



CONSUMER WANTS TO ENTERTAIN, TO BE STIMULATED AND TOUCHED BY HEART: CELL PHONE CONSUMPTION PREFERENCES OF THE TURKISH CONSUMERS AS AN EXPERIENTIAL WAY OF CONSUMPTION

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ABSTRACT

Experiential marketing provides customers an opportunity to engage and interact with brands, products, and services in sensory ways in today's competitive markets. This research demonstrates how experiential marketing fits in with the current consumer behavior and attitudes through cell phone usage on Turkish consumers. In the research, the steps and elements of experiential marketing will be clearly defined. A questionnaire is prepared content with this research and is applied on 612 cell phone users as participants from various regions of Turkey. Sampling of the research consists of 612 participants of 18-65 age groups. The research data are analyzed in the program of SPSS 10.0 and t test, factor analysis, frequency analysis, correlation analysis and variance analysis are performed. The study indicates that the subjects on which the participants show attitude at higher level are related with the brand experience. In addition to this, it is seen that the consumers evaluated the products in the frame of the social status symbolized in their cell phone preferences in the experience of association.

Keywords: *Experiential marketing, hedonism, advertising, brands, cell phone*

1. INTRODUCTION

French writer Beigbender describes the consumption mechanisms with the following remarkable sentences in his book titled 99 Francs in which he defines the consumption culture on the life of an advertiser which attracted a great attention on the dates of its publication (2001:19): "My name is Octave and I'm dressed from head to foot in Tom Ford. I am an advertising executive: Yup, that's right, I pollute the universe. I am the guy who sells you shit. Who makes you dream of things you will never have. The sky is always blue; the girls are never ugly, perfect happiness touched up on Photoshop. When, after painstaking saving, you manage to buy the car of your dreams (the one I shot in my last campaign), I will already have made it look out of date. I am three trends ahead, and I make sure you are always frustrated. Glamour is a country that no one ever gets to. I intoxicate you with new things, and the advantage with the new is that it never stays new for long. There are always new things to make the last lot look old. I want to make you drool- that is my vocation. No one in my profession actually wants you to be happy, because

happy people don't spend." Beigbender, while performing an analysis of the consumption culture with its destructive style, also mentions the process of preparation of the perfect experiences for the consumers.

The consumption mechanisms which are mentioned by Beigbender expresses a process which is called consumption society in the social theory today, and each of the Western style capitalist societies is called a consumption society today. The industrial production and urbanization based on the technological development, determinant influence of the mass communication on the economical and social life, new consumer type that tries to break the alienation that they suffer under the pressure of the brands and images are the determinant elements, which form the consumption society. As a result of such factors, the integration of the culture and consumption; and even replacing one by the other from time to time idealized the consumption itself because of the reasons not resulting from its own in actuality. Today, in an environment in which the consumption idealized itself and even it becomes a purpose, the



assumption gets importance that the vast majority of the world experiences the hegemony of abundance and consumption with the multiplicity of the goods, services and objects. It is expressed that the social structures in which the power of the consumption-bound objects is experienced are consumption societies; and the cultural practices, which direct this society, are the consumption culture practices. In this respect, the consumption culture addresses to the culture of the consumption society (Featherstone, 1994: 187).

The fact of consumption culture which has extensive economical foundations and political dimensions is a form which forms new attitudes and behaviors in order to create a continuous and infinite consumption habit, uses the lifestyles, uses the hedonistic and narcissist tendencies and takes the individual under its influence. In addition to this, the consumption society is the society of learning the consumption and the community of mass familiarization for the consumption. It is a new and specific style of socialization, which is proportional with the appearance of the new production powers and the monopolist structuring of an economical system, which has high productivity (Baudrillard, 2004: 95). In the consumption society, it may be possible to mention a very extensive commercial-merchandise culture with the form as seen in USA and other developed Western countries. The market relationships, merchandise value and merchandise meaning are in question in this kind of cultures, and they are imaged with the presence of the media. The stated structure is a structure in which the consumption processes, consumer preferences, market and competition conditions are considerably complicated.

Under the mentioned conditions, ensuring simply the customer satisfaction does not suffice for ensuring a continuous brand devotion and acquiring new customers. Though satisfying the consumer requests and needs, which are the important concepts of the process, which we left behind, and injecting confidence into the consumers, still protect its importance, it is not the only strategy any longer. Today, making the products and services, brands in a whole as a unique experience in the entire consumption process appears as a dominant purpose. In the social and economical theory, a process that is called the experience economy is mentioned around what we tell today (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 97-105). The consumption researchers Pine and Gilmore express that we

experience an experience economy in which the daily business life is converted into a theater stage, the business processes are converted into art and the professionals are converted into artists (Pine and Gilmore, 1999: 254).

In the current situation, the creative and interactive ways of thinking, cross-disciplinary new points of view, continuous innovation and social sensitiveness become important for the purpose of accelerating the consumption mechanisms, which are essential for the continuance of the economical and social order. In the experiential economy, the consumption practices that are established on the interaction between the product, event, person or opinion and consumer in a certain situation are in question. Kunde and Cunningham, who are marketing gurus, while talking about the brands, expressed that each brand is a feeling and the people give their moneys only to the pleasant experiences and good ideas (Kunde and Cunningham, 2002). Setting out from this point it could be said that converting the merchandise into product is an economical development and it means creating values that are more economical. If we define the marketing not as a product or service only, but creating value, then jumping to getting experience from selling product or service for a brand also means creating an economical value. In this case, the foundation of the experience economy is formed by the experiential consumption and the experiential marketing practices, which ensure this consumption.

The experiential consumption is a concept that is invented for covering a need naturally. Its fundamental emphasize is realized only in the event the consumption is experiential between the consumer and the object. Of course, that this process is extended to the design; that is to say, this bond could be ensured with the professional communication activities. It is a consumption approach, which is structured on the opinion that the people make their shopping preferences in accordance with the previously acquired experiences. It is a consumption type in which the consumption objects change hands by means of arousing 5 senses of the consumers. It associates our memory in which we keep our feelings, values, feelings and excitements with "ourselves". All this experience, feelings and excitements are accumulated beginning from the birth. At the same time, it is defined and interpreted again continuously. The smell of fresh milk, the taste of chocolate takes us to our childhood shortly. A



music remaining from our childhood makes us happy or melancholic at a moment. The character of our favorite book is revived in a TV series. These factors are used as a message factor frequently by the brands as well. The experiential connection between the consumers and the brand is ensured in this way. Creating this experiential connection is ensured with the effective usage of our five senses. Discovering our five senses by the brands and activating these senses for their brands is a different potential of differentiation. The consumer purchases “not steak but the smell of the steak cooked on the grill” with the simplest expression in such a consumption.

The marketing activities, which try to ensure the experiential consumption, are focused on understanding the experiences of the customer and processing them, instead of the functional characteristics and benefits of the product as different from the traditional marketing. The experiential marketing that we could evaluate as an innovation of the marketing in the economical development reveals which characteristics of the consumption object the consumer most like. It aims at making the brands a daily life experience around some certain feelings through the experiences that are mostly personal and objective today. Such that, instead of putting the product or service at the front place, it mentions the experience which the product or the service; and it experience is focused on the bathroom pleasure but not the shampoo. Because of this reason, it gives the priority always to the experience to be obtained by the customer. The benefits and characteristics, which will be created by the brands, are secondary in this approach.

Setting out from what is said at this point, the experiential consumption concept in the coverage of the study will be explicated on the ways of usage of the cell phone of the Turkish consumer. The way of spreading the consumer experience concerning the brand from the advertisements to the sales and from the points of sale to the sitting rooms of the people and in short to all of the areas of the life by the trans will be read on the cell phone consumption. The kind of meaning circle the cell phone has as a product category will be examined on the consumer attitudes. It will be examined also whether the cell phone is converted into an identity project as a product or not. It will be also mentioned in this study how it is ensured to work on a product group by the consumer.

2. WAY TO THE EXPERIENTIAL CONSUMPTION: HEDONIST CONSUMPTION AND HEDONIST CONSUMER

Starting discussion of the concept of consumption as a sociological fact dates back to the discussions, which are performed about the consumption society in the beginning of the 1960's. In this process, it became particularly important to put the consumption fact on a sociological foundation as a result of the developments that occurred in the social theory, which is shaped by all these experienced as well as the social, cultural and political events. In addition to the social, political and cultural events, one of the important reasons for getting interested in the consumption and consumption culture by the researchers from different disciplines is the developments which appear in the social theory; the theory which is developed by the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss and which is called structuralism in general ensured experiencing a radical transformation of the studies relating to the consumption (Bocock, 1997: 12). The main emphasis of the studies in the social theory became on the matter that the consumption is realized on the symbols and representations in the capitalist society structures. In the frame of this approach, the purpose of realization of the consumption activities also became always controversial. Relating to the experiential consumption, the hedonist way of consumption is one of the subjects of discussion.

The fact of individual hedonism which is a fact which appeared in the ends of the 19th century and attracted attention intensively in the middle of the 20th century direct the individuals to a anesthetized life desire based on fantasy and dream under the attractive appearance of the consumer life (Fox and Lears, 1993: 12). Here, the formation of an aesthetic life based on fantasy and dream is an important point. The hedonist approach bases the source of the pleasure on the function of the feelings of the individual in the consumption experience. When it is looked at this from that point, the hedonist way of consumption indicates the pleasure, which is taken from the pleasure dimension of the experience in any case. In connection with this, the consumption researcher Morris B. Holbrook bases the process in 18th century England in his article in which he researched the roots of the hedonist consumption (Holbrook, 1996: 26). The importance of this period should indicate that it is the beginning of the



romantic period and then it does not show the economical and rational consumer behavior which is based on the requirements of the consumer which will form basis for the postmodern consumption. Holbrook states that the consumer realizes the consumption experiences under the influence of the romantic motifs and expresses this as a process as follows:

Romanticism → Consumption Experience → Emotional Reaction → Pleasure

The postmodern individual who tries to enrich the daily life through the hedonist consumption reaches the feeling of satisfaction through the subjective symbols rather than the objective ones. In any case, the emotional reactions of the individual in such an effort are in key position. Two times money, which is paid in the St. Valentine's Day in the daily life activities, the excessive prices that are spent for the gifts, which are purchased in the New Year, are the signs of the dominance of the emotional reactions on the benefit and rationalist motifs. It could be observed which point is reached by the daily life practices that are brought by the hedonist consumption, and the people could consume even the sad and unpleasant events for the purpose of satisfying themselves through the fantasy and emotional stimulation. It seems as an important tool in forming the fantasies, which may enable them to cope with this kind of experiences to be encountered in the daily life such as the series, reality shows that are currently available on television channels and most of them are equipped with the pain and violence factors. Odabasi also indicates a similar fact in his book titled Consumption Culture and he states that the movie titled Roots and Holocaust which was on our TV's previously, the intemperance and exposed violence at the moment of singing some arabesque songs which used the pain as a main theme, has an important function for helping the individual by means of fantasy and emotional stimulation in coping with the unhappy and unpleasant events which should stand such environments (Odabasi, 1999: 88). This may remind the capitalist ideology.

The capitalist ideology encodes every individual born in its structure as a consumer and, according to it, everybody has the inborn right and power to be consumer. Capitalism presents it under a freedom ideology mask. The right of freedom that is given by being a consumer is closely connected with the daily living practices. The hedonic structure of the consumption indicates that it is covered with a group of infinite and unsatisfied

needs. The expenses which are made on special days –such as New Year, St. Valentine's day, Holidays, Birthdays, etc-, sports competitions, movies, concerts and each of them are the experiences which get the people together, beyond the activities which fill the leisure times, in which the common interests are shared, increase the attraction between the individuals, encourage the competition, enable acquiring status and, as a result of them, anesthetize the daily life (Kim, and Sullivan, 2005). Not only this but also urban design are factors encouraging the hedonist consumption approach. Today, there is an electric and transitive city appearance is in question, reflecting the daily consumption culture and with excessive decorations in all of the capitalist cities. The consumption tendency in the city tissue could show a pastiche feature; and it could be put on the agenda again in which the styles and date are mixed (Chaney, 1996: 15). All of them are included in symbolism that emphasizes the hedonist consumption as well. Today, most of the thematic parks, thematic hotels, shopping centers and concept residence projects express this hedonist situation mentioned.

The foundation of a consumption behavior, which we could qualify as hedonist, is the production of a whole of cultural values on the exposition of the desire and the distinguishing indicators. Thus, the social values are produced with the indicator value of the mentioned desired objects. Consequently, the consumption itself is also something from which pleasure could be taken. The consumption also includes the exchange and encoded value system of an existing system in spite of the consumer. Today, we could mention an institutionalized pleasure system as well. As if it is a part of the citizenship system, today the consumer-individual considers a lot of feelings such as being pleased, sad, praising and being happy as a part of the duty of taking pleasure (Baudrillard, 2004: 92). It could be said that this is the basic promise of the today's lifestyle. The decreased effort/production time provide opportunity for the leisure time activities. Thus, the pleasure is renewed continuously. The consumer-man is renewed continuously. The consumer man is obliged to cope with the fear of failure in reaching the pleasure continuously. Baudrillard says that a lot of areas of the daily life is an universal curiosity which exists in them but not the tendency with a desire or pleasure such as kitchen, culture, science, religious, priority, etc. (2004: 94). The consumer-individual is directed with the logic that tries everything, never miss with the fear of skipping any pleasure. This process is also supported through the



perfect consumption experiences, which are prepared for the consumer.

3. DESIGN OF THE UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES ACCORDING TO PINE AND GILMORE

The words, which are said about 200 years ago by Benjamin Franklin, who is an American philosopher and author, presented us an approach that would change the marketing radically: "If you tell, I will forget. If you show, I may not remind. But if you involve me, then I understand it!" Franklin puts forward here an important vision concerning the experiential marketing: Differently from a lot of other methods, breaking the routine of directing the promotion activities from the brands to the consumers and following a process from the consumer to the consumer in the promotion technique. The brands have also tendency of involving the consumers who abstain from the intensive communication bombardment into the communication process with their own wills. At this point, from the points of sale where the brands communicate with the consumer directly, the sincerity and transparency based social network and mobile marketing elements through the activity marketing elements and new technological opportunities appear as the important experiential marketing tools (Semovitz, 2005). These media are important tools for the purpose of realization of the abstract targets such as creating awareness for the brands, establishing emotional bonds, grapevine speaking. Likewise, the today's consumer perceives the shopping and consumption factor as a whole and as a process and wants to participate in the stages of pre-purchasing, purchasing and after-purchasing actively and wants the entire process to be a pleasure-giving, entertaining experiment (Holbrook, 2000: 178-192).

In the frame of the experiential marketing, it is also aimed to create the different, extraordinary and personalized experiences for each customer in this approach. Pine and Gilmore call these experiences as the unforgettable experiences and define the experiential consumption as an event or chain of events which are performed for the purpose of realizing a life experience and which is involved, participated and acquired, consumed by the consumer (Pine and Gilmore 2001: 10-16). All kinds of special designs that are prepared at the points of purchase are realized in the shopping for the purpose of ensuring the mentioned unforgettable experiences. The daily living

experiences of the people are used during the formation of the brand value. The brands think over understanding the place of the consumer in its life, and adding value to the meaning world of the consumer and its identity acquisition; and try to combine the brand and the consumer in this respect (Holbrook and Corfman, 1985: 31-57). Irrespective of the way of designing the experience, the marketing activities are established on the feelings of the people, by means of taking as basis the needs of the consumers such as entertainment, stimulation, touching emotionally, getting educated. Schmitt, who is a consumer researcher, evaluates the feelings and experiences of the customers during the use of the product as five different elements as perception, feeling, thinking, acting and establishing relationship. A successful experiential marketing could be performed only on the marketing activities that use these five factors properly.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) also put forward five fundamental design principles for the design of the unforgettable experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 97-105):

1. It is necessary to determine the main design theme that is contemplated for the formation of the experience. This theme should be ensured to be precise and different. In addition to this, this theme should be sustainable and strong. Hard Rock Cafe, Starbucks, Walt Disney are the enterprises which have themes.
2. The second stage in the formation of the experience is the process of integrating the impressions with the positive clues. This situation means a strong experience for the brands.
3. Eliminating the negative clues is the third stage in forming the experience.
4. 'Integrating the experience with the objects concerning the brand' is the fourth important step on the way of making the experience continuous. In this manner, the brand experience will be made permanent in the mind of the consumer.
5. The situation of integrating the experience with five senses is the fifth and last principle of the experiential design. In this integrated approach, the smell of a product, the quality of a service and the smell of another one etc factors are made experiences attached to the brand.



Today, mostly as a result of the search for consumption, in an environment in which always the different one (even if older) and always the new one (from detergent to automobile tire) could be kept in the market, the aesthetic production which is combined with the “empiricism” is an important structural feature (Corrigan, 1997: 56-57). In this respect, the project of making aesthetic and stylistic the daily life by the experiential way of consumption mostly includes the consumption tools, which are described as the consumption cathedrals by Ritzer (2000: 83). Ritzer also refers to the new environments that are consumed in or through the goods and services. This kind of places are the places which ensure opportunity for and oblige consumption with their fantastic atmospheres, and Ritzer expresses these tools as follows (2000: 29): Fast food restaurants, franchising chain stores, catalogues, shopping centers, luxury entrance estates, education environments, museums, medicine centers and hospitals. The new tools of consumption are the concepts that are formed by the sociologist Max Weber from the signs of Marx. The new tools of consumption are considered as the objective structures. According to Weber, capitalism is an objective structure in its own cage and it is a structure adapting and manipulating the individual to his own preferences (Ritzer, 2000: 83). The new tools of consumption are like a kind of cage, which encompasses those entered. Ritzer also says that these new tools of consumption is a part of the wider group of facts relating to the goods and services; and the production, distribution, advertisement, marketing, sales, individual taste, style and fashions are inside these tools (2000: 24-25). This kind of consumption tools, with their aesthetic appearances, contributes to the social change, which becomes a place for watching.

4. CREATING EXPERIENTIAL BRANDS WITH THE ADVERTISEMENT AND MARKETING COMMUNICATION ELEMENTS

Today, we witness the rise of the consumption tools in place of the production tools that had primary importance in the past. The hypermarkets, entertainment parks, outlet stores, cyber shopping center, stadiums etc which are called the new consumption tools in the social theory increasingly occupy our daily life. The experiential marketing, which is put forward by Bernd Schmitt and which we could say that it appears as a result of a need, is a concept, which is derived in order to meet a need

naturally. Its fundamental philosophy is based on the logic of creating an experiential connection between the consumer and the brand (Kotler, Keller and Lane, 2006). The point, which the effort of crating experience is based, is also converting this into an emotional experience while creating satisfaction by means of covering the customer expectations. We mention a method, which the brands try to realize by means of activating five senses of the target audiences.

The freshness, which is continuously emphasized in its advertisements by Ruffles and being crispy, which indicates an emphasis of taste, is something like that. The brand mentions the experience of the consumer as a result of consuming the product, instead of designing a communication concerning the physical characteristics of a product. As a similar example, the laboratory studies are carried out in order to create that “crispy” feeling which will give the consumer the feeling of freshness by Kellogg’s which is the famous popcorn brand. If we want to given an example from the automotive sector, in order to embody the subject, there is a feeling of quality and sportsmanlike nature which is given by the design of the BMW brand just like in any brand, a style feeling which is given by the sound of its doors, a tissue of its accessories, the originality of its color and a feeling of prestige all over its structure. Volvo brand automobiles are designed as very clumsy and massy in order to support the feeling of being reliable on which it has been positioned for long years. This situation is the reflection of the feeling of confidence that is tried to be experienced by its consumer of that brand on the design.

The messages which are sent to the subconscious of the consumer by means of spreading smell of chocolate in its stores for the chocolate drink which McDonald’s will newly present, and the space design of Starbucks which works with a similar logic, its posters and visual materials, products such as coffee seeds are experiential marketing elements which make emphasis on the mentioned five feelings. The experiential marketing elements anticipate a marketing style which is built on the consumer experiences, and which stimulates and entertains the consumer and which touches the consumer emotionally. It makes the consumers feel that they are valued at every time. In addition, it supports the mentioned marketing styles also through the marketing communication. There are experiences personalized and experienced by the consumer in the mentioned marketing activities. It



is aimed at creating different experiences for each customer in any manner in the frame of the experiential marketing. It has also a base of production and there is an approach like adapting the products and services at the basis of individual customer.

Another importance of the social media as an experiential marketing instrument is the channel structure, which is appropriate for forming various emotional experiences. Such that, as required by the experience planning; while forming this experience, the necessity of being creative, surprise-full, sensational, attractive and provocative is quite appropriate in terms of the experiential marketing (Schmitt, 2003). The marketing practice that is performed by Oprah Winfrey who is the famous show-woman of USA jointly with Pontiac that is an automotive brand of USA and gifted 276 Pontiac automobiles in her program is a remarkable example on the subject of mentioning itself and creativity. Keeping the customer always in the brand circle continuously by means of the transmissions, which are included in the life practice and touches the heart for the purpose of creating a holistic experience and observing them continuously are important (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, 132-140). When we want to categorize the experiences, it is most probable for the education, aesthetic and other fascinating experiences to be experienced actively in the social media. When all of them are considered together, the channels such as advertisement, sales position the consumer passively. In the social media, the active participation of the consumer and its directing feature are mentioned. This is a strong way of relationship that could be realized through the social media.

The main theme concerning the experience to be formed by the brand is formed in accordance with the principles of Pine and Gilmore as mentioned previously (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 97-105). The users form this precise and different experience even if this experience is of brand source. Harley Davidson, Apple, CV2, Starbucks, Walt Disney are the brands which have themes and which form this experience with the name of the user repeatedly through various communication activities. The mentioned experiences should be supported sensitively before the consumer. The designed brand is presented to the target audience with the entertaining, exciting, intelligent etc fictions and

communicated as based on the principle of sincerity and participation through the users. The other elements of five senses are also supported at the points of sale or service (Weinberger, 2008: 33-43). Supporting the brand experience with the memories and nostalgia is also used as an important element of devotion on the consumer (Pine, and Gilmore, 2008: 18-24). Enlivening and spreading these brand stories are among the most important elements of the consumer experiences.

The consumer researcher Gerald Zaltman mentions the memory, metaphor and stories connection on the subject how the brands become effective (Zaltman, 2003). Zaltman sees remembering and metaphor based on stories. In connection with this, a story is the notification of one or several experiences, which cover not only episodic but also semantic remembrance (Zaltman, 2003: 269). All of the important brands that completed the process of branding make efforts for their customers to create positive stories about the brand by means of using all of the promotional channels within the process of becoming brand. The brands inspire the consumers on the subject of formation of the mental determinations by means of using these promotion channels. For example, Pepsi gives message that it is the choice of the new generation with all of the famous names -Michael Jackson, Britney Spears, etc. used in its promotional activities against its eternal rival Coca Cola. The brands create experiences for their potential consumers concerning whom they are and who they could be, concerning what kind of life they want to have and what kind of life they want to be in.

Integration of the experiences concerning the brand with the positive clues and elimination of the negative clues is also two separate designs that are mentioned by Pine and Gilmore (2000:18-23). The positive attitude that could be developed against the brand by means of all of the marketing communication tools is based on the opinion that it may create a positive influence on the sales. As an example, the brands apply to the social media for the purpose of creating this experience because this social experience in the social media will be communicated through the known persons, relatives and friends, the costiveness will be a feeling which is communicated stronger. The brand management in the experiential marketing manages not only the social media but also all of the consumer touch points as a whole. In order to achieve this, the product development, advertisement activities, activity management,



authorized sellers, services and all of the elements representing the brand are trained in order to develop the brand experience as much as possible. All of these elements are in collaboration with the consumer as a part of the brand experience. In this meaning, a gas station attendant in Shell is also considered as a part of the brand experience. Or the service officials in Starbucks are not sales staff but baristas. In the brand communities in which the brand devotion is very high such as Harley Davidson, CV2, Apple, the people that consume these brands are not consumers, but the users and participants of these brands.

The fact, which is expressed as the consumption tools by Ritzer, indicates the tools that influence the consumer, direct them to the consumption on their desired direction, and take them under inspection. In this respect, the hypermarkets and the products that are sold in the hypermarkets and a boutique and the dressings that are sold in the boutique have very different meanings from each others. For Marx, the consumption tools are the places which are formed specially formed and in which the consumption goods are sold. Although the goods, which are sold there, have their own meaning and influence, the essential factor that pushes the people for consumption is this kind of tools of consumption (Kim, 2001: 287-9). When you enter Nike Town to purchase a basketball shoe, you have the opportunity to try your favorite shoe in the basketball field. Everybody who has something to sell should know that: what is difficult is not to sell the product or services, but to enable your customer to experience pleasant moments that could not be forgotten during a lifetime.

5. RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN: “Cell Phone Consumption Preferences of the Turkish Consumer as an Experiential Way of Consumption”

Importance and Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to put forward the cell phone consumption preferences of the Turkish consumer as an experiential way of consumption as said. In this direction, the point of view, attitudes and behaviors of the consumer will be tested on this subject in the study. The experiential marketing elements, having an important place among the modern marketing activities, will provide us with an important foresight in recognizing the today's consumers. It is expected from an academic study with this content to present a contribution to the

brands at the point of understanding the consumers, and this is considered important. Performing the study with the realization of a dynamic and developing market sample like Turkey is also important for an academic writing. Moreover, the study is a wide geographic based study which is applied in several regions of Turkey and consequently in several cities. Not only Marmara but also Eastern Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia regions take part in the field of the study, and this situation gives a separate importance for the study. At the same time, the study is important in terms of putting forward the attitude scales concerning the experiential marketing elements of the consumers.

Questions of the Study

- Q 1: How can we explain the elements of the sensitive branding approach?
- Q 2: How are the attitudes and behaviors of the consumers about the experiential marketing elements?
- Q 3: How are the approaches of the consumers about the usage-change value relationship of a product (cell phone here)?
- Q 4: What is the determinant role that is played by the sensitive experience, which is presented by the brands in creating the brand devotion with the customers?
- Q 4: What are the priorities of the consumer in the preference of purchasing a product?
- Q 5: How the attitudes of the consumers concerning the experiential marketing are realized according to the variables such as age, sex and income?

Research Method

A survey application is performed while testing the consumption preferences, attitudes and behaviors concerning the experiential marketing activities in this study. The questions in the survey form are developed by the researchers as a consequence of the studies relating to the subject and compilation of the related writing. The studies, which are carried out by Pine and Gilmore, 2000: 18-23; Kim and Sullivan, 2005; Holbrook, 2000: 178-192; Kim, 2001: 287-9 became the studies from which it is benefited while preparing the survey form. The demographic information of the participants of the study and the questions that measure the elements concerning the experiential consumption take part in the survey questions. Most part of the questions in the survey is tried to be given by means of measuring the degrees of agreement/disagreement



with the expressions given of the consumers by means of the 5-item Likert scale. A pretest study is carried out by means of performing the survey with 20 persons who are selected with the easy sampling method. The related corrections are made by means of taking into consideration the pretest results and the final shape is then given to the survey form. Thanks to the suitability of the opportunities, the field study on the subject of survey application is realized in Eastern Anatolia, Southeast Anatolia and Marmara Regions. In the survey application, which is performed on total 612 participants, the meaningfulness between the attitudes and behaviors of the consumers and their demographic information is also examined. This study is among the descriptive-conceptual studies at the basis. It could be said that it has a discovery nature as of taking into consideration the relationships between the facts. The complementary nature of the study takes up and defines the problem in hand, the situations relating to this problem, variables and the relationships between the variables.

Analysis of the Data obtained with the Study and Findings

The t test, factor analysis, frequency analysis, correlation analysis and variance analysis are performed to the demographic characteristics belonging to the consumers who participate in the survey study and the reliability analysis results concerning the scale in this chapter of the study. As a result of this, the findings are stated in accordance with the research questions to the study results. The analyses are performed on the available 612 survey form in the study.

Demographic Characteristics of the Consumers in Study Sampling

The identifying information concerning the frequencies belonging to the demographic characteristics of the consumers who participate in the survey and their averages are stated in the Table 1. The important short explanations concerning these tables are also provided in the appendix.

Table 1. Demographic information

Gender	f	%
Male	408	66.7
Female	204	33.3
Total	612	100.0
Education level	f	%
Primary school graduate	65	10.6

High school student	30	4.9
High school graduate	135	22.1
University student	173	28.3
University graduate	123	20.1
Post graduate	86	14.0
Total	612	100.0
Age	f	%
<18	46	7.5
18-24	68	11.1
25-31	112	18.3
32-38	118	19.3
39-45	120	19.6
46-52	60	9.8
53-59	49	8.0
>60	39	6.4
Total	612	100.0
Monthly income (TL)	f	%
< 1000 TL	243	39.7
1000-2000	179	29.2
2001-3500	139	22.8
3501-5500	33	5.4
> 5500 TL	18	2.9
Total	612	100.0

Participants' 66.7% are male, 33.3% are female. Education level wise participants' 10.6 % are primary school graduate, 4.9% are high school student, 22.1 % are high school graduate, 28.3% are university student, 20.1% are university graduate and 14% are postgraduate. Participants' 7.5% are younger than 18, 11.1% are 18-24; 18.3% are 25-31; 19.3% are 32-38; 19.6% are 39-45, 9.8% are 46-52; 8% are 53-59 and 6.4% are older than 60. Monthly income of participants' 39.7% are less than 1000 TL; 29.2% are 1000-2000 TL; 22.7% are 2001-3500 TL; 5.4% are 3501-5500 TL and 2.9% are 5500 TL and over. All participants own mobile phone. Participants' 95.8% changed mobile phone before, 4.2% never changed their mobile phone. Participants' 78.6% (n=481) used two, 21.4% (n=131) used three different mobile phone until now. Participants' views on changing mobile phones are at Table 2.

Table 2. Participants' views on changing mobile phones

Average mobile phone change	f	%
My mobile phone is changed once a year	290	47.4
My mobile phone is changed once in 2 years	161	26.3
My mobile phone is changed once in 3 years or more	96	15.7



Can not tell an average mobile phone change period	65	10.6
Total	612	100.0
If you change your mobile phone now:	f	%
My present make of mobile phone	363	59.3
One I did not use before, a different make	166	27.1
One I used before, same make	83	13.6
Total	622	100.0
Reasons for buying mobile phone	f	%
Image	114	18.6
Functionality	139	22.7
Image & functionality	359	58.7
Total	612	100.0
Mobile phone satisfaction views	f	%
Satisfied with the make I use now/before	206	33.7
Before I used a different mobile phone make and I was satisfied but I bought a new model	116	19.0
Unsatisfied with the make I use before I bought a new model	290	47.3
Total	612	100.0

Issues participants give importance when buying mobile phone is at Table 3.

Table 3. Issues participants give importance when buying mobile phone

Participants' 15% are very satisfied, 20.1% are satisfied, 35.3 cannot tell, 19.8 % are not satisfied, 9.8 % are very unsatisfied with their current phone.

Consumer behavior scale based on experience

The 18-item scale is prepared according to specialist views and related literature and applied to 298 persons to test the factorial reality. To determine the factorial structure of the scale varimax rotated basic component analysis is used. According to analysis results, the ones with factor loads 0.35 and higher are chosen for the second analysis and 18 items are determined as operational. This analysis shows that the scale is one-dimensional.

Table 4. Factor loads of the items in consumer behavior scale based on experience

According to factor analysis results *Barlett Test*=2446.044 and *KMO*=.91. According to *Barlett test* correlation is found between the variables and factor analysis is applied to those variables. As a whole Cronbach Alpha of the scale is 0.91, therefore the scale is reliable. As a result, highest and lowest points are 90 and 18 respectively.

Participants' behavior based on experience

Table 5. Data on participants' behavior based on experience

As seen on the Table participants' (n=612) average behavior point is 64.18. As the median is 63 and close to arithmetical average, therefore results are close to normal distribution. Average behavior point 64.18 when evaluated from a scale of 5 is equal to 3.56 points. As a result, participants' behavior based on experience is close to positive. Arithmetical average and standard deviation related to behavior items is given at Table 6.

Table 6. Arithmetical average and standard deviation related to behavior items

According to the results, items with high behavior points determined by participants' answers are as follows.

- I would suggest my current make to friends ($\bar{X}=4.31$),
- I would share my negative views on my current make with friends ($\bar{X}=3.95$),
- I regularly compare market prices for mobile phones ($\bar{X}=4.25$),
- I regularly compare specifications of mobile phones ($\bar{X}=3.54$),
- Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed prices of different makes ($\bar{X}=3.52$),
- Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed specifications of different makes ($\bar{X}=3.50$),
- Before I bought my current mobile phone I asked my friends and family for their views ($\bar{X}=4.00$),
- After I decided to buy my current mobile phone I analyzed the pros and cons of my decision ($\bar{X}=3.76$),



- In my decision to buy my current mobile phone brand image was important ($\bar{X}=3.89$),
- My mobile phone should suit my personality ($\bar{X}=3.85$),
- I look at the make before I buy a mobile phone ($\bar{X}=3.65$),
- I am a loyal customer to my current make ($\bar{X}=3.49$)
- Items with average behavior points determined by participants' answers are as follows.
- If I buy a mobile phone again I will choose my current make ($\bar{X}=2.99$),
- I would change my current make if there is a discount opportunity ($\bar{X}=3.28$),
- I would change my current make if another make gives accessories for free ($\bar{X}=3.04$),
- I would choose my current make even if it is relatively expensive ($\bar{X}=3.03$),
- If I had a chance to choose again I would buy a different make ($\bar{X}=2.98$).

To determine if there are differences in participants' behavior points based on age, education level and income *one-way variance analysis* is applied (Table 7).

Table 7. Variance analysis results of points participants' behavior points based on variables.

According to Table 7 there is no meaningful difference based on age, education level and income. Distribution in terms of income is seen as non-homogenous. As a result, *Kruskal Wallis h* test is applied to this item. Analysis results are at Table 8.

Table 8. Variance analysis results of non-parametric variables

According to *Kruskal Wallis h* test there is no meaningful difference based on income. To determine if there are differences in participants' behavior points based on gender independent groups t test is applied (Table 9).

Table 9. Results of independent group's t test based on gender

According to independent groups t test based on gender females have more positive behavior when compared to males.

6. CONCLUSION

The questions that will express the experience types that form the foundation of the experiential marketing are asked to the consumers in the survey applications that are performed in the study. It is tried to reveal how the participants evaluate the elements concerning the experiential consumption on the cell phone preferences. It is seen that responses, which are given by the participants, are in agreement with the approach, which takes part in the experiential marketing theory.

It is considerable that the consumers have an intensive perception experience in their cell phone preferences and they took the messages, which are sent by the brands emotionally, in various attitudes and behaviors in the study. The consumers expressed their expectations and made suggestions in compliance with their lifestyles in their mentioned experiences. It is seen that the consumers evaluated the products in the frame of the social status symbolized in their cell phone preferences in the experience of association.

When we look at the opinions of the participants concerning the change of cell phones of the participants, we see that the Turkish consumer is quite dynamic. We see that at least 73.7% of the Turkish consumers changed their cell phones definitely once in two years. At the same time, we see that the Turkish consumer has strong brand devotion as well. At least 59.3% of the consumers prefers to a brand which they currently use and 13.6% of them prefers to a brand which they used previously. This finding indicates that total 72.9% values their previous brand experiences. We see that the consumers could select a product having functionality such as cell phone only for its image. We see that 77.3% of the participants select the cell phone either for its image only or together with its image and functionality.

The study indicates that the subjects on which the participants show attitude at higher level are related with the brand experience. Saying by the participants that they could recommend the cell phone brand which they use to their relatives and



friends ($\bar{X}=4.31$) indicates that the Turkish consumer considers the product not only as a product, but as an experience. In this frame, saying that if the Turkish consumer has some negative opinions about the cell phone brand then they would tell them to their relatives and friends ($\bar{X}=3.95$) is the expression that the consumption would spread through experience. As it is stated previously, attaching excessive importance to the brand image and looking for a connection between the brand image and personality in purchasing a product for the brand are elements of experiential consumption. These attitudes are realized as ($\bar{X}=3.89$) and ($\bar{X}=3.85$) respectively. Again, as mentioned in the study, the situation that the participants consider themselves as the devoted customers of the cell phone brand which they use ($\bar{X}=3.49$) appears as another element of experience.

No meaningful difference is found in terms of the age, educational level and income between the attitude points of the participants in the study. This shows that the Turkish consumer considers the consumption experience as a purpose at every level. It appeared that the women have higher level of positive attitude than the men in the attitudes of the participants in terms of gender. As a result, we experience a consumption environment in which the brands take into consideration the design principles for creating unforgettable experiences for their consumers. As a result, the brands are feeling equivalents. As long as the customers could experience different experiences on the brands, they consume these brands. It is necessary to maintain the consumption as a pleasure and as an experience for the brands. The importance of perceiving these experiences in a stronger way is stated in this study as well.

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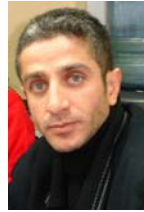
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**Table 3. Issues participants give importance when buying mobile phone**

	Very important		Important		Can't tell		Unimportant		Not important at all	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Price	115	18.8	98	16.0	114	18.6	133	21.7	152	24.8
Terms of payment	231	37.7	234	38.2	63	10.3	42	6.9	42	6.9
Campaigns	231	37.7	248	40.5	64	10.5	39	6.4	30	4.9
Functionality	161	26.3	244	39.9	85	13.9	81	13.2	41	6.7
Design	169	27.6	260	42.5	87	14.2	75	12.3	21	3.4
Different colors	44	7.2	216	35.3	176	28.8	88	14.4	88	14.4
Not heavy	102	16.7	323	52.8	51	8.3	119	19.4	17	2.8
Is small	91	14.9	153	25.0	46	7.5	276	45.1	46	7.5
Camera	285	46.6	195	31.9	44	7.2	66	10.8	22	3.6
Audio/video	283	46.2	216	35.3	38	6.2	59	9.6	16	2.6
Data transfer capability (infrared, Bluetooth)	95	15.5	374	61.1	71	11.6	48	7.8	24	3.9
Internet	163	26.6	346	56.5	60	9.8	26	4.2	17	2.8
Radio and mp3	66	10.8	322	52.6	160	26.1	32	5.2	32	5.2
Printer connection	47	7.7	141	23.0	188	30.7	47	7.7	189	30.9
Low SAR rating	92	15.0	396	64.7	62	10.1	31	5.1	31	5.1
Brand image	122	19.9	429	70.1	30	5.1	31	4.9	0	0.0
Made in a high-tech country	92	15.0	212	34.6	184	30.1	93	15.2	31	5.1
Service network	181	29.6	338	55.2	31	5.1	31	5.1	31	5.1
Warranty period and terms	243	39.7	279	45.6	30	4.9	30	4.9	30	4.9
Long stand-by and talking period	215	35.1	277	45.3	30	4.9	60	9.8	30	4.9
Attention catcher	61	10.0	244	39.9	154	25.2	61	10.0	92	15.0
Used by celebrities	121	19.8	61	10.0	122	19.9	277	45.3	31	5.1
Used by people I give importance	124	20.3	306	50.0	61	10.0	91	14.9	30	4.9
Expensive and limited edition	30	4.9	31	5.1	61	10.0	366	59.8	124	20.3
TV ads	61	10.0	91	14.9	153	25.0	276	45.1	31	5.1
Positive views on media	31	5.1	307	50.2	121	19.8	122	19.9	31	5.1
Awards like "mobile phone of the year"	30	4.9	60	9.8	122	19.9	183	29.9	217	35.5
Sold at known and trusted sales points	182	29.7	337	55.1	31	5.1	31	5.1	31	5.1
Friendly user interface	153	25.0	304	49.7	62	10.1	62	10.1	31	5.1
Functional software	184	30.1	273	44.6	31	5.1	93	15.2	31	5.1
Robust	123	20.1	334	54.6	93	15.2	31	5.1	31	5.1
Accessories	153	25.0	335	54.7	62	10.1	31	5.1	31	5.1
Used by an elite few	92	15.0	152	24.8	214	35.0	61	10.0	93	15.2

**Table 4. Factor loads of the items in consumer behavior scale based on experience**

Factor no	Item no		Factor load
1	3	I look at the make before I buy a mobile phone	,660
2	10	If I buy a mobile phone again I will choose my current make	,587
3	18	I would suggest my current make to friends	,700
4	1	I would change my current make if there is a discount opportunity	,750
5	12	I would change my current make if another make gives accessories for free	,783
6	2	I am a loyal customer to my current make	,659
7	7	I would choose my current make even if it is relatively expensive	,541
8	16	I would share my negative views on my current make with friends	,503
9	4	If I had a chance to choose again I would buy a different make	,693
10	11	I regularly compare market prices for mobile phones	,615
11	8	I regularly compare specifications of mobile phones	,537
12	14	Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed different makes	,562
13	15	Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed prices of different makes	,659
14	17	Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed specifications of different makes	,583
15	5	Before I bought my current mobile phone I asked my friends and family for their views	,696
16	13	After I decided to buy my current mobile phone I analyzed the pros and cons of my decision	,611
17	9	In my decision to buy my current mobile phone brand image was important	,530
18	6	My mobile phone should suit my personality	,620

Table 5. Data on participants' behavior based on experience

	n	Range	Min	Max	\bar{X}	Median	sd
Scale	612	26	54	80	64.18	63	5.68

**Table 6. Arithmetical average and standard deviation related to behavior items**

Items	n	\bar{X}	sd
I look at the make before I buy a mobile phone	612	3.65	.98
If I buy a mobile phone again I will choose my current make	612	2.99	1.17
I would suggest my current make to friends	612	4.31	.89
I would change my current make if there is a discount opportunity	612	3.28	1.10
I would change my current make if another make gives accessories for free	612	3.04	1.11
I am a loyal customer to my current make	612	3.49	1.24
I would choose my current make even if it is relatively expensive	612	3.03	1.32
I would share my negative views on my current make with friends	612	3.95	1.09
If I had a chance to choose again I would buy a different make	612	2.98	1.04
I regularly compare market prices for mobile phones	612	4.25	1.12
I regularly compare specifications of mobile phones	612	3.54	1.28
Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed different makes	612	3.46	1.27
Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed prices of different makes	612	3.52	1.23
Before I bought my current mobile phone I reviewed specifications of different makes	612	3.50	1.32
Before I bought my current mobile phone I asked my friends and family for their views	612	4.00	1.11
After I decided to buy my current mobile phone I analyzed the pros and cons of my decision	612	3.76	1.21
In my decision to buy my current mobile phone brand image was important	612	3.89	.97
My mobile phone should suit my personality	612	3.85	1.23

Table 7. Variance analysis results of points participants' behavior points based on variables

Variable	Levene test	Groups	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	f	P
Age	P>.379	Between groups	217.565	7	31.081	.962	.458
		Within groups	19517.302	604	32.313		
Education level	P>.646	Between groups	233.122	5	46.624	1.449	.205
		Within groups	19501.746	606	32.181		
Income	P>.001*	Between groups	50.270	4	12.567	.388	.818
		Within groups	19684.598	607	32.429		

Table 8. Variance analysis results of non-parametric variables

Income	n	Mean rank	df	Kruskal Wallis h	p	Groups with differences
< 1000 TL	243	307.29	4	1.139	.888	-
1000-2000	179	299.33				
2001-3500	139	310.72				
3501-5500	33	330.52				
> 5500 TL	18	290.50				

**Table 9. Results of independent group's t test based on gender**

Groups	n	\bar{X}	sd	df	t	Sig.level
Female	408	64.09	5.69	610	-4.519	P<.000
Male	204	66.33	5.94			
Levene test statistic= 1.949 Significance level=.163						