

Chapter 4

AUTOMOBILE BRAND PREFERENCE IN TURKEY DEPENDING ON COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND SEGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Current automotive sector is very well developed with the change in the demands and expectations of consumers and progression of the technology and it still continues to develop. It is seen that many brands operate in automotive sector today in 21st century since the beginning of the 20th century, during which a few brands were able to produce automobiles. Increase in number of brands operating in the sector provides a preference chance to the consumers. Presence of many brands worldwide having similar technologic infrastructure before the consumers causes the purchasing decision to be more difficult.

At this point, it becomes important for brands to completely understand their target markets and to produce their automobiles by determining their demands and expectations (Athar, 2006), since automobile purchasing decision is an important and strategic decision in the lives of the people (Arıtan and Akyüz, 2015). Understanding the thoughts, purchasing decision processes of the target markets by the brands provides opportunity to be preferred easily for the brands and establishes a win-win relation that means the facilitation of purchasing decision process in aspect of the consumer. Therefore, market researches revealing the demands and expectations of the consumers are important in terms of both the consumers and the producers.

When the literature on the automobile purchasing decision processes of the consumers are analysed, it is seen that many studies were conducted with different visions. However, most of the studies were conducted in developed countries (DCs) (De Haan et al., 2006; Diamantopoulos et al., 2011; Lieven et al., 2011, Tang et al., 2011, Vrkljan and Anaby 2011); Only some of them were conducted in emerging countries (ECs). Hence, Sedzro et al. (2014) emphasized that studies regarding the automobile preferences in ECs are seen rarely. Yet, ECs refer to more

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In the analysis carried out with the classification as Premium or non-Premium brands, social status variable represents an important factor. For the users preferring Premium automobile brands, it may be deduced that hedonic consumption is prominent than rational consumption. Azizağaoğlu and Altunışık (2012) expressed the tendency of the consumers for preferring the brands that symbolize their status in their brand preferences as the following: “Products and brands seem like the colours used by an artist while painting Picture. Artist uses the colours in order to paint the Picture he/she imagines or desires. Consumers tend to use the images and symbols represented by the products and brands in order to realize the experience they desire, dream and place in their fantasy worlds.” According to the results of the analysis carried out with the classification structure according to the countries of origin of the brands, it may be thought that users have a more rational preference tendency (fuel consumption, prevalence of the sales network).

In the further studies, it shall be possible to conduct researches providing more reliable conclusions since conducting researches with a higher sampling number shall increase the capability of the sampling to represent the universe of the study. Studies may be conducted on the users, who has shifted between the automobile brands having different origins or different market positions at different times and reasons of such shifting may also be analysed (is it based on the change of the user or is it based on the studies of these brands conducted in order to gain these target groups).

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