

**T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ**

**THE AFFECT OF PHENOMENON MARKETING
ON PURCHASING DECISIONS**

Master's Degree Thesis

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İSTANBUL, 2018

**T.C.
BAHÇEŞEHİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ**

**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

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THESIS ADVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. GÖZDE ÖYMEN

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ABSTRACT

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In this paper it is aimed to find out the following: whether this marketing channel has really an impact on decisions of people, whether it has higher influence than the other marketing channels like TV, newspaper/magazine, radio, websites etc., what are the main distinctive features of more influential phenomenons, whether the features of followers have impacts on the level of being influenced by a phenomenon, whether followers have tendency to unfollow if there is an obvious marketing activity presented by a phenomenon, and whether social media platforms have impact on influence level of phenomenons. A questionnaire was used for data gathering. By the answers of this questionnaire, the following findings are found: 1) People are influenced by phenomenon marketing, 2) the influence of this marketing channel is higher than the most traditional channels (similar with TV and newspaper/magazines), but it is lower than online website marketing, 3) there are five distinctive dimensions of features of more influential phenomenons compared the others: relation to daily and popular lifes of people, detailed information sharers, the content topic of phenomenons about daily activities and entertainment, the character/background, and the connection/communication levels of a phenomenon, 4) female, graduated or single people have more tendency to be influenced by a phenomenon, 5) the tendency of unfollowing a phenomenon is higher for the people, who have ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon, when they realize the marketing activity done by that phenomenon, 6) the level of influence of phenomenons change regarding to social media platforms.

Keywords: Phenomenon, social media, influencing, features, followers

ÖZET

FENOMEN PAZARLAMASININ SATIN ALMA KARARLARINA ETKİSİ

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Bu çalışmanın genel amacı fenomen pazarlamasının satın alma kararlarına etkisinin incelenmesidir. Bu çalışmada fenomen pazarlamasının gerçekten satın almaya etkisinin olup olmadığı, diğer pazarlama kanallarıyla karşılaştırılması, yüksek etkiye sahip olan fenomenlerin belirgin özelliklerinin tespit edilmesi, takipçilerin özelliklerinin etkilenme seviyeleri ile ilişkisinin incelenmesi, bunun bir pazarlama aktivitesi olduğu anlaşıldığında fenomenleri takip etme eğilimindeki değişimin araştırılması, ve sosya mecralara göre etki seviyesinin değişip değişmediği konularına cevap aranmaktadır. Çalışmanın ana çıktıları şu şekildedir: 1) fenomen pazarlaması insanların satın alma kararlarına olumlu yönde etki etmektedir, 2) bu kanalın etkisi geleneksel pazarlama kanallarından yüksektir (TV ve gazete/dergi ile benzerdir), ancak internet sitesi reklamlarına kıyasla daha düşüktür, 3) etkisi yüksek olan fenomenlerin özellikleri 5 ana boyutta toplanmıştır: fenomenlerin günlük ve popüler hayatla ilgili olması, detaylı bilgi paylaşımı yapılan mecraların kullanılması, paylaşılan içeriklerin günlük hayat veya eğlence sektörü ile ilgili olması, fenomenlerin karakterleri ve arkaplan özellikleri (bilgi seviyesi, tecrübe vs.), bağlantı ve iletişim özellikleri, 4) Kadın, mezun olmuş (öğrenci olmayan) veya bekar kişilerin fenomenlerden etkilenme eğilimleri diğerlerine göre daha yüksektir, 5) takip ettikleri bir fenomenin pazarlama aktivitesi olarak kullanıldığını fark ettiklerinde; özellikle daha önce bir fenomenen etkilenip ürün satın almış insanların, o fenomeni takip etmeyi bırakma eğilimi daha yüksektir, 6) fenomenlerin etki seviyeleri buldukları sosyal mecralara göre farklılık göstermektedir.

Keywords: Fenomen, sosyal medya, etki, özellikler, takipçiler

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IAB	:	Interactive Advertising Bureau (https://www.iab.com/)
WOM	:	Word of mouth
e-WOM	:	Electronic word of mouth
SMI	:	Social Media Influencer



1. INTRODUCTION

By the rapid growth of internet and mobile usage all around the world, the connectivity of people is increasing. This increase in connectivity helps people to make easier and faster interactions between each other, even with companies. The main platform for doing these interactions is Social Media. 74 percent of internet users are also active social media users with 21 percent annual growth¹. People can reach and communicate with each other, share photos, watch videos, look at their emails, write comments and reviews about products, follow the news and also make complaints. Companies are also well aware about these developments. That's the reason why they are using social media for their marketing activities. Because of the increasing online engagement of people, they are also taking action by the advertisements on their mobile apps. Globally 47 percent of the people take action after they have seen an advertisement on a mobile app; 13 percent of people even click on the advertisement². They are also more sensitive to user generated content based advertisements like reviews, photos, videos etc. and click through those advertisements four times higher than average³. People can even share their political ideas and religious beliefs. So social media has become the core of our daily lives. That is the reason why it is used for a marketing channel like TV, newspaper or radio. The latest report of IAB Turkey shows that digital media's share of marketing budget in 2016 in worldwide is 41.1 percent with a growth rate of 17.4 percent, while total media growth is 5.9 percent⁴. Because traditional media is mostly one to many communication like broadcasting via TV, radio, newspaper etc., the potential of higher resonance of its messages between people in communities is lower than the potential of social media. By the emergence of influential people online, consumers tend to follow them for decreasing their risk about purchasing. So they seek reviews or feedbacks

¹ Kemp, S., 2017, DIGITAL IN 2017: GLOBAL OVERVIEW, we are social, <https://wearesocial.com/special-reports/digital-in-2017-global-overview>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

² IAB, Always On - A Global Perspective of Mobile Consumer Experience, 2017, https://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017-IAB-Global-Mobile-Experience-Study_Infographic.pdf, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

³ Shopify, 4 Tactics to Drive Traffic and Sales With User-Generated Content, 2015, <https://www.shopify.com/blog/68976197-4-tactics-to-drive-traffic-and-sales-with-user-generated-content>, [accessed on 3 May 2018].

⁴ IAB Turkey, Digital Ad Spend / Total Ad Spend Turkey vs. Worldwide, 2017, <https://www.slideshare.net/IABTurkiye/digital-ad-spend-total-ad-spend-turkey-vs-worldwide?ref=http://www.iabturkiye.org/sektorel-sunumlar>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

online easier than the traditional media. This power of social media against traditional media let some people to influence others. People are also influenced by social media when they make a purchase decision, especially about electronics, clothing, dining out and grocery (Sruoginis 2017).

The high usage of social network (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter etc.) and instant messaging apps (Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, Wechat etc.) is also creating an opportunity for generating influencers (we can also call them phenomenons, who call their followers to take action). Rather than using traditional methods, companies can use these phenomenons for reaching their potential consumers and promote their product. According to Lin and others (2017), social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter have helped brands like Coke, Dove, GoPro, McDonald's, Samsung Mobile, Nike Football, Oreo, KFC, PlayStation, Converse, and Red Bull to market their products more effectively (Lin and others 2017).

By these developments online, using phenomenons as a marketing channel is becoming more and more common. In this paper we aimed to find out the following: whether this marketing channel has really an impact on decisions of people, whether it has higher influence than the other marketing channels like TV, newspaper/magazine, radio, websites etc., what are the main distinctive features of more influential phenomenons, whether the features of followers have impacts on the level of being influenced by a phenomenon, whether followers have tendency to unfollow if there is an obvious marketing activity presented by a phenomenon, and whether social media platforms have impact on influence level of phenomenons.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

2.1.1 Social Media And Social Networks

Before talking about phenomenons and their influences on their followers, we should define social media and social networks first. The definition of social media made by Evans (2008, p. 31):

Social media, simply, is text, words, pictures, video, and the like created with the intention of sharing. In the context of a marketplace, it is the thoughts and experiences of participants—for example, consumers—that relate to their experiences with brands, products, or services. The act of sharing is often for the purpose of making a better or more-informed choice.

Regarding to this definition there are two main points: people have the intention of sharing in social media and they share especially their thoughts and experiences. So in other words, social media is some kind of a platform which connects people with the things they share.

By the increased number of mobile devices people can be “Always On” without restricting themselves in specific places, so they can reach from everywhere (Powers and other 2012). By being always on at everywhere makes sharing and interacting much more convenient and strengthens the desire of sharing at any time at anywhere. That's the reason why there are about 2.8 billion active social media users all around the world, and the number is growing annually by 21 percent¹.

This grow rates cause or be caused by increasing number of social media platforms. People desire to share, and these platforms satisfy those needs. Some examples of nowadays well accepted social media platforms regarding to their number of active users are Facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube, QQ, Wechat, Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter and Pinterest². All of them help people to share and connect with each other as mentioned in social media definition.

¹ Kemp, S., 2017, DIGITAL IN 2017: GLOBAL OVERVIEW, we are social, <https://wearesocial.com/special-reports/digital-in-2017-global-overview>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

² Kemp, S., 2017, DIGITAL IN 2017: GLOBAL OVERVIEW, we are social, <https://wearesocial.com/special-reports/digital-in-2017-global-overview>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

The sharing intentions of people, being always on and being mobile also help them to create social networks. These networks can be defined in three groups: one-to-many like broadcasting with one way interaction (eg. TV, radio, newspaper), one-to-one like a transaction between two different entities (eg. messaging) and many-to-many as group of people interact with other group of people (eg. On-line chat rooms, multiplayer games). Social networks can be one of these three forms. According to Reed's Law the value of group forming networks with n members have a lot more potential than the other networks (Reed 2001).

Modern social networks like Facebook, Youtube, Twitter etc. are similar to group forming networks (many-to-many) because of their features of creating communities by following or adding friends and letting interactions between group of people. They can share photos, videos, blogs, news, ideas or reviews with each other and with their communities.

The rising of social media networks has got the attention of companies too. The high value potential of social networks causes companies to make changes on their marketing strategies. The increasing attention of companies is shared by Bowden (2016, p. 3):

66% of entrepreneurs believe that social media is a key part of their business (Salesforce), with 92% describing it as 'important' (Social Media Examiner). 38% of companies are trying to increase their social media presence. 66% of businesses employ a dedicated social media team as outlined by Salesforce.

Social media helps companies to connect to their consumers, to get feedback about their brands, products or services, to hear their suggestions, to communicate with them, to build brand visibility and to convey consumers to their websites (Bowden 2016, p. 3).

That's the reason why marketers have started to integrate social media in their marketing activities. So the social media has emerged. Tuten and Solomon (2018) define the social media marketing as: "Social media marketing is the utilization of social media technologies, channels and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization and its stakeholders".

The latest report of IAB Turkey shows an increasing attention of companies on social media. It shows that digital media's share of marketing budget in 2016 in worldwide is

41.1 percent with a growth rate of 17.4 percent, while total media growth is 5.9¹. Companies reserve most of their marketing budget on digital platforms and its share increases much more than the non-digital channels like TV, newspaper, etc. In addition to, according to the 2013 social media marketing industry report, 86 percent of marketers state that social media is important for their business, and 88 percent want to learn the tactics of effective social media marketing and ways of engaging the audience by social media (Stelzner 2013).

The reason of why marketers are very eager to use social media marketing is the large set of goals, that they can satisfy by using social media; such as brand awareness, brand liking, promoting customer engagement and loyalty, inspiring consumer word-of-mouth communication, and potentially driving traffic to brand locations on and offline (Ashley and Tuten 2015).

In addition to the benefits of social media for companies mentioned above, there are two important matters which make social media marketing crucial. First one is about the power of trust on social media. It helps people to increase their reach for trustworthy people around them. They can search experiences of other people in blogs, forums, etc. in addition to their close friends or families (Powers and others 2012). When we look at the percentages of the social media's roles, it can be seen that purchasing decisions of people are affected by the social media more than 20 percent (Powers and others 2012). So marketers desire to use this power in their marketing strategies. Second matter is about transforming the people from being passive consumers of content to active creators of information. 30 percent of online users create their own content for sharing in 2009 with an increase of 9 percent (21 percent in 2017) (Lenhart and others 2010). So the online adults increasing the interaction on social media by becoming more active on creating contents and sharing. In addition to the increasing of content creation, the developments in easier content creation, increased interaction, and higher interoperability, the value production has begun to shift from companies to consumers (Berthon and others 2012). So companies aim to control this environment by being in it. At this stage where companies losing their power of content over consumers, the

¹ IAB Turkey, Digital Ad Spend / Total Ad Spend Turkey vs. Worldwide, 2017, <https://www.slideshare.net/IABTurkiye/digital-ad-spend-total-ad-spend-turkey-vs-worldwide?ref=http://www.iabturkiye.org/sektorel-sunumlar>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

importance of influencing them on their purchasing decisions arises. Companies started to listen more to understand their consumers before they act for gaining influence on discussions and their decisions (Evans 2008, p. 37). So the need of implementing a good social media marketing increases continuously.

2.1.2 Differences Between Traditional And Social Media Marketing

Before social media has emerged, there were mass media channels like TV, radio, newspapers etc., and they still exist of course. However their marketing budget shares do not increase as much as social media marketing¹, because of the emergence of new concepts and bigger opportunities by the implementation of social media marketing. A brief history of marketing is important because of that.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), developed the two-step flow communication theory, which also states the influence power of people. According to this theory messages sent by mass media are first received and understood by opinion leaders, who then resonate the ideas through many individual and group interactions. In this concept opinion leaders have roles in spreading the message. So the communication strategies shouldn't be made only by planning the mass media communication, but also the interaction afterwards. Latane (1996) extended the idea of Katz and Lazarsfeld mentioned above by adding the social influence to the theory of dynamic social impacts by defining group of people as a complex self organizing system. In this system, people interact between each other and have impacts to decisions of others. By the emergence of social media, it helps people to get connected and interact with each other easily. This improvements also caused some other changes in word of mouth channel, because the increasing of interaction between normal people, increased the resonance of ideas between groups of people too. Babic (2016, p. 297) states the following about the traditional and electronic word of mouth:

In marketing, word of mouth (WOM) is the act of consumers providing information about goods, services, brands, or companies to other consumers. Such information communicated through the Internet (through, e.g., reviews, tweets, blog posts, "likes," "pins," images, video testimonials) is called "electronic word of mouth"

¹ IAB Turkey, Digital Ad Spend / Total Ad Spend Turkey vs. Worldwide, 2017, <https://www.slideshare.net/IABTurkiye/digital-ad-spend-total-ad-spend-turkey-vs-worldwide?ref=http://www.iabturkiye.org/sektorel-sunumlar>, [accessed on 29 April 2018].

(eWOM), and it represents one of the most significant developments in contemporary consumer behavior.

With the technological developments and emergence of social media, e-WOM has a great traffic all around the world. Approximately 3.5 billion WOM conversations occur all around the world and about 66 percent of them are related with a brand, product or service, and its growing faster with the help of social media (Evans 2008, p. 41). Since WOM has a huge traffic all around the world and great impact on decisions of people, it is important for marketers to connect with the people who are at the center of the conversation and have the power to affect the decisions of people around them (Keller & Berry, 2003, p. 279).

Most of the traditional media are done by pushing or telling methods, all of which are the one way communication contains dictation without having a feedback. In these methods, only the marketers have the control of the message. After the emergence and rising of social media, consumers started to have some voice by the ability of talking online platforms (Evans 2018, p. 81). By the emergence of consumer voice, marketers started to listen what they say about their products or services, in other words they started to listen feedbacks, which transformed the one way marketing into a two way interaction. As a result, the marketing power is shifting away from the companies to the individuals and communities by the help of social media (Berthon and others 2012). In addition to this power transition, there is an increasing chaos and surplus of advertisements on social media, which compels online users to avoid advertisements (Evans 2008, p. 16). They also have the proper tools to do that effectively, such as skip advertisement option or ad-block softwares, which blocks unwanted advertisements to be shown online. All of these tools make the job of marketers harder to reach their target audience (de Veirman and others 2017). So they try to find alternative ways to convey their messages online. Phenomenon marketing is an effective method to manage that. Because consumers value the opinions of others, decision making process of consumers are effected more strongly by e-WOM rather than traditional advertising methods. A message is more credible and of course persuasive when it is sent by a consumer who has prior using experience of the related product or service rather than the words of a marketer (de Veirman and others 2017). An important element behind the word of mouth is trust. Because of the rapid advertisements done as pop-ups and

spams which annoy people online, the value of trust between individuals have started to gain momentum in social communities about taking purchasing decisions. Advertising is good for hearing about something new, but the message does not seem trustworthy by the audience. That is the reason why people also ask the ideas of their friends or read reviews about the products or services they heard about on advertisements, before they give a decision about purchasing (Evans 2018, p. 20). People engage with brands and experience their products or services in the physical world, and they develop ideas based on those experiences. These ideas result in selecting favorite brands for specific purposes (Evans 2018, p. 81). Then they start to discuss and promote them on social media.

Phenomenons generate the bigger share of WOM in the market and they influence thoughts, attitudes or behaviors of people by leading them to choose a certain path or give a certain decision. Because consumers usually like to decrease the risk of giving the wrong decisions, they tend to see phenomenons as agents for risk reduction through their experiences and feedbacks (Nunes and others 2018). An average consumer usually considers the suggestions of phenomenons in during their decision process (Zhao and others 2018). Moreover, they can also influence the purchasing decisions of consumers by their appealing, strong connections, specialized expertise or their authority on a subject (Lin and others 2018). When compared with traditional marketing channels, social media marketing gives more power to people who have influence on other people. By this development the influencers become more valuable in social platforms.

e-WOM takes place on a wide range of online channels, like blogs, emails, reviews, forums, virtual consumer communities, and social network sites. It also has the impact on product sales, decision making processes of consumers, and attitude towards the products or services (Chu and Kim 2011). There are different types of e-WOM, such as consumer reviews which are usually pulled media by the receivers, and microblogs which can push content into the accounts of receivers. The difference of pull and push mechanisms on social media platforms also change the way of influencing (Marchand and others 2017). For example, microblogs can be used effectively when a product or service is launched or a new information is appeared by pushing messages to people and inform them about the news. On the other hand by the tutorial videos content creators

can pull the consumers, who are interested in a specific area, to their channels or sites and under their influence.

2.1.3 Types Of Users And Influencing In Social Media

The dynamics of interacting individuals in a group has been studied in a wide range of majors like sociology, physics, politics, economics and philosophy. In these studies it states that, individuals try to find the truth or reach consensus by interacting with each other about their opinions and beliefs. In this interactive environment, there are some specific individuals, who have more power on influencing the others about their opinions. They are called as opinion leaders (Chen and others 2016), in other words phenomenon. They likely to influence others in their immediate environment. In that environment there can be their neighbours, friends, coworkers, and even broadly known people like celebrities, experts, and other influential people (Lin and others 2018).

There are also more digital phenomenon who use online platforms like blogs, forums, social media, and social networks more actively and in a collaborative manner (Nunes and others 2018). In social media they are also called as social media influencers (SMI) (Miguel Del Fresno and others 2016), and they influence their audiences by their blogs, tweets and other social media activities (Freberg and others 2011).

In addition to the phenomenon, there is one more user type in social media, which is called as the followers. Merwe & Heerden (2009) suggest that, consumers desire to decide on and pursue a course of action that will satisfy the minimum requirements necessary to achieve a particular goal. But their choices are not optimal, because the rationality of consumers are restricted by the lack of data, time and expertise. To reduce these restrictions, they often seek the suggestions of phenomenon, when they encounter with a complex choice. Simply, they follow the phenomenon.

There are two main personality types for these people: introverted and extraverted. These personality types also shape the behaviors of followers on social media. People who have an extravert personality, are more social in their offline life too, and they are more open to suggestions and dependant on their friends about decision making. On the other hand, introverted personality people are more occupied with their own ideas and

depend less on their friends (Gosling and others 2011). So their following behaviours differ from each other.

There is also the psychology of following which is important for understanding the reasons behind the intention of why people actually follow. Micha Popper explains the psychology of following in chapter 6 of "Followership: What is it and Why do People Follow?" edited by Carsten and Lapierre (2017). Popper states that followers have two points of views about phenomena. First one is about following the hard to reach phenomena like political leaders, or celebrities, with whom people usually can't interact easily. Followers are influenced by the attraction of these phenomena with little knowledge about them. They are attracted by their life stories as publicly presented, their messages or their manner. On the other hand, the second group is about following more close phenomena with whom they can interact frequently and easily, like leaders in everyday life. People who tend to follow these kind of phenomena, give more value on evidence and outcomes of their actions. So the phenomena of this type are evaluated by their behaviours and the results of their decisions (Carsten and Lapierre 2014, pp. 116-117).

Popper also states that there are three views about the attractions of followers: psychoanalytic, cognitive-psychological, and social-psychological. The psychoanalytic explanation is about followers' desires and tendencies to have an authority figure, like a baby being desperate to have his guardian. These kind of people are more likely to follow phenomena because they see them as protective figures. Especially in times of crises, these kind of phenomena become more desirable by these followers because of the need of reducing anxiety and increasing safety. The cognitive-psychological explanation is in question where the phenomenon is being perceived as a suitable and logical explanation for a complex situation. Individuals absorb and process phenomena, their image, speech and behaviors as pieces of information in the whole of data. And they recall people more than circumstances or events, when they are trying to explain what is happening in a certain situation. They are likely to recall complex situations by phenomena because of their availability and representativeness of that situation and they come to mind rather easily as an actor in that situation. So people are more likely to follow those phenomena to reduce uncertainty of events. The Social-Psychological Explanation is about the willingness of people to follow phenomena

who overlap with their identities. People have layers of identities in society, and the upper layers are easier to be activated. When a phenomenon is perceived as a representative of their identities, people are more likely to follow him because of seeing it as a reflection of their own identities (Carsten and Lapierre 2014, pp. 110-115).

In addition to psychological dimension of following, there is another dimension related with the emotions and feelings of the followers. Rath and Conchie from Gallup have conducted a research to understand why people follow the phenomena. 10 thousands of followers participated into this research. They focused on sorting out the most common descriptions of phenomena who have the most positive influence on their daily lives. They let the followers answer with their own words, not from multiple choices questions to prevent a biased outcome. The result put four words forward: Trust, compassion, stability and hope (Rath and Conchie 2008, pp. 80-82).

Each word has its own meaning more deeper than it sounds. Trust was cited most with some other words: respect, integrity and honesty, all of which are the results of strong relationships built on trust. When the trust level is low, then struggle is more likely to happen in discussions which also affects influencing badly. Compassion was cited most with caring, friendship, happiness and love. Followers of this type expect more compassion from phenomena compared to more intimate words like caring they expect from their everyday leaders. Stability was cited most with security, strength, support and peace. Followers looking for stability like to count on their leaders when it is needed, and believe that their leaders' core values are unchanging. With this, they can be sure about what is expected and an unnecessary changes won't happen. Hope was cited most with direction, faith and guidance. Hope gives people something to believe in and look into the future. It also helps people to see a way through hard times and complex situations. Knowing that everything will be alright is a powerful motivation and it supports the influence of a phenomenon who lets people to feel full of hope (Rath and Conchie 2008, pp. 83-89).

2.1.4 Influencing In Social Media Marketing

The influence works between different kind of people. There are phenomena and followers in this ecosystem. But how the influence works? First, let's see the definition of influence defined by Brown (2008, p. 49) as:

Influence can be broadly defined as the power to affect a person, thing or course of events. Influence manifests itself in many ways, from direct purchase advice to subtle shifts in perception of a vendor's credibility. Influence can be the action of creating an environment conducive to affecting another person's opinion on a particular issue.

According to this definition influence can have the power of altering the environment of a person which results some changes in his ideas, beliefs or decisions.

Phenomenons have the ability to influence the attitudes, decisions and behaviors of their followers through social media. In addition to their direct influence over their audience, their followers can transmit their messages through their own communities and help phenomenons to increase their area of reach with the help of transmitting messages faster and easier (de Veirman and others 2017).

According to Evans (2018, pp. 82-83), the purchase funnel that consumers flow consists of three stages: awareness, consideration and purchase. The consideration phase in this funnel is important because of its role of connecting awareness and action of purchase. Consumers during this phase evaluate the factors such as value, performance, reputation etc. before making their decisions of purchase. In the time of traditional media, marketers used to focus on awareness phase by delivering their messages and leave consumers to decide whether to buy the product or not. Because of marketers don't involve in the consideration phase, the interruptive factors during consideration may result failures in purchasing phase. On the other hand, unlike traditional media, social media continues to be in action during the consideration phase of consumers after the awareness phase. Its like a validation platform for supporting the purchase decisions unlike traditional media. The main reason behind this is the social feedback cycle provided by social media as a purchase validation tool. In this validation tool, awareness has very little effect, because they are already aware of the product. The feedback cycle works between purchase and consideration phases repeatedly. Traditional media is powerless because of its main involvement in awareness phase and it is mostly out of the picture on this feedback cycle. This is a huge advantage of social media when compared to traditional media. Social media is a tool for content creator to reach out high number of people and influence them over their purchasing decisions. It enables them to spread their messages all around the world (Brown 2008, p. 148).

A contributor and creative consumer is the one of the most valuable elements in social media era. They add much more valuable contents in their communities and networks than the firms themselves. They create content with texts, posts, pictures, or videos and share them on social media platforms such as Youtube, Facebook or Instagram. And of course they can be inspired to create more content. Social media content creation consisted of text in blogs at first. They were written by individuals who have something to say and desire to share. After blogs, microblog platforms were emerged, such as Twitter. Microblogs let people to send and read short messages with restricted number of characters. Picture sharing platforms, like Instagram, and video sharing platforms, like Youtube, have emerged after these text based social media platforms. All of these platforms aroused the need of social networks which people can share all types of contents, form connections with other individuals by either adding them as friends or simply following. With social networks, the journey of increasing collectiveness has started and caused the power of relationship and collective wisdom of many to be emerged (Berthon and others 2012).

Phenomenons can influence other people in so many ways by using emotional, regulatory or strategic levels, using pressure etc. Brown (2008, p. 50). Which way they choose, the main idea is simple, they are capable of persuading people on their decisions by their well generated information messages. According to Nunes (Nunes and others, 2018), this persuasive messages have four aspects: argument quality, source credibility, source attractiveness and source perception. These aspects feed information acceptance and attitude, which ends up at purchase intention. Nunes (2018, p. 66) interprets the results like this: "The results show that consumers, after receiving a message and considering it persuasive, tend to accept this information as a reliable and useful source for purchase decisions."

In addition to the persuasive messages, Brown (2008) has defined four more dimensions to measure the influence: market reach, frequency of impact, quality of impact and closeness to decision. Market reach is about how much one can be heard in the market. If there are a few people to hear his voice than he doesn't have much influence in that market. Frequency of impact is also important because that offers more chances for being heard by the audience. Quality of impact focuses on not the quantity of interactions but the quality of them. In other words, its about the uniqueness and

genuineness. Closeness to decision is also very effective for influencing the decisions of people. Especially when they are at the last stages of their decision process (Brown 2008, pp. 68-69). On the other hand the action of persuasion should be done with care, because it may generate a negative outcome. People have the ability to learn how to approach different kind of information through their prior experience. Persuasive messages as marketing activities let them to develop an understanding and awareness before they decide on how to respond to these advertisements. This realization helps them to recognize, analyze, interpret, evaluate and remember the persuasion attempts, before they activate a suitable defensive approach against them (Friestad and Wright 1994). These defense mechanisms, such as suspicion, disbelief or objection, can cause negative impact on the influence power of the source (Nelson and others 2009). Persuasive messages of advertisements done via social media platforms are less recognizable than the traditional media channels. In social media platforms, advertising messages or products can be shared or recommended by strong ties, such as family, close friends or colleagues, which increases the effect of the message in a positive way (van Noort and others 2012). On the other hand people can be more annoyed by an advertisement on social media if it comes without any social tie (Evans and others 2017).

Another important point about influencing is the affect of the post purchase experiences. Social media let people to give feedbacks after they purchase a product or service and help the others with their decisions on the stage of consideration before the purchase (Evans 2008, p. 42). With the elements of influence of these feedbacks, they affect the decisions of people and it goes on as a loop. This feedback loop was used effectively by HTC (a mobile phone manufacturer) in 2010. They introduced a new smartphone to the market and recruited 1,000 T-Mobile or AT&T customers to post comments and write reviews on social media. At the end HTC reached more than 234,000 consumers and increased its brand awareness (Bao and Chang 2014).

Deutsch and Gerard (1955) suggest that there are two types of influence affecting a person's decisions: normative and informational influences. They define the normative social influence as an influence which fits the positive expectations of others, while the informational social influence is defined as an evidence of reality. It generally divides people online into two groups: people who influenced by the group compliance and

people who influenced by knowledge and evidence (Kwahk and Kim 2017). Informational social influence affects consumers decisions especially in social media by creating feedbacks through the experience of previous users and helps the purchase funnel with the feedback loop to operate.

There is also the psychology dimension of influencing. Cialdini (2007) explains the psychology of influencing by defining its principals in seven categories: reciprocation, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Reciprocation is based on the tendency of people to return favors. If a person gets help or a gift from another, then he feels obligated to return that favor in the future. This also applies on ideas. If a person feels obligated to return a favor to someone, they will also have the tendency to accept opinions coming from that person. Commitment and consistency are go along together. People tend to commit and also be consistent what they have declared in the past. So if a person have agreed an initial idea of someone, they are more likely to continue to support it, because of their tendency to be consistent. Social proof is about feeling safe by following the others choices. This concept is usually valid when a person is uncertain about what to do, so they choose the safe way, which everybody walks. Liking is the principal in question when someone influenced from a person they like. Thats why people are more likely to buy from people they know or like. Authority is based on obedience as an influence. People who has authority are more likely to be followed by the others. And scarcity increases the influence, because the things with limited supply generates more demand.

2.2 PHENOMENON MARKETING

Marketers use different methods to reach their target audience on social media by brand pages, paid advertisements, sponsored posts and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Evans and others 2017). Hennig-Thurau and others (2004, p. 39) define the term eWOM as follows: “Any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet”. By the emergence of social media and increased number of interactions between people, it is possible for marketers to use some individuals in these social networks, who have the desire to share brand related messages with others, for their maketing activities and let them to promote their

products (Phua and Ahn 2016). In general eWOM is a free charge and organic way of communication done by individuals who willingly promote brands to other individuals due to their positive experiences with those brands. Marketers often try to enhance the resonance of their messages through the community by making professional deals with phenomenons on social media, such as celebrities, brand community members, bloggers (Evans and others 2017), micro-celebrities, micro-influencers, experts and high-reputation informants, market mavens, early adopters, and product enthusiasts (Lin and others 2018).

A study done by Ipsos claims that 69 percent of consumers don't believe there is honesty in advertising¹. A study done by Womenkind in 2017 attests that 80 percent of women also do not trust in advertising². There is an issue about the trust level of advertisements regarding to these studies. The importance of phenomenon marketing arises in these circumstances. Using a phenomenon to deliver a brand's message may overcome the trust obstacle. Phenomenons gather their followers by inspiring others and their followers envy their lifestyles. This mechanism empowers their influence over people and make the message of a brand more charming (Koslow 2017). In addition to this, the 2016 Nielsen Catalina Solutions study suggests that using influencers in marketing has 11 times higher return of investment compared to other types of digital advertising³. The combination of these three studies suggest that people don't trust on traditional advertisements done by the company itself, but they are influenced by phenomenons instead. So finding the most suitable phenomenons for marketing activities is important because of greater success. Phenomenons are content creators on social media who have a sizeable base of followers. They share their opinions, experiences and everyday lives through blogs, vlogs or other social media platforms with their followers. Marketers target to excite and tempt phenomenons to promote their products by involving them into their marketing activities (de Veirman and others 2017).

¹ Ipsos, When Trust Falls Down, 2017, https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/2017-06/Ipsos_Connect_When_Trust_Falls_Down.pdf, [accessed on 2 May 2018].

² Womenkind, The Squeeze On Brand Trust, 2017, https://www.slideshare.net/shespeaks/the-squeeze-on-brand-trust-72869767?from_action=save, [accessed on 2 May 2018].

³ Nielsen Catalina Solutions, 2016, Sales Effect Study: Influencer Marketing, <https://www.slideshare.net/paraff/sales-effect-study-influencer-marketing-nielsen-catalina-solutions-ncs>, [accessed on 3 May 2018].

There are three main features wanted to be known when evaluating a phenomenon: demographics, reach and engagement. Demographics are related about who their followers are. Different kind of phenomenons have different kind of people, and a marketer should consider the potential consumers of his product and the follower base of a phenomenon before launching a marketing activity. It won't be logical to offer a product desired by young people by using a phenomenon who is followed by elders. Reach is about the scope of their influence and the number of followers they have. A phenomenon has more influence if he reaches more people. Reach can be roughly measured by looking at the number of followers. Checking the engagement is also very important, because the number of followers doesn't tell everything only by itself. If there are lots of people following a phenomenon, but their engagement is low, then the power of his influence will not be high as much as marketers expected. A phenomenon who has less followers but higher engagement with them may be a better choice rather than a phenomenon with high number of followers with low engagement (Diesel 2018).

Marketers realized the impact and potential of viral growth of working with phenomenons to promote their products. They desire to use phenomenons because of their wide social network of people, which trust the opinions of the phenomenons they follow. Because of this companies focus on the phenomenons to praise their products and influence the opinions of their followers about the products. This mechanism helps marketers to create more trustworthy, credible and authenticated messages than the traditional paid advertisements. Phenomenons are key players to decrease the resistance to these marketing messages and spread them within their social networks by their sharings (de Veirman and others 2017).

Some companies, such as Nike, use celebrities in their marketing activities for increasing sales by attracting attention to their products and show their effectiveness by letting celebrities to use them publicly. Some other companies, like Procter and Gamble, use professionals, such as dentists, to convince people to trust their products by using the expertise of professionals (Piskorski and Brooks 2017).

According to Piskorski and Brooks (2017), there are three types of phenomenons influencing the decisions of people on social media. First type is the traditional phenomenons, such as celebrities who take monetary gains by their sharings about the related product or service, or journalists, who can help marketers to reach to many

potential consumers. The second group contains phenomenons who are parts of a company formed influencer networks, such as Tremor by P&G, or Vogue Influencer Network. In this group companies are the decision makers. They recruit the phenomenons and use them for spreading their messages. The phenomenons in this group usually have the priority to use the products before everyone else rather than having monetary deals. The third set of phenomenons is the independent online broadcasters who create their own content and responsible of sharing them. They operate on platforms they choose, such as Youtube, Instagram, Vine etc. (Piskorski and Brooks 2017). Unlike celebrities, some phenomenons, who can be called as microcelebrities, are more accessible, trustworthy, sincere and easy to relate to because of their sharings about their daily lives with their followers (de Veirman and others 2017). This difference of phenomenons can create a friendly familiarity over their audience and let their followers to be more favorable for their opinions and ideas or the products they talk about (Colliander and Dahlen 2011). So the third set of phenomenons we discussed before who act independently, has more advantage in case of establishing intimate and friendly relations with their audience. Social media gives chances to ordinary people to become visible and popular by sharing their stories or content. This formation is strongly bonded to self branding. People can reach a set of followers online and can bring themselves fame. The pursuit of fame online creates chances to reach a celebrity status by making a strategic fan base, who can called as microcelebrities (Khamis and others 2017).

The process of establishing bonds between companies and phenomenons depends on whether they are independent or a part of a captive influencer network. In case of independent phenomenons, companies may reach out to them directly, or imposed by the followers, or most of the time companies seek help from dedicated influencer search agencies. Most of these agencies use their public relations background or quantitative studies to find the most suitable phenomenons who match the needs of companies. On the other hand, companies acquire phenomenons by taking applications on social media like Facebook. They asked these phenomenons to share their opinions about their products and monitor the spreading of that message through their audience. The data gathered by monitoring the transfer of information, help companies to make better decisions about which phenomenon should share what kind of messages in the future

(Piskorski and Brooks 2017). However disclosures of advertisements done by phenomenons have significant negative effects on brand related attitudes, purchase intention, brand memory and recall, online sharing intention, and credibility perceptions (Evans and others 2017). According to Friestad and Wright (1994), consumers have ability to notice advertisements and when they do, they activate a defense mechanism against them. On social media, disclosure of an advertisement done by a phenomenon may backfire because of this defense mechanism. The monetary gains recieved by phenomenons is like a two sided medallion. On the positive side, it is a very important revenue source of a phenomenon, however on the other side, it creates a dilemma by harming the image of phenomenons who are supposed to be independent and trustworthy. Despite of the bad side of the monetary gains, phenomenons developed two main ways to maintain their influence over their followers. One way is providing detailed comparisons by examining the features of both products rather than just telling them to buy it. Second way is being aspirational, lovable or entertaining, while providing insights about the products which they try to influence their audience to buy (Piskorski and Brooks 2017).

Phenomenons carry out some activities to influence the purchasing decisions of their followers. One of them is providing tutorial videos about different topics like how to apply makeup, play a video game, cook a meal or practice yoga. In these videos, phenomenons disclosure different kind of products by using them and try to influence their audience by giving them the chance to evaluate. An other activity that phenomenons use to influence their followers is making direct comparisons of products. They explain what they like about the product and how they plan to use it by telling which product is better. By doing this activity, a phenomenon shares useful information with his audience and prevents any possible unrest about him being paid for that activity. This helps him to maintain his influence by preserving his credibility. In addition to these two activities, phenomenons also manage their online personality to increase their influence over their followers. They demonstrate that they are relatable to everyone and likable, so people desire to visit their pages again. During this demonstration, they also portray personas that others desire to become, which helps the phenomenons to influence their followers about what to do. They choose some ways to portray a likable persona, such as speaking directly to their audience in their contents to

create more intimate relation, or sharing the positive and negative things in their personal lives to be seen as more relatable, or basically having a charming smile (Piskorski and Brooks 2017).

Video content is very powerful for influencing people, because it helps phenomenons to attract more attention by creating intimate connections with their audience. According to Cisco's Visual Networking Index report, globally total video traffic will be 82 percent of total traffic (both business and consumer) in 2021¹. Marketers also reserve their marketing budget on video contents on social media platforms, like Facebook, Youtube and Instagram and plan to increase it in the next year². Youtube is more important for the phenomenons because of being a video content platform by its nature. According to a study done by Google, 70 percent of subscribers state that Youtube content creators are responsible for changing and shaping culture³. Phenomenons operating on Youtube can have more influence over their audience by the help of video contents. Facebook and Instagram are also one of the most effective platforms for phenomenons to operate. They can share photos and videos with various hashtags to inspire their audience and become a microcelebrities (Dewey 2014). Brands can use these microcelebrities to promote their products with their target audience by sharing sponsored content, posts and product placements, documenting an event or experience, hosting an event and making event appearances⁴.

The power of affecting decisions of people go along with many different types of phenomenons such as consultants, management gurus, partners, distributors, trade association executives, financiers, industry authorities and countless others (Brown 2008, p. 50). All types of phenomenons have their own way to influence others due to different scenarios, their personalities and backgrounds (Chen and others 2016).

¹ Cisco, The Zettabyte Era: Trends and Analysis, 2017, <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/visual-networking-index-vni-hyperconnectivity-wp.pdf>, [accessed on 5 May 2018].

² Animoto, The State of Social Video: Marketing in a Video-First World, 2017, <https://animoto.com/blog/business/state-of-social-video-marketing-infographic/>, [accessed on 3 May 2018].

³ think with Google, Why YouTube Stars Are More Influential Than Traditional Celebrities, 2016, <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/youtube-stars-influence/>, [accessed on 4 May 2018].

⁴ MediaKix, 2016, 'How Do Instagram Influencers Make Money?', <http://mediakix.com/2016/03/instagram-influencers-making-money/#gs.l=XoxIU>, [accessed on 1 May 2018].

Gladwell categorizes these phenomena in three groups: Connectors, mavens and salesmen. Connectors are the people who create networks and let people to meet each other. Knowing different kinds of people across a set of social, cultural, professional and economic environments is the strong feature of this kind of phenomena. There are the mavens on the other hand. They are the people who know a lot, and also they share the knowledge they have. Lastly, there are salesmen, who are the persuaders with charisma. They have powerful negotiation skills and prefer to softly convince people on their decisions rather than forcing them (Gladwell 2010, pp. 30-70). All of these phenomena have some different features helping them to influence the decisions of others.

Phenomena are also qualified with a high number of personal connections. They have the ability to connect people and stimulate them about political events, social issues or consumer choices, which helps them to increase their influence power (Nisbet and Kotcher 2009). However there are some false collectors who have lots of connections but meaningless. Duncan Brown defines most of them as false collectors. Regarding to him the true collectors are like stamp collectors, they choose their connections wisely and with passion (Brown 2008, p. 38).

Phenomena can interact with more people, directly or implicitly but convincing others requires some kind of power to manipulate their opinions. Charismatic phenomena have this power naturally by their reputation or experience, while others have it by rewards or even coercion. A phenomenon may also be democratic or autocratic in according to their willingness to listen others' opinions (Kurmyshev and Juárez 2013).

There is a concept called social trust which is defined as a belief in someone's actions that they will give good results in the future and making their decisions regarding to this belief. There is a meaningful relation between trust and tendency to accept decisions, when there is a strong identity-relevant bond between an individual and a group. Because of that a person's social identity bonds can help to build trust between their social group (Liu and others 2015). And with this trust established between them, the decisions of those members can be influenced regarding to the concept of social trust. So confidence level or trust degree of a phenomenon is also important for his

influencing level. When the confidence level or trust degree of a phenomenon is high then the power of his influence is also bigger (Hegselmann and Krause 2002).

Phenomenons also have the willingness of exploring new things on internet out of curiosity and their computer competence is high. Because of these, they have more experience and more information about a product or service in digital world (Lyons and Henderson 2005). So people seek their knowledge to make decisions.

Brown (2008) makes a detailed classification types for phenomenons: idea planters, predictors, trendsetters, proclaimers, aggregators or communicators, scopers, recommenders, persuaders, negotiators, validators, and super-influencers. Idea planters are the thinkers and innovators of their industries. They are the people who asks questions and have the curiosity. They are the starting point of the idea. Predictors are the people who foresee what will happen next and they focus on the question "What's next?". After the predictors here comes the trendsetters. They are the first in the market. They are like a reference point and give direction to the rest. They are important because they help to the market to be successful. Their influence come from their early adoption. Proclaimers are the people who dictates how it will be done by using their authorities like government or regulation offices. Aggregators or communicators are one of the most important roles regarding to Brown because they gather the information and spread it around. As we discussed so far, one of the most important characteristic of social media is the sharing intention and the easily accessible information and this type of phenomenons play pivotal roles about it. Scopers are the people asking the question "What now?". They define the current situation with its limitations, parameters and dimensions, and give solutions to problems. Recommenders are like the jury about a topic, idea or a product. They suggest what should be done by giving feedback and reviews. This type of phenomenons are more passive on influencing but they have power to increase their voice and arouse the decision makers. Persuaders are the people who tell others what to do. They are the opposite of being passive. They are experts on making or breaking the decisions of others. Negotiators are the people who has the power of negotiation. They negotiate on implementing the decision. Validators are the safety nets for the decision makers. They give a health check to any decision and help the decision maker to be sure about all options are covered. They have the power to halt,

or send back the decision. Super-influencers are key individuals who has the highest respect and attention. They are rare but their influences are magnificent.



3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Limitations

One of the limitations is the participants similarity in high education level and occupation. Because of this similarity we may not use the results of this study outside of its demographic scope. In addition to this, this study has lack of information about phenomenon marketing and its influence on purchasing decisions of people who are younger than 20. The people of this age group may not have their own money to buy products, but they may have some influence on their guardians to take those decisions. To understand how their decisions are affected by the phenomenon marketing may be the goal in a different study. So this study should be evaluated and implemented if the desired audience is over 20 years old and have their own money to decide on what to purchase.

The last limitation of this study is the possibility of people who do not follow any phenomenon in social media, may quit from the questionnaire before they answer the all questions and submit. So the results may be biased because the remaining participants are more likely to follow a phenomenon. We should keep that in mind when analyzing the results.

3.1.2 Data Gathering

For gathering data for testing the hypotheses we mentioned above, a quantitative questionnaire was prepared. In this survey questionnaire there were five sections consist of 18 questions including demographic information (gender, age, marital status, occupation, education level and household income), information about social media usage (hours of daily social media usage and frequency of social media platform usage), information about following phenomena (whether they follow any phenomenon, platform usage for following, types of phenomena they follow and shared content types of phenomena they follow), information about comparison between phenomenon marketing and other marketing channels including traditional and online marketing (level of influencing regarding to channels and positive features of

phenomenon marketing compared to other channels), information about the impacts of phenomena on purchasing decisions and reactions of people (whether they have bought any product or service by being influenced by a phenomenon, whether they have changed their idea about something by being influenced by a phenomenon and their desire to continue to follow after the realization of phenomenon marketing). This questionnaire was prepared in google forms and sent via social media platforms like whatsapp, facebook, linkedin etc., and response data was exported also by using google forms.

3.1.3 Questionnaire Reliability Test And Data Validation

Before starting to analyze and test hypotheses, we did a reliability test by using Cronbach's alpha method whether the questions with Likert Scale are understood by the participants, and are reliable. For this test, we used IBM's SPSS v24 tool. SPSS is a statistical analyzing tool, which let users to make reliability tests, ANOVA tests, correlation analysis, regression analysis and cluster analysis.

The questionnaire have 3 groups consisted of 24 questions with Likert Scale (Questions 7, 12 and 13). You can find the questions in the questionnaire in the APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire. Each of these groups are tested for reliability with their sub questions by using Cronbach's alpha method. The Cronbach's Alpha results for each question is shown in Table 3.1 below. Regarding to the results the alpha value of question 13 is 0,94, which is very reliable; alpha value of question 12 is 0,78, which is reliable; and alpha value of question 7 is 0,67, which is acceptable.

Table 3.1: Reliability statistics by Cronbach's alpha method for questions 7, 12 and 13

Reliability Statistics		
Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Question 7: Please specify your social media usage regarding to the platforms below.	0,673	6
Question 12: How much do the marketing channels listed below influence you about buying a product/service?	0,783	8
Question 13: How much do you agree on that the phenomenons you follow are positively distinctive compared to the traditional marketing channels (TV, Radio, Newspaper, Cinema etc.)?	0,943	11

Although reliability test of question 7 is acceptable, we make further inspection whether removing any question increases the alpha value or not. As it states that by removing the scale of social media usage of Facebook, the alpha value of question 7 will rise to 0,705, which is 0,03 points from our original value. So removing Facebook scale do not make a remarkable change in alpha value of question 7, we accept this question reliable without making any removing, and its alpha value stays 0,67, which is acceptable. The item total statistics for Cronbach Alpha is given as Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Item total statistics of question 7

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_FACEBOOK	9,46	29,879	0,176	0,705
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_INSTAGRAM	8,44	23,464	0,487	0,599
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_TWITTER	10,10	26,979	0,344	0,652
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_LINKEDIN	9,85	25,512	0,474	0,607
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_YOUTUBE	8,86	24,367	0,542	0,582
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_BLOGFORUM	10,52	27,777	0,426	0,628

To validate the data, we used some metrics in SPSS tool. All the metrics are given in the Table 3.3 below. All variables are passed the tests except three, which are given in the Table 3.4. Both of these three variables have been failed in the same test, because only the few of participants checked the boxes related to these variables. The result of the questionnaire states that our participants don't likely to follow phenomenons on Blog/Forum, they don't likely to follow Gamers, and content related to the gaming. Because of that these three variables have no distinct information because of very little distribution, we decided to remove these from our dataset.

Table 3.3: Metrics for data validation test in SPSS

Data Validation Metric	Cutoff	Failed Variables
Maximum percentage of missing values	5%	0
Maximum percentage of cases in a single category	95%	3
Maximum percentage of categories with count of 1	90%	0
Minimum coefficient of variation	0,001	0
Minimum standart deviation	0	0

Table 3.4: Failed variables in data validation test

Metric	Cutoff	Failed Variables
Categorical	Cases Constant > 95	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG_BLOGFORUM
		FOLLOWING_GAMER_FLAG
		PHENOMENON_CONTENT_GAME_FLAG

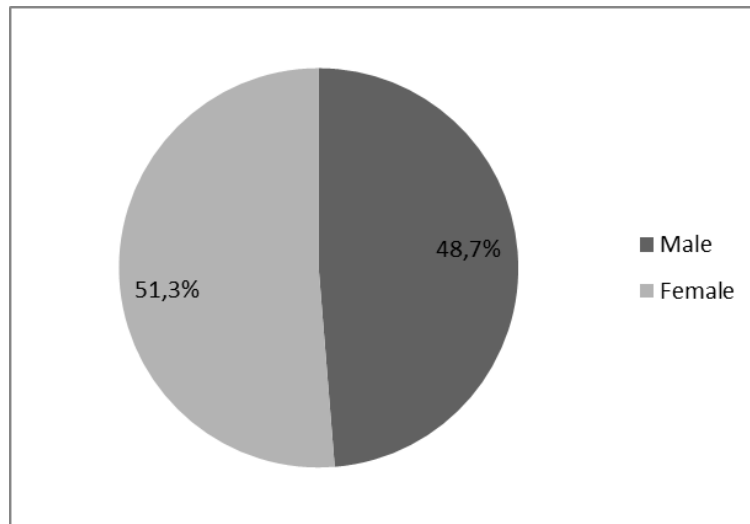
For validating whether there are strongly correlated (over 0,85) variables in the dataset, we conducted a pearson correlation matrix. Regarding to the result none of the correlations is above 0,85. This means that all the variables in our dataset have passed the correlation validation.

3.1.4 Participants

Totally 195 people were participated to this questionnaire. All of the questions are answered by all of them. There is a wide range in their ages, channel usages, marital status. However they aggregated mostly in high education level, high household income and their occupations are mostly private sector employees.

As given in Figure 3.1, the distribution of participants genders are almost equal. 51 percent of participants are female and the rest are male.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of participants regarding to their genders



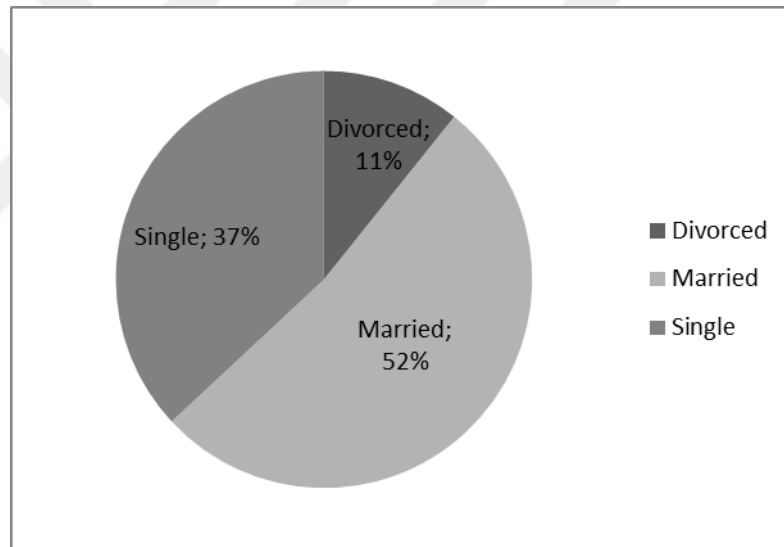
As given in Figure 3.1, there are participants from different ages. Most of the participants are below 40 years old, and they cover 61 percent of all participants, on the other hand 26 percent of them are over 50 years old as shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Distribution of participants regarding to the age groups

AGE_GROUP	Minimum Age	Maximum Age	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
20-29	22	29	54	28%
30-39	30	38	65	33%
40-49	40	48	25	13%
50-59	50	59	38	19%
60+	60	74	13	7%
Grand Total	22	74	195	100%

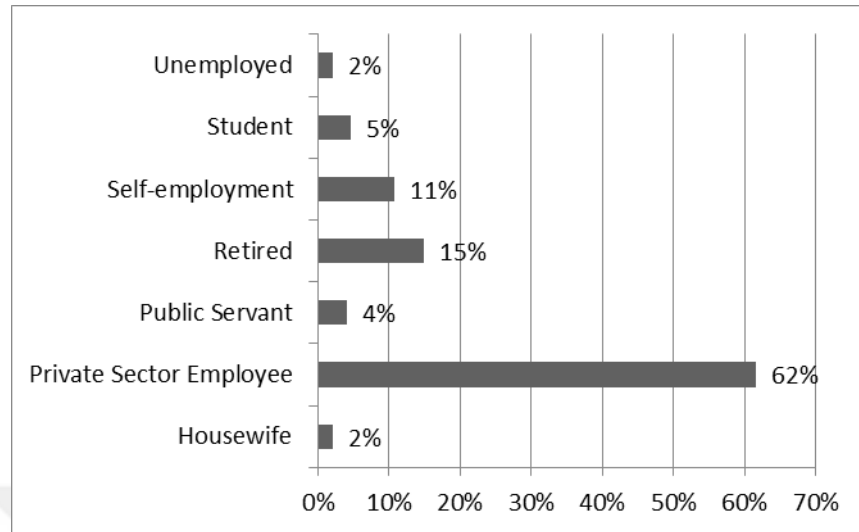
As shown in Figure 3.2, most of the participants are married. They have the biggest share with 52 percent. Then there are singles covering 37 percent. The rest is divorced.

Figure 3.2: Distribution of participants regarding to their marital status



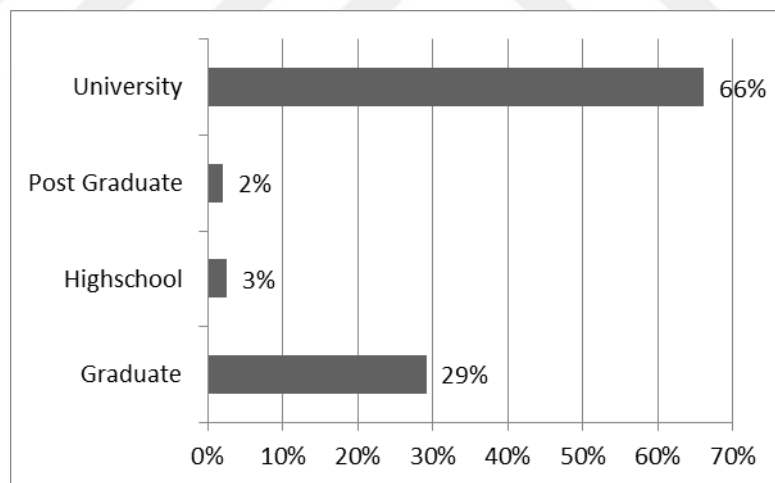
As shown in figure 3.3, the participants are grouped mostly in private sector employee as an occupation. They have a very big share with 62 percent. The rest is consisted of retired, self-employment, student, and public servant.

Figure 3.3: Distribution of participants regarding to their occupations



As shown in Figure 3.4, the participants are well educated. 66 percent of them are graduated from university; 29 percent of them have master's degree.

Figure 3.4: Distribution of participants regarding to their education levels

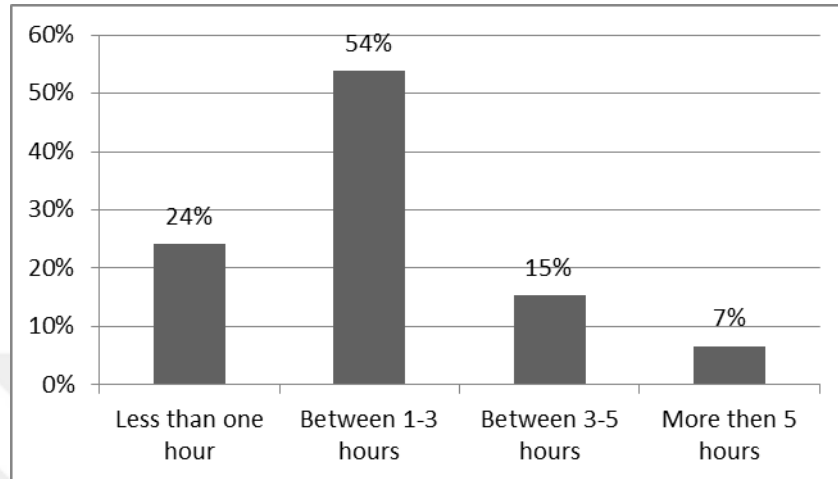


So we can analyze the results of this questionnaire regarding to some demographic informations and can use it in testing our hypotheses in addition to other metrics, and figure out whether there are correlations between demographic dimensions of followers and the impact of phenomenon marketing.

24 percent of the participants use social media less than hour per day; 22 percent of them use social media more than 3 hours per day. Most of them (54 percent) use social

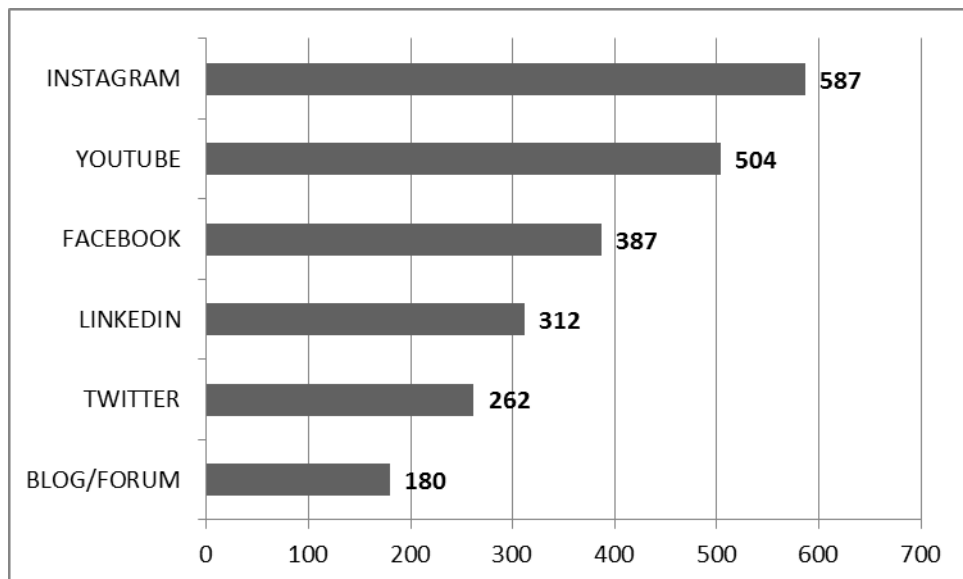
media between 1 and 3 hours per day. Figure 3.5 shows their daily social media usage distribution.

Figure 3.5: Distribution of participants regarding to their daily social media usages



Participants answered their usage regarding to some social media platforms by a scale metric from 1 (lowest usage) to 5 (highest usage). When we look at the total points each platform have taken, we can see that the participants are using mostly Instagram as social media platform. The second and third platforms are Youtube, and Facebook orderly. Figure 3.6 shows the order of total usage points of these social media platforms.

Figure 3.6: Total points of social media platforms by their share of usage



75 percent of the participants follow at least one phenomenon. Because of the high number of participants following a phenomenon, we can use their answers to the questionnaire for testing our hypotheses.

3.1.5 Data Manipulation For Analysis

Some manipulations have been made on the data before analyzing the results and testing the hypotheses. First, a unique id column was created for identifying each row for preventing any chance of error during analysis which requires joining datasets. Because of the original questionnaire is prepared in Turkish, the columns of the dataset were translated to English and also be shortened. Then the categorical yes and no questions were changed to binary columns to make it available for regression analysis (for example gender column became female column, which returns 1, if the participant is a woman, otherwise it returns 0). Moreover other character variables like occupation, marital status and education were splitted into binary columns as dummy variables regarding to their values for using in regression (for example, if marital status is single, then the value of the new column is 1, otherwise 0). Also continues integer age column was grouped by the margin of 10 (between 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and over 60). The scaler columns which includes character values were changed to ordinal numeric values (for example, “1. Strongly disagree” value is altered as 1). Moreover the variables which include multiple choices together were divided in to sub columns with binary values (for example, from the “Facebook, Instagram, Youtube” value three new columns were generated all of which have 1 as value for that specific ID). So these columns can be used in regression analysis and ANOVA tests.

3.2 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

As we discussed in literature review, there are followers and phenomenons on social media. By the increasing trend of social media usage and connectivity, social media has become an important marketing channel. While it is becoming one of the marketing channels, its revenue share in marketing budgets is also increasing more than the traditional marketing channels. Phenomenon marketing is one of the social media marketing ways which is build on the idea of influencing people by using them to deliver the messages about products or services instead of companies themselves. We

have six hypotheses about focusing on the influence of phenomenons on the purchasing decisions of their followers.

3.2.1 Hypothesis 1: Phenomenons Have Impact On Their Followers' Decisions

Because of people are tend to follow the others for some reasons, like emotional, informational, psychological or sociological, we believe that the phenomenons can use their influence to change the decisions of their audiences. We are willing to find out how much is the impact of influences of phenomenons over their followers, and how many people have ever changed their ideas or bought a product or service by being influenced by a phenomenon. We believe that knowing this impact will help companies to decide whether to increase their marketing budget on phenomenon marketing or not, or should they start to use this channel, if they haven't started yet.

3.2.2 Hypothesis 2: Using Phenomenons As A Marketing Channel Have Higher Influence Compared To Traditional Marketing Channels

As we discussed in literature review, phenomenons spread the idea around and increase its scope after mass media interaction is done. Because mass media is one to many marketing channel, people likely to hear the message but can not be able to respond or get into interaction with the company. However phenomenons can reach their audiences and their groups, and can start a circulation of marketing messages by e-WOM around social media. By this circulation, instead of one to many network, a many to many network can be established. As Reed's Law states (Reed 1999), many to many networks have greater value potential than the other networks and can give better outcomes. We believe using phenomenon marketing as a marketing channel generates better results on influencing purchasing decisions of people when compared to traditional media channels such as TV, radio, newspapers or magazines, telemarketing, cinemas etc. By giving proofs about phenomenon marketing can generate better results, we aim to help companies to decide whether to increase their marketing budget on phenomenon marketing or not, or should they start to use this channel, if they haven't started yet.

3.2.3 Hypothesis 3: There Are Some Distinctive Features Of Phenomenons Who Have More Influence On Decisions Of Their Followers

Each phenomenon has his own personality, ethnic and social characteristics, background, charisma, set of connections, knowledge, trust degree, sincerity, appealing, experience or authority. These features of a phenomenon have impacts on level of his influence over his followers. In literature review we specified that followers follow phenomenons because of different reasons in different circumstances. And each of these features has some kind of impact on the level of his influence. With this hypothesis, we aim to clarify which of the features have the most impact on increasing the influence of a phenomenon. Our set of features contains: trust degree or confidence level, sincerity, appealing or charisma, knowledge level, experience of a product or service usage, ability to persuade, reachability, content of sharing, authority level, ability to set trends, flexibility. We believe the result of this hypothesis will help in two subject: first, it will give insights to phenomenons about their features and their impacts on their influence level. So they can choose which feature they should shine or hold down. Secondly, marketers can use it for choosing the suitable phenomenons for their marketing activity.

3.2.4 Hypothesis 4: The Impact Of Phenomenons On Purchasing Decisions Differ Regarding To The Features Of Their Audience

We mentioned in the third hypothesis, that each feature of phenomenons has an impact on their influence level over their audience. In forth hypothesis, we will seek answers to whether the features of audience have impact on tendency of letting their decisions to be influenced by a phenomenon. As we discussed in literature review, followers have different reasons to follow the phenomenons. There are different dimensions on their tendency to follow them. We believe that there are some distinctive set of choices of followers, whose tendencies to be influenced by the phenomenons are lower than the others. By the result of this hypothesis, we hope to learn which kind of followers are the toughest when it comes to influence them on their decisions. So it can help phenomenons to choose their audience wisely if they wish to be used as a marketing channel, and it can help marketers to be evaluate their marketing strategy by analyzing not only the phenomenons but also their audience before making the final decision.

3.2.5 Hypothesis 5: When An Individual Realises That A Phenomenon Making A Marketing Activity, The Tendency Of Following Him Decreases More, If The Individual Has Ever Bought A Product By Being Influenced By A Phenomenon

In literature review, we covered that phenomenons have influence on their followers. They are the people who connects other people and spread the word around. Recent developments in technology increased the number of social media users and created a dynamic network with lots of interactions between people in it. In these network its important to stay connected. The number of connections are important because of that. Especially for the phenomenons, becuase they are the people known with their influences and if the number of their connections and the value of their presence diminish then persuasiveness of their messages, market reach, frequency of impact, quality of impact and closeness to decision may also decrease. All of these features are important to measure influence power of a phenomenon. A phenomenon who lost his influence power is not useful for marketers because his ability to convince people with his messages like his shares, reviews, posts and feedbacks is also decreases. We believe that despite phenomenons have influence power on purchasing decisions of people, they can suffer a loss in this power if their audience figure out they are doing it for profit. By the result of this hypothesis, we aim to highlight the consequences of marketing done frankly by the phenomenons. So they think better and make calculations before they become a part of the marketing enviroment.

3.2.6 Hypothesis 6: The Level Of Influence Of A Phenomenon Over His Followers Changes Regarding To Social Media Platforms Like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube, Twitter, Blogs Or Forums

All of these platforms have different features and so their users. Regarding to what they offer as services and their capabilities as a social platform, the purpose and features of their users are also differs from each other. We believe that these differences of using purposes between those platforms also cause differences between their phenomenons. The features of phenomenons may be different from platform to platform and their area of expertise may also different from each other. As well as these differences between phenomenons, there may be differences of followers too. Knowing which platform suits most to which type of phenomenon is crucial to develop a profitable phenomenon marketing strategy. We hope to clasify the influence levels of these platforms regarding

to the features of phenomenons. So marketers can give their decisions about which platform to choose for their phenomenon marketing, and phenomenons can find the most suitable platform for themselves.



4. RESULTS

4.1 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 1

The first hypothesis is that phenomenons have impact on decisions of their followers. To test this hypothesis we selected only the people who are following phenomenons (who gave “Yes” as an answer to question 8), because including people who are not following any phenomenon would be unrelated to the model we plan to develop. In our model dependant variable is the question 14 as binary, where 1 represents “Yes” and 0 represents “No”. And we choose one independent variable to see the relation in a linear regression, which is the answer of question 12 about the influences of phenomenon. This question contains answers of eight different channels and their influences over consumers by likert scale. We focus on the answers given according to phenomenon marketing channel. This variable value changes between 1 and 5 and indicates that influence increases when the number increases. Our results show that there is a significant relation between those two variables with p-value less than 0.0001 and the coefficient of our independent variable is 0.179 as shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Coefficients table of regression for hypothesis 1

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.006	0.087		0.074	0.941
INFLUENCED_BY_MARKETING_CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	0.179	0.031	0.431	5.736	0.000

Dependent Variable: INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG
Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

4.2 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 2

The second hypothesis is that using phenomenons as a marketing channel have higher influence compared to traditional marketing channels. For testing the hypothesis, we used paired samples t-test by using the answers of question 12. We paired phenomenon marketing with other remaining channels one by one. The results of paired t-test is given in table 4.2 and mean differences between pair elements are given in tables 4.3.

Table 4.2: Paired sample t-test results for hypothesis 2

Pair Number	Paired channels	Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & TV	0.200	1.459	0.105	-0.006	0.406	1.914	194	0.057
Pair 2	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & DEBATE	0.513	1.397	0.100	0.315	0.710	5.125	194	0.000
Pair 3	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & TELEPHONE	1.026	1.282	0.092	0.845	1.207	11.171	194	0.000
Pair 4	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & RADIO	0.662	1.263	0.090	0.483	0.840	7.312	194	0.000
Pair 5	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & NEWSPAPER	0.108	1.253	0.090	-0.069	0.285	1.200	194	0.232
Pair 6	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & CINEMA	0.292	1.277	0.091	0.112	0.473	3.197	194	0.002
Pair 7	CHANNEL PHENOMENON & WEBSITE	-0.692	1.307	0.094	-0.877	-0.508	-7.395	194	0.000

Table 4.3: Mean differences of paired t-test for hypothesis 2

Pair Number	Paired Channels	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_TV	1.98	195	1.002	0.072
Pair 2	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_DEBATE	1.67	195	0.961	0.069
Pair 3	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_TELEPHONE	1.16	195	0.487	0.035
Pair 4	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_RADIO	1.52	195	0.795	0.057
Pair 5	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_NEWSPAPER	2.08	195	0.919	0.066
Pair 6	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_CINEMA	1.89	195	1.027	0.074
Pair 7	CHANNEL_PHENOMENON	2.18	195	1.225	0.088
	CHANNEL_WEBSITE	2.88	195	1.212	0.087

4.3 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 3

The third hypothesis is that there are some distinctive features of phenomenons who have more influence on decisions of their followers. We selected participants who follow at least one phenomenon for analyzing their results. For testing this hypothesis, we used questions 9 (social platforms for following phenomenons), question 10 (clasification of phenomenon like celebrity, writer, traveller etc.), question 11 (topics of contents of phenomenons being followed) and question 13 (positive features of phenomenon compared to other channels). We did factor analysis by using principal components with varimax rotation for the questions 10, 11 and 13 to reducing the dimensions and extract information from the upper surface. For classification of phenomenons we extracted 4 components: daily and popular life (celebrities, artists and travellers), politics and news (poitician and writers), knowladge base (executives, experts and thinker) and detailed sharing (youtubers and bloggers). For the topic of contents we extracted 4 components: daily activities and entertainment (entertainment, foot and beverage, and travelling), politics and business, knowladge and art (academic, general culture and art) and sports and health. For the topic of positive features in question 13, we extracted 2 components: character and bacground (charisma, trust, sincerity, knowladge, etc.) and connection and communication (authority, trendsetting, flexibility, persuasive and reachability).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity for all factor analyses are given in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity for all factor analyses in hypothesis 3

KMO and Bartlett's Test ^a		Q10	Q11	Q13
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.554	0.584	0.892
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	136.121	169.169	1065.477
	df	45	45	55
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000

The scree plots of all the factor analyses, which shows the eigenvalue changes by the component extraction, are given as figure 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 in the order of question numbers.

Figure 4.1: Scree plot of question 10 for hypothesis 3

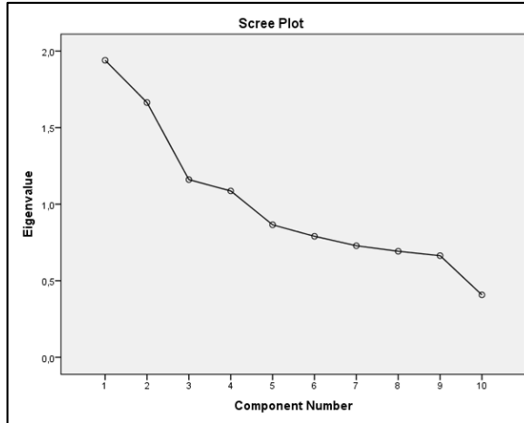


Figure 4.2: Scree plot of question 11 for hypothesis 3

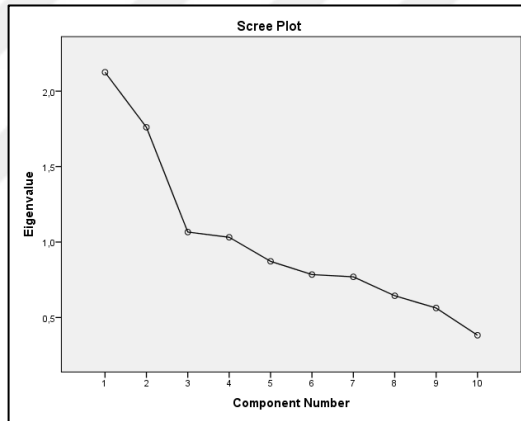
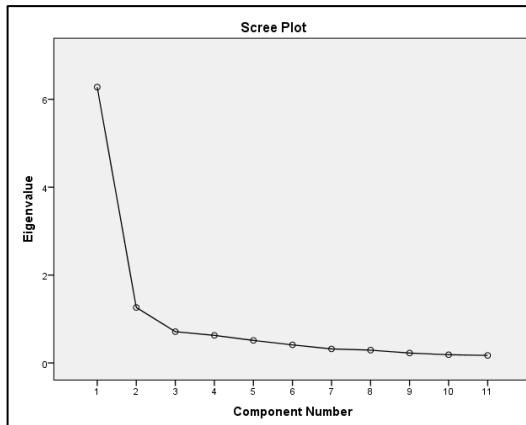


Figure 4.3: Scree plot of question 13 for hypothesis 3



The results of the rotated component matrices for all factor analyses is given in tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 in the order of question numbers.

Table 4.5: Rotated component matrix of question 10 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Components			
	FAC1_1	FAC2_1	FAC3_1	FAC4_1
FOLLOWING_CELBRITY_FLAG	0.708			
FOLLOWING_ARTIST_FLAG	0.756			
FOLLOWING_TRAVELLER_FLAG	0.586			
FOLLOWING_EXPERT_FLAG			0.636	
FOLLOWING_POLITICIAN_FLAG		0.656		
FOLLOWING_EXECUTIVE_FLAG			0.724	
FOLLOWING_WRITER_FLAG		0.868		
FOLLOWING_THINKERS_FLAG			0.651	
FOLLOWING_YOUTUBER_FLAG				0.525
FOLLOWING_BLOGGER_FLAG				0.809

Table 4.6: Rotated component matrix of question 11 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Components			
	FAC1_2	FAC2_2	FAC3_2	FAC4_2
CONTENT_SPORT_FLAG				0.889
CONTENT_HEALTH_FLAG	0.403			0.462
CONTENT_POLITICS_FLAG		0.728		
CONTENT_ENTERTAINMENT_FLAG	0.485			
CONTENT_FOODDRINK_FLAG	0.843			
CONTENT_HOLIDAY_FLAG	0.791			
CONTENT_BUSINESS_FLAG		0.781		
CONTENT_ACADEMIC_FLAG		0.318	0.627	
CONTENT_GENERALCULTURE_FLAG			0.760	
CONTENT_ART_FLAG			0.668	

Table 4.7: Rotated component matrix of question 13 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Components	
	FAC1_3	FAC2_3
FEATURE_TRUST	0.872	
FEATURE_SINCERITY	0.840	
FEATURE_CHARISMA	0.646	0.516
FEATURE_KNOWLEDGE	0.780	0.330
FEATURE_EXPERIENCE	0.740	0.304
FEATURE_PERSUASIVE	0.464	0.648
FEATURE_REACH	0.505	0.579
FEATURE_CONTENT	0.589	0.538
FEATURE_AUTHORITY		0.806
FEATURE_TRENDSETTING		0.843
FEATURE_FLEXIBILTY		0.785

After the extraction of components, we developed linear regression models for each question to see the effects of components on the question 14 (binary variable giving the information of whether participant have ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon). The results of the regressions are given in tables 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 in the order of question numbers.

Table 4.8: Linear regression coefficient table of question 10 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.459	0.039		11.623	0.000
REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1	0.086	0.040	0.171	2.163	0.032
REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1	-0.035	0.040	-0.070	-0.881	0.380
REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1	0.031	0.040	0.062	0.782	0.436
REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1	0.138	0.040	0.277	3.496	0.001

Dependent Variable: INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG
 Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

Table 4.9: Linear regression coefficient table of question 11 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.459	0.040		11.610	0.000
REGR factor score 1 for analysis 2	0.143	0.040	0.287	3.617	0.000
REGR factor score 2 for analysis 2	-0.063	0.040	-0.125	-1.580	0.116
REGR factor score 3 for analysis 2	0.023	0.040	0.046	0.575	0.566
REGR factor score 4 for analysis 2	0.056	0.040	0.113	1.421	0.158

Dependent Variable: INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG
 Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

Table 4.10: Linear regression coefficient table of question 13 for hypothesis 3

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.459	0.040		11.615	0.000
REGR factor score 1 for analysis 3	0.115	0.040	0.230	2.898	0.004
REGR factor score 2 for analysis 3	0.110	0.040	0.220	2.769	0.006

Dependent Variable: INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG
 Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

Moreover for deeper understanding for the question 13, we also look at the correlations of its features. Table 4.11 shows the results.

After the regression of component elements, we looked the correlations of each elements of the related questions and question 9 (in which platforms participants follow phenomena). The table of correlation of all elements of the questions we mentioned is given in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Correlation table of all elements for hypothesis 3

INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG			
Question Number	Elements	Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
9	PLATFORM_FACEBOOK	0.164	0.024
	PLATFORM_INSTAGRAM	0.205	0.006
	PLATFORM_LINKEDIN	0.112	0.090
	PLATFORM_TWITTER	-0.054	0.260
	PLATFORM_YOUTUBE	0.131	0.058
10	FOLLOWING_ARTIST	0.074	0.188
	FOLLOWING_BLOGGER	0.215	0.005
	FOLLOWING_CEBLEBRITY	0.033	0.347
	FOLLOWING_EXECUTIVE	-0.143	0.042
	FOLLOWING_EXPERT	0.063	0.224
	FOLLOWING_POLITICIAN	-0.072	0.193
	FOLLOWING_THINKERS	0.020	0.406
	FOLLOWING_TRAVELLER	0.226	0.003
	FOLLOWING_WRITER	-0.062	0.228
FOLLOWING_YOUTUBER	0.178	0.016	
11	CONTENT_ACADEMIC	-0.042	0.308
	CONTENT_ART	0.141	0.045
	CONTENT_BUSINESS	-0.073	0.192
	CONTENT_ENTERTAINMENT	0.121	0.073
	CONTENT_FOODDRINK	0.244	0.001
	CONTENT_GENERALCULTURE	0.018	0.413
	CONTENT_HEALTH	0.206	0.006
	CONTENT_HOLIDAY	0.254	0.001
	CONTENT_POLITICS	-0.155	0.031
CONTENT_SPORT	0.110	0.093	
13	FEATURE_AUTHORITY	0.207	0.006
	FEATURE_CHARISMA	0.318	0.000
	FEATURE_CONTENT	0.194	0.010
	FEATURE_EXPERIENCE	0.257	0.001
	FEATURE_FLEXIBILTY	0.221	0.004
	FEATURE_KNOWLADGE	0.226	0.003
	FEATURE_PERSUASIVE	0.256	0.001
	FEATURE_REACH	0.241	0.002
	FEATURE_SINCERITY	0.223	0.003
	FEATURE_TRENDSETTING	0.252	0.001
FEATURE_TRUST	0.244	0.001	

4.4 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 4

The fourth hypothesis is that the impact of phenomenons on purchasing decisions differ regarding to the features of their audience. For testing this hypothesis, we used gender, age, marital status, occupation, education level, daily social media usage and social media usage by platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc) to see whether these features of participants have any significance affect on the results of question 14 (binary variable giving the information of whether participant have ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon). The correlation table of all elements and dependant variable is given in table 4.12.

Table 4.12: The correlation table for hypothesis 4

INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG		
Variable	Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
FEMALE	0.287	0.000
AGED	-0.090	0.139
MARITAL_STATUS_SINGLE	0.166	0.023
MARITAL_STATUS_MARIED	-0.124	0.068
OCCUPATION_PRIVATE	0.033	0.347
OCCUPATION_SELFEMPLOYED	-0.075	0.183
OCCUPATION_PUBLIC	0.086	0.150
OCCUPATION_RETIRED	0.073	0.191
OCCUPATION_STUDENT	-0.173	0.018
EDUCATION_LEVEL_UNIVERSITY	0.098	0.119
EDUCATION_LEVEL_POSTUNIVERSITY	-0.089	0.144
DAILY_SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE	0.050	0.276
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_FACEBOOK	-0.023	0.389
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_INSTAGRAM	0.067	0.210
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_TWITTER	-0.116	0.082
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_LINKEDIN	-0.018	0.413
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_YOUTUBE	0.002	0.493
SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_BLOGFORUM	-0.054	0.258

Moreover we developed a linear regression model by using three variables from the list above: female, student and single. The results of this regression is given below as table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Coefficient table of linear regression for hypothesis 4

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.229	0.068		3.368	0.001
FEMALE	0.276	0.079	0.275	3.518	0.001
MARITAL_STATUS_SINGLE	0.229	0.081	0.225	2.832	0.005
OCCUPATION_STUDENT	-0.513	0.220	-0.187	-2.335	0.021

Dependent Variable: INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG
 Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

4.5 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 5

The fifth hypothesis is that, when an individual realises that a phenomenon making a marketing activity, the tendency of following him decreases more, if the individual has ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon. For testing this hypothesis, we developed a linear regression model which has question 16 (tendency to unfulflow after realizing its a marketing activity with Likert scale) as the independent variable, and question 14 (whether participant have ever bought a product by being

influenced by a phenomenon) as a dependant variable. We developed this model by using only the participants, who follow at least one phenomenon to eliminate noise in the data regarding to our hypothesis. The result of the model is shown in table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Coefficient table of linear regression model for hypothesis 5

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.810	0.114		15.855	0.000
INFLUENCED_BY_PHENOMENON_PRODUCT_FLAG	0.593	0.169	0.281	3.518	0.001

Dependent Variable: TENDENCY_TO_UNFOLLOW_REALIZED_PHENOMENON_MARKETING
 Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

4.6 RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS 6

The sixth hypothesis is that the level of influence of a phenomenon over his followers changes regarding to social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube, Twitter, Blogs or Forums. For testing this hypothesis, we selected the participants who follow at least one phenomenon. And we used correlations of each elements in questions 7 and 9 with the influencing level of phenomenon marketing given in question 12 in Likert scale. The results are given in table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Correlation table for hypothesis 6

INFLUENCED_BY_MARKETING_CHANNEL_PHENOMENON			
Question Number	Variables	Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
7	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_FACEBOOK	-0.001	0.497
	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_INSTAGRAM	0.258	0.001
	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_TWITTER	0.022	0.396
	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_LINKEDIN	0.216	0.004
	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_YOUTUBE	0.096	0.125
	SOCIAL_MEDIA_USAGE_BLOGFORUM	0.199	0.008
9	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FACEBOOK	-0.041	0.312
	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_INSTAGRAM	0.121	0.074
	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_TWITTER	-0.161	0.026
	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_LINKEDIN	-0.059	0.240
	FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_YOUTUBE	0.101	0.113

Selecting only cases for which FOLLOWING_PHENOMENON_FLAG = 1

5. DISCUSSION

The results of our analyses suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between the effect level of phenomenon marketing and tendency to buy a product by being influenced by a phenomenon. We can accept that phenomenon marketing can influence people to buy a specific product. By the increasing usage of social media and e-WOM to establish networks, some people in these networks have a power to manipulate the others. And phenomenons are the ones who can manage to do that in social media. So marketers should integrate this channel into their marketing strategies and should reserve some budget. TV and newspaper/magazine marketing should also be used together with phenomenon marketing, because they have similar impacts on consumers like phenomenon marketing. Using one of the other traditional marketing channels is not a good choice on influencing people. However website marketing has more influence than the phenomenon marketing. Both of these channels are emerged after the technological developments and foundation of the internet, and increased their reputation year after year. As we see from the results, if marketers desire to influence their customers on social media, they should prefer website marketing channel more than phenomenon marketing.

The phenomenons who are related to the daily and popular lives of people like celebrities, artists and travellers, and detailed information sharers like youtubers and bloggers, have positive impacts on decisions of people. Youtubers and bloggers have more influence when it compared to the other groups. The content topic of phenomenons also have impacts on decisions. Phenomenons sharing contents about daily activities and entertainment like food and beverage, travelling and entertainment have significantly greater influence on purchasing decisions of people. There are also two more dimensions of a phenomenon's features: the character & background level, and the connection & communication level. They have significantly greater influence on decisions of consumers. In addition to these charisma & appealing feature have a greater impact on influencing. We believe marketers can use these results to choose more suitable phenomenons for their marketing activities, and phenomenons can strengthen their features to increase their influence over their audience.

Being female has the highest positive impact on buying a product under the influence of a phenomenon. Being single has the second highest positive impact. However being a student has a negative effect on buying a product under the influence of a phenomenon. So the most sensitive target group is graduated, single and female consumers, as our regression model states. We believe marketers can benefit from this result to create their target groups and marketing strategies over them.

So far we discussed about the impacts and influence levels of phenomena and their followers. And now we want to attract some attention on the tendency of people about unfollowing a phenomenon, after they realized it is a marketing activity. We believe usually both marketers and phenomena ignore the importance of the attitude and the psychology of following, and make an obvious phenomenon marketing activities. The result significantly suggests that an individual who has ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon, has more tendency to unfollow him after the realization of marketing activity is done by that phenomenon. This is an important outcome, because the main audience targeted by the marketers are the one who actually have more desire to buy products. So their marketing activities pay for their costs. When a phenomenon makes an obvious marketing activity, he loses this valuable target group more than the others, and it causes him to lose more power on his audience, who has more purchasing will and the attraction of marketers too. Marketers can find another phenomenon but a phenomenon may not find another marketer after his power is decreased. So especially phenomena shouldn't ignore this hidden trap when they are making a marketing activity.

People using instagram, linkedin and blog/forum are being influenced more than the others by the phenomenon marketing. However the people who uses twitter are being influenced less by it. It may be the aspect of social media platforms, or type of phenomena on that platforms, or the features of people following them on those platforms. By this outcome, we believe both marketers and phenomena may benefit by planning their strategies and presence regarding to the influence level offered by social media platforms.

6. CONCLUSION

The increased number of people online and usage of social media let people to increase their connections and interactions. By these developments social networks become bigger and more complex. These complex systems have got the attention of marketers by their great potential of marketing. In addition to traditional channels, marketer started to use people on social media as their marketing channels. Those people have influence on the purchasing decisions of other. The highly influential people on social media are called phenomenons, and using them as a marketing channel is called as phenomenon marketing.

In this paper we aimed to find out the following: whether this marketing channel has really an impact on decisions of people, whether it has higher influence than the other marketing channels like TV, newspaper/magazine, radio, websites etc., what are the main distinctive features of more influential phenomenons, whether the features of followers have impacts on the level of being influenced by a phenomenon, whether followers have tendency to unfollow if there is an obvious marketing activity presented by a phenomenon, and whether social media platforms have impact on influence level of phenomenons.

Our findings suggest that people are influenced by phenomenon marketing. Purchasing decisions of consumers are affected by the influence of phenomenons. The study results of Shi and Wojnicki (2011) also supports that phenomenons have important roles in the marketplace. The influence of phenomenon marketing is higher than the most traditional channels but similar with TV and newspaper/magazines. Nunes and others (2018) suggest that marketers should invest in phenomenon marketing rather than traditional marketing. Our study supports half of their suggestion. Phenomenon marketing is more effective than most of the traditional marketing channels but have similar affect with TV and newspaper channels. So we suggest that marketers should continue to use TV and newspaper/magazine channels for their marketing activities. In addition to suggestion, marketing on websites has higher influence on people than the phenomenon marketing. The reasons of this are unknown in this paper and it requires further investigation. But anyhow, marketers should use both of these two online channels

(phenomenon and website marketing), but it would be better if they reserve more of their marketing budget for websites rather than phenomenons.

There are also distinctive features of more influential phenomenons compared the other. These features can be grouped in five dimensions: 1) relation to daily and popular lifes of people like celebrities, artists and travellers, 2) detailed information sharers like youtubers and bloggers, 3) the content topic of phenomenons about daily activities and entertainment like food and beverage, travelling and entertainment, 4) the character and background level of a phenomenon, 5) the connection and communication level of a phenomenon have significantly greater influence on decisions of consumers.

The features of followers have also impacts on the level of being influenced by phenomenons. Our results suggest that if an individual is female, graduated or single, then the probability of being influenced by a phenomenon is greater than the others.

One of the most valuable outcomes of this study is the tendency of unfollowing a phenomenon. It is higher for the people, who have ever bought a product by being influenced by a phenomenon, when they realize the marketing activity done by that phenomenon. In addition to the influence power of phenomenons and the desire of marketers to use them as a marketing channel, both of them should be carefully manage their marketing activities for not losing the profitable target group.

Our results also suggest that the level of influence of phenomenons change regarding to social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube etc., where they are present and their followers are using. Our study suggests followers using Instagram, Linkedin and blog/forum platforms are more available for being influenced, however phenomenons on Twitter have less power on influencing the decisions of their audience.

We believe with these significant outcomes, both marketers and phenomenons can optimize their marketing activities. They can choose the platforms, channels, their target groups, their contents, and the features they should strenghten regarding to these outcomes.

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APPENDIX



APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

Question 1: Please specify your gender.

- A. Female
- B. Male

Question 2: How old are you?

.....

Question 3: Please specify your marital status.

- A. Single
- B. Married
- C. Divorced

Question 4: Please specify your occupation.

- A. Public Servant
- B. Private Sector Employee
- C. Self-employment
- D. Student
- E. Retired
- F. Housewife
- G. Unemployed

Question 5: Please specify your education level.

- A. Below Highschool
- B. Highschool
- C. University
- D. Graduate
- E. Post Graduate

Question 6: Please specify your daily social media usage.

- A. Less than 1 hour
- B. Between 1 – 3 hours
- C. Between 3 – 5 hours
- D. More than 5 hours

Question 7: Please specify your social media usage regarding to the platforms below.

Socail Media Platforms	Not Using	1. Very few	2	3	4	5. Very much
Facebook						
Instagram						
Twitter						
Linkedin						
Youtube						
Blog/Forum						

Question 8: Are you following at least one phenomenon (singer, sportsman, politician, writer, youtuber, academic etc.)?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 9: In which social platforms do you follow phenomenons?

- A. Facebook
- B. Instagram
- C. Twitter
- D. Linkedin
- E. Youtube
- F. Blog/Forum
- G. Not following any phenomenon

Question 10: Which kind of phenomenons do you like to follow?

- A. Celebrities (Singers, Football Players, Film Stars etc.)
- B. Artists (Painters, Photographers, Dancers etc.)
- C. Travellers
- D. Experts (Academic People, Doctors, Yoga Instructors etc.)
- E. Politicians
- F. Executives of Companies
- G. Journalists/Writers
- H. Thinkers/Gurus
- I. Gamers
- J. Youtubers
- K. Bloggers
- L. Not following any phenomenon

Question 11: What are the topics of contents of phenomenons who you like to follow?

- A. Sports
- B. Health
- C. Politics
- D. Entertainment
- E. Food & Beverage
- F. Travelling & Holiday
- G. Business World
- H. Academic
- I. General Culture
- J. Games
- K. Art & Culture
- L. Not following any phenomenon

Question 12: How much do the marketing channels listed below influence you about buying a product/service?

Marketing Channels	1. Not influencing	2	3	4	5. Very influencing
Television					
Debate Programs					
Telemarketing					
Radio					
Newspaper/Magazine					
Cinema					
Web Sites					
Phenomenons that you follow					

Question 13: How much do you agree on that the phenomenons you follow are positively distinctive compared to the traditional marketing channels (TV, Radio, Newspaper, Cinema etc.)?

Features	1. Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5. Strongly agree
Trust Degree					
Sincerity					
Charisma/Appeal					
Level of Knowledge					
Experience of a Product/Service Usage					
Ability to Persuade					
Reachability					
Content of Sharing					
Authority Level					
Ability to Set Trends					
Flexibility					

Question 14:

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 15: Have you ever change your point of view by being influenced by a phenomenon?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Question 16: What is your tendency to continue following a phenomenon after you realized that it is used for marketing?

1. Strongly stop following	2	3	4	5. Strongly continue following

Question 17: Please write down the top three phenomenon that you follow in nationwide?

.....

Question 18: Please select the proper interval below representing your monthly household income.

- A. Between 1000 – 1500 TL
- B. Between 1500 – 2000 TL
- C. Between 2000 – 3000 TL
- D. Between 3000 – 5000 TL
- E. More than 5000 TL