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ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN SATIN ALMA DAVRANIŞI ÜZERİNDE SOSYAL MEDYA FENOMENLERİNİN ROLÜ YOUTUBERLAR ÖRNEĞİ

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Öz

Web 2.0 ile birlikte ortaya çıkan ve yıllar içinde mevcut şeklini alan sosyal medyada içerik kavramlarını paylaşan sosyal medya fenomenleri, gönderilerinin bulunduğu kanallarda takipçileri/aboneleri tarafından tanınan "mikro ünlüler"dir. Bu bağlamda sosyal medya kullanıcıları, mecranın özelliklerine göre sosyal medya fenomenlerini takip etmekte veya kanallarına abone olmaktadır. Sosyal medya fenomenleri, paylaştıkları medyaya ve onları takip eden ya da kanallarına abone olan sosyal medya kullanıcı sayılarına göre çeşitli sınıflandırmalara tabi tutulmuştur. Bu çalışmada sosyal medya fenomenlerinden biri olan YouTuber'ların üniversite öğrencilerinin satın alma kararlarına etkisi araştırılmıştır. Bu kapsamda anket çalışmasında Dicle Üniversitesinde öğrenim gören 404 üniversite öğrencisine ulaşılmıştır. Sonuç olarak "Marka veya ürün dikkatimi çekiyor" maddesinin en yüksek ortalamaya sahip olduğu, benzer ürün veya markaları kullanırsam kullanmayı bırakırım maddesinin ise düşük ortalamaya sahip olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelime: Sosyal Medya, Fenomen, YouTube, YouTuber, Satın Alma

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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PHENOMENA ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS PURCHASING BEHAVIOR YOUTUBERS EXAMPLE

Abstract

Social media phenomena that emerged with Web 2.0 and shared their content concepts in social media, which took its current form over the years, are "microcelebrities" known and recognised by their followers/subscribers in the channels where their posts are located. In this context, social media users follow social media phenomena according to the characteristics of the medium or subscribe to their channels. Social media phenomena have been subjected to various classifications according to the media they share and the number of social media users who follow them or subscribe to their channels. In this study, the effect of YouTubers, one of the social media phenomena, on the purchasing decision of university students was investigated. In this context, 404 university students studying at Dicle University were reached in the survey study. As a result, it has been observed that the item "Brand or product attracts my attention" has the highest average while the item If I use similar products or brands, I stop using them now has the lowest average (2.953 ± 1.051).

Keywords: Social Media, Phenomenon, YouTube, YouTuber, Purchasing

INTRODUCTION

1. SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTUBE

In the 21st century, people's communication patterns and habits are shaped by the speed of technology change. Thanks to the developing technology, communication opportunities have increased, and communication tools have gained functionality. Contrary to traditional media, new media offers two-way communication to the audience. At the same time, it opens the door to a medium where it can be both a producer and a consumer (Strangelove, 2010, s.7). It is seen that in 2021, the number of YouTube users will exceed 2 billion, and 46.7% of the people using the internet worldwide access the YouTubebroadcasting platform every month. Active users of YouTube consume more than 1 billion hours of digital content daily. An ordinary user visiting YouTube spends 16 minutes and 44 seconds on the platform. On the other hand, content producers produce more than five hundred hours of content daily and upload it to their channels (YouTube, 2020). Localised in 100 countries worldwide, YouTube has also become a global phenomenon using 80 different languages. According to a social media study, it is estimated that by 2025, 50 per cent of individuals younger than 32 will not include a television in their lives and will follow all visual media from web applications. In addition to uploading and watching videos on the platform, users can comment and share

content. “YouTube's goal is to provide an easy and fun experience for its users.” (Ying, 2007, s.17).

YouTube is not just video sharing. It contains much different content such as entertainment, health, serials, and education. It is essential in terms of making sense of the community feel of YouTube as the most dominant form of user-generated content on YouTube, called vlog or videoblog (Burgess & Green, 2009, s. 94). In the channel profile on YouTube, information about the names, ages, genders of the users and their interests, in general, is reached. In the personal channels, there are links to all the videos of the digital content producer uploaded to the channel (Ding vd., 2011, s. 361). The YouTube broadcasting platform has become a channel where users can broadcast live, apart from a structure that only uploads videos. “YouTube Live” live broadcasts leave a structure that only exists for personal use and offers the “opportunity to broadcast all their content with the accounts that professional TVs will open on behalf of the television. Today, any TV channel that continues its broadcasting life with terrestrial broadcasting can deliver the broadcast everywhere via YouTube (Şahin & Şahin, 2016, s.58). YouTube, which is based on video viewing (Khan, 2017, s.72)., is the most recognized and popular platform worldwide, while it is the second most frequently visited website (Alexa, 2020, s.76).

For this reason, the platform is attractive to media companies and individual users (Xu vd., 2016, s. 98). The platform does not only offer users the opportunity to produce or consume digital content. It also offers various interaction opportunities. Users can comment, vote, and share positive or negative comments on digital content. This interaction creates a sense of community and provides control over the production and consumption of content. YouTubers, who are in popular culture and have a large number of subscribers, fall into the category of 'famous, famous.

2. YOUTUBERS

In its most general definition, YouTuber is the name given to people who have a channel on YouTube and regularly upload digital content to this channel and have many followers. Since YouTubers have a large number of subscribers, companies prefer YouTubers to advertise, so YouTubers who make money and become more famous are increasing the number of subscribers daily. YouTubers are advancing on the steps of fame day by day. Moreover, YouTubers have left many celebrities behind when looking at their viewing rates. The phenomenon of Andy Warhol: "Everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes one day" has

come to life in today's world. YouTube has turned into a platform that offers people the opportunity to become famous.

The parasocial type relationship is defined as the type of relationship that an individual reates with the other person or with someone they do not know in real life by consuming the content produced by him (Dibble vd., 2016, s. 32). Parasocial relationships can be created not only with fictional characters but also with real-life people, such as political characters and famous people (Dibble vd., 2016, s. 43).)YouTube is a suitable ground for forming parasocial relations with its famous culture (Dibble vd., 2016, s.44; Ferchaud vd., 2018, s. 61). The platform has created a unique culture system by connecting digital content producers and consumers (Burgess, 2008, s. 13).

Youtube is at the heart of the young generation's relationship with media. YouTube is also the centre where the digital world produces phenomena/celebrities. Young people of the Z generation perceive YouTubers as a profession, and many of them express that they want to be YouTubers in the future (Establés vd., 2019, s. 54). Generation Z lives on as an independent generation different from all current generations. Generation Z is seen as a generation that is at peace with technological devices with the advantage of living in a period when technology is breaking new ground and, in this sense, can adapt to virtual formations immediately (Sladek & Grabinger, 2014, s. 2).For this reason, young people, defined as Generation Z, create their phenomena as a generation that can immediately transition from the universe they exist to the digital universe.

Among the videos that viewers prefer to watch the most on YouTube are game videos, video blogs, how-to videos, unboxing videos, funny videos, makeup videos, educational videos, best videos and joke videos. Generally, YouTubers reach the audience by preparing videos on the topics mentioned above and publishing these videos on their channels. As the number of views and followers increases, the recognition of YouTubers increases, they make sponsorship agreements with famous people, and they earn money by promoting goods and services (Burgess & Green, 2009, s. 17). Those who watch the videos can make positive or negative comments after watching the video, symbolise whether they like it or not, and publish this video on their social media (Khan, 2017, s.77).

No studies have been found in the literature on why and when viewers watch YouTuber videos. Most studies have analysed and made sense of YouTube users and their videos. In

particular, a limited number of studies have been conducted on the motivations that cause these videos to be watched (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009, s. 19; Khan, 2017, s. 77). In a study conducted in 2017, people stated that they watch YouTube videos to create social interaction and status, have fun and get information. In another study conducted in parallel with this study, it was found that people watch YouTube videos for reasons similar to television and other communication tools; They stated that they watched the videos on YouTube with the motivation of watching together, having fun, social interaction and getting information (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009, s. 20).

3. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

3.1. Data Collection

In the first part, the participants; Demographic information about gender, age, mother's education level, father's education level, and monthly income of the family were asked. In the second part, the participants were asked about the frequency of use of social media, the duration of social media use in a session, the social media channel with the most time spent, the frequency of YouTube usage, the duration of YouTube usage, the tool used while accessing YouTube, the number of subscribed channels and the most followed channel. Questions were asked to obtain data on the species. In the third part, the scale called "Purchase Decision Scale" consists of 10 items of 5-point Likert type. Responses to survey items are given with the options "1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-undecided, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree". The average score that can be obtained from the one-dimensional scale varies between 1-5, and as the score increases, the purchasing decision that occurs depending on the use or promotion of any product by the following YouTubers increases. There is no reverse item on the scale (Başer, 2020, s.107).

3.2. Research Hypothesis

This study aims to determine whether YouTubers, one of the social media phenomena, affect the purchasing decision of Generation Z consumers. The central hypothesis of the research is; YouTubers, one of the social media phenomena, affect the purchasing decision of generation Z consumers. The sub-hypotheses are as follows:

H1: The frequency of YouTube use by university students significantly increases their purchasing decision.

H2 Significantly increases the decision of university students to purchase YouTube usage time.

H3: The number of YouTube channels university students subscribe to or regularly follow significantly increases their purchasing decision.

H4 The purchasing decision of university students depending on whether the YouTubers they follow use or promote any product differs significantly by gender.

H5: The purchasing decision of university students depending on whether the YouTubers they follow use or promote any product differs significantly according to age.

H6: The purchasing decision of young people studying at university, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, differs significantly according to the educational status of the parents.

H7: The purchasing decision of university students, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTuber they follow, differs significantly according to their monthly income level

3.3. Method

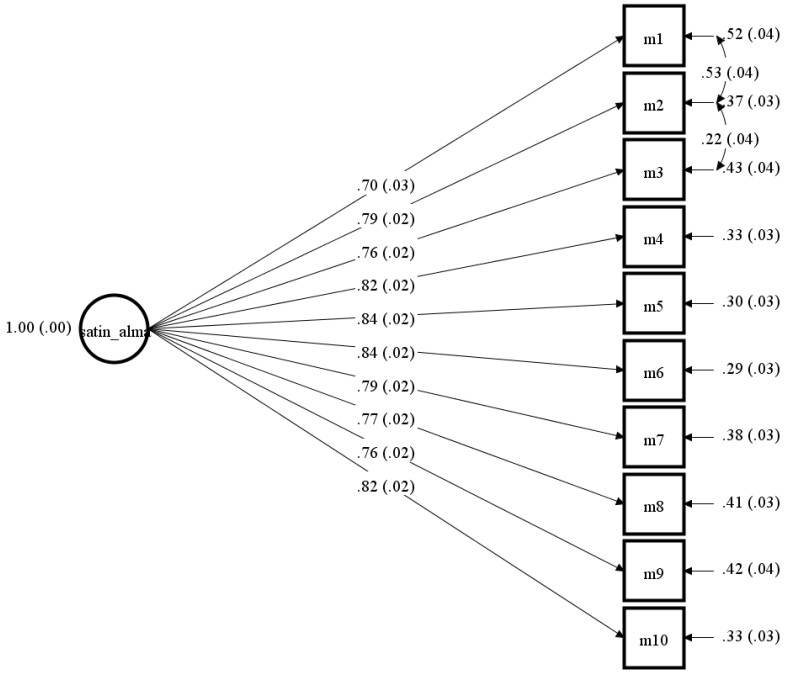
Mplus 7.0 (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-2017) program was used for confirmatory factor analysis (DFA), and R program "agricolae" package (de Mendiburu, 2021, s. 4) was used for other analyses. The survey was conducted with a total of 404 participants. Demographic characteristics of the data are given. Reliability and validity tests were performed for the scale of the current study. Since the model was determined during the design phase of the study, confirmatory factor analysis was used. The compatibility of the data matrix with the matrix of the pattern constructed by CFA was evaluated with fit indices. In addition, when examining the difference between groups, the Mann-Whitney U test (for gender) was used for independent paired groups and the Kruskal-Wallis H test for more than two independent groups. Data were evaluated at $p<0.05$ significance level and presented as n, Min, Max, Mean, Standard deviation, Median, interquartile change (CADG), and mean rank.

3.4. Measurement model - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

For the reliability of the presented scale, Cronbach α was used and estimated at a satisfactory level of 0.943. It is understood that the data set is suitable for the DFA analysis performed with the result of 0.940 in the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. It is also significant at the

p<0.001 level of the Bartlett Sphericity test. The model was tested using the scale used in the study with DFA, the maximum likelihood method. Accordingly, the smallest correlation between the items was 0.478, and the largest correlation was 0.795. When the quality criteria of the model were examined, it was estimated that the value of $\chi 2/sd= 4.226$ was significant ($p<0.05$), RMSEA=0.089 (90%CI: 0.074, 0.105), CFI=0.966, TLI=0.953 and SRMR=0.031. As a result, the parameters can be interpreted without problems since all fit indices are within the relevant threshold values according to the CFA model (Figure 1) and contain sufficient information (Şen, 2020; Yalçın, 2021).

Figure 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis



3.5. Demographic Data

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics Of The Participants

Question	Category	N	%
Participant gender	Woman	213	52,9
	Male	190	47,1
Participant age	under 18 years old	29	7,2
	between 18-20	132	32,8
	between 21-23	163	40,4

	between 24-26	51	12,7
	over 26	28	6,9
Participant mother's education	Not Finished School	114	28,3
	Primary school graduate	102	25,3
	secondary school graduate	48	11,9
	High school graduate	112	27,8
	Graduated from a university	27	6,7

It is the continuation of Table No. 1

Participant father's education	Not Finished School	41	10,2
	Primary school graduate	52	12,9
	secondary school graduate	73	18,1
	secondary school graduate	135	33,5
	Graduated from a university	102	25,3
Participant family's monthly income	less than 2500 TL	23	5,7
	Between 2500-5000 TL	82	20,3
	Between 5000-7500 TL	86	21,3
	Between 7500-10000 TL	109	27
	more than 10000 TL	103	25,6
Frequency of use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) in general	Once a month	4	1
	every 15 days	15	3,7
	Once a week	10	2,5
	more than once a week	33	8,2
	once every day	109	27
	multiple times a day	232	57,6
Social media usage time per session (average)	0-15 min	75	18,6
	16-30 min	85	21,1
	31-60 min	79	19,6
	1-2 hours	71	17,6
	2-3 hours	70	17,4

	more than 3 hours	23	5,7
Spend the most time on social media	YouTube	26	6,5
	Instagram	259	64,3
	Facebook	19	4,7
	Twitter	41	10,2
	Snapchat	24	6
	TikTok	34	8,4
Frequency of use of YouTube	Once a month	21	5,2
	every 15 days	29	7,2
	Once a week	44	10,9
	more than once a week	74	18,4
It is the continuation of Table No. 1	once every day	135	33,5
	multiple times a day	100	24,8
YouTube usage time per session (average)	0-15 min	87	21,6
	16-30 min	87	21,6
	31-60 min	93	23,1
	1-2 hours	68	16,9
	2-3 hours	54	13,4
	more than 3 hours	14	3,5
The tool used to access YouTube	Smartphone	336	83,4
	Tablet	28	6,9
	Computer	39	9,7
Number of channels subscribed or regularly followed on YouTube	no	91	22,6
	1-5	125	31
	6-10	66	16,4
	11-16	41	10,2
	16-20	30	7,4
	more than 20	50	12,4

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations For Items

Questions	n	Average	Std. Deflection
Brand or product grabs my attention	403	3,256	1,114
My opinion about the brand and product is positively affected	403	3,223	1,079
I learn what to buy	403	3,28	1,041
I would like to buy the brand or product	403	3,223	1,041
I do not have any concerns/reservations when buying this promoted product or brand	403	3,082	1,044

I trust this promoted product or brand	403	3,146	1,049
I prefer this product/brand even if I have to pay more for it than similar products or brands	403	3,032	1,035
I share this promoted product/brand or video with my friends	403	3,146	1,037
If I use a similar product or brand, I stop using them.	403	2,953	1,051
I think the products or brands I buy have increased my standard of living.	403	3,057	1,041

Then, mean and standard deviations of the items used in the Likert-type scale are given (Table 2). Accordingly, it has been observed that the item "Brand or product attracts my attention" has the highest average (3.256 ± 1.114) (3.256 ± 1.114), while the item "If I use similar products or brands, I will stop using them" has the lowest average (2.953 ± 1.051).

Table 3: Factor Loads And Their Significance

Purchase Scale	**Factor load**	**Standard error**	**t-value**	**p**
1.Brand or product grabs my attention	0.696	0.027	25.317	<0.000
2.My opinion about the brand and product is positively affected	0.791	0.020	39.546	<0.000
3.I learn what to buy	0.755	0.023	32.376	<0.000
4.I would like to buy the brand or product	0.817	0.019	44.165	<0.000
5.I do not have any concerns/reservations when buying this promoted product or brand	0.836	0.017	49.217	<0.000
6.I trust this promoted product or brand	0.841	0.017	50.694	<0.000
7I prefer this product/brand even if I have to pay more for it than similar products or brands	0.789	0.021	38.172	<0.000
8.I share this promoted product/brand or video with my friends	0.766	0.022	34.259	<0.000
9.If I use a similar product or brand, I stop using them.	0.760	0.023	33.437	<0.000
10.I think the products or brands I buy have increased my standard of living.	0.818	0.018	44.367	<0.000

The factor load, standard error, t and p values of the validated scale are given in Table 3. Accordingly, it was estimated that all observed variables had a highly significant effect on the factor.

	n	Min	Maks	Average	Std.deviation	Hydrangea	CADG	Average rank	Groups	χ^2	Sd	p
Every 15 days	29	1.00	4.00	2.82	0.84	2.90	1.60	155.59	b	29.94	5	<0.001***
Once a month	21	1.50	4.00	2.82	0.84	2.80	1.60	157.07	b			
Once a week	44	1.40	4.80	3.12	0.83	3.10	1.30	194.41	b			
More than once a week	74	1.00	4.30	3.07	0.87	3.10	1.58	194.66	b			
Once every day	135	1.00	5.00	3.05	0.88	3.00	1.45	187.48	b			
Multiple times a day	100	1.00	5.00	3.48	0.75	3.80	1.00	253.27	a			

3.6. Analysis of Hypotheses

H1: The frequency of YouTube use by university students significantly increases their purchasing decision.

It was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the frequency of YouTube use of university students in terms of purchasing decisions, $\chi2(5) = 29.94$, $p < 0.001$. Regarding rank averages, individuals using YouTube "more than once a day" (SO = 253.27) were most affected by the decisions, while other groups were the same and had equal impact. Additionally, it has been studied that people who visit YouTube “more than once a day” are significantly different from other groups when purchasing a product. In other words, it can be said that YouTube content producers highly influence individuals who use YouTube frequently during the day.

H2: Significantly increases the decision of university students to purchase YouTube usage time.

h2	n	Min	Maks	Average	Std. deviation	Hydrangea	CADG	Average rank	Groups	χ	Sd	p
0-15 min	87	1.00	5.00	3.06	1.03	3.20	1.80	192.13	a	8.75	5	0.119[nm]
1-2 hour	68	1.30	4.30	3.23	0.72	3.20	1.23	212.52	a			
16-30 min	87	1.00	4.30	2.94	0.83	3.00	1.55	175.81	a			
2-3 hour	54	1.50	4.80	3.34	0.77	3.55	1.00	223.17	a			
more than 3 hours	14	1.00	4.00	3.23	0.99	3.55	1.00	226.54	a			
31-60 min	93	1.40	4.50	3.21	0.81	3.40	1.40	212.05	a			

Nm: not meaningful.

It was observed that there was no statistically significant difference between university students' YouTube usage time in purchasing decisions, $\chi 2(5) = 8.75$, $p = 119$. Despite this, it can be said that the group with the highest rank average is those who use YouTube for more than 3 hours, and the lowest group is those who use 16-30 minutes. In other words, although there is no significant difference, it is thought that there is a tendency in the purchasing decisions of individuals when the duration of YouTube usage increases in terms of time.

H3: The number of YouTube channels university students subscribe to or regularly follow significantly increases their purchasing decision.

h2	n	Min	Maks	Average	Std. sapma	Hydrangea	CADG	Average rank	Groups	χ	Sd	p
16-20	30	1.90	4.70	3.59	0.63	3.95	0.88	264.37	a	37.64	5	<0.001***
more than 20	50	1.00	4.50	3.46	0.66	3.55	0.90	244.96	a			
11-15	41	1.40	5.00	3.40	0.80	3.80	1.10	239.32	a			
6-10	66	1.40	5.00	3.28	0.78	3.25	1.18	218.01	a			
1-5	##	1.00	5.00	2.98	0.88	3.00	1.60	179.88	b			
No	91	1.00	4.70	2.82	0.91	2.90	1.70	159.80	b			

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the number of YouTube channels university students subscribe to or regularly follow in purchasing decisions, $\chi 2(5) = 37.64$, $p < 0.001$. Accordingly, when the group differences are examined, the purchasing decisions of those who follow six channels or more are predicted to be significantly higher than those who follow fewer channels. From this point of view, it has been observed that individuals can manipulate their decisions as the number of channels followed increases.

H4: The purchasing decision of young people studying at university, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, differs significantly by gender.

	n	Min	Maks	Average	Std.	Hydrangea	CADG	Average	Groups	U	Z	Sd	p

					deviation			**rank**					
Male	190	1.00	5.00	3.03	0.95	3.00	1.80	189.41	b	17843	-	1	0.040*
Woman	213	1.00	5.00	3.24	0.75	3.30	1.20	213.23	a		0.058		

The purchasing decision of university students, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, showed a statistically significant difference according to gender, U(Nmale: 190, Nfemale: 213) = 17843, z = -0.058, p <0.001. According to the results of the study, the level of exposure of female individuals to YouTube content producers (SO = 213.23) was higher than that of male individuals (SO = 189.41).

H5: The purchasing decision of university students depending on whether the YouTubers they follow use or promote any product differs significantly according to age.

	n	**Min**	**Maks**	**Average**	**Std.deviation**	**Hydrangea**	**CADG**	**Average rank**	**Groups**	**χ**	**Sd**	**p**
between 18-20	132	1.00	5.00	3.35	0.81	3.70	1.03	233.63	a	25.71	4	<0.001***
under 18 years old	29	1.50	5.00	3.34	0.94	3.60	1.30	229.62	ab			
between 21-23	163	1.00	5.00	3.10	0.84	3.20	1.40	194.30	bc			
between 24-26	51	1.00	4.10	2.85	0.87	2.90	1.45	161.75	cd			
over 26	28	1.50	4.00	2.71	0.76	2.65	1.23	142.43	d			

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the ages in terms of the young university students' purchasing decisions depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, $\chi 2(4) = 25.71$, p <0.001. It has been estimated that young people between 18-20 (SO =233.63) are the most affected group compared to older age groups by YouTube content producers when purchasing decisions. It has been observed that the age group that is least affected by YouTube content producers is 26 and over (SO =142.43). In other words, as individuals age, their exposure to YouTube content producers decreases.

H6: The purchasing decision of young people studying at university, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, differs significantly according to the educational status of the parents.

H6mother	**n**	**Min**	**Maks**	**Average**	**Std.**	**Hydrangea**	**CADG**	**Average**	**Groups**	**χ**	**Sd**	**p**

					deviation			rank				
Primary school graduate	102	1.00	5.00	2.97	0.92	3.00	1.60	175.50	b	17.80	4	0.001**
High school graduate	112	1.00	4.70	3.37	0.81	3.75	1.00	238.61	a			
School Unfinished	114	1.00	4.80	3.10	0.83	3.10	1.18	194.56	b			
Secondary school graduate	48	1.30	4.80	3.16	0.79	3.05	1.35	202.04	ab			
Graduated from a university	27	1.90	4.50	2.96	0.90	2.70	1.90	181.59	b			

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the educational status of young university students and their mothers' purchasing decisions due to the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, $\chi 2(4) = 17.80$, $p = 0.001$. According to the analysis, it was observed that the YouTube content producers followed by high school graduate mothers significantly affected their purchasing decisions in the highest way (SO = 238.61). It was estimated that the least affected mothers were those who did not finish school (SO = 194.56), primary school (SO = 175.50) and undergraduates (SO = 181.59).

H7: The purchasing decision of university students, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTuber they follow, differs significantly according to their monthly income level.

					Std.			Average				
h5	**n**	**Min**	**Maks**	**Average**	**deviation**	**Hydrangea**	**CADG**	**rank**	**Groups**	**χ**	**Sd**	**p**
Primary school graduate	52	1.50	4.80	2.93	0.71	3.00	0.93	165.13	b	11.30	4	0.023*
High school graduate	135	1.00	5.00	3.25	0.90	3.60	1.40	221.65	a			
School Unfinished	41	1.00	4.20	3.21	0.74	3.40	1.00	206.65	ab			
secondary school graduate	73	1.00	4.50	3.01	0.87	3.10	1.20	183.03	b			

Graduated from a university	102	1.50	5.00	3.17	0.88	3.20	1.78	206.50	ab

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the educational status of the fathers of the university students and the purchasing decision depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, $\chi 2(4) = 11.30$, $p = 0.023$. According to the analysis, it was observed that the YouTube content producers followed by high school graduate fathers significantly influenced their purchasing decisions (SO = 221.65). It was estimated that the least affected fathers were primary school (SO = 165.13) and secondary school graduates (SO = 183.03).

CONCLUSION

In this research, the effect of YouTubers, one of the social media phenomena, on the purchasing decision of university students was examined. The research consists of three parts. In the first chapter, the concept of YouTuber is mentioned. The second part includes the survey and survey findings. The third chapter includes the conclusion part of the study.

In the 21st century, university students use social media very often, and it is seen that they are very active in consumption. Companies aware of this are creating various methods to reach university students in this respect; social media phenomena are of great importance for brands and businesses. Social media phenomena share the products they try (use) with their followers by promoting them from their accounts. Firms frequently use phenomena to attract young people's attention and engage them in purchasing behaviour. Because these phenoms, which have a large number of followers, can reach millions of followers at once with the video they shoot, and they can promote the product in a short time.

In the research, a survey was applied to determine how influential YouTubers are in the purchasing action of university students. Hypotheses for the study were formed. The data of the students who participated in the survey were analysed statistically. As a result, it is seen that university students differentiate among themselves while showing their purchasing behaviour.

A total of 404 university students were reached in the survey study. 52.9% of the participants are women, and 47.1% are men. All groups were represented in the sample according to the mother and father's education level and the family's monthly income. The mothers of 27.8% of the participants and the fathers of 33.5% were at least high school graduates. Considering

the monthly income of the participants is less than 2500 Turkish lira at 5.7%, between 2500-5000 Turkish lira at 20.3%, between 5000-7500 Turkish lira at 21.3%, and between 7500-10000 Turkish lira at 27%. It was determined that 25.6% of them had an income of more than 10000 Turkish lira. In light of these data, it can be said that, in general, half of the participants have a medium income level, and half are below the medium level. In terms of social media usage, participants generally have a profile that uses social media in more than one session a day, for at least half an hour in each session.

57.6% of the students who participated in the survey stated that they use social media more than once a day, and 21.1% at least 30 minutes. The most spent social media channel is Instagram. Twitter, TikTok and YouTube follow Instagram. 64.3% of the participants stated Instagram, 10.2% Twitter, 8.4% TikTok and 6.5% YouTube as the social media they spend the most time.

Considering the frequency of YouTube usage, 33.5% of the participants said that they visited the YouTube platform once a day, and 24.8% said that they visited the YouTube platform more than once a day. When the YouTube usage time (average) was examined in a session, it was determined that 3.5% of them used the platform for more than 3 hours and 23.1% of them used the platform between 31-60 minutes. When evaluated in terms of the tool used while accessing YouTube, it was determined that 83.4% of them accessed YouTube using a smartphone.

The n, mean and standard deviations of the items used in the Likert-type scale are given (Table 2). Accordingly, it has been observed that the item “Brand or product attracts my attention” has the highest average (3.256 ± 1.114) (3.256 ± 1.114), while the item “If I use similar products or brands, I will stop using them” has the lowest average (2.953 ± 1.051). The factor load, standard error, t and p values of the validated scale are given in Table 3. Accordingly, it was estimated that all observed variables had a highly significant effect on the factor.

It was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the frequency of YouTube use of university students in terms of purchasing decisions, $\chi 2(5) = 29.94$, $p < 0.001$. Regarding rank averages, individuals using YouTube "more than once a day" (SO = 253.27) were most affected by the decisions, while other groups were the same and had equal impact. Additionally, it has been studied that people who visit YouTube “more than once a day” are

significantly different from other groups when purchasing a product. In other words, it can be said that YouTube content producers highly influence individuals who use YouTube frequently during the day.

It was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the YouTube usage times of the university students in terms of purchasing decisions, $\chi 2(5) = 8.75$, $p = 119$. However, in terms of giving an idea, the group with the highest rank average was those who used YouTube for more than 3 hours. It can be said that the lowest group is those who use 16-30 minutes. In other words, although there is no significant difference, it is thought that there is a tendency in the purchasing decisions of individuals when the duration of YouTube usage increases in terms of time.

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the number of YouTube channels university students subscribe to or regularly follow in purchasing decisions, $\chi 2(5) = 37.64$, $p < 0.001$. Accordingly, when the group differences are examined, the purchasing decisions of those who follow six channels or more are predicted to be significantly higher than those who follow fewer channels. From this point of view, it has been observed that individuals can manipulate their decisions as the number of channels followed increases.

The purchasing decision of young university students, depending on whether the YouTubers they follow use or promote any product, showed a statistically significant difference according to gender, U(Nmale: 190, Nfemale: 213) = 17843, z = -0.058, $p < 0.001$. According to the results of the study, the level of exposure of female individuals to YouTube content producers (SO = 213.23) was higher than that of male individuals (SO = 189.41).

It has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the ages in terms of the purchase decision of the young people studying at university, depending on the use or promotion of any product by the YouTubers they follow, $\chi 2(4) = 25.71$, $p < 0.001$. It has been estimated that young people aged 18-20 (SO =233.63) are most affected by YouTube content producers compared to older age groups when purchasing decisions. It has been observed that the age group that is least affected by YouTube content producers is 26 and over (SO =142.43). In other words, as individuals age, their exposure to YouTube content producers decreases.

As a result of examining the purchasing decision according to socio-demographic characteristics, women have a significantly higher purchasing decision than men, those whose

parents are university and high school graduates, those whose parents are secondary school graduates, and those with a monthly income of more than 5000 Turkish lira than those with a monthly income of 2500-5000 Turkish lira. SO = 2386.61) Significant differences; It is small according to gender and monthly income, and medium size according to the education level of mother and father.

When the survey data is evaluated in general, it can be said that university students are curious about the products YouTubers introduce; the products attract their attention and make them want to buy. However, this request does not always result in a purchase action.It is seen that most of the participants have social media in their lives. The most preferred platforms in social media are Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok and YouTube.Social media channels are used to reach young people. It is known that young people frequently use social media in their daily lives. Most of the time, young people try products promoted on social media.

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