Customers' Cellular Phone Buying Behavior from the Aspect Of Their Attitudes, Value Perceptions and Life Values

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ABSTRACT

Since value perceptions associated with a particular product provides some clues about customer expectations, the effect of customers' value perceptions on their purchase behavior has become an important topic. As cellular phone using in Turkey has been increasing each day in recent years, to examine Turkish customers' value perceptions with their individual life values become the subject of interest of this study. This study was carried out among 514 cellular phone users in order to find out their product value related perceptions as well as their individual life values, attitudes and demographic characteristics that may influence their buying behavior. Customers' value perceptions were grouped under four dimensions as emotional, quality, price and social. It can also be summarized that customers were placed under different clusters according to their value perceptions about cellular phones. According to the findings, individual life values such as "excitement", "self-respect", "sense of achievement" and so on were found to be related to

different cluster of customers. There are significant differences among clusters in relation to such demographic factors as gender and age.

Key Words: Buying Behavior, Customer, Attitudes, Values, Social-Emotions

INTRODUCTION

In such a competitive environment, it is nowadays important for companies to get to know more about customer expectations and determinants of their purchase behavior. Accordingly, managers are curious about analyzing the process of their customer' purchase behavior in order to find out the facts beneath this particular behavior. As will be discussed later in the theoretical background of the study, one of the issues the recent studies are concerned with is the effect of customers' value perceptions on their purchase behavior. Since value perceptions associated with a particular product provides some pinpoints about customer expectations, to investigate what type of products or what features of the product may satisfy what kind of value expectations of the customers has become a critical subject for managers. By doing so, managers may generate competitive strategies by considering the product designs and promotional activities to influence customers' buying behavior. Furthermore, the relationship between customer value perceptions and customers' individual life values can be examined in the content of the study since to satisfy individual life values may also be important in the occurrence of a particular behavior.

This study was carried out among a group of cellular phone users in order to find out the related product value perceptions as well as their individual life values that may influence their buying

behavior. The use of cellular phones in the world has become very important as the number of users have been increasing three times higher each year since 2000. As stated by International Telecommunication Association, the number of cellular phone users have reached to 2.6 billion (Sabah News, 2007). In Turkey, the number of cellular phone users was 53 million through the end of 2006 and the statistics draw our attention to the fact that there was 10 million increase in the number of its users from 2005 to 2006. Turkey is the 12th country in the world with the intensive amount of cellular phone users. China, United States and Canada are placed on the very top of the list. Compared to such countries as England, Germany and France where 80-90 percent of the population own cellular phones, Turkey is a country where a technology oriented young population change the model of their phones more frequently than other countries. Therefore, the number of products presented by foreign companies to Turkish market keep increasing each year (Tumgazeteler.com, 2007). In this case, the competition between foreign companies and local companies has enhanced recently.

Based on the importance of cellular phone using in Turkey, like in the content of this study, to examine Turkish customers' value perceptions with their individual life values may provide interesting findings for company managers. Moreover, through the examination of value perceptions, customers can be grouped in different segments according to their demographic characteristics and their common expectations related to the product.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The study of customer value is becoming significantly more important, both in research and in practice. Understanding the way customers judge and value a service or product is crucial to achieving a competitive advantage (Graf & Maas, 2008). In other words, companies with a

superior ability to provide a service product that customers perceive as valuable will incur an important competitive advantage (Hansen *et al.,* 2008). More and more organizations that face intense competitive pressures are striving for superior competitive advantage by concentrating on creating and delivering value to their customers. The goal of customer value research is to describe, analyze, and make empirically measurable the value that companies create for their customers and to link these insights to further marketing constructs (Graf & Maas, 2008). For the customer value is a lived experience and is generally a trade off between benefits and costs (Nasution & Mavondo, 2008). An important question for all managers to ask is whether their concepts of value and satisfaction correspond to the way customers think of value and satisfaction. The answer to this question will go a long way toward determining how well a company's customer measurement process reveals what customers truly value (Woodruff, Schumann, & Gardial, 1993). In choosing among alternative products, buyers tend to select those products which they perceive will yield the highest value, taking into action consideration the benefits and sacrifices associated with acquiring and using the products (Saliba & Fisher, 2000).

Information on consumers' values can be important in this respect, because how a product is perceived can differ as function of these values. Tying a product to a value can enhance a product's worth (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). One thing for certain is that organizations could not afford to underestimate the strategic importance of product/service value because value has paramount impact on customer purchase decision and satisfaction (Ho & Cheng, 1999). Managers will be better able to achieve success if that have a clearer understanding of the way

clients, customers and prospects perceive value and the role that value plays in purchase decisions (Saliba & Fisher, 2000).

Marketers need to provide value to ensure future business with current customers and/or generate positive word-of-mouth to attract new customers. With the current emphasis on maintaining a long-term relationship with the customer, examining factors that impact consumer's perceptions of retailer value are crucial for today's marketer (Naylor & Frank, 2000). The value of a product or service is determined by the relationship of its performance to cost. A product or service with appropriate performance and cost is said to have good value. Value, in other words, equals function divided by cost (Ho & Cheng, 1999). Customer value is a powerful concept in that it links customer behavior with supplier. Gould- Williams (1999) noted that consumers use a variety of attributes to form an overall evaluation of price and the quality of products and services. The attributes used by consumers relate to perceived product/service attributes or features. Even though products and services consist of many attributes, consumers tend to base their overall perception of quality on just a few attributes, or in some cases, just one (Huang & Tai, 2003).

Customer value is the customer's perception of what they want to have happen (i.e. the consequences) in a specific-use situation, with the help of a product or service offering in order to accomplish a desired purpose or goal. This definition helps one understand that products or services are means to accomplishing customer goals. Typically, customers do not see products or services as ends in themselves. Products or services create value for customers not by delivering

the innate characteristics of the products or services, but by delivering consequences in their use situations (Stahl *et al.*, 1999).

The consumer's value judgement was defined as "the interactive, relativistic preference that characterizes the customer's experience of interacting with some object". This definition is useful because the overall evaluation of products and services is a combination of judgements about both low and high-level benefits, attributes, and values, including price and the other reputation of the service provider (Mattila, 1999). In other words, value has been recognized in both the product and service literature as a trade-off between benefits (typically operationalized as quality) and costs. Along with identifying quality as the benefit side of the value trade-off, these definitions reflect that costs have typically been operationalized as price (Naylor & Frank, 2001). Clearly, these two components (quality and price) have different and differential effects on perceived value for money. A product or service is said to have good quality when it can deliver what it promises or claims, that is, high conformance to specifications (Ho & Cheng, 1999). Zeithaml (1988) argued that some consumers perceive value when there is a low price; others perceive value when there is a balance between quality and price. Thus, for different consumers, the components of perceived value might be differentially weighted. Additionally, Zeithaml (1988) found that some consumers obtained value from all relevant 'get' and 'give' components, leading to her definition of perceived value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Many marketing strategists and industrial-organization (IO) economists emphasize that creation of superior "customer value" is a key element for companies' success. The meaning of customer value is a level of return in the product benefits for a customer's payment in a purchase exchange

(Huber *et al.*,). It is clear that different value dimensions may be important depending on the decision level (e.g., buy/not buy or buy brand A/brand B), as well as on the type of product or service being considered (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Customers do not purchase a product, instead they buy a set of benefits. To provide benefits, a product must be able to accomplish one or more of the following: Perform certain tasks or functions, solve identified problems, and/or provide specific pleasures (Saliba & Fisher, 2000). Thus who buy a luxury automobile are obviously looking for transportation, but also prestige, status, image, exclusivity, respect, comfort and so forth, which they believe other models of automobiles and modes of transportation are not capable of delivering (Saliba & Fisher, 2000).

From the standpoint of marketing strategy, creating customer value in consumer marketing means meeting target customers' needs and increasing customer satisfaction. Customer value management has been used widely by market oriented firms to differentiate themselves from competitors and is considered a major priority by executives (Chen & Dubinsky, 2003). Processes that an organization uses to measure value as perceived by its customers should be assessed periodically to see if improvements are needed. A measurement process that focuses only on customers' preferred attributes is useful, but not sufficient to truly understand customer value (Woodruff *et al.,* 1993). O'Brien and Jones (1995) proposed that customers' value perception is also a necessary condition for developing brand loyalty through the loyalty program (Yi & Jeon, 2003).

Customer value impacts customer loyalty and is the driving force behind customer attraction, retention, and repurchase. Thus, focus on customer value is both appropriate and necessary for business managers. Price can impact value as a function of what is paid, how that price compares to other prices compensates when that product or service is purchased (Ralston, 2003). Price is thought to impact quality because high quality products generally cost more to produce than low quality products. Price acts on consumers in two different ways. It signals quality and it signals the amount of monetary sacrifice involved in purchasing a product. Thus, both quality and sacrifice potentially mediate the influence of price on value in different ways (Agarwal & Teas, 2001).

Adding value and motivational information on demographics can greatly enhance the effectiveness of any segmentation effort, from the product development phase to the end of a product's life cycle. Managers can come to understand where a product, service or idea fits into a person's lifestyle and guiding principles (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). As a well-known method in the field of individual values, the list of Values (LOV) can serve as a key value measurement instrument in the study of consumer similarities and differences. Most marketing efforts will be more effective if the role of values is considered, and LOV provides one effective mechanism for assessing this role. The meanings and motives behind many consumer activities depend upon values (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). The psychologist Milton Rokeach identified a set of terminal values, or desired end states, that apply (to various degrees) to many different cultures. The Rokeach Value Survey (RVS), a scale used to measure these values, also includes a set of instrumental values, which are composed of actions needed to achieve these terminal values (Solomon, 1996). When RVS and LOV are compared with each other, Beatty *et al.*, (1985)

postulated that the LOV system has several advantages over the RVS system because the former is simpler to administer and the respondents would find the ranking of LOV's nine items an easier task to accomplish (Keng & Yang, 1993).

The List of Values (LOV) Scale identifies nine consumer segments based on the values they endorse and relates each to differences in consumption behaviors. These segments include consumers who place a priority on such values as sense of belonging, excitement, warm relationships with others, and security (Solomon, 1996). Personal values have also been found to be a good market segmentation variable (Boote,1981). AT&T also applied value research to cluster their consumers (Veltri & Schiffman, 1984). Because of the perceived strong linkage between values and consumption, Kahle and Kennedy (1998) observed that people often purchased products for the benefit of value fulfillment and hence concluded that the function of marketing is to help consumers fulfill their values.

Cognizant of the important role played by values in many aspects of human life, social scientists have embarked on an extensive empirical investigation of the effects of values. Munson (1984) provided a brief overview of values research across four disciplines: psychology, sociology, organizational behavior, and consumer behavior. The last two areas are particularly interesting for readers in the field of business and management (Keng & Yang, 1993). It is undeniable that customers will compare the functions and prices among similar products or services until they find one with the highest perceived value when making a purchase decision. Yet, what customers consider is not limited to functions and price when evaluating the value of a product

or service. Obviously, quality needs to be included in the context in order to capture the full meaning of customer's perceived value (Ho & Cheng, 1999).

The customer value approach requires a number of determinations (Saliba & Fisher, 2000):

- First, the organization must assess customer perceived benefits and sacrificies and the relative importance of each to the customer in order to determine customer value.
- Then the organization should compare itself to its competitors.
- Finally, it must determine how best to increase its customer perceived value to gain competitive advantage.

Organizations can influence the perceived value that customers attach to their products through actions that raise the perceived benefits or reduce the perceived sacrifices. After acquiring and using a product, customers are beter able to assess the benefits and sacrifices (Saliba & Fisher, 2000). Businesses that achieve a superior customer value position have average profit margins on sales that are three times greater than those of businesses that have an inferior customer value position, according to Keith Roberts (Saliba & Fisher, 2000).

THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of the study is to investigate whether customers' value perception of cellular phones in relation to the judgements on their minds are grouped under major dimensions such as emotional, quality, price and social or not. Furthermore, whether different clusters according to the customers' value perception dimensions, their demographic characteristics, individual life

values as well as differences in their attitudes in relation to the judgements about cellular phones exist or not were also examined in the content of this study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The analysis of data about categorizing customers' value perception dimensions of cellular phones in relation to the judgements on their minds requires an exploratory study. On the other hand, in order to confirm whether the above mentioned value perception dimensions comply with the four dimensions (emotional, quality, price, social) presented in the literature; a descriptive study was carried out.

In the research model, the cluster of customers according to their value perception dimensions, demographic characteristics, individual life values and their attitudes in relation to the judgements about cellular phones were also analyzed through a descriptive study as shown Figure 1.

The research model examines customers' value perceptions in four dimensions. The value perceptions were measured on a 5 point likert type of scale. Customers' demographic and socio-cultural characteristics, individual life values, value perceptions as well as the factors that were used to describe different clusters were considered as the variables of this study.

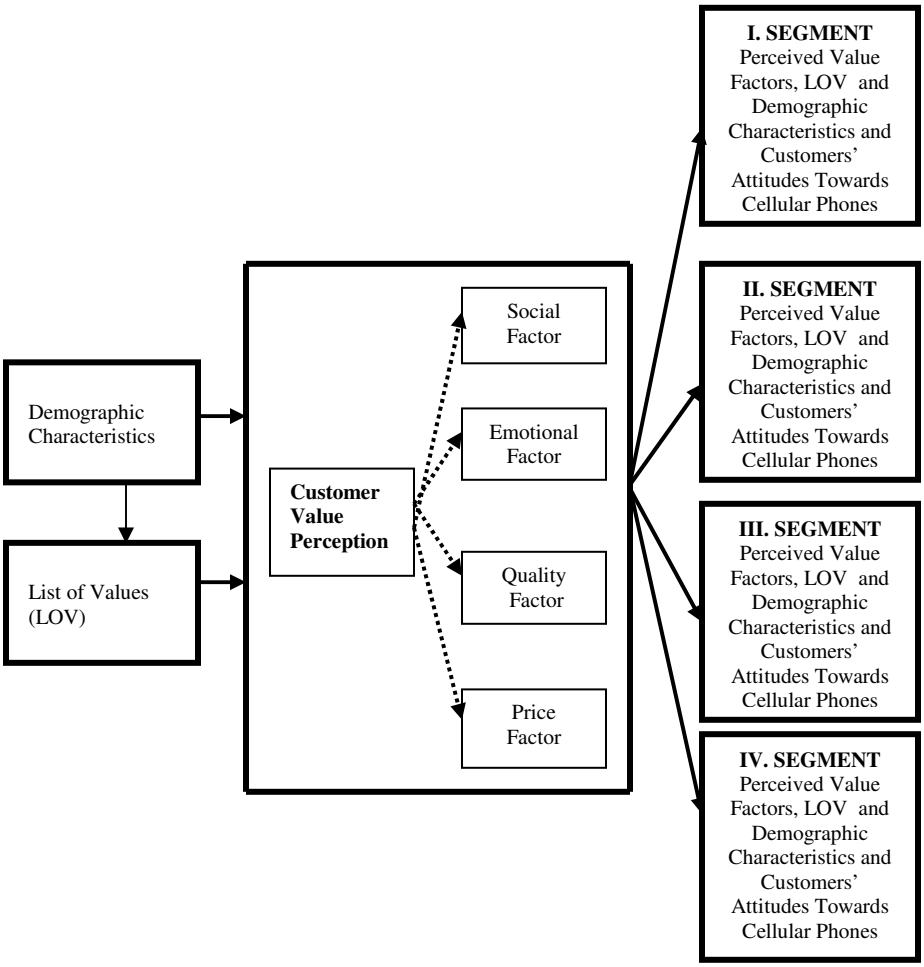

Figure 1. Research Model

THE HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

The related hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H_1: The customers' value perceptions related to cellular phone buying are categorized under four dimensions such as quality, price, social and emotional.

H_2: Customers are clustered in different segments in relation to their value perceptions of cellular phone buying.

H_3: Customers who are clustered in different groups according to their product value perceptions have different individual life values.

H_4: Different clusters of customers in relation to their product value perceptions have different demographic characteristics.

H_5: Customers who are clustered in different groups according to their product value perceptions have different attitudes in relation to their cellular phone judgements on their minds.

THE SAMPLE OF THE STUDY AND LIMITATIONS:

The study contains a sample of customers who live in İstanbul and who possess cellular phones. A structured questionnaire was conducted to a sample of 514 people. A pretest was conducted to ensure clarity and communicability of the questionnaire with 30 respondents. Convenience sampling method is used in a face to face survey to select and collect data from the respondents. This study was carried out among 514 respondents only in Istanbul since there have been such

limitations as the cost of time and budget. As this is a pilot study, the outcomes were not intended to be generalized.

THE DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE:

The data about product value perceptions and individual life values were collected by a questionnaire that consists of four sections. In the first section, items about nine individual life values adopted from Kahle's (1983) List of Value (LOV) Scale took place. The content of the values in this scale are sense of belonging, excitement, warm relationships with others, self-fulfillment, being well respected, fun and enjoyment of life, security, self-respect and sense of accomplishment. The original LOV Scale has got a nine point likert type of scale.

The second section of the questionnaire contains items of product value perceptions such as social, emotional, price and quality. The Value Perception Scale with 19 items developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) was used. The responses to Product Value Perception Scale were given on a five point likert type of scale. The third section consists of items that measure the customers' attitudes toward the use of cellular phone buying in relation to the judgements on their minds.

The final section of the questionnaire is composed of items about demographic characteristics such as gender, marital status, educational background, salary income level, profession and family size. The items in the questionnaire were assigned in relation to the study's main

purposes and were pre-tested in a pilot group of 30 respondents. The required changes were made as a consequence of pretest.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics

Gender	**Frequency**	**Occupation**	**Frequency**
Female	258	Self-employment	100
Male	256	Tradesman	16
Total	514	Merchant	8
Education	**Frequency**	Civil Servant	73
Primary School	12	Retired	18
High School	93	Labor	79
Graduate	291	Housewife	31
Postgraduate	118	Student	176
Total	514	Private sector	13
		Total	514
Age	**Frequency**		
34 and below	403	**Family Size**	**Frequency**
35-50	83	One person	40
51 and above	28	Two persons	76
Total	514	Three persons	127
		Four persons	188
Income Level	**Frequency**	Five and above	83
1000 YTL and below	67	Total	514
1001-1500 YTL	71		
1501-2000 YTL	95		
2001-2500 YTL	47	**Marital Status**	**Frequency**
2501-3000 YTL	92	Married	151
3001 YTL and above	142	Single	363
Total	514	Total	514

The demographic characteristics of the sample group shows that the frequency of university and high school graduates are higher than primary and secondary school graduates. The majority of the sample group consists of married respondents. The dominant age group is 34 and below. The most frequent family size of the respondents are between three and four. The salary income of the sample group is frequently between the level of 2501 – 3000 YTL and 3001 YTL and above. Among several occupations, the majority of the respondents are either students or the ones in trading business (Table 1).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY'S RELATED HYPOTHESES:

The data analyses were performed by SPSS 15.0 and AMOS 7.0 statistical program. In order to investigate which value dimensions influence customers' evaluation of cellular phones, a 5 point likert scale that consist of 19 items was used. The reliability and validity of the scale were analyzed. The findings of the factor analysis performed for the validity analysis showed that customers' value perceptions were grouped under four dimensions. This finding was also confirmed by structural equation modeling along with confirmatory factor analysis. The categorized variables driven from factor analysis were put into cluster analysis to find out different clusters of customers depending on their value perception dimensions. For testing different segment of customers' (based on cluster analysis) individual values, demographic and socio-cultural characteristics, cellular phone using habits and attitudes toward cellular phones, chi-square analysis were performed.

For the reliability analysis of the scale used in this study, the most frequently used cronbach alpha coefficiency was examined. First of all, for the 19 items scale which measures customers' value perceptions attributed to cellular phones, reliability analysis were performed. The scale's internal consistency was found to be .840. The lower limit that is accepted for cronbach alpha coefficient is .70. However, for some exploratory studies, this limit can be tolerated to .60 (Hair *et al.,*1998). As cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale in this study is higher than the commonly accepted .70, no item was required to be left out.

In this study, for testing the hypothesis about the dimensions that determine the occurance of customer value perceptions and for investigating the effect of the loadings of customer value perception dimensions over customer value perceptions, structural equation modeling has been used and second level confirmatory factor analysis has been performed.

As a consequence of validity and reliability analysis, no single item was eliminated from the 19 item value perception scale and confirmatory factor analysis was initiated. Nevertheless, the item about "the product that I would enjoy" (B5) was strongly related to the quality dimension though it was supposed to be related to the emotional value dimension. Therefore, it was decided to leave out this item from the scale. When the item about "the poor workmanship" is compared with the item about "would not last a long time" related to the quality dimension, one of these items was eliminated from the research model. As the item about "the poor workmanship" is almost similar to the item about "how well the product is made," the former item was decided to be withdrawn from the scale. When the 19 items were reduced to 17 items, and the analysis continued, an improvement was observed in the criteria of structural equation modeling (Table 2).

Table 2. The Results of Analyses After B5 and C18 were Withdrawn from the Scale

Number of Variables	CMM (Chi-Square)	Cmv/DF	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
19	316.271	3.536	.898	.867	.923	.70
17	**341.477**	**3.022**	**.927**	**.901**	**.948**	**.63**

In customer value perception research model, the observed variables that are symbolized by rectangles in the model are 17. The error ratio of each variable is identified as "e". Each dimension in the latent variable nature of customer value perception is represented by ellipses in the research model. The observed variables (17 total) along with the four latent variables (emotional, quality, price and social) are endogeneous-internal variables whereas the variables that show errors and that are explained from e_1 to e_{19} are exogeneous-external variables. In this research model, customer value perception dimensions are determined by structural equation modeling. To achieve this purpose of the study, AMOS 7.0 was utilized. The one way arrows moving from customer values as latent values to value dimensions represent each of the four variables' standardized regression coefficiencies. These values in the model differ from .36 (social dimension) to .92 (emotional dimension).

Whether the interrelated four factors are grouped under the same general factor or not was tested and it is proved that the model that second level factor is involved explains the concept better than the other level. Some of the fitness indexes of the model are as follows: $X^2/df = 3.022$, GFI = .927, AGFI = .901 and RMSEA = .063. Since chi-square value is sensitive to the sample size, this value alone is not sufficient for evaluating the fitness between the model and the data (Baker *et al.*, 2002). Accordingly, some other criterias are required to look for the fitness between the model and the data. For testing the fitness between the model and the data X^2/sd ratio was calculated by dividing chi-square value by the degrees of freedom. This ratio should be close to zero or lower than five (Yoo *et al.,* 2000). In this research model, chi-square value is 341.477 and the degree of freedom is 113. When the chi-square value 341.477 is divided by the degree of

freedom (341.477/113), the value of 3.022 is found. Therefore, a fitness between the data obtained and the research model can be accomplished.

Another criteria to evaluate the fitness between the data and the model is the goodness of fit index (GFI). GFI falls in between zero and one. Other fitness criteria such as CFI (Comperative Fit Index), NFI (Normed Fit Index), TLI (Tucker - Lewis Index), RFI (Relative Fit Index) and IFI (Incremental Fit Index) also fall in between zero and one. When this value gets closer to one, it can be said that the fitness between the data and the model is adequate. As GFI value was found to be .927, this value indicates a well fitness of the model and the data. Other fitness criteria such as NFI (.925), RFI (.909), IFI (.948), TLI (.937) and CFI (.948) indicate a well fitness of the model and the data since all these values are close to one.

RMSEA is also used for evaluating the fitness. RMSEA value of .063 in this study represents an adequate fitness. Finally, .05 Hoelter and .01, Hoelter Indexes indicate the minimum sample size that the research hypothesis can be tested at a confidence level. To test the hypothesis at %95 confidence interval level and .05 significance level, the required minimum sample size is 209, at %99 confidence interval level and .01 significance level the minimum sample size that is required is 227. 514 sample size of this study is further beyond the required sample sizes determined by Hoelter .05 and Hoelter .01 indexes.

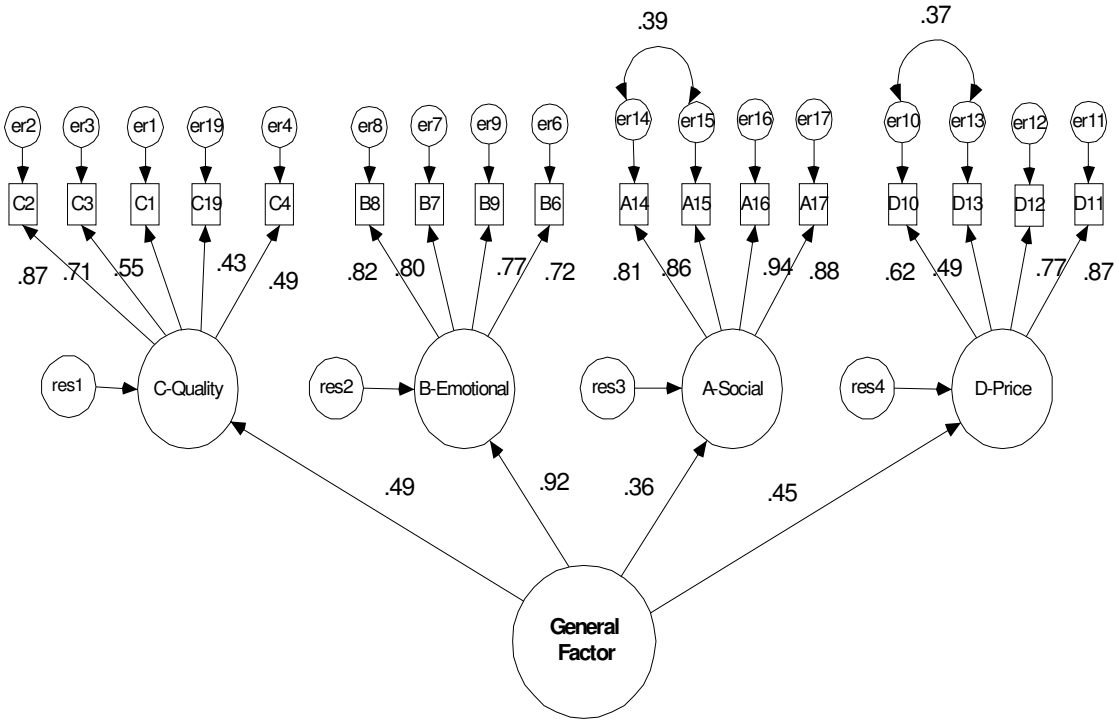

Figure 2: Customer Value Perception Dimensions

Standardized regression coefficiencies demonstrate the loading of customer value perception dimensions over the customer value perceptions. As can be seen in Figure 2 and Table 3, the highest loading of value perception dimension over the value perceptions of the customers is Emotional (.92) followed respectively by Quality (.49), Price (.45) and Social (.36).

Table 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Component		
(Cronbach's alpha .860)		**EMOTIONAL**
B8	**This product would make me feel good.**	**.82**
B7	**This product is the one that I would feel relaxed about using**	**.80**
B9	**This product would give me pleasure.**	**.77**
B6	**This product would make me want to use it.**	**.72**
		(Standardised Regression Weights .92)
(Cronbach's alpha .734)		**QUALITY**
C2	**This product is well made.**	**.87**
C3	**This product has an acceptable standard of quality.**	**.71**

C1	**This product has consistent quality.**	**.55**
C19	**This product would perform consistantly.**	**.43**
C4	**This product would not last a long time.**	**.49**
		(Standardised Regression Weights .49)
(Cronbach's alpha .808)		**PRICE**
D10	**This product is reasonably priced.**	**.62**
D13	**This product would be economical.**	**.49**
D12	**This product is a good product for the price.**	**.77**
D11	**This product offers value for money.**	**.87**
		(Standardised Regression Weights .45)
(Cronbach's alpha .934)		**SOCIAL**
A16	**Using this product would make a good impression on other people.**	**.94**
A15	**To use this product would improve the way I'm perceived.**	**.86**
A17	**To use this product would give its owner social approval.**	**.88**
A14	**Using this product would help me feel acceptable.**	**.81**
		(Standardised Regression Weights .36)

The first factor consist of such variables as how good the product makes the customer feel about, how relaxed the customer would feel about using the product, the pleasure the product gives and how the product would make the customer want to use it. This factor is identified as emotional dimension. In other words, the products' ability to stimulate emotions or emotional states can be called as emotional dimension. Some products or services can be consumed because of the desire they create to experience particular emotions (Tek, 2006) according to the reliability analysis of the emotional dimension scale that consist of four items, cronbach alpha coefficiency was found to be .860. Thus, no item was taken out of the scale.

The second factor that is called as the quality dimension is composed of such variables as how well the product is made, an acceptable degree of quality standards, the consistency of the quality and the performance and the durability of the product. The cronbach alpha coefficiency

(.734) of the reliability analysis show that neither of the five items was required to be removed from the scale.

The third factor that is described as the price dimension consists of such variables as how good and how economic the price of the product is, how well and valuable the product is in comparison to its price. The cronbach alpha value of .808 clarifies that the scale that is composed of four items was reliable and no item was required to be removed.

The fourth factor that is named as social dimension is composed of such variables as the good impression using the product leaves on other people, the positive perceptions the product causes in the social environment, the social approval the product gives its owner. Social value dimension is about attributing positive or negative characteristics to a product to influence social value of its users by relating them to demographic, socio-economic, cultural and ethnical groups. Consumers motivated by social values will choose alternatives which represent the groups they're identified with or they belong to (Tek, 2006). The cronbach alpha value of the reliability analysis demonstrate .934 reliability coefficiency. Consequently, no item was removed from the scale.

The reliability analysis of all the scales used in this study show that the scales have got internal consistency. No single variable was found to have low correlation with the scales of the study. No variable was removed from the scales to enhance alpha coefficiency. The alpha coefficiencies of all the scales involved are over .70, a value that is considered as the lowest level of acceptability for a reliable scale (Hair *et al.*, 1998). Therefore, H_1 hypothesis that states

"The customers' value perceptions related to cellular phone buying are categorized under four dimensions such as quailty, price, social and emotional" is accepted.

For testing the second hypothesis of the study, "H_2: Customers are clustered in different segments in relation to their value perceptions of cellular phone buying", a nonhierarchical k-means method was used to perform cluster analysis. To eliminate systematic error for determining cluster numbers in k-means method, several attempts has been made in relation to k numbers and finally it was decided to select k number as four. With the use of the selected k number (4), the appropriate findings for interpreting the data as well as for clustering have been reached. As shown in Table.4, from a total of 514 respondents, 135 of them were placed in the first cluster, 129 in the second, 103 in the third and 147 in the fourth. In Table 4, F values in the content of cluster analysis, significance levels and final cluster centers can also be seen. The variables that were involved in cluster analysis were evaluated at $\alpha = .005$ significance level.

Table 4. Final Cluster Centers, Number of Cases in Each Cluster and ANOVA

			1 Cluster		2 Cluster		3 Cluster		4 Cluster	
Sig..	F	COMPONENTS..	Importance Attributed to Each Factor	1 Cluster	Importance Attributed to Each Factor	2 Cluster	Importance Attributed to Each Factor	3 Cluster	Importance Attributed to Each Factor	4 Cluster
.000	41.602	EMOTIONAL FACTOR	1	.47012	4	-.68037	3	-.12876	3	.25554
.000	241.159	SOCIAL FACTOR	4	-.81830	3	-.58503	1	.34362	1	1.02413
.000	197.784	QUALITY FACTOR	2	.03432	2	.46972	4	-1.40737	2	.54239
.000	75.797	PRICE FACTOR	3	-.74871	1	.71728	2	.33507	4	-.17664
Number of Cases in each Cluster				1 Cluster		2 Cluster		3 Cluster		4 Cluster
Valid: 514 Missing: 0				135		129		103		147

The ANOVA table shows whether there are differences between the mean value of the variables in four clusters or not at α = .005 significance level. The variance analysis support the finding that emotional, quality, price and social components differ among clusters at α = .005 significance level. Since cluster analysis maximize the differences, the distribution of observations among the clusters is not random. Therefore, the results of variance analysis can only be seen as a descriptive information.

To be able to interpret each of the four clusters in more detail and to make comparisons between the clusters, LSD test was applied. The findings about cluster's comparisons can be examined in Table 5. Accordingly, to make interpretations about how value dimensions (components) differ from one cluster to another becomes easier. When the two-way comparisons are examined, there are differences among clusters (indicated with * sign) in terms of value dimensions at α = .005 significance level. Only the quality value dimension does not differ in between the second and the fourth cluster. In all the rest of other comparisons, it can be seen that all value perception dimensions differ from one cluster to another (Table 5).

Table 5. Two Way Comparisons of Factors In Relation to the Clusters

EMOTIONAL FACTOR				**SOCIAL FACTOR**			
ANOVA				**ANOVA**			
F		**Sig.**		**F**		**Sig.**	
41.602		**.000**		241.159		**.000**	
CLUSTER N	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**	**CLUSTER N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**
1.CLUSTER- 135	.4701164	.89990671	.07745164	**1.CLUSTER- 135**	-.8183037	.53246291	.04582711
2.CLUSTER- 129	-.6803741	.95784651	.08433368	**2.CLUSTER- 129**	-.5850296	.61247755	.05392564
3.CLUSTER- 103	-.1287600	.92867552	.09150512	**3.CLUSTER- 103**	.3436153	.82621258	.08140914
4.CLUSTER- 147	.2555430	.82020311	.06764921	**4.CLUSTER- 147**	1.0241322	.62192881	.05129582
Total- 514	.0000000	1.00000000	.04410811	**Total- 514**	.0000000	1.00000000	.04410811
The Comparison of Emotional Factor Among Four Clusters (I-J)				**The Comparison of Social Factor Among Four Clusters (I-J)**			

Mean Differences (I-J)		Std. Error	Sig.	Mean Differences (I-J)		Std. Error	Sig.
1-2	1.15049058(*)	.11068232	.000*	**1-2**	-.23327412(*)	.07940238	.003*
1-3	.59887643(*)	.11760912	.000*	**1-3**	-1.16191905(*)	.08437159	.000*
1-4	.21457345(*)	.10716107	.046*	**1-4**	-1.84243592(*)	.07687626	.000*
2-3	-.55161415(*)	.11878690	.000*	**2-3**	-.92864493(*)	.08521652	.000*
2-4	-.93591713(*)	.10845237	.000*	**2-4**	-1.60916180(*)	.07780263	.000*
3-4	-.38430298(*)	.11551297	.001*	**3-4**	-.68051687(*)	.08286784	.000*

Table 5. cont.

QUALITY FACTOR				PRICE FACTOR			
ANOVA				ANOVA			
F		Sig.		F		Sig.	
197.784		.000		75.797		.000	
CLUSTER N	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**	**CLUSTER N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**
1.CLUSTER- 135	.0343248	.77269612	.06650309	**1.CLUSTER- 135**	-.7487053	.82809978	.07127148
2.CLUSTER- 129	.4697189	.62256338	.05481365	**2.CLUSTER- 129**	.7172809	.75757025	.06670034
3.CLUSTER- 103	-1.4073681	.68317826	.06731555	**3.CLUSTER- 103**	.3350691	.86741362	.08546880
4.CLUSTER- 147	.5423900	.64052266	.05282942	**4.CLUSTER- 147**	-.1766404	.87861861	.07246724
Total- 514	.0000000	1.00000000	.04410811	**Total- 514**	.0000000	1.00000000	.04410811
The Comparison of Quality Factor Among Four Clusters (I-J)				**The Comparison of Price Factor Among Four Clusters (I-J)**			
Mean Differences (I-J)		**Std. Error**	**Sig.**	**Mean Differences (I-J)**		**Std. Error**	**Sig.**
1-2	-.43539410(*)	,08395409	.000*	**1-2**	-1.46598619(*)	.10269508	.000*
1-3	1.44169296(*)	,08920817	.000*	**1-3**	-1.08377434(*)	.10912202	.000*
1-4	-.50806517(*)	,08128317	.000*	**1-4**	-.57206491(*)	.09942793	.000*
2-3	1.87708706(*)	,09010153	.000*	**2-3**	.38221185(*)	.11021480	.001*
2-4	-.07267107	,08226264	.377	**2-4**	.89392128(*)	.10062605	.000*
3-4	-1.94975813(*)	,08761821	.000*	**3-4**	.51170943(*)	.10717713	.000*

If the groups are of approximately equal size (i.e., if the largest group size divided by the smallest group size is less than 1.5), a violation of equal variances assumption has minimal

impact. If the sizes differ more than this, then the researcher should test and correct for unequal variances, if possible (Hair *et al.*, 1998). When the highest number of people (147) in the forth cluster is divided by the lowest number of people (103) in the third cluster, the final result (147/103= 1.427) is under 1.5. Accordingly, the homogeneity of the variances test (Levene Test) is not required.

As it comes to interpret the table of final cluster centers (Table 4) based on the research findings, it can be said that customers in the first cluster reached the highest value in emotional dimension while they have the lowest value in social dimension. In the same cluster, the ones who valued the quality dimension in the second order also valued the price dimension as the lowest. The rank order of this group's value dimensions are emotional, quality, price and social. This cluster of customers are "emotional and quality" oriented.

Customers in the second cluster valued the price dimension the highest followed by the quality dimension. When they are compared to other clusters, emotional dimension is the lowest negative one. Social dimension, on the other hand, is the second negative dimension both in this cluster and among the other clusters. The cellular phone value dimensions of this cluster indicate a positive tendency toward price and quality dimensions. Consequently, these people are "price and quality" oriented (Table 4).

The third cluster of customers attributed almost equal positive values to social and price dimensions while emotional and quality dimensions were negatively valued. Compared to other clusters, they don't seem to give importance to the quality dimension at all. This cluster of

customers are rather "social and price" oriented though the values they attributed are not very high (Table 4).

Finally, in the fourth cluster, social dimension was valued the highest when compared to other clusters. Moreover, they also valued the quality dimension as the highest among other clusters. Emotional dimension is also positive though not as much as the first cluster. However, the price factor was not found to be important. The fourth cluster of customers can be called as "social and quality" oriented ones (Table 4).

Based on the findings about the clusters of customers mentioned above, it can be summarized that the first cluster is emotional and quality oriented, the second cluster is price and quality oriented, the third group is moderately social and price oriented whereas the fourth group is social and quality oriented about cellular phone buying. Therefore, "H_2: Customers are clustered in different segments in relation to their value perceptions of cellular phone buying" is mostly accepted.

In the content of this study, not only the clusters of customers according to their value perception dimensions were examined but the differences in between clusters in terms of individual life values were also tested by chi-square analysis (Table 6). According to the findings, "warm relationship with others," "excitement," "self-respect" and "sense of achievement" type of individual life values were found to be important for "social and quality" oriented cluster of customers. "Warm relationship with others," "excitement," "self-respect," and "sense of achievement" were not found very important individual life values by "social and price oriented"

cluster. Consequently, the majority of "H_3: Customers who are clustered in different groups according to their product value perceptions have different individual life values" hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6. The Distribution of Individual Life Values in Customer Segments

WARM AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 35.780(a) **Sig. .000**
VERY UNIMPORTANT	**Count**	3	4	19	8	34	
	% of Total	.6%	.8%	3.7%	1.6%	6.6%	
2.00	**Count**	6	3	8	6	23	
	% of Total	1.2%	.6%	1.6%	1.2%	4.5%	
VERY IMPORTANT	**Count**	126	122	76	133	457	
	% of Total	24.5%	23.7%	14.8%	25.9%	88.9%	
a 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.61.							
EXCITEMENT		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 18.279(a) **Sig. .006**
VERY UNIMPORTANT	**Count**	14	11	25	15	65	
	% of Total	2.7%	2.1%	4.9%	2.9%	12.6%	
2,00	**Count**	23	18	10	17	68	
	% of Total	4.5%	3.5%	1.9%	3.3%	13.2%	
VERY IMPORTANT	**Count**	98	100	68	115	381	
	% of Total	19.1%	19.5%	13.2%	22.4%	74.1%	
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.03.							
SELF-RESPECT		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 15.063(a) **Sig. .020**
VERY UNIMPORTANT	**Count**	9	5	14	5	33	
	% of Total	1.8%	1.0%	2.7%	1.0%	6.4%	
2,00	**Count**	12	6	8	9	35	
	% of Total	2.3%	1.2%	1.6%	1.8%	6.8%	
VERY IMPORTANT	**Count**	114	118	81	133	446	
	% of Total	22.2%	23.0%	15.8%	25.9%	86.8%	
a 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6,61.							
A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 15.815(a)
VERY UNIMPORTANT	**Count**	6	7	13	4	30	
	% of Total	1.2%	1.4%	2.5%	.8%	5.8%	
2,00	**Count**	9	10	5	4	28	

	% of Total	1.8%	1.9%	1.0%	.8%	5.4%	**Sig. .015**
VERY IMPORTANT	**Count**	120	112	85	139	456	
	% of Total	23.3%	21.8%	16.5%	27.0%	88.7%	
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.61.							

This study also compares demographic characteristics of the clusters from the point of people's value perception dimensions based on their attributions to the cellular phones. There are significant differences among clusters in relation to such demographic factors as gender and age. Education, marital status, occupation and income level on the other hand, do not cause a significant difference among clusters.

Table 7. The Distribution of Demographic Characteristics in Customer Segments

Gender		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 8.296(a) **Sig. .040**
Female	**Count**	71	74	40	73	258	
	% of Total	13.8%	14.4%	7.8%	14.2%	50.2%	
Male	**Count**	64	55	63	74	256	
	% of Total	12.5%	10.7%	12.3%	14.4%	49.8%	
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 51.30.							
Age Groups		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests **Pearson Chi-Square** 15.779(a) **Sig. .015**
34 and below	**Count**	118	90	81	114	403	
	% of Total	23.0%	17.5%	15.8%	22.2%	78.4%	
35-50	**Count**	14	30	13	26	83	
	% of Total	2.7%	5.8%	2.5%	5.1%	16.1%	
51 and above	**Count**	3	9	9	7	28	
	% of Total	.6%	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	5.4%	
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.61.							

As shown in Table 7, the majority of the first cluster where people are considered as "emotional and quality" oriented, are females. Most of the customers in this group are 34 years old or younger. The majority of the second cluster also consists of females. Although not as much as

in the case of the first and the fourth cluster, most of the customers in the second cluster (price and quality oriented) are 34 years old or even younger. In the third cluster where the customers are considered as "social and price" oriented at a moderate level, the majority of them are males and they are 34 years old or younger. There is almost an equal distribution of males and females in the fourth cluster who are called as "social and quality" oriented ones.

The majority of the people at the age group 35-50 are from the fourth cluster. Though not as many as in the case of first cluster, most of the people at the age group 34 and below are in the fourth cluster. Thus, "H_4: Different clusters of customers in relation to their product value perceptions have different demographic characteristics" is partially accepted.

As seen in Table 8, when the customers' attitudes toward cellular phone buying is examined from the aspect of clusters, the findings draw our attention to the fact that the majority of the people who strongly agreed with such items as "I have a desire to buy this product," "I recommend this product to my friends and relatives," "I believe I won't come across any problem with this product" are gathered in the highly "social and quality" oriented cluster. The ones who agreed to the same items are also in the same cluster. The people who strongly disagreed to the above mentioned items are usually in the third and second cluster of customers. The very same items were disagreed by the majority of "social and price" oriented cluster.

Table 8. The Distribution of Customers' Cellular Phone Attitudes in Customer Segments

I have a desire to buy this product.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests
Strongly disagree	**Count**	4	3	6	1	14	**Pearson Chi-Square** 52.519(a)
	% of Total	.8%	.6%	1.2%	.2%	2.7%	**Sig. .000**
Disagree	**Count**	10	20	27	8	65	
	% of Total	1.9%	3.9%	5.3%	1.6%	12.6%	
Uncertain	**Count**	19	28	20	17	84	
	% of Total	3.7%	5.4%	3.9%	3.3%	16.3%	
Agree	**Count**	91	68	44	98	301	
	% of Total	17.7%	13.2%	8.6%	19.1%	58.6%	
Strongly agree	**Count**	11	10	6	23	50	
	% of Total	2.1%	1.9%	1.2%	4.5%	9.7%	
a 4 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.81.							
I recommend this product to my friends and relatives.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests
Strongly disagree	**Count**	3	7	5	1	16	**Pearson Chi-Square** 55.232(a)
	% of Total	.6%	1.4%	1.0%	.2%	3.1%	**Sig. .000**
Disagree	**Count**	15	14	21	5	55	
	% of Total	2.9%	2.7%	4.1%	1.0%	10.7%	
Uncertain	**Count**	35	22	36	25	118	
	% of Total	6.8%	4.3%	7.0%	4.9%	23.0%	
Agree	**Count**	73	76	39	94	282	
	% of Total	14.2%	14.8%	7.6%	18.3%	54.9%	
Strongly agree	**Count**	9	10	2	22	43	
	% of Total	1.8%	1.9%	.4%	4.3%	8.4%	
a 4 cells (20,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3,21.							
I believe I won't come across any problem with this product.		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**	Chi-Square Tests
Strongly disagree	**Count**	13	7	15	4	39	**Pearson Chi-Square** 50.826(a)
	% of Total	2.5%	1.4%	2.9%	.8%	7.6%	**Sig. .000**
Disagree	**Count**	33	29	32	19	113	
	% of Total	6.4%	5.6%	6.2%	3.7%	22.0%	
Uncertain	**Count**	49	41	35	43	168	
	% of Total	9.5%	8.0%	6.8%	8.4%	32.7%	
Agree	**Count**	35	44	15	60	154	
	% of Total	6.8%	8.6%	2.9%	11.7%	30.0%	
Strongly agree	**Count**	5	8	6	21	40	
	% of Total	1.0%	1.6%	1.2%	4.1%	7.8%	
a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.82.							

The item "I have a desire to buy this product" was unconcerned by mostly "price and quality" oriented second cluster whereas "I recommend this product to my friends and relatives" was similarly unconsidered by the third cluster. The "emotional and quality" oriented first cluster responded to the item "I believe I won't come across any problem with this product" as "uncertain." As a consequence, "H_5: Customers who are clustered in different groups according to their product value perceptions have different attitudes in relation to their cellular phone judgements on their minds" hypothesis of the study is accepted.

CONCLUSION

In the content of this study, in which segments customers were clustered in relation to the value they attributed to the product, what individual life values were found important by customers, which demographic characteristics customers possessed and what kind of attitudes customers evolved towards cellular phones are examined based on customers' value perception dimensions about cellular phones.

The data was collected by a questionnaire composed of four sections. In the first section, items about customers' individual life values and in the following section items about customers' value perceptions of a product in relation to the evaluations on their mind took place. There were items about customers' attitudes toward cellular phones based on their evaluations on their mind in the third section while fourth section was composed of items of demographic characteristics.

514 respondents were involved to the study. The four value dimensions that were found as a result of exploratory factor analysis comply with the current literature. Afterwards, these results

were confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis. In terms of the four value dimensions, customers were clustered as "emotional and quality," "price and quality," moderately low "social and price" and "social and quality" oriented ones.

Emotional and Quality Oriented First Cluster: This cluster of customers who are mostly females and at the age of 34 and below are identified with such variables as "how good the product makes the customer feel about," "how relaxed the customer feels about using the product," "the pleasure the product gives," "the desire the product makes the customer use it," "how well the product is made," "an acceptable degree of quality standards," "the consistency of its quality and its performance" and "the durability of the product (would not last a long time)." If the reason why emotional dimension was particularly related to a woman dominated cluster is questioned, it can be combined with the woman's image in the society caused by her role expectations. By looking at the individual life values of this group, warm and close relationship with others is the highest one. In other words, to be friendly, sincere and supportive are important individual life values. The values such as excitement, self-respect and sense of achievement were highly evaluated as important values by this group. This cluster of customers who were also found to be quality oriented responded as uncertain to the item that asks if the customer believed he wouldn't experience any problem related to the product.

Price and Quality Oriented Second Cluster: This cluster mostly consists of females and age 34 and below ones who expressed such variables as "how reasonable and economic the price of the product is," "how good and how valuable the product is in comparison to its price," "how well the product is made," "an acceptable degree of quality standards," "the consistency of its

quality and its performance," and "the durability of the product." The individual life values that were emphasized by this cluster were close and warm relationship with others, excitement, self-respect and sense of achievement. This cluster of customers who were also quality oriented responded to the item "I have a desire to buy this product" as uncertain.

Social and Price Oriented Third Cluster: The customers in this cluster are mostly males and are at the age of 34 and below. The preferred variables related to social dimension are "the good impression that the product leaves on others," "the way the person is perceived positively by his environment," "the social approval the product provides," and "social acceptance of the person in his environment." The variables related to the price dimension are "how reasonable and how economic the price of the product is," and "how good the product is in comparison to its price." The majority of this cluster gave no importance to such quality dimensions as "how well the product is made," "an acceptable degree of quality standards," "the consistency of its quality and its performance," and "the durability of the product." This group has a tendency for recognition in the social environment rather than the quality.

Individual life values such as "warm relationship with others," "excitement," "self-respect," and "sense of achievement" were not considered as important by the majority of this cluster of customers. Customers' attitudes towards cellular phones show that such judgements as I have a desire to buy this product," "I recommend this product to my friends and relatives," and "I believe I won't come across any problem with this product" were approved by the majority of customers in this group.

Highly social and Quality Oriented Fourth Cluster: The fourth cluster of customers in which the number of males and females are almost even evaluated the cellular phones in relation to such criterias as "the good impression the product leaves on other people," "the positive perceptions the product causes in the social environment," "the social approval the product provides to its customers," "the social acceptance the product provides in the social environment of its customers," "how well the product is made," "an acceptable degree of quality standarts," "the consistency of the quality and the performance," and "the durability of the product." However, the number of males is slightly higher (% .4) than females in this cluster. Hence, socio-psychological needs such as to create influence in the social environment and social acceptance are evaluated as important needs by both males and females. The majority of this group is at the age of 35 - 50. The individual life values such as "the warm relationship with others," "excitement," "self respect," and "sense of achievement" are highly rated by most of the people in this group. In other words, to achieve a task and to receive feedback about that, self-esteem, to act with solidarity and the need for innovativeness are important for the people who are involved to this group.

The majority of 34 and below age group are from this cluster. Nevertheless, the number of this particular age group is higher in the "emotional and quality" oriented first cluster. Most of the people in the "social and quality" oriented cluster "strongly agreed" on such attitudes about cellular phones as "the desire to buy this product," "to recommend this product to his friends and relatives," and "the belief that no problem will be encountered related to this product." Similarly, the above mentioned attitudes were also "agreed" mostly by this group.

Considering all the findings of the study, it can be concluded that people's decision making processes are influenced by their value perceptions when they are about to purchase a product, particularly in an environment where customers have become more selective than ever. Therefore, this finding of the study should carefully be analyzed by marketing managers. The value dimension that is perceived by the customer about a particular product will also reflect the customer's expectation related to the same product. The value perceptions may vary from customer to customer, or may depend on the type of product and how the product appears to others in the social environment. In other words, the social privilege or status a particular product provides to its customers and the social acceptance the product provides in the social environment is an important issue. For instance, cellular phone is a kind of product that the way it appears may attract other people's attention. Accordingly, a marketing manager should concentrate on which type of product is identified with what kind of value dimension such as social, emotional, price and quality from customer's point of view. In addition, the individual life values that influence decision making process of the customer who attempts to buy a product as well as the common customer segments that occur according to the value perceptions and demographic characteristics should be considered carefully by marketing managers. Thus, they can generate appropriate and effective strategies to attract their customers' attention and to influence their customers' buying behavior. In the case of cellular phone buying, in countries like Turkey where cellular phones have become an inevitable requirement for the majority of the people in the society, further research findings are required to investigate customers' value perceptions, individual life values and demographic characteristics associated with cellular phones in a particular society. Accordingly, many other future research findings will help

managers apply effective marketing strategies that will support the promotions of their company's product as well as the company's prosperity.

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