

Průzkum demonstrativní spotřeby z hlediska sportovních produktů

An Investigation on Conspicuous Consumption from Perspective of Sport Products

Metin Argan¹, Muge Akyildiz², Mehpare Tokay Argan³, Sabri Kaya⁴

¹Anadolu University, Faculty of Sport Science, Iki Eylul Campus, (26470), Eskisehir / Turkey

²California State University Chico, Visiting Scholar, Chico, CA, USA

³Bilecik Seyh Edebali University, Bozuyuk Vocational School, Bozuyuk, Bilecik / Turkey

⁴Kirikkale University, Physical Education and Sport School, Kirikkale / Turkey

Abstrakt

U sportovního zboží je demonstrativní spotřeba mezi spotřebiteli mladé generace obecným trendem. Účelem studie je odhalit rozměry demonstrativní spotřeby vztahující se ke sportovním produktům a analyzovat vlivy demonstrativní spotřeby na spokojenost spotřebitelů. Dotazníky vyplnilo 680 univerzitních studentů ve městě Eskisehir v Turecku. Výsledky rozborů odhalují čtyři platné dimenze (spokojenost a pohoda, postavení, prestiž a symbolické vlastnosti produktu) a signalizují významný vztah mezi dimenzemi demonstrativní spotřeby a spokojeností a pohodou jako závislou proměnnou. Závěr zní, že tři faktory vázané na demonstrativní spotřebu hrají kritickou úlohu v marketingu a kontextu chování spotřebitele a manažeři sportovních produktů by měli věnovat pozornost větší části mladé generace.

Abstract

The conspicuous consumption among young generation consumers is a general trend in sport goods. The purpose of the study is to reveal the dimensions of conspicuous consumption related to sport products and to analyze the effects of conspicuous consumption on consumer happiness. Self-administered questionnaires were collected with 680 university students in a city of Eskisehir in Turkey. The results of analyzes reveal four valid dimensions (happiness and wellbeing, status, prestige, and symbolic product characteristics) and indicate significant relationship between conspicuous consumption dimensions and happiness and wellbeing as dependent variable. As a conclusion, the three factors, underlying conspicuous consumption, plays a critical role in the marketing and consumer behavior context, and that the managers of sport products should pay attention the larger part of young generations.

Klíčová slova: *demonstrativní spotřeba, chování spotřebitelů, sportovní spotřeba, Turecko.*

Keywords: *Conspicuous consumption, Consumer behavior, Sport consumption, Turkey.*

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The sport clothing and footwear is one of the largest industries in the United States and Europe. Young people are the dominant group in the sporting goods consumption in many countries. Often, sporting goods can be purchased for different purposes by young consumers. One of the most important purpose is to enhance image, self-identity, glory etc.

Conspicuous consumption as a concept originates from consumer behavior since 1899 (Veblen, 1899) and according to the conspicuous-consumption theory, people consume highly observable goods to signal that they are wealthy to others and as primarily to display goods and services to gain social status (Veblen, [1899] 1994; Gudmunson and Beutler, 2012). Conspicuous consumption is defined by Gudmunson and Beutler (2012, p.389) as “a pattern of behavior whereby consumers ostentatiously obtain, use and display material goods and services to gain social status more than to meet utilitarian needs”. Bahn, Belk, Russell and Mayer (1982) states that

people reflect themselves through consumption. Conspicuous goods differ from many frequently purchased goods as they satisfy not just material needs but also social needs such as prestige (Belk, 1988; Shukla, 2008). Veblen (1994) argued that social status makes people engage in conspicuous consumption (Acikalin, Gul and Develioglu, 2009).

In the early periods conspicuous consumption was defined as extravagantly spent on expensive and luxury expenditures to display wealth or status and purchasing behavior meant display and demonstration. On the other hand, in the modern and postmodern periods consumption has become a means of self-realization and identification as consumers no longer merely consume products; they consume the symbolic meaning of those products. Therefore, people can communicate with others and display their status with less expensive but “tasteful” expenditures. An important implication of these discoveries is that “individuals could choose to buy any product merely for the sake of being different from others, rather than to display their wealth or status” (Chaudhuri and Majumdar, 2006: 7).

Additionally, Shim (1996) indicates that conspicuous orientation in decision making related to apparel store is one of most important of shopping orientations. With regard to the clothing consumption and fashion, Goldsmith, Flynn and Kim (2010) assumes that there are significant relationship between status consumption and clothing consumption. According to O’Cass and Frost (2002), clothing says how important an individual is, tells others how much status an individual has, what individual is like. Therefore, goods increase the perceived symbolic value from the users’ viewpoint. Furthermore, O’Cass (2000) states that fashion clothing not only forms an important part of everyday consumption decision, but is implicitly a central component of daily activities.

Besides, the literature share common concerns with the rise of a culture consumption which seek to influence adolescent behavior (Gudmunson and Beutler, 2012). Youth were posturing themselves through goods and services purchased and displayed status, power, provocation, and pleasure seeking (Belk, 1988). Sport-related conspicuous consumption may be a usual state among young people consuming to enhance their image, self-identity and glory. Buying goods for their symbolic meanings is characterized as conspicuous consumption. The using casual sports apparel and shoes can be reflecting symbolic meaning like conspicuous consumption. Therefore, goods increase the perceived symbolic value from the users’ viewpoint.

Consistent with the research in consumer behavior and marketing, there are significant relationship between sport consumption and conspicuous consumption. It has been suggested that buying a good or service can help to enhance status (Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn, 1999) and happiness, but the relationship between factors related conspicuous consumption of sport goods and happiness lacks quantitative evidence. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to empirically examine how conspicuous consumption factors affect happiness of consumers.

METHOD

The aim of the study is to reveal the dimensions of conspicuous consumption related to sport products and to analyze the effects of conspicuous consumption on consumer happiness. The study involved a quantitative research methodology employing a questionnaire and convenience sampling with a total sample of 680 university students within the Eskisehir in Turkey. The measurement scales were employed to measure the dimensions of conspicuous consumption and their impacts on consumer happiness. The questionnaire comprised three parts. The first part contained 21 statements related to attitudes toward conspicuous consumption. The items in the first part were developed and adapted from existing literature (Acikalin et al., 2009; Moschis, 1981; O’Cass and Frost, 2002; Richins, 1987; Shukla, 2008). The scale of human happiness in the second part was adapted from Richins (1987) and Predergast and Wong (2003). The last part of questionnaire was designed to collect the behavior of sport brand preferences and demographic characteristics of respondents.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

A total of 680 university students completed questionnaires between November, 2012, and January, 2013. 327 participants were male (48.1%) while 353 were female (51.9 %) students at the university. Ages ranged from 17 to 32 years. Many of respondents were grouped as 19 to 21 (44.9%), and 22 to 24 (40.4%). The distributions of respondents by their current year of study are as follows: senior year students constituted the largest student cohort by 26.8%, followed by the sophomores by 26%, and third rate class by 24%. As average monthly household income showed a wide distribution: about 42% had less than \$1000, 30% had \$1001–1500, and 28.2% had \$1501 and more. According to the mean scores, Adidas ($M = 3.20$) and Nike ($M = 3.04$) were commonly used brands among university students (see Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of the respondents and using frequencies of sport brands (N = 680)

	Frequency	%		M*	SD
Gender			Brands		
Male	327	48.1	Adidas	3.20	1.18
Female	353	51.9	Nike	3.04	1.17
Age			Converse	2.96	1.44
18 and <	31	4.6	Puma	2.12	1.14
19–21	305	44.9	Tiger	2.05	1.23
22–24	275	40.4	Reebok	1.89	1.01
25 and >	69	10.1	New Balance	1.88	1.21
Class			Other	1.67	1.28
Junior	88	12.9	Lotto	1.60	0.99
Sophomore	177	26	Kappa	1.47	0.91
Third rate class	163	24	Asics	1.37	0.80
Senior	182	26.8	Umbro	1.35	0.70
Other	70	10.3	Jordan	1.35	0.78
Household Income			Fila	1.32	0.73
1000 \$ and <	284	41.8			
1001–1500 \$	192	28.2			
1501 \$ and >	204	30			
Academic programs					
Vocational school	59	8.7			
Collegiate school	54	7.9			
Faculty	558	82.1			
Graduate School	9	1.3			

*5 = Very Frequently 1 = Never

Conspicuous Consumption Factors

The data was subjected to reliability, validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures. Factor loadings of the items were ranged between 0.40 and 0.88. The ratio of X^2/df (2.90) was satisfactory indicating below the cut-off point 3 (Kline, 2005). Fit values of RMSEA (0.069) and SRMR (0.066) were smaller than accepted value of 0.08. Additionally, the values of IFI (0.97), CFI (0.97), NFI (0.95), NNFI (0.96) in the CFA and SEM were higher than the accepted value of 0.90 (Kline, 2005). Overall, many of the

fit statistics, validity, and reliability evidence suggested the confirmation of the proposed CFA model. Consequently, the CFA revealed four valid constructs therefore these constructs were further analyzed by the structural equation modeling. These are happiness and well being, status, prestige, and symbolic product characteristics.

Table 2: Conspicuous Consumption Factors

Constructs	Std. loadings	CR	AVE	Construct reliability
<i>Happiness and Wellbeing</i>				
I feel better when wearing branded sport products	0.76	0.85	0.47	0.85
Prestigious sport brands makes me happy	0.77			
Wearing a high priced sport brand makes me feel good	0.76			
I'm happy when wearing popular sports brands	0.85			
When I buy sport products people's thoughts are important to me	0.40			
Brand name makes me feel happy	0.72			
<i>Status</i>				
I believe that sport brand is symbol of popularity	0.70	0.87	0.57	0.83
Sport brands provide reputation	0.80			
Brand is a sign of my personality	0.73			
Brand is a sign of success	0.70			
I believe other people judge my personality by the type and brand of the sport goods that I use	0.50			
When you buy expensive brand a sport product, people will recognize it	0.62			
Expensive or branded products are related to status	0.48			
<i>Prestige</i>				
Buying expensive brands makes me feel good	0.75	0.81	0.50	0.78
I think that sport products will affect other people	0.85			
Buying expensive brand of sport product makes me feel classy	0.81			
I prefer expensive sport products	0.65			
<i>Symbolic Product Characteristics</i>				
Design of sport product is important	0.71	0.80	0.44	0.81
The quality of sport product is significant	0.88			
Usefulness of sport product is important	0.78			
Guaranty of sport product is essential	0.59			
$\chi^2 = 531,70$ ($p = 0,000$), $df = 183$, $\chi^2/df = 2,90$, $RMSEA = 0,069$, $GFI = 0,89$, $AGFI = 0,86$, $NFI = 0,95$, $NNFI = 0,96$, $CFI = 0,97$, $IFI = 0,97$, $SRMR = 0,066$				

Reliability and composite reliabilities (CR) were higher than 0.70 as recommended by Nunnally (1978). The Cronbach's alpha values for all factors were higher than 0.78, which confirms high reliability (Hair, Anderson, Babin, and Black, 1998). Values of CR were higher than 0.80 indicated satisfactory level. The average variance extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.44 to 0.57 (see Table 2), and revealed two of the four dimensions failed to meet the recommended criteria.

Findings in the SEM model on factors underlying conspicuous consumption and happiness are reported in Table 3. SEM indicated that all of the constructs were found to be effective on the happiness and wellbeing. Prestige was the most significant dimension among other conspicuous consumption factors.

Table 3: Results for structural model

	Standardized Solution	t-Value
Status → Happiness and Wellbeing	0.37	4.82
Prestige → Happiness and Wellbeing	0.46	5.88
Symbolic Chr. → Happiness and Wellbeing	0.21	5.04
$\chi^2 = 531,70$ ($p = 0,000$), $df = 183$, $\chi^2/df = 2,90$, $RMSEA = 0,069$, $GFI = 0,89$, $AGFI = 0,86$, $NFI = 0,95$, $NNFI = 0,96$, $CFI = 0,97$, $IFI = 0,97$, $SRMR = 0,066$		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of analyzes reveal four valid dimensions (happiness and wellbeing, status, prestige, and symbolic product characteristics) and indicate significant relationship between conspicuous consumption dimensions and happiness and wellbeing as dependent variable. The results of this study reveal that the conspicuous-based consumption among young generation had a positive impact on happiness and well-being. Image related consumption is one direction of conspicuous consumption that could influence the happiness and well-being of people with popular sport apparel or shoes, because having a product for glory is a general trend among young generation in developing countries.

Findings from this study provide the evidence to reveal new dimensions about sport goods. In order to increase satisfaction and loyalty for new young generations, conspicuous actions in advertising are needed. According to Bahn et al. (1982) people reflect themselves through consumption. Moreover, social motivation in consumption are frequently directed by conspicuous consumption and a person's desire for self-expression in consumption-related decisions (Moschis, 1981). New and creative ideas to win young generations should re-consider the image requirements, which have an important strike on consumer behaviors. In sport, conspicuous consumption may be associates with need to appear attractive. Especially, attitudes toward appearance indicates idea of the self-determination.

The results from the SEM analyses show that among university students or developing countries, such as Turkey, symbolic meaning of sport product is essential. This symbolic meaning of brand or product makes students happy. This finding is somewhat consistent with previous research, showing associations between meaning of consumption and pleasure (Belk, 1988). The findings of this study suggests that conspicuous consumption reflects the tendency of prestige-seeking behavior by university students, as concluded by Acikalin et al (2009).

Overall, the results of this study indicate that prestige, meaning of product rather than usefulness, status and symbolic characteristics of sport product have a significant effect on being happy in society among young generations. These results suggest that the three factors, underlying conspicuous consumption, plays a critical role in the marketing and consumer behavior context, and that the managers of sport products should pay attention the larger part of young generations. These results are important because defining factors related with conspicuous consumption play a role in the development of many new marketing, advertising and sale strategies.

Limitation and Future Studies

As the study was only based on sport apparel and shoes, the findings should be approached with caution. Given the focus on university-aged consumers, generalizations beyond this age group should be undertaken with some reservation. As indicated by Shukla (2008), future research should extend this area of inquiry into other consumer segments, different types of product categories and brands within them, and also focus on different cultures. This study was limited to a city of Eskisehir in Turkey and could be replicated in across the country to observe the similarities and

differences among the consumers' conspicuous consumption habits. Sport firms or organizations who deal with conspicuous consumption goods or services would surely benefit from such studies.

References

- Acikalin, S., Gul, E. and Develioglu, K. (2009). Conspicuous consumption patterns of Turkish youth: case of cellular phones, *Young Consumers*, 10 (3): 199–209.
- Bahn, K., Belk, D., Russell, W. and Mayer, R. N. (1982). Developmental recognition of consumption symbolism, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9 (1): 4–17.
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15 (2): 139–68.
- Chaudhuri, H. R., Majumdar, S. (2006). Of diamonds and desires: Understanding conspicuous consumption from a contemporary marketing perspective, *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, Vol. 2006: 11–18.
- Eastman, J. K., Goldsmith, R. E. and Flynn, L. R. (1999). Status consumption in consumer behavior: Scale development and validation, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(3): 41–52.
- Goldsmith, R. E., Flynn, L. and Kim, Daekwan, (2010). Status consumption and price sensitivity, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 18(4): 323–338.
- Gudmunson, C. G. and Beutler, I. F. (2012). Relation of parental caring to conspicuous consumption attitudes in adolescents, *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 33 (4): 389–399.
- Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Babin, B. J., and Black, W. C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles And Practice of Structural Equation Modeling*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Moschis, G. P. (1981). Patterns of consumer learning, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 9 (2): 110–126.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric Theory*. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hall, New York.
- O'Cass, A. (2000). An assessment of consumers' product, purchase decision, advertising and consumption involvement in fashion clothing, *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 21: 545–576. rev
- O'Cass, A. and Frost, H. (2002). Status brands: Examining the effect of non-brand-product related brand associations on status and conspicuous consumption, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 11 (2): 67–88.
- Richins, M. L. (1987). Media, materialism, and human happiness, in Wallendorf, M. and Anderson, P. (Eds), *Avances in Consumer Research*, 14: 352–356.
- Shim, S. (1996). Adolescent consumer decision-making styles: the consumer socialization perspective, *Psychology and Marketing*, 13 (6): 547–569.
- Shukla, P. (2008). Conspicuous consumption among middle age consumers: psychological and brand Antecedents, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 17 (1): 25–36.
- Veblen, T. ([1899] 1994). *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Veblen, T. ([1899] 2014). *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. London: Allen and Unwin available at: <http://moglen.law.columbia.edu/LCS/theoryleisureclass.pdf>