



## Consumer Attitudes and Preferences about Upholstered Furniture

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### Abstract

This study focuses on learning the knowledge, opinions, and preferences of consumers about upholstered furniture. This study further aims to discover how the preferences arising from the knowledge and thoughts of the consumers are reflected in the home-type upholstered furniture purchase process. A survey was designed and implemented for this study. Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test. Results of the study indicate the following: consumers from Kayseri plan to use their upholstered furniture for 6 to 10 years, do not replace their furniture before it is worn out, and when considering replacement, they give importance to aesthetic features, ease of use, and moderate prices. It was also found that, when purchasing furniture, consumers pay attention to the quality of the fabric, the cleanable and washable qualities, and timeless design.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

People furnish and decorate their living spaces with furniture and furnishings to transform them into more comfortable and aesthetic environments. It is essential that people consume several goods and services to make such amendments and transformations in their living spaces. The use of goods and services to satisfy the needs of people is called consumption [1], and the consumer is the person that buys or consumes any goods or services to fulfil their requirement and desires [2]. The focal point in understanding the attitudes of consumers is how a consumer decides on the consumption of limited resources (money, time, energy). In this context, questions such as who buys several products, why such products are used, why certain brands or models are chosen, how such product or model is selected, how the payment is made, when the product is needed, and where the product is bought from are the basic issues for which an answer is sought [3].

Furniture is commercial consumer goods that have an important place in human life. They are basically divided into two groups: soft furniture and hard furniture. Furniture made of materials such as wood or metal is considered hard furniture, whereas furniture that consists of pillows and cushions and is made from fabric or leather is considered soft furniture or upholstered furniture [4]. People encounter upholstered furniture in many living spaces, including houses, workplaces, and schools, which are a part of daily life. As well as the services such furniture offers, such as studying or resting by sitting or lying down, they also have decorative purposes in that the spaces appear aesthetically improved. Upholstered furniture comes in a multitude of forms, including chairs, armchairs, couches, and sofa beds, that can be used as a set or single furniture items.

A production technique that ensures comfort and convenience is used in the manufacturing of upholstered furniture. This technique has a slower process compared to other manufacturing techniques and depending on the skills of the craftsperson, it can be labor-intensive [5]. The solidity, comfort, and quality of the furniture are created from the elements underneath the upholstery material. The upholstering

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process has five phases: frame, webbing, woven textiles coating (Hessian, Scrim, etc.), springs assembly, filling and wadding, and decorative fabric coating and finishing touches [6].

It is essential to analyze what factors lie behind the preferences and behaviors of consumers to understand their attitudes concerning upholstered furniture. However, most of the academic studies on upholstered furniture report results from a variety of tests (mechanical, dust, combustion tests) on fabrics, filling materials, or springs. A review of the literature indicates that consumer attitudes regarding upholstered furniture were analyzed in very few studies. For example, Arslan et al. (2010), in their study conducted in Turkey, identified the types of problems encountered by consumers regarding upholstered furniture. These problems were “wearing out of fabrics,” “squeaking and noise making,” and “disintegration on the joints.” Additionally, they found that consumers replace their upholstered furniture because it “expired its economic life” [7].

Dangelico et al. (2013) conducted investigated textile and upholstered furniture in a manufacturing sector in Italy to underline the importance of environmental problems. Results of the study indicated that the integration of environmental sustainability issues with product design would open new markets and product arenas for the companies, increase their financial performance, and create new opportunities [8]. In another study, Goa et al. (2014) attempted to determine the qualifications of ideal upholstered furniture through the use of numerous scientific branches, including design methodology, psychology, applied human engineering, marketing, graphics, and statistics. Ultimately, they aimed at creating the “rules for upholstered furniture” that may serve as a guide for consumers and the upholstered furniture industry [9]. Arisut and Ayan (2017), in their study conducted in Turkey, examined the criteria affecting the preference of consumers in upholstered furniture purchasing. According to their results, consumers give foremost importance to the price factor and payment options followed by fabric and color factors in terms of design attributes when purchasing upholstered furniture [10].

This study seeks to identify the knowledge, thoughts, and preferences of consumers regarding household upholstered furniture, such as armchairs, sofas, chairs, and sofa beds. Further, this study aims to explore how such knowledge, thoughts, and preferences are reflected in consumers’ preferences while selecting furniture. More clearly, it is further intended to analyze how the experiences and attitudes of the consumers arising from their knowledge and opinions affect their attitudes in the process of selecting, purchasing, and using upholstered furniture. Analyzing these issues will help to understand the preferences and attitudes of consumers about upholstered furniture, set a sample for the studies to be conducted about furniture in the future, and obtain the presumptions that may have a positive impact on product sales in the upholstered furniture sector.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Data Collection**

This study was planned and conducted in order to analyze the knowledge, opinion and preferences of the consumer in Kayseri province about upholstered furniture. Kayseri, a developed province in terms of its furniture industry has shown improvement in the upholstered furniture sector. According to Central Anatolian Development Agency (ORAN) (2017), Kayseri is Turkey's most important furniture center. Twenty of the largest furniture manufacturers in Turkey, eleven of them are in Kayseri [11]. According to Central Anatolia Exporters' Association (OAIB) (2016), the rise of the furniture sector in Kayseri began with the manufacturing of couches, armchairs, and beds. Exports from Kayseri province are largely from the home furniture industry (armchairs, couches, sofa sets, etc.) [12]. Therefore, consumers living in Kayseri are offered a wide range of products in terms of design, pricing, quality, and other attributes. This access to a large number of alternatives in upholstered furniture means consumers have a varied experience of consumption.

Originally, the researchers intended to sample consumers throughout Turkey. However, it became necessary to narrow the scope of the study to a certain area since companies are not willing to share such information and it is difficult to contact consumers. Moreover, the existence of logistical problems, such

as transportation, personnel requirement, and financial and time constraints, had to be addressed. Therefore, the researchers decided upon a purposive sampling method restricted to the consumers living in Kayseri for this research. According to Sencer (1989) purposive sampling is to make the most appropriate part of the universe as an observation subject [13]. Although only Kayseri province was selected for this study, future research is planned to explore the preferences and behavior of consumers living in other major Turkish cities. According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), the population of Kayseri province in 2018 was 1,389,680 [14]. For regions with a population size of 250,000 or above, the sample size is 384 with a 95% confidence level and 5% confidence interval [15- 17].

The survey technique was used to obtain data that may reveal the impact of the preferences of the consumers arising from their knowledge and opinions regarding upholstered furniture on purchase behaviors of the same. The research was carried out in a store based in Kayseri that sells a variety of upholstered furniture and accessories. Necessary permissions were obtained from the store authorities to conduct the survey. The participants were informed before the survey and their verbal consent was obtained. Initially, a target sample of 384 individuals who visited the store was sought. However, the response rate was better than expected and 450 surveys were completed and examined for the study.

## 2.2. Analysis of Procedures

To obtain high quality, unbiased and comprehensive data from the survey form, the face-to-face interview survey method was preferred. Face-to-face interviewing has the highest potential with respect to types of questions and questionnaire complexity. It has also the highest potential regarding coverage and sampling, but again it can be very costly, especially if the country is large and sparsely populated [18]. This method has some advantages and disadvantages. One advantage is that some questions and items could be clarified with the help of an interviewer. In contrast, one disadvantage is that the responders are not able to spend as much time answering questions in comparison to alternative methods [19]. During the implementation of the survey, explanatory information was given to the individuals about significant points of attention and efforts were made to ensure that the participants understood the survey correctly and clearly.

The survey form consisted of four parts. In the first part, participants were asked to answer demographic questions relating to income, gender, age, marital and educational status. The second part contained questions related to the preferences and behaviors of the individuals in the process of purchasing and using upholstered home furniture. In the third part, participants were asked about the general technical specifications and upholstery fabric of their existing home sofa sets. Finally, in the last part, participants were asked to rate a variety of sentences on a Likert scale in terms of how they relate to their opinions, experiences, and Preferences about upholstery furniture and the purchasing process. According to Sullivan (2009), a Likert Scale is a rating measure used widely in survey questionnaires to assess respondents' attitudes, preferences, and subjective responses to statements. Developed by Rensis Likert, a set of items presents users with statements and standardized response categories on a continuum, such as strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Likert items are usually presented along a horizontal line on which the subject circles or checks his or her response [20].

The data of this survey were analyzed in the WEKA 3.9 statistical software. Waikato Environment for Knowledge Analysis (abbr. WEKA) has general public license, and was developed at the University of Waikato, New Zealand [21]. The obtained data were presented through tables and graphics.

## 2.3. Hypothesis

Consumers take into account many quality features such as the quality of the material or fabric when purchasing upholstered furniture. In this section, it has been investigated whether there is a significant relationship between the averages of these quality features and the gender factor. This for investigation, the following two hypotheses have been established.

- **h<sub>0</sub>**: There is no meaningful difference between the quality features that consumers pay attention to when buying upholstered furniture and gender.
- **h<sub>1</sub>**: There is a meaningful difference between the quality features that consumers pay attention to when buying upholstered furniture and gender.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Demographic Findings

To begin, the demographic attributes of the individuals taking part in the survey were examined (Table 1). The survey sample was composed of 48.9% women and 51.1% men. Among these individuals 82.2% were married and 17.8% were single, and 34.4% were between the ages of 36 and 45 and 30% were between the ages of 45 and 65.

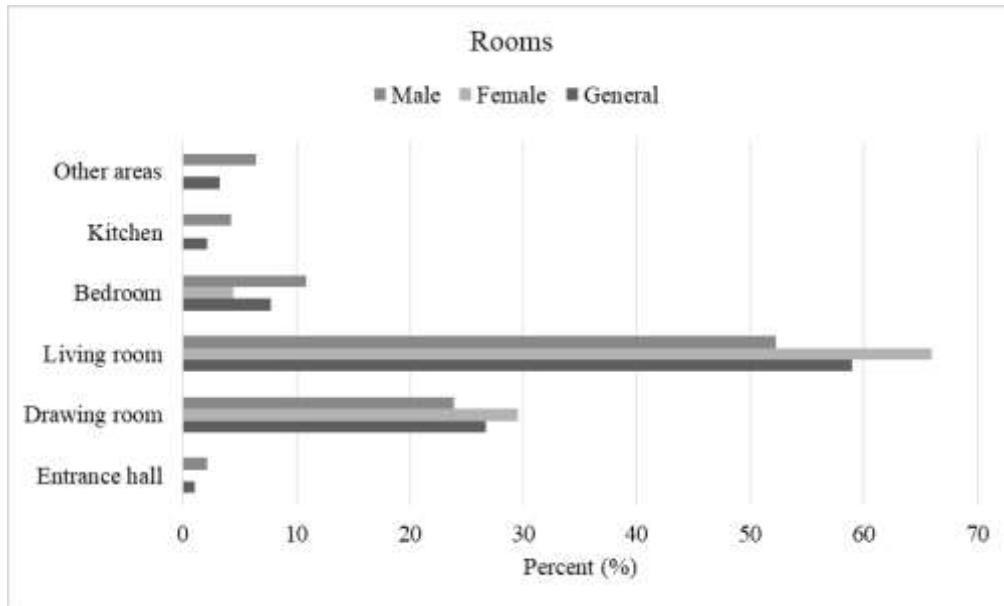
*Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants*

<b>Sex</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Male	48.9	Primary school	17.8
Female	51.1	High school	21.1
<b>Age</b>	<b>(%)</b>	Associate Degree	18.9
18-25	14.4	Bachelor Degree	23.3
26-35	18.9	Master / Ph.D.	18.9
36-45	34.4	<b>Income Status (monthly)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
46-65	30	Minimum wage or below (380 USD and below)	25.6
66 and upper	2.2	Minimum wage upper -3000 TL (381-515 USD )	24.4
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>(%)</b>	3001-5000 TL (516-858 USD)	27.8
Married	82.2	5001-7000 TL (859-1,200 USD)	15.6
Single	17.8	7001 TL and upper (1,201 USD and upper)	6.7

The majority of the participants had attained a high school (21.1%) or a bachelor's (23.3%) education. Demographic characteristics of the participants were investigated in monthly income. According to The Republic of Turkey Minister of Family, Labour and Social Services (2019), monthly minimum wage in Turkey is 2,020.90 Turkish lira net (Turkish lira is the official currency of Turkey, and is symbolized as TL) [22]. In terms of monthly income, 27.8% earned 3001-5001 TL (516-858 USD) and 25.6% earned monthly minimum wage 2,020.90 TL (380 USD) or lower.

#### 3.2. Findings on the Preferences of the Use and Purchasing of Upholstered Furniture

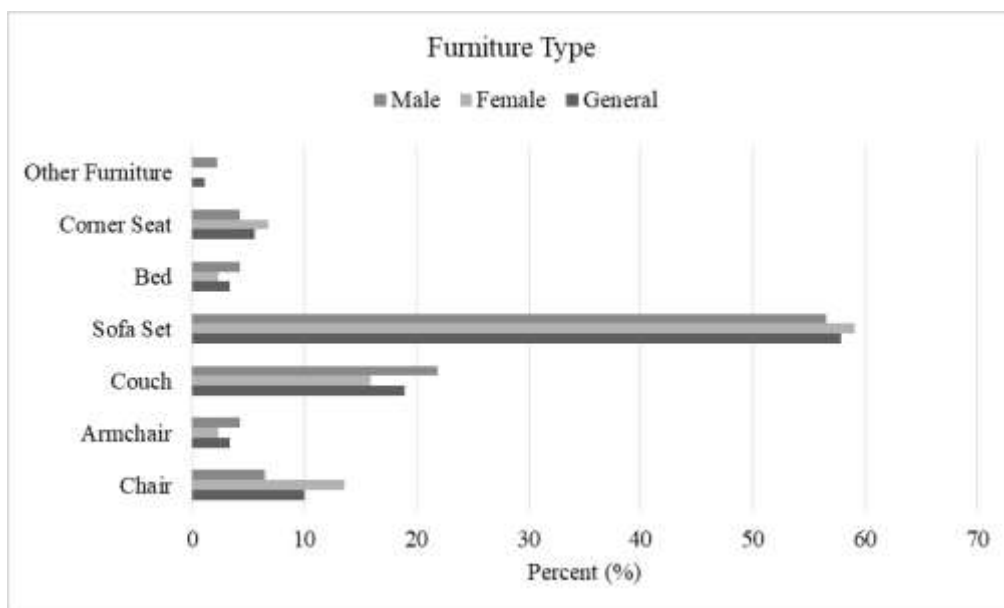
This section examines the preferences and behavior of the individuals living in Kayseri that participated in the survey in the process of purchasing upholstered furniture for their homes. Firstly, the participants were asked whether they were satisfied with the upholstered furniture they used at home: 58.9% of the individuals said they were satisfied, 11% said they were not satisfied, and 30% said they were partially satisfied. It was understood that more than half of the individuals (51.1%) replaced their upholstered furniture within a period of between 6 and 10 years, and 35.6% replaced it after a period of 11 years or more.



**Figure 1.** Rooms that most frequently want to replace by participants

The participants were most frequently willing to replace their living-room furniture designed for everyday use of household members, including the sofa sets (58.9%). When the individuals were asked about which furniture they had replaced most recently, 55.6% noted that they replaced their sofa sets and 17.8% said they replaced only their couches. 66% of the participants who want to change the living room and 29.5% of the participants who want to change the drawing room are women. Women mostly want to change sofa sets (%59.1), Couch (%15.9) and chairs (%13.6). Similarly, men mostly want to change their sofa sets (%56.5), Couch (%21.9) and chairs (%6.5) (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The participants were offered various groupings regarding the functional positioning of sofa sets. According to the participants, the most functional positioning of furniture (46.7%) was two triple sofas and two single armchairs. Erdinler and Koc (2016) stated that the criteria for functionality is at the forefront for consumers in their selection of furniture [23].



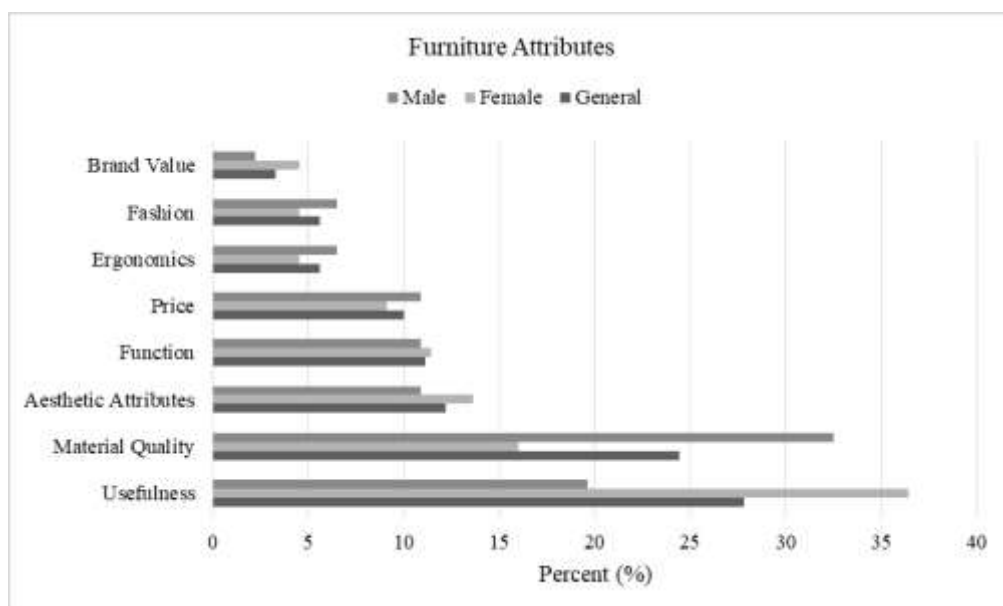
**Figure 2.** Upholstered furniture that most frequently wants to replace by participants

The participants were asked about their reasons for purchasing upholstered furniture. More than half of respondents (61.1%) indicated that the reason was that their old furniture was wearing out and 16.7% indicated that they were replacing their furniture because of marriage. In light of this information, it appears people living in Kayseri do not replace their furniture unless it is necessary. Additionally, it was also found that individuals referred to the internet and social networks to gather information before purchasing (34.4%) as well as family and friends (28.9%). Lihra et al. (2008) indicated the internet is an important instrument for furniture sales both for the manufacturers and the consumers [24]. Andac and Guzel (2017) and Andac Guzel (2020) stated that a large majority of the consumers make use of internet before buying furniture [25, 26].

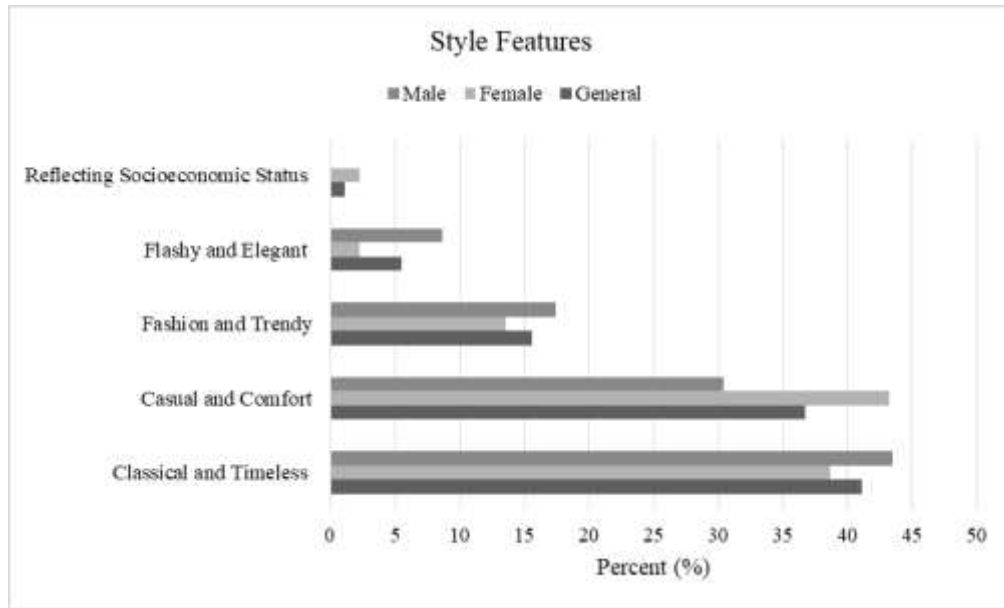
When asked about purchasing location, most of the participants prefer to purchase their upholstered furniture from a store (85.6%) and more than half preferred to purchase from a renowned brand (54.4%), followed by a local brand (40%). Andac (2008) and Cabuk et al. (2012) stated that a large majority of the consumers buy their furniture from the dealers of famous brands [27, 28]. Erdinler and Koc (2016) stated that as the level of income increases, the demand for the branded products also increases [23].

In reference to the first and most dominating factor consumers pay attention to when purchasing a piece of upholstered furniture, 27.8% of the participants noted that they paid attention to the ease of use, 24.4% paid attention to the quality of the material in the first instance, and 12.2% said they considered the aesthetic attributes. Burdurlu et al. (2004) stated that it is the other predictive factor after price that indicates the product is high quality and easy of use [29] (Figure 3). Likewise, Mowla (2019) also stated that quality is important in the purchase decision when buying furniture. In this section, an analysis made according to gender regarding the upholstered furniture purchasing process. The first ease of use that women pay attention to when buying upholstered furniture (36.4%) is the material quality of men (32.5%).

In this survey, the influence of the aesthetic attributes in the process of purchasing were also examined. According to the findings, the participants first prefer classical and timeless design style (41.1%) followed by a casual look and comfort (36.7%) in the style of upholstered furniture. According to gender analysis, women first prefer a casual and comfortable design style, while men prefer to first classical and timeless design style in upholstered furniture (Figure 4). The majority of participants preferred flamboyant furniture with Socio-economic status implications (70%) for their drawing rooms, whereas they preferred more comfortable, easy-to-use, and functional upholstered furniture for their living rooms. Burdurlu et al. (2004), Andac and Guzel (2017), and Isac and Badshah (2019) stated that consumers prefer furniture that are easy of use [29, 25, 30].



**Figure 3.** Furniture features that most frequently considered by participants in purchasing

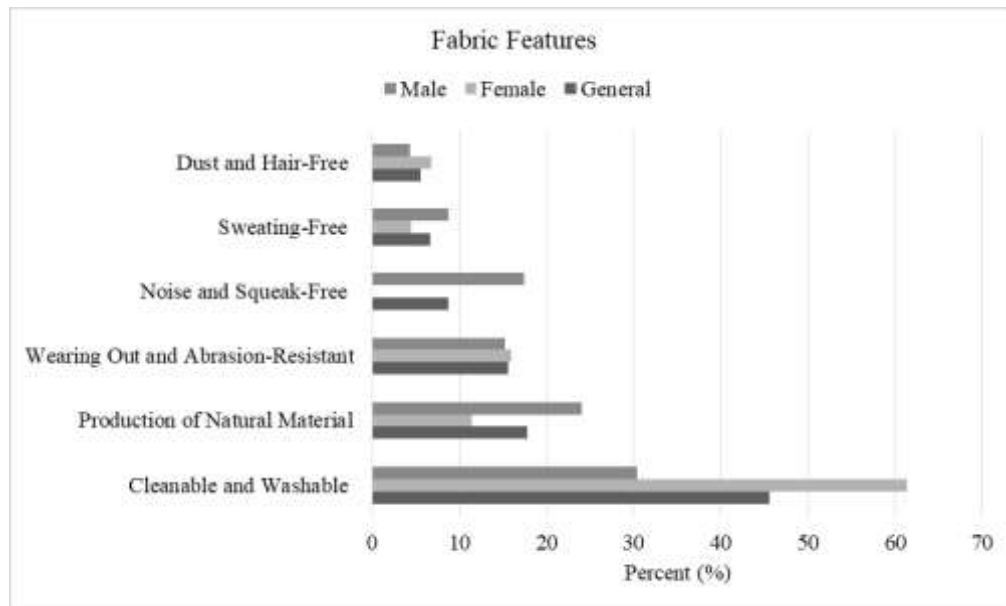


*Figure 4. Upholstered furniture style features that most frequently want by participants*

### 3.3. Findings on the Materials and Technical Specifications of Upholstered Furniture

In this survey, the technical specifications and upholstery fabric material used on the surface of the existing upholstered furniture that the participants were currently using in their homes were also examined. According to the results, almost half of the participants noted that the upholstered furniture in their homes was made using a spring system (47.8%) or non-spring system (42.2%), whereas 10% of the participants said they did not have any idea about the subject. Additionally, the participants noted that the surface of their upholstered sofa set furniture was made of natural fabric (30%) or synthetic fabric (70%).

The consumers were asked about the most important quality of the upholstery fabric when purchasing upholstered furniture. Almost half of the respondents (45.6%) indicated that cleanable and washable fabrics were important. Other qualities indicated by the consumers included the use of natural material (17.8%), durable fabrics that resist wearing out and abrasion (15.6%), noise and squeak-free when there is motion of sitting or repositioning on the upholstered surface (8.7%), does not cause sweating when it is sat on (6.7%), and does not collect dust and hair on the surface fabric (5.6%) (Figure 5). Arisut and Ayan (2017) stated that the color and the fabric characteristics are the most important factors in an upholstered furniture purchase [10]. Arslan et al. (2010) stated that consumers consider fabric wear, squeaking and noise making, and disintegration on the joints of fabrics in the selection of upholstered furniture [7]. According to gender analysis, both women and men want upholstered furniture fabric to be cleanable and washable. Only men want the fabric's features to be noise and squeak-free (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Upholstered fabric features that most frequently want by participants

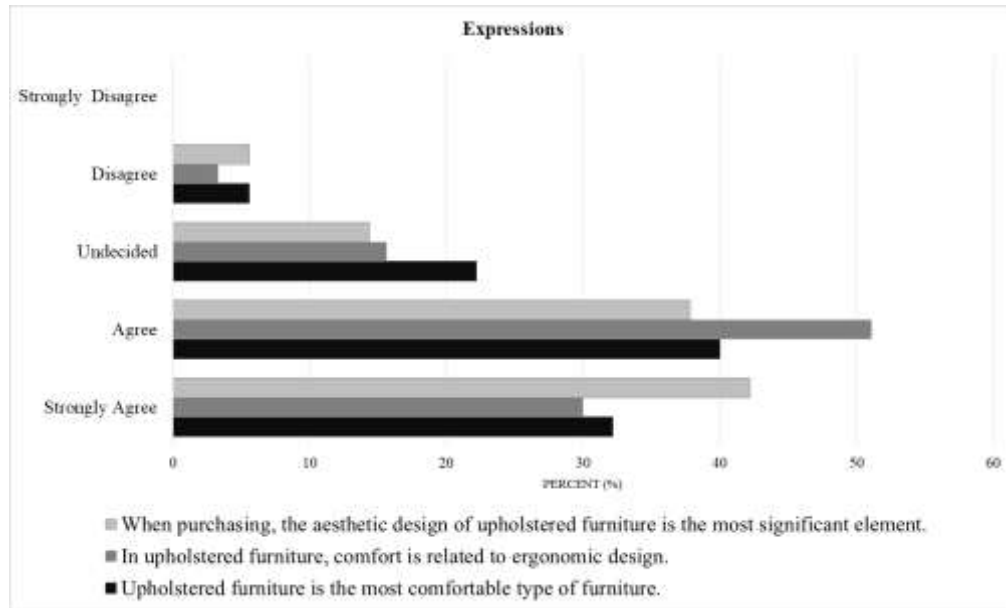
The elements that are important for consumers regarding the durability and quality of material when purchasing upholstered furniture were also investigated. It was found that the most important factor is the quality of the upholstery fabric (26.7%). The second most important factor is the quality of the sponge and filling material (22.2%), and the third is the quality of the frame case of the upholstered furniture (21.1%). Other important elements include the quality of the particleboard and MDF used in visible parts of the furniture (15.6%), the quality of upholstery spring (5.6%), the quality of the accessories used on the furniture and cushions (tassel, fringe, cords, decorative button, beads, etc.) (4.4%), the quality of the jointing points on the upholstery fabric and the stitches (3.3%), and lastly, the quality of the assembly elements (zipper, velcro, etc.) (1.1%). In addition, an independent samples T-test was performed for this section (Table 2). With this test, the effect of the upholstered furniture features on the purchasing process was investigated.

### 3.4. Findings on Judgments about Upholstered Furniture

In this section, various judgment sentences were set up for the purpose of analyzing the opinions and experiences as well as purchasing behavior of the participating individuals about upholstered furniture. Agreement with sentences was recorded using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*, with a midpoint of *neutral*).

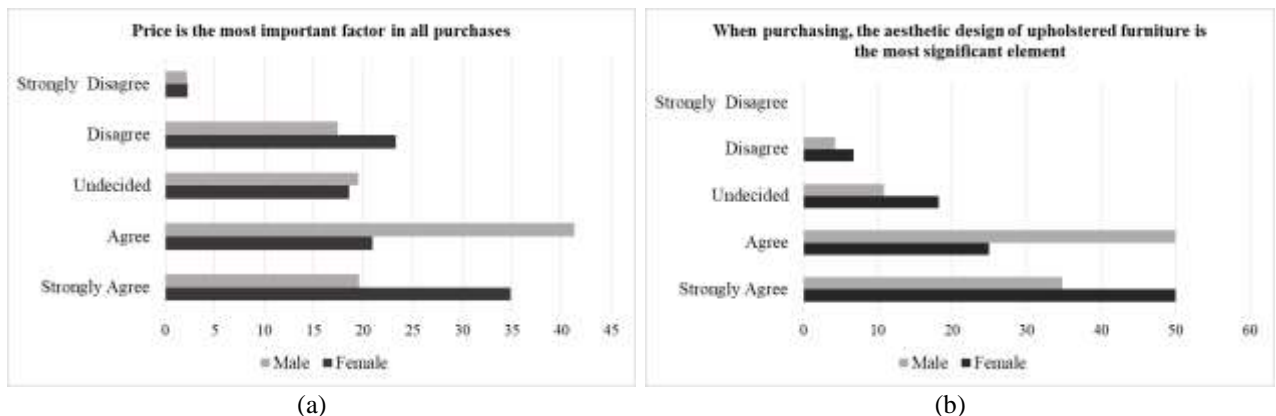
According to the results obtained, 40% of participants regard upholstered furniture as the most comfortable, and 51.1% relate comfort in furniture with ergonomic design. All participants agreed that the most persuasive element when purchasing furniture is aesthetic design. Further, all participants indicated that in addition to ergonomic design and aesthetics, ideal upholstered furniture should be functional. Participants stated that they agree with these sentences. Only 5.6% of the participants disagree that upholstered furniture is the most comfortable type and this comfort is related to ergonomic design (Figure 6).





**Figure 6.** Some results of analyses on judgments about aesthetic and ergonomic design

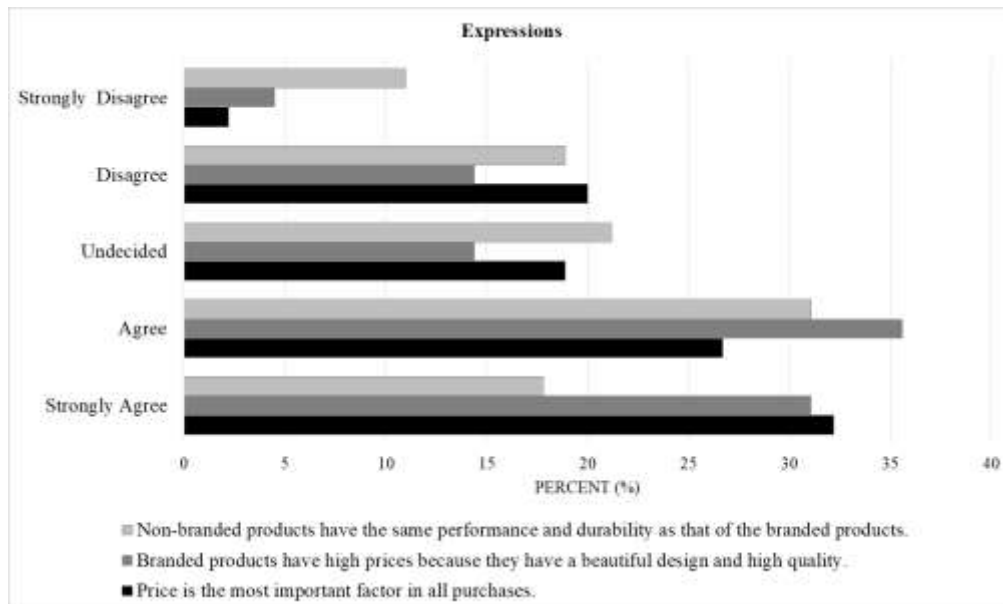
To analyze the impact of aesthetic design on the sale of furniture in greater detail, the participants were offered another set of judgment sentences. Notably, 31.1% of participants would still purchase upholstered furniture that lacked functionality if it had a highly aesthetic design and 30% would purchase furniture with a poor ergonomic design if it were aesthetically pleasing. Moreover, 38.9% of participants believed that consumers prefer to purchase stylish and aesthetically designed upholstered furniture to highlight their social level. Individuals stated that they agree with these sentences. Barut and Gunes (2018) stated that consumers with higher purchasing power request flamboyant products more often when buying furniture, and Erdinler and Koc (2016) suggested that consumers pay great attention to the image the furniture creates when buying furniture [31, 23]. In view of Isac and Badshah (2019), consumers prefer to buy products that appear nice aesthetically [30]. According to gender analysis, women pay more attention to both aesthetics and price of upholstered furniture than men and strongly agree with the sentence describing this view (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Some results of analyses on judgments about upholstery furniture  
a- Analysis of price by gender, b- Analysis of aesthetic design by gender

Another significant factor shown to have an impact on the salability of upholstered furniture is the price (Figure 7 and 8). According to 32.2% of participants, price is the most important factor in all purchases. While individuals stated that they strongly agree with this sentence, only 2.2% stated that they strongly disagree with this sentence. Interestingly, 37.8% of participants said a modest price was more important than aesthetics, functionality, or ergonomic design. Burdurlu et al. (2004), Andac (2008), Bednarik and Pakaine Kovats (2010), Serin and Andac (2009, 2012); Arpacı and Obuz (2013). Andac and Guzel (2017); Arisut and Ayan (2017); Andac Guzel (2020) stated that price is one of the most predictive

factors while buying furniture [29, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35, 26]. Further, the perspectives of participants concerning brand and branded products were also examined. When asked why branded products have higher prices, 35.6% answered this was due to very good aesthetic design and high quality (Figure 8). Mowla (2019) stated that the brand is important in the purchase of the product and there is a significant relation between the price and brand loyalty [36]. Barut and Gunes (2018) stated that the price and the brand of the product in a furniture purchase is an alternative way used by the consumers to show their social levels [31].



**Figure 8.** Some results of analyses on judgments about price and brand

However, results indicated participants do not consider only branded products as having high performance, durability, and quality. Similarly, Andac (2009) also stated that higher price does not represent the quality of the product on its own [33]. In fact, 31.1% of participants believe that non-branded products may also have the same performance and durability standards as branded products. When asked how they initially evaluate furniture during the purchasing process, 26.7% of participants indicated they consider technical specifications, such as the quality and performance of the assembly equipment and mechanisms used in upholstered furniture. They agree that the technical specifications of furniture are important. Burdurlu et al. (2004) stated other predictive factors after price is quality and that it is easy to use [29]. Okcu and Kecec Morkoc (2017) stated that the consumers make their final decision to buy the furniture based on the durability and usefulness of the furniture [37]. Additionally, 24.4% indicated the use of environmentally friendly materials is not an initially important quality concerning their purchase decision. However, for 17.8% of individuals, it strongly disagrees with the idea that furniture is not environmentally friendly. They wanted the furniture to be environmentally friendly. Similarly, Andac Guzel (2020) found an eco-label contributes to the purchase of the good, and Isac and Badshah (2019) stated that consumers would like to purchase eco-friendly products [26, 30]. Dangelico et al. (2013) reported that it is important to develop environment-friendly products in the upholstered furniture sector [8].

Consequently, the participants noted that an ideal piece of upholstered furniture is a product with a high level of aesthetics, functionality, and ergonomic design made with high-quality and durable materials that communicate brand value. However, economic conditions and price create a tendency among these consumers towards equivalent products without brand value but with reasonable aesthetics, functionality, ergonomic design, and quality (with the admission of the risks that they may create because the item is not made with environmentally friendly materials). Burdurlu et al. (2004), Andac (2008), Serin and Andac (2009, 2012), Lihra et al. (2012), Andac and Guzel (2017), Okcu and Kecec Morkoc (2017), Isac and Badshah (2019), and Andac Guzel (2020) all found that price, aesthetic features, quality, brand, and

usefulness of the furniture are important factors regarding the preferences of consumers [25- 27, 29, 30, 33, 34, 37, 38].

### 3.5. Independent Samples T-Test Findings

Costumers care about a variety of factors when users are buying upholstered furniture. These are factors such as durability and quality of material, the quality of the upholstery fabric, the quality of the sponge and filling material, the quality of the frame case of the upholstered furniture, the quality of the particleboard and MDF used invisible parts of the furniture, the quality of upholstery spring, and the quality of the accessories. In this section, the effect of these factors on purchasing is compared with the gender factor. For this examination, an independent samples t-test was used, and it was investigated whether there was a significant difference between the two groups (Table 2).

Among the quality features of upholstered furniture features and gender, a meaningful result was obtained from gender factors (p-value: 0.000). Therefore, hypothesis (1) as “There is a meaningful difference between the quality features that consumers pay attention to when buying upholstered furniture and gender” is acceptable. As a result of the analysis, the ratio of female consumers to pay attention to the quality features of furniture was found to be higher in the process of buying upholstered furniture than male consumers.

**Table 2.** T-test results for the upholstery furniture of quality features with gender

Group Statistics				
	Gender	n	Mean	SD
Furniture features	Female	220	4.4432	0.63404
	Male	230	4.0978	0.64932
Independent Samples Test				
			<i>t-test for equality means significant (two-tailed)*</i>	
Furniture features			0.000	

\* p > 0.05 means there was no bond between data; p < 0.05 means there was a bond between data

## 4. CONCLUSION

In this study, the perspectives of consumers living in Kayseri province of Turkey concerning upholstered furniture were examined. A summary of results is provided below.

1. Consumers in Kayseri regard upholstered furniture as the most comfortable type of furniture. These consumers define an ideal piece of upholstered furniture as high-level products in terms of aesthetics, functionality, and ergonomic design, and as products made of high-quality materials with a long span of life and brand value.
2. Consumers in Kayseri make use of their furniture for a long period of time and they only replace it when necessary. For this reason, they tend to prefer products that are useful, made of high-quality materials, and have an aesthetic but timeless design. It is thought and recommended that companies keep such products in their product range to gain new customers.
3. Consumers frequently make use of the internet and social networks before purchasing upholstered furniture. Therefore, it would be beneficial for companies to effectively promote their products on these platforms and carry out activities to increase their brand value.
4. In the process of purchasing upholstered furniture, consumers give importance to the quality of surface upholstery fabric as well as their cleanable and washable qualities. Therefore, companies who allocate store space for this type of product are likely to realize an increase in sales.
5. The price of upholstered furniture has an impact on purchasing. It was found that consumers tend to purchase equivalent products that are not branded and are reasonable in terms of quality, aesthetics, functionality, and ergonomic design. However, doing so means they are will to risk purchasing furniture that is not considered environmentally friendly.
6. In the gender analysis, it was determined that female consumers pay more attention to the aesthetic attributes of the upholstered furniture, to be in a casual and comfortable design style, and to the price

compared to male consumers. In addition, according to the result of the t-test analysis, the ratio of female consumers to pay attention to the quality features of furniture were found to be higher in the process of buying upholstered furniture than male consumers. If furniture companies in Kayseri want to grow their customer base and sales, they should do Research and Development (R&D) studies for upholstered furniture that will attract the attention of female consumers.

7. Furniture companies in Kayseri must produce and present high quality, durable, and useful products that are less harmful to the environment and human health but also look good and appeal to the taste of consumers within the scope of their potentials. If they offer such products, which have the foregoing characteristics to the target group with reasonable price options, they are likely to have the chance to increase their sales. Furthermore, they may have the chance to develop within the sector both nationally and internationally.
8. Lastly, Kayseri is one of the leading furniture centers in Turkey, and the rise of furniture sector in Kayseri started with upholstered furniture production (OAI B 2016). Therefore, it may set a sample for the furniture companies in other regions if the local furniture companies in Kayseri understand the preferences and expectations of the consumers correctly and deliver useful solutions. This may result in the emergence of new designs throughout Turkey for the furniture sector in the future as well as the discovery of new materials, formation of production processes, and creation of new marketing strategies.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors

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