

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
BAHÇEŞEHİR UNIVERSITY**

**CONSUMERS' GIFT SELECTION: GIFT GIVING
ATTITUDES IN TODAY'S MARKETING ENVIRONMENT**

Master's Thesis

BERNA BAŞAR

İSTANBUL, 2011

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
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**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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ABSTRACT

CONSUMERS' GIFT SELECTION: GIFT GIVING ATTITUDES IN TODAY'S MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

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This study examines gift selection behavior of Y Generation in today's marketing environment. The motives and factors influencing the gift giving decisions of adults have been explored using qualitative data. Previous studies have not focused on the relation between the gift buying habits and buyers' reaction to marketing elements as a whole.

In order to get insight about gifting habits of Y Generation, thirty two in-depth interviews were carried out. Besides its availability, this group has been chosen since the technology, mass marketing, and popular culture in which today's youth grew up differentiated Y Generation from previous youth cultures.

Research results show that females are more interested in gift giving in comparison to males. Females buy more gifts and care more about buying gifts regularly since they see gift giving as a way for showing the recipient how much they care about them. On the other hand, males do not enjoy buying gifts and do not attach any meaning to gift giving unless the receiver is someone very special for him and/or they are buying a ring for engagement.

Giving gifts to parents and/or romantic partners are considered to be the most important gift giving occasions. While the gifts bought for family members are more utilitarian, are bought without any price limit and without reciprocal obligation; gifts bought for romantic others are more expressive, customized and requires some amount of reciprocity. In addition, male participants spend the highest amount of money on gifts when they are buying a wedding gift to their romantic partner.

According to the answers of the participants the second most important group consists of people from higher position and best friends followed by extended kin and regular friends. Unlike the gifts given to friends, family members and romantic others; gifts given to someone from a higher position than the gift giver should be bought according to the standards set within the community. In such a case, gifts should be bought from specific stores and should not be cheap and simple.

Although there is no consensus on the importance of brand name in gift giving, quality is considered as a gift selection criteria by most of the participants. These participants prefer to buy gifts according to the quality standards set within their environment. It is also obvious that some brand stores deliver high quality gifts in the eyes of the customers.

All of the participants attach importance to packaging since it affects the first impression of the receiver about the gift. Even in some instances, participants consider packaging more important than the gift itself, as a result of seeing visuality more important than anything.

Despite the fact that local shops may be preferred because of their low prices and their unusual product alternatives, in general chain stores are usually considered as more convenient places for buying gifts. Although participants prefer buying gifts on sale, they usually can not do that since gifts should be bought at a specific period of time.

Key Words: Gift Selection, Marketing Environment, Consumer Behavior

ÖZET

MÜŞTERİLERİN HEDİYE SEÇME DAVRANIŞLARI: BUGÜNÜN PAZAR ORTAMINDA HEDİYELEŞME EĞİLİMLERİ

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Bu çalışma Y jenerasyonunun bugünün pazar ortamındaki hediye seçme eğilimlerini incelemektedir. Niceliksel veri ile bu grubun hediye verme kararlarını etkileyen faktörler araştırılmıştır. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalar müşterilerin genel olarak tüm pazarlama öğelerine tepkileri ve hediye alma eğilimleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelememiştir.

Y jenerasyonunun hediye alma eğilimlerini incelemek için 32 mülakat gerçekleştirilmiştir. Y jenerasyonu hem kolayda örnekleme yöntemine uygun olduğu için hem de teknoloji, yoğun pazarlama ve popüler kültür ortamı bu jenerasyonun önceki jenerasyonlara göre daha farklı bir ortamda büyümesini sağladığı için seçilmiştir.

Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre bayanların erkeklere oranla hediye alma ile daha çok ilgili oldukları görülüyor. Bayanlar daha çok hediye alıyorlar ve düzenli bir sıklıkta almaya dikkat ediyorlar. Bunun nedeni hediye vermenin karşısındakine verilen değeri gösterdiğini düşünmeleridir. Bunun aksine, erkekler hediyeden zevk almıyorlar ve hediye aldıkları kişi çok özel biri olmadıkça ve/veya nişan hediyesi almadıkları sürece hediyeleşmeye büyük bir anlam yüklemiyorlar.

Katılımcılar en çok yakın aile bireylerine veya sevgililerine aldıkları hediyelere önem veriyorlar. Ailelerine hediye alırken daha işlerine yarayacak ve kullanabilecekleri bir hediye alıyorlar. Bunun yanında ailelerine hediye alırken hiçbir fiyat limiti konulmuyor ve aldıkları hediyeye bir karşılık beklemiyorlar. Sevgililere alınan hediyelerde ise karşılık bekleniyor, daha çok kişiye özel ve anlamlı hediyeler tercih ediliyor. Buna ek olarak, erkekler en çok nişan ve düğün hediyesi alırken para harcıyorlar.

Katılımcıların cevaplarına göre hediye alırken en çok önem verilen ikinci grup ise yakın arkadaşlar ve üst pozisyonda görevli kişilerden oluşuyor. Bu grubu ise akrabalar ve orta yakınlıktaki arkadaşlar takip ediyor. Arkadaşlara, aile bireylerine ve sevgililere verilen hediyelerin aksine üst makamlardaki kişilere verilen hediyeler toplumda kurulmuş yazılı olmayan temel kurallara göre alınıyor. Bu durumlarda, hediye belirli mağazalardan alınmalı, ucuz ve basit olmamalı.

Hediyenin markasının önemi konusunda katılımcılar arasında bir fikir birliği olmasa da, kalite çoğunlukla bir hediye seçme kriteri olarak görülüyor. Bu kişiler çevrelerinde belirlenmiş olan kalite standartlarına uygun hediyeler almayı tercih ediyorlar. Ayrıca bazı markalar tüketicilerin gözünde diğerlerine kıyasla daha yüksek kalite değerine sahip.

Bütün katılımcılar ilk izlenim açısından önemli olduđu için ambalaja önem vermekte. Hatta bazı katılımcılar, görselliđi herşeyden önemli görerek ambalajın hediyein kendisinden daha önemli olduğunu düşünmektedir.

Yerel dükkanlar düşük fiyatları ve deđişik hediye alternatifleri sundukları için bazı durumlarda tercih edilseler de, büyük alışveriş merkezleri hediye için en çok tercih edilen alışveriş mekanı konumunda. Katılımcılar, indirimde hediye alabilmiş olmayı istedikleri halde, hediyeşerin belirli bir zamanda verilmesi gerektiđi için hediye alırken indirimi takip edemediklerini belirtiyor.

AnahtarKelimeler: Hediye Seçme, Pazar Ortamı, Tüketici Davranışları

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1. INTRODUCTION

In order to gain a deeper understanding of consumers' gift selection attitudes, motives and factors influencing the gift giving decisions of adults have been explored using qualitative data. The main research question for this exploratory study is 'What kind of gift giving habits does the Y Generation have in today's marketing environment?'

Since both self and others are closely implicated in gift giving, it is reasonable to expect that different dimensions of the self will be activated in different gift giving contexts depending on who the receiver is and the occasions for the gift (Weisfeld 2009). The main idea is that, different self-conceptions can be made accessible at different times and in different situations and relatively conflicting traits may exist in a person's self-concept (Aaker 1999).

This study examines how marketing environment effect gift selection and explore these conditions in detail. This research explores our gift giving patterns with the evolution of marketing environment and other dominant factors related with gift giving value system. As a result, new insight is provided by analyzing and integrating the components, dimensions, and models of gift giving from past research and develops testable hypotheses on gift selection criteria with a qualitative research for future verification. In order to get insight about gifting habits of Y Generation in Turkey thirty two in depth interviews were carried out.

Gift selection analysis provides managers insights to develop specific strategic initiatives for driving purchases of each individual gift category, brand and channel. The insights of this dissertation offer marketers targeting gift buying customers a better guidance and a greater opportunity to enhance giver and receiver utilities in gift giving practice in order to increase business profitability.

1.1.RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aims to carry out a comprehensive literature review about gift selection, so that the components, dimensions and models of gift giving will be analyzed and the

contribution of this study to the literature will be explained. In order to analyze gift selection behavior of Y Generation in Turkey, this study has focused on the following research objectives.

Primary objective of this research is to answer the following questions. How is gift giving behavior is perceived by the Turkey's Y Generation in today's marketing environment? How do the customers react to the elements of marketing? What are the motives and factors influencing gift giving decisions of this sample?

It is aimed to access information about gift givers feelings, thinking and habits through in depth interviews with participants living in Istanbul and belonging to Millennial Generation. In addition to that, these interviews will contribute to analysis of culture's and gift selection circumstances' effect on gifting behavior in Turkey.

Finally, this study aims to analyze the information gained from these interviews and develop our understanding of gift buying process and its relation with marketing environment. Through comparing and combining the results of this research and prior studies all of this research's objectives will be fulfilled.

1.2. WHY SHOULD THIS SUBJECT BE ANALYZED?

Gift giving as a concept in consumption may be one of the few remaining crucial incidents of true significance or sufficient periodicity that test the social ties that consumers have formed in their relationships with others (Sherry 1983). Although its examination by researchers has started during the last century, gift as a tangible product of our social relationships, has come into existence and has become a universal habit since ancient times. In this sense Marcel Mauss (1954) pioneered other researchers by his book *The Gift* in which he analyzed gift giving in a systematic way.

Gift buying behavior is interesting in the sense that we play a different role and apply a distinct gifting strategy in each gifting occasion. Given that each relationship is unique, gift giving varies with the circumstances and the relationship- making it highly contextual (Sherry 1983). The depth of these circumstances is greater than it is

estimated and it offers a rich area for researchers to examine. The same person can prefer to buy totally different and unrelated gifts in different conditions according to the identity attached to the gift giver at each gift selection process. Markus and Kunda (1986) indicate that self-concept is not as stable and unresponsive to variations in situations as researchers had previously believed, but rather that the self is dynamic and malleable. In other words, different self-conceptions can emerge during different times and situations, so that conflicting traits may exist in a person's self-concept. While there is no doubt that gifts reflect the importance that the giver attaches to expressing a particular social role (Sherry 1983), different gift-selection strategies may reflect the importance of these roles as well (Otnes, Lowrer & Kim 1993) . Since each individual considers the product or service on offer in relation to their own culture and attitudes, gift selection process becomes complicated.

The share of gift purchases in overall purchases is larger than it is estimated. For instance; Garner and Wagner (1993) have estimated that at least \$78 billion are spent annually for gifts outside the household. Belshaw (1965) estimated that 10 percent of retail sales in North America are for gift giving and according to another research gift giving has been estimated to account for an additional two percent of the household budget when charitable contributions are included (Lamale & Clorety 1959). More recently, Household Spending (2004) estimated that over \$110 billion are spent each year in the United States for gifts and American Generations (2005) estimated that an average of 2.5 percent of household expenditures were for gifts in 2003. As a result of this market's size and its contributions, gift giving is a valuable subject for consumer behavior and marketing.

Researches related with gift buying behavior have usually focused on psychological inputs and marketing inputs have not taken enough attention. Incursion of western holidays into Turkish life has altered the nature of gift giving within the society. Advertisings which focus on gifting and aim to increase gift purchases are countless. Special days, such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Teacher's Day, become big opportunities for marketers in the sense that marketers offer their products in a more meaningful way in the eyes of the customers during these times.

In many instances, marketers touch people's feelings and make their potential customers believe that buying their products is an indication of caring more about relationships. For instance; it has been shown that web sites that offer distinctive features for gift presentation are preferred by gifting communities because gift presentation expresses special thought, thus ensuring responsibility on behalf of the giver (Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan 2006). In addition to that, other marketing tools such as; brand image, customer relations, pricing, fashion etc. can be effective factors for gift buyers. This study will also analyze the effects of marketing environment during gift selection process.

Furthermore, most of the studies related with gift giving have been carried out and conducted in and limited to American culture (Park 1993). Consumer behavior studies have not put much effort on analyzing gift giving behavior in other cultures. Although there has been studies exploring gifting habits in recent years, there has never been a study which explores gift selection behavior of millennial generation in the Turkish culture.

Finally, most of the researches till now related with gift selection behavior have either focused on cultural or psychological attitudes instead of combining the two. As Benu (1980) states; both cultural and psychological approaches to cross cultural behavior should be analyzed and synthesized in order to develop a more comprehensive interpretation of exchange. This research does not ignore the importance of the both and analyzes these themes focusing more on the marketing elements.

The ancient practice of gift giving has significantly influenced cultures around the world, and it remains a crucial part of the process of creating and maintaining social relationships today (Sherry 1983). It is inevitable that it will continue to be crucial part of our social relations in the future.

2. GIFT BUYING

2.1. WHAT IS GIFT?

In fact, any resource, tangible or intangible, can be transformed into a gift in the sense that the transformation from resource to gift occurs through the vehicles of social relationships and giving occasions (Sherry 1983). Researchers have defined gift in different ways in relation with their different perspectives. Belk (1970) defines gift in a simple way: 'Gift is a good or service (including the giver's time, activities, and ideas) voluntarily provided to another person or group.' Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Gove 1993, p.953) defines a gift as something that is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation. In fact, there is some kind of compensation in many gifting occasions which is not explicit as it is the case in commodity exchange. This is why researchers segregate pure gifts from other gifts at which some kind of return expectations exist (Parry (1986), Belk& Coon (1993)). Mauss also focuses on the obligations related with gift giving in the sense of reciprocity which will be mentioned later.

Gift is defined by Spoilter (2009) as the circulation of goods to promote ties and bonding between individuals. In relation with this definition, this thesis will ignore free gifts which companies offer their customers in order to test their products or build a relationship between the brand and the customer. In addition, bonuses given to employees by the companies as a result of high performance also will not be included in the analysis of this research because of the same reason. According to Spoilter's definition, excluding all other tradeoffs only product exchanges which aim to promote ties between individuals can be called as gift exchange.

Finally, self-gifts are ignored by this study too which is a term explored by Mick and Demos (1990, p.328). The main reason for not analyzing self-gifts in this thesis, is that it is nearly impossible to distinguish our daily shopping from self-gift shopping which would create a problem both during the collection of information and analyzes.

Gifts have many roles which change according to each single situation in the gift giving scenario. For instance; Carmichael and MacLeod (1997) think that use of gifts at the beginning of a relationship can support long-term cooperation. Belk (1979) looks from a more broad perspective and attributes four functions to the gift; communication, social exchange, economic exchange and socialization. While socialization can be the main function for one gifting situation, economic exchange can be the main function for the other. It's the interesting nature of gift giving that both all of those functions may exist at the same time whereas only one of them may exist for another scenario. Sherry (1983, p.159) looks from a socialization and communication perspective and sees gift giving as a way of exchange for partners for modulating their relationship to maintain the desired degree of intimacy. In this sense, people gain different roles and prefer the appropriate gifts in order to fulfill the requirements of these roles. With this perspective Sherry (1983) defines gifts as tangible expressions of social relationships. In other words, gifts are the only tangible proofs of our socialization in our nature. As McCracken (1988, p.78) indicates; gift exchange allows individuals to insinuate certain symbolic properties into the lives of the gift recipient and to initiate possible meaning transfer. In some instances, gifts enables us to show our feelings which we could not show otherwise because of our fears and/or shyness.

Guo (2005) sees gift giving as an important social activity. Gift has different functions in various gift giving occasions. For instances, it helps to define the status of people in the society. Furthermore, gift giving serves as a symbol of social support during the passage from one life stage to another, such as for graduations, religious confirmations, engagements, and weddings (Belk, 1975). Gift giving is prominent in ceremonial occasions such as Father's Day, Mother's Day, and Secretary's Day (Belk, 1979).

Many researchers examined gift from an opportunistic view and ignored the altruistic benefits of it. For example, Bienenstock and Bianchi (2004) see gift giving as type of interaction which can generate status differences and they state that it is not the possession of resources that brings about status, but the use of those resources. In addition, Apparudai (1986) noticed that what social anthropologists have described as gift exchange in small-scale societies, is in reality not a simple act of generosity, but like commodity exchange – just a matter of self-interested calculation. It is also claimed that

commodity-exchange and gift exchange do not strictly represent two entirely different and mutually exclusive societal forms, but rather just two ideal types of exchange (Rus 2008). In reality, any economy will be a mix of these two types of exchange.

According to Gregory (1980, 1982, 1997), gifts belong to the sphere of the household and personal relationships, while commodities belong to the sphere of trade and impersonal relationships. Although this view is acceptable most of the time, this kind of a distinction which separates gifts and commodities with a strict line can be misleading in many instances. For example, if you buy your medicines from a specific pharmacy regularly it is a possibility that you form some kind of a personal relationship with the pharmacist. In addition to talking about their illnesses customers start talking about their daily lives when they shop at a specific pharmacist regularly over a period of time. Even in some extreme cases customers feel guilty when they purchase goods from another pharmacy. Although it is a type of trade relationship we cannot claim that it is impersonal. This shows that the distinction between the commodity and gift can be not so clear in each occasion. However, when we compare gift exchange with commodity exchange it is obvious that gift exchange is much more personal than the latter.

When we buy a product we value it with its monetary value whereas we may value the gifts we receive with their monetary values and/or symbolic values. As Mauss (1969) states it 'They have a name, a personality, a past and even a legend attached to them. Baudrillard (1988) agrees with Mauss and says that 'Once it has been given- and because of this- it is this object and not another. The gift is unique, specified by the people exchanging it and the unique moment of the exchange'. Since the gift's level of uniqueness and symbolic meanings attached to it change from one occasion to another, its value can not be compared with commodities purchased daily.

Bourdieu (1977) has argued that very often the only thing that makes gift exchange different from simple barter is the mere lapse of time between gift and counter gift. Although it is difficult to accept that this is the only difference, it is a valid statement partially in the sense that you have to pay instantly for what you want to purchase whereas it would be rude to buy a counter gift instantly when you receive a gift from your friend. For example, if your friends buy you a chic vase for your new house, it would be better to wait some time for reciprocity.

2.2. GIFT VERSUS COMMODITY PURCHASE

In order to analyze interpersonal gift selection behavior as the main subject of this research, we should make a clear distinction between gift purchases and the rest consisting of both commodity purchases and self-gifts. Although many research studies aiming gift buying, analyzes both self-gifts and interpersonal gifts, this study focuses only on interpersonal gift selection because distinction between self-gifts and commodity purchases is not always so much clear. It would be useful to define some general characteristics of two main purchasing types in order to understand and analyze this subject better.

When we buy a product for personal use we evaluate it with its use value and exchange value rather than the symbolic value it may have. On the other hand, in some cases when we purchase a product as a gift or receive a gift we may evaluate it with its symbolic value. For instance, a boy can buy greeting cards, roses to his girlfriend which may mean a lot as a gift but they have no meaning in terms of use value or symbolic value when this boy buys these things for himself. Carmichael and MacLeod (1997) explains this point in his study and states that; although gift goods may have little use value even at low levels of consumption, the institution is not useless. In other words whatever the use value of the gift is, gift has a useful function in our social environment.

As both utilitarian and hedonic shopping value play predominant roles in non-gift shopping (Babin & Attaway 2000), previous research stresses the utilitarian nature of gift shopping. Gift shopping is complicated by numerous social rules and interpersonal expectations that can render the pursuit of a gift into a quite arduous task (Sherry (1983); Caplow (1984); Otnes, Lowrey& Kim (1993); Laroche (2000); Wooten (2000), Lowrey, Otnes & Ruth (2004)). Gronhaug (1972) as well as and Belk (1978) found that in most cultures, compared to purchases for self-use, gift purchases generally involve visiting more stores, considering more alternatives, and spending more time searching for information.

Hart (1974) found higher levels of perceived risk in buying for others as a gift rather than for one's self. In contrast to shopping for self-use gift shopping can become both joyful and tortured. Shopping for self-giving has been a way for indulging, relaxing or enjoying yourself especially for women. Because you buy it for yourself and you know that you like it, then you do not take any risk during self-giving at all. If you buy a gift you take into account some benchmarks other than your own taste and needs, so that you can fulfill the aim of buying that gift. These benchmarks can change according to the role which you want to gain through gift giving. According to the research findings of Wooten (2000, p.85) indicates that people become anxious when they are highly motivated to elicit desired reactions from their recipients but are pessimistic about their prospects of success. In addition, he points out that as interpersonal stakes increase, actors are likely to be more concerned about their performances. In other words, gift selection may not always be enjoyable because of your expectations and ambiguity of the future.

One of the important issues is the communication problem in interpersonal gift giving whereas it is not the case for shopping for self-use. Interpersonal gifts often have communication errors because of the indirect and polysemous nature of social symbols with potential ambiguity (Belk 1979). Hart (1974) found higher levels of perceived risk in buying for others as a gift rather than for one's self. According to a research carried by Mick and Demoss in 1990 true self gifts are distinct from others and unquestionable special due to their rarity, particularity or function for the individual and sometimes due to aspects of sacredness. The reason for this assumption can be that no one else can know our needs and tastes better than we know. Unlike interpersonal gifts, the private coding of self-gifts ensures no misunderstanding of intended messages, a fact that not only demarcates these two forms of gift giving along the communication dimension but also enhances the value of self-gifts a personal acquisitions (Mick and DeMoss 1990, p.326).

As another point, it is useful not to overlook the difference of the definition of success between purchases for self-use and gift purchases. For instance, if we like the taste of the chocolate we bought from a supermarket or like the smell and durability of a perfume we bought from a store we can call it as a success. On the other hand when gift

purchasing is the case it is more difficult to be sure about our success. As Fischer (1990) also describes in his journal, success in gift selection means that recipients do not (to the giver's knowledge) return or exchange the gifts given to them. He further explains that, some gifts may be returned without the knowledge of the giver, so only giver reported success can be assessed. In addition to that, success is only partially determined by the giver since recipients may vary in their propensity to return gifts or to communicate the inappropriateness of them (Fischer 1990, p.339). According to the same research, although casual observation of the return counters in department stores after Christmas suggests that many gifts are returned, few respondents reported gifts being returned or exchanged. This, together with the low correlations between success and the other measures, could raise questions about the success measure's validity.

While no study has yet compared psychological states between buying for self-use and interpersonal gift giving, Clarke and Belk (1979) found that in most cultures, compared to purchases for personal use, gift purchases generally involve visiting more stores, considering more alternatives, and spending more time searching for a suitable gift. Gronhaug (1972) found that compared to recent buyers of tableware for personal use, those giving tableware as a gift reported considering more alternative choices, shopping at more dealers, seeking more advice from others, and reading dealers' brochures more thoroughly. In addition to that, there can be several reasons leading to this research results. May be, it is because the gift giver does not personally know the receiver very well or the giver wants to impress the receiver or want to reciprocate to a special gift with a special one, etc.

According to Belk (1982) the main difference between the gift purchase and personal purchase is that gift selection is a more involving activity than making a comparable selection for personal use. There are at least two types of involvement with which we might be concerned in gift-giving. One is item-specific and the other is purchase situation-specific. The item-specific form of involvement has been called "importance of purchase" (Howard & Sheth 1969), "enduring involvement" (Rothchild 1977) and "product involvement" (Clarke & Belk 1979). The essence of the construct involved in these phrases is that the consumer who is high in purchase item-specific involvement cares more about that item and is more interested in the purchase outcome. According to

Belk, the second type of involvement of concern in gift-giving is task involvement (Belk (1975), Clarke & Belk (1979)). Rather than attaching to a particular product, this type of involvement arises from the consumer's goals in a particular shopping situation and includes the usage situation envisioned for the product. As Clarke and Belk (1979) point out, "the task may be highly involving either because it entails important immediate goals (e.g. find a coat which is the least expensive wool coat in town), or because the intended usage situation involves important goals (e.g. find a dress to wear to the prom)."

This study seeks to explore the effects of different levels of gift-giving involvement on the gift selection process in order to resolve the apparent conflicts in prior research findings. The major assumption is that gift-giving situations differ in involvement and that these differences in involvement directly influence the amount of effort devoted to the purchase selection process.

2.3. CULTURAL VALUES & PERCEPTION OF GIFT ADEQUACY

Culture is defined in various ways according to the different perspectives of different researchers. Hofstede (1980, p.21) explains culture as:

Systems of values; and values are among the building blocks of culture... Culture could be defined as the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment. Culture determines the identity of a group the same way as personality determines the identity of an individual.

According to another researcher culture is defined as an evolving system of concepts, values and symbols inherent in a society- a learned system of behavior that organizes experience, determines an individual's position within social structures and guides actions in a multitude of situations, both known and unknown (Yau, Chan & Lau 1999, p. 98). In brief, culture can be defined in many different ways, in brief, a culture is a group of people sharing common beliefs, norms and customs (Yau, Chan & Lau 1999).

Study of Hofstede (1977) resulted in a model with four important cultural dimensions:

- Power distance (relationship between the subordinates and their manager)

- Individualism vs. Collectivism (ties between individuals)
- Masculinity vs. Femininity (authority vs. negotiation)
- Uncertainty Avoidance (the extent to which the citizens feel threatened)

The culture of Turkey expresses the duality of Western and Eastern culture which is built on traditional values (Kazan & Ilter 1994). According to the Hofstede's (1997) categorization of Turkey as a collectivist culture, people are not afraid of showing feelings and are emotionally integrated. In addition, he categorizes Turkey as a country where high power distance and masculinity is dominant. As a result, Turkish citizens are considered as success oriented focusing on social advancement. Finally, in terms of uncertainty avoidance Turkey keeps its high rankings according to the Hofstede's classifications (1997).

As it is clear, members of the same culture share the same value system, attitudes and behavioral characteristics which differentiate them from other cultures. Interestingly, the differences in value systems across various cultures appear to be associated with major differences in consumers' behavior (Gong 2003). Because culture also effects the buying decisions of the customers, marketers have always attached importance to the issue of culture. As an example, Kacen and Lee (2002) has pointed out that differences between the cultural values of individualism versus collectivism, as well as differences between the ideas of independent and interdependent notions of the self, influence impulsive purchasing behavior among Australian, American, and Asian consumers. In the West, the individual is generally identified as a separate entity, a decision making-unit (Markus & Kitayama 1991), and while in Chinese culture an individual is inherently connected to others and fosters relationships through reciprocity, sentiment and kinship networks. But even within interdependent cultures an element of individuality exists (Belk 1988).

The most popular gift types changes from one country to another according to its culture, lifestyle, etc. For example, Sherif and Sherif (1963) stated that Navajo Indians judged that a gift of wearing apparel for a loved one had to cost in excess of 11 dollars before it would bring pride to the giver, while for Black and White respondents, a 6 dollar gift was seen as adequate to pride.

Whereas sporting goods and handmade items are among the most frequent gift items in the U.S. (Belk 1979), in other cultures besides clothing, favorite gift items vary. For instance, in France and Mexico, toys are very popular as Christmas gifts (Jolibert & Fernandez-Moreno 1982). In Asian countries such as Korea and Japan, fruit and meat are given as gift items, while these items are seldom found on the gift lists of Americans (Gehrt & Shim (2002), Park (1998)). Koreans also frequently give practical gift items, especially cash (Park 1998).

Obviously, there has been little gift given research in Turkey compared to Western countries. As a result, Turkish people's gifting behavior appears to be an area in which further research is a necessity. Although gift giving is a universal process (Belk 1976), gift selection criteria can depend on culture and may change from one country to another. When gift giving literature is examined, it can be seen that research results proves this dependency. As a result, it is a necessity for this subject to test the validity of the hypothesis suggested by other researchers for Turkish culture and to try to get new findings about gift giving for this culture.

Turkish sociocultural context has been characterized by close interpersonal relationships, group ties, loyalty and kinship (Aygün & İmamoğlu (2002), Fişek (1982), Kağıtçıbaşı (1982)). Emotions of collectivist cultures such as Turkish culture belong to the self-other relationship rather than being confined to the subjectivity of the self (Mesquita 2001). Since gifts are tangible expressions of social relationships (Shery 1983), they constitute an important element of Turkish people's social life who attach importance on intimate relationships within the community.

In the Ottoman community, gifts are the main elements in the social relationships, particularly in formal celebrations, rituals and ceremonial parade review (Önal 2008). Wedding ceremony is one of these ceremonies at which giving jewelry as a gift is a tradition. In the Ottoman culture, gifts are used to expose the communication between the gift giver and the gift receiver and to show the power and to be the vehicle to contact with different countries' people (Önal 2008). According to the study of Önal, gifts given in the Ottoman society can be classified in the following form: dresses, clothes,

other representation equipments, valuable ornaments, jewels, perfumes, cosmetic materials, slaves, books, horologe and decoration materials.

In Turkish history, as the west was equated with the very principle of ‘civilization’, the logic of westernization had come to seem necessary and inevitable (Robins 1996). As a result, Turkish culture started to be shaped by western culture which is also introduced as the ‘universal culture’ by the west (Robins, 1996). Today, when gifting occasions are considered such as Valentines’ day, Mothers’ day, Fathers’ day; effect of the Western culture on the Turkish gifting habits are obvious. Special days of the Turkish culture such as Bayrams are replaced by the western special days. In Turkey at Valentines’ Day jewelers make ten times more revenue than it is the case at other times (Fortune 2010). According to another information source of Turkey, in 2010 682 million TL is spent for Mothers’ Day and 639 million TL is spent for the Valentines’ Day (Vatan 2010). This data confirms that western holiday habits have been adopted by the Turkish citizens.

2.4. MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

Designations of ‘gift’ may arise through cultural convention, or through such directed intervention strategies as advertising (Sherry, 1983). One of the aims of this research is to explore impact of marketing environment on attitudes about gift selection. Marketing experts, advertisers and retailers should have a clear understanding about the process of gift selection because it is an important part of consumption as it has been mentioned before. Through the contributions of Belk (1976) the relation between the marketing and gift giving gained a different perspective. Belk (1976) concludes that gift giving spread because it was a solution for manufacturers who were looking a way to increase demand. Belk identifies 19th century as the starting point for buying mass produced gifts. During that time, American industry began to pump excess goods into the US market and firms have started to promote the idea of a holiday filled with gifts in order to sell their excess supply. When we think about these special days, multiple types of them come in to our minds such as; Christmas, Fathers’ Day, Mothers’ Day, Valentines’ Day, Teachers’ Day, and many others which may also change from one country to another.

The impact of advertising on how and what people think, believe and feel has been widely researched, both in psychology and marketing. Billions of dollars each year are spent internationally to create and distribute advertising messages promoting their products or ideas. Incursion of western holidays into Turkish life has altered the nature of gift giving within the society. Advertisings which focus on gifting and aim to increase gift purchases are countless. Special days, such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Teacher's Day, become big opportunities for marketers in the sense that they offer their products in a more sentimental way in the eyes of the customers during these times. Marketers have continued to 'invent' new gifting occasions such as Grandparents' Day, Secretaries' Day and so on. Not only do the advertisements promote products, they enhance the pressure on the consumer to give, invoking the 'obligation to give' (Mauss 1954).

In fact, special days became big opportunities for marketers whose main objective is to make people buy their products. While trying to fulfill these aims, marketing professionals applied different strategies. For example, in order to make people buy a gift for Mother's Day, they touch into the feelings of people and remind them about the unique relationship between them and their mothers. When emotion is the issue, the object which is promoted a lot by marketers through touching feelings comes into mind; diamond ring. For instance, at an advertising of a diamond ring of '... the slogan is: 'your beloved deserves 'this small thing''. Sherry (1983, p.160) also focused on the relation between marketing and gift selection and pointed out that the extent to which items are perceived as gifts as a result of their availability in gift stores, the power of such institutions to shape consumer behavior and the response of consumers to the manipulation of traditional conceptions of 'gift' are worthy of additional field investigation.

Consumers are under considerable pressure due to the aggressive advertising strategies of companies to make customers purchase and give gifts. Marketers touch people's feelings in order to feel them obligated to buy a gift for people within their social environment.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. QUANTITATIVE VERSUS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Both quantitative and qualitative techniques are applied in the area of consumer behavior by marketing experts. Although both of these methods are very helpful, each one of them offer solutions to specific needs. As a result, it is an important decision for researchers to choose the appropriate research method for their study.

Quantitative research which assumes that individuals have direct, unmediated access to the real world subscribes to the theory that it is possible to obtain hard, secure, objective knowledge about this single external reality (Carson, *et al.* 2001). According to this research type, the thought should be supported by explicitly stated theories and hypothesis. The main advantages of the quantitative research is that it is relatively easy to reach many respondents and draw conclusions for generalizations. In quantitative research methodology the data is collected through surveys, experiments and time series analysis (Lekvall & Wahlbin 1993). The collected data is comparable or measurable and often systematically standardized and easily presented in a short space (Patton 1990). However, it is difficult to reach underlying factors, as attitudes and valuations.

Instead of trying to explain casual relationships by means of objective ‘facts’ and statistical analysis, qualitative research methodology avoids the rigidities of quantitative research methodology and uses a more personal process in order to understand the reality (Carson *et al.* 2001). In addition to that, the qualitative research is more focused on detailed data and the number of respondents and cases are limited. This limitation in the number of participants reduces to ability of making generalizations. Qualitative investigations consist of interpretations of the reality which provide rich descriptions aiming to set the qualitative results into the human context (Jackson & Trochim 2002). Common ways of collecting qualitative data is interviews and observations. (Patel & Davidsson 1994). These methods are optimal for interpretation of emotions and obtaining rich descriptions (DeMarrais & Tisdale 2002). In order to understand participant’s perceptions and attitudes qualitative method is preferred for this research.

3.2. WHY IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS?

When we look through the researches done in the area of gift giving it stands out that many important researchers have preferred to depend on qualitative data (Belk & Coon (1993), Fischer & Arnold (1990), Park (1993), Otnes, Lowrey & Kim (1993), Wooten (2000), Joy (2001), Schiffman & Cohn (2008)). As Atkinson and Silverman (1997) states it, use of interviewing in order to gain information is so extensive today that it has been said that we live in an 'interview society'. There are several reasons for using in depth interviews instead of other research methods for this study.

First of all, personal in depth interviews were chosen as the method for collecting qualitative data since they provide a rich description of the behavior of cultural and social settings (Geertz, 1973; McCracken 1988). As a complex subject gift selection links consumers' social and economic backgrounds with influences from the market. Personal in depth interviews were widely adapted in previous gift related studies by researchers (e.g. Arnould, Price & Curasi (1999); Durgee and Segó (2001); Hill and Romm (1996), Joy (2001); Otnes and Zolner (2004)).

Besides these issues, in depth interview is appropriate for this subject since this study aims to answer the underlying motives for gift selection decision instead trying to get rigid answers. As a result, reaching the participants feelings is essential in order to explore this subject. In this sense, the numerical values of a survey research can mean nothing without knowing the underlying motives for the actions of the participants. Although surveys are preferable when reaching more participants and making generalizations are the main objectives, it is not preferred when it is aimed to explore deep feelings. Through in depth interviews the participant can feel important and may be eager to help, the researcher can see the interest and intention of the participants and get information about the participants' deeper feelings.

In-depth interviews allow the interviewer to probe key areas of interest, so that the interviewer takes on the responsibility to guide the discussion to uncover the pertinent

issues (Homick 2007). In other words, the interviewer can lead the conversation according to the research objectives.

Furthermore, through in-depth interviews the participant has freedom to express his/her opinions about the topic. One of the researches show, that in in-depth interviews the critics are more acid than it is the case in focus groups (Milena, Diainora & Alin 2008). As a result, the participants feel more confident and they express their concerning and rejection regarding an activity which is considered too difficult or unnecessary (for some) from their point of view (Milena, Diainora & Alin 2008). In this sense, interviews are also appropriate for addressing sensitive topics that people might be reluctant to discuss in a group.

Additionally, during in-depth interviews the candidate feels more important because the interviewer spends much time with him in order to get more information from the candidate. On the other hand, it is vice versa when surveys are the issue. A survey applicant may not care much about the survey because he knows that hundreds of people will be filling in that survey and his ideas nothing will mean more than a numerical value to the researcher. In addition to that, during a survey no one spends much time with him and makes him feel himself important. As a result this candidate does not care much about questions in the survey and may answer them randomly.

Finally, if the candidate answers the survey questions without any attention or even without reading some of the question, it may be difficult for the researcher to find out that. During a survey research, the researchers do not watch the participants most of the time when they are filling out the survey and this decreases the probability of knowing the intention of the participant. On the other hand, during an in depth interview a researcher can easily see if the candidate really cares about this researcher and want to be helpful or not. The participant shows his/her level of interest through many ways, such as willingness to answer all questions with detail, giving positive reactions to the prompts of the researcher, his/her motivation, mood ,etc.

3.3. THE Y GENERATION

Otnes and Woodruff (1991) argue, that the gift giver's stage in the life cycle can explain variations gift selection behavior. This statement implies that people from different life cycles may show different characteristics. The sample of this qualitative study consists of participants who live in Istanbul and who are from Y Generation which is also called the Global Millennial. Although it is not strictly defined, for this generation, an age range from 18 to 32 is acceptable by most of the scholarly resources (Keene and Handrich 2010). According to a research done by the Ministry of Health in Turkey in 2009 this generation has the highest population in contrast to other generations. As it is clear, generational theory seeks to understand and characterize cohorts of people according to their birth generation. Generations are defined not by formal process, but rather by demographers, the press and media, popular culture, market researchers, and by members of generation themselves (Pendergast 2007). This research aims to develop strategic directions to target millennial generation in the market. Besides its availability, there are specific reasons for analyzing Y generation in Istanbul.

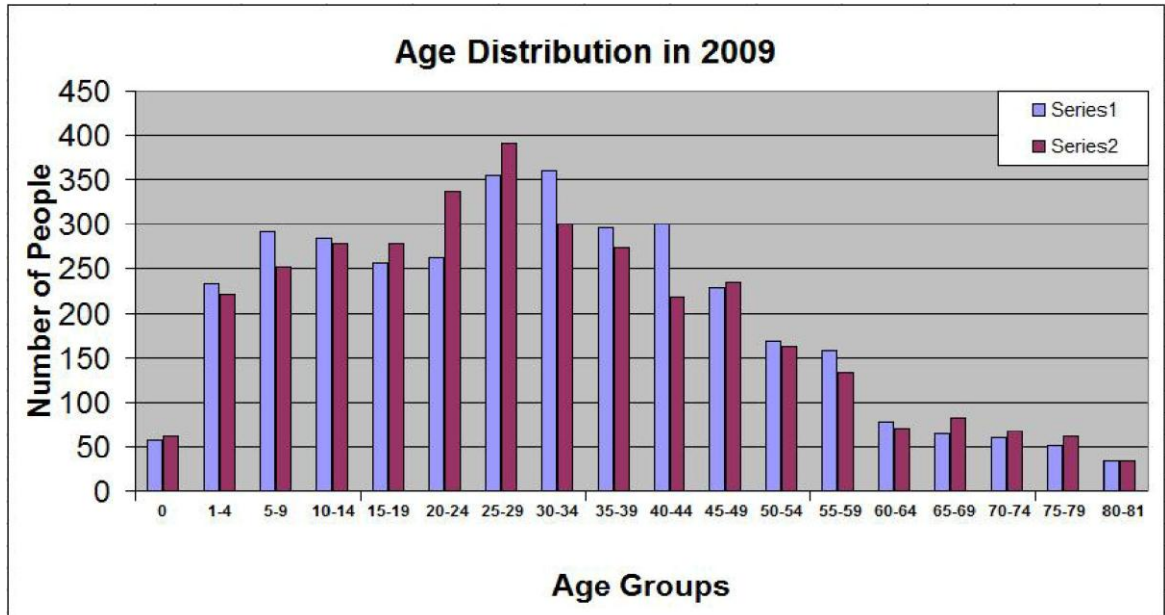


Figure 3.1.: Age Distribution of Turkey in 2009

Source: <http://www.velimeseso.saglik.gov.tr/images/ist.ht2.jpg>

The technology, mass marketing, politics and pop culture in which today's youth have grown up have ensured a significant difference to previous youth cultures (

McCrindle2009). In contrast to other generations, Y generation is more educated and more financially endowed than any generation preceding them (Wolfinger 2009). Furthermore, according to a recent study, Y Generation has considerable effect on the buying behavior of their parents (Dyk 2008). As a result, the effect of Y generation on sales is more than it is estimated. Finally, understanding Y generation will show an insight about future's adult population that will probably be the one possessing largest financial resources. As it is pointed out by Pendergast in 2007, understanding that we each belong to a generation, and that generations have unique predictable values, cycles, strengths and weaknesses-generational dynamics- is a strategic way of embracing the future.

One of the most important communalities within the Y Generation members is that they were born into the Information Age during which rapid technological developments occurred influencing their everyday life and buying behavior. According to the research Pew Internet Project (2009), the web continues to be populated largely by younger generations, as over half of the adult internet population is between 18 and 44 years old. These young people dominating the online population, access communication technologies and unlimited information on the web, so that they overcome the constraints of time, distance and space. 'They've never known life without a computer-they can take in 20 hours' worth of information in seven hours. There isn't a *brand* or a trend these kids aren't aware of', says Nancy Kramer, CEO of Resource Interactive. (Dyk 2008).

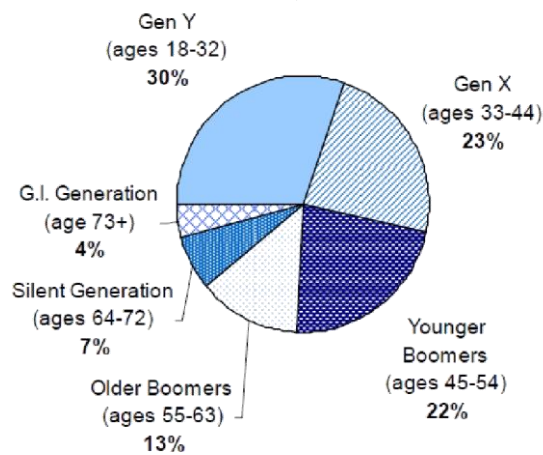


Figure 3.2.: Make up of Adult Internet Population by Generation in U.S.

Source: Pew Internet Project Data Memo, 2009

According to the research carried by Dyk (2008), although Y generation's income is lower than that of most boomers, yet core Millennials are much more psychologically engaged in luxury than their parents' generation. For instance, when we look at the university parking lots we see more luxury cars such as Audi, BMW, and Mercedes than it is the case for other parking lots.

Moreover, the impact of the Y Generation on their parents buying behavior has been explored by the researchers. According to another study which is carried by Resource Interactive, an Ohio-based marketing company, young adults influence 88 percent of household apparel purchases (Dyk 2008). Parents trust their children's taste may be because the Millennials are perceived to be the more informed consumers. Millennials and their parents go out shopping together most of the time and consult each other on what to buy.

While older generations were not included in the sample because of their traditionalist views younger generations were not preferred because they do not have enough experience to make a research in gift giving and draw conclusions. As Otnes(1993) has stated, younger givers may not have experienced selecting gifts for a wide variety of recipients.

To sum up, taking into account their population size, their effect on the buying behavior of the adults, their willingness to pay for luxury good even before they start to earn money, their familiarities with technology and their growth during information age without any limitation of time, space, it can be concluded that they share so many similarities which differentiate them from others and that they have a huge impact on the sales which was not the case for previous generations at this age range.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. RESERCH GAP

As a leading researcher in gift giving, Marcel Mauss (1954) became a source of inspiration for many other researchers who are interested in the subject of gifting. Although relatively little research was conducted on gift giving from the 1920s through the 1960s, an increase in the number of studies as the topic received greater research attention in more recent years which can be seen on the table below (Homick 2007, p.10). This rapid increase may be a result of the increasing popularity of gift giving in the culture which couldn't be the case during world wars avoiding a friendly and peaceful environment for gift giving. Marcel Mauss' work, whose original version is in French, was translated into English in 1954 by Cunnison and till that time none of the researchers has contributed to this subject.

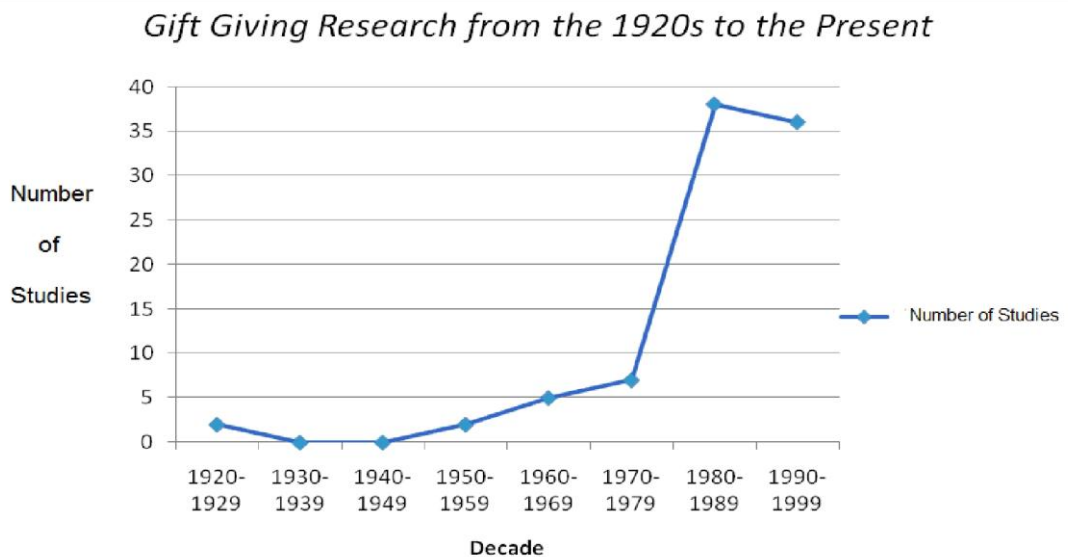


Figure 4.1.: Gift Giving Research from the 1920s to the Present
Source: Homick, 2007

As a result of its unique nature gifting has gained the attention of many researchers from different subject areas during 1960s. In addition to its existence in social relationships and gaining attention of the anthropologists (ex: Levi Strauss 1965), sociologists (ex: Gouldner 1960) and psychologists (ex: Schwartz 1967); gifting also

became an important subject in business world because of its market share and gained the attention of researchers in the area of economic (ex: Belshaw 1965), consumer behavior (ex: Lowes, Turner & Wills 1968) and marketing. Examination of gift giving in many different subject areas enables us to gain a broader and deeper understanding of gift giving behaviors.

Researches related with gift buying behavior have usually focused on psychological inputs and marketing inputs have not taken enough attention. Furthermore, most of the studies related with gift giving have been carried out and conducted in and limited to American culture (Park 1993). Although behavioral research studies across cultures have focused on a wide range of topics, consumer behavior studies have not put much effort on analyzing gift giving behavior in other cultures. Incursion of western holidays into Turkish life has altered the nature of gift giving within the society. Although there has been studies exploring gifting habits in recent years, there has never been a study which explores gift selection behavior of millennial generation in the Turkish culture.

4.2.LITERATURE RELATED WITH GIFT SELECTION

Existing theories and research studies related to present study will be analyze according to their primary subjects. Researchers have tried to analyze this issue from different perspectives. Instead of being mutually exclusive, most of these themes are related with each other and they can exist at the same time.

4.2.1. Motivation

Motivation triggers people for exchanging gifts within their social environment (Hill and Rom 1996). The type of the motivation which enables people to buy gifts changes from one situation to another. Whereas the gift giver may aim to make the recipient happy with an altruistic motivation, he may also aim to satisfy himself/herself with an agonistic motivation. As Sherry (1983) indicates it, gift exchange results from multiple motives that fall between the poles of altruism and agonism on a motivation continuum.

Several categories of motivations have been identified in previous studies on gift giving, and include obligatory and voluntary motives (Goodwin, Smith & Spiggle (1990);

Mauss (1954); Park (1993)), practical and experiential motives (Wolfenbarger and Yale 1993), altruistic motives (Lowe, Turner & Wills (1971); Sherry (1983); Wolfinger (1990); Laidlaw (2000)), compliance with social norms (Wolfenbarger 1990), self-interest (Lowe et al. (1971); Mauss (1954); Sherry (1983); Wolfenbarger (1990)), and reciprocal needs (Lowe et al. 1971). Specifically, Goodwin et al. (1990) have classified gift giving according to the obligatory and voluntary natures of different gift giving motives. Lowe, Turner and Wills (1971) have postulated that the most important reasons for giving gifts are to obtain pleasure from giving, to exhibit friendship and love, to meet others' expectations, to give pleasure to others, and to show appreciation for others. Wolfenbarger (1990) have suggested three categories of motivation: self-interest, compliance with social norms, and altruism. Wolfenbarger and Yale (1993) have proposed experiential, obligated and practical motivations. Gift giving may be driven not purely by a single motivation, but rather by motivations that may span several categories: 'The giver's motive may be predominantly voluntary, predominantly obligatory, or some combination of the two' (Goodwin et al. 1990, p.690).

Banks (1979) focuses on reciprocity as a kind of motivation in gift exchange. He introduces reciprocity with pure gift (altruism) at one end total reciprocation (reciprocity) at the other end of continuum. In case of a pure gift, nothing is given or expected in return. Altruism as a motivation for gift giving arises when the receiver is capable of appreciating the gesture but is incapable of returning the gift or favor; the very old, the very young, the very sick, and the very poor (Banks 1979). Reciprocity belonging to the other end of the continuum involves social obligation to give, to accept and to repay. Reciprocation may be mediated by other variables such as ability to return a gift and position of the recipient in the society (Banks 1979). According to the rules set in the community, the recipient must reciprocate to avoid feeling inferior and to safeguard reputation, the recipient must reciprocate and a failure to reciprocate appropriately can result in an asymmetrical relationship (Sherry 1983).

Babin, Gonzales and Watts (2007) introduced a gift satisfaction model which is shown below. This model consists of key constructs addressing a consumer's approach to gift shopping. Consumer's satisfaction with the gift shopping experience is depicted as the final dependent variable. According to this model, satisfaction is an outcome

determined by personal shopping value and spending of money time and effort which are predicted by two shopping orientations and two motivation types.

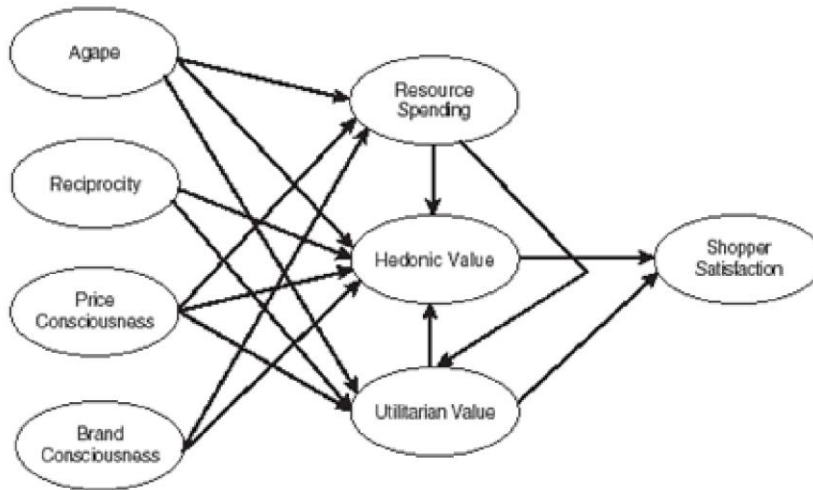


Figure 4.2.: Gift Satisfaction Model

Source: Babin, Gonzales, Watts; 2007

People in different cultures demonstrate various gift-giving motivations. Betty et al. (1993) have suggested that Japanese, typical collectivistic cultures, give more non-obligatory gifts than Americans do. Park (1993;1998) has concluded that cultural values such as face saving, pressure to reciprocate and group conformity are found to be more dominant among Koreans, while altruism is found to be more dominant among Americans. Hill and Romm (1996) have suggested that Australian mothers emphasize short-term goals in gift giving, whereas Vietnamese mothers focus on long terms.

4.2.1.1. Reciprocity

As it is stated earlier, Marcel Mauss (1954) who is both an anthropologist and a sociologist is one of the most important researchers contributing to the gifting subject with his study; *The Gift*. He interpreted gifting as a collective formation and as a system at the center of society consisting of mutual obligations such as; the obligation to give, the obligation to receive and the obligation to repay. This obligation cycle enables gifting to continue in the future. In Mauss' classic formation denying these obligations means violating the public expectations and denying the existence of a social relationship with the other party. As a result of seeing the importance of gifting early in

the twentieth century and putting forward a new understanding during these years he became a pioneer in this subject and number of the studies which cited his book is countless.

Carrier (1991) examines both the habit of gift giving and Mauss' statements. Carrier (1991) confirms Mauss's theories about obligations in gifting and states that gift transactions are obligatory for stable relationships at which gifting cycle goes on as long as the relation continues. For instance, if one neighbor helps another move some stones, and if later the second loans the first a tool, this does not simply discharge the obligation. It also reaffirms the neighborly relationship, and so reaffirms the obligation to continue to give and receive in this way (Bulmer 1986).

Schwartz (1967) is one of the few researchers who analyzed gift giving with his study of '*The Social Psychology of the Gift*' during a period when the amount of effort given to explore the gifting behavior was limited in the academic world. Schwartz (1967) preferred to categorize gifts into two groups with respect to giving motivations. According Schwartz, the first gift group consists of Christmas, birthday and anniversary gifts, Mother's Day and Father's Day presents, and so forth. The second group consists of prizes and trophies which are the purest form of the achievement gifts. Mixed forms involve achievement gifts for persons of a certain (usually kinship) status, for example, graduation presents. Like Mauss, Barry also focuses on the principle of reciprocity and indicates that; a gift giver will experience discomfort if reciprocity fails to occur; but the idea that over-reciprocation will produce disturbance in the original giver is more interesting and leads into the area of undeserved reward. As a result, quality of gift exchange provides a social relationship, in the form of grace or disgust.

In gift giving there is the risk of losing face if the gift one gives is not appropriate, if one refuses another's gift offer, or if a gift is not appropriately reciprocated. Although the practice of calculating and comparing the value of gifts given and received is frowned upon, it is not considered uncommon according to Joy (2001). By exchanging material and non-material goods, people become mutually dependent on each other and this mutual dependence is regulated by a power balance between the actors in the

network (Scanzoni 1975). The reciprocal character in the exchange process binds people together.

Laidlaw (2000) looks at reciprocity from a different point of view focusing on the concept of pure gifts. According to James, it is a mistake to define the gift as necessarily reciprocal and non-alienated. Like it is the case for pure commodity, the pure gift is characterized by the fact that it does not create personal connections and obligations between the parties which conflicts with the assumptions Mauss provides.

Finally, Service (1996) introduces a new term in the area of gift exchange which is called as 'negative reciprocity'. Service (1996) termed 'negative reciprocity' when the partner in an exchange relationship seeks more than is given. In this situation economic man acts in a self-seeking manner with minimum moral inhibitions (Ekeh 1974).

4.2.1.2. Self-Concept & Status

Mauss (1954) gave examples from many cultures to show that status is attainable through gift giving. After Mauss, Homans (1961) and Blau (2009) related gift giving to status in their theories about exchange. In his study of Exchange and Power in Social Life, Blau (2009) argued that status structures are emergent properties of social exchange processes. A person who gives others valuable gifts or bestows important services makes a claim for superior status by obliging the receivers to him. If the receivers return benefits that adequately discharge their obligation, they deny the giver his claim to superiority (Blau 2009, p.108).

A number of researchers have shown that gift giving behavior reflects both the giver's self and the giver's perception of the recipient (Belk (1979), Neisser (1973), Shurmer (1971)). Self-identity may be confirmed by showing it to others in the objectified form of a gift, or by conspicuous presentation of gifts (Sherry 1983). In relation with that, acceptance or rejection of a gift can be a conscious affirmation of selfhood (Schwartz 1967). In other words, we give receive, and reject gifts strategically, thereby symbolically predicating identity. Since those who give gifts are also those who have the means to give gifts, it is difficult to distinguish whether status differences result

from generosity or are due to the possession of resources (Bienenstock & Bianchi 2004).

Schwartz (1967) explores gift giving behavior with respect to status, social relationships and concludes that social rankings are also reflected in and maintained gifts. He further explains that allocation of presents, in terms of quantity or quality, normally coordinate with the social rankings of the considered recipients. The obligation to present gifts brings people into comparison that would ordinarily not be contrasted with one another. In other words, as the only tangible product of our social relationships; gifts show us the status differences and social differences between people in our environment.

Otnes (1993) analyzed status from a different perspective in his study. Since social relationships are dynamic, it can be assumed that the roles expressed by givers and recipients may change over time (Otnes 1993). In this case, it is important to understand the conditions that cause the roles of either party to remain consistent or be modified. In addition, Otnes states that, longitudinal studies of giver-recipient dyads are or networks, would be beneficial in order to expand our understanding of the fluid nature of social roles expressed through gift exchange over time.

4.2.1.3. Altruism versus Self- Interest

Sherry (1983) argues that both altruism and self-interest affect giving. The Sherry model suggests that relevant characteristics of the recipient may include not only financial, physical and emotional wellbeing, but also appearance, social role, attitudes and opinions, behavior may include hints and direct requests for gifts.

One of the studies of Belk which is a mutual work with Coon (1993), deals with three types of dating gift giving; economic exchange, symbolic exchange, romantic love. Couples who belong to the economic exchange model evaluate the value of gifts only according to its price. On the other hand with respect to romantic love, couples only care about its symbolic value and don't care about this 'pure gift's' price both when they are the giver and the recipient.

The work of Malinowski (1922) and Sahlins (1972) also suggests a positive relationship between the closeness of social relationships and the purity of the gift (the extent to

which it is given as an expression of sympathy and without concrete expectations of returns). As an exchange model; Belk's symbolic exchange model lies in the middle of these two extremes. Although it's difficult to categorize each relationship in these groups, Belk's study provides us systematic analyzes of gift giving in dating.

4.2.2. Cross Cultural Gift Giving

As it has been explained before, the gift selection criteria used by people from different cultures are also different. An example given by Betteridge (2010, p.4) shows a cross cultural gift giving different clearly: 'A young Iranian man recently arrived in the U.S. and, confused about Christmas, inquired if Christmas presents were only given by older people to younger ones and was somewhat surprised to learn that anyone may give to anyone else, that even children make or purchase presents for their parents, other relatives and friends'.

Guo (2005) has reported that Canadian respondents prefer gifts that create intangible value (e.g. pleasure) while Chinese respondents prefer gifts that have more practical value (e.g. cash). Hill and Romm (1996) have noted that Australian mothers prefer to give gifts with prestigious brand names, Vietnamese mothers prefer to give practical gifts, and Israeli mothers tend to buy gifts at discount prices.

Jolibert and Fernandez-Moreno (1983) discuss the economic significance of gift giving and the roles played by French and Mexican couples in purchasing Christmas gifts. They report Mexican couples spend a higher proportion of their average monthly income for Christmas presents than French couples and that Mexican husbands and wives appear to contribute equally in gift giving while French wives largely make the decisions concerning the number of gifts.

Joy (2001) is one of the researchers who put emphasis on the difference in gift giving attitudes between different cultures. According to Joy, although each individual also has a private of inner self, in China it is also subject to the collective will. In the West, an individual is considered as a separate entity, a decision-making unit (Markus and

Kitayama 1991), and while in Chinese culture an individual is connected to others and fosters relationships through reciprocity, sentiment, and kinship networks.

4.2.3. Relationship Type

With regard to the relationship type different relationship types have been classified and analyzed in a range of studies (Belk (1979); Caplow (1982); Goodwin (1990); Joy (2001); Sherry (1983); Otnes, Tina & Young (1993); Wagner, Ettenson & Verrier (1990)). Belk (1979) has categorized gift receivers into close family members, distant family members and non-family members. As another example, Spiggle, Smith and Goodwin (1990) have divided receivers into three groups: 1) casual friends and business associates; 2) close friends, dates and spouses; and 3) family relations (e.g. siblings and parents). Furthermore, Joy (2001) has classified relationships into family relations, romantic partners, close friends, just friends, and hi/bye friends.

Analysis of Otnes, Tina, Young (1993) indicates that, almost without exception, the perception of recipients as easy or difficult is affected from some aspect of the particular relationship between giver and recipient. According to nature of their relationship with the recipient, the gifting partners change their gift selection behavior so as to select a gift that reflects the roles they wish to express in each relationship. Knall and Vangelisti (1996) assert that gift giving is a way of making a statement about a relationship.

A common finding in previous studies is that gift items, the cost of a gift, and the gift acquisition process differ in relation to the intensity of giver-receiver relationship. Specifically, gift items can vary from personal items for intimate relationships to a specific amount of money for mere acquaintances (Johnson, 1974). In addition to that, according to the study of Caplow (1982) the cost of a gift is roughly proportional to the closeness of the relationship. For instance, more expensive gift items are generally given to closer family members than to distant family members (Belk, 1979).

Buying a gift for your children is different in nature from buying a gift to others in the sense that there is no expectation of reciprocity, you are aware of that they depend on you because they have no other resource to get their requests. As a result, gifts given to

your own children are examples for altruistic form of giving for all the time. Andre Caron and Ward (1975) analyzes the sources of children's gift requests and the parental responses initial verbal response (e.g. yes, no, maybe) and ultimate behavioral response (buying or not). According to the results of the study; children most often cited television as the source of gift ideas. This information isn't surprising in the sense that most of the children are interested in watching TV and they believe what they saw on TV most of the time. Older children were more likely to cite television and catalogs as the idea source and less likely to cite friends than were younger children. These findings suggested that older children have learned to use a variety of mass media as sources of product ideas. Andre Caron (1975) indicates that middle class children exhibited less interest in competition toys than did upper-class children. This data is so interesting that it needs further exploration at the future in order to understand the underlying motives from a psychological perspective. In terms of gifts received data shows that both groups (middle and upper class) receive mostly what they requested that is non-interactive toys for the middle class children and competition games/toys for the upper class children.

4.2.4. Occasion Specific

A number of studies have been conducted on various occasions. Some researchers have examined gift giving by manipulating hypothetical occasions (Belk (1982); DeVere, Clifford & Shulby (1983)). Specifically, Belk (1982) has examined the effect of involvement on gift giving, by manipulating involvement through four different gift-giving scenarios: 1) a birthday gift for a close female friend who is about your age, 2) a thank you gift to repay some favor; 3) a birthday gift for a casual female friend who is older than you; and 4) a wedding gift for a close young female relative. The results indicate that differences in involvement brought by various gift giving situations result in different consumer purchase strategies (Belk, 1985).

Wooten (2000) has focused on Christmas gift giving at multiple recipients per giver exists increasing the concerns about equipollence. In this situation, equipollence refers to the extent to which multiple recipients are treated in an egalitarian way by givers (Lowrey 1996). The equivalence may be in terms of, in term of quantity of gifts, etc. (Lowrey 1996). Wooten explains, that concerns about equipollence puts the giver in a

difficult situation by imposing equality constraints on gifts to different recipients. As a result, these constraints complicate gift shopping by reducing givers' degree of freedom.

Wooten (2000) also examined the relation between the gift giving occasion and the importance attached to the gift by the gift givers. According to Wooten, an occasion is considered to be special, if it is perceived as being important to the recipient. For instance, weddings and silver anniversaries meet this criterion. Important occasions spark gifting anxiety because they are usually accompanied by high gifting demands (Wooten 2000).

According to Latane (1981), in gift giving social tensions increases with audience size. Leary and Kowalski (1995) focused on occasion in gift giving and concluded that, gift givers become anxious when large audiences are present because potential gains and losses vary with the number of witnesses to a performance. Inappropriate gifts cause embarrassment, threaten social ties, and leave lasting impressions.

4.2.5. Demographics

Like it is the case in all purchasing decisions, gift purchases are also related directly with the economic level of the buyer. Garner and Wagner (1991) have analyzed gift selection with the respect of the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of households. The results demonstrated that the value of annual expenditures for gifts is related to total expenditures (a proxy for income) , family size, life cycle stage and education. Her research results show that, extra household gift expenditures appear to be a luxury in the sense that; as income increases, gift expenditures increases more rapidly and as family size increases, the probability of spending for gifts to be given outside the home decreases. For families giving extra household gifts, the amount spent decreases as family size increases. In large families, most of the household budget for gift exchange may be allocated to members of the immediate family. The view that large families concentrate their gift expenditures on family members is also consistent with the results of Belk (1979), Caplow (1982), and Chael (1988) who indicated that members of the immediate family are not only the most frequent recipients but that they also receive the most expensive gifts. Given that family bounds are stronger in Turkey; this research result should also be valid in Turkey.

As a demographic element Wooten (2000) focuses on the giver's gifting capacity which is defined as the quality of possessing the necessary means to succeed as givers. According to Wooten, both cognitive (e.g. creativity and knowledge) and productive (e.g. money, time, and effort) resources were considered as necessities for givers.

Garner and Wagner explores further that, in the mature and older stages in which no children were present expenditures for gifts were higher than they were for young single adults whereas young married adults spent less than young single adults on extra household gifts. Grandparents may have less expenditure because of not living with their children and it is a high probability that they have accumulated money which they have saved when they were younger. As a result, they may be eager to spend much money on gifts. Finally, according to the results of the Garner and Wagner's study, probability of gift expenditures was greater among households in which the reference person had either some college education or an undergraduate degree or postgraduate education.

Komter and Vollebergh (1997) have also explored the relation of gift giving with demographics with multiple dimension such as sex, religion, religion, marital status, etc. Findings of Komter and Vollebergh show that there is no difference between the sexes in the way they distribute their gifts. Strong attachment to the values of the nuclear family in Christian religions may explain the fact that among nonreligious respondents friends are more popular, and religious respondents have a more intention give to their extended kin. Komter and Vollebergh further explains that being married is not related to gift giving to the extended family, but it diminishes the generosity toward friends. The number of children is not related to giving gifts to friends, but the percentage of gifts to member of the extended family is lower when the number of children is higher. Finally, it is found out that respondents with more education give more to friends, whereas those with less education give more to kin.

4.2.6. Recipient's Characteristics

Otnes (1993) contributed to the gift giving research subject with his study; 'Gift Selection for Easy and Difficult Recipients'. In this study, the gift giver is defined as a chameleon in order to explain how consumers move fluidly in their expression of one or

more social roles to recipients with whom they shared varied relationships. As it is stated earlier, people may gain different identities according to circumstances they face and these identities may conflict with each other. According to the research results of Otnes (1993), recipients are described as easy or difficult since the givers either help or hinder givers' attempts to express specific social roles through exchange. Otnes (1993), identifies 6 roles that givers express: pleaser, provider, the compensator, the socializer the acknowledger and the avoider. He concludes that gift selection strategies are inextricably dependent on two factors which are recipients' characteristics and the social role givers are attempting to express.

Sherry (1983) is one of the important researchers whose contribution to the gifting research area is a lot and whose studies became a resource for many others. At his study named 'Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective', Sherry (1983) argues that both altruism and self-interest affect giving. Sherry points out, that gift dimensions such as price or quality are used to create, maintain, modulate, or sever relationships with individuals or alliances within the matching partners. It is further explained that we give, receive and reject gifts strategically, thereby symbolically in relation with our attached identities. In other words, givers choose their gifts according to the type of relation they want to maintain with the recipient. According to the Sherry model relevant characteristics of the recipient may include financial, physical and emotional wellbeing In addition, appearance, social role, attitudes, opinions and behavior may include hints and direct requests for gifts. In this sense, she analyzes gift giving as a product of socialization and points out a relation with the gifts we choose and the role we prefer to play. Her research findings show, that gift giving contributes to the process of creating and maintaining social relationships within our environment.

Wooten (2000) focused on the effect of the recipient's characteristics on gift buying pattern of the giver. As Wooten (2000, p.90) explains it, selectivity influencing perceived gifting demands, is a characteristic ascribed to those who combine careful inspection with exacting standards. Selective recipients are especially problematic for givers who attempt to enact the pleaser role and whose objective is to select gifts that recipients will like (Otnes 1993).

4.2.7. Gifting Rules

Social groups developed strong rules regarding when, where and what kind of gifts could be given to whom (Thomas 2009). Carmichael and MacLeod (1997) tried to explore how the general norms and appropriate behaviors for gift giving have emerged and accepted by the culture and why they have been established in that particular way. In this research customs are defined as behavioral rules or strategies that are taught to each new generation by parents. According to their claim; children in most cases follow the rule unreflectively for the rest of their lives, and in turn teach it to their own children so that the convention is a replicator, acting much like a gene in a model of biological evolution. Most of the predictions follow from the simple idea that a custom, if it has survived years of evolutionary competition, must have had a good immune system- it must have been able to fight off attempts to subvert it. This allows us to say a great deal about the goods which should be chosen as gifts.

Test results of Carmichael and MacLeod (1997) are interesting and very informative:

(1) Gifts that are exchanged between two parties should be inefficient. If the partners exchanged money at the beginning of a match, then parasites could immediately enter. The partners of the match may give (and receive) the money and cheat.

(2) Gifts will be more expensive when the life of a match is short. If matches are too short gift giving will not help to achieve cooperation. Gift giving customs will surround only the important long term relationships in people's lives.

(3) Gift giving is a fully decentralized institution in the sense that a gift needs to be verified only by the other partner to the match. In such a way it may be a low-cost substitute to reputation mechanisms that require more public information on the behavior of agents in their relationship history.

(4) Gifts are a universal language. Members of a gift giving society can indulge in the entire costless message sending they wish when they give gifts.

Leon Schiffman and Deborah Cohn (2009, p.1055)'s study is one of the latest researchers in the subject of gift giving. These researchers define and analyze gifting rules and illustrate them on a table which you can see below. According to their

statements, these gifting rules are not mutually exclusive. Instead of that, they are intertwined relying upon each other to full flesh out the rulebook. Among these rules preference rule, knowledge acquisition rule, surprise rule, value rule and fitness rule are related with the gift selection criteria.

Table 4.1: Gifting Rule Definitions

Gifting Rule Definitions	
Rule Name	Definition
• Participation and reciprocity rule:	This rule determines who is required to participate in the exchange, and the degree obligation for receiver to give a gift in the future to the gift giver.
• Preference rule:	The extent to which the gift giver considers the gift receiver's likely preferences in deciding a course of action.
• Knowledge acquisition rule:	The method used by the gift giver to learn a gift recipient's desire and preferences.
• Surprise rule:	The value or extent of surprise in the gift exchange.
• Value rule:	The scale used to determine the importance, significance, prestige of the gift. (e.g. Time it took to pick out, monetary value)
• Fitness rules:	These rules state which objects are appropriate for any given gifting situation.
• Preparation rule:	This rule states how an object should be prepared for presentation.
• Recipient's rule:	This rule states how a recipient is expected to respond to the act being given (or receiving) a gift.

Source: Schiffman, Cohn;2009

Theodore Caplow (1984, p.8) explains the gift selection rules in his study. He indicates that a Christmas gift should demonstrate the giver's familiarity with the receiver's preferences; surprise the receiver, either by expressing more affection-measured by the aesthetic or practical value of the gift-than the receiver might reasonably anticipate or more knowledge than the giver might reasonably be expected to have; be scaled in economic value to the emotional value of the relationship. Caplow (1984) concludes that, as a result of the complexity of the rules, errors and failures in gift selection can be expected to occur, and they frequently do.

5. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK PROPOSED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

As it is explored by Cohen (1991), consumer purchase decisions are affected both by psychological inputs and marketing inputs. Understanding consumer buyer behavior means understanding how the person interacts with the marketing inputs. As described by Cohen (1991), the marketing mix inputs focus on the consumer. The psychology of each individual considers the product or service on offer in relation to their own culture and attitudes. The consumer then decides whether or not to purchase, where to purchase, the brand that he or she prefers, and other choices.

Whereas previous studies have focused on consumer decision making from the perspective of psychological inputs, this study aims to analyze the gift buying criteria of Y Generation in Turkey from the perspective of marketing inputs. In other words, this study aims to find out how marketing mix elements can be implemented more efficiently in order to target gift givers.

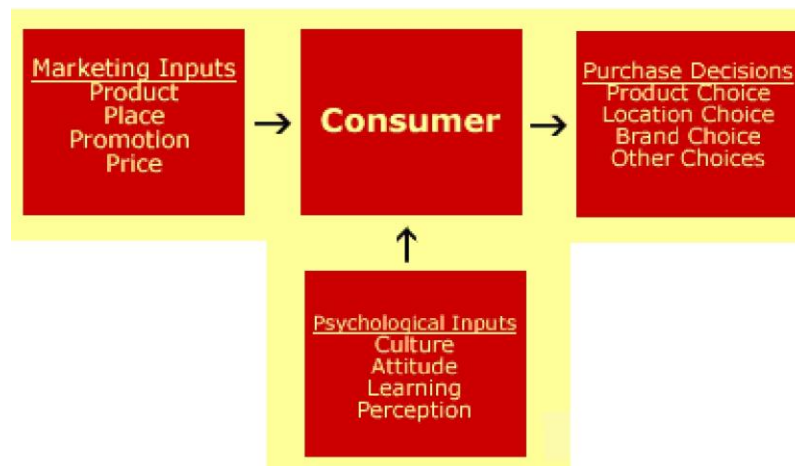


Figure5.1.: Buyer Decision Process

Source: Cohen, 1991

5.1. SAMPLING

As it has been denoted earlier face to face in depth interviews were selected as the research tool for this study: The research sample consisted of 32 people belonging to Y

Generation in Turkey whose age range is between 19 and 32. Purposive convenience sampling is preferred for this study. Choosing the appropriate sample is a crucial element for the research (Creswell 1994). Informants in this study were a purposive sample from Istanbul from different groups in terms of gender, marital status, income, education and age within the specific age limits. Participants from different groups were preferred in order to understand the gift-giving behavior among participants from a wide range of lifestyles. Although there was budget and time constraints they did not affect the sample design in a negative way.

5.2. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND CONTENT

As it is generally accepted personal in depth interviews can be conducted in the form of standardized, non-standardized, or semi-standardized interviews (Berg 2000). For this study semi structured interview type was preferred in order to both to implement an interview schedule and to gather a greater breadth of data. The semi-standardized form which was applied for this research is an intermediate form between standardized and non-standardized form in the sense that it involves both asking predetermined questions and probing beyond the interview guidelines when it is needed. All of the in depth interviews are moderated, type recorded and then transcribed by the author.

The questionnaire was structured according to the research objectives of this study. In addition to that, some of the interview questions were adopted from Homick (2007). was taken as a model. Questionnaire was carefully structured in order to explore the gift buying habits of Y Generation in Turkey. The questions were constructed in order to both explore the participants' attitudes towards gifts exchange, and their product, price, place and promotion preferences while purchasing gifts. The interviews started with explanation of the research's purpose and interview content. The first questions tried to explore the participants' general perceptions of gift selection and later more specific questions were asked to explore their attitudes about specific themes.

After the preparation of the interview questions according to research questions and sample, three pre-test interviews were conducted. According to the results of these interviews, these interview questionnaires were than finalized and interviews were conducted in summer and autumn 2010. By the test interviews it was realized, that some

of the preliminary questions caused misunderstanding by the participants and that these questions required revision.

The interviews carried for this research lasted from thirty minutes to one hour. All of the interviews were audio typed in order to be sure about its accuracy and integrity as well as to provide data for future analysis with the related subject. The audio types then were coded through coding sheets.

Table 5.1.: Participants' Demographics

ID:	Age:	Name:	Gender	Highest Level Of Education Completed	Current Occupation
1	27	Eren	Male	Undergraduate	Bank Employee
2	19	İpek	Female	High School	Student
3	20	Mert	Male	High School	Student
4	24	Görkem	Male	Undergraduate	Student
5	25	Duygu	Female	Undergraduate	Unemployed
6	27	Ebru	Female	High School	Accountant
7	20	Ayça	Female	High School	Student
8	26	Merve	Female	High School	Student
9	19	Hasan	Male	High School	Student
10	20	Berk	Male	High School	Student
11	26	Çiğdem	Female	Undergraduate	Foreign Trade Specialist
12	26	Ersin	Male	Undergraduate	Self-Employment
13	23	Cevher	Female	High School	Student
14	32	Selen	Female	Undergraduate	Unemployed
15	26	Deniz	Female	Graduate	Research Assistant
16	27	Ömer	Male	High School	Musician
17	20	Aslı	Female	High School	Student

18	21	Aylin	Female	High School	Clerk
19	29	Selcan	Female	Undergraduate	Veterinarian
20	24	Çiğdem	Female	Undergraduate	Lawyer
21	19	Aysu	Female	High School	Clerk
22	24	Ceyda	Female	Undergraduate	Unemployed
23	28	Osman	Male	High School	Security Staff
24	27	Ege	Male	Undergraduate	Unemployed
25	19	Başak	Female	High School	Student
26	32	Esmâ	Female	Undergraduate	Architect
27	30	Hakan	Male	High School	Estate Agent
28	26	Melis	Female	Undergraduate	Unemployed
29	29	Murat	Male	High School	Estate Agent
30	26	Hasan	Male	Undergraduate	Research Assistant
31	20	Merve	Female	High School	Student
32	28	Onur	Male	Undergraduate	Unemployed

6. ANALYSIS&RESULTS

As it has been clarified previously, this study focuses on the gift buying patterns of the customers from the marketing elements point of view instead of focusing on the psychological inputs. At the analysis part, first the general overview of participants about the gift giving process will be analyzed. Participants' gift giving frequency and their attitudes towards gift giving will be explained. In the second part, the relation of the gift buyer with the marketing elements will be analyzed in order to understand gift buying patterns of the customers in today's marketing environment.

The participants mentioned many gift selection criteria for selecting an appropriate gift. These criteria can be subdivided into two main groups. First group of criteria can be called as psychological inputs and the latter can be called as the marketing inputs & nature of the gift. The most common psychological inputs effecting the participants' gift selection decisions were the characteristics of the receiver, relations type, motivations of the giver and gift exchange history between the receiver and the giver. Gift selection criteria according to the marketing elements and nature of the gift were quality, brand, packaging, convenience in access, price and nature of the gift such as usefulness, symbolic meaning and uniqueness.

6.1. DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN GIFT GIVING ATTITUDES

According to the answers given by the participants, females are more interested in gift giving in comparison to males. In relation with that, females buy more gifts and care more about buying gifts regularly. Female participants see gift giving as a way for showing the recipient how much they care about the recipient. On the other hand, males do not enjoy buying gifts and do not attach any meaning to gift giving unless the receiver is someone very special for her and/or they buy a ring for engagement. 8 of the total 13 males participants of this study do not buy gifts regularly and/or do not enjoy buying gifts. In addition to that, for many males it was hard to remember about their past gift exchange experiences. It may be hard for them both because males do not exchange gifts frequently and because they do not attach much meaning to gift exchange.

As it is indicated earlier 13 of the 32 participants of this study are male. Excluding three of the male participants the rest of the males do not have a habit of gift giving to their parents for special days regularly if they do not buy a mutual gift with the other family members.

It is interesting that two of these males are married who are the only married ones in this study. What makes men buy gifts for their parents after marriage is an important question to answer. One of these two males explained that he, his wife and his child are living together with his parents at his parents house and he admitted that he owes to his parents a lot. This feeling of indebtedness can make him buy gifts to his parents when he has enough money. The second male candidate who stated that he is buying gifts regularly to his parents expressed that his parents are in financial difficulties which can be the main reason for him to buy them gifts regularly.

The third candidate who tries to buy gifts to his parents and his siblings is 20 years old and is a member of a big family with strong family ties. He said that he has four sibling and three of them are married. During birthdays and other special days such as mothers' day and father day the whole family gathers and give gifts. Not to be excluded from this tradition he feels himself forced to buy a gift during these days. In an earnest way he admits that he enjoys getting gifts but buying a gift becomes a burden for him because it is hard to find the right gift for the right person. Despite of its difficulties he continues to buy gifts for the family members when it is required to do so.

Excluding these exceptions it can be concluded that males who are not married do not buy gifts to their parents and siblings most of the time as long as they buy a mutual gift with another member of the family or a direct request is made to them. In addition to that they provided different kinds of reasons for not buying gifts for their parents. For instance, Ömer who is a singer working at bars indicated that during special days either he has no money or buying a gift does not cross his mind. Eren who is an electronic engineer working at a bank has noted that his parents and brother do not wear anything which Eren boughts for them and this has discouraged him from buying gifts. Most of the others do not even know why they do not buy gifts for special days indicating that they do not have such a tradition within the family.

On the other hand, with one or two exception all of the female candidates tries to buy a gift or do something special during these special days most of the time. Even if they do not have enough time or money they prefer to buy flower which is appreciated by their parents. Only Merve who is an undergraduate student and a low income consumer, do not buy gifts to his parents. Instead of that she has bought a pair of sport shoes to her brother costing 150TL which is a lot according to her income level. She explained that her parents' and her brother's expectations from life are much different and her brother is very special for her.

According to the past experiences explained by the participants, it is noticed that, ignoring the wedding gifts the most expensive gifts are bought by high income participants of this study. For instance, Melis who is a high income consumer has bought jewelry to her mother for her birthday which costed 3000 TL. Excluding the wedding wedding gifts this was the highest amount of money given for a gift within the examples of the participants. As the second most expensive gift, Çiğdem has bought a ring to her mother at mothers' day costing 2000 TL. The third most expensive gift was a SEIKO watch by Ceyda to his elder brother. These people were high income consumers and they were the ones who spend the highest amount of money on gifts.

6.2. GIFT SELECTION CRITERIA IN THE MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

Gift selection criteria specified by the participants according to the marketing elements and nature of the gift were quality, brand, packaging, convenience in access, price and nature of the gift such as usefulness, symbolic meaning and uniqueness.

Product quality is defined as the ability of a product to perform its functions; it includes the product's overall durability, reliability, precision, ease of operation and repair, and other valued attributes (Kotler 2000). Product quality, which is closely linked to customer value and satisfaction, is one of the most important marketing mix elements. In a consumer centered perspective quality is defined as creating customer value and satisfaction. Since customer driven quality is an important competitive advantage for many companies, they have created satisfaction and value by consistently and profitably meeting customers' needs and preferences for quality.

Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors (Kotler 2000). In today's competitive marketing environment, one of the most important skills of professional marketers is their ability to build well known and respected their brands. Consumers view a brand as an important part of a product, and branding can add value to a product. Branding helps buyers in many ways in the sense, that brand names help consumers identify products that might benefit them and tell the buyer something about product quality (Kotler 2003).

Gifts can be divided into subgroups as utilitarian and expressive gifts. As Tournier (1963) points it out, expressive gifts have greater symbolic value than utilitarian ones. For instance, within the romantic love model, expressive gifts celebrate the giver's feelings for the beloved who is idealized as totally unique and a preordained match with the giver (Belk & Coon 1993)

Packaging involves designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product (Kotler 2000) The results of the Howard's (1992) research show that, wrapping a gift has a favorable influence on evaluations of what is inside and when subjects received a personal gift that was wrapped, they had a more positive attitude toward owning it than subjects who received the same item that was unwrapped. Since, this study focuses on gift exchange, wrapping attitudes of the customers is analyzed under the title of packaging.

Marketers put pressure on consumers to spend more money on gifts. In addition to that Kotler (2000) considers price as one of the most flexible elements of the marketing mix, since unlike product features and channel commitments, price can be changed quickly. Many firms support such price-positioning strategies with a technique called target costing, which reverses the usual process of first designing a new product, determining its cost, and then asking, 'Can we sell it for that?' (Kotler 2000). As a result, effective, buyer oriented pricing involves understanding how much value consumers place on the benefits they receive from the product and setting a price that fits this value. In this sense, it is important to explore when the gift buyers prefer to pay more and when less. Kotler (2000), defines discount as a straight reduction in price on purchases during

a stated period of time. While many companies adjust their basic price to reward customers for certain responses such as off season buying, some companies may temporarily price their products below list price and sometimes even below cost to create buying excitement and urgency (Kotler 2000). As Alexandra Homick points it out, one of the gaps in the gift giving research area is research attention to nontraditional giving such as hoarding since researchers have not yet explored this new trend which involves purchasing large numbers of gifts at bargain prices, for instance, making purchases of highly reduced merchandise, and then holding the merchandise until a time of gift exchange. It is obvious that many people keep track of discounts in order to buy something for themselves. This study tries to explore if gift buyers keep track of discounts when they need to buy a gift.

Kotler (2000) defines marketing channel as a set of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption by the consumer and states that marketing channels are part of the overall customer value delivery network. According to Kotler (2000) designing the marketing channel requires answering several questions. What do the target consumers want from the channel?. Do consumers want to buy from nearby locations or are they willing to travel to more distant centralized locations? Would they rather buy in person, over the phone, through the mail, or via the Internet? Marketing channel which is an element of distribution, is an important variable of marketing mix. Since this dissertation is in the area of consumer behavior, it is preferred to focus on the attitudes of the customers towards channel strategy instead of focusing logistics management of component which also fits under the distribution variable.

6.2.1. Quality

When it is asked to participants what are their criteria for choosing a product as a gift, 20 of them considered quality as a gift selection criteria and expressed this explicitly. For instance Merve indicated that; ‘For me buying the right gift means buying a gift with high quality.’

Eren explained one of his experiences when quality of the gift he bought was very important for him.

Since one of my best friends with whom we have been friends for 12 years, had gone into the army, I had to take care of his girlfriend. His girlfriend has moved to Istanbul recently and was looking for furniture for her home. One of the emergent needs of her was coffee table and she couldn't buy it as a result of timelessness. I went about various furniture show rooms in order to find a coffee table with high quality. After spending my whole week for looking for a coffee table, I preferred to buy it from Tepe Home because they sell high quality products and they have services to fix the furniture at home.

In this example, Eren preferred to go about various show rooms in order to find a product with good quality instead of purchasing the gift somewhere else in a more convenient way.

According to the examples given by the respondents, it can be seen that some specific stores considered being more reliable than others and delivering better quality gifts. Informants' interpretations of 'quality' stores have been formed by the values of their communities. Most of the times the customers prefer to buy gifts from stores whose quality standards are appreciated by others. In other words, respondent's interpretations of quality show that their interpretation of quality depends on the values of the other people in their environment. One of our respondents; Melis indicated that in some instances the stores quality from where the gift is bought is important for the relationship with the receiver in a social network. She gives an example.

We would visit my father's partner in order to celebrate their new house. Since he was my father's partner, we are required to buy a product with high quality. My mother and I went to Paşabahçe and bought a vase with an Ottoman head. Since Paşabahçe is considered as a brand store selling high quality products favored by everyone in our community, we bought the gift from there.

According to the security officer living in Mahmutbey, buying a good quality gift means buying a gift from their local shop in Mahmutbey. He does not prefer to buy clothes from bazaar since he does not believe that goods sold at bazaar are high quality products.

As a last point it is important to express that many people who do not prefer internet as a resource for gift because of their quality concerns about the products sold online. For instance, Caged explains one of her experiences.

One of my friends had seen a bag which is made of packages and became regretful when she came back to Turkey without buying it. When I saw it on an online store I hesitated to buy it because I was not sure about its quality. Till I decide to buy, I looked through the website whole day in order to be sure both about the quality of the website and the bag.

6.2.2. Brand

In this study there were conflicting opinions about when the brand of a gift is more important. One of the participants cares more about brand of a gift if she is buying it for a close friend. On the other hand, another participant indicated that she does not care about a brand when she is a close friend whereas she cares more about the brand of the gift when is buying for a not close acquaintance.

As another example, Berk who is a 21 years old undergraduate student admitted that he chooses the brand of a gift according the recipients previous gift which is given to him. In this case, reciprocity comes into existence and he chooses a gift according to the value of the gift previously given to him by the recipient. As another opinion, there were also some participants who prefer to buy a gift with a good well-known brand if the recipients' values these brands and appreciate that.

There is also generally accepted consensus about the fact that the gifts bought for boss, supervisor or professors at the university preferred to be bought from good quality brand stores. If the participants need to buy a gift for someone who has a higher position than the gift giver, the participant prefers to buy a gift with a well-respected brand.

SelinErdirinç explained her opinion about this issue:

In a job environment you have to prefer one of the specific brands which are appreciated. When there is a hierarchical position between you and the gift recipient, you see gift exchange in a more formal way and try to fulfill the standards for an appropriate gift. On the other hand, if you are buying a gift to a close friend you do not care about the brand. Instead of you care more about the gift itself.

Most of the time participants have a tendency towards buying a gift from brand stores which are preferred by most of the people in their environment and matches with the expectations of their community. For instance, Selin who is a 32 years old unemployed participant, indicated that when she needs to buy a gift, she prefers 'general brands'. With the term of 'general brands', she means the brands which are preferred by the majority of the people within her environment. These types of brands are usually neither cheap nor expensive and offer their products with reasonable prices. Mango, Zara, Stradivarius, Mudo and Koton can be examples for such brands. The number of participants who have never bought a gift from these stores is not over 8.

As another example, Ayça explained how she buys gifts for her parents.

If I prefer to buy a cloth as a gift for my parents, I always go to Marks & Spencer which is the favorite store of them because of its quality. When I'm looking for a gift to my parents, I need to buy products with high quality at the expense of paying more.

As it is clear, Ayça thinks that Marks & Spencer is a more reliable store than many others and deliver better quality gifts. According some examples given by the participants, it can be concluded that stores brand image accurately predicts gift quality. However there were also a few cases which weaken assumption that brand is the symbol of the products' quality. There were two respondents who specifically stressed that they attach importance to quality instead of brand.

One of the participants looked brand issue in gift exchange from a different perspective and has a negative attribute about attaching importance to brands. He explained his opinion in a clear way.

For me brand is not important at all. In my environment there is not any person who sets a high value on brands. If there is any one in my environment who attaches importance to brands, I would end my relationship with him/her.

When the participants were asked if they would buy a gift from bazaar their answers varied regardless of their income level. While some of the low income customers indicated that, they buy gifts at bazaar regularly; other low income customers claimed that they buy nothing from bazaar except fruits and vegetables as a result of not trusting the quality of the products sold there. This information enables us to conclude that there is not a direct relationship between the income groups and shopping habit at bazaar.

Although most of participants claimed that they would buy a gift from a bazaar if they are sure about that the receiver likes it, the ones which have already bought a gift from bazaar were really few. Even if they shop for themselves at bazaar the possibility of buying a gift from a bazaar is really low.

One of the participants indicated that they if they would buy a gift from bazaar giving it at his/her birthday would be very rude. Instead of that, they would buy another gift for the birthday and give the other gift bought from bazaar later. They think that giving a

gift bought from bazaar degrades the image of the gift giver, since products sold at the bazaar have a low quality image and do not have a brand.

6.2.3. Features

When the participants were asked to explain why they have chosen these gifts for family members the most frequently given answer is the likes and the needs of the recipient. Because they know what the receiver likes and needs they do not prefer to waste money with emotional or symbolic gifts. Instead of that, they prefer to buy utilitarian gifts which the recipient can use in an efficient way. This findings conflict with the statement of Tournier (1963) indicating, that utilitarian gift exchange occur where role distance between partners is relatively great.

Among the 67 gifts given to parents and siblings 41 of them were clothes & accessorize, 7 of them were jewelry, 4 of them were kitchen wares, 3 of them were cell phones, 3 of them were perfumes, 3 of them were curios. Curios which cannot be counted as utilitarian goods are bought to family members in this study only as a result of the request of the recipient in some instances.

Nevertheless, excluding the request made by the mothers, we can conclude that the gift bought for family members are bought according to the likes and needs of that person and these gifts are utilitarian. In other words, givers look for something which the recipient can "use".

Since the age range of the participants were between 19 and 32, the type of romantic relationships they have experienced varied a lot. Some of them were married, whereas some others had never experienced a romantic relationship in their lives. Among the 47 gifts given to romantic partners, 25 of them were clothes & accessorizes and 14 of them were customized and/or symbolic gifts. For instance, Ömer who is working as a singer explained his symbolic gift for his loved one.

Since she was very special for me, I wanted to do something very special for her. I composed a song for her. In fact it took 20 minutes to compose this song. I did not put so much effort in it. It happened spontaneously.

Duygu also talked about her gift giving experience to her boy friend

During these times I was going to a wood painting course. I painted a wood box and draw hearts on it in order to give it as a gift to my boyfriend. It took me 2 days to finish that wood box. I wanted him to keep my letters which I had written to him in that wood box.

The type of symbolic gifts given to romantic partners varies a lot since they were customized. For instance, Ersin has bought a digital frame and saved his and his girlfriend's mutual photos in it and gave that digital frame as a gift. As another example, Selen who is an undergraduate student has bought a box as a gift and filled it with the chocolates which her boyfriend likes a lot.

When the gifts given to romantic other are compared and to the family members it can be noticed that gifts given within romantic relationships are more customized in contrast to the others. This is because during relationships partners look for something special for the other one. In addition, it is important to not oversee, that clothes & accessorizes constitutes the most preferred gift type.

When the gift givers choose a gift for their boss or for a couple who is marrying, the rules which have been set for the type of the gift they buy are very strict. In these situations, candidates prefer to buy a gift according to the general accepted standards, so that they are not excluded from the community. On the other hand, when the participants buy a gift for the romantic partner, they do not feel themselves bounded to strict rules, so that they can express themselves through the gifts they choose for their beloved ones.

Participants of this study indicated that it is easier for them to buy a gift to someone within the family than to someone outside the family because they know the likes, interests and needs of family members better than anyone else. As a result, they spend less money but more time for buying a gift to someone from outside the family most of the time. In relation with that, in romantic relationships at the beginning finding a appropriate gift for the other one can be very torturous. The reason is both that they care about the gift they buy for the romantic partner and that they do not know him/her personally well. While the partner looks for a perfect gift to make the romantic other

happy, she/he does not know what does a perfect gift mean to his / her romantic partner. After a period time, romantic partners start to know each other better and buy gifts in a more convenient way as it is the case for gift exchange within the family.

Gift cards can be counted as one of the most utilitarian goods since their values are similar to a monetary value. In addition to that, gift cards are also preferred to be examined in this study since there is not any study in Turkey which is related with the gift card buying habits of the customers. Gift cards are one of the most utilitarian gifts in the sense that the receiver spends all the money the giver pays in an efficient way according to his/her needs and tastes. Unlike Americans (figure 1.1), many participants in this study see buying gift cards very rude and consider it as giving cash. Although it is impossible to compare these two types of researches, it gives some insight about popularity of different types of gift occasions.



Figure 6.1.: Gift Card as the Most Planned Purchased Gift of the Year in U.S.

Source: Ying Yu, 2010

Except two of the candidates of this study all of them have indicated that they have never bought a gift card in their lives. It is also interesting that these two participants had bought gift cards while they were staying in a foreign country. The ones which have never bought a gift card has several reasons for that, most of them do not prefer to buy a gift card because they find it very rude. Three of the participants who have never

bought a gift card either because the idea of buying a gift card has never come into their mind or there is not such a tradition within their environment. The rest thinks it as giving cash money to the recipient and find this very emotionless for a gift exchange.

For instance; Gorkem stated his opinion about gift cards.

Buying a gift card is as saying that you do not want to make any effort for the recipient, since the meaning of buying a gift is spending your time and making effort for the gift recipient. Stores which offer gift card as an alternative also offer change cards. In this sense there is no need for gift cards'.

While participants indicate their negative attitude towards gift cards, they do not think so negative about getting gift cards as a gift. The only participant who appreciate buying gift cards was the only one in the sample who has ever gotten a gift card as a gift. She explained her ideas about this issue.

I find buying a gift card very rational because it is very difficult to find a gift according the needs and tastes of the recipient. When you buy a gift card, the receiver can buy it according to his/her own likes and as a result the recipient can use it for a long term.

6.2.4. Packaging

Without any exception all of the participants agree on the requirement of a gift wrap for the gifts they bought. 7 of the 32 participants indicated that although a gift is required to be wrapped before given to the recipient, the type or the quality of the wrap is not important at all. One of the participants of these 7 people indicated that a wrap of the gift is only important when you meet with your girlfriends parents. For all other times the wrap does not have to be excellent at all. People who do not find packaging as an essential issue give various reasons for their opinion. Gorkem indicates that, 'When you give a gift, the most important thing is what you buy instead of how you wrap it. The quality and outlook of the wrap shouldn't be better than those of the gift.'

As another participant who is 32 years old and who see packaging not as an essential issue gives different reasons.

When we were young we were really caring about the wrapping and spend special time for that. On the other hand, you do not care about the gift wrap as you become older. At my age people give their gifts with a simple bag and without a wrap. When you are over thirty, instead of the trumpery, quality of the gift becomes important.

25 participants of this study constituting the rest sees packaging as an essential point and cares about the packaging of their gifts a lot. Some of them had really extreme opinions. For instance, İpek who is a 20 years old undergraduate student stated, that she a lot for the packaging of the gift because presentation is the most important thing.

Ayça who is also an undergraduate student at their twenties give a similar answer.

Although brand is not much important in gift giving, packaging is always important. Even if I buy a simple gift, I want it to have a favorable wrap.

Çiğdem as a 26 years old foreign trade specialist is one of people who see packaging more important than the gift itself.

I always bedeck the gift with special materials such as fabric and ornaments and think a lot about its outlook. In my opinion the outlook of the wrap of the gift more important than what is inside of it. If I buy a gift without a packaging, I buy special packages from a stationer for sure and spend a lot of time on packaging it and decorating it with ornaments. For special days, gift wrap is especially important.

Ömer as a low income consumer has different reasons for caring about packaging.

The packaging is important as a result of two reasons. First, packaging of the gift makes people wonder about the gift. Second, when you wrap gift is wrapped in an appropriate way with materials of good quality, you do not feel embarrassed within the community.

Deniz who has studied in US told about her past experiences.

In America the meaning of packaging was different from here. When I gave a friend of mine a gift without a special wrapping, she was hurt because the wrapping means a lot for her like it is the case everyone in the USA. There you have to buy a special package and a card with your gift. If you want your gift to be appropriate you have to pay around 20 dollars for the bag and the packaging which is sometimes as much as the cost of the gift itself.

6.2.5. Price

According to the past examples given by the participants of this study, the most expensive gifts bought are either for their parents or their romantic partners. Among 32 participants, 14 people have bought the most expensive gift to his/her parents (parents or siblings), 13 of them have spent to their romantic partner and 1 of them have spent to her cousin. In other words, participants of this study prefers to sacrifice more, if they buy a gift for their romantic partners or family members. Although sometimes obligation

can be the reason for gifts bought for parents, it is not the case for gifts bought for the romantic partners most of the time.

According to the past experiences of the participants of this study, most of the time the participants attach more importance to the gift they buy when they are buying it either for their family member or for their romantic partners (Figure 6.2). Participants' supervisor (or professor) and best friends constitute the second group according to the importance level the participants stated. Besides that, when they are buying a gift for their extended kin or their regular friends' participants of this study spend less money and care about the gift less than it is the case when they buy a gift for their family members, romantic partner, boss or best friends. As a result, extended kin and regular friends forms the third group according to the importance which the participants give. The number of participants who have ever given to a gift to at least one of his/her relatives and can remember this gift exchange occasion was only 16.

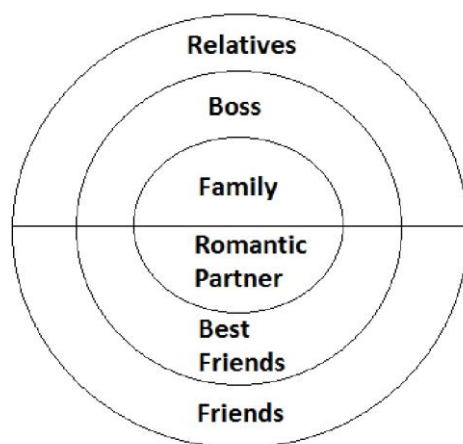


Figure 6.2.: The Level of Importance (both money and effort) Given for Buying Gift According to Recipient Type

When the gifts which the females bought for their romantic partners are examined. It is obvious that they behave more irrational and buy expensive gifts for their boy friends when they are younger. On the other hand, when they get older they start to think in a more rational way. For instance, Duygu who has once bought a perfume with all of her savings when she was at high school, now calls this event as her biggest foolness.

Although at that time my boyfriend had never bought an expensive gift to me, I was very willing to buy him such a valuable gift. Since I loved him, he was the only important person in my life and I thought that he deserves the best. I had not hesitated for a moment for buying a perfume for her boyfriend with all of her savings at high school, I won't do the same thing ever again in my life.

As another example Deniz explained her past experience about this issue.

The gift which I cared at most was the gift which I bought for my boyfriend. Although he preferred to buy me a gift from a moderately priced brand store, I bought him a wallet from Louis Vuitton which costed 450 TL. I preferred to buy him a gift from a premium brand store because I loved him and I wanted him to be happy.

Females spend more money on gifts for males when they are younger. On the other hand, males spend the highest amount of money on gifts when they buy a gift for engagement such as a ring. According to their statements, the aim of spending so much money on gifts is to make their beloved ones happy. They think their partners deserve that and they become happy when their romantic partners become happy. One of the participants even told that her boy friend has bought her the third diamond ring because she has lost the previous ones when she was washing her hands at the toilet.

Another male candidate who does not like buying gifts at all and prefer to buy small gifts most of the time has explained that he has bought two diamond rings for his two previous girlfriends. He claimed that those rings have costed 6 thousand TLs each. He had bought these rings because he has wanted to marry them and ordered rings with special designs and stones. Since his beloved ones are very special to him, he wanted to make them feel special and happy. In addition to that, through these special and expensive gifts he has tried to show his feeling to them.

One of the males who works as a real estate agent told about this issue.

I wanted to buy an engagement gift for my fiance and I have looked for a vase for a month in Istanbul. This gift had to be something both special and expensive, since it would be given when we were engaged. After going about many shopping centers, I bought a vase in Eminönü which she would like. This vase costed 850 TL to me which was the highest amount of money I have ever paid for a gift till that time. Anyway I had thought she was deserving that.

If the participants buy gifts to their parents, most of the time they do not put a price limit as long as they can afford it. In addition to that, even if one of the family members

reciprocate their expensive gifts with a cheap one, the participants do not care about that. Most of the time this is not the case if one of their friends reciprocate their valuable gift with a cheap and simple one.

One of the married men working as a security officer admitted that he has bought a jewellery which costs 350 TL for his mother at mother's day whereas he had a bought ring costing only 150TL as a gift to his fiance as an indication of engagement. Later he explained that he, his wife and his child are living together with his parents at his parents house and he admitted that he owes to his parents a lot. This feeling of indebtedness can make him buy gifts to his parents when he has enough money.

As it is explained earlier female participants of this study buy gifts to their parents more frequently than it is the case for unmarried male participants. They prefer to buy expensive gifts and even if they do not have enough money for that, they prefer to buy a flower or do something special.

When the gift givers are forced to spend at least specific amount of money because of the traditions, they may be feel uncomfortable about that which is the case for gifting at weddings. In total six of the participants find giving gold as a gift irrational and pointless tradition because of different reasons. All of these people having a negative attitude towards gold buying as a gift for weddings are low or middle income consumers.

One of the participants; Merve who is an undergraduate student and a low income consumer explained her past experience about this subject.

At a wedding of my friend I gave money instead of gold. You know how high gold prices are. Anyway, the amount of money I gave was nearly as much as the cost of the gold. I did not want that my gift will lose value while she exchanges it with cash.

When they buy a gift for a close friend or other acquaintances they do not prefer to give a gift which can be counted as cash money. Instead of that, they prefer that there is some sort of symbolic value in it. For instance, when they buy gold for a marrying couple with whom the participants is very close, he does not prefer to buy something which the couple may exchange with money. Instead of that, they look for something

which their marrying friend can use forever at the expense of paying more for that specific gift.

According to the answers given by the participants of this study, discount which is the one of the marketing strategy elements of many brands is not as effective as it is the case for self purchase. Only 7 of 32 participants stated that they keep track of discounts and buy their gifts previously during sales. Some of these people who wait for sales in order to buy a gift, indicate that they care more about the sales and price of the gift when these participants face financial difficulties and they need to buy a gift anyway.

As another example, Ayça claims that it is easier to follow the discounts on the internet. She keeps track of certain discount websites and some of the websites which sell electronic equipment. When she is required to buy a gift she prefers to buy one of these websites which Ayça keeps looking.

The rest indicated that they can not keep up with the discounts when they are buying a gift. One of the participants who is working as a real estate agent explained his opinion about this issue.

I wish I could buy on sale and pay less but most of the time it is not the case. Since I usually decide to buy a gift for a sudden, I do not have enough time to buy a gift previously and put it aside till I give it to the recipient. Usually when I need to buy a gift, there are sales.

People who do not keep up with the prices when they need to buy a gift indicate that they buy the gift when they are required to do. Even if they keep up the sales when they want to buy something for themselves, it is not the case when they need to buy a gift which have to be done at specific times.

Besides these situations, 4 of 32 participants indicated that they sometimes buy gifts only because its on sale and without any specific reason. For instance Melis explained one of her experiences related with this issue.

My friend had wanted to buy a beige sweater which she could not find around. When everything at stores was on sale, I came across a sweater which my friend wanted to have a lot. Since it was on sale, I bought it without thinking a second. It was not a gift for a special day. It was just a spontaneous gift.

6.2.6. Convenience in Access

In this study, under this title it is preferred to explore gift shopping places of the participants. In this sense, it is meaningful to explore which kind of stores or shops are more convenient and preferable for the customers to buy a gift. In contrast to local shops, chain stores are usually considered as better places for buying gifts. Whereas 18 of the participants prefer to buy gift from chain stores most of the time, 4 of them prefers to buy from local stores. In addition that, 10 participants preferred both and do not favor one over another.

Shopping centers and places such as BagdatCaddesi, Nişantaşı where popular brands' chain stores exist side by side, considered as to appropriate places for buying gifts. This popularity of the shopping centers has many reasons according to the participants of this study. Existence of lots of stores in a single shopping center has several benefits for the customer. People can find both premium and moderately priced chain stores at a single place. The customer can look through them in an easier way and can spend his/her time more efficiently. Unlike local stores shopping stores are open from 10 am to 10 pm which gives them a lot of time to visit these stores even if they are working. In addition to that, at these shopping centers the participants can find the products of well known brands which may be important when they are looking for a gift. Second, as the number of shopping centers increases, it becomes easier to find a shopping center around you, so that you do not have to spend time on transportation.

On the other hand, although shopping centers are considered to be the most appropriate places for buying a gift by most of the participants, they are still not considered to be an alternative by low income consumers. This group prefers to shop at local stores instead of going to shopping centers even the chain stores are on sale. Their motive for preferring a local store is that local stores are on their way to home and that these local stores are still cheaper than the shopping centers despite of existence of so many outlets. As another motive they show their habits and their willingness to shop at shops where he/she knows them personally.

Some of the participants who shop both at local stores and shopping centers think that, at local stores they may find different things which do not exist at shopping centers. For instance, Çiğdem who is a member of a high income family, sometimes prefers to look a specific local store in the arcade because at this specific store she can find interesting and different products which can do not exist in other stores. She explains that the owner this stores import the clothes which they sell and then decorate them according to their own style which she finds very interesting.

I'm bored of buying similar product from usual stores because everybody buys similar gifts both to wear and to give as a gift. I prefer to buy unusual and unordinary gifts which everyone can not find.

This situation can be seen as a reaction of the customer against mass production and popular culture.

When the participants were asked if they would buy a gift from bazaar their answers varied regardless of their income level. Although most of participants claimed that they would buy a gift from a bazaar if they are sure about that the receiver likes it, the ones which have already bought a gift from bazaar were really few. 17 participants of this study have never bought a gift from bazaar whereas 15 participants have bought at least one gift from bazaar. The ones which at least have bought a gift one are most of the time for their close family members. Even if they shop for themselves at bazaar the possibility of buying a gift from a bazaar is really low.

One of the participants indicated that they if they would buy a gift from bazaar giving it at his/her birthday would be very rude. Instead of that, they would buy another gift for the birthday and give the other gift bought from bazaar later. They think that giving a gift bought from bazaar degrades the image of the gift giver, since products sold at the bazaar have a low quality image. Another reason for not buying a gift from bazaar is that it can be problematic to change what you have bought before. Since the products sold at the bazaar are considered to be low quality products, the participants think that there is a higher possibility for returning the product back when they buy it at the bazaar.

Cevher gives different reason for not buying a gift from bazaar.

I do shopping at bazaar for myself but I have never bought a gift from bazaar and I would never do. The packaging of a gift is very important for me and I have never heard about someone who requested a gift for him/herself from bazaar. Nobody would want a gift bought from a bazaar.

When the same question is asked to the Berk he summarized his reason for not buying a gift from bazaar.

I would not buy a gift from bazaar. If the gift recipient asks from where I have bought the gift, it would be embarrassing to say that I have bought it from bazaar. In addition to that, if the product bought from bazaar is defective, it can be problematic change it.

Hakan who is working as an agent consultant gives a similar reason for not buying a gift from bazaar.

I would never buy a gift from bazaar. The recipients would make gossips about me because I have preferred to buy a cheap gift.

Another dimension which makes bazaar not so preferable is the discount at the chain stores of well-known brands. For instance, Ceyda's explanation is related with this issue.

There is no need to buy a gift from bazaar and have a failure. Instead of buying a product from bazaar I would prefer to buy a gift from Mango since Mango's prices are not much different from the product prices at bazaar.

In comparison to shopping habits in the western world, Y generation in Turkey which has grown in an environment with high technological developments, do not shop online regularly. The view point of the participants for shopping online is very different from one another. 10 participants of 32 people indicated they have at least once bought a gift online and the rest stated that they have never bought a gift online. Among these 22 people 10 of them have ever bought something from internet even if it is not a gift and the rest which consists of 12 people has never bought something from internet. As it is clear the habit of buying a product online for self-use is more common than buying a gift online. In addition to that, 5 of the participants do not use any credit card at all.

The ones which do not prefer to buy gifts online have several reasons for that. First of all, they think that returning back the product which they have bought online is very difficult and they do not want to deal with these procedures. When they buy something

from a store, at least they know with whom they have to get contact and they can change the product in an easier way whenever they want. Second, these participants do not want to take the risk of buying a product as a gift which they have not seen or examined personally before. They can not be sure about that if the product is really good as it appears on the monitor. Eren indicated that although she buys products online, she does not prefer to buy something as a gift before she sees it with her own eyes. According to him, there is no need for taking such a risk whereas he can buy anything he wants from an ordinary store. Some others refuse shopping online totally. For instance, Cevher indicates that she has a tic and she can not buy anything before she touches and sees it.

Although security of the internet has improved over the recent years, for some people it is still an unsolved problem which constraints shopping online. Some others indicate that although there are big, respected web sites for shopping they do not trust them enough to give their credit card number. Finally, there were also participants who do not have any credit card at all. People having no credit card were from a lower income group. It can be said that online market may not target lower income people in a successful way. In some instances, it is seen that people prefer to buy gifts online when they cannot find that product at ordinary stores or when they come across something very unusual. For instance, Gorkem explained his experience related with this issue.

My girlfriend wanted to have purple counter boats and she has been trying to find a pair of purple counter shoes with the right size for weeks. I have also looked for it for a week and I couldn't find it at the shopping centers around. When I found it online, I bought it without waiting a second.

In addition to that, Gorkem explains that he keeps track of some online stores at which he can find some interesting products as gifts. As another example, Ege who do not buy gifts at birthdays regularly have bought an interesting t-shirt as a gift for his friend when he found it online. As he explains it, it was a very unusual t-shirt in the sense that its color was changing according to the music playing. As a result, he bought that gift from an online store for his friend who is very interested in music.

For gift buyers which have shopped online another reason for preferring online shopping is easiness. For instance, Hakan who is working as an estate agent has

preferred to buy flowers online because of its product variety. Besides that, shopping online makes you save a lot of time.

As another example, Esma who is working as architecture told about his opinion related with online shopping.

I'm working so much that sometimes I do not have enough time to go about and find a gift. In this type of situations I look through web sites and order a gift. Internet provides a wide range of products which you can find in an easy way and in a short period of time.

Even if they do not shop online, participants find looking through web sites useful when they want to find a gift. In this sense internet has many advantages for them. First, through looking at internet participants can find more gift alternatives in a short period of time without going out. Second, internet gives information about where they can find the product which they are trying to find. In other words, if they learn the place of the store which sells the product they want to buy, they do not have to go from one store to another and spend a lot of time. Third, they can get insight about the price of the gift and learn where they can find the gift with an appropriate price. In this sense using internet as a source of information becomes very cost efficient for the gift buyers.

7. DISCUSSION

7.1. DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN GIFT GIVING ATTITUDES

As it is also found out by previous researches (Komter and Vollebergh (1997), Cheal (1988), Steinkamp and Wallendorf (1991), Caplow (1982), Fischer and Arnold (1990), Sherry and McGrath (1989)), females are more involved in gift giving in comparison to males. According to Cheal (1988), women are the primary gift givers because of their greater concern with showing love. These results also confirm the traditional Turkish family structure, at which women are expected to care for others, to maintain social relationships, while men deal with the external world (Fişek 1982). The answers of this study's participants confirm that in the sense that women see gift giving a way for showing how much they care about the recipient. In addition to that, females are more interested and care more about buying gifts regularly. Benney (1959) also found that women are much more concerned than men with buying 'appropriate' gifts and cards. According to the research results, participants usually buy gift at special days while few gifts are bought spontaneously.

Research results of Garner and Wagner (1991) show that total annual expenditures and the proxy for income are positively related with the value of gift expenditures. This relationship shows that as household income increases, expenditures for gifts increase. Confirming the research done by Garner and Wagner (1991), in this study it is also noticed that, ignoring the wedding gifts the most expensive gifts are bought by people high income consumers. Garner and Wagner(1991) further explain that there is a positive relation between income and gift expenditures: As household income increases, expenditures for gifts increase. According to this research, household gifts are a luxury- as income increases- the proportion that is allocated to expenditures for such gifts increases more rapidly than the proportional increase in income. When a low income households experience a decline in income, they are likely to reduce their extra household gift expenditures disproportionately. This reduction in gift expenditures may reflect the need to devote remaining income to physiological needs, which economists assume must be met before social needs (Douglas and Isherwood 1979).

Whereas males usually do not prefer to buy gifts for their parents for special days if they do not buy a mutual gift with the other family members, female candidates try to buy a gift or do something special during these special days most of the time. Even if they do not have enough time or money, they prefer to buy flowers which is appreciated by their parents.

In contrast to research results of Komter and Vollebergh (1997) showing that respondents with more education give more to friends and that those with less education give more to kin, this study does not confirm existence of such a relationship. However, this research's results confirm that gross income does not have an effect on giving to friends or extended kin which was also found out by Komter and Vollebergh (1997).

7.2. GIFT SELECTION CRITERIA IN THE MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

According to the examples given by the respondents, it can be noticed that some specific stores are considered as more reliable than others and deliver better quality gifts. As it is indicated by many participants, choosing a product from a high quality store is important to optimizing relations within a social network. According to a previous study of (Hollenbeck, Peter & Zinkhan 2006) all of the participants emphasized the importance of quality in their decisions to purchase gifts for community members and their interpretations of a quality store are grounded in the values of their communities. The aim of the participant for trying to buy a gift from a store selling high quality products corroborates Mauss's (1954) view that gift giving is an optimizing behavior in social norms.

In this study there were conflicting opinions about when the brand of a gift is more important. The importance of a gift's brand changes from one person to another according to his/her point of view. On the other hand, there is a consensus when the gift is bought for someone at a higher position. If the participants need to buy a gift for someone who has a higher position than the gift giver; the participant prefers to buy a gift with a well-respected brand.

As Harrison (2000) points it out, the dimension of relational messages become evident when one takes into account that different gifts are appropriate for different types of relationships. According to the example given by Harrison (2000), a gift of lingerie from a man would not be an acceptable gift to his mother in law, while it could be an acceptable gift for his wife and girlfriend. The answers of this study's participants confirm this assumption in the sense that, participants' gift preferences changes according to different relationship types. If the participants need to buy a gift for someone who has a higher position than the gift giver, the participant prefers to buy a gift with a well respected brand.

Joy (2001), states that gifts for family members are practical and functional which de-emphasize these gifts' special status. This conflicts with what Cheal (1988) suggests about the West, where the emphasis in family giving is on non practical and non utilitarian goods. Family members prefer to buy non-utilitarian goods to each other since basic needs are met in routine and impersonal ways. Tournier (1963) agrees with this conclusion indicating that, utilitarian gift exchange occurs where role distance between partners is relatively great. However, the answers of the participants show this is not the case for Y Generation in Turkey. When the participants were asked to explain why they have chosen these gifts for family members the most frequently given answer is the likes and the needs of the recipient. Because they know what the receiver likes and needs, they do not prefer to waste money with emotional or symbolic gifts. Instead of that, they prefer to buy utilitarian gifts which the receiver can use in an efficient way.

When we compare the gifts given to romantic other and to the family members it can be noticed that gifts given within romantic relationship are more customized and more symbolic in contrast to the others. Belk (1979) has also concluded, that gifts between spouses are expected to be more unique than gifts between those in any other relationship. This is because during relationships partners look for something special for the other one. Like Belk (2003) clarifies in his research, since social exchange model of gift giving views dating partners ad quasi kin, gifts are expected to be valued for their symbolic worth rather than their economic worth. In another study, Belk(1991) indicates that even more than gift giving in general, dating gift giving seems highly

emotionally charged. This may be the reason for couples to prefer more symbolic gifts for their romantic partners.

As Sherry (1983) points it out, inappropriate gifts cause embarrassment, threaten social ties, and leave lasting relations. When the gift givers choose a gift for their boss or for a couple who are marrying, the rules which have been set for the type of the gift they buy are very strict. This situation also confirms the statement of Anne Betteridge (2010). According to Anne Betteridge (2010), specific gifts are appropriate for particular occasions and the situations in which presents are given are dictated by social obligations. Betteridge (2010) adds that, gift giver has to decide the quality of the item to be given since the value should reflect the relative rank of the donor and recipient.

On the other hand, when the participants buy a gift (ignoring wedding gifts) for the romantic partner, they do not feel themselves bounded to strict rules, so that they can express themselves through the gifts they choose for their beloved ones. Related with this issue, Anne Betteridge (2010, p.1) states in her study; 'In the realm of intimates, who include some immediate family members, close friends, saints and God, gift exchange takes on a personal quality and gifts may express the personality of the donor or recipients. Outside the restricted circle of intimacy, expressions of oneself are few and far'. According to Betteridge (2010), in formal situations it is the position rather than the individual which counts.

Carmichael and MacLeod (1997) explain in their research that, customs related with gift giving are widespread, and the practice is often governed by strange and arcane rules. In order to support this assumption, Carmichael and MacLeod further explains, that the gift giver encloses the gift in wrapping paper, even though she/he wants her/his prospective partner to unwrap it almost immediately. This study's results also confirmed the assumption of Carmichael and MacLeod indication that wrapping rule is one of the widespread gift giving rules. Without any exception all of the participants agree on the requirement of a gift wrap for the gifts they bought and most of them indicated that although a gift is required to be wrapped before given to the recipient, the type or the quality of the wrap is not important at all.

Price is an important element in gift giving because the price of the gift can have several meanings according to different occasions, relationship types and recipients. As Belk, Ger and Askegaard (2003) point it out, although it is not always the case in romantic relationships the amount of money spent on gifts can also be considered as a symbol of love and as important for its symbolic meanings as a token of love by the recipient. Participants of this study prefer to sacrifice more, if they buy a gift for their romantic partners or family members. Males spend the highest amount of money on gifts when they buy a gift for engagement such as a ring. This conclusion confirms the statement of Belk (1979), that ignoring recipient, wedding gifts bought for the romantic partner were judged to require more expensive selections than birthday gifts. If the participants prefer to buy gifts for their parents, most of the time they do not put a price limit as long as they can afford it.

As Zhang (2005) has pointed it out, the nature of the relationship is found to have some impact on determining the value of the gift and the effort put into its selection. Participants usually attach more importance to the gift they buy, if they are buying it either for their family member or for their romantic partners. In relation with that, the most expensive gifts bought are either for their parents or their romantic partners. Belk (1979) explored that, ignoring recipient, wedding gifts bought for the romantic partner were judged to require more expensive selections than birthday gifts. Fischer and Arnold (1990) have also found out that it is common for gifts to spouses to be more expensive than those to any other recipient. Caplow's (1984) argument that men's gifts to their spouses were more expensive than women's would also support this study's findings. According to answers of the participants, males spend the highest amount of money on gifts when they are buying a gift to their romantic partner for engagement and/ or wedding. One criterion for an occasion to be special is that it is perceived as being important to the recipient and weddings meet this criterion (Wooten 2000). In other words, some gift exchange occasions can be considered as important because of high gifting demands.

It is noteworthy, while previous studies done with regard to western culture (Belk (1979), Fisher and Arnold (1990)) argued gifts given to romantic partners are the most expensive selections, according to this study gifts bought both for the romantic other

and parents are the most expensive preferences. The main reason for this difference may be the cultural differences between Turkey and the West in the sense that in Turkey the family ties are stronger. Another study examining gift exchange in Hong Kong by Joy (2001) supports the difference between the West and the East stating that, although the extended family structure in Hong Kong is being replaced by the nuclear family, its members continue to cultivate intimate family relations even when the children leave the nest.

Participants' supervisor (or professor) and best friends constitute the second group according to the importance level the participants stated. Answers of this study's participants obviously confirm that time investment in terms of decision making and shopping depends on the intimacy between the gift giver and the recipient (Bank(1979), Belk(1979), Ryans(1977), Caplow(1984)). For instance, when they are buying a gift for their extended kin or their regular friends participants of this study spend less money and care less about the gift than it is the case when they buy a gift for their family members, romantic partner, boss or best friends. In addition to that, the results show, that in case of gifts given to best friends the amounts spent are more than on regular friends. As a result, extended kin and regular friends forms the third group according to the importance which the participants give.

As it is mentioned before, the most expensive gifts bought are either for their parents or their romantic partners. Belk (1979) explored that, ignoring recipient, wedding gifts bought for the romantic partner were judged to require more expensive selections than birthday gifts. Fischer and Arnold (1990) have also found out that it is common for gifts to spouses to be more expensive than those to any other recipient. According to this study, males spend the most money on gifts when they are buying a gift to their romantic partner for engagement and/ or wedding. Caplow's (1984) argument that men's gifts to their spouses were more expensive than women's would also support this study's findings.

Betteridge (2010) points out in his research that, gold coins have the features such as, having clearly stated value, convenience and transferability. Most often the participants of this study see buying gold as a gift at weddings practical and necessary since they

do not have to think about what kind of a gift to buy and the couple may buy what is needed if they exchange gold. Besides that, since at weddings people feel forced to buy at least a small gold coin, low income consumers sometimes feel uncomfortable about this custom.

According to the answers given by the participants of this study, discount which is the one of the marketing strategy elements of many brands is not as effective as it is the case for self purchase. Some of these people who wait for sales in order to buy a gift, indicate that they care more about the sales and price of the gift when these participants face financial difficulties and they need to buy a gift anyway. Besides these situations, there were also participants indicating that they sometimes buy gifts only because its sale and without any specific reason.

In contrast to local shops, chain stores are considered as better places for buying gifts most of the time as a result of the convenience and/or reputation they offer. In comparison to shopping habits in the western world, Y generation in Turkey which has grew in an environment with high technological developments, do not shop online regularly. When the participants were asked if they would buy a gift from bazaar their answers varied regardless of their income level.

Even if they shop for themselves at bazaar, the possibility of buying a gift from a bazaar is really low, since products sold at the bazaar have a low quality image. There is not a direct relationship between the income groups and shopping habit at bazaar.

8. CONCLUSION

In order to explore how gift giving behavior is perceived by the Turkey's Y Generation in today's marketing environment, first demographic differences and then marketing environment related gift selection criteria are analyzed.

Female participants were more interested in gift buying than male participants. Although many female participants have an intention to buy gifts regularly to their parents, male participants do not buy gifts to their parents until they are married.

In this study it is also noticed that, ignoring the wedding gifts the most expensive gifts are bought by high income customers. This relationship shows that as household income increases, expenditures for gifts increase.

Gift selection criteria of the participants such as quality, brand, packaging, features of the product, price, convenience in access can be grouped according to the Kotler's (2000) marketing mix elements.

'Marketing mix is the set of controllable tactical marketing tools- product, price, place, and promotion- that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market' Kotler (2000). According to marketing mix concept, product is the goods or services the company offers to its customers, price is the amount of money customers have to pay to obtain the product, place includes all the activities making the product available to consumers, promotion means activities that communicate the merits of the product and persuade the target customers to buy it. Kotler explains that four Ps concept takes the seller's view of the market, not the buyer's view. From the buyer's viewpoint, the four P's might be better described as the four C's.

Table 8.1.: Kotler’s Four P’s Concept

4Ps	4Cs
Product	Customer Solution
Price	Customer Cost
Place	Convenience
Promotion	Communication

Source: Kotler, 2000

Communication mix of an organization consists of various promotion tools such as; advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing (Kotler 2000). Since the participants did not express promotion as a gift selection criterion, this marketing mix element is not analyzed in this research.

Although there is no consensus on the importance of brand name in gift giving, quality is considered as a gift selection criteria by most of the participants. These participants prefer to buy gifts according to the quality standards set in thier environment. It is also obvious that some brand stores deliver high quality gifts in the eyes of the customers. The stores quality from where the gift is bought is important for the relationship with the receiver in a social network. Participants usually prefer to buy gifts from well known chain stores since these stores offer convenience and are well known withing their social environment.

All of the customers attaches importance to packaging since it affects the first impression of the receiver about the gift. Even in some instance, the participants consider packaging more important than the gift itself, as a result of seeing visuality more important than anything. However, research results also show that, in Turkey gift wrap is not as much crucial as it is the case in the USA.

As Tournier (1963) points it out, gifts that are more significant by being more expensive, unusual, personal or intimate symbolize greater commitment by both the giver offering them and the recipient accepting them.

Giving gifts to parents and/or romantic partners are considered to be the most important gift giving occasions in terms of the gifts' price and effort put into. While the gifts bought for the family members are utilitarian and bought without a price limit and without reciprocal necessity gifts bought for romantic others are more expressive, customized and requires some amount of reciprocity. In addition to that, male participants spend the highest amount of money on gifts when they are buying a wedding gift for their romantic partner. According to the answers of the recipients the second most important group consists of people from higher position and best friends followed by extended kin and regular friends.

When the gift is bought for someone at a higher position than of the gift giver, the standards related with the gift within the community is stricter than it is the case when the gift is bought for friends, family members or romantic others. Gifts selected for the boss should be bought from specific stores and should not be cheap and simple.

Although the participants prefers they could buy gifts on sale, they usually do not do that since gifts should be bought at a specific period of time. Only if they have limited amount of money, they keep track of the discounts and buy gifts beforehand. There are also a few cases, when participants had bought gifts without any special reason and only because the products are on sale. However, it can be concluded that price discounts are not as effective as in gift buying as it is the case for self purchase.

Despite the fact that local shops may be preferred because of their low prices and their unusual product alternatives, in general chain stores are usually considered as more convenient places for buying gifts. Besides that, internet is still not considered as a popular alternative for buying gifts.

In developping an understanding of relationships and status positions, it has been found that individuals depend on stereotypes to simplify their search for comprehension

(Banaji, Hardin & Rothman 1993) and to be appreciated within the community. Most of the time participants have a tendency towards buying a gift from brand stores which are preferred by most of the people in their environment and matches with the expectations of their community. In this sense, gifts are bought from the brand stores which are preferred by the majority of the people within her environment. Stereotypes are socially and culturally adopted to some extent, to the point that even those who do not believe in or behave in accordance with stereotypes still carry a latent knowledge of stereotypes (Thomas 2009).

Special days imposed by the Western culture reminds most people of gift buying and they superseded Bayrams. In relation with that, only a couple of participants ignore buying gifts at these special days and buy spontaneous gifts instead. It is also noteworthy that Christmas is considered as less special in comparison to other special days such as Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, birthdays, etc. In addition, wedding ceremony is considered as an important gift giving occasion at which giving jewelry has become a tradition since Ottomans (Önal 2010). This situation shows the cultural difference between the West and Turkey.

As it is explored previous studies (Cheal (1988), Tournier (1963)), non-practical gifts are preferred in family gift giving where as in Turkey more practical gifts for family members are preferred. In addition, while previous studies done with regard to western culture (Belk (1979), Fisher and Arnold (1990)) argued gifts given to romantic partners are the most expensive selections, according to this study gifts bought both for the romantic other and parents are the most expensive preferences. The main reason for this difference may be the cultural differences between Turkey and the West in the sense that in Turkey the family ties are more strong. This also confirms Hofstede's (1977) categorization of Turkey as a collectivist culture where family members are strongly integrated. As a conclusion, the values of a warm relationship which is the case in family relations and romantic relations related positively to the amount spent for the gift and the effort made in searching for the gift.

In Turkish history, as the west was equated with the very principle of 'civilization', the logic of westernization had come to seem necessary and inevitable (Robins 1996). As a

result, the culture of Turkey expresses the duality of Western and Eastern culture which is built on traditional values (Kozan & Ilter 1994). It is also important to point out that, the Turkish people have an identity based on a very rich cultural heritage. In this respect, Turkish cultural values have impact on both consumption and shopping behavior. Turkish people's distinct decision process differentiating them from other cultures' consumption patterns, and gift giving process can be perceived as a direct outcome of their cultural orientation.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Within the marketing mix framework, gift buying behavior of Y Generation is explored and future research recommendations are provided. Gift giving orientations play an important role in attracting customers and creating willingness to spend. Gift selection analysis provides managers insights to develop specific strategic initiatives for driving purchases of each individual gift category, brand and channel.

The insights of this dissertation offer marketers targeting gift buying customers a better guidance and a greater opportunity to enhance giver and receiver utilities in gift giving practice in order to enhance business profitability.

It is noteworthy, while previous studies done with regard to western culture (Belk (1979), Fisher and Arnold (1990)) argued gifts given to romantic partners are the most expensive selections, according to this study gifts bought both for the romantic other and parents are the most expensive selections. The main reason for this difference may be the cultural differences between Turkey and the West in the sense that in Turkey. Another study examining gift exchange in Hong Kong by Joy (2001), supports the difference between the West and the East stating that, although the extended family structure in Hong Kong is being replaced by the nuclear family, its members continue to cultivate intimate family relations even when the children leave the nest. In this sense, marketers can promote expensive products both for Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day.

As it is found out by this research, although the participants care about gift wrapping, it is not considered as crucial as it is the case in U.S. Most of the time, participants see the gift wrapping of the store adequate and do not pay for extra wrapping materials. Marketers can focus on the importance of gift wrapping, so that this market can be developed and gift buyers spend more on gift wrapping.

10. FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the participants did not express promotion as a gift selection criteria, this marketing mix element is not analyzed in this research. Effect of communication elements such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing on gift selection criteria can be analyzed in another research in order to confirm the result of this study or to find new relationships between these two variables.

Although extant research has focused on various dimensions affecting gift giving, the difference in gift giving habits of married and unmarried people has not taken enough attention of the researchers. Garner & Wagner (1991) and Komter& Vollebergh (1997) have provided us with some initial guidance. Garner and Wagner explored that young married adults spend less than young single adults on extra household gifts. Confirming this finding, Komter& Vollebergh (1997) pointed out that being married diminished the generosity towards friends. Limited by these conclusions, extant research can not explain the findings of this study's result related with unmarried males.

As it is indicated earlier, according to the answers of the participants most of the females have an intention to buy gifts to their parents regularly. On the other hand, unmarried male participants males do not have a habit of gift giving to their parents for special days regularly if they do not buy a mutual gift with the other family members. 'What makes males purchase gifts to their parents after marriage?' is an important question to answer. This question may have multiple explanations. For instance, the parents may put pressure on their sons when they marry and leave the parents' home or married males may feel themselves indebted for raising them, etc.

This assumption gained in this study may be tested through quantitative method and new conclusions may be explored. A research analyzing the relation within marital status, gender and relation type and their effect on the frequency in gift giving would be very beneficial. Since there is not any research analyzing gift selection attitudes with this respect, new themes can emerge during the analysis part.

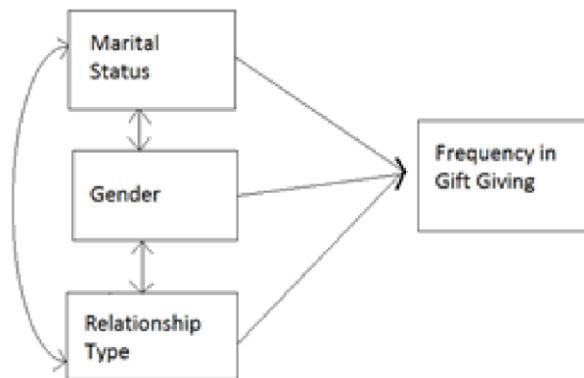


Figure 10.1.: Gift Frequency Model

Purchase decisions of buyers for gift giving and self use can be compared and analyzed. For instance, Shapiro (1970) reported that price is less of a constraint in gift purchase than in purchase for self. However, the amount of research which analyzes the distinction between self-purchase and gift purchase is very limited. In such a way, the role of the giver's characteristic on gift purchase may be specified more clearly.

Otnes and Woodruff (1991) found that the giver's stage in the life cycle could explain variations in gift selection-behavior. It would be beneficial to explore other generations' gift purchasing behaviors and compare it with the results of this study. As a result, the gift giver's stage in the life cycle on gift exchange can be explored.

Surveys can be carried out in order to test the hypothesis with large samples, so that the assumptions provided by this study can be generalized.

11.LIMITATIONS

The researcher in this study applied in depth interviews as a qualitative research method and it would be useful to test the assumptions provided in this study with a quantitative method. As a researcher also Calder (1977) indicates that exploratory qualitative studies are effective precursors to quantitative methods.

This research study required participants to remember and explain past experiences, some of which occurred many years ago. It can be argued that the use of recall data to explore gift selection and relational effects may lead to a distorted picture of these experiences. For example, it is possible that, important and dramatic gift- receipt experiences are more likely to be remembered than those that were more ordinary. As a result, the data may over represent memorable experiences and under represent more casual gift occasions which may affect the dominance certain themes or characteristics.

Furthermore, it is also a possibility that the participants would like to show themselves as spending much more money than it is the case in reality. For instance, a participant who favors regifting may not like to admit that even if he/she does not know the interviewer in person. However these kinds of limitations which depend on the characteristics of the participants are not only valid for this research but also for most of the other researches in social sciences.

12.LITERATURE TABLE

<p>Study Name: The Gift: Form and Function in Archaic Society by Mauss, M, (1954). Source: IL / Free Press Method: Texts and papers Subject: Religious, legal, economic, mythological and other aspects of giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift-Giving is a system of reciprocity consisting of three types of obligations: the obligations to give, to receive and to repay. These obligations motivate individuals to become involved in the process of giving a gift.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement by Gouldner, A. (1960). Source: American Sociological Review Method: Review of literature. Subject: Social reciprocity.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The norm may lead individuals to establish relations only or primarily with those who can reciprocate, so that the needs of those unable to reciprocate are neglected.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Principle of Reciprocity by Levi-Strauss, C. (1965). Source: New York: MacMillan. Method & Sample: Review of literature. Subject: The principle of reciprocity.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift giving is examined as a reciprocal exchange and a complex game. Successful gift giving is directly related to emotions giving greater recognition and security of social support.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Social Psychology of the Gift by Schwartz, B. (1967). Method: Review of literature. Subject: Gift exchange</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift's characteristics give insight about the powerful statement of the giver's perception of the recipient.</p>
<p>Study Name: Patterns of Gift Giving and Their Marketing Implications by Lowes, B., Turner, J., Wills, G. (1968). Method: Qualitative and Quantitative Study. Interviews / Surveys. Subject: Patterns of gift giving in the society and their marketing implications.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Most expensive gifts are given within family and majority of gift giving takes place within the family network.</p>
<p>Study Name: Buying Situation and Buyer's Information Behavior by Gronhaug, K. (1972). European Marketing Research Method : Literature review Subject: Differences in consumer purchase behavior.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift buyers spend more time and money on selecting the gift than they would if the purchase was for them.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Decisions by Kids and Parents by Caron, A. and Ward, S. (1975). Source: Journal of Advertising Research Method : Quantitative Study-Experiential Study Subject: Influence of mass media and interpersonal resources</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Children most often use television as a source of gift ideas, closely followed up by friends. Although parents mediate gift requests regardless class, children receive mostly what they request.</p>
<p>Study Name: It's the Thought that Counts:</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Balance in gift</p>

<p>A Signed Digraph Analysis of Gift Giving by Belk, R. W. (1976). Source: Journal of Consumer Research Method: Quantitative Study / Questionnaire Booklet Subject: Conditions which effect gift buying behavior</p>	<p>giving is a desired state leading to satisfaction. Gift giving instances involving close relatives and a prior history of gift exchange are likely to result in balanced results. Tension reduction may be limited for many imbalance situations.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift-Giving: A Review and an Interactive Paradigm by Banks, S. K.(1979). Source: Advances in Consumer Research. Method : Literature review Subject: Past theories and findings on gift giving within the marketing discipline.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: An interactive gift-giving model is designed, including a view of both the giver and receiver.</p>
<p>Study Name: Dogmatism and Innovation: A Situational Perspective Coney, K. A.; Harmon, R. R. (1979). Source: Advances in Consumer Research Method & Sample: Qualitative Study / Interview Subject: Influencing recipient's perception of the giver.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift givers may choose gifts that convey some of the personality of the gift giver to the recipient and furthermore gifts are a means of changing the recipient's view of the giver.</p>
<p>Study Name: Effects of Gift Giving Involvement On Gift Selection Strategies by Belk, R. W. (1982). Source: Advances in Consumer Research Method & Sample: Quantitative Study / Questionnaire Subject: Effect of gift giving involvement in gift selection strategies</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The present findings suggest that there is significant variation in purchase strategies between different gift-giving situations.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving in anthropological Perspective by Sherry, J. F. (1983). Source: Journal of Consumer Research Method & Sample: Theoretical Study Subject: A model of the gift exchange process intended to stimulate comprehensiveresearch on gift- giving behavior</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Sherry's model of gift exchange process has described the transfer of goods or services, as the flow of social invisibles such as deference, affection and social bonding. The process consists of three stages: Gestation, prestation, and reformulation.</p>
<p>Study Name: A Comparison of French and Mexican Gift Giving Practices by Jolibert, A. J. P., Moreno, F. C. (1983). Source: Advances in Consumer Research, Method: Qualitative and quantitative. Interviews and questionnaires Subject: Comparison of French and Mexican Christmas gift giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Substantial cross-cultural differences in consumer behavior show that Mexicans spend more at Christmas.</p>
<p>Study Name: Functional Equivalence in</p>	<p>Result of the Study: There is a lack of</p>

<p>Cross-Cultural Consumer Behavior: Gift Giving in Japan and United States by Green, R.T., Alden, D.L. (1988). Source: Psychology and Marketing, Method: Qualitative Study / Interviews. Subject: Functional equivalence of gift giving that exists between U.S. and Japanese consumers.</p>	<p>functional equivalence of gift giving that exists between U.S. and Japanese consumers. More research is needed in order to explore the difference between Eastern and Western cultures.</p>
<p>Study Name: Glitches in Global Gift Giving by Barnum, C. & Wolniansky, N. (1989). Source: Management Review Method: Qualitative Study / Emails Subject: Gift-giving in the global marketplace.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: In today's marketing environment gift giving has become complicated. Since there are cultural differences in terms of gift giving habits, it is best to speak to someone of a particular culture to decide for an appropriate gift.</p>
<p>Study Name: Strings Attached by Cronk, Lee (1989). Source: Sciences Method & Sample: Literature review. Subject: Cultural meanings of gift giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gifts are both powerful and compelling. People have always understood a gift's power to unify, intensify or conquer.</p>
<p>Study Name: Reciprocity in a Gift-Giving situation by Rynning, M. (1989). Source: Journal of Social Psychology, Method: Quantitative Study/ Surveys Subject: Reciprocity in gift giving</p>	<p>Result of the Study: When men are reciprocating rather than women, the reciprocity through flowers and other gifts are more likely.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gender Roles and Christmas Gift Shopping by Fischer, E. & Arnold, S. J. (1990). Source: Journal of Consumer Research Method & Sample: Qualitative Study/ Structured Interviews Subject: Effect of gender related variables on Christmas gift shopping</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Women are more involved than men in Christmas gift shopping. However, men are likely to be more involved if they hold egalitarian gender role attitudes. Overall, it is concluded that, while Christmas shopping is most widely considered as "women's work".</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift-Giving: Consumer Motivation and the Gift Purchase Process by Goodwin, C, Smith K.L. & Spiggle, S. (1990). Source: Advances in Consumer Research, Method : Quantitative Study / Surveys Subject: Obligatory vs. voluntary motives.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Connection of product category selection on decision making about time and monetary aspects in purchasing gifts is explored. Association of gift giving with rituals and obligations during holidays is confirmed.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Effect of Donor-Recipient Involvement on Consumer Gift Decisions by Wagner, J., Ettenson R. & Verrier, S. (1990). Source: Advances in Consumer Research Method : Quantitative Study / Experimental Subject: Effect of donor and recipient</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Size, type of fiber and price affected mothers in the new neighbor condition when they are purchasing gifts. Fiber type and size affected mothers who are in the best friend category.</p>

involvement in consumer gift giving decisions.	
<p>Study Name: Motivations and Symbolism in Gift-giving Behavior by Wolfinbarger, F. (1990) Source: Advances in Consumer Research</p> <p>Method : Qualitative Study / Interviews</p> <p>Subject: Motivations and symbolism in gift giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gifts are more valuable to participants for the symbols involved than for the material benefits exchanged.</p>
<p>Study Name: Personal Values and Gift-Giving Behaviors: A Study Across Cultures by Kahle, L. R. & Homer, P. (1991). Source: Journal of Business Research,</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study / Surveys</p> <p>Subject: The linkage between giftgiving behaviors and personal values was investigated.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Individuals in social segments reported higher levels of gift giving and greater effort in the process than those in non-social segments.</p>
<p>Study Name: Can't Buy Me Love: Dating, Money and Gifts by Belk R. W. and Coon, G. S. (1991). Source: Advances in Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study: Essays on dating histories</p> <p>Subject: The role of money in dating</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Both expenditures of money and gift giving appear to be key symbolic communication media. Even more than gift giving in general, dating gift giving seems highly emotionally charged. In pre-courtship and non-courtship dating, there is a careful attempt to invoke gifts and expenditures to express interest, gratitude, and sincerity, to exercise or attempt to exercise power, to apologize or to please a date.</p>
<p>Study Name: Economic Dimensions of Household Gift Giving by Garner, T. I. and Wagner, J. (1991). Source: Journal of Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study / Surveys</p> <p>Subject: The probability of giving and the expected value of the corresponding expenditures</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Both the probability of giving and the value of annual expenditures for gifts given outside the consumer unit are related to total expenditures (a proxy for income), family size, life-cycle stage, and education. In addition, the probability of gift giving is related to the number of female adults, ethnicity, and urbanization, and the value of gift expenditures is related to region.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving Roles and Gender Self-Concepts, Gould, S. J., Weil, C.E. (1991). Method: Quantitative Study / Surveys</p> <p>Subject: Comparing males and females in different gift-giving contexts and how they may vary on a within-individual</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The sexes describe themselves differently in terms of expressiveness and instrumentality.</p>

basis.	
<p>Study Name: Gift Wrapping Effects on Product Attitudes: A Mood- Biasing Explanation by Howard, D. J. (1992). Source: Journal of Consumer Psychology</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study: Experiment and Survey</p> <p>Subject: Effects of gift wrapping on product attitudes.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Results show that a happy mood consistently mediates gift wrapping effects on attitudes. The happier the mood, the more subjects sought to maintain that state through the development of favorable attitudes toward owning the gift they received.</p>
<p>Study Name: Three Motivations for Interpersonal Gift Giving, Experiential, Obligated, and Practical Motivations, Wolfenbarger, F. & Yale, J. (1993). Source: Advances in Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study / Interviews</p> <p>Subject: Experimental, obligated and practical motivations.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Givers have general feelings about giving and that these feelings differ between givers.</p>
<p>Study Name: Cross Cultural Gift Giving Behavior: Collectivistic vs. Individualistic Cultures by Park, S. Y. (1993). Method: Qualitative Study /Focus groups and In-depth interviews Quantitative Study/ Surveys</p> <p>Subject: How gift giving behavior works and differs across cultures.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Results show that gift-giving motivations are both universal and singularly cultural as well. Koreans under the influence of collectivism have stronger face saving and group conformity motivations. Americans under the influence of individualism. Americans give gifts congruent with the perceived identity of the giver or receiver more frequently than Koreans.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Selection for Easy and Difficult Recipients: A Social Roles Interpretation by Otnes, C., Lowrey, T. M. & Young Chan Kim (1993). Source: Journal of Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study/ In-depth Interviews</p> <p>Subject: The meaning underlying Christmas shoppers' description of some recipients as 'easy' or 'difficult' in terms of gift selection</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The perception of recipients as easy or difficult is directly related with the relationship between the giver and the recipient. Participants select gifts in such a way that the gift reflects the roles they wish to express in each relationship.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving As Agapic Love: An alternative to the Exchange Paradigm Based on Dating Experiences by Belk, R. W. & Coon, G. S. (1993). Source: Journal of Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study/ Journals and Interviews</p> <p>Subject: Meaning of gifts and gift giving in the dating process.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: This article introduces three types of gift exchange between datingpartners: economic exchange, social exchange and agapic love.</p>
<p>Study Name: ThePleasure and Pain of</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Men are reluctant to</p>

<p>Being Close:Men's Mixed Feelings about Participation in Valentine's Day by Otnes, C., Ruth, J. (1994) Advances in Consumer Research, Method: Quantitative Study / Survey Subject: Men's complex feelings about participation on Valentine's Day.</p>	<p>buy gifts for women on Valentine's day. Those, which do participate in this holiday, do not have positive attitudes</p>
<p>Study Name: Children and the Economics of Christmas Gift-Giving by Tremblay, C. H. & Tremblay, V. J. (1995). Source: Applied Economics Letters Method: Literature review Subject: Relationship between the population of children and per capita Christmas spending.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: A complete model showing the relation between the children's population and per capita Christmas spending is developed. This study finds out that, children increase the amount of Christmas spending.</p>
<p>Study Name: Twisting the Gift: Translating Pre-Colonial Into Colonial Exchanges in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia by Aragon, L. V. (1996). Source: American Ethnologist Method: Qualitative Study / Historical data Subject: The relationship between gift giving and hierarchy.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Dutch colonial officials and European missionaries disrupted prior community and regional exchange patterns and initiated strategic policies of asymmetric inter-ethnic gift giving.</p>
<p>Study Name: Mainstream Legitimization of Homosexual Men Through Valentine's Day gift-Giving and Consumption Rituals, Method: Qualitative Study / Indepth Interviews Subject: The meaning and practices surrounding the consumer ritual of Valentine's Day from the perspective of homosexual men.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Research finds out that similarities for the celebration of Valentine's Day between homosexual and heterosexual singles, while differences may exist for the functions of Valentine's Day gift-giving between these groups.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift-Giving Among Gay Men: The Reification of Social Relations by Rucker, M., Freitas A. & Huidor, O. (1996). Source: Journal of Homosexuality Method: Qualitative Study / Indepth Interviews Subject: Gay gift-giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gay males are more more interested in selecting gifts, and they were also more concerned about them recipient's appreciation and utilization of the gift.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving and the Evolution of Cooperation by Carmichael, L. H. & W. Bentley MacLeod, W. B. (1997). Source: International Economic Review Review</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gifts that are exchanged between the two parties should be inefficient. If the partners exchange money, then parasites can enter. When matches are long-term, the cost of the gift can be less than it is the case for short term</p>

<p>Method: Theoretical Study Subject: The character of the goods that can be used as gifts</p>	<p>matches. Gifts will be more expensive when the life of a match is short.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving and the Emotional Significance of Family and Friends by Komter, A. & Vollebergh, W. (1997). Source: Journal of Marriage and Family Method: Quantitative Study: Both precoded and open questions Subject: The emotional importance of relationships with friends, primary & secondary family members</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Being married is not related to gift giving to the extended family, but it diminishes the generosity toward friends. In the western society gift giving within primary family relationships appears to still play an important role.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift-Giving: A research Anthology by Stafford, T. F. (1997), Source: Academy of Marketing Science Journal Method: Literature Review Subject: A research anthology related with the act of giving a gift.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Giving a gift is an affirmation of complex cultural and interpersonal values, and it is an act rich in meaning for both parties. Recognition, affection, importance-all are conferred along with gifts. Many times what is given is not as importance as the fact that it is given.</p>
<p>Study Name: A Comparison of Korean and American Gift-Giving Behaviors by Park, S. (1998). Source: Psychology & Marketing, Method: Quantitative Study / Surveys Subject: A comparison of Korean and American gift-giving behaviors.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Wives in both cultures primarily buy gifts, but Korean husbands are more active in gift giving.</p>
<p>Study Name: Determinants of In-store Information Search Strategies Pertaining to a Christmas gift Purchase by Laroche, M., Saad, G., Browne E., Cleveland, M., Kim, C. (1998). Source: Canadian Journal of Administrative Science Method: Quantitative Study / Surveys Subject: Examines Consumers' use of in-store information sources while Christmas shopping.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Situational variables are more effective than personal or demographic variables. Three information related dimensions effecting the consumers are general information search, specific information search and assistance of sales clerks.</p>
<p>Study Name: Reciprocal Gift-Giving Behavior in Taiwan and USA: The Influence of Culture and Relationship Strength between Dyads by Chiou, J. (1999). Source: American Marketing Association Method: Qualitative/ Written Situations Subject: Gift-giving behaviors in Taiwan and the USA.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The level of relationship strength between dyads may influence people's decision on which type of social behavior they will apply in reciprocal gift-giving behavior.</p>

<p>Study Name: Influence of Chinese Cultural Values on Consumer Behavior: A Proposed Model of Gift Purchasing Behavior in Hong Kong by Yau, O. H. M., Chan T. S. & Lau, K. F. (1999). Source: Journal of International Consumer Marketing.</p> <p>Method: Literature Review</p> <p>Subject: Gift-purchasing behavior in Hong-Kong.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift giving is considered as a social behavior among family members and business friends. The importance of the symbolism of gifts Show that social referents are often determined by one's cultural background.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gender Differences in the Motivations for Gift Giving by Webster, C. & Nottingham, L. (2000). Source: American Marketing Association</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study / Indepth Interviews</p> <p>Subject: Gender and gender identity differences in gift-giving motivations.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Females are more interested in gift giving. Whereas females experience more positive motivations, males more practical motivations in gift giving. When obligated motivations are the issue, nodifference between the sexes is observed.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving and Relational Messages in Romantic Relationships by Harrison, C. M. (2000). Method: Qualitative Study /Surveys</p> <p>Subject: Gift giving in romantic relationships.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The most frequently bought gifts are the traditionally accepted products, such as clothing, flowers, jewelry, trinkets,etc. Most of the time, participants select a gift according to the recipients likes and wants.</p>
<p>Study Name: A Free Gift Makes No Friendsby Laidlaw, J. (2000). Source: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</p> <p>Method: Literature Review</p> <p>Subject: Reciprocity in Gift Giving</p>	<p>Result of the Study: It is a mistake to define the gift as necessarily reciprocal and non-alienated. The pure gift does not create personal connections and obligations between the parties.</p>
<p>Study Name: Qualitative Steps toward an Expanded Model of Anxiety in Gift-Givingby Wooten, D. B. (2000). Source: The Journal of Consumer Research</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study: Survey</p> <p>Subject: Anxiety in Gift Giving</p>	<p>Result of the Study: People get anxious when they are highly motivated to induce desired reactions from recipients and others, but they are doubtful of success. Elusive demands or expectations spark getting anxiety by reducing givers' subjective probabilities of eliciting desired reactions to their gifts.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving in Hong Kong and the Continuum of Social Ties by Joy, A. (2001). Source: The University of Chicago Press</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study / In-depth Interviews and limited Observations</p> <p>Subject:Gift giving practices in Hong Kong.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Participants drew on a gift continuum that celebrates relationships from the most affective to the least. According to their answers major relationship categories are; close friends, good friends and hi-bye friends. The rightness of the gift depends on the relationship and their gifting history.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Non-Monetary Nature</p>	<p>Result of the Study: People buy gifts not</p>

<p>of Gifts by Pendergast, C. & Lars, S. (2001). Source: European Economic Review Method: Literature Review Subject: Amount of Money spent on gifts. Three or four percent of individuals' income is spent on gifts.</p>	<p>to prove they have searched for the perfect gift, but to prove that they are sure that what they are giving is the right thing. Cash gifts are offered by those who are less certain of the recipient's preference.</p>
<p>Study Name: Brand Choice in Gift-Giving: Recipient Influence by Parsons, A. G. (2002). Source: Journal of Product and Brand Management Method: Quantitative Study: Survey Subject: Brand choice when purchasing a gift.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Consumers vary in their choice of brands for different recipient groups. Gender, age, and income all affect brand choices. Overall consumers tend to look for brands with greater perceived symbolic benefits.</p>
<p>Study Name: Activating Performance Expectations and Status Differences Through Gift Exchange by Bienenstock, E. J. & Bianchi, A. J. (2004). Source: Social Psychology Quarterly Method: Quantitative Study: Experimental Subject: Emergence of status inequalities and future performance expectations directly from social exchanges</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The study finds out that being generous and giving gifts during interactions create status differences. The important point is that it is not the possession of resources that brings about status, but the use of those resources. In other words, status is gained through gift giving is not a product of wealth.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Selection of Wedding Gifts: The Gift Giving Perspective of English Canadians by Guo, L. (2005). Method: Qualitative /Eight in-depth interviews and Quantitative Study/Surveys Subject: Criteria and conditions effecting wedding gift selection by English Canadians.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Consumer are more willing to buy gifts beyond their budget if the gift is intended for a person in a close relationship with them. Furthermore, findings indicate that gifts with personal meaning are important in close relationship context, whereas practical items, or even monetary gifts, are preferred in the context of more distant and casual relationships.</p>
<p>Study Name:The Changing Gift-Giving Practices of Chinese Immigrants in Canadaby Zhang, X. (2005). Method: Qualitative and Qualitative Study Subject:The impact that Chinese cultural values and acculturation have on gift giving.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Although cultural values shae the gift giving practices of Chinese in Canada, ethnic identification has little impact on Chinese immigrants' gift selection.</p>
<p>Study Name: The Role of the Variety Seeking Trait in Purchases Made For Others by Chowdhury, T. G. (2005). Source: Ph.D. Thesis at the University of Connecticut</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Variety seeking individuals form more heterogeneous consideration sets when buying gifts for others. Further, the effect of variety seeking trait on the composition of</p>

<p>Method: Qualitative Study- Case Study Quantitative Studies- Survey / Questionnaire Subject: Whether and when an individual's variety seeking tendency influences heterogeneity in his/he consideration sets for gifts.</p>	<p>consideration sets is attenuated in the presence of a prevention (vs. promotion) regularity focus.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving: A community Paradigm by Candice R. Hollenbeck, Cara Peters, George M. Zinkhan (2006). Source: Psychology & Marketing Method: Qualitative Study- In depth Interviews and Group Interviews Subject: Gift giving within the social environment.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The data suggest that, on the internet, social networks of relationships influence the purchasing of gifts. This study expands the theoretical understanding of gift giving by identifying three distinct paradigms.: the economic exchange paradigm, the relational partnership paradigm and the communal commitment paradigm.</p>
<p>Study Name: An Exploration of Gift Giving: Re- Gifting as a Gift Giving Behaviorby Homick, A. V. (2007). Source: Master Thesis at the University of North Carolina Method: Qualitative Study: Interview Subject: The role of re-gifting in the consumer gift-giving process.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: There are three themes as triggers for regifting: time, lack of relationship, and duplicates. Most informants felt that what triggered using an unwanted gift as a gift for another was convenience,where social relationships were not important.</p>
<p>Study Name: Does Santa Have a Great Job? Gift Shopping Value and Satisfaction by Babin, B. J., Gonzalez C. & Watts, C.(2007) Method: Quantitative Study /Survey /Hypothesis Testing Subject: Roles played by general and specific shopping orientations in shaping giftshopping in shaping gift shopping value and satisfaction.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Price consciousness may convert a shopping experience into a treasure hunt but a highly price conscious consumer may have greater difficulty in purchasing the gift that they want to buy. Gift shopping orientations, such as agape may dominate may dominate general shopping orientations, such as price consciousness.</p>
<p>Study Name: Are They Playing the Same Rule? A Consumer Gifting Classification of Marital Dyads by Schiffman, L. G. & Cohn, D. Y. (2008). Source: Journal of Business Research Method: Qualitative Study/ Interview Subject: The dynamics of gifting behavior of long-term committed dyadic relationship of married couples</p>	<p>Result of the Study: This research considers the findings of a study in which the reported gifting behavior of couples reveals two gifting rulebook: symbolic and economic exchange rules. Couples may follow both same and different rulebooks which may lead to harmony or clashes.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gifts vs. Commodity' debate revisited by Rus, A. (2008). Source: Anthropological Notebooks Method: Literature Review Subject: The difference between</p>	<p>Result of the Study: This study denotes that the commodity, like the gift, can possess a quality of the giver, and manifest a form of inalienability from the giver (producer or seller) which is otherwise</p>

commodity exchange and gift exchange	characteristic of a gift.
<p>Study Name:For Him, For Her: The Effects of Gender Stereotypes in Advertising on Gift Giving Behavior and Social Attitudes by Thomas, C. N. (2008).</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study / Survey</p> <p>Subject: Impact of stereotype activating and reinforcing messages in advertising on gift giving behavior.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Gift givers, especially males, engage in gender stereotyping when selecting gifts. It does appear that exposure to the stereotyped ads does have an impact on the gift choice. Hedonic gifts are more likely to be selected for female recipients and utilitarian gifts are more likely to be chosen for male recipients.</p>
<p>Study Name: One for him, one for me: An examination of gift giving and the malleable self by Spolter, S. W. (2009).</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study: Questionnaire</p> <p>Subject: Variability of gender identity and self-construal in different gift giving , contexts</p>	<p>Result of the Study: Research findings show, that different gift giving situations can influence the assessment of different aspects of the self concept. This study finds that, self gifting activates the masculine/ instrumental and independent self-concept and interpersonal gift giving activates the feminine / nurturing and interdependent self concept.</p>
<p>Study Name:Rule Enforcement without Visible Means: Christmas Gift Giving in Middletown by Caplow, T. (2010). Source: The American Journal of Sociology</p> <p>Method: Theoretical Study</p> <p>Subject: The unwritten rules that regulate Christmas gift giving and the effective enforcement of those rules without visible means.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: A Christmas gift should show the giver's familiarity with the receiver's tastes and surprise the receiver. In other words the giver should do something which is not expected from him/her. In addition to that, the gift should be scaled in economic value to the emotional value of the relationship.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Exchange in Iran: The Locus of Self-identity in Social Interaction by Betteridge, A. H. (2010). Source: Anthropological Quarterly</p> <p>Method: Qualitative Study: Ethnographic</p> <p>Subject: The extent to which gift giving in Iran can be viewed as a presentation of self</p>	<p>Result of the Study: The pattern of gift-giving applied in Iran reflects a hierarchy of social identity and personal self. Public and private spheres are regulated by different rules. In the case of formal gift-giving, self expression is not desirable. Little room is left for the exercise of choice in deciding what to give on a particular occasion.</p>
<p>Study Name: Gift Giving and Gift Card Research by Yu, C. Y. (2010). Source: The University of Texas at Dallas/ Dissertation</p> <p>Method: Quantitative Study/Online Survey</p> <p>Subject: To provide a general understanding of gift card purchase behaviors in the current marketplace.</p>	<p>Result of the Study: In general givers tend to spend more money on gifts when they are giving the gifts to their family members and when they have a close relationship. A higher dollar gift value is given for Christmas holiday and when a giver has a higher education and income level.</p>

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1- Interview Questions

- 1)Hediyeleşmek hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
- 2)Genelde nasıl hediyeler almaktan hoşlanırsınız?
- 3) Hediye alırken nelere dikkat edersiniz? Doğru hediyeyi seçtiğinizi nasıl anlarsınız?
- 4)Hiç kendi yaptığımız el yapımı bir hediye verdiniz mi? Size gelen bir hediyeyi başkasına hediye olarak verdiniz mi?
- 5)Aile adına bir hediye alınıyorsa ne alınacağına genelde kim karar verir? Örnek veriniz.
- 6)Sizce hediye almak zorunlu mu yoksa isteğe bağlı bir hareket mi?
- 7) En son aldığımız 2 hediyeyi anlatır mısınız? (alınma nedeni, nerden aldı, neden o hediyeyi seçti, ücret, kriter, zamanı, o kişi ile olan yakınlık seviyesi, nerelere bakılmış, daha önce o kişi ne almış, vs.)
- 8)En çok zorlanarak hediye aldığımız zamanları hatırlıyor musunuz? Bu durumla nasıl başa çıktınız? Anlatınız.
- 9)Amirinize, öğretmeninize veya kendinizden pozisyon olarak yüksek herhangi birine hediye aldınız mı? Anlatınız.
- 10)Sadece kendinizi zorunlu hissettiğiniz için aldığımız bir hediye oldu mu? Anlatınız.
- 11) Hediye alacağınız kişinin hiç hediye ile ilgili bir talebi oldu mu?
- 12)En çok özenerek değer vererek seçtiğim hediye çünkü
- 13)Sizin en çok hoşunuza giden hediyeçünkü
- 14)Hediye aldığımız belirli yerler var mı? Neden oraları tercih ediyorsunuz?
- 15)Bu mağazalara ulaşımınız kolay olması sizin onları tercih etmenizde etken bir faktör mü?
- 16)Değişim kartı uygulaması olup olmaması kararınızı ne kadar etkiler?

17) Sizce hediye marka ve ambalaj önemli midir? Ne zaman daha çok önemlidir?

18) Hediye alırken indirim günlerini takip ediyor musunuz?

19) Hediye almak için alışverişe çıktığınızda kafanızda önceden bir şey belirleyip onu mu arıyorsunuz veya mağazadaki ürünler arasından bir şey seçmeye mi çalışıyorsunuz?

20) Hediye alırken başkasından yardım alıyor musunuz? Reklamlar, dergiler, broşürler veya mağazadaki satıcılar hediye alırken size fikir kaynağı oluyor mu? Örnek veriniz.

21) Sadece hediyelik eşya satan mağazalardan hediye aldığınız oldu mu? Anlatınız.

22) Para yüklü hediye kartı almayı tercih ettiniz oldu? Neden?

23) Hiç internetten hediye satın aldınız mı? Anlatınız.

24) Örnek Olay:

Şık bir yere çok samimi olmadığınız bir arkadaşınızın doğum gününe gittiniz ve arkadaşınıza kullanışlı bir ajanda aldınız. Doğum gününde hediyeler açıldıkça fark ediyorsunuz ki herkes sizinkine kıyasla çok daha şık ve pahalı hediyeler almış. Doğum günü olan arkadaşınız hediyelediğinden sonra diğerlerine nasıl teşekkür ettiyse size aynı şekilde teşekkür etti. Peki, bu durumda siz kendinizi nasıl hissederdiniz? Neden?

Bir sonraki sene aynı doğum gününde ona hediye alırsanız nasıl bir hediye almaya dikkat ederdiniz? Neden?

25) Örnek Olay 2:

İki arkadaşınız ortak doğum günü yapıyor. Biri sizin çok sevdiğiniz senelerdir tanıdığınız bir arkadaşınız. Diğerisi ise 1 senedir tanıdığınız, diğerisiyle olduğu kadar samimi olmadığınız ama arkadaş grubunuzun içinde olan biri. İkisine de mutlaka hediye alacaksınız. İkisine aldığınız hediyeler aynı değerde mi ya da farklı değerlerde mi olur? (hem sembolik hem maddi açıdan). Neden?

26) Örnek Olay 3:

Sizin için çok değerli bir arkadaşınız. Doğum gününde çok özenle bir hediye seçtiniz ve ona verdiniz. Ama sizin doğum gününüzde sıradan bir çerçeve aldığını gördünüz. Ona

belli etmediniz ama aslında hayal kırıklığına uğradınız. Onun bir sonraki doğum gününde nasıl bir hediye alırdınız? Cevaptan sonra eğer bu kişi aileden biri olsaydı tutumunuz ne olurdu?

27) Örnek Olay 4:

Yarın arkadaşınızın doğum günü ve sizi de doğum gününe çağırdı. Pazarda gezerken arkadaşınızın beğeneceğine emin olduğunuz bir elbise gördünüz. Doğum günü hediyesi olarak pazardan o elbiseyi alır mıydınız? Neden? Eğer ailenizden birinin doğumgünü olsaydı alır mıydınız?

28) Anneler gününde/ babalar gününde hediye alır mısınız? Anlatınız

29) Çocuğunuz sizden daha çok ne gibi hediyeler almanızı istiyor ve siz ona ne almak istiyorsunuz? Neden?

30) Evlenmeden önce veya evliliğin ilk yıllarında birbirinize aldığınız hediyelerle şuan birbirinize aldığınız hediyeler arasında bir değişiklik var mı? Lütfen alınan hediyelerden örnek vererek açıklayınız.

31) Bunun dışında aile içindeki kişilere aldığınız hediyelere örnek verebilir misiniz? Anlatınız.

32) Onlar size daha önce ne almıştı veya genelde neler alır? Anlatınız.

33) Aile içinde birine hediye seçmekle aile dışından birine hediye almak arasındaki en büyük fark nedir? Bunun aldığınız hediyeler üzerinde ne gibi etkisi oluyor?

34) Aile dışındaki akrabalarınıza hediye alır mısınız? Anlatınız.

35) Yılbaşında hediye alır mısınız? Anlatınız.

36) Hiç düğüne giderken hediye aldınız mı? Anlatınız.

37) Nişanlanınca tek taş alınması konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?