

## **Consumer Decision-Making Process in E-Commerce: Case of Salzburg-Ankara**

**Ahmet GÜRBÜZ**

Karabük University,  
Faculty of Economics and  
Administrative Sciences,  
Karabük, Turkey  
[agurbuz@karabuk.edu.tr](mailto:agurbuz@karabuk.edu.tr)

**Nurettin AYAZ**

Karabük Üniversitesi,  
Safranbolu Tourism Faculty  
Karabük, Türkiye  
[nurettinayaz@karabuk.edu.tr](mailto:nurettinayaz@karabuk.edu.tr)

**Mete ALBAYRAK**

Karabük University,  
Faculty of Economics and  
Administrative Sciences,  
Karabük, Turkey  
[metelbayrak@karabuk.edu.tr](mailto:metelbayrak@karabuk.edu.tr)

### **Extensive Summary**

#### **Introduction**

The concept of e-commerce is considered as the sum of all activities related with marketing and trade of products and services in electronic environments (Internet, mobile telephone, interactive television etc.) by moving out of the traditional sales methods (Erdağ and Batuman, 2006: 72); and understanding the consumer behavior in this sphere can be considered as an important element for success. It is highly possible for those businesses that understand the consumer behavior well to be successful and increase their competitive power in the environment of intense technological developments and increasing competition. Tracking the important changes in external environment for consistent strategies, structures and systems in companies for achievement in e-commerce has become an important input element (Epstein, 2004: 94-95).

The needs and requirements of the customers within the market have to be understood in the marketing process (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011: 6). This information are very valuable in order to assume the effect of changes in the market (Akın and Yoldaş, 2010: 6). First and the most important condition to fulfill this requirement is to analyze the consumer behavior with all its aspects. Without understanding the consumer behavior or recognizing the consumers, it is not possible to determine the needs and requirements and to detect the variables motivating them. Therefore, it is indispensable for the marketers to learn the needs, expectations and preferences of consumers in advance and to develop strategies in this direction.

This study aims to determine the consumer differences among the countries in terms of e-commerce applications. In accordance with this goal, it is aimed to contribute the development process of e-commerce in Turkey. Within this context, the purchasing decisions of female e-commerce users in Turkey and Austria during the e-commerce process are investigated. This study is conducted within the scope of

qualitative research methods and the findings of in-depth interviews applied for the consumers are interpreted and the results are being discussed.

### Methodology

This study is prepared in order to reveal the similarities and differences between the e-commerce purchasing decisions of different countries' citizens; and the secondary data was obtained by literature review whereas content and discourse analysis is used for the scope of in-depth interview method as a qualitative research method as the primary data.

Literature (Harris, 2001) states that the process of content analysis should include; determination of research question/questions, sampling, determination of units of analysis, confirming the categories to be used, implementing the coding and determination of validity and confidence. Within this scope, research question was determined as follows:

Are there any differences between the purchasing decisions of different countries' citizens in e-commerce?

Target population of the study is set as female consumers in Ankara/Turkey and Salzburg/Austria. Sampling is applied in the research due to the elements of time, cost and accessibility. Results were obtained through simple random sampling by asking 304 questions in 400 minutes to 16 female consumers selected within the target population. Interviews were conducted between the dates August 15<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Experts' opinions were received for the development of research questions. Necessary arrangements were done in accordance with the suggestions and criticisms of the academics and an interview form was prepared which was subjected to a preliminary test application. Within the scope of preliminary test; 22 questions in the interview form were asked to 10 e-commerce users in Karabuk and Ankara provinces. Accordingly, questions which could not be understood by the interviewee were excluded from the interview form and the study is conducted with the remaining 19 questions. Interview form was applied to the female consumers selected from the target population between the dates August 15<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 by using the face-to-face interview technique in order to obtain data. The demographic characteristics of the participants were ensured by classification scale; while the information about e-commerce was obtained by open ended questions.

### Conclusion

Within the scope of our qualitative research in order to develop and understanding on the purchasing processes of female e-commerce users in Turkey and Austria, the similarities and differences of different countries' citizens are indicated in Table 1:

**Table 1: Comparison of Research Findings**

Category	Ankara/Turkey	Salzburg/Austria
Shopping Frequency	Frequently Very often According to TV advertisements According to advise 1-2 times in a week or 1-2 times in a month	Frequently Depends Rarely 5-6 times in a month 4-5 times in a month Once in a month

<b>Payment Type Preferences</b>	Credit card Paying at the door Money Order Debit card	Credit card Paying at the door PayPal Money Order E-bay ki-ng
<b>Amount of Transaction</b>	Maximum: 3000 TL Minimum: 0-500 TL range	Maximum: 6000 EUR Minimum: No shopping was done in the last 6 months according to the criteria mentioned.
<b>Product Preferences</b>	Garment, Transportation, Food, Accessories, Houseware, Books, Electronic goods, Cosmetics	Clothing, Shoes, Electronic devices, Books, Textile products, Hand-made products, Toys, Persian food products, “high tech” products, CD, Fabrics, Wedding material, Gardening tools, Products that cannot be found in the store
<b>Purchasing Decision Behavior</b>	I plan my shopping in advance I surf the websites, I search for the one with the proper price I shop without planning I consult the experiences of people I know	I plan my shopping in advance I shop without planning I review the web sites for information
<b>Risk Perception in Shopping</b>	Security of credit card information Security of personal information General security of shopping process	Security of credit card information Security of personal information General security of shopping process
<b>Shopping Website Preferences</b>	Connection speed to access the images in the websites Access to information Asking others and obtaining information Preferring the recognized companies Early delivery of the product by the website Design of website	Design of the page Advises and comments Recognition of the website Ranking of the website in the search engines Whether the page has TÜV certificate or not
<b>Factors for Shopping</b>	Ability to shop always Personal preferences Friends’ likes Internet advertisements Advises Friends’ advises E-mail notifications’ Newspaper-TV advertisements	E-mail notifications Internet advertisements TV advertisements Products seen in store Ability to shop always No need to walk around the stores Any product can be found in Internet Affordable prices Shipping possibilities No shipping fee
<b>Factors Triggering Shopping</b>	Affordable prices If the product is considered as appropriate If the product is related with a product purchased from the store If the desired brand’s product has a more affordable price in Internet If the product cannot be found in the	Advantages in office materials When I see different advertisements According to my mood If I need it If I have money If I want to reward myself When it comes to my mind

	<p>store</p> <p>My residence is far from shopping malls</p> <p>Seeing an affordable product while surfing unplanned</p> <p>When an affordable price is seen at the Internet campaigns</p> <p>If a rapid decision has to be made and there is not enough time</p>	<p>No certain situation</p> <p>When something is required in the house</p> <p>Special occasions</p>
<b>Shopping Convenience</b>	<p>It does not take too much time</p> <p>There is no need to contact with the cashier or customer representative</p> <p>You can be the product owner, customer and cashier in Internet</p> <p>Products are delivered at your door</p> <p>Option to pay by credit card</p> <p>It is easier to find products which are rare</p> <p>Quality product can be purchased for affordable prices</p> <p>When you give the order, the product is delivered next day</p> <p>Product scale is vast</p> <p>There are different prices for the same product</p> <p>Shopping for affordable prices</p> <p>Product can be returned whenever there is a problem</p>	<p>There are more options in Internet</p> <p>Products can be compared immediately</p> <p>There is a chance to review other pages</p> <p>It is more convenient</p> <p>There is no need to wait for payment where hundreds people pay</p> <p>There is no need to search for the product</p> <p>There is a chance to return the product if not liked</p> <p>It provided many options</p> <p>All sizes of garment can be found in online stores</p> <p>There is no problem about the delivery or payment of the products</p> <p>There is no need to visit distant stores</p> <p>No extra costs for transportation</p> <p>Products are delivered to the house or workplace</p> <p>No transportation problem</p>
<b>Purchasing Online Soon</b>	<p>7 Participants have answered positively.</p> <p>1 Participant has answered negatively.</p>	<p>2 Participants have answered positively.</p> <p>6 Participants have answered negatively (that they did not have a planned purchase or not thinking of it yet).</p>
<b>Purchase Advise</b>	<p>1 Participant said she will not advise.</p> <p>7 Participants said they will advise.</p>	<p>4 Participants said they will not advise.</p> <p>4 Participants said they will advise.</p>
<b>Future Expectations</b>	<p>All of the participants have stated that they will make online shopping in the future.</p>	<p>All of the participants have stated that they will make online shopping in the future.</p>

With respect to the results mentioned above and the model established suggestions to increase the productivity for the purchasing decisions of e-commerce users can be summarized as:

- Time, customer relations, transportation, options for payment, diversity or prices and products are the elements that directly affect purchasing decision in e-commerce process. E-commerce companies should consider these aspects and renew their policies in time.

- The study is on the purchasing decision of female consumers in Turkey and Austria, and it is seen that they were mostly concerned about the security of their personal information. In this context, companies have to develop special systems. Also, legal arrangements have to be developed that define the relations between the buyer and seller “without any legal gaps”.
- Study has detected that product purchase requests of consumers is high in terms of e-commerce. In this context, companies have to focus on publicity and encouragement policies to keep this request alive.
- Greatest difference between the e-commerce applications in Turkey and Austria is in the payment methods. In this context, the transfer of payment methods in Austria to Turkey might increase the volume of e-commerce.
- When the product preferences is evaluated, it can be seen that the consumers in Turkey purchase tickets for transportation, accessories, Houseware and cosmetic products in e-commerce; while the consumers in Austria prefer shoes, hand-made products, toys, high-tech products, CD, fabric, wedding material and gardening tools. In this context, companies in Turkey have to focus on developing these products in domestic and international sales.

This study has researched the purchasing decision processes of female consumers in different countries. It is assumed that the study will be guiding for the companies that conduct e-commerce. But, there are some limitations in this study as in other studies. In this context, researchers have to consider the aspects below in similar studies to improve and generalize the findings:

As sampling bulk, female consumers in different countries are selected. Therefore, it is possible that the research findings might change if the study is conducted on different gender consumers. So, studying with different consumer types might be helpful to create different assumptions.