum olarak belirtilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Referans grupları, bilgi arama davranışı, satın alma süreci, satın alma davranışı, cep telefonları.

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Anahtar Kelimeler	Referans Grupları, Bilgi Arama Davranışı, Satın Alma Süreci, Satın Alma Davranışı, Cep Telefonları.

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The study of human behavior has been of great importance since ancient times, due to its importance and trying to identify it and determine the factors that affect it, because the behavior of individuals is affected by many factors, the impact of which varies according to these factors, where there is a clear difference in the behavior of individuals. This is a result of different countries, regions, races, customs, traditions, laws, customs, civilizations and other factors.

Since consumer behavior represents one aspect of this behavior, studying and trying to identify it has received very great attention from various economic and behavioral schools. It has become at the present time an important and fundamental point and occupies the first position for organizations as a result of scientific and technological progress, which led to an increase in the numbers of products presented in The market and its diversity, the existence of alternative products for it that can replace it and give similar services or benefits, or the intensification of competition and the development and diversity of consumer tastes in a way that made it represent the important and essential axis of all marketing strategies.

Consequently, it became the starting and end point for the various productive, marketing and other activities in the organizations, which made the professionals proceed to define these strategies by studying the consumer's behavior and trying to identify his needs and desires and trying to meet them with a view to achieving satisfaction and gratification for him and pushing him to make a purchasing decision and that the success of these organizations It is linked at the present time to its ability to meet these desires and needs and achieve consumer satisfaction.

In order for the organization to succeed in its marketing plans, it must more accurately identify the consumer, which is metaphorically referred to as the black box, as marketing departments still do not know about consumer behavior and what is inside there is little despite the scientific progress in the field of natural social sciences, so the analogy here shows that what Inside a person is unknown and the resulting buying behavior may not be repeated continuously because it results from the influence of several different factors, including social factors.

There are various social factors influenced by the consumer that are reflected in his behavior and treatment, including: reference groups, meaning those groups that have a direct impact on individuals or their behavior, groups that have a direct impact on individuals can be called membership groups, to which individuals belong strongly and who are closer to them, for example. Family, friends, working groups, and neighbors: These groups are called primary groups, while others are less interactive in terms of continuity than in unions, federations, and associations.

Reference groups are one of the most important factors that contribute to influencing the behavior of individuals and groups. The human being is affected by his nature and affects the environment in which he lives, especially the people around him, because he is a social being whose life is based on interaction and communication with others and depends on them to satisfy his needs and desires, as it is He derives his culture with all its components through learning and interacting with the group to which his problem belongs, and he has the basic basis on which he bases his behavioral practices.

Since the marketing success of business organizations depends primarily on the possibility of identifying customers, knowing their purchasing characteristics and behaviors, and analyzing the factors affecting them. Since reference groups are one of these factors, those responsible for marketing policies must study them and analyze their effects on purchasing behaviors, which helps in formulating targeted marketing strategies that ensure the success and excellence of organizations. A simple understanding of normal buying behavior indicates that an individual's decision to purchase a product stems from the need, and his desire to obtain a certain benefit, and that this desire is affected by a set of variables surrounding it, such as: goods available in the market. And the extent of the impact of marketing policies on the consumer, in addition to many other influences such as income, economic and social conditions and reference groups.

And as reference groups are one of those influences that can be used as a frame of reference for individuals in their purchasing decisions, and the formation of their attitudes and behaviors towards products, and that the individual consumer affiliation with one of the reference groups makes him affected by the behavior, trends, attitudes and beliefs of the group to which he belongs, so the reference groups play an important

role in influencing On the purchasing positions of individuals through the adoption of the individual positions agreed with the views of the reference group and its goals, and avoid positions contrary to it. Thus, reference groups direct the individual to a specific consumer behavior and make a purchasing decision commensurate with their positions and behaviors by giving information or providing advice and guidance to the individual.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study aimed to address the concepts related to the nature of purchasing decisions, the mechanisms for taking them and their evaluation methods, and to clarify the types of reference groups that affect the purchasing decision of the consumer and focus on the basic groups. The objectives of the study can be summarized in the following:

- 1) Explain the main types of reference groups that affect the consumer's purchasing decision and the degree of influence of each of them.
- 2) Determine the effect of these major reference groups on the purchasing decision
- 3) Knowing the extent of consumer influence with the main reference groups and measuring whether or not there is a relationship between the variables.
- 4) Knowing the influence of the main reference groups on the individual which is reflected in his purchasing behavior.
- 5) Providing the most important results and recommendations that the study will reach.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The problem of the study is summarized in clarifying the extent of the consumer's influence of the basic reference groups when purchasing goods. This problem lies in not knowing the effect of these basic reference groups on the consumer's purchasing decision and not knowing that the consumer depends on these

basic groups as a source of information that helps him in making the purchasing decision.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM

The problem of the study can be highlighted by asking the following question, which comes from several questions:

Is there a relationship between the main reference groups and the purchase decision?

It branches from it:

1. Does the family influence the purchasing decision?
2. How do friends influence buying decisions?
3. How does coworkers influence purchasing decision-making?
4. What is the role of celebrities in making the purchase decision?

POPULATION AND SAMPLE (IF AVAILABLE)

The questionnaires were distributed to a number of Libyan citizens, where the success rate of the questionnaire was 100%. The total number of participants is 403 and the participants are from Benghazi which is the largest city of Libya.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

Hyman introduced the term 'reference group', as "a person or a group of persons which significantly influences an individual's behavior". In other words, it is a group whose accepted perspectives or values are being used by an individual as the basis of his or her behavior. It provides standards (norms) and values that can become the determining viewpoint for the mode of thoughts and actions of those who are thus influenced. A reference group is defined as "an actual or imaginary individual or group

conceived of having significant relevance upon an individual's evaluations, aspirations, or behavior". Reference groups are usually conformed by the social network of an individual: family members, friends and colleagues, and inspirational figures. Given that social networks are conformed in different manners in different cultural contexts, reference group influence varies across cultures. Reference groups have basically two functions: A normative function that sets and enforces standards for the individual, and a comparative function that serves as a comparison point against which an individual evaluates himself and others.

Marketing and consumer behavior scholars have shown that reference groups influence consumer choice, especially for branded products such as candy, clothing, snack foods, mineral water and sodas, fragrances, and wine. In a study of wine brand choice, Orth & Kahle (2008) have found individuals higher on internal values and with more complex social identities were less susceptible to normative influence and placed less emphasis on social brand benefits. They have also shown that reference group salience interacts with personal values and social identity complexity in affecting consumer susceptibility to normative influence, which in turn affects consumer brand choice. Clark & Goldsmith (2006) examined the effects of innovativeness and attention to social comparison information on normative and informational dimensions and found that innovativeness is associated with susceptibility to informational influence despite a resistance to normative influence.

In simple words a reference group is any person or group that serves as a point of comparison (for reference) for an individual in forming either general or specific values, attitudes, or behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). From the consumer behavior perspective, reference groups serve as frames of reference for individuals in their purchase or consumption decisions. Promotional strategies adopted by the marketers in using celebrities and the subtle use of group influence in their advertisements, clearly indicates the growing awareness on the part of marketing and advertising practitioners regarding the influence of reference groups in purchase decisions. For example, by using reference groups in their advertisements, Blackberry Mobile Systems are communicating the message that they are meant not only for the business executives but also for all those who are actively into mobile messaging, net surfing, film making, fashion designing, etc.

1. CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study of human behavior has been of great importance since ancient times, due to its importance and trying to identify it and determine the factors that affect it, because the behavior of individuals is affected by many factors, the impact of which varies according to these factors, where there is a clear difference in the behavior of individuals. This is a result of different countries, regions, races, customs, traditions, laws, customs, civilizations and other factors.

Since consumer behavior represents one aspect of this behavior, studying and trying to identify it has received very great attention from various economic and behavioral schools. It has become at the present time an important and fundamental point and occupies the first position for organizations as a result of scientific and technological progress, which led to an increase in the numbers of products presented in The market and its diversity, the existence of alternative products for it that can replace it and give similar services or benefits, or the intensification of competition and the development and diversity of consumer tastes in a way that made it represent the important and essential axis of all marketing strategies.

Consequently, it became the starting and end point for the various productive, marketing and other activities in the organizations, which made the professionals proceed to define these strategies by studying the consumer's behavior and trying to identify his needs and desires and trying to meet them with a view to achieving satisfaction and gratification for him and pushing him to make a purchasing decision and that the success of these organizations It is linked at the present time to its ability to meet these desires and needs and achieve consumer satisfaction.

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buying behavior may not be repeated continuously because it results from the influence of several different factors, including social factors.

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The problem of the study is summarized in clarifying the extent of the consumer's influence of the basic reference groups when purchasing goods. This problem lies in not knowing the effect of these basic reference groups on the consumer's purchasing decision and not knowing that the consumer depends on these basic groups as a source of information that helps him in making the purchasing decision. The problem of the study can be highlighted by asking the following question, which comes from several questions:

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2. CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Consumer Behavior

People have been part of certain activities that have resulted in consumption, whether they wanted it or not, since the very first moment it existed on earth. It is impossible to find a person who somehow does not engage in consumption, from the most primitive to the most modern. Humans, like other living creatures in the same nature, are in constant consumption throughout their lives. However, unlike other living things, humans have to take into account not only their physical needs but also their social and psychological needs and reflect these needs in their consumption activities.

In its most basic sense, consumption is a phenomenon that emerged as a result of the merging of products and services with current demands in a particular market. In a narrow sense, consumption is the purchase of products and services to meet family needs or personal needs. The shopping involved here is not only about providing our daily needs, but also includes a range of activities ranging from renting or building houses, to obtaining loans for the needs. In other words, consumption contract includes durable products that are consumed at once, durable products such as furniture and cars, movable products such as land, housing, or services related to products such as cleaning, insurance, repair, credit as well as medical treatment and examinations. On the other hand, consumption does not only involve private law or private sectors, including self-employment or commercial activities, but also includes public services such as hospitals, postal, telephone, electricity, suburban trains, water, natural gas. (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh & Best, 2010)

From a sociological point of view, consumption cannot be treated separately from images, cultural values and symbols since it is not a purely mechanical process. Products and services are marketed to consumers through some symbols and indicators by manipulating consciousness through psychoanalytic processes as well as classical and operant conditioning techniques used to shape mass and individual behaviors in psychology in order to ensure sustainability and sustainability of consumption. This is

the connection between desires and consumption. It is observed that the presentation of products and services by identifying them with certain personality types is tried to be shaped by the consumption phenomenon of various identities, leisure time styles and lifestyles instead of the role models and roles in the environment.

2.1.1. The Concept of Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior constitutes a dynamic process as a motivated behavior and covers various activities. Consumer behavior may differ for different people. Consumer behavior includes complex decision processes that occur under the interaction of a large number of internal and external factors. Therefore, consumer behavior is not simple reactive behavior. There are a number of features. These features make consumer behavior a process involving various activities. As a result, consumer behavior is a highly dynamic process, and activities covering every stage of consumption in this process take place in a certain order and hierarchy. (Weiner, 2000)

Consumer behavior should be examined within the framework of the behavior of the person related to market and consumption. According to their definition, consumer behavior is a whole of activities that involve a person's decisions to purchase and then use economic products and services. These consumer activities are related to mental, emotional and physical qualities. More specifically, consumer behavior examines how consumers' limited resources such as time, energy and money are used for consumption and which factors are effective on these behaviors. The most basic features of consumer behavior as follows: (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore & Hill, 2006)

- Consumer behavior is motivated.
- Consumer behavior is a dynamic process.
- Consumer behavior consists of various activities.
- Consumer behavior is complex and differs in terms of timing.
- Consumer behavior deals with different roles.
- Consumer behavior is affected by environmental factors.
- Consumer behavior differs for different people.

The concept of consumer behavior can be defined as the whole of their behaviors in the consumption process in order to satisfy the needs and desires of the consumers. These behaviors are described in two ways by the authors:

- Activities such as research, selection, consumption, purchase and use, and subsequent disposal of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy consumers' needs and desires.
- Activities covering the evaluation process such as after consumption, complaints and complaints.

Consumer behavior can be explained as a system of certain processes. According to the author, the consumer realizes his need before buying. The realization of the need arises with the effect of physiological, mental and external stimuli. Then the information gathering phase begins. In this process, the consumer conducts research on what type of product it will meet. Of course, the effect of factors such as time, effort and money costs should not be forgotten. The consumer, who starts to evaluate the alternatives in the next stage, moves to the purchase stage after making his choice. In the purchase decision, the consumer goes to the most appropriate point of sale for him and gets the product / service. Every purchase is a learning process for the consumer. Because, according to the author, the satisfaction or regret given by the product in the evaluation stage after the purchase will affect the future behavior of the person. (Laros & Steenkamp, 2005)

2.1.2. Consumer Behavior Characteristics

Marketing of products and services is not just an economic activity, there are many factors that affect the purchasing behavior of individuals. Therefore, consumer behavior covers a wide area. Consumer behavior can be defined as the field of study that examines the processes related to the selection, purchase, use or disposal of products, services, thoughts or experiences to satisfy the wishes and needs of individuals or groups (Solomon, 2009). As can be understood from the definition of consumer behavior, it deals with not only the purchasing phase, but also the before, after, experiences about this phase and various factors. In assuming consumer behavior, some assumptions and characteristics of the field should be examined. It is possible to summarize the characteristics of consumer behavior in seven main topics. (Dijksterhuis et al., 2005)

1. Consumer behavior is motivated behavior: Consumer behavior is motivated behavior to achieve a goal. The aim is to satisfy the needs and demands that create tension when not met. In other words, it is the aim to develop solutions to the problems of the consumer. Products, services, shopping places are possible solutions of people and consumers take actions to reach these solutions. Behavior itself is a tool, and satisfying needs and desires is the goal. It is essential for marketers to be indispensable to know the reasons that affect the behavior to satisfy the need.

2. Consumer behavior is a dynamic process: In consumer behavior, the purchasing decision is a process consisting of some activities. Consumer behavior examines this dynamic process. This process consists of three steps. These steps are; pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase activities are: (Baumeister, 2002)

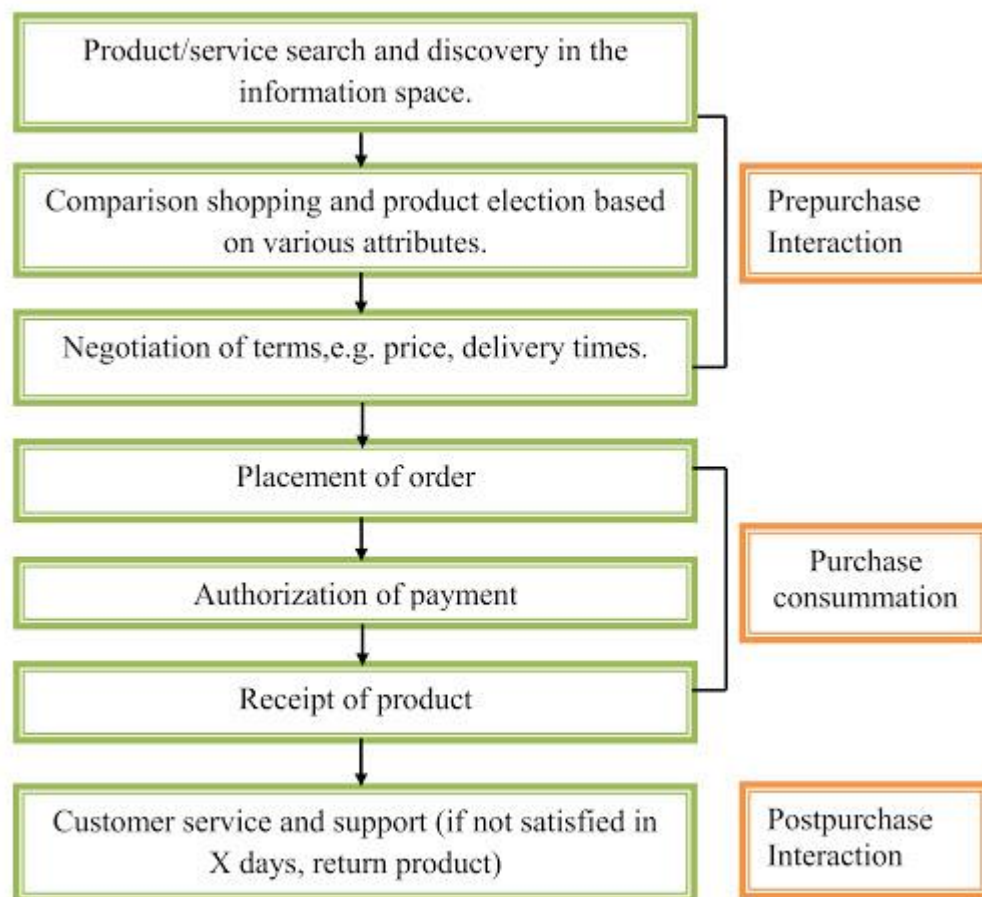


Figure 2.1. Steps in the Purchase Process

Purchasing is only one stage of the consumption process, and limiting consumer behavior to this is an important deficiency. Therefore, the decision process

needs to be examined. Examining the decision process is very useful in explaining why, how and what consumers buy. The meaning of the purchasing process and the steps involved in this process for consumers and marketers is given in Figure 1.1. For example, as shown in the figure, there are steps to realize the need, research options and evaluate options before purchasing in the purchasing decision process. After the need arises, research and evaluation of options begin to meet this need. In this step, consumer's previous experiences are very important. At this stage, again, consumers turn to the resources from which they can obtain the most appropriate information for them. At this point, it is important to use the right resources (advertisements, internet, mobile phones, etc.) to reach the consumers.

3. Consumer behavior consists of various activities: The fact that consumer behavior consists of various activities draws attention to what these activities might be. As a consumer, we all have thoughts, decisions, experiences and evaluations. Some of these can be done voluntarily and planned, while others can be done accidentally. Interviewing sales staff, collecting information or deciding to buy can be shown as an example of the activities performed by planning and planning. On the other hand, we rarely make a special effort to watch ads. Although we go to the store with a certain brand in mind, it is very common that we buy another brand. These examples are considered randomly. (Goel et al., 2010)

4. Consumer behavior is complex and varies in terms of timing: Timing describes when the decision was made and how long the process took. Complexity explains the number of factors (variables) that are effective in a decision and the difficulty of the decision. It can be said that the more complex a decision, the more time will be spent. To put it more clearly, it is clear that a long time will be needed when making an important consumption decision. Making complex and difficult decisions will naturally require more energy. To speed up and simplify the decision, methods such as being open to the suggestions of others and creating brand addiction can be used.

5. Consumer behavior deals with different roles: It is generally thought that all steps of the purchasing decision process are made for a consumer's own needs and wishes, and then consumption by this individual. However, different individuals can play different roles in the steps of the purchasing process. For example, the purchaser

and user may not be the same person, as in the process of buying clothes for a parent's child. There are different roles and different combinations of these roles in consumer behavior. When a purchase decision process is analyzed: There are five roles: Initiator, Impressive, Decision Maker, Buyer and User. (Koufaris, 2002)

6. Consumer behavior is influenced by environmental factors: The ability of consumer behavior to be influenced by external factors is an indication that it can both change and have a adaptive structure. The effects of some external factors involve a long period, while others take a very short time. In general, all individuals are affected by environmental factors at different stages of the purchasing process. For example, it is common for many individuals to buy hats to protect themselves on a sunny summer day, to accelerate or postpone home purchases with the expectation that home loan rates will rise or fall.

7. Consumer behavior may differ from person to person: The difference in consumer behavior for different people is the natural consequence of personal differences. In understanding consumer behavior, it is important to understand the reasons for individuals' behavioral differences. As a consumer, all individuals display different preferences and different buying behavior. Although this makes it difficult to generalize, it is important to know what consumer responses will be for businesses.

2.1.3. Types of consumers

The concept of consumer means the person who makes use of goods and services in the most basic form as a dictionary, purchases, uses and consumes goods and services. In a broad sense, the consumer; is the person who is equipped with the needs, who can choose and have pleasure, who uses the economic resources to purchase goods and services, and as a result of these activities, reaches satisfaction by benefiting. While the consumer person directs his own life with the decisions he takes as an individual, it also affects the economic decisions such as how much and with which methods to produce, how to distribute the factors, how to evaluate the savings and how to use the income to meet the needs. When end consumers purchase a product or service, they expect it to meet the relevant needs of that product and service. It also wants the needs to be met at the cheapest. The person who could not meet his expectation in his purchasing activity will not turn to that product or company again. (Gatersleben, Steg & Vlek, 2002)

The behavior of consumers to purchase products and services is to satisfy their needs and to experience a sense of satisfaction. These needs are classified by Maslow in Figure 1.2. According to Maslow, the severity of the needs at the bottom of the pyramid is highest and the severity of the needs at the top is lowest. For example; It is unlikely that a person will follow developments in the art world while starving.



Figure 2.2. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy

Today, the goods that people identify themselves by purchasing serve to the purpose of consuming by embracing various images. This service tries to connect people to the world of social values with symbols and to show social values as a part of the objects offered for sale. In this way, consumption creates its own ideology again. Considering consumer individuals as beings living in a material world means discovering the spirit of the consumer society. The world is occupied with an understanding supported by consumption objects, and the characteristics of people can be analyzed with their belongings. The time spent in the market has become increasingly the time devoted to chasing objects, apart from routine social relationships. Even daily conversations with other people are almost about consumption. (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2002)

In today's world, where the creation of a brand-specific personality has become increasingly important, consumers see consumption as a way of life and perceive it as a tool to identify themselves and complete their personality. The personality of a brand includes some concrete and abstract qualities like the personality of a person.

Consumers evaluate brands just as they do real people, and brands want to transfer some personality traits to their consumers. For all these reasons, brands are trying to create the image they desire and find ways to reach the desired position in the consumers' perceptions.

2.2. Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior models examine the structural form of consumer behavior and the factors affecting this structure. Each model advocates the formative importance of a separate element on these behaviors. As a result, no model can fully explain consumer behavior. Based on these models and many studies, the factors that shape consumer behavior can be categorized into three basic groups (Figure 1.3). (Koufaris, Kambil & LaBarbera, 2001)



Figure 2.3. Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

2.2.1. Cultural factors

Cultural factors, which are the factors affecting consumers' purchase of goods and services; culture, subculture and social class.

2.2.1.1.Culture

There has been a variety of confusion and disagreements among researchers that the concept of culture is the most meaningful. Hofstede, the most mentioned person in culture in the literature, defined culture as a jointly programmed intelligence (mind) that distinguishes one group from another. By Culture; It has been defined as a collection of meanings, attitudes and values developed throughout the history that have been learned and shared by the community, affecting their material and intangible lifestyles. Community members learn about shared features throughout their lives in family, school, community, and education. Hampden-Turner, who are also known for their work in the field of culture; defined as a set of methods and rules that a society has developed to solve the problems they face in time. On the other hand, Singh expressed culture as a structure consisting of facts shared by a group or society in the past and present.

While analyzing the purchasing behavior of consumers, it was concluded that culture is of great importance. This is mainly because culture is the biggest factor that shapes individuals' decisions and wishes, and their behavior within a broader framework. Some features of the concept of culture in terms of consumer behavior are as follows: (Assael, 2005)

- It is all of the learned behaviors.
- It has the feature of being traditional.
- It contains some differences and similarities.
- It is a concept created over time.
- It is the most basic element that shapes individual and social needs.

There are different elements of culture and different consumption behaviors that these elements affect. Values, language, religion, traditions, beliefs, ceremonies, etc. It is one of the elements that structure culture.

2.2.1.2. Subculture

All individuals grow in a particular society and acquire their value judgments, preferences, behaviors and perceptions from the social environment in which they grow and the cultural pattern of this environment. The race, religion, nationality and

region of the people determine the subcultural groups to which it belongs. The subculture group that the individual belongs to plays a determining role on the needs, wishes and choices from the clothing style of the individual to the food and beverage preferences.

The subculture has individual, social and organizational features. In subculture, community members do not have to have the same race or religion as each other. The absence of such a requirement separates the subculture from the upper communities. In the consumer groups, the social impact of the subculture on the group members is also important because it affects the purchasing decision and choice of the consumer. As an example of consumer grouping of subculture, enthusiasts can be given to the motorcycles of the Harley Davidson brand. The people who are members of this group meet in a café they set together and perform social activities on the days they determine jointly. Considering that each individual member of the group is also a consumer, the joint activities of the groups that make up the subculture show a separate consumer behavior. While eating together in the restaurant, where the group decided jointly, it is a consumer activity created by a subculture, whereas one of the group members ordering beverages next to the decided meal is an individual consumer activity. From this point of view, it is seen that an activity or product decided as a group is not always effective on the group members. (De Mooij, 2019)

2.2.1.3. Social Class

The concept of social class; It can be expressed as a relatively homogeneous subdivision of a community that adopts the same values, lifestyle, interests and behavior. Marketing efforts begin with the determination of the target market primarily. For the target market researches, the interests, values and behaviors of the people who make up this market are determined. However, it is impossible to handle each consumer one by one and make this determination. For this reason, groups that are thought to have homogeneous features are considered and a planning is made accordingly. Although there are no strict boundaries between social classes, many common features help in determining social classes. Social classes are generally divided into six categories. (Koufaris, Kambil & LaBarbera, 2001)

2.2.2. Social Factors

Social factors, which are the factors affecting the buying behavior of consumers; reference (counseling) groups, family, circle of friends, roles and status.

2.2.2.1. Reference (advisory) groups

Reference groups; It is one of the factors that affect people's behavior and purchasing decisions. Each consumer who is a member of the consumer society is under the influence of the social groups to which he is affiliated. In the process of making the purchase decision, the attitude towards a good or service or the proximity to the goods and services constitute a perception on the group. The social characteristics of the group, its proximity or distance to goods and services, its reactions may lead to the end or realization of a possible purchasing activity. Reference groups are groups whose impact is accepted and that individuals relate to themselves. Consumers do not always disclose purchasing decisions within the group or social class they belong to and do not take the opinion of the group. In such a situation, the consumer is only affected by the probability of the severity of the group's reaction to the choice and behavior of purchasing. This shows that the consumer individual only takes the group as an example. Probabilities, responses and total blood play a mind-blowing role in the consumer. The fact that the reference group of a consumer who is excessively demanding for goods or services has a negative attitude towards that product may prevent the decision to purchase the product from turning into action. On the other hand, many people adopt the group's consumption behavior in order to be included in a group or to maintain their status in the group they are in. This shows how important and effective reference groups are in consumers' purchasing behavior. (Talluri & Van Ryzin, 2004)

When group interaction is analyzed in terms of consumer purchasing decisions, it is seen that especially small-scale groups such as school friends, professional groups and groups of friends affect the consumption phenomenon in different ways. These effects:

- It affects the awareness of consumer individuals about goods and services and brands.
- It affects consumers' knowledge and beliefs about the product.

- It affects consumers to try goods and services.
- It affects how consumers use goods and services.
- It affects which needs of consumers will be met by the goods and services consumed.
- While carrying out all these effects, it affects the formal and informal communication network within the group of the consumer.

2.2.2.2. Family

Starting in the middle of the 20th century, the concept of extended family has gradually decreased, and the nuclear family structure has started to become widespread. With the nuclear family concept, mothers, fathers and children who have not yet entered adolescence come to mind. Family needs and expenses depend on how many parents are working outside the home and contributing to the budget and the number of children in the family. As family members age or the number of members in the family changes, their preferences and needs also differ. Since the family is a different social institution in many ways, it affects decisions to purchase goods and services. The feature that distinguishes the family from the other groups among the groups that have an impact on consumer behavior is that the family is a unit that both earns and spends. In terms of the general appearance of the decision-making process, products purchased according to family characteristics and characteristics can be explained as follows: (Hsu & Lu, 2007)

- **Autonomous Family:** When the spouses are independent from each other, it is the situations in which the woman or man decides to purchase the product independently. Examples of these products; over-the-counter medicines, personal care products, drinks, etc.
- **Family Dominated by Women:** Cleaning products, women's personal clothes, kitchen utensils, etc.
- **Family dominated by men:** High-priced products such as television, life insurance, automobile.
- **Family in which decisions are made jointly:** home, vacation place, children's educational expenses or entertainment expenses, etc.

2.2.2.3. Social environment

All individuals live in interaction with other people around. For example; like a store's salesperson or a friend who goes shopping together. In addition, communication may occur from time to time with other customers in the store. Many people can easily get distracted in crowded environments, which can negatively affect the shopping process. For some people, crowded spaces can cause positive emotions to emerge. As an example; If a store selling mobile phones is too crowded, it will be extremely difficult to have information about the phone you want to buy and to examine the phone in detail. On the other hand, when a restaurant is searched for food, the most crowded restaurant is thought to be filled with the flavor of its food, which can create a positive impression on the consumer. (Goh, Heng & Lin, 2013)

2.2.2.4. Roles and statuses

Behaviors and activities that determine the position of people in society are called roles. Roles consist of social activities, jobs and various activities. People, on the other hand, adopt these roles as the privilege and duty of the behaviors they exhibit. People use all these roles to express their status and social status. For this reason, the roles of individuals bring along various obligations and responsibilities. Each role requires a status and hence product selections are made in accordance with the status and roles in the community. For example; An individual who owns the firm tends to drive the latest model car.

The club, association, family etc. that individuals participate. its position in each of the groups can be addressed in terms of status and role. For example; While a woman plays their daughter's role in terms of her own parents, she acts as a sales consultant where she works. Each of these roles affects purchase behavior separately. Every role of individuals has a certain status in society. Goods and services can act as status symbols according to geographical situation, social classes or time. (Goh, Heng & Lin, 2013)

2.2.3. Personal factors

The personal characteristics of consumers affect the purchasing decisions. Personal factors that affect the buying behavior of consumers; gender, age, marital status, income level, and occupational and educational status.

2.2.3.1.Age

Age and life cycle levels play a major role in meeting the needs of individuals throughout their life. There are distinct characteristics of the products and services that each age group needs and interests. While the consumers in the older age group remain loyal to that brand due to their knowledge (experiences) they have about a brand, it is seen that the consumers in the young age group are in a life cycle process that will require consumer awareness.

Traditionally, individuals are considered to have nine stages throughout their life cycle. These nine stages and their features are as follows: (Marin, Ruiz & Rubio, 2009)

- Singleness Period: It refers to the pre-marriage and youth period of the person. In this period when financial problems are scarce, basic household vehicles, cars, furniture, games and entertainment needs are at the forefront.
- Just Married Couples: It covers a period when people are young, newly married and without children. In this period of high purchases, the need for cars, furniture, durable goods, household vehicles and holidays is high.
- Filled Home I: The smallest individual is at most six years old in this period, which is the first of the stages called the full home. In this period of financial difficulties, the need for toys, baby products, vitamins and medicines, as well as household goods, is high.
- Filled Home II: This period, when the youngest child of the family is older than six years, is the period of young and married couples. In this period, the financial situation is better than in the past. Family spending is generally geared towards food, education, cleaning supplies, bicycles, musical instruments and music lessons.
- Filled III: Refers to married couples who live with their children and are elderly. In this period, the financial situation of people is better than before. Children find and work in this period. Family expenditures are generally made for furniture that is suitable for pleasure, durable goods, travel by car and health services.

- **Emptied Home I:** Includes married children, elderly couples, separated from home, where the father of the family works. In this period when the financial situation is good due to the savings, entertainment, travel and self-development needs are prioritized. During this period, we go on holiday, the household items are improved and luxury household items are purchased.
- **Evacuated Home II:** It represents the elderly and married couples whose father is retired from the family whose children are separated from the house. In this period when material income is reduced, household goods are kept and the need for sanitary products and medical devices increases.
- **Living Alone I:** It refers to the period of old celibacy still working. The financial situation is at a good level in this period.
- **Living Alone II:** It refers to the period of old and retired celibacy. In this period, material income declines and the need for health products increases. Love, safety and care needs are prioritized.

In studies that examine the effect of age and electronic commerce experience on different product types (vitamins, computer, mobile phone), these two variables (age and product type) have a positive effect on shopping in the electronic environment, and the only factor that is important on the different product types of electronic shopping experience. It was concluded that other factors were also effective. On the other hand, it is concluded that age and electronic shopping experience have an interactive effect especially for products such as vitamins and car insurance.

2.2.3.2. Gender

The gender and social sexual identity of individuals do not only affect the decision making process of the consumer, but also an important factor that determines the sales and marketing strategies. For example, the social roles of women and men and their definition within society come into play in the needs related to beauty and health. In addition to this, different roles are defined for women and men in terms of cultural, economic and social aspects; On the other hand, the gender element, including LGBT groups, also affects consumer behavior. (De Vries, 2008)

The concept of gender, which is one of the personal factors affecting the buying behavior of consumers, is one of the important issues to be examined. It is undeniable that women, who are the most ladies, are an important force affecting the purchasing decision process. On the other hand, in post-modern societies, it is seen that women have reached important levels, especially in the business world. The increase in the number of working women has brought some results. As a result of women's economic freedom, they are positioned as a consumer independent of the family. On the other hand, with the increase in income, the demand of women consumers in the market has also increased.

It is known that the sensitivity of consumers with different genders towards colors, tastes and shapes is also different. Today, many brands gain additional meaning when they are identified with specific genders. These connections with consumers in general are not a strategy designed by marketers, but rather a connection created by consumers themselves. To give an example; Managers of the Subaru brand have found that gay individuals prefer Subaru cars four times more than other consumers. Although the company does not consciously turn towards gay individuals at first, it later chose these consumers as their target and included them in advertisements.

In studies on sexual identities, it is important to know all the features of biological gender dimensions. The reason for this is that in order for individuals to be classified in one of their sexual identities, it is necessary to compare their sexual identities with the biological sex they have. Based on this, when gender characteristics are examined; while women liked verbal and visual rich, complex and highly informative ads that contain a lot of information about the product, men liked ads that focused on a simpler and single theme. On the other hand, while women are affected by messages that care about other individuals as well as men, men are influenced by advertisements that emphasize competition and show dominance. Sexual identity can only be estimated in cases where these and similar discriminative features have an effect. (Cachon & Swinney, 2011)

2.2.3.3. Marital status

In addition to other personal factors that affect consumer behavior, marital status is one of the factors that have a great influence. A single consumer buys products and services to meet their general needs. However, after marriage, his

capacity in terms of marital status has changed. Since the individual's responsibility will increase after getting married, he acts by thinking about the family he has established himself as he thinks. It has been observed that the expenses of individuals have shifted more to their children, especially after getting married and having children. It was observed that some of the women did not work after marriage. For this reason, a single man has a tendency to go into savings because his income remains constant after marriage, and he cannot be expected to spend as much as when he is single.

Which products or services the consumers in the target audience will be directed to, which products and companies to meet the emerging needs will depend on the marital status. When the target groups are examined in terms of marital status, young or adult singles, who are in the first step in the family life curve and are not connected, are under the influence of reference groups in their purchase preferences. At the stage where their lives are single, consumers mostly; spends for products and services such as holidays, magazines, cars, computer games. On the other hand, after marriage, expenditures vary according to the processes of marriage. Newly married couples tend mostly to durable consumer goods and holiday spending. With the birth of the child in marriage, expenditures vary according to the child's growth periods. (Gross & Souleles, 2002)

2.2.3.4. Vocational and educational status

Individuals' professions will greatly affect their purchasing behavior. For example, blue-collar workers will demand products such as work clothes, hard hats and work shoes, while company owners will request flight tickets or suits. At this point, marketers should consider developing different types of products and services for different professional groups.

In the industrial society, blue collar employees have experienced their golden age. Blue-collar workers were performing tasks and movements that were restricted, simplified, and harmonized by the nature of the job. These employees did not need intellectual knowledge and mental effort. In today's business organization, a completely different type of worker is needed in terms of quality. These workers, who are called white-collar workers, act as information workers and must receive an education and a high mental effort. Employees who are information workers are highly

sophisticated and high-income consumers. Therefore, it is defined as a new power in the market. Information workers are a type of consumer who has high expectations from the products and services they have purchased, namely brands, has a high purchasing power, hardly likes and insists on seeking their rights. Consumers in this group are a type of consumer that is difficult to win for all companies and must be gained. For this reason, the brands that operate today should be multi-dimensional brands addressing the new consumer power in the post-modern society. (Huang, Lurie & Mitra, 2009)

The educational status of individuals is one of the factors that determine the position of the person in the society. As a result of the researches, it has been observed that consumers with a high level of education prefer to purchase products that have technical characteristics and combine a wide variety of features. For consumers with lower levels of education, simpler messages lead people to purchase behavior. As the level of education increases, consumers' tendency to research, inquire and technology increases. On the other hand, as the level of education increases, needs and demands increase. The level of education, in other respects, is in direct proportion to the income of individuals and the ability to use the Internet. Therefore, it is seen that the level of education has an extremely important effect on product and purchasing behavior.

It can be said that consumers are more likely to react to any situation than before and seek their right more. There are many complaints websites for consumers on the internet, such as (angry.com).

2.2.3.5. Income rate

Decisions about how much households will save and how much they will consume are important. People want to balance and make a decision between their present and future benefits. Each excess consumption of people right now will affect future consumption and income levels. Income is an important factor in purchasing behaviors and expenditures of consumers. The concept of income is briefly a monetary expression of the periodic purchasing power that an individual or community has acquired over a period of time in return for their work. In its most basic definition; It can be defined as the purchasing power of consumers. People can also earn income by offering their labor or other production factors. The income generated by consumer individuals also affects their consumption expenditures. If consumers receive a

production factor income other than the income they work and earn, consumption expenditures will also change and take shape accordingly. (Bargh, 2002)

After deducting direct taxes from the individual's personal income, the remaining income or income is defined as usable income. Some of the available income goes to mandatory expenditures and constant liabilities for living. The extent to which expenditure is compulsory cannot be easily measured, but after the expenditure on food, clothing, home rental, transportation and health expenses are compulsory and immutable, the rest of the income is defined as optional income, and the consumer can use it as he wishes.

Income level affects purchasing expenses closely. Generalizations in spending patterns are also called Disability Laws. According to this;

- As the income level increases, the expenditures in all product and service categories also increase.
- As the income level increases, the share of food expenditures decreases proportionally.

2.2.4. Psychological factors

The power that affects people's behaviors originating from within is called psychological factor. Psychological factors; It tries to find answers to the question of what consumers buy goods and services for. In other words, psychological factors reveal which goods or services consumers buy for what purpose. Psychological factors affecting people's purchasing behavior; personality, motivation, learning, perception and attitudes and beliefs.

2.2.4.1. Personality

Personality is all of the psychological and biological features of individuals. According to some studies in this area, there is a close relationship between the goods and services purchased by a consumer and his personality. In other words, various personal characteristics of individuals affect their purchasing behavior. (Mowen, 2000)

Personality can be called a concept in which all psychological factors that affect consumer behavior are combined. The individual's style, habits, perspective on the environment and events cause him to be separated from other consumers. In this way,

the unique characteristics of the consumer distinguish his preferences for goods and services. In terms of consumer behavior, this factor maintains its influence mostly in brand choices.

Considering the definitions given above regarding personality, three important points related with personality come to the fore for people who are interested in consumer behavior. These:

1) It distinguishes the person from the other person. The personality of individuals arises from their personal experience and hereditary characteristics, making them unique. No one can be the same as anyone else. However, many people with certain personality traits may also be similar. For example; some people are competitive, some are timid and introverted, others are social and extroverted. In this case, it would be useful to group individuals according to their specific characteristics in analyzing consumer behavior and to base this grouping on market segmentation. (Foxall, 2010)

2) Personality is continuous and consistent. The concept of being consistent means that the individual does not change their behavior towards similar situations. It is an unsuccessful and meaningless work that people who develop marketing strategies try to shape the personality traits of consumers in such a way that they take their own goods and services. Instead of such a study, it is more logical to establish strategies that will adapt to it by determining which personality trait is effective in purchasing certain products.

3) Personality may change. Although personality is continuous and consistent, it has a structure that can change in some cases. On the other hand, as individuals mature, their personality may change depending on what life offers them. Some important events in life can cause a change in personality. For example; Events such as marriage, birth of the child, separation, loss of a loved one, and being in a war can cause personality to change.

2.2.4.2. Motivation

Motives are defined as an internal state of arousal. In other words, motives are stimulated requirements that energize consumers to achieve a specific purpose. While requirements tend to react, motives drive a certain response. A motivated consumer is

voluntary and ready to act on purpose. In addition to motives, there are also various impulses that lead consumer behavior and guide their behavior. These impulses create a combination of several or one by one, allowing consumers to move towards a certain buying behavior. The impulses that reveal the motives are; cognitive efficacy is formed depending on four different factors: situational conditions, physiological conditions and characteristics of external stimuli. (Mandel et al., 2017)

In order to understand motivation, which is one of the factors affecting consumer behavior, it is necessary to know how to influence the learning and thinking process of the consumer. Tensions arise as a result of unmet needs. The movement that will reduce the tension with the behavior thought to satisfy the need is performed unconsciously or consciously. The chosen goal and the behavior chosen to achieve this goal are the result of the individual's learning and thinking. The satisfaction is dependent on the activities chosen. Therefore, marketers have to know or learn the concept of motivation in order to affect the cognitive processes of consumer individuals.

2.2.4.3. Learning

People are constantly in contact with their environment from the moment they are born. During all these communications, he gains experience and stores these experiences in his memory. Learning is changing the behavior of the person as a result of the knowledge and experiences they have gained from their surroundings. Learning is knowing the unknown or permanent changes in behavior.

The concept of learning is a behavior change caused by the experiences of individuals. Learning action takes place only as long as it is repeated. For example; Repeating the advertisement of a good and service several times causes the consumer to learn. The learning process has a great importance and place in guiding the behavior of individuals. The psychological characteristics and existence of people are largely determined by the experience gained throughout the learning process. The brain of individuals is considered to be a closed box, and with the introduction of some stimulants, behavior patterns occur as a result of various processes inside the brain. (Chen, Chen & Huang, 2012)

The factors that shape the consumption behavior of individuals are their attitudes, tastes, values and preferences. All these elements are gained through

learning. The concept of learning from a marketing point of view is a process in which consumers gain their experience in consumption and purchasing, which will guide their future movements. The important points that come up with this definition are as follows:

- Learning is a process, which means that new experiences and knowledge are gained and changed. Personal experiences and acquired knowledge form the basis for similar situations that consumers may encounter in their future behavior.
- Learning activity is a system that operates with conscious or unconscious efforts. While learning takes place consciously, when a need arises or information about a product is required, it can occur unconsciously and completely without any effort. For example; Like brand names watched and learned in commercials on television.
- Learning is a permanent change in behavior. While there is a change in behavior in the negative or positive direction through learning, this change is expected to take as long as possible.

2.2.4.4. Perception

Perception is called recognition of the individual's various stimuli around the senses. Perception action is a two-way process, attitudes and motives affect perception, and perception affects attitudes and motives. On the other hand, besides these physiological factors, perception includes emotional processes, sensory processes and symbolic processes. Emotional processes mean that stimuli determine the level of liking. Sensory processes mean that stimulants are perceived with sensory organs, while symbolic processes mean that the stimulus creates an image in the memory of consumer individuals. (Baumgartner et al., 2008)

The evaluations made on many issues such as the origin of the products bought by the consumers, quality expectations, whether the price is suitable, the shopping experience, the benefits of having the product socially are actually a result of the perceptions of the individuals. Perception is related to the observation of objects, environment, odors, people, movements, colors and flavors. Perception can be defined as the interpretation of the stimuli coming from individuals in a way that creates a

meaningful world for them. Perception in its shortest definition; is the process of interpreting sensations and making them meaningful.

Our experience and the role of our previous life are very important in the perception process. Therefore, perception is a very subjective process. In this process, individuals receive and store inputs just like a computer. But unlike computers, it is not passive. It takes inputs (stimuli) that are in line with the motives, expectations and experiences, and includes them in the perception process, and excludes many stimuli.

2.2.4.5. Attitudes and Beliefs

Attitudes mean too much or less exciting learned response to any stimulus. Another definition and attitude is the way individuals determine their emotions, thoughts and behaviors related to that situation regularly in the face of an objective situation. Attitudes include intellectual activities as well as emotions and differentiate intensities. On the other hand, attitudes can affect the level of remembering the message and create distortions in the perception of the given message. (Hsu & Lu, 2007)

Changing them is extremely difficult, as attitudes save on thought and energy. Therefore, companies try to adapt their products and services to existing attitudes rather than changing the attitudes of consumer individuals. However, it can be seen that the efforts and costs to change attitudes sometimes give positive results. For example; When the Honda brand first entered the US market, many people in this country had a negative attitude towards people using motorcycles. As a result of the researches, it has been determined that the motorcycle created many negative calls such as leather jackets, quarrels and murder. Despite this situation, Honda started to carry out the slogan that you will see a very sweet person on Honda by running an intense advertisement campaign. In this way, Honda has become one of the few motorcycle companies in the USA by spending great time, effort and money.

The complementary ideas, thoughts and opinions that people have about anything constitute their beliefs. Beliefs can be given as proven information as a result of personal experience or as information obtained by researching external sources. Beliefs can be expressed as commitment, knowledge and opinion for proof. For example; It is believed that drinking milk is a useful product for a growing child.

Therefore, if the benefit of milk is known to be proven, belief is confirmed. (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2002)

2.3. Decision Process

It is extremely important to understand the consumer and therefore how he behaves in the modern world we are in. Evaluation of the purchasing process will make a great contribution in understanding the answer to the question of whether people who make purchases act in the same way. The idea that consumers may act differently in terms of the purchasing process according to the category or class of products and services will be understood when the details of this unit are evaluated. Although the purchasing decision process seems to be similar for consumers and industrial users, it will be seen that some steps or steps can be passed quickly while others can take quite a long time. This situation; the quality of the product purchased, the level of knowledge of the consumer, and loyalty to the product or brand, may vary according to a number of variables.

2.3.1. Purchase Decision definitions

Nowadays, products and services are getting more and more similar, but it is not overlooked that consumers act faster or are willing to pay more when buying some products. A good understanding of this is linked to the purchasing decision process, which forms the heart of consumer behavior models. Because the main source of internal (psychological), external (socio-cultural), situational and demographic factors, which are the most commonly emphasized in consumer behavior, is the purchasing decision process. All these variables are aimed at influencing the purchasing decision process. In this respect, understanding the purchasing decision process and thus its steps will make very important contributions in terms of consumer behavior. In this unit of the consumer behavior book; The process of purchasing decision, the stages of the purchasing decision process, theoretical information and application examples related to each phase and consumer decision types will be emphasized. (Bansal & Voyer, 2000)

The point reached by production technologies today leaves the consumer with many options. Unlike the past, the options offered to the consumer who face a need for the product are extremely high. The consumer, who has to decide between these options, somehow has to act in an informal process. Depending on the nature of the

product, the consumer, who sometimes makes a quick decision, sometimes has to make extremely slow decisions. Many manufacturers make presentations about products and services that can be described as complex. These manufacturers use highly complex pricing, distribution and promotion (promotion) strategies to attract and satisfy consumers.

One of the main assumptions in consumer behavior research is that many purchases are shaped through a decision process. The decision can be defined as the action taken by the consumer who faces two or more options (products) with a good probability of a desired final result. Thus, in order to talk about the decision, it is possible to talk about at least two products that have the feature of satisfying the consumer's wishes and needs and to talk about the choice of the consumer among these products. In such a situation, the consumer who remains and acts for the purchase decides. For example, a young person who needs a laptop computer to evaluate homework and leisure time, makes the decision to stay between at least two brands and related features as a result of this complex process. Therefore, decision making is defined as the process of thinking, evaluating and choosing among the options. The consumer decision is expressed as a careful individual evaluation of the features associated with a group of products, brands or services. Decisions made for the purchases made to satisfy the need with the lowest cost and reasonable features (quality, function, durability etc.) reveal rational decision making. While many consumers make such a purchase decision, which is expressed rationally, some consumers may behave in a more emotional or emotional way. Moreover, many consumer decisions are based on feelings and emotions rather than product features. These feelings and feelings may be related to the product or to the purchasing environment. As a matter of fact, it makes me feel better than a brand feature (such as price, style and functional feature) or it can be bought because of the emotions that my friends will like. In this sense, it can be said that emotions have an important place in the purchase decision. This kind of approach is expressed as emotional decision making. (Pickett- Baker & Ozaki, 2008)

2.3.2. Purchase Decision Types

The form, type, and type of decision making are linked to the meaning attributed to the product. In this regard, while dealing with the issue of decision, the

issue of interest should also be evaluated. My concern is the sense of personal significance and level of interest felt for a stimulus in a particular situation. In terms of consumer decision-making action, product interest and purchase interest can be mentioned. Product interest is about the relationship that the consumer establishes with the product. It is the personal attention that any person gives to a particular product in a particular situation. The importance that a person places on a product may affect the nature of the purchase decision. The person may be willing to pay more because of the special meaning he attributes to a polar mount to be used in mountaineering. As can be understood from the example, the more different the product or brand is compared to the competitors, the higher the level of interest. Each product manufacturer wants to increase its level of interest in its own brand. My interest in purchasing can be expressed as the level of interest of the purchasing process, which arose from the need to consider a special purchase. As a matter of fact, purchasing interest reveals a temporary situation of an individual, family or household unit. Interest in purchasing is influenced by the interaction of the individual, the product, and the situational properties. The product interest is continuous according to the purchase interest. (O'Cass, 2000)

Another important issue that should be emphasized in terms of decision-making regarding the subject of interest is the high and low level of interest. If purchasing is very important for the consumer for financial, social or psychological reasons, I have high interest. When purchasing the products that the consumer deems important, he enters the search for more information and makes high efforts. This complicates the purchasing decision. The consumer compares more features, brands and alternatives when purchasing a product that may be important to him. It examines the internal and external sources of information in more depth before purchasing. It makes evaluations that can be described as complicated after the purchase. Low interest refers to the opposite of high interest. If the consumer sees the purchase as unimportant, the purchase process will be shaped accordingly. For example, since the level of interest in products such as cigarettes, bread, and chewing gum, which are described as easy products, is low, purchasing is simple, routine and fast. Low interest refers to the situation that occurs when the results of the decision are insignificant. When the consumer needs to buy a product of interest (such as an umbrella in rainy weather, or a hamburger in case of heavy hunger), the purchase behavior is low.

The buying decision process is shaped according to high and low interest situations. In case of low interest, it can be said that the purchase decision was made quickly. This rapid decision is due to the low importance of the importance attributed to the product or the result of purchasing the product. It is seen that problem determination and information seeking are superficial in low purchasing interest. The consumer makes the decision to purchase without comparing the options. In most cases, there is no incompatibility between the desired situation and the actual situation and makes limited post-purchase evaluations. For example, if a consumer trying to quench his thirst buys a brand that he knows and uses before, the situation that arises is the routine purchase decision made in case of low interest. In case of high interest, the purchasing process will consist of more comprehensive steps, as the results and financial value of the product are important. The person will search for deeper and more comprehensive information to solve the problem and compare the alternatives in many ways. It will take more time and effort when looking for information and evaluating alternatives. When evaluating after purchase, it will be subjected to a complex evaluation process and incompatibilities may arise between the desired situation and the real situation. (Biggsby & Ozanne, 2002)

When consumers move from low interest to high interest in purchasing, the purchase decision will be prolonged and complex. If the meaning of the product is low for the person, the purchase decision will be easier and the decision will be made faster than the high interest.

Despite the distinction between unscheduled and programmed decisions in terms of decision-making types, it is seen that three decision types are widely emphasized in the literature. These are routine decision making, limited decision making and intensive decision making. Programmed decisions cover routine decisions, while unscheduled decisions cover limited decisions and intensive decisions, the other two types of decisions. The distinctive features of routine decision making, limited decision making and intensive decision making are discussed in detail below.

2.3.2.1. Routine Decision Making

Routine decision making type is also called conventional, so-called or insignificant (nominal) decisions. Such decisions are also referred to as programmed

decisions. The nature of routine decision making, as can be understood from its name, is used to describe situations where decision making is automated or occurs spontaneously. If there is experience in the product, at the same time, the level of interest in the product is low and the result of the purchase is not at risk, such decisions are made quickly or quickly. Routine decision-making behavior can occur in relation to two cases. These; brand loyalty and repeated purchase. If a consumer has bought a brand many times and is satisfied with that brand, he can immediately choose this brand in subsequent purchases. In particular, fast and routine purchasing situations based on brand loyalty can arise in easy products such as cigarettes, bread, chewing gum, toothpaste, detergent, liquid soap and milk with high circulation. In the case of repeated purchasing, which can also arise based on brand loyalty, the consumer becomes affiliated with the brand because it has been used and satisfied many times before, and this brings routine and repeated purchases. (Tinson, Nancarrow & Brace, 2008)

Routine decision making behavior emerges as automatic behavior. The purchasing action is taken by passing the steps of the purchasing decision process superficially or quickly. The possibility of incompatibility after purchase is also extremely limited. In other words, since such products have been purchased, used and satisfied, the automation will be in question for future purchases. During the purchasing decision process, it is decided to purchase information without stopping too much or constantly on searching for information and evaluating options. One of the most emphasized issues here is the acceptance of past experience as a reference. Experience sheds light on future or current purchases, as a result, the decision to buy becomes faster and routine.

Routine purchasing is related to low level of interest. Purchasing decisions appear to be made automatically when purchasing products with low interest. It is seen that the purchase is realized by passing the evaluation stage of the options in the purchase decision process. It is possible to say that the first two stages are based on past experiences without a detailed examination in problem identification and information seeking. In this regard, it is seen that a routine decision making approach emerges in the purchase of low-interest products, the results of which do not carry risks. (Tinson, Nancarrow & Brace, 2008)

2.3.2.2. Limited Decision Making

Limited decision making refers to a gray area that is among routine decision making and intense decision making options. In the case of limited decision-making, consumers have some experience with some form of purchasing. Consumers have already established an evaluation criterion for the selection category in evaluating the product, service or brand. Limited decision making refers to one of the unscheduled decisions. A consumer trying to meet the need for a mobile phone does not have time to systematically research the information and evaluate each alternative option in great detail. As a simple approach, purchasing a previously used and known brand can be a functioning strategy. Therefore, based on the generic problem solving approach in the first stage of the purchasing decision process, there will be a trend towards brands learned as a result of their past experience. The possibility of using external resources is limited and not exhaustive. During the evaluation of options, instead of all or detailed features, decision making approach is based on several features. In most cases, incompatibility does not occur after purchase. Since trends are already shown to already known products and brands, results often appear to reflect expectations. (Han & Ryu, 2012)

In the limited decision-making type, although general information about the product class is obtained, it is seen that consumers do not have sufficient information about the brands. Although there is not enough information about the brands, it is seen that there is no in-depth or detailed evaluation in evaluating the options. It can be said that the motivations of this type of consumers for information research are low. Advertising has little effect on such purchasing decisions and it is witnessed that comparisons are made at retailers that are point of purchase. Satisfaction gained in previous product experiences reveals repeated buying behavior. If dissatisfaction has been experienced in previous purchases, there is a shift to substitute brands.

In some cases, if the product does not have a direct competitor in that class, it is seen that a quick purchase decision has been made, although the product can be evaluated as high. Namely, the purchase decision process of Ipad 2, whose features are well known by young people, can be realized quickly.

2.3.2.3. Intense Decision Making

The type of intense decision making is intensified, it is also expressed extensively. This type of decision making reveals one of the unscheduled decision types. Intense decision making is the type of decision making used when the interest is high. It is seen that a comprehensive and in-depth evaluation is made in every step of the purchasing decision process due to the risk phenomenon arising in the product and the increase in the level of necessity to obtain information. The best way to evaluate the type of intense decision making is by underlining when it occurs. In order for the intensive decision-making type to emerge, consumers should not have certain product classes or precise criteria to evaluate various brands. Similarly, if there is no clarity to facilitate decision making, or if the products or brands that are desired to be purchased cannot be reduced to a limited number, there is a tendency towards this type of decision making. (Han & Ryu, 2012)

It is seen that a lot of time and effort is spent in the information seeking and option evaluation stages of the purchasing decision process. It is seen that internal and external information seeking resources are evaluated intensely and in fine detail during the information seeking phase. The consumer searches for all kinds of external sources of information, as well as the knowledge and experience he has acquired and memorized. A potential buyer, for example, who wants to buy a car, will reflect the features, brands and retail points he has learned before in the search for information. In addition, it will try to minimize incompatibility or dissatisfaction that may arise after purchasing by making use of all kinds of externally qualified information sources. In the evaluation of options, it is seen that quite comprehensive comparisons are made according to routine and limited decision making. At this stage, many features and options are emphasized and purchases are made according to complex decision-making procedures. It is often seen that products with intense decision making options are available for a longer period of time. It is quite natural that this is so. Uncertainty about the product, the monetary value of the product, the value of the risk that will arise after the purchase, bring about extensive research and comparisons before the purchase. Of course, there will be a difference between buying bread, which is an easy product, and buying a house, in terms of the purchasing process. Relatively few consumer decisions are said to have taken place at such a complex level. Except for exceptional examples, it can be said that while consumers mostly use routine and

limited types of decision making more commonly in their daily lives, they tend to focus on intense decision making behavior. It is quite natural that this is so that a typical consumer rarely purchases a home, computer or car. However, it purchases fast-consuming products every day and therefore has to make decisions faster. It should be noted, however, that some consumers with a very high income status can purchase cars and household products according to their intense decision types. (Harrison, Waite & White, 2006)

As stated briefly above, the most important factor leading to the emergence of intense decision making type is the perceived risk phenomenon. The tension caused by the risk, which is thought to arise as a result of the decision, makes it imperative to search for more information and to compare more comprehensive options. Therefore, the consumer will try to eliminate the uncertainties about the product in order to minimize the risk phenomenon that may arise and will try to make decisions under the environment of uncertainty. By acting in this way, the discord or dissatisfaction in the outcome of the decision is tried to be eliminated.

2.4. Consumer Buying Decision Process

It is possible to talk about the existence of approaches and models that differ in some aspects and in some other aspects in order to affect the consumer's purchase decision. It is possible to talk about the four most emphasized models within the scope of consumer behavior or marketing communication. These are: (1) Problem Solving Model (2) AIDA Model, (3) Hierarchy Model of Effects and (4) and Acceptance of Innovation Model.

When each model and stages are evaluated individually, it is possible to state that there are similar stages or approaches. In these four models or approaches, it is seen that the decision making process starts with problem, awareness or attention. In the next stages, it is observed that there is a tendency to seek information about the product in order to solve the situation arising due to a need. At these stages, it is seen that the consumer starts looking for information by turning to a cognitive process about the product he wants to buy or prefer. In the next stages, after the information and evaluations about the product are made, a purchase action is taken, therefore a decision to purchase is made. The final stages of models and approaches are mostly related to the evaluation of products purchased, tested and used. When the evaluation

is positive, while purchasing the same product and brand continues, in case of dissatisfaction, there is a tendency to substitute products. (Jang, Prasad & Ratchford, 2012)

It is possible to say that the consumer purchasing decision process, which is considered within the scope of consumer behavior, is handled in five stages or steps. These stages are defining the problem, searching for information, evaluating options, purchasing and evaluating the results, respectively. Figure 1.4 shows the consumer purchasing decision process and each stage involved in this process. Explanations for each stage or step will be given below in detail. (Jung & Yoon, 2012)



Figure 2.4. Consumer Purchase Decision Process and Stages

2.4.1. Problem Recognition

The consumer purchasing decision process begins with identifying the problem. The problem here may be a physical, social, psychological deprivation. Such deprivations create a number of problems on the consumer. If the difference between the current situation and the desired situation is far from the desired situation, it is necessary to purchase a product. This stage, which is defined as the emergence of the need in some sources, indicates the existence of the problem and the need to be solved. The current or actual situation reveals the answer to the current situation. Any deprivation in the current situation (for example, cell phone malfunction, hunger, feeling of thirst) will cause the problem to arise. Desired situation describes the desired

point to be reached. In other words, it is the desired goal to be reached for the solution of the problem that arises as a result of the current situation. The lower the gap between the current and the desired situation, the higher the satisfaction or pleasure. In the opposite case, that is, if there is a difference between the current situation and the desired situation, dissatisfaction may occur. Therefore, to reach the desired situation, other stages of the purchasing decision process are passed. (Koc, 2004)

While the consumer is at this stage, it means facing a big, small, simple or complex problem. The nature of the problem is not important and it is sufficient to start the process. However, it should be noted immediately that the quality of the mentioned problem is an important indicator of how fast the process will be taken. For example, if the need for a high cost or very complex product turns into a purchase, then a need related to thirst turns into a purchase.

2.4.1.1. Types of Consumer Problems

Problems with consumers are divided into active and inactive problems. The active problem concerns situations where a consumer is aware of or will be. The inactive problem reflects the unconsciousness of the consumer. Active and inactive problems require different marketing strategies. In the active problem, the marketer tries to convince the consumer that his brand is the top solution. Consumers are already aware of the problem. On the other hand, in inactive problems, the marketer first convinces the consumers that they have problems and then tries to reveal that their brands are the best option. The difference between the two types of problems is awareness, as stated above. For example, a consumer is aware that there is a problem with a mobile phone that is damaged and cannot be used as a result. They can find a solution by choosing a reasonably priced phone brand that will bring the best solution to their problem. In order to act on the same example regarding the inactive problem, trying to raise awareness about the feature (Viber) that allows those who have an iPhone 3 or iPhone to make free calls from abroad can be an example of the inactive problem. The consumer is first made aware of the need for a free phone call abroad, and then the message is that the best solution will be the iPhone. (Xia et al., 2006)

2.4.1.2. Reasons for the Problem

Consumers can start the purchasing process due to different problems. The elements that symbolize the change in the consumer's situation generally consist of:

Depletion or decrease of products, dissatisfaction with existing products, change in financial status, emergence of new needs and conditions, emergence of new products and marketing communication studies.

Depletion or Reduction of Products: One of the most important reasons behind the emergence of a problem is the emergence of need. Ending or decreasing quantity of an existing product triggers the occurrence of the problem. For example, a university student whose credit is exhausted takes action to purchase new credit on his mobile phone. Therefore, it will be sufficient for the need to appear for a problem to arise. This need can be physiological, psychological and social. The same will be valid not only for physical products but also for social or psychological needs. For example, the problem that triggers a consumer who decides to go to the cinema can be social or psychological. Causes such as boredom, monotony of life, desire to be with friends may have triggered going to the cinema. (Jaakkola, 2007)

Dissatisfaction with the Current Situation Another factor that can cause a problem to arise is dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction with an existing or current situation. As in the example of going to the cinema above, all kinds of dissatisfaction can be evaluated under this scope. The problem may be caused by a physical discontent as well as non-physical discontent. For example, the situation of someone dissatisfied with the features of the computer or mobile phone is evaluated under this heading. The slowness of the computer or the level of being unable to take the software programs required in engineering education as memory will bring dissatisfaction. In some cases, it may be a response to the boredom of routine life, for women to dye or style their hair in some cases. In this regard, any dissatisfaction can be sufficient to start the purchasing decision process. It is possible to increase the examples that can be given under this title. Already the main thing is about the proximity of the desired situation to the current situation. The closer the current situation is to the desired situation, the higher the satisfaction phenomenon will be. If the desired situation exceeds the current situation, there is dissatisfaction. In a reverse situation, that is, if the current situation is better than the desired situation, there is a high satisfaction situation. For this reason, consumers try to buy products or services that will bring them to the desired state as much as possible. (Zawawi et al., 2004)

Change in Financial Status: Any change that may be considered positive or negative in the financial situation of a consumer may cause the problem to arise. These changes in the financial situation shape expectations, which can lead to acquisitions to find solutions to new problems. For example, the attempt of a financially enriched consumer to change the house and the car, is evaluated in this context. Of course, it is possible to say the opposite. To put it more precisely, the main factor behind the reduction of the expenditures of a consumer whose financial situation deteriorated was caused by the emergence of a problem. Considering the approach style of the Barrier Law in the Economy, it is seen that a consumer whose financial situation has improved does not increase the basic food product consumption, instead he is directed towards more luxurious products. The consumer, who is subject to this increase in income, can take part in domestic or foreign travels, buy a new summerhouse, change his car or head for luxury branded clothes to evaluate his spare time. In other words, when the expenditure items are analyzed, there may be an increase in the purchase of other items, which can be counted as luxury, although the quantity such as eating and drinking does not increase in quantity or is very low.

Emerging of New Needs and Conditions: This type of problem determiner, based on the view that human needs in the economy are endless, causes the purchase decision process to begin. When the processes from the first human appearance to the present day are evaluated, it is seen what kind of change and development of the needs are. While eating, drinking and shelter are sufficient for a person living in the early ages, such needs are not sufficient for today's people. In this regard, marketers try to discover new needs of people and produce products that satisfy these needs. The most important reason behind today's innovations (innovation) is the determination of hidden areas of use. All kinds of new products and services that will make people's lives easier are aimed at meeting the needs. For example, home care services for relatives of people with good income are evaluated within this scope. Products put on the market for environmentally conscious consumers also arise from such needs. (Chen, Lu & Wang, 2017)

The Emergence of New Products: Another important subject that is in parallel with the new needs subject tried to be explained above is the new products. Any unmet need means unsatisfied consumer. Today, millions of new products are introduced to the market every day. While some of these products are kept in the market, most of

them fail. New product does not always mean brand new, which is not at all in the market. In most cases, changes made to the existing product are perceived as new to consumers. For example, a product whose packaging or properties have been renewed is also considered new. For example, iPhone 4S can be considered in this context. Launched with the addition of new features to the existing iPhone 4, this product is launched as new in the market and consumers accept it in this way. In other market is a product available are also new products for consumers. In this respect, any new product placed on the market is considered a new problem for the consumer. For example, a consumer with a classic or scuba television may face a new problem when plasma televisions are released and may want to replace the current product. The person who owns Plasma TV may also want to have this new product when LED or three-dimensional (3-D) televisions are launched. In many industrializing countries, there is a tendency towards a service-oriented economy, which reveals the fact that new services are put on the market. Today, with the start of women entering the working life, many services are tried to be performed by other people or professional companies. For example, sectors that offer child and elderly care, home cleaning services, and food services are launching new products. (Li-yin, 2007)

Marketing Communication Studies: Another factor that causes consumer problems to arise is the studies on marketing communication. Marketing communication is a continuous dialogue between the institution and consumers. Marketing communication, promotion or sales efforts is a process that covers a wider area than the concepts of sales promotion (promotion) and involves presenting the product concept, corporate personality to consumers. In marketing communication, it is also considered as communication efforts for delivering the total recommendation of the product to consumers. In marketing communication activities, besides product, price, distribution, advertising, personal sales, public relations and sales promotion methods, which are mixed elements of promotion, are used. Today, many companies send messages to consumers about their new needs through marketing communication studies. The advertisements about the features of a newly developed product, what needs it can meet and its brand cause the consumers to start the purchasing process. For example, a young consumer who may be exposed to any kind of marketing communication work for the iPad 2 product, which includes multiple entertainment elements as well as connecting to the internet, may request this product. Therefore, as

a result of the emergence of the new needs mentioned above, the change of the financial situation and the introduction of the new product, the consumer encounters a problem and initiates the purchase attempt to satisfy this product need. (Koc, 2004)

2.4.1.3. Measuring Consumer Problems

There are many methods used to identify the problems faced by consumers. The most widely used approach is undoubtedly intuition. In fact, intuition is closely related to the empathy approach. The problem can be identified by placing the marketer in the consumer's place or empathizing. The manager can determine if there is any improvement by analyzing a product put on the market. Self-cleaning toilet systems, large-volume washing machines and quiet vacuum cleaners are among the reasonable solution options developed for consumer problems. The main challenge with this approach is that problem determination can be of low importance for many consumers. In this regard, different research or data collection techniques are used to identify the problem. The most common techniques are survey, focus group, in-depth interview and observation. In the survey method, mostly closed-ended and optional questions are asked to consumers who are included in the sample within the framework of certain questions. Surveys can be conducted through personal interview, mail, internet and telephone. The focus group is a method of discussion that takes an average of 1-3 hours through a person called a moderator for a community of 6-12 people. The focus group is considered as a qualitative method and enables new problems to be identified through these discussions. It is recommended to hold a minimum of three group interviews or group interviews until they repeat themselves. It enables data collection on more in-depth topics that cannot be determined by in-depth interviews, surveys and focus groups. It is characterized as a highly effective qualitative method to better recognize consumers and see underneath the iceberg. This technique is based on a one-to-one interview and takes an average of half an hour to two hours. The researcher who will analyze the focus group and the in-depth interview must be experienced. Another important research method related to problem determination is observation. It can be considered as a unique method to identify the problems that arise with the way of using the product. By observing the consumers while using some products, defects related to the product are determined and the product is renewed. It is also seen that the observation method is widely used in testing

toys for children. Many new problems or opportunities can be identified by observing the children's approach to new toys left in the playground. (Barber & Almanza, 2007)

Five approaches are used to measure consumer problems. These are activity analysis, product analysis, problem analysis, human factors research and emotion research. Features and explanations for each are given below.

Activity Analysis: This analysis reflects the type of analysis performed based on a single specific activity or event. For example, as a result of analyzes made for kitchen cleaning, it is possible to develop new cleaning products. The questionnaire can be identified using the observation technique as well as the focus group. For example, in the studies carried out to detect skin dryness, solutions to solve this problem can be produced. Comprehensive information can be provided by conducting analysis specific to each activity. For example, an activity performed by individuals benefiting from the fitness center can be analyzed and the sports shoes that provide the best solution can be placed on the market. Similarly, the brushing technique of a user who performs the paint job can be analyzed and a new paint brush can be developed. Analysis of driving activity to prevent traffic accidents can bring new solutions.

Product Analysis: Although this type of analysis is similar to activity analysis, there is an evaluation based mostly on product analysis. All kinds of interviews, surveys and focus group discussions with consumers on the product have a great functionality here as well. For example, thanks to the questionnaires, interviews and discussions with the mothers and caregivers about the bottles, the products that will provide the best solution can be developed. Similarly, as a result of interviews with consumers over the age of sixty, mobile phones with larger screens and fonts or menus with larger fonts are developed. Many new products in the field of consumer behavior are developed after these analyzes are carried out. (Li-yin, 2007)

Problem Analysis: Analysis of products and activity can be made as well as the problem itself. However, this analysis technique related to the problem is different from product and activity analyzes. These analyzes start with a list of problems. Then, consumers are asked which products, activities and brands might be related to the listed problems.

Human Factors Research: This type of research focuses on determining people's eyesight, strength, response time, flexibility and fatigue. The effects of these

capacities on lighting, heat and sound can be determined. Commonly, observation method is used. Marketers try to identify questions using slow motion, video recording, and activity recording. This type of research is very useful in identifying functional problems that consumers are not aware of. For example, this method can be used in the construction of facilities that are less tiring to the human mind and body. It is said that the feeling of fatigue of people in the shopping centers is related to the electro magnetic field located there. New regulations to prevent this problem can be realized more easily as a result of such research. (Kim & Sung, 2009)

Emotion Research: One of the research areas commonly used in marketing are those directed towards emotions. Marketers who try to determine the role of emotions in decision making attach great importance to this issue. It is stated that many purchases that are seen as rational (logical) are affected by emotions. For example, despite the core utility provided by the car, almost no consumer makes a decision based solely on this feature. Because emotional approaches such as the brand's identity, the car's personality structure and the level of overlap have a significant impact on the decision to purchase. It is observed that focus group, questionnaire and in-depth interviews are widely used in emotional research. In such researches, emotions related to certain products, products that decrease and increase certain emotions are tried to be determined. For example, questions about products that best represent the feeling of freedom can be asked. An approach to emotion detection can be done with an approach to what emotion a typical Ferrari car can be expressed as a result. Similarly, an advertising campaign can be designed as a result of the research that tries to determine the basic feeling evoked by a New Balance branded sneakers. Emotions lie behind the launch of, for example, Nissan Qashqai jeeps as rebellious but urban. (Sharma & Sonwaney, 2014)

2.4.2. Information Search

Once the problem or need is identified in the consumer purchase decision process, it is time to search for information about the product. While researching information about the consumer product, it can benefit from internal and external sources, as well as the case-based research can be conscious or accidental. In addition, according to the research purpose, information can be searched before and after the

purchase. Therefore, it would be beneficial to consider these sources and form of information in detail. (Shulman, Cunha Jr & Saint Clair, 2015)

2.4.2.1.Resource Types

It is examined under two main titles in terms of information search resource types. These are internal and external sources. These resources, which are separated by some aspects, also complement each other. Explanations for each are given below.

Internal Resources:

It can easily be said that the first source used by a consumer to solve the problem experienced is the internal source. The consumer makes use of the information he / she experiences or memory in doing research internally. For example, remembering experiences and heard about the product indicates the inner source. For some products, while internal search or internal resources are sufficient, it may not be sufficient for other products. For most easy or frequently purchased products, the information contained in memory is sufficient and external resources are not needed. On the other hand, in the purchase of complex and expensive products that are at risk, external sources are used more than internal sources. So, the type, quality, monetary value, complexity and risks of the product determine which source will be used. (Lim & Lau, 2011)

Many consumers have various information about products or services in their long-term memory. When the product need arises, this information in the memory is guiding and facilitates our decision making. The nature of past experiences for the product, brand or store will have an impact on future purchases. For example, whether our experience in a restaurant is positive or negative will have an impact on our future decisions. Consumers will remember the attitudes and behavior of the waiter working in the restaurant, the taste of the food, the charm of the ambience, and this will shape the future purchase. The memory status of consumers provides unique opportunities to marketers. Marketers make use of the concept of memory. These concepts are sharpening and leveling. Since the consumer is under a lot of messages in daily life, some messages or brands should be brought to the fore. Sharpening tries to fulfill this function. It is aimed to sharpen some of the unnecessary and massive memory entries. On the other hand, the leveling is about the correction of the message or information in memory. Leveling ensures that unnecessary information is cleared and something

simple remains in memory. It is easier to remember something that is cleaned from details and crumbs. For example, the fact that a purple-colored packaging immediately reminds Milka chocolate is among the best examples that can be given to this subject. Sharpening and leveling often contribute positively to brand loyalty. Putting the brand to the forefront lies in the heart of every marketer. To achieve this, long-term and sustainable brand communication studies are used. (Kiran, Majumdar & Kishore, 2012)

External Resources:

These resource types, as the name suggests, refer to information sources that are out of memory and spread by marketers. Interpersonal resources such as market-oriented sources such as advertising, promotional materials, packaging, store visits, conversations with salespeople and close contacts, communication via electronic media are widely used. Consumers try to get all kinds of information about the features of the product they want to buy from such sources. Especially for products with high level of interest, it is seen that external sources are used more. While external sources have gained importance in some products, many studies have reported that external sources actually have little place in product preferences. Many consumers visit a few or only stores and make decisions without price comparison. For example, according to a study focused on shopping at a supermarket in 1990, it was revealed that although many brands were placed directly on the shelf in front of the shopper, customers spent 12 seconds for each product while making purchasing behavior. Only 59% of greengrocer shoppers checked the price and made purchases. (Lim & Lau, 2011)

- The functioning of internal and external resources is not independent from each other. Because it would be useful to state immediately that it should not be forgotten that internal sources, that is, the sources in memory, were previously obtained from external sources. For this reason, marketers try to take place in internal sources through marketing communication studies. Therefore, considering the internal and external sources together, it is seen that five information sources are used in searching information. These:
- Memory about past research: It includes personal experiences and low-interest learning.

- Personal resources: Includes friends, family and other close groups or individuals.
- Independent sources: The magazine deals with consumer groups and government agencies.
- Marketing resources: Includes tools such as sales staff and advertising.
- Sources of experience: Occurs based on product inspection and testing.

There are a number of factors that affect the amount of outsourcing consumers. It is possible to classify these factors under four groups. These: (Kiran, Majumdar & Kishore, 2012)

- Individual learning styles: Consumers' level of skill in searching and processing information is not the same. So this reveals personal differences. The learning style of each consumer can be different. For example, consumers who follow fashion or are conscious about it will probably be passive learners. Because these already have awareness about the information that can be considered small about fashion.
- Product involvement: The state of interest for the product or the special attention given to the product will affect the search for information. As the level of interest in the product increases, the rate of seeking information will be that high. The opposite is true for individuals with low levels of interest. For example, a consumer with low interest in computers will be unlikely to research from a computer journal.
- Experience: New and unfamiliar purchases or consumers facing the product will be more likely to investigate. Therefore, more time and effort is required for this.
- Perceived risk: The level of risk that a consumer perceives about the product to buy determines the level of conduct and level of research. Risks related to the purchase decision can be evaluated under five categories.

These are: Monetary risk, functional risk, physical risk, social risk and psychological risk. Monetary risk is related to the value of the product to be obtained in return for the financial resource spent. Functional risk is related to whether the

product can solve the problem. Physical risk covers material damage that may arise from the product. Social risk is related to the social acceptance of the product. Finally, psychological risk can be evaluated within the scope of psychological negativities that may occur in connection with social risk.

2.4.2.2. Research by Situation

Another important issue that should be addressed within the scope of information seeking behavior is related to the quality of the researches conducted on the basis of situationality. In this sense, it is necessary to focus on studies that are accidental and conscious or deliberate. (Saeed et al., 2011)

Random Research:

If the research is not done consciously and there is a phenomenon of coincidence, this is an unconscious research. In random research, there is a passive situation. In most cases, when we watch an ad, we think we act with the assumption that the ad is not about us. Although we are passive against advertising, we somehow have thrown the messages given to our subconscious. Every day, the individual, who visits the store as a consumer, unconsciously throws the information into his memory. Such a search for information refers to random or unintentional research. The sharpening and leveling mentioned above while explaining the internal sources has a great function here. Brands, packaging and messages that we think we are exposed to passively become active when needed.

Conscious or Intentional Research:

In a conscious or deliberate study, the consumer is active. In other words, it is aware that it is searching and makes more efforts for searching compared to random research. In conscious researches, the consumer uses internet resources effectively. Search engines are of great importance here. Search engines like Google provide huge benefits in obtaining product related information. The consumer tries to reach the information he / she wants through online trips without physically visiting the store. In addition to online resources, visiting the store, meeting with salespeople, and making use of printed resources are among the conscious researches.

2.4.2.3. Research by Purpose

Various researches are carried out within the scope of product-seeking behavior. Researches according to the purpose; It can be examined under two groups as ongoing or ongoing research before and during the purchase. (Gigauri, 2012)

Pre-Purchase Research:

During the purchasing decision process, it is seen that the researches made before the purchase are widely used in searching for information. When a consumer faces a problem with a product or when the need arises, he tries to obtain information before purchasing. If the consumer has the intention to purchase a product, he / she will benefit from research before purchasing.

Continuous Research:

This research, which can also be called as ongoing or ongoing research, refers to the research carried out regardless of a specific need or problem. In other words, it is the search behavior of products that the consumer is interested in without the concern of purchasing. For example, it is within the scope of this research that a consumer who is interested in communication technology examines the mobile phones related sites, or an individual who is fascinated by cars is a member of the Auto Motor Sport magazine and follows the developments in the field. The university student who conducts such a research tends to acquire knowledge even though he is not interested in purchasing. However, this person may be a reference to those who plan to purchase such products in their surroundings.

2.4.3. Evaluation of Alternatives

The third stage of the purchasing decision process reveals that the options begin to be evaluated after searching for information. In line with the information it collects and recalls in the second stage of the purchasing decision process, the consumer has to evaluate among several competing products. In a structure that can be expressed as an alternative evaluation process, it is seen that three elements are taken into consideration. These are: Evaluation criteria, importance of criteria and options. When consumers compare products and services, they are based on the evaluation criteria. These criteria can be features such as desired benefits, features for use, and problem-solving capacity. Since the features may differ according to the consumers, evaluations

will be made on the basis of their own personal features. Therefore, consumers evaluate the features they want in a brand in the order of importance they perceive. (Prasad, Gupta & Totala, 2017)

Evaluation criteria reveal the different qualities sought in responding to a problem that the consumer faces. Genre, number and importance situations may differ. Differences between species can be objective and subjective. While evaluating the product, there may be objective criteria such as cost and performance, as well as a more subjective brand image and fashion. It is also not easy to distinguish objective and subjective criteria from each other with exact lines. In other words, they can act together. In other words, when a consumer makes the decision to buy a car, he can combine the objective feature such as the engine volume and body endurance with the subjective feature such as color and model. Of course, the consumer will determine which of the criteria used here are important. However, it should be noted that some criteria and features will be more dominant than others. While the number of criteria for products such as newspapers and bread is low, the number of criteria for cars and summer flats will be higher. Here again the perceived risk comes into play. (Barrena & Sánchez, 2010)

Some factors come to the fore when evaluating. Perhaps the most important of these factors is the price. While evaluating the alternative to be purchased, the cost of the product becomes important for the consumer. The subject of price is directly related to the perceived quality. The monetary value considered for the product is expected to be at least equal to the benefit of the product and an evaluation is made accordingly. Another factor that is effective in evaluating is the brand. Brand image plays a decisive role in the evaluation. In this regard, marketers try to consolidate their brand image. Because this image has a big share on the decision to purchase.

Another issue that should be emphasized during the evaluation is the signals. Even the brand name, logo, price tag and the retailer itself have an impact on consumer perception of the product. Price is often used as an important indicator of quality, but does not reduce the presence of such signals. Such signals can have an impact on our decision-making at that moment, allowing the decision-making process to take shape. Although the decision process seems complicated, it seems that the process is fast for many products in daily life. In other words, consumers make decisions by using some

tips or signals when purchasing some products. The consumer does not make an in-depth analysis at every stage of the decision-making process, using the heuristic (heuristic or exploratory) technique in many purchases. Many people make their purchasing decisions by being influenced by the behavior of the people around them. For example, the desire to eat in a restaurant preferred by people abroad can be explained by minimizing the risk. (Chang, Lee & Huang, 2010)

2.4.3.1. Purchase Decision

After the consumer, whose need has emerged, has gathered information about the product and evaluated the options, it has now decided on a product. Therefore, the last stage of the purchasing decision process, that is, the decision where the decision is made and turns into action, is purchasing.

Purchase status can take place both planned and unplanned. The phenomenon of purchasing functions as a function of two determining factors. These; purchase intent and environmental impacts or personal differences. If the consumer has identified a general need, product class, product category, product, and brand, planned buying behavior is mentioned. The fact that the product and the brand are clear is a typical planned purchase.

If a need is not identified or a decision is made in the environment where shopping takes place when there is no purchase intent, unplanned purchasing behavior is mentioned. Unplanned buying behavior can occur in different types. Explanations for each are given below. (Chikweche & Fletcher, 2014)

Completely Unplanned Purchases: If a new product or brand is seen and the ownership is demanded about it and the consumer wants to take action and try it, it is talked about completely unplanned purchases. In fact, many consumers make such purchases while visiting the store.

Unplanned Purchases Made with Reminders: Although it is on the shopping list, it is realized in the event of a product that is forgotten to be bought and purchased immediately. The purchase of the tie, which is remembered as needed when walking around a store, is an example to this group.

Unplanned Purchases with Suggestion: It is the case of purchasing a product that has not been felt before and has been proposed in line with the sales person or the

packaging signal. For example, purchases made on the basis of a shirt recommendation that would fit well with the suit are included in this scope.

Unplanned Purchases Brought by Planned Shopping: Sometimes, planned shopping can cause unplanned purchases. Namely, a consumer who goes shopping can buy and buy a substitute or promotion of a brand. For example, someone who goes to the store to buy fabric trousers instead of going home with linen trousers and a belt reflects such an unplanned buying behavior.

2.4.4. Post- Purchase Evaluation

The final stage of the consumer decision process is the evaluation of the performance of the purchased products. Purchases can reveal three possible situations. In the first case, the consumer is satisfied and may have the tendency to purchase this product or brand again. If there is no discrepancy between the expectation and the realization, the satisfaction is mentioned. For example, if the consumer who buys a laptop is satisfied with the capacity, speed, performance and charge of this product, it will eventually reveal satisfaction. In such a case, brand loyalty will be in question. In the second case, if the performance of the product is far below the expectation, it will be dissatisfaction. An unsatisfied consumer will complain and at the same time he will not buy this product again and turn to another brand. In the third case, the consumer is stuck between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. That is, partly satisfaction. A partially satisfied consumer will experience cognitive contradictions. (Abendroth, 2011)

If the consumer is satisfied, the product will continue to be used, if it is not satisfied, there will be contradictions and the product will be disposed of. The consumer, who is not satisfied with the incompatibility caused by the expected performance and the performance, will want to get rid of the product. One method of trying to get rid of the product is to dispose of the product. Disposal can be in the form of destruction or by selling in the second hand market.

The evaluation stage of the results occurs in relation to the quality of the product. Namely, while the probability of dissatisfaction after purchasing is less for the products, it is more likely that the contradiction will occur for complex and risky products. According to the satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the first step of the process is returned in the next purchase decision.

2. CAPTIRE THREE

METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the data obtained as a result of the questionnaire applied was made in this section. In order to analyze the data, the questionnaire forms were transferred to IBM SPSS 25.0 program first, then with appropriate coding. In the analysis, factor analysis and reliability analyze of the effect scale of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones were made during the purchase process. Descriptive statistics for the scale and scale items were determined. Descriptive statistics are specified as frequency (N), percentage (%), mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum in the analysis.

3.1. Factor Analysis of the Scale

Factor analysis is a statistical technique that aims to explain the measurement with a small number of factors by gathering the variables that measure the same structure or quality, and it is defined as the process of revealing new variables called factoring or common factors or obtaining functional definitions of the concepts using the factor load values of the items. (Büyüköztürk, 2007)

Since factor analysis may not be suitable for all data structures, the suitability of the data for factor analysis can be examined with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy and Bartlett Sphericity tests. The KMO's higher than 0.60 and the Bartlett test being meaningful shows that the data are suitable for factor analysis. (Büyüköztürk, 2007)

In order to test the prerequisites of factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett Sphericity test were applied to the scale of effect of reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones used in the analyzes and the findings are shown in table 2.1.

Table 3.1. KMO and Bartlett Tests of the scale

The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		,809
Bartlett Testi	Chi-Square	1944,739
	Df.	120
	<i>p</i>	,000
Df. Degree of freedom		

Table 2.1 shows the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values of the scale. The fact that these values are greater than 0,600 indicates the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Sphericity test ratios (*p*), and 000 mean that significant factors will emerge from the data. As a result, it was determined that the results of KMO and Barlett tests of the scale of influence of reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones used in the analyzes were sufficient for factor analysis.

Factor analysis was carried out to ensure that the expressions of the scales used were collected under appropriate dimensions, and the determined dimensions were expressed as items below. As a result of putting the data of the scales into factor analysis and returning varimax, factors with an eigenvalue above 1.00 and items with factor loadings above 0.40 were taken as basis.

The scale of impact of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase process of mobile phones consists of 20 items. The scale was developed by Jin R. and Punpanich W. (2011). The scale of effect of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase process of mobile phones is a 5-point Likert type.

The fact that the explained variance exceeds 50% over the total variance is an important criterion of factor analysis. Because if the created factor structure explains less than half of the total variable variance, it would be wrong to talk about the representation ability. (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017)

Table 3.2. Eigenvalues and Variances Explained for the Sub-Dimensions of the Scale

Lower dimension	Extract Value	Variance (%)	Cumulative Variance (%)
1. Sub-Dimension of Reference Group's Effect on Purchase Decision	4,405	27,533	27,533
2. Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group	1,967	12,295	39,828
3. Sub-Dimension of Important Factors Affecting Smart Consumers' Purchase Decision	1,718	10,737	50,565

The sub-dimension of the reference group's impact on the purchasing decision consists of items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, with an eigenvalue of 4,405 and 27,533 of the total variance. The different effects sub-dimension of the different reference group consists of scale items 7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14 and 15, the eigenvalue is 1,967 and 12,295 of the total variance. The important factors affecting the purchasing decision of the smartphone consumers are composed of the sub-dimension 16,17,18,19 and 20 scale items, the eigenvalue is 1,718 and 10,737 of the total variance.

Table 3.3. Factor Loads of the Sub-Dimensions of the Scale

	Factor Load
Impact Dimension of Reference Group on Purchase Decision	
Q4. My family's preferences may affect my smartphone selection	,689
Q6. My favorite stars' suggestions can affect my smartphone selection	,567
Q1. I'm looking for information about smartphones from my family or family members	,528
Q5. My choice of smartphone is influenced by the opinions of my friends	,410
Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group	
Q14. As long as my favorite celebrities support the same brands, I keep getting	,821
Q15. I follow the star of the people option because it represents my required identity	,818
Q13. I buy products advertised by celebrities, athletes or stars on TV, radio or magazines	,798
Q8. I always follow my family's decisions to purchase the same products and brands like any other	,744
Q12. I want to be like my friends so I get the same brands they bought	,705

Q7. I get my family's opinion before buying any product	,684
Q9. If I use the same products that my loved family uses, I feel like I can be successful like them	,681
Q11. I rarely buy the latest products until my friends approve	,535
Q10. I always talk to my friends about price and quality before buying	,846

Important Factors Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase

Decision

Q16. I am trying to reach the latest technology	,807
Q17. What look do I try to achieve the best design	,562
Q19. I try to reach the most attractive linked plan package	,744

In factor analysis, factor loads are used to sort out items that do not measure the same structure. If there is a cluster of items that are highly correlated with a factor, this finding indicates that those items measure together a concept-structure-factor. A factor load value of 0.45 or higher is a good measure to choose from, but in practice, this limit value can be reduced to 0.3 for a small number of items. The difference between the highest load value in the factors of a substance and the highest load value after this value is expected to be as high as possible and this difference is recommended to be .10. (Büyüköztürk, 2007).

When the values in the table are examined, as a result of the low factor loads of the items 2,3,18 and 20 of the scale, these items were excluded from the scale that was not included in the analysis. When the factor loads of the remaining questions after these items have been removed, the effect sub-dimension of the reference group on the purchase decision factor loads .410 and .689, the different effects sub-dimension factor loads of the different reference group .507 and .821 and the effects on the purchase decision of the smartphone consumers. factors sub-dimension ranges between .562 and .846.

The factor loads obtained at the end of the Varimax rotation are roughly "bad" between .32 and .44, "normal" between .45 and .54, "good" between .55 and .62, "very good" between .63 and .70, and It is considered as "perfect" at .70 and above. (Comrey, 1992)

3.2. Reliability Analysis of the Scale

In the researches, it is tested whether the data is in the degree of reliability appropriate for the analysis before the analyzes are performed. Reliability is a concept that reveals the consistency and internal harmony of all variables on a scale. (Kurtulus, 2010)

Reliability can be defined as the consistency between individuals' answers to test items. Reliability is related to how accurately the test measures the property it wants to measure. Calculated as the reliability coefficient of the test (r), it is used to interpret to what extent the actual differences related to the test scores depend on the real and the degree of error factors. If the answers to the test items are three or more options, the cronbach (α) coefficient is used. (Büyüköztürk, 2007)

The Alpha value calculated from a 15-item scale is called standard alpha, and if its value is above 0.75, its reliability is considered to be high, the values between 0.50 and 0.75 are considered to be medium, and if it is less than 0.50, it is considered low. The Alpha coefficient calculated from a scale with more than 15 items is excellent reliability of 0.90 and above, high reliability of 0.70 to 0.90, medium reliability of 0.50 to 0.70, and low reliability of 0.50. (Hinton et al., 2004)

In this study, cronbach alpha coefficient was used to test the reliability of the scale used.

Table 3.4. Reliability Analysis of the Scale

	Cronbach Alfa	Item Number
The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones (General)	,814	16
Impact Dimension of Reference Group on Purchase Decision	,555	4
Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group	,794	9
Important Factors Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase Decision	,671	3

When the values in the table are examined; It was understood that the Cronbach alpha values of the scale and the sub-dimensions used in the analyzes ranged between .555 and .814, so the data of all scales were measured reliably.

3.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Scale

Descriptive statistics regarding the scale of influence of the reference groups to the information seeking behavior and the scale items are given in the tables below.

In the survey study, the effect scale of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones, which consists of 16 items and 3 dimensions, was determined to determine the effect levels of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones during the purchase process. In line with the answers given by the participants, the values were given as 1, I strongly disagree, and I definitely agree 5 points, and by collecting these values and dividing them by the total number of questions to 16, the effect levels of each participant on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups were determined during the purchase process of mobile phones. Accordingly, the impact levels of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the participants during the purchase of mobile phones is between 1 and 5.

Table 3.5. Descriptive Statistics of Scales

	Min.	Max.	Average	Standard deviation
The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones (General)	1,75	4,38	3,03	,46
Impact Dimension of Reference Group on Purchase Decision	1,00	5,00	3,05	,74
Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group	1,00	4,33	2,70	,64
Important Factors Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase Decision	2,67	4,67	3,74	,51

When the data in the table is analyzed, the effect levels of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups in the buying process of the average mobile phones of 403 participants is 3.03, the effect levels of the reference group on the purchase decision of 3.05, the different effect levels of the different reference group is 2.70 and the effect of the smartphone consumers on the purchase decision. significant factor levels were determined as 3.74.

Table 3.6. Descriptive Statistics for Scale Items

	Average	Standard deviation
Q1. I'm looking for information about smartphones from my family or family members	3,28	1,11
Q4. My family's preferences may affect my smartphone selection	3,13	1,16
Q5. My choice of smartphone is influenced by the opinions of my friends	3,15	1,13
Q6. My favorite stars' suggestions can affect my smartphone selection	2,66	1,08
Q7. I get my family's opinion before buying any product	3,17	1,18
Q8. I always follow my family's decisions to purchase the same products and brands like any other	2,94	1,15
Q9. If I use the same products that my loved family uses, I feel like I can be successful like them	2,85	1,13
Q10. I always talk to my friends about price and quality before buying	3,75	,97
Q11. I rarely buy the latest products until my friends approve	3,41	1,12
Q12. I want to be like my friends so I get the same brands they bought	2,28	1,02
Q13. I buy products advertised by celebrities, athletes or stars on TV, radio or magazines	2,30	1,02
Q14. As long as my favorite celebrities support the same brands, I keep getting	2,31	1,02
Q15. I follow the star of the people option because it represents my required identity	2,18	,94
Q16. I am trying to reach the latest technology	3,86	,91
Q17. I try to reach the best design and appearance	3,76	,99
Q19. I try to reach the most attractive linked plan package	3,48	,84

According to the table, when the answers given by the participants to the items of the scale of influence of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones are examined, the highest average score is 16 (3.86) (I am trying to reach the latest technology.) And the lowest average score is 15 (2.18). (I follow the people's star option because it represents my required identity). These score averages of the scale items determine the level of participation of the participants in these items.

3.4. Demographic Findings

Analyzes of the demographic information of the participants in the survey are presented below under headings and tables.

3.4.1. Gender Distribution of Participants

Gender status distribution data about participants are tabulated and analyzed and explained in the table below.

Table 3.7. Frequency Analysis of Gender of Participants

		N	%	Current %	Cumulative %
Gender	Female	183	45,4	45,4	45,4
	Male	220	54,6	54,6	100,0
	Total	403	100,0	100,0	

According to the table, 183 people are female (45.4%) and 220 people are male (54.6%).

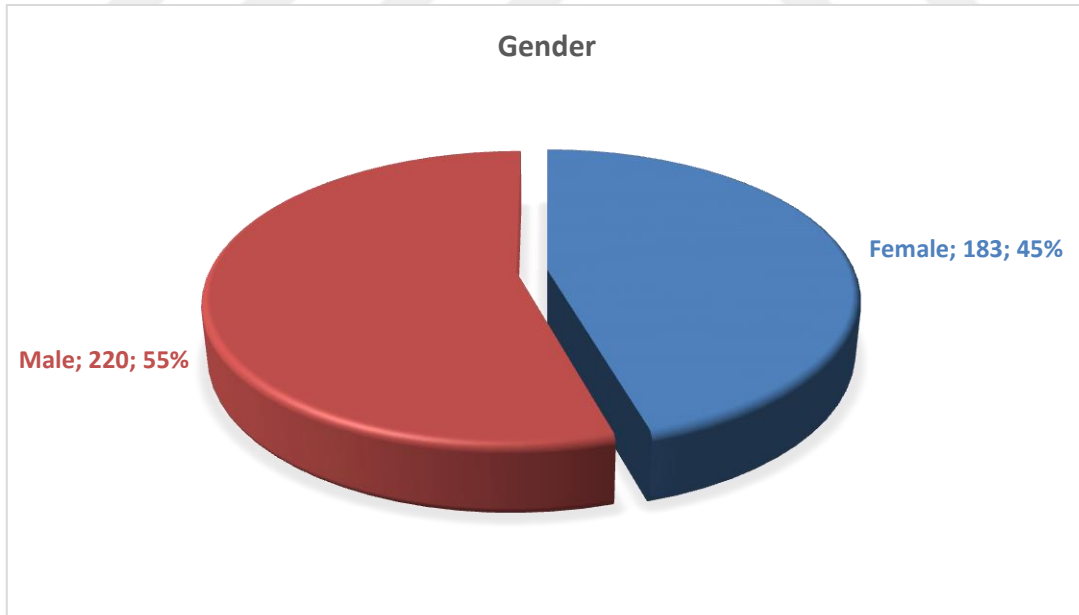


Figure 3.1. Frequency Analysis of Gender of Participants

3.4.2. Age Distribution of Participants

Age status distribution data about participants are tabulated and analyzed and explained in the table below.

Table 3.8. Frequency Analysis of the Age of Participants

		N	%	Current %	Cumulative %
Age	Less than 24	76	18,9	18,9	18,9
	24-35	108	26,8	26,8	45,7
	More than 35	219	54,3	54,3	100,0
	Total	403	100,0	100,0	

According to the table, 76 participants are less than 24 (18.9%), 108 are between 24-35 (26.8%) and 219 are more than 35 (54.3%) years old.

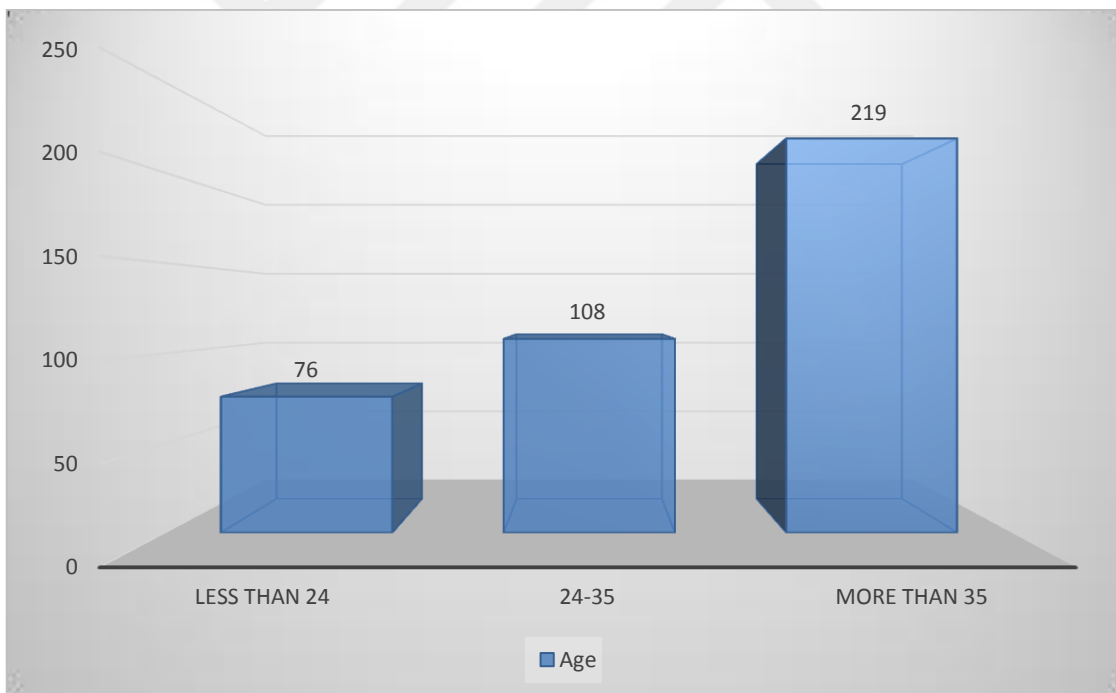


Figure 3.2. Frequency Analysis of the Age of Participants

3.4.3. Distribution of Income Statements of Participants

Income distribution data about the participants are tabulated and analyzed and explained in the table below.

Table 3.9. Frequency Analysis of Income Status of Participants

		N	%	Current %	Cumulative %
Income status	Less than 700	144	35,7	35,7	35,7
	700-1500	168	41,7	41,7	77,4
	More than 1500	91	22,6	22,6	100,0
	Total	403	100,0	100,0	

According to the table, 144 people have less than 700 (35.7%), 168 people have between 700-1500 (41.7%) and 91 people have more than 1500 (22.6%).

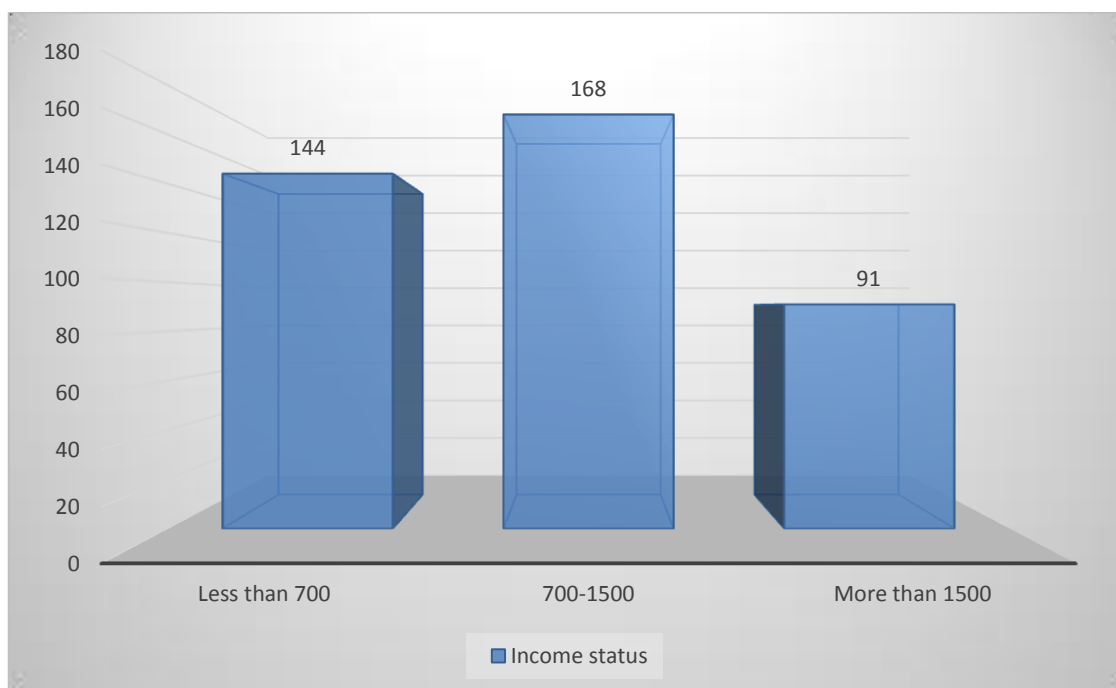


Figure 3.3. Frequency Analysis of Income Status of Participants

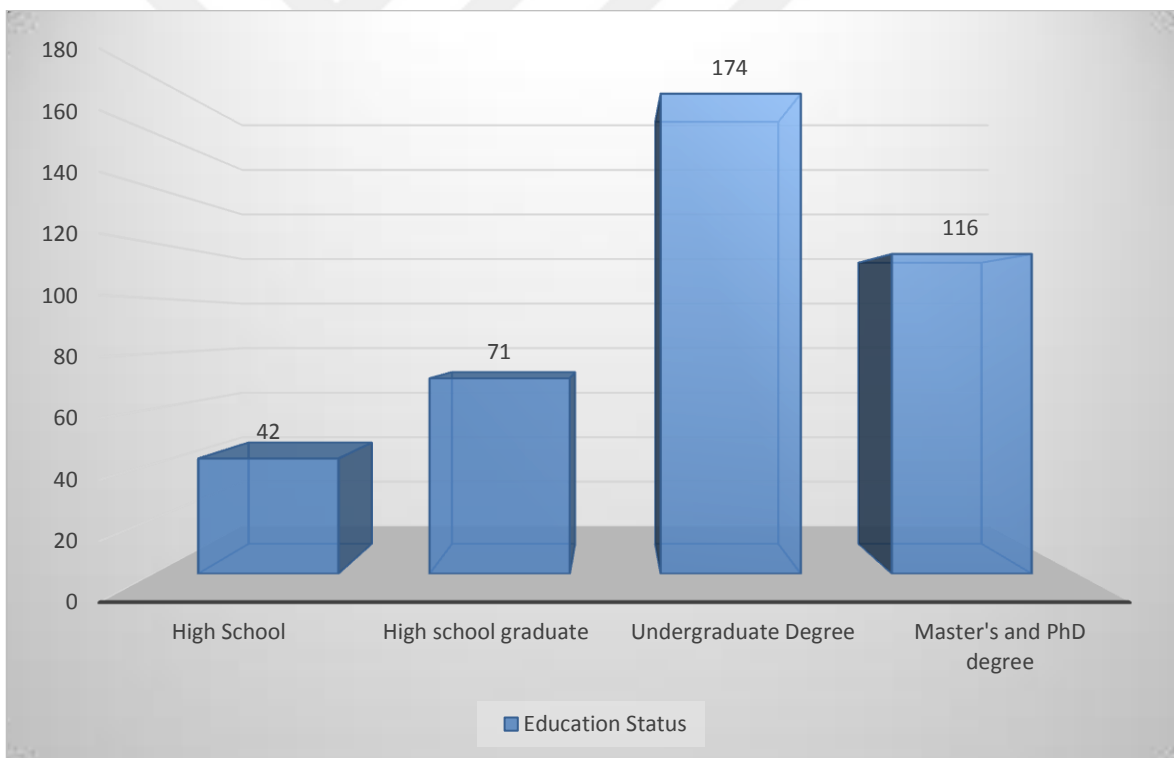
3.4.4. Educational Status of Participants

The educational status distribution data about the participants are tabulated and analyzed and explained in the table below.

Table 3.10. Frequency Analysis of Participants' Educational Status

		N	%	Current %	Cumulative %
Education Status	High School	42	10,4	10,4	10,4
	High school graduate	71	17,6	17,6	28,0
	Undergraduate Degree	174	43,2	43,2	71,2
	Master's and PhD degree	116	28,8	28,8	100,0
	Total	403	100,0	100,0	

According to the table, 42 of the participants are under high school (10.4%), 71 are high school (17.6%), 174 are undergraduate (43.2%), and 116 are graduates (28.8%).

**Figure 3.4. Frequency Analysis of Participants' Educational Status**

3.4.5. Distribution of Participants' Employment Status

The distribution data of the working situation about the participants are tabulated and analyzed and explained in the table below.

Table 3.11. Frequency Analysis of Participants' Working Status

		N	%	Current %	Cumulative %
Working Status	Student	91	22,6	22,6	22,6
	Employee	217	53,8	53,8	76,4
	Free jobs	63	15,6	15,6	92,1
	Manager	32	7,9	7,9	100,0
	Total	403	100,0	100,0	

According to the table, 91 of the participants are students (22.6%), 217 are Employee (53.8%) and 32 are managers (7.9%). 63 of the participants also work in free jobs (15.6%).

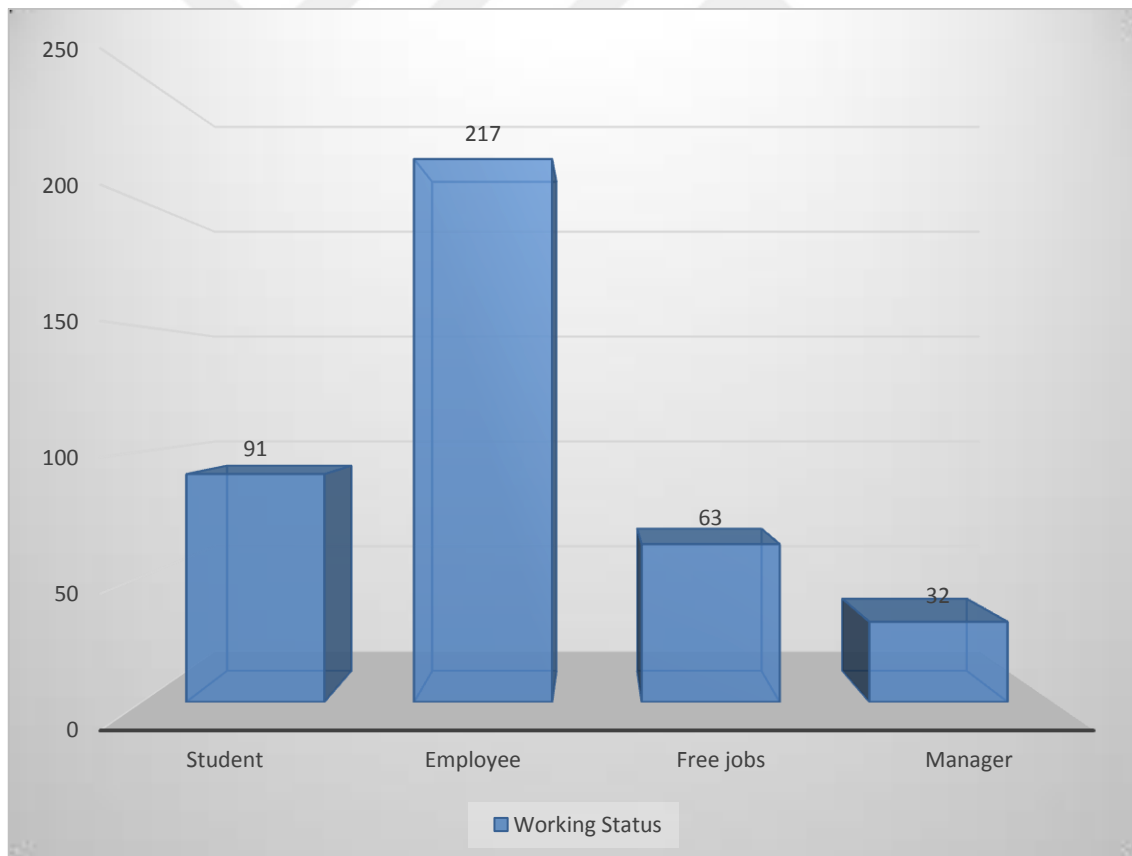


Figure 3.5. Frequency Analysis of Participants' Working Status

3.5. Normality Tests

When the values of significance (p) in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk normality tests, which were carried out separately for reference to the information seeking behavior of the reference groups in the purchase process of mobile phones, and the sub-dimensions of the scale were examined, it was understood that the data did not have a normal distribution because the results were $<.05$.

Table 3.12. Normality Tests for Scales

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistics	df	p	Statistics	df	p
The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones (General).	,052	403	,011	,996	403	,320
Impact Dimension of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision.	,119	403	,000	,981	403	,000
Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group.	,071	403	,000	,988	403	,003
Important Factors Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase Decision.	,156	403	,000	,942	403	,000

When the histograms of the scales are examined, it is seen that the data are close to the normal distribution for all scales. Since it can be misleading to make decisions based only on the test results, in addition to the test results, it is necessary to look at the skewness and kurtosis of the data.

Table 3.13. Skewness and Flatness Values of the Scales

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistics	Statistics	Standard error	Statistics	Standard error
The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones (General)	403	-,013	,122	-,060	,243
Impact Dimension of Reference Group on Purchase Decision	403	-,307	,122	,028	,243
Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group	403	,031	,122	-,070	,243
Important Factors Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase Decision	403	-,223	,122	-,303	,243

It can be said that data with skewness and kurtosis values within ± 1.5 are normally distributed. (Doğan and Başokçu, 2010). When the skewness and kurtosis values of the effect scale and sub-dimensions of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones used in the survey were examined, the values were found to be in the range of ± 1.5 and it was assumed that the data were normally distributed. Independent sample t-test, one-way variance analysis (one way anova) and tukey post-hoc test were used for the analysis of independent variables in terms of scale scores. Statistical significance value was accepted as $p < .05$.

3.6. Difference Tests

Independent sample t tests and one way anova tests were conducted and the results were presented in titles in order to determine that the sub-dimensions of the scale of effect of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the

participants during the purchase of mobile phones differed according to demographic data.

3.6.1. The Scale of the Effect of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones

3.6.1.1. Analysis of the Gender and the Scale of the Participants

Table 3.14. Analysis of the Scale with the Gender of the Participants - Independent Sample t-Test

	Gender	N	Average	Standard deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
The Effect Level of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones	Female	183	3,0464	,46014	,597	388,937	,551
	Male	220	3,0188	,46420			

When the t test results in the table are examined, according to the gender of the participants;

- The level of influence of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones ($t_{(388,937)} = ,597$; $p > ,05$)

"The effect level of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones" does not differ statistically. In other words, the fact that the participants are men or women does not significantly affect the impact levels of reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones.

3.6.1.2. Analysis of the Scale with the Ages of the Participants

Table 3.15. Analysis of the Scale with the Ages of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Effect Level of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones	Less than 24	76	3,1693	,43883	5,195	2	,006
	24-35	108	3,0486	,50061			
	More than 35	219	2,9750	,44087			
	Total	403	3,0314	,46199			

When the one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the age of the participants;

- The level of influence of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones ($F(2)=5,195$; $p<,05$)

differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are between the age variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.16. Tukey Post Hoc Tests by Age of Participants

(I) Age	(J) Age	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Less than 24	24-35	,12064	,06846	,184
	More than 35	,19423*	,06087	,004
24-35	Less than 24	-,12064	,06846	,184
	More than 35	,07359	,05376	,358
More than 35	Less than 24	-,19423*	,06087	,004
	24-35	-,07359	,05376	,358

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; Participants who are less than 24 years old have a significantly higher effect level on the information seeking behavior of reference groups in the purchase process of mobile phones than those who are more than 35 years old. ($p = .004$)

3.6.1.3. Analysis of the Income Status of the Participants and the Scale

Table 3.17. Analysis of the Scale with Income Status of Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Effect Level of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones	Less than 700	144	3,1096	,47263	3,401	2	,034
	700-1500	168	2,9763	,41190			
	More than 1500	91	3,0093	,51737			
	Total	403	3,0314	,46199			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the income levels of the participants;

- The level of influence of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones ($F(2)=3,401$; $p<,05$)

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are among the income variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.18. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Income Status

Income Status (I)	Income Status (J)	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Less than 700	700-1500	,13327*	,05216	,029
	More than 1500	,10033	,06150	,234
700-1500	Less than 700	-,13327*	,05216	,029
	More than 1500	-,03294	,05978	,846
More than 1500	Less than 700	-,10033	,06150	,234
	700-1500	,03294	,05978	,846

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; Participants whose income is between 700-1500 have significantly lower levels of influence on the

information seeking behavior of reference groups in the purchase process of mobile phones compared to those with less than 700 income. ($p = .029$)

3.6.1.4. Education Status of the Participants and Analysis of the Scale

Table 3.19. Analysis of the Scale with the Educational Status of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Effect Level of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones	High School	42	3,0945	,48543	3,579	3	,014
	High school graduate	71	3,1746	,44039			
	Undergraduate Degree	174	2,9987	,42867			
	Master's and PhD degree	116	2,9698	,49806			
	Total	403	3,0314	,46199			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the educational status of the participants;

- The level of influence of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones ($F(3)=3,579$; $p<,05$)

differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which sub-groups of these variations are among the educational variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.20. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Educational Status

(I) Education Status	(J) Education Status	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	<i>p</i>
High School	High school graduate	-,08012	,08908	,805
	Undergraduate Degree	,09573	,07867	,617
	Master's and PhD degree	,12464	,08241	,431
High school graduate	High School	,08012	,08908	,805
	Undergraduate Degree	,17585*	,06444	,033
	Master's and PhD degree	,20476*	,06895	,017
Undergraduate Degree	High School	-,09573	,07867	,617
	High school graduate	-,17585*	,06444	,033
	Master's and PhD degree	,02891	,05485	,953
Master's and PhD degree	High School	-,12464	,08241	,431
	High school graduate	-,20476*	,06895	,017
	Undergraduate Degree	-,02891	,05485	,953

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; The level of influence of the high school graduate participants on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups during the purchase of mobile phones is significantly higher than those of the undergraduate degree, Master's and PhD degree. ($p=,033$; $p=,017$)

3.6.1.5. Analysis of the Scale with the Working Status of the Participants

Table 3.21. Analysis of the Scale with Participants' Working Status - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Effect Level of Reference Groups on the Information Search Behavior in the Purchase Process of Mobile Phones	Student	91	3,1729	,47369	4,776	3	,003
	Employee	217	2,9836	,43172			
	Free jobs	63	3,0610	,44699			
	Manager	32	2,8945	,56762			
	Total	403	3,0314	,46199			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the working status of the participants;

- The level of influence of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones ($F(3)=4,776$; $p<,05$)

differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are among the study variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.22. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Employment Status

(I) Working Status	(J) Working Status	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Student	Employee	,18937*	,05690	,005
	Free jobs	,11196	,07467	,439
	Manager	,27842*	,09364	,016
Employee	Student	-,18937*	,05690	,005
	Free jobs	-,07741	,06521	,635
	Manager	,08905	,08628	,731
Free jobs	Student	-,11196	,07467	,439
	Employee	,07741	,06521	,635
	Manager	,16646	,09891	,334
Manager	Student	-,27842*	,09364	,016
	Employee	-,08905	,08628	,731
	Free jobs	-,16646	,09891	,334

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; The level of influence of the participants, who are students, on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups in the procurement process of mobile phones, is significantly higher than those who are the employees and managers. ($p=,005$; $p=,016$)

3.6.2. Difference Tests on the Impact Sub-Dimension of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision

3.6.2.1. Analysis of the Gender and the Scales of the Participants

Table 3.23. Analysis of the Scale with the Gender of the Participants - Independent Sample t-Test

	Gender	N	Average	Standard deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
The Impact Level of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision	Female	183	3,0902	,73197	,911	389,175	,363
	Male	220	3,0231	,73976			

When the t test results in the table are examined, according to the gender of the participants;

- The level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision ($t_{(389,175)}=,911$; $p > ,05$),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, whether the participants are women or men does not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

3.6.2.2. Analysis of ages and scales of participants

Table 3.24. Analysis of the Scale with the Ages of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Impact Level of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision	Less than 24	76	3,0998	,83433	,832	2	,436
	24-35	108	3,1088	,78260			
	More than 35	219	3,0103	,67445			
	Total	403	3,0536	,73608			

When the one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the age of the participants;

- The level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision (F(2)=,832; p>,05),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the age of the participants does not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

3.6.2.3. Analysis of Income Status and Scales of Participants

Table 3.25. Analysis of the Scale with Income Status of Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Impact Level of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision	Less than 700	144	3,0781	,77970	,179	2	,836
	700-1500	168	3,0288	,67077			
	More than 1500	91	3,0604	,78558			
	Total	403	3,0536	,73608			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the income levels of the participants;

- The level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision (F(2)=,179; p>,05),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the income of the participants does not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

3.6.2.4. Education Status of the Participants and Analysis of Scales

Table 3.26. Analysis of the Scale with the Educational Status of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Impact Level of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision	High School	42	2,9940	,87389	1,833	3	,140
	High school graduate	71	3,2195	,73722			
	Undergraduate Degree	174	2,9856	,67507			
	Master's and PhD degree	116	3,0754	,76131			
	Total	403	3,0536	,73608			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the educational status of the participants;

- The level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision ($F(3)=1,833$; $p>,05$),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the educational status of the participants does not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

3.6.2.5. Analysis of Participants' Working Status and Scales

Table 3.27. Analysis of the Scale with Participants' Working Status - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
The Impact Level of the Reference Group on the Purchase Decision	Student	91	3,1850	,81846	1,176	3	,151
	Employee	217	2,9827	,69137			
	Free jobs	63	3,1111	,72091			
	Manager	32	3,0469	,78657			
	Total	403	3,0536	,73608			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the working status of the participants;

- The level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision ($F(3)=1,176$; $p>,05$),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the working status of the participants does not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

3.6.3. Difference Tests for Different Effects Sub-Dimension of Different Reference Group

3.6.3.1. Analysis of the Gender and the Scales of the Participants

Table 3.28. Analysis of the Scale with the Gender of the Participants - Independent Sample t-Test

	Gender	N	Average	Standard deviation	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Level of	Female	183	2,6873	,64219	-,411	388,760	,682
Different Effects	Male	220	2,7138	,64699			
of Different Reference Group							

When the t test results in the table are examined, according to the gender of the participants;

- Different effects level of different reference groups ($t_{(388,760)}=-,411$; $p > ,05$),

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, whether the participants are women or men does not significantly affect the different effects levels of the different reference group.

3.6.3.2. Analysis of ages and scales of participants

Table 3.29. Analysis of the Scale with the Ages of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of Different Effects of Different Reference Group	Less than 24	76	2,8962	,64491	4,848	2	,008
	24-35	108	2,7068	,70017			
	More than 35	219	2,6318	,60276			
	Total	403	2,7018	,64415			

When the one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the age of the participants;

- Different effects level of different reference groups ($F(2)=4,848$; $p<,05$),

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are between the age variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.30. Tukey Post Hoc Tests by Age of Participants

		(I) Age	(J) Age	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Level of Different Effects of Different Reference Group	Less than 24	24-35		,18941	,09553	,118
			More than 35	,26439*	,08495	,006
	24-35	Less than 24		-,18941	,09553	,118
			More than 35	,07498	,07503	,578
Reference Group	More than 35	Less than 24		-,26439*	,08495	,006
			24-35	-,07498	,07503	,578

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined;

- Different effect levels of the participants who are less than 24 years of age are significantly higher than the participants who are more than 35 years old. ($p=,006$)

3.6.3.3. Analysis of Income Status and Scales of Participants

Table 3.31. Analysis of the Scale with Income Status of Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of	Less than 700	144	2,8218	,67378	4,073	2	,018
Different Effects	700-1500	168	2,6204	,57644			
of Different	More than 1500	91	2,6621	,69170			
Reference Group	Total	403	2,7018	,64415			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the income levels of the participants;

- Different effects level of different reference groups ($F(2)=4,073$; $p<,05$)

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are among the income variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.32. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Income Status

Income Status (I)	Income Status (J)	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Less than 700	700-1500	,20139*	,07260	,016
	More than 1500	,15961	,08561	,150
700-1500	Less than 700	-,20139*	,07260	,016
	More than 1500	-,04178	,08321	,870
More than 1500	Less than 700	-,15961	,08561	,150
	700-1500	,04178	,08321	,870

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; The different effect groups of the participants whose income is between 700-1500 are significantly lower than the participants whose income is less than 700. ($p=,016$)

3.6.3.4. Education Status of the Participants and Analysis of Scales

Table 3.33. Analysis of the Scale with the Educational Status of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of Different Effects of Different Reference Group	High School	42	2,9497	,73752	6,234	3	,000
	High school graduate	71	2,8795	,56336			
	Undergraduate Degree	174	2,6656	,59531			
	Master's and PhD degree	116	2,5575	,68211			
	Total	403	2,7018	,64415			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the educational status of the participants;

- Different effects level of different reference groups ($F(3)=6,234$; $p<,05$)

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which sub-groups of these variations are among the educational variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.34. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Educational Status

(I) Education Status	(J) Education Status	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
High School	High school graduate	,07024	,12301	,941
	Undergraduate Degree	,28415*	,10864	,046
	Master's and PhD degree	,39226*	,11380	,003
High school graduate	High School	-,07024	,12301	,941
	Undergraduate Degree	,21392	,08899	,078
	Master's and PhD degree	,32203*	,09522	,004

Undergraduate Degree	High School	-,28415*	,10864	,046
	High school graduate	-,21392	,08899	,078
	Master's and PhD degree	,10811	,07575	,483
Master's and PhD degree	High School	-,39226*	,11380	,003
	High school graduate	-,32203*	,09522	,004
	Undergraduate Degree	-,10811	,07575	,483

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined;

- The levels of different effects of the different reference groups of the participants whose education level is below high school are significantly higher than those who have graduated from undergraduate degree, Master's and PhD degree. ($p=,046$; $p=,003$)
- The levels of different effects of the different reference group of participants who are high school graduates are significantly higher than those of Master's and PhD degree. ($p=,004$)

3.6.3.5. Analysis of Participants' Working Status and Scales

Table 3.35. Analysis of the Scale with Participants' Working Status - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of Different Effects of Different Reference Group	Student	91	2,8694	,66493	4,731	3	,003
	Employee	217	2,6231	,60442			
	Free jobs	63	2,8189	,63294			
	Manager	32	2,5278	,75201			
	Total	403	2,7018	,64415			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the working status of the participants;

- Different effects level of different reference group ($F(3)=4,731$; $p<,05$)

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are among the study variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.36. Tukey Post Hoc Tests According to Participants' Employment Status

(I) Working Status	(J) Working Status	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	p
Student	Employee	,24621*	,07935	,011
	Free jobs	,05048	,10413	,962
	Manager	,34158*	,13058	,045
Employee	Student	-,24621*	,07935	,011
	Free jobs	-,19573	,09093	,139
	Manager	,09537	,12031	,858
Free jobs	Student	-,05048	,10413	,962
	Employee	,19573	,09093	,139
	Manager	,29109	,13792	,151
Manager	Student	-,34158*	,13058	,045
	Employee	-,09537	,12031	,858
	Free jobs	-,29109	,13792	,151

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined; The levels of different effects of the different reference groups of the participants who are students are significantly higher than the participants who are the employees and managers. ($p=,011$; $p=,045$)

3.6.4. Difference Tests on the Important Factors Sub-Dimension Affecting Smart Phone Consumers' Purchase Decision

3.6.4.1. Analysis of the Gender and the Scales of the Participants

Table 3.37. Analysis of the Scale with the Gender of the Participants - Independent Sample t-Test

	Gender	N	Average	Standard	t	df	p
				deviation			
Level of Important Factors Affecting Smartphone Consumers' Purchase Decision	Female	183	3,7378	,50258	-,257	392,411	,798
	Male	220	3,7509	,52151			

When the t test results in the table are examined, according to the gender of the participants;

- Significant factor level affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision ($t_{(392,411)}=-,257; p > ,05$)

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the fact that the participants are men or women does not affect the important factor levels that affect the purchasing decision of the smartphone consumers.

3.6.4.2. Analysis of ages and scales of participants

Table 3.38. Analysis of the Scale with the Ages of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of Important Factors Affecting Smartphone Consumers' Purchase Decision	Less than 24	76	3,7913	,48899	3,078	2	,047
	24-35	108	3,8273	,49293			
	More than 35	219	3,6883	,52470			
	Total	403	3,7450	,51241			

When the one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the age of the participants;

- Significant factor level affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision ($F(2)=3,078; p<,05$)

it differs statistically significantly. Tukey post-hoc tests were conducted to determine which subgroups of these variations are between the age variable and the results are given in the table below.

Table 3.39. Tukey Post Hoc Tests by Age of Participants

	(I) Age	(J) Age	Average Difference (I-J)	Standard error	<i>p</i>
Level of Important Factors Affecting Smartphone Consumers' Purchase Decision	Less than 24	Less than 24	-,03600	,07633	,885
		35'ten fazla	,10305	,06787	,283
	24-35	24-35	,03600	,07633	,885
		35'ten fazla	,13905*	,05994	,034
	More than 35	More than 35	-,10305	,06787	,283
		24-35	-,13905*	,05994	,034

When the tukey post hoc tests in the table are examined;

- Participants who are more than 35 years old are significantly lower than the participants who are 24-35 years old, who have a significant factor affecting the decision of the smartphone consumers. ($p=,034$)

3.6.4.3. Analysis of Income Status and Scales of Participants

Table 3.40. Analysis of the Scale with Income Status of Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	<i>p</i>
Level of Important Factors Affecting Smartphone Consumers' Purchase Decision	Less than 700	144	3,7733	,50356	,677	2	,509
	700-1500	168	3,7100	,53750			
	More than 1500	91	3,7647	,47943			
	Total	403	3,7450	,51241			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the income levels of the participants;

- Significant factor level affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision ($F(2)=,677$; $p>,05$)

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the income of the participants does not significantly affect the level of important factors affecting the smartphone consumers' purchasing decision.

3.6.4.4. Education Status of the Participants and Analysis of Scales

Table 3.41. Analysis of the Scale with the Educational Status of the Participants - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of	High School	42	3,6547	,48271	1,569	3	,196
Important	High school graduate	71	3,7018	,54663			
Factors	Undergraduate	174	3,7316	,51469			
Affecting	Degree						
Smartphone	Master's and PhD	116	3,8241	,49363			
Consumers'	degree						
Purchase	Total	403	3,7450	,51241			
Decision							

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the educational status of the participants;

- Significant factor level affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision ($F(3)=1,569$; $p>,05$)

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the educational status of the participants does not significantly affect the level of important factors that affect the purchasing decision of the smartphone consumers.

3.6.4.5. Analysis of Participants' Working Status and Scales

Table 3.42. Analysis of the Scale with Participants' Working Status - One Way Anova Test

		N	Average	Standard deviation	F	df	p
Level of Important Factors	Student	91	3,7818	,50939	,201	3	,896
Affecting Smartphone	Employee	217	3,7347	,53290			
Consumers' Purchase	Free jobs	63	3,7342	,42642			
Decision	Manager	32	3,7314	,55134			
	Total	403	3,7450	,51241			

When one way anova tests in the table are examined, according to the working status of the participants;

- Significant factor level affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision ($F(3)=,201$; $p>,05$)

it does not differ statistically significantly. In other words, the working status of the participants does not significantly affect the level of important factors affecting the smartphone consumers' purchasing decision.



CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between the main reference groups and the decision to purchase, and this importance comes through knowing the role that the main reference groups can contribute to the purchase decision and identifying the study variables and the effects on them, and the results showed that some dimensions of the main reference groups have a major impact on The relationship between the primary reference groups and the purchase decision; Friends and coworkers were supported in the study as well as by dimensions that did not support family and celebrities.

When the company sets out its marketing strategies, it should focus on their friends and co-workers, then support and reduce the burden on the fashions and celebrities when directing the promotional mix because they are not supported.

The following results can be concluded from this study:

- 183 of the participants are women (45.4%) and 220 people are men (54.6%).
- 76 participants were less than 24 (18.9%), 108 were between 24-35 (26.8%) and 219 were more than 35 (54.3%) years old.
- 144 people from the participants had less than 700 (35.7%), 168 people between 700-1500 (41.7%) and 91 people had more than 1500 (22.6%).
- 42 of the participants are under high school (10.4%), 71 are high school (17.6%), 174 are undergraduate (43.2%), and 116 are graduates (28.8%).
- 91 of the participants are students (22.6%), 217 employees (53.8%) and 32 people are managers (7.9%). 63 of the participants also work in free jobs (15.6%).
- The impact levels of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the average of 403 participants in the process of buying mobile phones 3.03, the impact levels of the reference group on the purchase decision 3.05, the different impact levels of the different reference group 2.70 and the important factor affecting the purchase decision of the smartphone consumers. levels have been determined as 3.74.

- When the responses of the participants to the items of the scale of influence of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the mobile phones were examined, the highest average score was 16 (3.86) (I am trying to reach the latest technology.) And the lowest average score was 15 (2.18). I follow the star option because it represents my required identity.)
- Whether the participants are men or women does not significantly affect the impact levels of reference groups on information seeking behavior during the purchase of mobile phones.
- The effect levels of the reference groups on the information seeking behavior of the participants, whose age is less than 24, is significantly higher than the participants whose age is more than 35.

According to the findings of the report, it was accepted that reference classes may have essential impact on the decision-making process of mobile telephone users. The results illustrate the correlation of such factors with the Yang, He and Lee survey (2007).

Three forms of effects were also evaluated according to the analysis by Khan & Khan (2008). But, differently from ours, their research reflects on the opinions of customers, dividing their respondents into communities and assessments, which affect those customers.

Furthermore, it is more vulnerable to collective consumption of luxury (smartphones) than private consumption of luxury (mobile phones), and is simpler for comparison classes to control (Makgosa and Mohube 2007). We imagine that there are variations between the buyer of cell telephones and smartphones and that the power of comparison classes is lately seen as a very significant consideration for consumers of smartphones.

Male and female respondents agree that men's comparisons have a greater functional impact on them as stated by Bearden and Etzel (1982), which arises when customers follow the expectations of others since they feel that meeting and approval by others would be useful.

Participants whose income is between 700-1500 have significantly lower levels of influence on the information seeking behavior of reference groups in the purchase process of mobile phones compared to those with less than 700 income.

The level of influence of the high school graduate participants on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups during the purchase of mobile phones is significantly higher than those of the undergraduate degree, Master's and PhD degree.

The level of influence of the participants, who are students, on the information seeking behavior of the reference groups in the procurement process of the mobile phones is significantly higher than those who are the employees and managers.

Whether the participants are women or men does not significantly affect the impact levels of the reference group on the purchase decision.

The ages of the participants do not significantly affect the level of influence of the reference group on the purchase decision.

Participants' income does not significantly affect the impact levels of the reference group on the purchase decision.

The educational status of the participants does not significantly affect the impact levels of the reference group on the purchase decision.

The working status of the participants does not significantly affect the impact levels of the reference group on the purchase decision.

Whether the participants are women or men does not significantly affect the levels of different effects of the different reference group.

Different effect levels of the participants who are less than 24 years of age are significantly higher than the participants who are more than 35 years old.

The different effect groups of the participants whose income is between 700-1500 are significantly lower than the participants whose income is less than 700.

The levels of different effects of the different reference groups of the participants whose education level is below high school are significantly higher than those who have graduated from undergraduate degree, Master's and PhD degree.

The levels of different effects of the high school graduate participants from different reference groups are significantly higher than those of Master's and PhD degree.

The levels of different effects of the different reference groups of the students who are students are significantly higher than those who are the managers and employee.

The fact that the participants are men or women does not significantly affect the level of important factors affecting the smartphone consumers' purchasing decision.

Participants who are more than 35 years old are significantly lower than the participants whose ages are 24-35, which affect the purchasing decision of the smartphone consumers.

Participants' incomes do not significantly affect the levels of important factors affecting smartphone consumers' purchasing decision.

The educational status of the participants does not significantly affect the levels of important factors that affect the purchasing decision of the smartphone consumers.

The working status of the participants does not significantly affect the level of important factors affecting the smartphone consumers' purchase decision.

Recommendations:

The study recommends that more attention be given to the use of friends when promoting products to increase their impact on them further, as it was stated in the study that friends have a great influence on individuals when they make the decision to purchase.

It also recommends that you pay attention to coworkers and it appears that they have a significant influence on the purchasing decision; So it should focus on them when starting the product promotion process to take advantage of this marketing opportunity.

In light of the results and previous contents, the study recommends that it is necessary for companies to plan and implement a deliberate scientific promotional mix so that the opinion of the main reference groups on marketed brands has a positive role in the promotional messages included in the advertising campaigns.

The study also recommends activating and disseminating the culture of purchasing decision-making among consumers and alerting to the factors that affect them, especially reference groups, through various curricula in addition to conducting other studies on variables and other factors such as the promotional mix that plays an influential role in the decision to purchase and conducting other studies on the subject of groups. The authority and its impact on the purchase decision on specific goods, as well as a comparison between several Arab countries to study the impact of the reference groups on the purchase decision in many local and foreign products.



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LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Groups/Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reference group influence on purchase decision-making					
1. I seek for information about Smartphones from my parents or family members					
2. I would search for information about various Smartphones' brand from my friends.					
3. I will collect Smartphone information from advertisement and other media.					
4. The preference of family members can influence my Smartphone's choice					
5. My choice of Smartphone is influenced by my friends.					
6. My favorite stars' testimonials can influence my choice of Smartphone					
Difference influence of different reference group					
7. I have never buy a product until I have discussed with people in my family.					
8. I always follow my family's decision by buying the same products and brands as others.					
9. If I use the same products as my admired family members use, I feel that I can be successful like them.					
10. I regular talk to friends about prices and quality before buying.					
11. I rarely buy the latest products until my friends approve them.					
12. I want to be like my friends so I buy the brand they buy.					
13. I buy only the products or brands which are advertised on TV, radio, and magazine by celebrities, sport heroes, or stars					
14. I continue buying the same brands as long as my favorite stars endorse them					
15. I follow my idol's choice because it represents my					

desired identity					
Important factors in Smartphone consumers' purchasing decision					
16. I seek for the newest technology					
17. I seek for the best design and appearance					
18. I seek for the lowest price among relatively similar products					
19. I seek for the most attractive calling plan package associated					
20. I seek for the reference group influence					

Gender:	Male
	Female
Age:	Under 24
	24 - 35
	More than 35
monthly Income:	Under 1000
	1000- 2000
	2001 – 3,000
	more than 3,000
Education:	Lower than High school
	High school
	Undergraduate
	Post- graduate
	Higher than post-graduate
Occupation:	Manager
	Senior Manager
	Consultant
	Marketing
	Engineering
	Government employee
	Employee
	Students
	Others

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