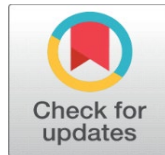


## FACTORS AFFECTING CLOTHING PURCHASE

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### ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the factors affecting consumers' choice during clothing purchase. Questionnaire method was used as the data collection technique in the research and data were obtained from 826 people living in İzmir province. The questionnaire consists of 8 sections. These are demographic information (age and gender), shopping frequency, the meaning of the brand, reasons for purchasing clothes, factors affecting clothing preference, the importance of the brand according to the product type, preferred places for shopping and finally the impressions created by the brand were tried to be determined. Evaluations and comments were made in the light of the data obtained.

**Keywords:** Ready-to-wear, Cloth Choice, Brand Trust, Consumer Experience, Brand Consciousness, Brand Loyalty, Purchase Decision Involvement

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dressing is related to the physical dimensions of the body and expresses the individual's self-perception and the desire to reflect this to the outside. In addition to protecting the physical health of individuals, the importance of clothing in meeting their psychological and sociological needs cannot be underestimated.

In the twenty-first century, the increase in consumption and the similarity of many products caused companies to differentiate their products. Thus, the concept of branding emerged. The simplest expression of brand is that it is a concept that provides rational and emotional satisfaction [Chen-Yu and Seock \(2002\)](#). Consumers attach great importance to the quality, durability, after-sales service, and brand of

the product. The brand makes it easier for the consumer to recognize and purchase products. Branded products are preferred by consumers more than unbranded products due to the features that enable the product behind the brand to be followed and the belief that it is of higher quality [Aktuğlu \(2004\)](#).

Brand and brand image is one of the most important factors affecting consumers in a rapidly changing global environment with high expectations. Although branding in clothing serves product recognition and differentiation as its basic function, some characteristics specific to clothing emphasize the importance of branding. Fabric is a special material because it is carried on the body. This makes it more personal than any other material used in the office or at home. Clothing is a complementary tool that reveals one's existence, what one wants in the future, one's point of view, where one stands in society, anytime, anywhere. Brands can help people communicate their self-image by serving as a symbolic tool. For example, some brands can be used by specific types of people to reflect different values and characteristics, so that two products of the same quality and materials can be evaluated differently because of the values attributed to them [Comert and Durmaz \(2006\)](#).

In this period of fierce competition, the most important thing for manufacturers and retailers is the customer. Firms can survive as long as the purchasing behavior of buyers continues. For this reason, the role of the consumer in the purchasing decision process within the scope of consumer behavior has always been in the focus of both academics (as theoreticians) and the sector and businesses (as practitioners). Because examining consumer behavior means determining the target market, creating the marketing mix to be developed and collecting the necessary information to meet the needs and demands of consumers correctly [Erciş et al. \(2007\)](#).

When we examine the studies aimed at understanding customer behavior in the literature, we observe that the preferences of the mass with certain characteristics are generally tried to be understood through surveys. In the study of Koca and Koç; the opinions of 300 working women were taken in order to determine the clothing choices and clothing color preferences of working women. According to the results of the study, it was determined that working women mostly prefer classic and sportswear styles. It was determined that they use monochromatic and contrasting color harmonies in clothes, and that they mostly prefer pink, blue, navy blue, white and brown. It was determined that body structure, body shape, personality traits and the area of use of the clothing primarily affect clothing color preferences, and there is a statistically significant relationship between women's occupation and age and clothing color preferences [Koca and Koç \(2008\)](#).

In Akça and her friends' study, the factors affecting adolescents' choice of clothing were examined and a questionnaire was applied to 320 high school students (15-18 years old) to determine their opinions on the purpose of clothing purchase, the importance they attach to the brand and the effectiveness of clothing in friendship relationships. As a result of the study, it was determined that gender did not create a significant difference in the clothing purchase purposes of adolescents, while socio-economic level and age created a significant difference. It was determined that socio-economic level was not effective in adolescents' giving importance to the brand, but gender and age were effective. In addition, it was determined that age did not make a significant difference in adolescents' views on the effectiveness of clothes in friendship relationships, while gender and socio-economic level made a significant difference [Akça et al. \(2011\)](#).

Armağan and Daşdelen examined the factors that observe the clothing preferences of university students and applied a questionnaire to 352 students. From the results of the survey, it was observed that factors such as "approach of store personnel", "store image and atmosphere", "advertisement" and "friends" were effective in determining the clothing preferences of students [Armağan & Daşdelen \(2012\)](#).

Atılğan et al. aims to analyze the factors affecting the color preferences of consumers in the ready-to-wear sector with a 20-question survey study conducted by using face-to-face interview method with volunteers residing in Izmir province in 2014. Consumers are influenced by factors such as quality, price and design when choosing between different apparel brands. In recent years, the design factor has come to the forefront among other factors. Color is one of the most important elements of design. As it is known colors affect the purchasing behavior of consumers. According to the results of our research, Turkish consumers attach great importance to the colors and color harmonies of the clothes they buy. While black, blue, and navy blue are the most preferred colors in clothes, orange, pink and yellow are the least preferred colors. In addition to all these, the relationships between consumers' demographic characteristics and color preferences were analyzed and suggestions were made for the sector [Atılğan et al. \(2014\)](#).

Çetin's research is also aimed at university students. This study was carried out to reveal the factors affecting the clothing choices of 280 female students studying at the European University of Lefke and Çanakkale 18 Mart University and to determine whether the relationships with peer groups, the characteristics of the clothes and the socio-economic levels of the families are effective in the importance of brands during purchasing behaviors. In the questionnaire studies applied for this purpose, it was determined that the clothing brand preferences of the participants in their purchasing behavior differed depending on the income level of their families. In addition, it has been observed that consumers' communication with their friends affects their purchasing behavior in brand addiction. It was concluded that factors such as the usage features of the clothes, reasonable prices and ease of payment affect the purchasing behavior of both consumer groups differently according to the income levels of the families, but there is no brand addiction [Çetin \(2016\)](#).

The purpose of the study conducted by Saeed et al. in Sahiwal (Pakistan) is to understand whether there are environmental influences on purchase decisions by using independent variables for different brands [Saeed et al. \(2013\)](#)

A study by Özipek et al. aims to outline the relationship between branding and apparel and to develop branding strategies for apparel companies by considering leading factors such as motivation and need for apparel, purchase decisions and personality, and the relationship between apparel and brands [Özipek et al. \(2014\)](#).

In this study, the survey method was used to determine some of the factors that are effective in the clothing purchasing process of the participants. While opinions on factors such as quality and price affecting the purchase were questioned, questions were also asked about how the brand factor affects the purchasing behavior.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

All male and female individuals aged 18 and over living in Izmir constitute our sample. In the studies examined in the literature, studies on a specific group (working women, university students, etc.) were generally not conducted. When the

studies about purchase preferences examined in the literature are examined, 100-500 participants were studied. The questionnaires prepared in the Google Forms section, which is a sub-menu of the Google Documents application and the link was shared in online platforms and 826 responses were obtained.

The survey, in which the participants were questioned about the clothing purchasing, consists of 2 parts. In the first part, there are questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, such as age and gender. In the second part, the participants were asked to evaluate the factors affecting their clothing choices according to the 3-point Likert method. In 5 of 6 questions in this section, factors were tried to be determined with sub-questions. While answering the questions the participants were asked to evaluate according to the Likert method given. In this survey, 3-point Likert method was preferred and "Never", "Sometimes" and "Always" options were used.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. RESULTS OF THE FIRST PART

826 of the questionnaires were returned completely filled in. In this first part where the findings were evaluated, the summary of the answers given by the participants to the general questions such as age and gender is given in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1**

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Participants		
	f	%
<b>Age</b>		
20-30	419	%50,7
31-40	218	%26,4
40 and over	189	%22,9
<b>Gender</b>		
Woman	517	%62,6
Man	309	%37,4

The frequency (f) and percentages (%) of the answers are given in [Table 1](#). Accordingly, 50.7% of the 826 participants said they were between the ages of 20-30 and 62.6% of them were women.

#### 3.2. SECOND PART OF THE SURVEY

In the second part of the questionnaire, 6 questions were asked to determine the factors affecting the choices of the participants when purchasing clothes. There when are various sub-options in the 5 questions in this section and are evaluated according to a 3-point Likert scale. The findings are summarized in [Table 2](#), [Table 3](#), [Table 4](#), [Table 5](#), [Table 6](#), [Table 7](#), [Table 8](#). The frequency (f) and percentages (%) of the answers given by the participants for the questions they answered according to each option "never", "sometimes" and "always" are included in the relevant tables.

**Table 2**

Table 2 Shopping Frequency of the Participants		
	f	%
Once a week	346	%41,9

Once a month	363	<b>%43,9</b>
Once in a six month	117	<b>%14,2</b>

When answers given by the participants to the question about the frequency of clothing shopping was questioned, it is seen that the most preferred option is shopping “once a month” with a rate of 43.9%. Right after that, 41.9% of the participants chose the option shopping “once a week”, and 14.2% chose the shopping “once every six months”.

**Table 3**

Table 3 Meaning of the Brand According to the Participants				
Meaning of		Never	Sometimes	Always
Quality of Product	<b>f</b>	106	579	141
	<b>%</b>	<b>%12,8</b>	<b>%70,1</b>	<b>17,1</b>
Reputation of Brand	<b>f</b>	203	481	142
	<b>%</b>	<b>%24,6</b>	<b>%58,2</b>	<b>%17,2</b>
Guarantee of Product	<b>f</b>	149	584	93
	<b>%</b>	<b>%18,0</b>	<b>%70,7</b>	<b>%11,3</b>
Large Variety of Products	<b>f</b>	206	510	110
	<b>%</b>	<b>%25</b>	<b>%61,7</b>	<b>%13,3</b>
Awareness of Brand	<b>f</b>	204	451	171
	<b>%</b>	<b>%24,7</b>	<b>%54,6</b>	<b>%20,7</b>
Originality of Design	<b>f</b>	199	495	132
	<b>%</b>	<b>%24,0</b>	<b>%60,0</b>	<b>%16,0</b>

**Table 3** shows the answers of the participants' opinions on 6 factors that can be associated with the “Meaning of the Brand”. When the answers given according to the 3-point Likert method it is seen that, for the “Product Quality” 70.1%, for the “Reputation of Brand” 58.2%, for the “Guarantee of Product” 70.7%, for the “Large Variety of Products” 61.7%, for the “Awareness of Brand” %54,6, and for the “Originality of Design” %60 of the participants marked “Sometimes” option.

**Table 4**

Table 4 Reasons for Buying Clothes According to the Participants				
Reasons to Buy Clothes		Never	Sometimes	Always
Need It	<b>f</b>	281	120	425
	<b>%</b>	<b>%34,0</b>	<b>%14,5</b>	<b>%51,5</b>
Dress Well for Work	<b>f</b>	258	240	328
	<b>%</b>	<b>%31,2</b>	<b>%29,0</b>	<b>%39,8</b>
Dress in Fashion	<b>f</b>	266	156	404
	<b>%</b>	<b>%32,2</b>	<b>%18,9</b>	<b>%48,9</b>
Fell Better	<b>f</b>	278	201	347
	<b>%</b>	<b>%33,7</b>	<b>%24,3</b>	<b>%42,0</b>
Look Nice to My Partner/ Lover/ Friends	<b>f</b>	273	228	325
	<b>%</b>	<b>%33,1</b>	<b>%27,6</b>	<b>%39,3</b>
Like New and Different Clothes	<b>f</b>	234	232	360

	%	%28,3	%28,1	%43,6
Adapt to the Group of Friend	f	208	324	294
	%	%25,2	%39,2	%35,6
Decide up from Ads	f	266	380	180
	%	%32,2	%46,0	%21,8

In the forth question the participants were asked why they bought clothes. The answers given by the participants who evaluated 8 sub-reasons according to the 3-point Likert method are shown in Table 4. Among the reasons for buying clothes, the answer with the highest rate of being marked as "Always" was "Need it" with 51.5%. Then, respectively, 48.9% in the "Dress in Fashion" sub-title, 43.6 in the "Like New and Different Clothes" sub-title, 39.8 in the "Dress Well for Work" sub-title, and 39.3% in the "Look Nice to My Partner" sub-title were ticked as "Always" option. In the "Adapt to the Group of Friends" and "Decide up from Ads" options they were selected as "Sometimes" option mostly (Table 5).

Table 5

Table 5 Preferred Places for Clothes Shopping According to the Participants				
Preferred Places for Clothes Shopping		Never	Sometimes	Always
Hypermarket	f	216	267	343
	%	%26,2	%32,3	%41,5
Shop	f	70	308	448
	%	%8,5	%37,3	%54,2
Bazaar/ Street Market	f	114	227	485
	%	%13,8	%27,5	%58,7
Shopping Mall with Stores	f	91	203	532
	%	%11,0	%24,6	%64,4

When the participants were asked about the places they chose for clothing shopping, the place where the "Always" option was mostly preferred was "Shopping Mall with Stores" with 64.4% (Table 5). This ratio in other options was "Bazaar/Street Market" with 58.7%, "Shop" with 54.2% and "Hypermarket" with 41.5%, respectively.

Table 6

Table 6 Factors Affecting Participants When Purchasing a Garment				
Effective Factors		Never	Sometimes	Always
Brand	f	171	304	351
	%	%20,7	%36,8	%42,5
Price	f	61	258	507
	%	%7,4	%31,2	%61,4
Color/Model/Style	f	65	232	529
	%	%7,9	%28,1	%64,0
Quality	f	61	225	540
	%	%7,4	%27,2	%65,4

Renovation etc.	f	151	301	374
	%	%18,3	%36,4	<b>%45,3</b>
Fashion	f	148	317	361
	%	%17,9	%38,4	<b>%43,7</b>
Shop Window Layout	f	269	354	203
	%	%32,6	<b>%42,8</b>	%24,6
Advertising	f	206	340	280
	%	%24,9	<b>%41,2</b>	%33,9

Participants were asked to evaluate 11 factors that are thought to have an effect when shopping for clothes, in terms of their importance. The answers given according to the 3-point Likert method are summarized in Table 6. 9 out of 11 factors were evaluated positively in the 3-point Likert method and the "Always" option was marked more than the other options. The most marked as "Always" factor from these factors was "Quality" with 65.4%. The ratios of the other factors marked as "Always" were respectively 64% "Color/ Model/ Style", 62.5% "Discount", 61.4% "Price", 48% "Promotion", 45%, Renovation with 3, "Fashion" with 43.7%, "Brand" with 42.5% and Suggestions with 37.9%. More often than 2 out of 11 factors are marked as sometimes. On of these was the "Advertisement" factor and marked as 41.2% so it was scaled positively. The other one was "Showcase Layout" factor and marked at 42.8% but scaled negatively.

**Table 7****Table 7 The Effect of the Brand According to the Product Types for the Participants**

Product Types		Never	Sometimes	Always
Shirt-Blouse	f	101	246	479
	%	%12,2	%29,8	<b>%58,0</b>
Trousers	f	93	266	467
	%	%11,3	%32,2	<b>%56,5</b>
Jacket	f	138	300	388
	%	%16,7	%36,3	<b>%47,0</b>
Suit	f	231	231	364
	%	%28,0	%28,0	<b>%44</b>
Dress	f	171	204	451
	%	%20,7	%20,7	<b>%54,6</b>
T-shirt	f	101	282	443
	%	%12,2	%34,1	<b>%53,7</b>
Coat	f	86	297	443
	%	%10,4	%36,0	<b>%53,6</b>
Underwear	f	174	239	413
	%	%21,1	%28,9	<b>%50,0</b>
Pajamas-Sleeper	f	164	215	447
	%	%19,9	%26,0	<b>%54,1</b>
Swimming Suit	f	192	189	445
	%	%23,2	%22,9	<b>%53,9</b>



Shoes	f	111	302	413
	%	%13,4	%36,6	<b>%50,0</b>
Bag	f	179	253	394
	%	%21,7	%30,6	<b>%47,7</b>

Another question asked to the participants was to evaluate the products they buy are branded or not. In this question, the evaluations made according to the 3-point Likert method according to product types are summarized in [Table 7](#). According to the participants, the brand is most effective is the "Shirt/Blouse" group, with the "Always" option selected by 58%. Branding was evaluated in positive direction in all product types and The percentages of ticking "Always" options for other product types are respectively; "Trousers" with 56.5%, "Dress" with 54.6%, "Pajamas/Sleeper" with 54.1%, Swimming Suit with 53.9%, T-shirt with 53.7%, 53% "Coat" with .6, "Underwear" and "Shoes" with 50%, "Bag" with 47.7%, "Jacket" and "Accessory" with 47%, and finally "Suit" with 44%.

**Table 8**

**Table 8 Impressions Created by a Brand According to Participants**

Impressions It Creates		Never	Sometimes	Always
Branded clothes are indicative of quality	f	56	203	567
	%	%6,8	%24,6	<b>%68,6</b>
Branded clothing should be fashionable	f	48	211	567
	%	%5,8	%25,6	<b>%68,6</b>
Branded clothes give prestige to people	f	82	218	526
	%	%9,9	%26,4	<b>%63,7</b>
Branded clothes have unique patterns	f	85	232	509
	%	%10,3	%28,1	<b>%61,6</b>
Branded clothes are expensive	f	60	174	592
	%	%7,3	%21,1	<b>%71,6</b>
Branded clothing offers a variety of possibilities to the customer. (refund, installment sales, etc.)	f	62	199	565
	%	%7,5	%24,1	<b>%68,4</b>

When we look at the answers obtained in the question in which the participants scaled their impressions about a brand with a 3-point Likert system, everyone agreed with these statements positively ([Table 8](#)). 71.6% was chosen as "Always" for the impression of "Branded clothes are expensive". Right after this, the impressions of "Branded clothes are indicative of quality" and "Branded clothing should be fashionable" were preferred with 68.6%. Next options "Branded clothing offers a variety of possibilities to the customer. (Refund, installment sales, etc.)" was preferred with 68.4%, "Branded clothes give prestige to people" with 63.7% and finally "Branded clothes have unique patterns" with 61.6%.

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

50.7% of our survey participants were between 20-30 years old and 62.6% were women. Looking at the results in general, it has been determined that



approximately 86% of the participants make at least one or more clothing purchases per month. When we look at the answers given about the meaning of the brand, it is seen that the participants concentrate on the "Sometimes" option and when all the answers are considered, the balance is in positive direction only in the "Product Quality" option. Although it has been seen that "Always" was the most preferred choice in the "Need it" option among the reasons for the clothing shopping, it was observed that the most positive density was in the "Adapt to the Group of Friends" option when all the answers were examined. This coincides with the concentration of participants in the 20-30 age range. By selecting the "Always" option in both questions, the most preferred shopping location was "Shopping Mall with Store", while "Color/Model/Style" was the most affected factor. Being branded, it came to the fore the most in the "Shirt/Blouse" category. Finally, the "Always" option was chosen the most for the impression of "Branded clothes are expensive".

### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

A survey form, which consisted of 8 main and 50 sub-questions, was used as data collection tool. The survey was ethically approved by Ege University's Ethical Board in 04.11.2020 with protocol number 692.

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