

A Study on Consumer's Buying Behavior of Second-Hand Products From Digital Platforms

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Abstract

The rapid development of the internet, which enables online interaction on digital platforms at any time, has made online communication almost one of the main means of communication. Today, consumers can easily connect to the internet 24/7 from anywhere in the world on their smartphones, computers and tablets. In this context, digital platforms have become new markets for businesses, and consumers have been able to purchase goods or services from anywhere in the world at any time. The mutual interaction here is realized through the internet. While the speed and convenience provided by the Internet to businesses and consumers paves the way for the creation of a new consumer pool in terms of corporate, the excessive time spent in stores by consumers accustomed to shopping in the real environment makes shopping in the virtual environment more attractive. In this article, the factors affecting the purchasing behavior of consumers who purchase second-hand products from digital platforms will be examined at a conceptual level.

Keywords: Online Shopping, Second Hand, Consumer Behavior.

1. Introduction

The new global economic system, designed by Western powers under the name of "big reset" and implemented as a result of supply chains deliberately broken by the Covid 19 pandemic, has rapidly increased environmental chaos with internal and external wars all over the world, and the process has forced national / international businesses to operate with uncertain environmental conditions. The most prominent feature of this process has been the spread of electronic commerce or online shopping all over the world in the closing process. Since the beginning of the 2000s, electronic commerce, which has been carried out through the websites established by businesses to support face-to-face shopping activities in the store and increase sales revenue, has been a lifeline for both businesses and consumers who are restricted from going out to meet their needs during the forced closure process due to the pandemic. Ruptures in the supply chain have forced every country in the world to suspend production or produce at reduced capacity, and thus an artificial economic depression created by the global economic system has spread across countries in waves. Inflation and unemployment rates have increased in all countries from west to east, and of course in our country as well, and businesses and private sector employees who have lost their jobs have had to cut back on their consumption. Governments provided various financial resources and opportunities to their citizens in line with the economic power of their countries, and tried to maintain the balance of the market with certain exemptions and exceptions in payments such as taxes and fees for businesses until the closure process ended.

For the reasons stated above, the ever-changing environmental conditions in the past five years have forced businesses to operate in unstable and uncertain conditions, while consumers have turned to online shopping with this new consumption habit acquired during the pandemic. Consumers even like the product in the store, as in traditional face-to-face shopping, and buy the same product electronically from the company's website by taking the barcode number. This is because products are sold at cheaper prices in the electronic environment compared to the store due to the low cost. In online shopping, consumers follow discount messages on their smartphones and try to make their consumption more economical. The artificial economic crises created by the pandemic process have forced consumers to manage their budgets like a magician. Another purchasing behavior brought by the process has been the preference of second-hand products by consumers. In traditional trade, houses and automobiles were traditionally bought and sold second-hand, and to a lesser extent, low-income consumers and students bought and sold white goods and furniture second-hand, but today a significant portion of consumers prefer to buy all kinds of products second-hand. This consumption behavior, necessitated by high inflation and economic weakness, forces businesses to establish digital platforms where second-hand products are sold and to transform their commercial activities from traditional to digital. This compulsory formation is not only specific to organizations with a modern structure, but has also become a lifestyle and philosophy for every organization, and the establishment of digital stores where both new and second-hand products are sold and online shopping is accepted as an important element of company success.

In the new economic model where such a destructive competitive environment prevails, it is important for businesses that want to be the best to be in constant harmony with the environment, to get the necessary information and to constantly monitor changes. Knowing why, how and when people buy and considering their behavioral dynamics in such relevant and competitive information will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the life expectancy of organizations (Tek & Özgül, 2008: 2).

2. Factors Motivating Consumers to Buy Second HandUsed Products

In recent years, the markets where second-hand products are sold have also become competitors for the markets where new products are sold. This is because second-hand products, just like new products, adequately meet the wants and needs of the consumer. In a study he conducted in 2019, Kılıç concluded that consumers prefer second-hand for various reasons, especially in many products such as cars, houses and mobile phones, and stated that economic motives, fashion, nostalgia and hedonistic consumption are prioritized among these reasons. The results of the study should help traditional sellers as well as intermediaries in the second-hand market to adapt their retail operations to different buying motives (Kılıç, 2019). Digital markets are a new formation that incorporates many intersections. The consumer has a very important place in this formation. While in traditional trade, the consumer was a passive consumer who was satisfied by meeting their wants and needs with existing goods and services, the consumer in the new era has evolved into a market-dominant, equipped and active profile.

This new consumer profile, which can be called the postmodern consumer, is positioned in a much different and beyond traditional position than the modern consumer profile, which is classified according to many demographic variables such as education, income level, social class and purchasing behavior. The main reason for this difference is undoubtedly the role played by consumption. Because while

production is at the forefront of modern economics, the phenomenon of consumption is among the topics that postmodern economics explores, albeit partially. This difference has forced businesses and consumers to adapt to this new trend with the knowledge economy, where the flexibility of production and consumption is important, as well as the execution of production in accordance with the wishes and needs of the consumer. The new consumer trend, which emphasizes the image of the product rather than its physical and functional features, is undoubtedly an important element of this new economy and socio-culture. In this culture, it is important not to choose one of the products or services by eliminating opportunity costs, but to add value by combining these products.

When buying a second-hand product, such as an automobile, the consumer, as a rational being, will, on the one hand, act on economic grounds and protect his or her self-interest at the highest level. On the other hand, as an indicator of his/her monetary power, he/she will consider the power, prestige and respect he/she will receive from the society. In other words, the consumer will use the automobile for various purposes. The fact that the automobile is perceived as a convenience and a free life should not be ignored. However, what should be emphasized is why consumers do or do not buy a second-hand product and which factors dominate their buying behavior (Arslan, 2010: 83). In this article, firstly, the second-hand product and the consumer's second-hand product purchasing behavior will be explained together with the reasons, and then a conceptual evaluation will be made by giving information about the studies in the literature on the subject.

3. A Second-Hand Product

A second-hand product is defined as a non-new product that has been used before (Ayres, 2019: 122 - 123). Words such as antiques, vintage, second-hand goods or retro are used to refer to used items. Antiques are old objects of very high value. Retro represents a relaxation or imitation of a simple style (Loon et al, 2018: 960). Vintage refers to high-quality non-standard clothing and accessories of past eras (Kessousa & Valette Florence, 2019: 2). In addition, the most popular second-hand goods are technological gadgets, clothing and books (Ayres, 2019: 122 - 123).

Guiot and Roux (2010: 356) explain second-hand shopping as buying products that, unlike new products, are typically sold in different places and used in different places. Usually, used goods are sold in traditional (physical) stores such as flea markets, second-hand stores, thrift stores, garage sales, etc. or online stores such as websites and social networks.

Worldwide, second-hand goods tend to be sold in thrift stores, vintage stores, pawn shops, online platforms such as Ebay, Amazon and Craigslist, specialty retail stores such as bookstores selling used books, flea markets, garage sales, exchange and donation shops (Fortuna & Diyamandoğlu, 2017: 178). The second-hand market capitalizes on the value of used goods. Second-hand sales have partly replaced sales of new products (Loon et al., 2018: 961). In second-hand purchases, the consumer can assume the role of both buyer and seller (Purohit, 1995: 102).

Traditionally, second-hand goods are seen as financially attractive for certain segments of the population (Chu, 2013: 1528 - 1530). Old and used products tend to gain a new lease of life as vintage, retro or used (Appelgren & Bohlin, 2015: 4). Moreover, consumers may prefer used products to create an emotional

connection with the product's past (Cassidy & Bennet 2012: 242). In today's world, the increase in the consumption of second-hand goods is driven by recreation, socialization, environmental and ethical issues (Guiot & Roux, 2010: 355 - 360). On the other hand, second-hand goods tend to move down the social hierarchy from rich to poor. This is because second-hand goods are associated with status (social class). Usually, developed countries send second-hand goods to poor countries (Appelgren & Bohlin, 2015: 3-4).

Antiques carry a lot of cultural meaning. Consumers participate in antique markets for various reasons such as socializing, creating a personal identity, gaining financial gain from the sale of products, having cultural values and the importance of antiques (Combs, 2003: 44-45). It is stated that consumers recycle or donate used goods to minimize their harmful impact on society. Consumers who do this with a sense of social responsibility can influence other consumers in this direction (Ha-Brookshire & Hodges, 2009: 179-181). Second-hand shopping is a market that continues to grow, although it is not taken seriously due to its informal nature. Used product sales are increasing in the market (Mohan & Padmaja, 2014: 146).

Second-hand trade has a long history. Especially in the last 20 years, the rapid increase in the consumption of second-hand goods has been a topic of interest to researchers. The consumption of second-hand goods has changed and greatly expanded with the industrial growth of the economy. Passive consumption started with a period of scarcity, and the value of used goods changed depending on their lifespan and cultural value. Products were repaired, recycled and put back into circulation. People sold the things they used to survive and sometimes replaced them with new ones according to their needs. It is also known that many stolen goods were sold during the famine.

Later, during the Industrial Revolution, second-hand goods were traded by specific sellers or brokers. The process continued with the emergence of door-to-door sales, garage sales and street vendors. In the period after the industrial revolution, the consumption of second-hand goods declined to a minimum level in parallel with technological developments. In this period, old and used goods took a new name as antiques purchased by the rich. The used products were then donated and exported to underdeveloped and poor countries (Lemire, 2012: 144 - 163).

4. Reasons for Consumers to Buy Second-Hand Products

When we look at the development of the reasons that push consumers to buy second-hand products, it is seen that the main factor that emerges is the periods of scarcity and economic crisis. However, with the change in global dynamics, the reasons for purchasing second-hand products have started to diverge. It is possible to categorize the reasons for used product shopping, which has started to take an important place in the global economy, under three headings: economic, ideological and convenience (Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015).

4.1. Economic Reason

The most important reason for buying second-hand products is that they are more affordable than new products (Waight, 2013). Consumers can bargain when buying second-hand products (Parguel et al., 2017), and they can buy luxury or brand products at very affordable prices (Yan et al., 2015). Price

sensitivity refers to consumers' opinions about the price of the product they will purchase. Consumers with high price sensitivity are less likely to purchase as product prices increase. For this reason, second-hand stores or digital platforms offer an important opportunity for consumers who want to buy a lot of products with little money. Consumers with limited income may sometimes prefer to buy more than one used product rather than buying a new product at the same price (Yan et al., 2015).

In addition, Guiot and Roux (2010) argue that frugality is a lifestyle for consumers and a critical motivator for second-hand shopping. Frugality is a lifestyle that focuses on spending less and encourages consumers to carefully plan their spending to save for the future by avoiding unnecessary expenses.

Used goods stores and digital platforms are ideal marketplaces for consumers to buy products they need or think are unique at an affordable price (İşçioglu & Yurdakul 2018:253-280). Brand obsession and the thrill of being able to purchase an expensive product at minimum cost lead consumers to second-hand shopping (Cervellon, et al., 2012). On the other hand, consumers' tendency to behave economically reduces overconsumption and thus minimizes the negative environmental consequences of consumption, providing economic as well as environmental benefits through reuse or recycling (Piligrimiene et al., 2020).

4.2. Ideological Reason

Consumers' interest in nostalgia, the rarity, geographical and biological characteristics of used products, as well as the desire to use a unique product are also influential in the purchase of second-hand products (Guiot & Roux, 2010). For example, a study conducted in France concluded that for a consumer who returns from the secondary market with an old airplane or tablecloth, the evocation of the past is more important than the price of the product (Roux & Guiot, 2010). Second-hand shopping is not only about exchanging money and goods, but also about exchanging information and stories. This suggests that consumers have both economic and emotional motivations for second-hand shopping (Parguel et al., 2017; Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015; Swapana & Padmavati 2018).

The sub-elements that make up ideological motives are divided into two as emotional and utilitarian. Affective and utilitarian motivations are social interaction, shopping experiences, hedonic consumption, environmental concerns, treasure hunting, utilitarian motives, trust and privacy.

Among emotional motivations, social interaction refers to consumers' communication with other people with similar characteristics to themselves. Consumers who want to provide social interaction tend to prefer the store environment. Shopping experience refers to consumers' enjoyment of shopping rather than being task-oriented or functional in the shopping process. Having fun while shopping and showing that they enjoy shopping is expressed as a reaction (Swapana & Padmavath, 2018).

The concept of hedonic consumption reflects the entertainment aspect of shopping. It refers to the consumer shopping with pleasure and joy. The hedonic dimension consists of the love of nostalgia and the desire to be unique. Nostalgic indulgence is the search for "old" products characterized by a historical period, an outdated product or a forgotten tradition. It expresses consumers' desire to buy

original products that evoke or remind them of their past. For example, it arouses consumers' nostalgic feelings when they are greeted with an outfit that was popular in their youth. This is because, thanks to this product, consumers recall memories of the era they lived in. In addition to memories, the popularization of vintage clothing by trends in the fashion world also evokes sentiment nostalgia. The term vintage is defined by the fashion world as "a rare and authentic piece that represents the style of a particular couturier or era". At the same time, vintage clothing is often sold at a more affordable price than new items. To this end, used stores and digital platforms fill an important gap in the market by offering retro and vintage products that are no longer manufactured. Second-hand stores and online platforms bring together on a common basis consumers looking for vintage products to keep up with fashion and consumers interested in the biological and historical origins of products. This search involves an emotional rather than functional experience for consumers (Abbes, et al., 2020; Cervellon et al., 2012).

The pursuit of nostalgia is seen as an uprising against overconsumption, where consumers refuse to buy mass-produced goods. This implies that consumers are avoiding the modern consumer culture that advocates the ever-increasing purchase of goods by avoiding the system or traditional channels. The average duration of current clothing trends ranges from six weeks to three months. This is an indication that fast consumption is part of our lives. Consumers are increasingly aware of the negative social and environmental consequences of mass production, materialism and waste generation. Consumers who want to move away from the system support slow consumption by increasing the value and appreciation of the products they buy by choosing stores that sell used products through traditional sales channels or online platforms (Borusiak et al., 2020).

Environmental issues refer to an individual's general attitude towards environmental protection and personal value system. This influences product choices and consumer purchasing decisions. Used purchases maximize the use of the product and reduce waste generation, giving the purchased product a second life. Therefore, second-hand purchases are seen as a form of consumption that involves the use of environmentally friendly products. Research shows that millennials in particular are socially responsible. In the last decade, clothing production in particular has been observed to have a negative impact on health, the environment and society as a whole. The overuse of resources caused by fast fashion has caused irreversible damage to the environment and marked the beginning of the eco-fashion trend. This trend aims to reduce the resources consumed by increasing reuse and recycling.

Utilitarian motives are defined as task-oriented, functional motives. Some of the sub-elements that make up utilitarian motives are trust and security/privacy. Trust is an evaluation made by a consumer based on promises made about an organization and a product. Security/Privacy refers to the security of customers' shopping processes and personal information. It is easier for consumers shopping in traditional stores to establish a trusting relationship with vendors or store owners than online platforms. While online shopping provides more comfort by offering easy and fast shopping, the purchasing process is highly variable. In this process, the entire online shopping process, from accessing any information to making a purchase decision, is based on the consumer's trust in the online platform. Trust in consumers buying from online platforms depends on their familiarity with the use of the website. At this stage, the structural guarantees offered by the digital platform to consumers are crucial in building trust. Structured

protection provisions cover the protection of personal information and ensure that information used to personalize consumer purchases does not compromise the user's privacy. Accordingly, the conditions and capabilities of online platforms that consumers use for second-hand shopping have an impact on consumer purchases (Thomas, 2003; Padmavathya et al., 2019).

4.3. Reason for Eligibility

Technological developments are changing the dynamics of consumer models. Consumers are shifting their shopping habits from traditional stores to digital platforms, and the fact that online platforms facilitate and accelerate the search for information about the product increases consumers' loyalty to the platform. Thus, the "ease of use" and "usability" of second-hand digital platforms affect consumers' online shopping. "Ease of use" and "usability" are sub-elements of second-hand shopping convenience (Padmavathy, et al., 2019; Swapana & Padmavati, 2018). Ease of use refers to the ability of consumers to use a particular system or technology effectively. Convenience means saving time and effort when shopping. Convenience-oriented consumers prefer online platforms to save time and effort in finding information or purchasing goods at any time of the day.

Ease of use is seen as one of the main concerns of consumers when using the platform. Yuliharsi et al. (2011) concluded in a study conducted for this purpose that ease of use affects the intention and behavior of the use of information systems. Usability refers to consumers' perception of the productive use of a particular system. Consumers expect maximum productivity with minimum effort. Websites that are difficult to use frustrate users. For this reason, when consumers think that online stores are easy to use, their interest and loyalty to these digital platforms increase, and businesses provide customer satisfaction (Gümüşsoy, et al., 2020).

5. Literature on Second-Hand Product Purchasing Behavior

When the literature on second-hand product purchasing behavior on digital platforms is examined, the following studies stand out.

Giout & Roux (2010), "*The Second-Hand Shopping Motivation Scale: Antecedents, Implications and Implications for Retailers*" by Giout and Roux (2010) was conducted in France. The study involved 708 consumers, which they defined in four different categories as "very curious", "humble critics", nostalgic hedonists and "regular expert buyers". In this study, first of all, the reasons that lead the participants to purchase second-hand products were emphasized. In each of the four consumer categories, it was found that they purchase second-hand products with different motivations such as critical, economic and hedonic. In the study titled "*The Role of Fashion in Motivating Second-Hand Shopping*" conducted by Ferraro, et al., (2016: 262-268), the behavior of consumers buying second-hand products was examined. As a result of the research, it was determined that consumers act with the motive of buying economic, recreational and fashionable products cheaper at a rate of 83%. Turunen, et al., (2019), "*Selling Used Luxury: Empowering and Embracing Social Roles*" explored the meaning and value of luxury goods in the selling process. The authors argue that consumers actively participate in the consumption of luxury goods by assuming new roles and that buyers sometimes become sellers of luxury goods.

In these studies, the common feature is that the lifestyle of the consumer plays an important role in the

decision to use second-hand products.

6. Conclusion

The last quarter century has been a process in which technological changes and transformations have occurred rapidly, and businesses, consumers and consumption habits have been moved to digital platforms in accordance with this transformation. In parallel with these developments, online shopping on digital platforms has become popular all over the world and in Turkey; The global average of online shopping compared to traditional commerce has reached 42%. This rate has naturally caused second-hand online shopping to increase significantly. Online stores selling second-hand products are an electronic commerce environment where there is interaction between the seller and the buyer, the consumer's demands and needs are quickly met, and the product and payment guarantee are usually provided by another institution or person instead of the main manufacturer. It is possible to say that online second-hand product shopping has become a system that competes with traditional shopping as products come into circulation again and again among consumers, in other words, when trading second-hand products, the service life of the products extends and the sales revenues of businesses from new products decrease (Fernando, et al., 2018).

Digital marketing is a strategic approach in which businesses direct their goods and services with marketing strategies using digital technologies and online platforms (Durukan, 2023). This transformation has accelerated especially during the forced closure period of the Covid 19 pandemic. Consumers have met their personal or household demands and needs in the digital environment by online shopping. Consumers who got used to the ease of online shopping on digital platforms continued to use the same platforms after the curfews were lifted. The disruption in supply chains and disruptions in production caused by the pandemic have caused the economic situation to worsen in all countries, and various difficulties have been encountered, especially in the supply of medicines, some household goods, food and clothing. As a result, second-hand product sales have increased at an ever-increasing pace. After a few years between life and death due to a disease caused by a simple virus, consumers' perception of wants and needs, consumption behavior, in short, their philosophy of life has changed greatly. Now, under the influence of high inflation and economic crises, people have started to reduce their consumption and prefer second-hand products instead of new products. Civil and foreign wars in various parts of the world also indicate that economic crises will spread to all countries and increase in waves. In this article, the consumption behaviors of consumers who purchase second-hand products on digital platforms were examined and the studies in the literature were evaluated at a conceptual level.

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