

The Effects of Social Media on the Purchasing Behaviour of Airline Customers (Generation Y and Z)

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Abstract

In recent years, the widespread use of the internet and the developments in communication networks have increased the use of social media networks and applications of enterprises operating in the aviation sector. In parallel with this, most airline companies have started to sell their tickets through social media. In fact, social media has become a means of solving the problems of airline customers, platforms where passengers share their experiences, and competitive tools that affect the purchasing criteria of potential customers. In this direction, it is aimed to determine the effects of social media tools on the purchasing behavior of airline customers. In the study, a questionnaire was used as a data collection method. Surveys were collected online from 139 respondents between 12 March -31 March 2022. In the study, it was concluded that there were changes in the ticket purchasing behaviors of the customers before and after the purchase, under the influence of different social media.

Keywords: Social media, airlines, passenger, purchasing behaviour, Y and Z generations

Sosyal Medyanın Havayolu Müşterilerinin (Y ve Z kuşağı) Satın Alma Davranışı Üzerine Etkileri

Öz

Son yıllarda internet kullanımının yaygınlaşması ile iletişim ağlarındaki gelişmeler, havacılık sektöründe faaliyet gösteren işletmelerin sosyal medya ağlarının ve uygulamalarının kullanım oranlarını arttırmıştır. Buna paralel olarak, çoğu havayolu işletmesi bilet satışlarını sosyal medya üzerinden gerçekleştirmeye başlamıştır. Hatta, sosyal mecralar havayolu müşterilerinin sorunlarını çözme aracı, yolcuların tecrübelerini paylaştıkları platformlar ve potansiyel müşterilerin satın alma kriterlerini etkileyen rekabet araçları haline gelmiştir. Bu doğrultuda çalışmada, sosyal medya araçlarının havayolu müşterilerinin satın alma davranışı üzerindeki etkilerinin saptanması amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada veri toplama yöntemi olarak anket uygulaması



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gerçekleştirilmiştir. Anketler çevrimiçi olarak 139 katılımcıdan, 12 Mart - 31 Mart 2022 tarihleri arasında toplanmıştır. Çalışmada, müşterilerin satın alma öncesinde ve sonrasında farklı sosyal mecraların etkisinde kalarak bilet satın alma davranışlarında değişiklikler olduğu sonucu varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal medya, havayolları, yolcu, satın alma davranışı, Y ve Z kuşakları

1. Introduction

Using social media networks, businesses can identify services that meet the changing demands and needs of their audience and gain competitive advantage over their competitors. Consumer buying behaviour varies between generations. Similarly, the usage rates of social media applications vary from generation to generation (Şahin & İçil, 2019). The applications are seen to be preferred by consumers, covering the generation Y and Z, which were born after the year of 1980. That's why businesses are actively using social media applications to make customers, especially those in these generations.

As businesses actively start producing content for users, users have started to create their own content on a variety of forums, media and content sharing sites and social networks, so they can share content with their environment, other users and even the world (Ceyhan, 2019).

As social factions become so involved in the lives and business world of users, different businesses that operate in all areas try to connect with existing and potential customers using social media channels to market their products or services. One of these businesses, airline businesses, is increasingly using social media, and most airline businesses are actively involved in networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn (Koch & Tritscher, 2017). According to this, increased interest in social media and digital interaction requires further research of social media marketing to promote products and services.

The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of social media networks on the purchasing behaviour of airline customers (called generations Y and Z). The study uses a sectional scanning model, one of the quantitative research methods. It was then attempted to determine what trends the purchasing behaviour has in advance, during and after the purchase and how much customers are affected by social media. This means that the following questions are sought in the study:

RQ1: It is aimed to show how the social media tools used by passengers influence consumer behaviour before and after purchase.

RQ2: It is intended to determine whether there is a positive relationship between the level of use of social media tools and consumer behaviour before and after purchase.

The contribution of the study to the literature is that it provides a different perspective by revealing the purchasing behaviours of airline customers under the influence of social media. As a contribution to the practice of the study, it is aimed at guiding airline decision makers through the knowledge of new strategic marketing approaches that drive airline customers to buy.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Consumer Behaviour

The concept of consumer behaviour can be defined as "a workspace that examines processes and factors affecting the processes involved in choosing, purchasing, using or disposing of products, services, thoughts or experiences to satisfy the wishes and needs of individuals or groups" (Odabaşı, 1998). Consumer behaviour does not only cover the purchase phase, but also the previous, the next, the experiences related to this stage and many different influences (Odabaşı & Barış, 2002).

To understand, analyze and succeed a business's consumer expectations and direction; Consumers need to try to understand their demands and needs, to produce products and services that best meet these needs, to make sure that these products and services are different from those offered by competitors, and to drive consumers to purchase with a value that will make the consumer happy (Durmaz et al., 2011).

There are many buying models on consumer behaviour. When the economic, behavioural, psychoanalytical and socio-psychological models are examined, consumers are influenced and acted in different ways. For example, in the micro-economic model, one of the economic models, consumer income, price of goods, type of goods, and sales-enhancing activities of the business are effective in the purchase process. In contrast, socio-psychological model, it is seen that the needs and behaviours of the consumer are determined by the group they wish to be a member of. According to this, consumers are directed toward objects such as clothing, cars, houses similar to society (Tuğcu, 2014).

In this context, when looking at generations created by groups of the same age through the phenomenon of consumption, baby Boomers developed a sense of loyalty to the product they were satisfied with by being rational to consumption because they were the generation of the period after war and absence (Altuntuğ, 2012). Given that the next generation X has a high level of education, a more informed and responsive purchase in terms of consumption is becoming widespread, while consumption is being realized for the purpose of gratification. For the millennials born in technological breakthroughs with the discovery of the Internet, consumption is seen as an expression and a source of entertainment, not only as a simple and imperative action. Concepts such as fashion passion, brand search or online shopping are the typical expectations of consumers of this generation. For the consumers of the youngest generation of Z, it is also impossible to describe a consumption behaviour without technology, without a smartphone or without a tablet (Bayrakdaroğlu & Özbek, 2018).

2.2. Social Media

The Internet is technically a interconnected global computer network system and is considered a new environment of communication. Many changes have been made since the Internet process and the needs of internet users have been developed according to their wishes. The most important step in this change is Web 2.0 technologies (Kara, 2013). In this sense, social media has started to emerge during the transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, and has been a tool developed in the Web 3.0 period and continuing its development in the process of moving to the Web 4.0 period (Arslan & Yavuz, 2020).

The term social media is defined in different ways in the literature. According to Boyd and Ellison (2004), users are defined as a virtual environment where they can create profiles, make a list of people they are associated with, share, and observe profiles and lists of other users. In other words, it can be expressed as social network factions that allow internet users to communicate with each other through personal comments, expressions, image and content sharing (Kirtiş & Karahan, 2011). The foundation of social

media is emphasized here as environments where people are constantly, instantaneously and actively participating (Özgen & Elmasoğlu, 2016).

The tools that make up these environments differ as a species and interactivity, and are seen to affect potential audience, as well as the development and rapid change in both the internet and social media, as well as a transformation in marketing and advertising assemblies (Arslan & Yavuz, 2020). The main social media tools are available as platforms where various visual and content can be shared, such as microblogs (Twitter), social networks (Facebook, Instagram), media sharing sites (YouTube, Tiktok, IGTV), instant messaging networks (Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, Instagram Direct, Twitter DM), passenger experiences on the internet (Skytrax, TripAdvisor).

The development of the mentioned social media networks has increased rapidly, especially in recent years. This speed is proportional to the increase in the power of communication and interaction. The speed at which the radio reaches 50 million users is 38 years, while the TV is 13 years, Twitter has only 9 months to reach this number (Kara, 2013).

Today, social media users are not just individual users. The internet has created a new channel for businesses and consumers. This allows businesses to connect their products with consumers and create an alternative source of communication with consumers. In this way, consumers can choose products, order products, and deliver product complaints, requests and questions to the manufacturer by comparing product specifications (Kara, 2016).

Social media use is a rapidly growing platform in our country, especially among young and young adults, and therefore has an important place especially for businesses with a target audience of young and young adult consumers (Barutçu & Tomaş, 2013). Businesses that are well-assessing social media platforms where young people spend a lot of time and are active users also have significant achievements in the competition environment (Şener & Yücel, 2020).

One of the sectors in which social media quickly expanded its coverage and increased its importance was the aviation industry. In this study, the behaviour of airline customers before and after purchasing tickets will be reviewed in the context of social media use.

2.3. Generation Theory

The concept of generation is defined as the default human communities that are born and raised and living in a given period of time and have common features and perspectives because they are affected by the events that occur in this process (Berkup, 2014). The theory of generation groupings or generations was first suggested in a book written in 1928 by Karl Mannheim, a German sociologist. The classifications and discussions that took into today's generations were first started to accelerate with the book published by Inglehart and then by Strauss and Howe in 1991, and some researchers called it the "Strauss-Howe belt Theory" (Arslan & Staub, 2015).

In the determination of generations, the social, economic and cultural conditions of the period in which the generations are present are affected, as well as developments in technology in particular (Aka, 2018). In this respect, a number of characteristics of technology use, business perspective, social values can be attributed to generations (Deniz & Tutgun Ünal, 2019).

In general, five generations are encountered when looking at society (Kavalcı & Ünal, 2016):

	Traditionalist (1900-1945)
Generation Name	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
	Generation X (1965-1979)
	Generation Y (1980-1999)
	Generation Z (2000-...)

Source: Kavalcı & Ünal, 2016.

Figure 1. Generations

Members of the traditional generation, also known as the silent generation, are characterized by financial and social conservatism. The members of this generation, who trust the state very much, are considered Patriots after living the great Depression, New Deal and the second World War. The primary goal of the traditional is to study at the university, find a good job, buy a house and retire. The next baby boomers represent the largest generation of today's adult U.S. population, which is about a third of the population. They are highly competitive, highly self-respecting and often considered optimistic. They are also cliché as workaholic and prominent consumers. This generation is the first generation to have television for their lives (Stern, 2002).

The workers of the X-generation, the children of the silent generation, are flexible, confident and comfortable to use technology. They prefer to make more than one career. They are questioning the way they work and the authority by creating a range of transferable careers for their skills and experiences. They are prioritizing security and salary elements in business life (Adıgüzel et al., 2014). Generation X demonstrates the motivation to look for strong information in technology usage and interaction with technology. Individuals of this generation focus more on the usefulness of technology (Calvo-Porrall & Pesqueira-Sanchez, 2020).

Born between 1980-1999, millennials are narcissistic, individualistic, easily able to present their wishes, entrepreneurial, unsatisfied, defying authority, and independent of their freedom, he's a technologically enthusiast, he's got a lot of demands, he's got little sense of loyalty, he's got a sense of comfort, he doesn't like to work, it is seen as individuals who love to win, who are ambitious, who have little patience for criticism. They prefer the personalized one rather than the standard products that appeal to the general (Kavalcı & Ünal, 2016). It is also accepted that these people are very interested in trends. The reason these generation members' lives are often fast, versatile and extremely intense is because they grow in environments where rapid change occurs. In the absence of speed, teamwork and versatile work to meet their expectations, their quick tightening is inevitable (Kuyucu, 2017). The individuals of this generation, who spend more time on social media platforms, are more confident in sharing and commenting on generations X (Bahar & Şayka, 2021).

The individuals born in the middle of technological advancements and living introverted are called the Z-belt. Internet generation, digital generation, or always online. In addition, research on this generation is known as the mysterious children of the future because it is limited (Kavalcı & Ünal, 2016). More equipped than other generations in

education and economic terms, the Zs are living time very quickly. One of the common characteristics of young people in this age group is their multi-screen skills and their drive to perform many tasks at the same time. In the study of the behaviour of taking multiple actions at the same time, such as studying while eating, eating while shopping, it is evident that Z-generation in this age range feels more than 24 hours a day (Köktener & Algül, 2020). Although there are similarities in the technology of their time between generation Z and generation Y, the most important feature that separates the Z belt from the Y-belt is that it is born into a different technology. In the 90 years, Generation Z has introduced the Internet into our lives and has eventually met a virtual world that smartphones and social media have made (Hariadi et al., 2016).

3. Literature Review and Determination of Hypotheses

There are many studies in the literature that study the impact of social media on consumer behaviour.

Kara (2016) has investigated how passenger-carrying businesses in Turkey use social media tools and whether these tools create competition. The study selected 12 airline businesses that only carry passengers and used the content analysis method. As a result of the study, social media is a new way of marketing to get a return on services and create new customers. In addition, the use of social media tools has reached a very important point, indicating that businesses should use social media more effectively and efficiently.

İşlek (2012), conducted a survey to measure the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour. The survey of 845 social media users revealed how often they use social media tools and how much consumer behaviour is affected by their purchasing processes over social media networks. As a result, it was revealed that social networking sites are the most used by consumers, and users are reading messages that share the most experience and experience. It has been seen that they are primarily researching the products or services they want to purchase through social media networks and are influenced by the comments of people they know. Also, if they were satisfied with the purchase, they often mentioned it in their profile. It was understood that they had given their negative impression at a higher rate.

Erdemir (2017), studied the impact of social media on consumer behaviour in his study. In particular, he studied whether social media use has a positive impact on what direction and brand image consumers have in terms of brands. In the study, the survey application has been applied to 250 people aged between 18 and 65. More than half of the work (53,2%) consists of people called the "Y" generation, which is 18-27 years old. As a result of the study, they stated that social media is very important to consumers and that they use such factions for purchasing. In addition, it was emphasized that the expectations, demands and demands of the younger generation in this age range should be followed, as most of their participants are millennials, and this is important for the image of the brand.

Kurt (2017), analyzed the data of the passengers who revealed their service experience with low-cost carriers through Twitter, a social media tool, and created a study. For example, Pegasus Airlines has been selected, and 2200 tweets of social media subject tags and sharing of passenger experiences have been reviewed using NVivo11 software through a tumevarative analysis method. Different types of categories have been obtained in the study and have shown why the passengers communicate. According to this study, passengers were seen sharing the most adverse experiences, and found that they often use social media to react to delays (delays), disruptions, cancelations and changes in flights. Another important finding is that by comparing passengers with other

airline businesses due to their positive circumstances and negativity, other potential passengers may have a direct influence on ticket purchase behaviour.

İmir (2018), in the study, took a sample of two airline businesses and case study of their posts on social media. The study conducted a review focusing on Twitter posts for Turkish Airlines and Pegasus Airlines businesses. In the study, the study found that Twitter was used because of the creation of a fast and effective communication for passengers. The primary reason for the shares is to attract customers. Another goal is to maintain positive perception on passengers, especially by sharing information about flights regularly and momentarily. In this study, social media has been found to have a positive impact on passengers' buying tendencies.

Özgen ve Elmasoğlu (2016), reviewed the tweets shared with the content analysis method, using three of the most monitored airline businesses on Twitter to review the use of social media in terms of brand image and communication. As a result of the study, it has been concluded that airlines should use social media more effectively, and it has been stated that it plays a huge role in brand communication.

Ekicikol (2016), has conducted a study to determine what impact airline services have on the occupants' buying behaviour. In the study, questions were managed by survey method to 402 passengers and the data obtained was analyzed. The analysis revealed that students were very closely monitoring advertising, promotions and campaigns, especially for discounted airline tickets, and that there was an approach in parallel with the importance of social media.

İlhan (2019), studied how the services that airlines provide to investigate the effects of social media marketing were perceived. A survey was conducted on 253 airline passengers using social media tools using the relational screening method as a method. As a result of the research, social media marketing has been found to be a positive approach for passengers. There have been significant differences in the size of use in relation to the demographic characteristics of the passengers. It has been stated that there are 18-25-year-olds as the age group that share the most social media sharing views and adopt the concept of using social media as marketing communications. This age group has concluded the age group that uses social media most effectively. The study also states that social media marketing communication is the most important factor affecting purchasing decisions.

Genç (2015), has reviewed the relationship between the purchasing behaviour of university students' social media use. The study revealed which social media factions university students use and how this affects purchasing behaviour. In addition, it has been investigated how effective it is before and after the purchase, considering the demographic characteristics of the students. The survey was used as a method of data in the study. The survey found that almost all participants (96,2%) were aged 18-25 years old. It is stated that the participants are investigating the service prior to the purchase and taking into account the comments from other consumers of the services. This study also states that social media tools are important for millennials.

Önen (2019), conducted face-to-face survey management using four different scales in the study in which the impact of social media on consumer behaviour in airway transport has been examined on the purchase request. The descriptive factor used reliability and linear regression analysis methods to ensure validity of scales and testing of the model. The purpose of the study is to study how affected the social media are in the way that passengers are behaving before and after purchasing tickets and in which direction they are influencing the trend to purchase airline passenger tickets. The survey has been applied to 384 people who have purchased airline tickets at least once. According to the findings, it has been found that there is a meaningful, positive and strong tendency to buy.

In the literature, it was not found that social media research together on the purchasing behaviour of airline customers (Y and Z generation). This study has been carried out to close this gap in the literature. Within the scope of the research, the following hypotheses have been established to test whether the level of use of social media tools has a meaningful relationship between the impact of consumers buying airline tickets to consumer behaviour before and after purchase:

H1: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of use of microblog (Twitter) and consumer behaviour before purchase on social media.

H2: There is a meaningful relationship between social network usage level and consumer behaviour before purchase on social media.

H3: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of use of media sharing sites and consumer behaviour before purchase on social media.

H4: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of communication in social networking groups and consumer behaviour before purchase on social media.

H5: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of use of passenger experiences online sites and consumer behaviour before purchasing on social media.

H6: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of use of passenger experiences over the Internet sites and the post-purchase consumer behaviour on social media.

H7: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of communication on social media and consumer behaviour before purchasing on social media.

H8: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of communication on social media and the post-purchase consumer behaviour on social media.

H9: There is a meaningful relationship between the level of use of all social media tools and consumer behaviour before purchase on social media.

4. Method of Research

The study was done using quantitative research methods. Designed as a sectional scan model, this study uses a relational model to examine direct and indirect relationships between variables. Given the sampling technique, the sample technique was applied to an unlikely (judicial) purpose, as the study would cover people born between 1980-2004 (generation Y and Z) and over 18 years old. So, purposeful sampling technique was used.

Questionnaire was used as a data collection method in the research. The scale used in the study was applied to people (Y and Z generations) who have traveled with airline companies at least once, based on the study of İşlek (2012). The questions asked to the participants were prepared by adapting them to the current social media tools suitable for the air transport sector. In the survey questions used in the research, first of all, the statements aimed at determining how often and for what purpose social media tools are used were asked to the participants. The scale was used as judgments (1=Never, 2=Very rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, and 5=Always). In addition, statements were asked to determine the effect of social media on consumer behaviour before and after airline ticket purchase (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree or Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). Adhering to these statements, hypotheses were formed and the accuracy of the hypotheses was tested by analyzing the collected data.

The survey form was prepared electronically (Google Forms) considering the current pandemic process, and the participants were reached and shared over the internet. The survey was conducted between 12 March - 31 March 2022 with 139 participants. Survey data were analyzed with IBM SPSS 25 software.

	Questions	Number of items	Explanation
1 st Section	1-5	28	It measures how often Social Media tools are used and which features are used and how much.
2 nd Section	6-8	23	It measures the extent to which social media influences the airline customer's purchasing behaviour before and after the purchase.
3 rd Section	9-17	37	Includes Demographic Questions.
Total	17	88	

Table 1. Survey Questions Content

At the stage of evaluating the research outputs, firstly, the frequency analysis of the demographic characteristics of the participants participating in the survey was put forward. After frequency analysis of demographic information, descriptive statistical data results were created. In the third stage, scale items were determined by performing factor analysis, and then reliability analyzes were made. In the last stage, correlation analysis between the scales was made and the validity of the hypotheses was checked with regression analysis.

5. Findings

In the first part of the study, demographic questions such as gender, age range, occupation, education level, monthly income, how many times they travel by plane per year, how many hours they spend on the internet and social media on average per week, and which tools they use to access social media were asked. Accordingly, approximately two-thirds of the respondents were female (64% female and 36% male). In addition, 55.4% of the respondents are Z generation (18-21 years old), 44.6% are Y generation (22-40).

In this study, considering that a significant majority of social media users are in these age ranges, it is important to determine the purchasing behaviours of people. In the research, it can be said that the desired sample has been reached since the level of influence of airline customers from social media has been investigated. When the data showing the occupations of the participants were examined, it was seen that three-quarters (75.5%) of the participants were students in parallel with the age data. In addition, when their educational status is evaluated, it is seen that the majority of them have high school (41%), associate degree (5%) and undergraduate (47.5%) degrees. Looking at the frequency of the monthly income data, 64.7% of the students with income between 0-1000 TL and only 12.9% of the participants with income between 1001-2000 TL due to the participants, of which the majority of the students are. 61.9% of the participants travel by plane only once a year, while 30.9% travel by plane 2-5 times. In addition, it was found that the majority of the respondents spend 6-15 hours a week on social media and the Internet. Finally, when asked which device they use to access social media, a large majority (91.4%) stated that they accessed social media via mobile phones.

Demographic Questions	Answers	Total Number	%
Age	18-21	77	55,4
	22-40	62	44,6
Sex	Female	89	64
	Male	50	36
Profession	Student	105	75,5
	Unemployed	10	7,2
	Private Sector Employee	9	6,5
	Civil Servant	8	5,8
	Akademician	3	2,2
	Self-employment	2	1,4
	Labour	2	1,4
Educational status	Primary Education	2	1,5
	High School	57	41
	Associate Degree	7	5
	Bachelor degree	66	47,5
	Postgraduate(Master's and Doctorate)	7	5
How many times do you travel by plane on average per year?	Once	86	61,9
	2-5 Times	43	30,9
	6-9 Times	9	6,5
	10 or more	1	0,7
Monthly Income	0-1000 TL	90	64,7
	1001-2000 TL	18	12,9
	2001-3000 TL	6	4,3
	3001 TL or more	25	18
How many hours do you spend on the internet on average per week?	0-5 Hours	11	7,9
	6-15 Hours	48	34,5
	16-25 Hours	33	23,7
	26 Hours or more	47	33,9
How many hours do you spend on social media on average per week?	0-5 Hours	39	28
	6-15 Hours	50	36
	16-25 Hours	30	21,6
	26 Hours or more	20	14,4
What types of devices do you use to access social media tools more?	Mobile Phone	127	91,4
	Personal Computer	10	7,2
	Tablet/Handheld	2	1,4

Table 2. Frequency Analysis

In the second part of the study, firstly, the analysis of normality was performed. In this analysis, the "Skewness and Kurtosis" values of the questions asked to the participants were examined. According to the literature, these values are expected to be between "-2" and "+2" (George & Mallery, 2020, p. 114). In this study, it was seen that all the items used in the questionnaire were between these values. For this reason, factor analysis was used to determine the scales, which is the next step. Factor analysis is carried out in order to determine the dimensions in which the items are explained, that is, to reduce the number of variables. In factor analysis, before the dimensions are determined, factor analysis of the items is done in general and the results of the sampling adequacy statistics (KMO) and Bartlett sphericity test are checked as a result of the analysis. In the literature, it has been stated that the p value of the Bartlett test should be less than 0.05 significance level, the KMO value should be between "0-1" and at least 0.5 value is suitable

for factor analysis (George & Mallery, 2020, p. 268). In the factor analysis, it was seen that the general KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value of the items was 0.825 and the significance level (p value) was 0.000. Since the P value is 0.000, it can be said that the variables in the study are suitable for analysis. Since the KMO value is higher than 0.8, it is seen that the suitability of the variables for factor analysis is at an excellent level.

In factor analysis, questions were analyzed using principal components method and Varimax rotation method. Looking at the "Anti-Image Matrices" table of the analysis results, it was seen that the MSA values of all the items on their own were above 0.5. For this reason, it has been seen that there is no need to remove any problem at this stage. In the analysis, when the "Rotated Component Matrix" result is taken into consideration, the questions "1.4, 6.5 and 6.6" were excluded from the analysis because they were only under the factor. In the analysis performed again, these questions were removed from the analysis because the factor weights of the questions "3.7, 4.1, 6.10, 7.8, 7.9 and 8.1" were close under more than one factor. As a result of the re-analysis, the questions "8.2 and 8.3" were excluded because they remained single under the factor, and the question "7.7" was excluded from the analysis because it had close values in different factor columns. As a result of factor analysis, it was concluded that there are 9 factors (scales).

After this analysis to test the construct validity of the study, a "reliability analysis" was conducted to find the reliability of each sub-dimension numerically. In this reliability test, the Alpha test was used, and it was stated in the literature that the scale was considered reliable when the correlation value (Cronbach Alpha) was 0.70 and above (George & Mallery, 2020, p. 244). Accordingly, since the internal consistency of the first 8 factors was above the 0.70 reliability level, but the "Cronbach's Alpha" value of the 9th Factor was below 0.70 (0.528), the questions constituting this factor were not used in the subsequent analyses. The questions in the factor were removed from the data set and factor analysis was performed again, and it was seen that the factors were meaningful and suitable for data analysis. As a result of the analysis, 8 factors were obtained. The total explained variance was 71.549%. The factors are "Post-purchase consumer behaviour in social media (SAS_TukDav)", "Twitter usage level (Tw_KulDuz)", "Social networks usage level (SosAg_KulDuz)", "Internet passenger experience sites usage level (IUYD_KulDuz)", "Social media purchases", respectively. consumer behaviour before purchasing (SAO_TukDav), "Social network grouping usage level (SosAg_Grup)", "Communication over social media (SosMed_Iletisim)" and "Communication on media sharing sites (MedPaySit_Ilet)".

Scale	Number of Questions	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Post-Purchase Consumer Behaviours in Social Media	Q7.1, Q7.2, Q7.3, Q7.4, Q7.5, Q7.6	6	.931
Microblogging (Twitter) Usage Level	Q1.1, Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5	6	.931
Social Networks (Facebook, Instagram) usage level	Q1.2, Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.3, Q3.4, Q3.5, Q3.6	7	.889
Online Passenger Experiences (SkyTrax, Tripadvisor, etc.) usage level	Q1.5, Q5.1, Q5.2, Q5.3, Q8.4	5	.858

Pre-Purchase Consumer Behaviours in Social Media	Q6.1, Q6.2, Q6.3, Q6.4	4	.801
Level of Intergroup Communication in Social Networks	Q3.8, Q3.9, Q3.10	3	.865
Communication Level in Social Media	Q6.7, Q6.8, Q6.9	3	.798
Media Sharing Sites (YouTube, Tiktok, IGTV) Communication Level	Q4.3, Q4.4, Q4.5	3	.725

Table 3. Reliability Analysis

In the last stage, correlation and regression analyzes were performed. As a result of the correlation analysis, it is seen that there is a significant relationship between the variables (Table 1.4). The highest correlation was found between "Using level of passenger experience sites on the Internet (IUYD_KulDuz)" and "Post-purchase consumer behaviour in social media (SAS_TukDav)" (0.544, $p < 0.01$). Since the highest correlation between variables was less than 0.9, no multicollinearity problem was observed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, the precondition of its regression is satisfied.

1. SAS_TukDav	1							
2. Tw_KulDuz	379**	1						
3. SosAg_KulDuz	352**	180*	1					
4. IUYD_KulDuz	544**	400**	280**	1				
5. SAO_TukDav	476**	240**	211*	352**	1			
6. SosAg_Grup	379**	226**	463**	331**	255**	1		
7. SosMed_iletisim	444**	381**	282**	263**	500**	254**	1	
8. MedPaySit_ilet	396**	310**	318**	370**	274**	451**	331**	1
*. $p < 0.05$, **. $p < 0.01$.								

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

After being found suitable for regression analysis, linear regression method was used to test whether the hypotheses formed were in a significant relationship. As shown in the Table 5, in the H_1 hypothesis, it was thought that there was a significant relationship between the Twitter usage level of consumers who bought airline tickets and their purchasing behaviour in social media, and it was seen that there was a significant relationship between them (0.004, $p < 0.05$). In the H_2 hypothesis, it was thought that there was a significant relationship between the level of social network (Facebook, Instagram) usage and pre-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between them (0.013, $p < 0.05$). In the H_3 hypothesis, it was thought that there was a significant relationship between the level of use of media

sharing sites (YouTube, TikTok, IGTV) and pre-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and the analysis revealed a significant relationship between them (0.001, $p < 0.05$). In the H₄ hypothesis, it was suggested that there is a significant relationship between the level of communication in social network groups and consumer behaviour before purchasing in social media, and it was seen that there was a significant relationship between them (0.002, $p < 0.05$). In the H₅ hypothesis, it was thought that there was a significant relationship between the level of use of passenger experience sites on the internet (SkyTrax, TripAdvisor, etc.) and pre-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and it was found that there was a significant relationship between them (0.000, $p < 0.05$). In the H₆ hypothesis, the same independent variable was considered to have a significant relationship with post-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and in the analysis made, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between them (0.000, $p < 0.05$). In the H₇ hypothesis, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship (0.000, $p < 0.05$) between the level of communication in social media and consumer behaviour before purchasing in social media. The counterpart of this independent variable can be explained as the airline companies in social media communicating with the passengers and solving the problems. In the H₈ hypothesis, the same independent variable was considered to have a significant relationship with post-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and in the analysis made, it was seen that there was a significant relationship between them (0.000, $p < 0.05$). Finally, in the H₉ hypothesis, which was established to see the holistic effect by expanding the scope further, it was hypothesized that all social media tools have a positive and significant relationship between pre-purchase consumer behaviour in social media, and in the analysis, the model was at a significant level (0.000, $p < 0.05$) but independent. When the variables were examined, it was concluded that only two of the six variables had a significant effect (0.010 and 0.000, $p < 0.05$), and the hypothesis was partially accepted.

Hypotheses	Sig. (p)
H ₁	0.004
H ₂	0.013
H ₃	0.001
H ₄	0.002
H ₅	0.000
H ₆	0.000
H ₇	0.000
H ₈	0.000
H ₉	0.000
p < 0.05	

Table 5. Regression Analysis Result

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Social media tools, which developed rapidly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, continue to develop by including individuals of the same generation. The generation that

first met with computers, then the internet and social media, and finally smart phones, was considerably affected by these developments. Determining the changes in the needs, expectations, goals and behaviours of the individuals of the generation caused by the developments and making arrangements for these are the requirements of the modernist structure in today's modern marketing approach (Odabaşı, 2014). In this study, the effect of social media on the ticket purchasing behaviour of airline customer groups was examined.

With the hypotheses created in the study, it was investigated whether there is a significant relationship between the use of social media and the effect of consumer behaviour before and after purchasing in social media. Accordingly, it was seen that the use of microblogging (Twitter), the use of social networks, the use of media sharing sites and the level of communication in social network groups had an effect before purchasing airline tickets, and there was a significant relationship between them. In addition, it has been observed that the use of passenger experience sites on the internet and the level of communication in social media have an effect on consumer behaviour both before and after purchasing in social media. These results are similar to the study of İşlek (2012), which constitutes the starting point of the study and the results are in line with other studies in the literature (Ekicikol, 2016; Erdemir, 2017; Kurt, 2017; İmir 2018; İlhan, 2019; Önen 2019; Şener and Yücel 2020). In the last hypothesis, it has been determined that there is a partially significant relationship between the behaviour of the airline customer before purchasing the airline ticket and the general social media tools. According to (Moslehpour et al., 2021) seems to be in line with the study they carried out for Indonesian Airlines.

Airlines should attach great importance to the use of social media and communication in order to correctly analyze the wishes, expectations and needs of customers, who are young customers and closely follow technological developments and adapt to these developments, and take action. In addition, airline companies should manage their social media channels in a professional manner and operate actively and efficiently in all channels, rather than just the most used social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter. Apart from the popular social media tools in which airline customers comment on their journeys, it has been concluded that although the low usage rate for younger generations (Y and Z generations) is mentioned in the websites where passenger experiences are shared on the internet such as SkyTrax and TripAdvisor, which they evaluate in detail, it is effective before and after ticket purchase. This result shows similarity to the result of (Şahin & İcil, 2019) that social media applications are effective on Z generation customers. Bahar & Şayka (2021) and Şener & Yücel (2020) revealed in their studies that young consumers exhibit purchasing behaviour by being influenced by social media. In addition, the importance of communication levels in social media has been seen to be important for airline companies both before and after ticket purchase. For this reason, it is recommended that airline companies quickly resolve the uncertainties experienced by their potential customers and the problems they encounter during the purchase before purchasing tickets via social media. In addition, it has been observed that airlines can maintain the perception of trust of their passengers if they solve the problems, problems and grievances experienced by their customers after their journey through social media, and passengers tend to buy the same airline ticket again.

In addition, it can be stated that the answers to the questions determined in the introduction part of the study were found with this research. In the research, it has been determined which social media tools are used more intensively by passengers with different demographic characteristics. In addition, it has been observed that the social media tools used affect consumer behaviour before and after ticket purchase. Finally, it

has been observed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the level of use of social media tools and consumer behaviour before and after purchasing.

As an advanced dimension of the research, it will be possible to make intergenerational comparisons by including other generations in the scope of the study. In addition, different studies in other cultures will enrich the literature. In this way, suggestions on the management of social media can be presented to airline companies with a broader perspective.

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Özet

İşletmeler sosyal medya ağlarını kullanarak hedef kitlesinin değişen istek ve ihtiyaçlarına uygun hizmetleri belirleyip rakiplerine karşı rekabet avantajı sağlayabilmektedir. Tüketicilerin satın alma davranışları kuşaklar arasında farklılık göstermektedir. Benzer şekilde sosyal medya uygulamalarının kullanım oranları da kuşaktan kuşağa değişmektedir (Şahin & İçil, 2019). Uygulamaların 1980 yılından sonra doğan Y ve Z kuşağını kapsayan tüketiciler tarafından daha çok tercih edildiği görülmektedir. Bu nedenle işletmeler özellikle bu kuşaklarda yer alan kişileri müşterileri haline getirebilmek için sosyal medya uygulamalarını aktif bir şekilde kullanmaktadır. Bu işletmelerden biri olan havayolu işletmeleri de sosyal medya giderek daha fazla kullanmakta ve çoğu havayolu işletmesi Facebook, Twitter ve LinkedIn gibi ağlarda aktif olarak yer almaktadır (Koch & Tritscher, 2017). Buna göre sosyal medyaya ve dijital etkileşime artan ilgi, ürün ve hizmetleri tanıtmak için sosyal medya pazarlamasının daha fazla araştırılmasını gerektirmektedir.

Bu doğrultuda çalışmanın amacı, sosyal medya ağlarının havayolu müşterilerinin (Y ve Z kuşağı olarak adlandırılan) satın alma davranışı üzerindeki etkilerinin saptanmasıdır. Çalışmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan kesitsel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Böylece satın alma davranışlarının satın alma öncesinde, sırasında ve sonrasında hangi

eğilimlerde olduğu ve müşterilerin sosyal medyadan ne derece etkilendikleri belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır.

Araştırmada veri toplama yöntemi olarak anket uygulaması yapılmıştır. Anket çalışmasında kullanılan ölçek İşlek (2012)'in çalışması baz alınarak yapılmış ve en az bir kere havayolu işletmesi ile seyahat eden kişilere (Y ve Z kuşağı) uygulanmıştır. Katılımcılara sorular hava taşımacılığı sektörüne uygun ve güncel sosyal medya araçlarına uyarlanarak hazırlanmıştır. Anket formu, içinde bulunulan pandemi süreci göz önüne alınarak elektronik ortamda (Google Forms) hazırlanarak katılımcılara internet üzerinden ulaşılarak paylaşılmıştır. Anket, 139 katılımcı ile 31 Aralık 2020 - 9 Ocak 2021 tarihleri arasında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Anket verileri IBM SPSS 25 programı ile analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırma çıktılarının değerlendirilmesi aşamasında ilk olarak ankete katılan katılımcıların demografik özelliklerinin sıklık analizi ortaya konulmuştur. Demografik bilgilerin frekans analizinden sonra açıklayıcı istatistik veri sonuçları oluşturulmuştur. Üçüncü aşamada ise, faktör analizi yapılarak ölçek maddeleri belirlenmiş ve sonrasında güvenilirlik analizleri yapılmıştır. Son aşamada ise, ölçekler arasındaki korelasyon analizi yapılmış ve regresyon analizi ile hipotezlerin geçerliliği kontrol edilmiştir.

Havayolu müşterilerinin yolculuklarını yorumladıkları popüler sosyal medya araçlarının dışında, ayrıntılı bir şekilde değerlendirdikleri SkyTrax, TripAdvisor gibi internet üzerinden yolcu deneyimlerinin paylaşıldığı sitelerde kuşaklar (Y ve Z kuşağı) özelinde kullanım oranının düşüklüğünden bahsedilse de bilet satın alım öncesi ve sonrasında etkili olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, çalışmanın giriş bölümünde belirlenen sorulara yanıtların bu araştırma ile bulunduğu belirtilebilir. Araştırmada, farklı demografik özelliklere sahip olan yolcuların hangi sosyal medya araçlarını daha yoğunlukta kullandıkları belirlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, kullanılan sosyal medya araçlarının bilet satın alma öncesi, süresince ve sonrasında tüketici davranışlarını etkilediği görülmüştür. Son olarak ise, sosyal medya araçlarının kullanım düzeyi ile satın alma öncesi ve sonrasındaki tüketici davranışları arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edildiği görülmüştür.

Araştırmanın ileri boyutu olarak, diğer kuşaklarında çalışma kapsamına alınması ile kuşaklararası karşılaştırmaların yapılması mümkün olacaktır. Ayrıca diğer kültürlerde farklı araştırmalar yapılması literatürü zenginleştirecektir. Bu sayede havayolu işletmelerine daha geniş bir perspektifle sosyal medyanın yönetimine dair öneriler sunulabilir.