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COMPONENTS OF TASTE IN FURNITURE SELECTION:
THE CASE OF UPPER INCOME GROUP IN İSTANBUL

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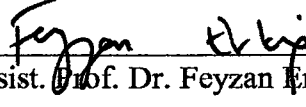
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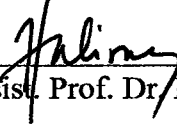
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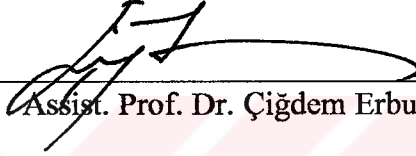
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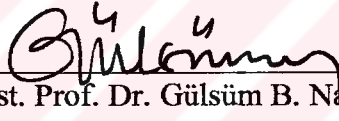
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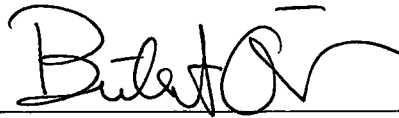
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ABSTRACT

COMPONENTS OF TASTE IN FURNITURE SELECTION: THE CASE OF UPPER INCOME GROUP IN İSTANBUL

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The aim of the present study is to develop a framework for the determination of the influential factors of taste in the selection of furniture, mainly for the living rooms which is tested through the upper income group in İstanbul. Therefore, the concepts constituting the framework of the study are explained, the important factors in the selection of furniture are explored and then the concept of taste is discussed. Accordingly, the factors constituting the taste is put forward which are influential in the selection of furniture. Lastly, an empirical research was conducted in İstanbul to investigate the role of these factors in the formation of taste of upper income group.

Keywords: Taste, furniture, furniture selection, taste variables, upper income group.

ÖZET

MOBİLYA SEÇİMİNDE ZEVK UNSURU BİLEŞENLERİNİN BELİRLENMESİ: İSTANBUL'DAKİ ÜST GELİR GRUBU ÖRNEĞİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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Bu tezin amacı, mobilya seçiminde etkili olan zevk kavramını oluşturan etkenlerin saptanmasına yönelik bir çerçeve geliştirmektir. Bu kavram İstanbul'da üst gelir gruplarının oturma odaları için mobilya seçimleri aracılığı ile tartışılmıştır. Tezin çerçevesini oluşturan kavramlar arasında mobilya seçiminde ortaya çıkan önemli etkenler ve bunların arasında zevk kavramının yeri belirlenecek ve bu doğrultuda zevk kavramı açıklanacaktır. Böylece mobilya seçiminde ortaya çıkan zevk etkeninin içeriği belirlenmeye çalışılacaktır. Bu çalışmaların sonucunda belirlenen etkenlerin geçerliliği İstanbul'da yürütülen araştırmayla sınıanmış ve sonuçları aktarılmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Zevk, mobilya, mobilya seçimi, zevk etkenleri, üst gelir grubu.

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Last but not the least, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of Yüksel Erdemir, who enlightened me to set goals and reach those with patience. He taught the ability of being kind but determined and other properties that determine me as myself thus, I will remember and recall his name through my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SIGNATURE PAGE.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 The Aim of the Study.....	6
1.2 General Framework of the Study.....	8
2 CONSIDERATIONS OF USERS IN FURNITURE SELECTION.....	11
2.1 The Importance of the Living Room.....	12
2.2 Meaning of Furniture.....	16
2.2.1 Function of furniture in the living room.....	17
2.2.2 Meaning of furniture for the user.....	19
2.3 Factors Influencing Furniture Selection.....	25

3	A FRAMEWORK FOR THE DETERMINATION OF TASTE VARIABLES IN FURNITURE SELECTION	29
3.1	Taste as a Consumer Preference	31
3.1.1	The definition of taste	31
3.1.2	A brief history of the concept of taste.....	36
3.2	The Constitution of Taste	42
3.3	Taste and Lifestyle	47
3.4	Taste and Power Structure.....	53
3.5	Taste and Social Determinants	60
3.5.1	Social data	60
3.5.2	Economic capital.....	61
3.5.3	Aesthetic preferences	63
3.5.4	Psychological factors	66
3.5.5	Cultural capital.....	66
4	EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: TASTE FACTORS INFLUENCING FURNITURE CHOICE OF THE UPPER INCOME GROUP IN ISTANBUL.....	72
4.1	Components of the Framework.....	72
4.1.1	Determination of the living room furniture.....	72
4.1.2	Determination of the sample group	74
4.1.3	Determination of the city	76
4.2	The Methodology of the Research	77
4.2.1	Hypotheses.....	79
4.2.2	Sampling procedure	81
4.3	Results of the Survey.....	84
4.4	Discussion and Evaluation.....	97
5	CONCLUSION.....	101
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	107
	APPENDIX A: Maps of Istanbul pointing out the distribution of inhabitants.....	114
	APPENDIX B: Semi-structured interview questions.....	115
	APPENDIX C: Analysis of the interviews.....	118
C.1	General evaluations (cross-tab analysis)	122
C.2	Analysis on the hypotheses of the survey (cross-tab analysis).....	124

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Relationship diagram among lifestyle, taste, culture and class.....	43
Figure 3.2 A framework for the formation of taste.....	57
Figure 3.3 Five values influencing market choice behavior.....	58
Figure 3.4 Determinants of taste	70
Figure 4.1 Framework of the empirical research.....	78
Figure A.1 Condensation map of İstanbul.....	114
Figure C.1 Place of purchase	123
Figure C.2 Preference for the place of purchase.....	123
Figure C.3 Frequency of change	123
Figure C.4 Rate of consultancy aid demand.....	140
Figure C.5 Consultancy aid demand preference	140

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4. 1 Demographic profile of the respondents.....	85
Table C.1.1 Years of selecting furniture vs. age.....	122
Table C.1.2 Reason of starting choosing furniture vs. age.....	122
Table C.2.1 Profession vs. disturbance of difference in treatment of furniture	124
Table C.2.2 Profession vs. main meaning of a living room	124
Table C.2.3 Profession vs. the most influential factor in the constitution of the taste	125
Table C.2.4 Profession vs. naming the style of furniture.....	125
Table C.2.5 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is functional and/or comfortable	126
Table C.2.6 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is harmonious with the house and furniture	126
Table C.2.7 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture emphasize design qualities	127
Table C.2.8 Profession vs. labeling tasteful furniture if perceived as beautiful.....	127
Table C.2.9 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture	128
Table C.2.10 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture consists of several styles.....	128
Table C.2.11 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is uncomfortable	129
Table C.2.12 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if the style of furniture is on the extremes of modern or classic	129

Table C.2.13 Sharing the house vs. difference in treatment of furniture with other rooms.....	130
Table C.2.14 Sharing the house vs. disturbance of difference in treatment with other rooms.....	130
Table C.2.15 Sharing the house vs. main meaning of a living room.....	131
Table C.2.16 Sharing the house vs. first consideration in choosing furniture.....	131
Table C.2.17 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. difference in treatment of furniture with other rooms.....	132
Table C.2.18 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. disturbance of difference in treatment with other rooms.....	132
Table C.2.19 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. main meaning of a living room	133
Table C.2.20 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. first consideration in choosing furniture	133
Table C.2.21 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. main meaning of a living room	134
Table C.2.22 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is harmonious with the house and furniture.....	134
Table C.2.23 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is plain and/or modern	135
Table C.2.24 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is exaggerated.....	135
Table C.2.25 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture	136
Table C.2.26 Desire to change any furniture today vs. reason of such desire.....	136
Table C.2.27 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. main meaning of a living room	137
Table C.2.28 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. naming the style of furniture.....	137

Table C.2.29 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteful if furniture represents personality	138
Table C.2.30 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture	138
Table C.2.31 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteless if the style of furniture is on the extremes of modern or classic	139
Table C.2.32 The change of taste vs. the most influential factor in the change.....	139



1 INTRODUCTION

Considering human life, people purchase and/or judge things according to likes and dislikes and claim it as their 'taste'. Thus, the problem of taste can be observed in all of our environments, such as our homes or our furnishings. Home is primarily a shelter for climatic conditions, and secondly a protection from the problems of urban daily life in the contemporary world. Consequently, house is an intimate space where a major portion of any lifetime is spent. On the other hand, Putnam (1990) claims that home is not only a place where one lives, but also a space that one imagines. That is the reason why an individual attaches several meanings to home throughout his/her life.

When we say that 'homes are made' rather than built, we acknowledge an interweaving of personal imagination, lived relationships and shaped surroundings. An understanding of home becomes a means for organizing the world and orienting our passage through it (Putnam, 1990: 7).

On the other side, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) state that home contains most of the special objects which are entangled in producing one's identity. Besides, Putnam (1990) states that the personal identity in a home both combines and

complicates with others' identity who are living in that space. She, also, points out the importance of social and cultural inputs in the constitution of home and continues: "Homes are made from material, social and cultural resources and are bound up in the relationships which sustain those resources" (Putnam, 1990: 7).

Eriç, et.al. (1986) claim that a house is not only a shelter, but an encompassment of psychological life. Different from the work environment, home is the place where one wants to establish required standards of comfort within the context of individual preferences. As one wants to claim his/her preferences, home can be seen as a site of consumption (Putnam, 1990). On the other hand, Madigan and Munro (1996) state that there is a tension between the notion of home as a place to relax and as a place for giving information about the householder. They exemplify this circumstance as follows:

.. cleanliness and tidiness, when respondents were asked what impressions they would like people to have of their home... the statement that 'people judge you on the way you keep the house'... women did not see these high standards as being driven by the potential judgments of others, but perceived them as self-imposed, and often inherited from their mothers (Madigan and Munro, 1996: 46).

Similarly, Özsoy (1994) mentions the same issues and claims that home develops both socially and personally as it can be named as the 'mirror' reflecting both the personal experience and the collective ideology of the society.

On the other hand, furnishings, being the major component of a home, thus become a basic concern and need of human beings. Putnam (1990) claims that household choices, including furniture, are resolved differently according to the lifestyle of the householder and his/her aspirations.

A specific home may mean a number of different things to an individual, it may be associated with events and experiences that have personal significance. In this sense, each of us uses the home in individual ways. But there is also a social meaning, that is, meaning shared by a group, meaning that is bound with social use (Francescato, 1993: 41).

Thus, in relation with the meanings possessed by the objects, the taste/preference of a single consumer does not reflect a unique choice, but being a symbol and/or sign of a group which he/she belongs to. Baudrillard (1997), Bourdieu (1984) and Tobin (1992) claim that the preferences in distinguishing one from the other are based not only on the unique choices of individuals, but also on the collective taste as a member of a group with a different status level in the society.

On the other hand, consumption has become a dominating part of the social and economic activities in today's society. Domestic consumption brings different components of choice together within an interaction between users, producers and designers. Every consumption behavior has several social, cultural and psychological

meanings. This presupposition is also valid for furniture consumption which differs according to social groups in a particular society.

It has been observed that following house expenditure, furniture is the second important expenditure group and the prestige purchase for the society in Turkey. (Şenesen and Selim, 1995). Thus, the furniture choice is considered as an important indicator of consumption patterns and taste of a particular group.

Preferences in consumption give clues about life-styles aspired after or achieved. Bourdieu (1984), Featherstone (1991) and McCracken (1988) agree on that consumption does not only satisfy functional needs, but also demonstrates the taste, the lifestyle and the identity of the user. Similarly, furniture used in the living rooms is particularly significant in reflecting the taste of the user (Pratt, 1982; Tuan, 1977). The reason lies in the understanding of 'home' and mainly the living room; both reflecting the self and expressing the life-style to others. Therefore, the furniture selected for the living rooms gains further importance. The problem of how these preferences are made when selecting furniture, leads to the notion of taste which is one of the main determinant in preference. "Taste, ... (is the)... preferences of a certain social group in a certain cultural situation and is therefore relevant to the discussion of any and every mass-produced consumer artifact" (Sparke, 1994: 122). Moreover, Bayley (1991), Bourdieu (1984) and Sparke (1994) give clues about the relationship between preferences and taste of the consumer and claim that taste is a

difficult phenomenon to discuss, as it is only expressed through preferences and changes that an individual has in his/her lifestyle.

Performance, durability, economy and functional efficiency can be measured in a way that approximates to scientific accuracy, but when most people speak of good design what they are really referring to is their own taste. The character of an object is a matter of design, the meaning of an object in use is a matter of taste (Bayley, 1991: 218).

Taste and design are the concepts which could easily be confused as the user could claim an object has a good design only if it fits his/her taste. In fact, they have a close relationship. When investigating the history of design, it has been determined that the consideration of 'good design' was established along with the emergence of discussions about taste (Bayley, 1991). Similarly, coming to post-modern era, Bayley (1991) and Sparke (1994) agree on that 'taste' is extremely confused with design and fashion. Considering taste, design and fashion, the relationship between them, and their impacts on each other can not be underestimated. The design profession puts forward new designs in the market pointing out the fashion of the era. Most of the new designs are purchased as they are the outcome of the fashion of that specific era. Consumers purchase what is in fashion and what they can find in the market. After a period of time, consumers perceive those fashionable designs as the representatives of their own taste so that; the taste of the consumer takes its roots from the market. Besides, Sparke (1995) claims that the fashion is a prolongation of capitalism which is first expressed in women's dress and then followed by domestic furnishings where

she adds; “Taste was an active agent within the consumption and disposition of goods, and within the process of domestic display. Design can be seen as a passive respondent to its demands” (Sparke, 1995: 32).

As well as these, the concept of taste is becoming the major problem in the discussions concerning culture and design. According to Bourdieu (1984) one major issue about taste is the judgment of taste “...judgment of taste ... depends on the context rather than the object itself. It is not necessarily the chair... but its relations in time and space. It is the intention behind its use” (Bayley, 1991: 215).

The discussions about furniture selection as the one of the focuses of this dissertation, necessitates an understanding of taste. Within the limits of this study, taste is not specified and judged, but instead, the problem of how taste values are formed and acquired are examined.

1.1. The Aim of the Study

Throughout time, furniture has increasingly inspired meanings beyond satisfying functional needs. So, in addition to functional preferences, there are some other determining factors in the consideration of furniture. Among these, ergonomics, durability, maintenance, in addition to the symbolic and aesthetic requirements are mentioned in the literature (Ching, 1987, Pile, 1990, Friedman, et.al, 1982).

Nevertheless, it is the taste of the consumer, which is the major determining factor for satisfying both the symbolic and aesthetic requirements.

Accordingly, the aim of the present study is to propose a general framework of the components of taste which are effective in selecting furniture. In this study, the framework is applied to a specific culture for a specific kind of commodity, namely furniture. Thus, a set of questions are developed to reach the aim of this study:

- What are the factors which constitute taste?
- Which of these factors are more valid in the consideration of choosing furniture?
- How the factor of cultural capital differ in the constitution of taste of different groups?

Consequently, this study specifically examines the factors affecting the taste of upper income group in İstanbul in selecting furniture for their living rooms. The changes in the consumer's taste in relation to the demographic and cultural changes are also examined. An empirical research is conducted to reveal the relation between the demographic inputs of today's upper income group and their furniture choices which may illustrate the preferences of this group. In this respect, the research focuses on two important issues; illustrating the preferences of the upper income group (see section 3.4) to be utilized both by the interior designers and by the producers and; disclosing their values on furniture related to their taste.

The results of the empirical study can lead the producers and designers to be aware of the preferences of the most consuming group of the society and what are the factors constituting taste, which can be utilized to develop different solutions in furniture. Besides, the framework which is developed for furniture can also give clues about the purchasing behavior of the society in other fields as well.

1.2. General Framework of the Study

Within the context of this thesis, the taste considerations of upper income group is analyzed to put forward a framework for furniture choice, which is an important component of interior architecture (Ching, 1987). As stated by Teymur (1990):

Design research as a new field of research has, especially in its early years, had to borrow most of its concepts, theories, models and methods from other, more established, disciplines such as physical sciences.....rather than.....social/human sciences. (69)

He adds that nowadays, design research could be conducted in relation with social/human sciences which are more relevant to it than physical sciences.

Accordingly, a proposal of a general framework for the determination of the taste variables developed. Furthermore, an empirical research conducted which could

analyze the taste variables for the furniture preferences of a specific group, for a specific culture.

The first chapter consists of a brief introduction which puts forward the aim and the general framework of the study. The second chapter focuses on the factors determining the furniture choice of the user. Within this context, the importance of the living room, the meaning of furniture both in the living room and for the consumer are discussed. Additionally, the factors influencing the determination of the furniture choice are pointed out. The importance of the taste as an important factor in furniture choice is also presented. In the third chapter, the concept of taste as a consumer preference is examined; pointing out the development of the concept of taste, the constitution of taste, relationship between taste and lifestyle, the importance of symbolic power, and its relation with the social determinants which are influential on the user. This leads the study to develop a new framework for the determination of taste variables in the furniture choice which takes place in the third chapter as well.

In the fourth chapter, an empirical survey which was conducted in İstanbul is presented. The criteria for the selection of the city, the group and the determination of living room furniture are discussed together with the methodology, the data collection process and the evaluation of the research. Chapter 5 concludes this dissertation depending on the results of the empirical research which indicates

various factors forming the taste of the upper income group in İstanbul and presents suggestions for further studies.



2 CONSIDERATIONS OF USERS IN FURNITURE SELECTION

Bilgin (1991) emphasizes the relation between furniture and space where they are used, claiming that furniture establishes itself within that space. The organization of the elements within a space means both the establishment and the organization of that space. As the living room is the focal point of social contact, the furniture should encourage and be the cause for further activity (Chalfant and Labeff, 1988). Having such an association between furniture and space, the change in the attitude to space organization also affects furniture. It has to be transformed to be able to keep an harmony with the space in addition to its identity to make a space to live in.

On the other hand, the time as a component for appreciating space in the twentieth century is also reflected in the selection of furniture. The understanding of permanent furnishing is turned into a dynamic and flexible one. The placing or the organization of the furnishing could be changed as the market has a trend of establishing a furniture type that could be changed after a short period of time (Eriç, et.al., 1986).

An individual has several considerations while making a purchase. These considerations change according to the product that he/she buys. Hence, while purchasing furniture, one has some considerations such as functional satisfaction, length of service or ease of maintenance among several others like safety, variety, flexibility and durability. Human beings purchase not only for necessities, but also to satisfy their aesthetical needs. This is also valid for furniture purchase. When buying a piece of furniture, an individual needs to be aesthetically satisfied. In fact, an individual feels to be aesthetically satisfied when he/she is able to attribute any meaning to that furniture.

Accordingly, it is apparent that within the rooms of a home, the living room is the space where one wants to express his/her desires and wishes and present them to his/her guests. Having such a quality, within the elements in the living room, furniture is the one which helps to create a character of a specific living room. Thus, within that space, furniture has a specific meaning.

2.1 The Importance of the Living Room

The significance of the living room lies in its being a place for both individual relaxation and social interaction. While Wentling (1990) considers the living room as the ceremonial component of residential spaces, Bilgin (1991) points out the importance of the living room as such;

A living room being the meeting place of the family members groups furniture and acts as a setting for various behavioral patterns. In this respect, a living room has a status of being frequently used segment of space..... Concerns on aesthetics, decoration and status emphasize the concept of furniture. Thus it leads to a search for a definite style of furniture within the living room (232-233. My translation).

The division of space in the house is done functionally according to the behavior and habits of the family members. In this manner, the living room acts as a stage where activities like sitting, resting, eating, entertainment, reception and leisure can take place (Bernard, et.al., 1993; Cooper, 1990). Radford (1976) claims that there are mainly two functions of a living room. First of all, it is the space where the activities of the inhabitants take place. Those activities are selected by the inhabitants of the house. As an example, some may prefer to watch TV in the living room, while others prefer to watch it in the bed room or, some may prefer to dine in the living room whereas others may not. Secondly, it is the show place of home, where the inhabitants are judged by the visitors. Wentling (1990) points out that "... (a) living room, (is) a formal space for the most formal of guests" (38).

Ayata and Ayata (1996) note the importance of living room for Turkish culture. They claim that neighbors are accepted either to the living room or to the family room. Family room is the place where daily activities of the family take place in a casual manner. On the contrary, the guests are only accepted to the living room hence, it serves as the guest room. Within this context, the living room acts as a bridge

between public life and intimate life. Even though the living room is a part of the home in physical sense; it is not the part of the intimate world that the home symbolizes.

On the other hand, Wentling (1990) opens an argument by questioning the validity of the living room in the informal life-style of the 90's. Even in this condition, the representation of the social status, or the endeavor of presenting more than the actual social status is depicted in the living room, more so than any service areas and private areas in the house.

To clarify what has been meant by status, the definition given by Nispet (1966 qtd. in Thompson, 1996) could be beneficial: "Status is the individual's position in the hierarchy of prestige and influence that characterizes every community or association" (107). This concern for social status leads the living room to be filled with furniture and other items that do not always satisfy actual needs but acquired mostly to exhibit family values to satisfy the needs of appreciation by other members of the society. Accordingly, such items are supposed to be representative of social status, more than being for functional use.

In the traditional Turkish house a single room serves several functions; in the contemporary house, every room serves for a determined function. Thus, it is observed that, spaces that are allocated for different functions in the house are clearly

separated as dirty/clean and night/day which demonstrate the functional definition and distribution of those spaces. The space that could be named as the family room, has a particular meaning in Turkish culture. Ulusu (1991) mentions that it is the space where segregation of activities are ignored thus, all activities could take place. Consequently, it can be claimed that it serves as a common area in front of the room or a continuation of 'sofa' in traditional Turkish houses (Sözen and Eruzun, 1992). Different from the living room, the family room acts as a media center as well in today's world. Hence, the room contains not only a TV, but also an entertainment wall which contains stereo equipment, storage for tapes and records and a video (Wentling, 1990).

Ayata (1988) illustrates the differentiation between the living room and the family room as;

While the living room, which is seldom used, is filled with most expensive items, the family room is furnished with cheap and unworthy items even though it witnesses a high traffic during the day. The family room, means ... melamine plate, spring mattress, used woven matting, a tin ashtray, a simple lamp a squeezed dinner table; whereas the living room has the connotations of crystal glass, chandelier, porcelain plate, luxurious armchair, a new carpet and controlled patterns of behavior (223. My translation.).

To this extend, it is apparent that the furniture used in the living room has a significant impact on the meanings ascribed to the living room. Accordingly,

furniture for the living room is acquired with much care and thought. On the other hand, in the family room, this is not always the case as the meaning of furniture is shifted from show off to comfort.

As a matter of fact, the living room contains not only furniture but also all sorts of furnishings and other decorating items in which the individual states his/her taste such as; the painting on the wall, the colors used in the living room and other accessories. More than the others, furniture distinguishes itself as being the most dominant item within the space. Thus, the focus of this dissertation is on the furniture more than the other items of furnishings.

2.2 Meaning of Furniture

Concerning the above mentioned issues furniture is one of the main determinants in the constitution of living rooms. Thus, one can claim that furniture has some symbolic connotations, meanings for the living rooms in addition to its use as an architectural element. It is evident that the consumers also attach some meanings to furniture they use. These meanings could vary with respect to their significance in the declaration of status for the expression of self.

2.2.1 Function of furniture in the living room

The importance of furniture lies in its property of serving several different functions. First of all, it acts as an architectural element since it organizes the space within a room (Pile, 1990). Secondly, it serves our everyday needs and last but not the least it functions as an answer to our aspirations (Smith, 1988). Ayata and Ayata (1996) mention that the use of living room makes a clear distinction between apartment houses and squatters. Similarly, the use and type of living room furniture differ between social groups. Thus, one can claim that the furniture of the living room expresses the social status of the user as a member of a social group.

On the other hand, multi-purpose utility of furniture is observed particularly in living rooms. The use of the sideboard in the living rooms may be an example for this observation. A sideboard serves as a space defining and dividing element. It also acts as a storage and a showcase. Furniture could satisfy several needs because of its flexibility in the functional use and its ability to transmit likes and dislikes of the user. In this way, a definition of a 'satisfactory furniture' could be reached. Çarkacı (1994) considers a furniture as satisfactory depending on how much it leads user to be in harmony with his/her physical environment. Aesthetic satisfaction is the one of the most significant factors for the consumer to be in harmony with the physical environment. In this respect, besides the functional preferences, aesthetic satisfaction

gains importance. In fact, a space equipped with 'satisfactory furniture' is the major cause to spend more time in that space for a wider range of activities.

Furniture also affects the way people live in and use a space. Looking at contemporary residential spaces, the focal point in the living room is the orientation of TV which also dictates the organization and selection of the furniture. In addition to the mentioned concerns, furniture is bought for a specific purpose within the living room. It could either be bought to satisfy resting requirements or to display some objects or to store them. Even though the judgment of the user is important, the judgment of the others has also an impact on the selection of furniture. That is to say that, being accepted and approved by the others has a significant impact in the selection of furniture. Sparke (1995) claims that "(Now) ... idea of 'display' was displaced by that of 'identity' (in the home furnishings)..." (78). Thus, more than who you are, what you have is important. Expressing identity took the place of social and functional requirements of a furniture.

Pratt (1982) claims that an individual associates several meanings to the products. Identity and individuality are the main goals of consumption where identity is expressed with the purchase of similar things. Thus, it can be claimed that furniture has some specific meanings for the user which are discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 Meaning of furniture for the user

McCracken (1988) examines how the meanings of things occur. He claims that there are three locations of meanings. First of all, there is a culturally constituted world in which the goods are produced; secondly, the consumer goods, and thirdly, the individual consumer. In each location, the good -in this case the furniture- is attached several different meanings and the focus is on how the individual consumer puts meanings upon on goods. First of all, furniture makes a kind of link between our past, our future and what we live today.

Surrounded by our things, we are constantly instructed in who we are and what we aspire to. Surrounded by our things, we are rooted in and visually continuous with our pasts... we are sheltered from the many forces that would deflect us into new concepts, practices, and experiences... Things stabilize us by reminding us of our past, by making this past a virtual, substantial part of our present (McCracken, 1988: 124).

McCracken (1988) points out what is problematic in the study of consumer goods is time. Because of the time factor, none of the meanings are permanent; on the contrary, they are temporary. He explains this situation as follows: “meaning is constantly flowing to and from its several locations in the social world”(71). On the other hand, Rapoport (1990) emphasizes that meaning and function could not be separated from each other as meaning acts as the most important factor of function. He claims that the presentation of self, demonstration of group identity and education

of children take place in physical environment. In fact, with physical environment he refers to clothes, furniture, buildings and such physical components of the environment. Palmer (1996a) emphasizes similar issues where he claims that function is also a product of desire. An individual desires something and, to achieve his/her desire, he/she attaches some roles to the objects. Additionally, he stresses the importance of the suitability of that object to our identity as follows:

...when we judge an object aesthetically we do not judge it in relation to some individual objective, but in terms of its appropriateness to our whole identity; such a judgment is based on value, and value is something that acts as a focus for decisions about the future without our necessarily realizing what it is we are committing ourselves to in any clear detail (Palmer, 1996 a: 6).

Rapoport (1990) accentuates that a human being defines his/her environment by imposing meaning on things. Within that process, a human being uses his/her scheme of knowledge; his/her scheme of defining things. Thus, the reaction to things -in this case the reaction is expressed with the choice of furniture- is the expression of those schemes. Rapoport (1990) adds that designers and users have different understanding and appreciation of designs and explains this difference by the scheme that the designers acquired with their education emphasizing the importance of the users' meaning " as ... the meaning of everyday environments" (16).

As the human being confers meaning on furniture, there occur patterns of behavior in response. Thus, the meaning of furniture also determines behavior (Kleine and Kernan, 1991). This can be illustrated by the mutual relationship between the lounge chair and the informal way of sitting. The lounge chair proposes an informal way of sitting and the informal way of sitting demands a chair like lounge chair. Klein and Kernan (1991) claim that; "Meaning is not inherent in the object itself; rather it arises from the interaction of individual, object and context ... and it is inherently symbolic, subjective, psychological and perceptual" (312).

They claim that in the perception of an individual, there are two dimensions; namely, attribute and performance. Attribute dimension is an individual's interpretation of an object, whereas performance dimension is the actual potential of the object. Similarly, Bilgin (1991) separates them as denotative and connotative meanings. According to him, the denotative meaning of furniture is based on an objective approach including its technical properties. The functionality of furniture that gains a special importance in modern life conditions could be stated as the denotative meaning of furniture. Eriç, et.al. (1986), point out that the representation of functionality on the form of the furniture is determined by the needs of the group using this furniture. Connotative meaning is related to user's social status and the values of the group that he/she belongs to. For example, the denotative meaning of an armchair is 'sitting on', while the connotative meaning of the same furniture is related to whether it has a style or not, its being cheap or expensive, and its comprising

social and personal symbols. According to Bilgin "moving towards a consumption society, the denotative meaning of furniture has been disappearing behind its connotative meaning" (1991: 248. My translation).

Nowadays, the meanings that we put upon a furniture replaces its functional properties. In this regard, the connotative meaning of furniture is inherent in the selection of furniture, in addition to and above its functional use.

The reason behind this change could be explained by the change of meaning of consumption. Today, the symbolic needs play a more crucial role in consumption behavior than functional needs. In a manner similar to Bilgin (1991), Francescato (1993) points out that the connotative meaning has been built upon denotative meaning of things. Thus, even though connotative meaning is more important compared with denotative meaning; a connotative meaning cannot exist without a denotative meaning. Francescato (1993) also claims that the connotative meanings that are put upon furniture vary with cultures, social groups and people's life-cycle and it could also vary between people within the same social group.

Symbolic considerations imply concerns related to social status and habits of the relevant society. Smith (1988) illustrates the importance of social status in furniture choice as follows: "...furniture plays a very important part as an indicator of social

status. The more hierarchical the society, the greater the emphasis on the particular role, so the question of convenience or comfort are often entirely usurped by it" (9).

Furthermore, Bourdieu (1984) points out the importance of social relations which define social status of the user as follows:

If a group's whole life-style can be read off from the style it adopts in furnishing or clothing, this is not only because these properties are the objectification of the economic and cultural necessity which determined their selection, but also because the social relations objectified in familiar objects,... (77)

Also McCracken (1988) and Bilgin (1991) point out that clothing and furniture to fashion are used by the dissatisfied social groups just to claim a new social identity. Furniture, similar to clothing, is claimed to be used as a symbol of social status.

Chapin (1933 cited in Bilgin, 1991) proposes a measure for status according to his observation of living rooms and residences. He explains status in terms of cultural products, income and attendance in group activities. By cultural products, he refers to the folk arts or products which are produced with the knowledge learned from cultural heritage. To have a social status, an individual has to purchase and be a part of those cultural products. On the other hand, he emphasizes that, an individual has to attend some social activities of a group which he/she belongs to in order to obtain a specific status in addition to his/her income level. Psychological considerations and

quality differences which were ignored by Chapin were also included in the determining factors of status by other researchers who figured out the lack of these information (Bilgin, 1991) . As a matter of fact, quality is an important concern in the relation of social status and furniture. Furniture changes in quality, style and brand name when there is a transformation in social status. Bilgin (1991) exemplifies expression of a rise in social status by timber furniture replacing laminate furniture, i.e. natural materials are preferred in texture and quality. As artificial materials are cheaper, they address the lower income strata. The reason for this shift in preferences may be a claim for a specific social status which also changes due to the shifts in fashion. Even though the fashion of the 1970's was plastics because of the rise in the popular culture and pop-art, around 1980's plastics was claimed to be out of fashion. Thus, the material and what it signifies have changed.

The concern for quality leads us to aesthetical considerations. In Latin, aesthetic means the information gained by our senses. The concept of beauty is mutually included in this concept considering that the 'beauty' is a natural drive of human being (Bilgin, 1991). Thus, a furniture considered as satisfactory should fulfill our aesthetic needs in a way to increase the time spent in that particular space.

On the other hand, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) claim that furniture choice is also a product of psychic activity. According to them, psychic activity could be defined as 'mobile attention'. They claim that "intentional

psychological acts cannot be carried out without the allocation of attention”(1981:4). When dealing with something, an individual chooses to do so to be able to have some attention. Thus, psychic activity sets the rules for the dynamics of self-consciousness. Similarly, furniture requires concentrated attention which results in an integration of the use of suitable material for the requirements and conformity of the human. This attention is valid for attaining others’ psychic activity as well. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) emphasize this issue in addition to the advantage of furniture in displaying psychic activity as follows:

... to own furniture, again like owning other objects, means to possess other people’s psychic activity. The preeminent place of furniture over other objects might be due to the fact that it can be displayed more easily, that is supposed to be useful, and that it constitutes relatively heavy investments of money, and hence of psychic energy (59-60).

With the above mentioned concerns, it may be assumed that there are other concerns which lead an individual to make his/her choices in furniture more than functional requirements. In the light of this assumption, the following section focuses on the factors which are effective in the selection of furniture.

2.3 Factors Influencing Furniture Selection

There are several approaches in determining the considerations in selection of furniture. First of all, Sparke (1995) and Ching (1987) propose the factors of

comfort, safety, variety, flexibility, style, durability and maintenance. Ching (1987) claims that physical comfort of the furniture plays a vital role in the selection. In fact, the comfort level is decided with what the individual does with that furniture and the time spent on it. In addition to comfort, the safety of that furniture also plays a crucial role. The adaptability of furniture for flexible use and to obtain varieties with that furniture act as an advantage in the selection of furniture. Furthermore, the ease of maintenance, both in physical and financial terms influences the selection. The suitability of the style of the furniture with the identity of the consumer also has an influence how an individual selects his/her furniture for the living room.

Pile (1990) classifies the influential factors into three: functional issues, issues of structure and material; and aesthetics. By functional issues, he refers to the convenience, mobility, comfort, safety, flexibility and length of service of the furniture and the cost of both the furniture and the maintenance. As a matter of fact, by the length of service, he does not only mention physical service but also psychological service of furniture. That is to say that the length of the service of furniture should not be too short. Damage should not be observed in a short period of time; it should serve for a long term for the psychological satisfaction of the user. Furthermore, by structure and material he mainly emphasizes the importance of the choice of material and structural stability in addition to its durability, in the selection of furniture. Thirdly, he mentions aesthetics by which he accentuates the communication of meaning through the form of that piece of furniture. Friedman,

et.al (1982), establish criteria for choosing furniture as quality, function, structure, material and aesthetics. Thus, within the framework of this study these items can be grouped under two main headings: functional and aesthetic considerations.

Briefly, functional considerations comprise the problems of comfort, safety, variety, flexibility, maintenance, convenience, mobility, length of service, price of the furniture in addition to structural and material concerns. Aesthetic considerations usually focus on style, design of the furniture and the satisfaction of the consumer. On the other hand, it signifies communication of meaning through the form of furniture.

As mentioned in section 2.2.2, nowadays the importance of connotative meaning of furniture exceeds that of the denotative meaning of it. When consumers are asked to choose between two products with the same price and function, they tend to choose the one which they find more attractive (Blouch, 1995). Attractiveness of a furniture implies its aesthetic properties; thus, it is apparent that the aesthetic requirement has a vital role in the selection of furniture. On the other hand, with the increase in production and technological development, an individual is faced with several alternatives to satisfy his/her functional requirements whereas aesthetic satisfaction is much more influential on user satisfaction. In addition to these functional and aesthetic requirements expected to fulfill the requirements of the user, there is the taste of consumer which also takes place in the selection. In fact, the issue of taste is

not a requirement to be fulfilled, but rather a claim which is effective when the aesthetic requirements are judged. Thus, when making a choice of furniture, an individual manifests his/her taste to represent those aesthetic conditions. So, the taste of the consumer/user should be taken into account as an indicator of aesthetic considerations.

There are several determinants for the constitution of taste varying in each social group depending on some variables. The definition of taste and the function of these variables lead to the understanding of how consumers declare their aesthetic considerations. Thus, the main concern of this dissertation is determining the factors which constitute the taste, which in this case manifests itself through user's choice of furniture. Accordingly, the following chapter focuses on the definition of taste and proceedingly the constitution of it, with its relation to certain concepts such as lifestyle and; declares a framework which points out the variables of taste relevant for furniture selection.

3 A FRAMEWORK FOR THE DETERMINATION OF TASTE VARIABLES IN FURNITURE SELECTION

Palmer (1996b) sees the valuation of commodities as the most important factor in the consumption preferences of the user. The valuation is done by those who could afford them as well as by the others who could not. Accordingly, the valuation of commodities can not be explained only by economic terms. The taste of the consumer should also have an important role within the valuation of commodities.

On the other hand, Blouch (1995) stresses the significance of taste for consumption and adds that a user's reaction to an object is determined with his/her likes and dislikes. This is to say that a product is evaluated positively if the form of the product is in harmony with the individual's taste and preferences. Bourdieu (1984) clarifies the reason of the differences in consumption as such:

The true basis of the differences found in the area of consumption, and far beyond it, is the opposition between the tastes of luxury (or freedom) and the tastes of necessity (Bourdieu, 1984: 177).

Bourdieu (1984) and Bayley (1991) have a common opinion that writing about taste has some problems as its subject changes in time, as it is a dynamic entity which is expressed by the preferences and choices. Another major problem about taste is that it is a kind of taboo within the society, thus by claiming your taste you expose your body and soul. Therefore, people are not eager neither to talk about nor to expose their own taste.

As a matter of fact, choice is the outcome of our taste and we expose our taste within the limits of consumption through choice. Literally speaking, taste is practiced mostly in department stores or in museums. Hence, the establishment of these two institutions has witnessed the emergence of popular consumption (Bayley, 1991). The relation between taste and consumption is also defined by Bayley (1991) as follows:

Taste might evade absolute definition, but we are known by our momentary expressions of choice. There is an approach to studying patterns of preference and consumption which allows the meaning of things to be interpreted: every artifact and gesture is the disguise of a meaningful structure. Taste is about consumption and consuming, we reveal ourselves (xvii).

Accordingly, taste is one of the main determinants of consumption. There are several approaches pointing out what taste is. Within the limits of this study, following the analysis of taste as a consumer preference, a description of the problems in the discussion of taste and the importance of symbolic power will be emphasized.

Consequently, the relation between taste and social determinants will be put forth.

3.1 Taste as a Consumer Preference

As a consumer preference, taste has an intimate relation with the dominating class and the society in which it was activated. Thus, the taste will be defined with the help of the developments in the relationship among taste and class throughout the years. In this context, it is found necessary to mention the history of taste to enlighten how the concept of taste was developed and how the judgments of taste emerged in history.

3.1.1 The definition of taste

Staniszewski (1995), Bourdieu (1984) and Ward (1991) agree on that taste is a kind or degree of appreciation that someone gained through culture and education. Kant (cited in Bourdieu, 1984) claims that taste is “an acquired disposition to ‘differentiate’ and ‘appreciate’” (466). As a matter of fact, one cannot analyze the taste of the consumer without considering the social group that he/she belongs to.

...taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed (Bourdieu, 1995:2).

In relation to what Bourdieu states, Madigan and Munro (1996) put forward the importance of dominating class in the analysis of cultural preferences.

... the whole question of style and taste is a means of reaffirming and delineating class cultures. The assumption of class superiority in matters of style is embedded in the notion of 'good taste'. The search for objective criteria of what constitutes 'good taste' or 'good design' readily operates as an ideological justification for the cultural preferences of the dominating class (Madigan and Munro, 1996: 42).

They claim that taste clarifies itself as the cultural reference of the dominating class. Thus, to figure out what taste means for that specific class could only be possible through the observation of cultural preferences of the dominating class. Similarly, Dahrendorf (1992 qtd. in Thompson (1996)) describes the meaning of class as such:

Classes are essentially necessary social forms. It is no accident that Marx tried to link classes, not just to relations but to forces of production; he saw classes as being based on certain central social needs, one class which presides over the existing values and laws and rules and mode of production and the other class which represents some new opportunity for the future, some chances of development (22)..

Besides, Sparke (1994) defines taste as a component of the complex interrelationship between society and material world. Additionally, she declares that taste could only be discussed in terms of social class. Within the limits of these two affirmations, she proposes that it is necessary to have information about the social data, economic

data, psychological data and aesthetic data which act as the determining criteria for the taste of the user.

Taste is a means of distinguishing oneself: it is a way of demonstrating that one has a class which he/she belongs to. As Bayley (1991) points out: "Taste is overwhelmingly a matter of personal preference, a person's ability to interpret style or add meaning to gestures, flavours or objects" (216). Thus, taste is an expression of personal values. Similarly, Norberg-Schulz (1968) evaluates taste within a subjective system. Consumers seem to judge the things or claim their taste in a subjective manner. He emphasizes that this subjective system is the product of society. Although taste seems to be the output of a subjective system, it is also shared by the public.

The concept of taste was invented by the middle class and it has been determined to be the problem of the middle class throughout the history. Bayley (1991) states that taste and class are almost inseparable concepts in a way that feed off each other. When we look at history, their relation was obvious; they came into being and started to be used at the same period which is 18th century. According to Sparke (1994), the emergence of mass consumption in the 19th century has also an impact on the development of the concept of taste in Britain. "Taste is the 18th and 19th century term of choice referring to the faculty of critical and appreciatory discernment of and

judgment upon objects of aesthetic experience” (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1997: 1).

Moreover, Sparke (1995) states that nowadays, the relation between taste and class are changed. Until recently, the class determined the taste but now, the relation in between them is in a reverse manner. This new approach emphasizes the centrality of taste within the dynamism of life, and how taste becomes one of the major determinants for the formation of social groups. As Sparke (1995) states: “... taste, rather than class became the marker of social and cultural distinction” (208).

Bayley (1991) claims that taste is not a set of predetermined values but a kind of discrimination between things. Discrimination which takes place is based on the pleasure given to the user by those objects. Thus, taste depends on knowledge and exercise of that knowledge which lead the user to an aesthetic satisfaction. Similarly Harris (1990) puts an emphasis on the aesthetic knowledgeability, experience and preferences of the society to determine the public taste where he divides the society into three groups among which taste acts as a linkage. “...because taste involves some kind of expression, the population can be divided, by transaction, into 3 separate groups: producers, sellers and consumers. Together they make up the national marketplace” (Harris, 1990: 57).

According to Gans (1974) there is a relationship among the choices of the consumer. He explains this relationship with similar values and aesthetic standards of the same group. Hence, Gans (1974) discusses two concepts: taste culture and taste public. According to him, values and standards provide the basis of taste culture, whereas the individuals who make similar choices for similar reasons are referred as the taste public. “(Taste cultures) are aggregates of similar values and usually ... similar content, and (taste publics) are aggregates of people with usually... similar values making similar choices from the available offerings of culture” (Gans, 1974: 69-70).

An individual has to determine his/her choices within taste cultures. Significant factors for the determination of taste cultures are referred as age, class, religion, ethnic and racial background, regional origin, place of residence and personality. However, the major cause of differentiation between taste culture and taste public is the socio-economic level. Among the factors determining the socio-economic level income, occupation and education can be stated. Gans (1974) claims education to be the most important factor. The role of education is explained in detail in section 3.5.5, through its relation with culture.

Gans (1974) further explains that the range of taste cultures and taste publics follows the range and hierarchy of classes within a society. With the same approach Putnam (1990) puts an emphasis on the hierarchy of classes and states that, “...the formation of tastes was as complex as ever. Sociological tabulation showed that it still served

the reproduction of social hierarchies, with changing populations and in shifting guises” (15).

Even though the importance of hierarchy of classes could not be underestimated, time has an important role in the definition of taste. Accordingly, Bayley (1991) claims that each period in history finds its own expression to reflect the tastes of the individuals.

Finally, one can conclude that taste has a direct relationship to culture, class and time. Following various definitions of taste, a brief history about how the terminology was developed which may enlarge the definition of taste, takes place in the following section.

3.1.2 A brief history of the concept of taste

The concept of taste has emerged in France in 17th century and after a while the concept of aesthetic discrimination was stated in England as well (Ward, 1991).

By the beginning of 18th century, taste came to be used in literature, then it established itself as a judgment. During the 18th century, there was no sort of discrimination about taste values; thus there was no differentiation between ‘good’ and ‘bad taste’. ‘Good taste’ began to be stated during the 19th century. ‘Good taste’

was referred as a set of rules and standards to which the society could aspire. Then, the concept of taste was spread out within all behaviors in every activity. “The development of taste as an idea and as an aesthetic prescription parallels the rise in popular expectations which grew with the increase in spending power. Taste and money are inseparable in 19th century culture” (Bayley, 1991: 46).

The increase of production during the 19th century resulted in the expansion of consumption in all social groups. The idea of taste was no more representing the common opinion but started to claim itself as the antithesis of choices that are made in the market (Bayley, 1991).

Bayley (1991) also constructs a link between taste and modernism. He explains modernism as a high-minded form of consumerism and he claims that history of modernism sets the rules of 19th century concept of taste.

According to Sparke (1995) the concept of taste was a unique phenomenon at the beginning of 20th century. She accuses male dominating moral system for the split between ‘good taste’ and ‘bad taste’. She comments that male dominating moral system was established with the 19th century design movement which resulted in modernism both in architectural and design theories and in culture.

Under the influence of modernity, the importance given to taste and aesthetics in daily life has shifted towards rationality. With scientific and technological developments, reason became the dominant factor in social life. Also, masculine dominance manifested itself in growth in areas such as communication system, transportation, mass production and mass media. These developments led to the emergence of new disciplines in social sciences. The cultural world, however, was dominated by the establishment of the avant-garde. Thus, taste, which is referred as a feminine duty has a conflict with design which is gendered as masculine (Sparke, 1995). She further comments that:

...the very concept of design, defined within modernism as a process determining the nature and forms of buildings and goods, grew out of this stereotypically masculine culture. In sharp contrast, the notion of 'taste' continued to align itself with domesticity and femininity (Sparke, 1995: 74).

Even in that condition, taste acts as an important element by which choices are influenced, but it survives through the consumption of feminine domesticity.

The entire agenda converged on the question of the desire to eliminate taste from the household. Rationality meant efficiency, professionalism and skill, all of which mitigated against an emphasis upon the aesthetic component of home-making, which had emphasized the role of intuition, instinct and amateurism (Sparke, 1995: 78).

This does not mean that women did not express their taste in their homes, but the way they express it and the reasoning was changed. Now, the expression of identity is much more important than to display things as a social ritual (Sparke, 1995).

As mentioned earlier, there occurred an increase in production which, in turn, resulted in an increase in consumption during the 19th century. Thus, the term 'good taste' emerged. Accordingly, the intellectuals in England tried to impose 'good taste' upon society. But, they failed as the consumers on the mass market shifted to the working class. The working class established 'mass taste' which was very different from the understanding of the 'good taste' of the aristocrats. At the beginning of the 20th century, aristocrats started to use the term kitsch, to describe the poorest demonstration of 'mass taste'. "The term (kitsch) meant to knock off and cheapen something..." (Ward, 1991: 12). Bayley (1991) emphasizes that kitsch can only take place in societies where a consumer has several choices in the market where he states:

Unable or unwilling to transfer peasant culture to the city, the new urban proletariat and petite bourgeoisie were equally ill-equipped to participate in the traditional high culture... Kitsch was... an ersatz version of high culture called into existence by a new form of demand (65).

Around 1940's, kitsch was referred as the culture of the masses. With the introduction of pop art in 1960's, which led to the discussions about popular culture, the issue of kitsch was declared as not something rejected but something cherished

(Ward, 1991). Even though the popularity could be the main value of kitsch, it does not mean that what is popular should be kitsch (Bayley, 1991).

As a matter of fact, one should not underestimate the importance of mechanical and electrical reproduction techniques in the appreciation of kitsch, as a result of industrialized society. With the help of these techniques, kitsch could satisfy its duty of transmission of information (Bayley, 1991). As a matter of fact, kitsch is still used by the intellectuals when criticizing mass culture (Sparke, 1995). Pratt (1982) puts an emphasis on the underlying reasons of kitsch more than the source of it where he claims that today kitsch is still criticized as it is referred as an attitude of inauthenticity.

On the other hand, avant-garde is the term used as a person who stands away from the popular culture and declares himself/herself distinct from the society. In the 19th century, art became a commodity and avant-garde was declared to be a reaction to this change. Bayley (1991) claims that kitsch and avant-garde may look very different, but in reality, they are both identical and opposite declarations of awareness of the society which resulted in modernity. Accordingly he explains their relationships as follows: “Just as the avant-garde places novelty and originality above all else, so banality and vulgarity are lionized in kitsch. Both violate everyday conceptions of ‘good taste’ ” (Bayley, 1991: 64).

On the other side, it is obvious that the taste of the avant-garde has been consumed by the whole society through time. Bayley (1991) points out the relation between taste and avant-garde stating that:

The avant-garde rejects convention and taste is not so much disregarded as deliberately confronted... The existence of the avant-garde had a curiously stabilizing effect on already conservative middle class taste: if taste is a matter of choice and discrimination, what choice can there be when only radically new acceptable? (57)

According to him, in the age of postmodernism, which is usually referred with an eclectic style, avant-garde and kitsch turned out to be the same thing. Besides, the emergence of a trend and schools based on the interrelation of kitsch and avant-garde can be observed. Studio Alchymia and Memphis could be the best examples for this new trend (Bayley, 1991). Studio Alchymia was established in the late 1970's in Italy with two furniture exhibitions, Bauhaus 1 and Bauhaus 2. These exhibitions contradict Bauhaus principles and they reject and humorize rigid functionality and lack of decoration in Bauhaus (Ward, 1991). Sparke (1994) emphasizes the outstanding property of Studio Alchymia and she claims that it used visual references from popular styling of the 1930's up to 1960's. By using these, it was combining kitsch and popular imagery.

Studio Alchymia led to the establishment of Memphis group in Italy under the leadership of Ettore Sotsass. Similar to Studio Alchymia, Memphis challenged the

norms of modernism (Pile, 1990). According to Ward (1991) Memphis mixed contradictory 'high class' and 'low class' materials in such combinations as marble and plastic. In doing this, the group has the chance to stand against the hierarchy of 'good' and 'bad' taste. Hence, "kitsch is scrambled with the 'good taste' to the point where you cannot tell which material is high and which is low" (Ward, 1991: 103).

The meaning and the context of taste is changed throughout the history, along with technological and social changes. Through these changes, kitsch, which was claimed to be the representation of 'bad taste', came to be claimed as avant-garde because of shifts in the meaning of taste.

Thus, it is apparent that in each culture and era, there could be different definitions of taste. In fact, all these definitions and determinations are the prolongation of the style which is declared within that certain era. Thus, style determines what is 'good taste' and what is 'bad taste'. When an individual prefers a style of a furniture then, he/she claims his/her way of living and also his/her taste. So, one can conclude that, the concepts of 'bad taste' and 'good taste' had emerged from the judgment of style.

3.2 The Constitution of Taste

The constitution of taste as a consumer preference depends much on the social factors that influence individuals. Stevens (1995) claims that there is an intimate relation

among taste, lifestyle, culture and class as shown in Figure 3.1. The declaration of taste is also the declaration of class, lifestyle and culture. If one belongs to a specific culture, it clarifies that you have a certain taste and lifestyle and you belong to a class.

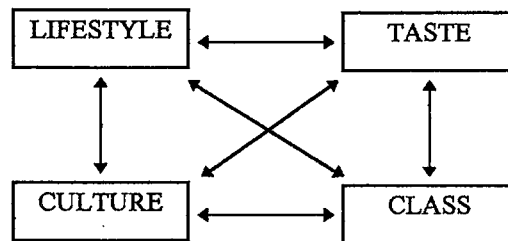


Figure 3.1 Relationship diagram among lifestyle, taste, culture and class

Bayley (1991) discusses the relationship between class and taste by claiming that even if the discussion is about 'good taste' or 'bad taste', it is the declaration of a class choice as well. Johnson (1995) interprets Bourdieu's definition of class as such:

A class is defined as much by its being perceived and by its being, by its consumption- which need not be conspicuous to be symbolic- as much as by its position in the relations of production (Johnson qtd. in Bourdieu, 1995: 4).

Taste could vary in different cultures, different periods of time and different social groups. Putnam (1990) points out that taste provides a cultural basis for a new kind of dominating class. Thus, those discriminate about the concept of taste and argue about

'good taste' and 'bad taste' belong to that class. Their main purpose is to demonstrate their preconception of social and cultural superiority and to create social and cultural distinction (Sparke, 1995). Bayley (1991) points this out as follows:

The terms good taste and bad taste do not represent absolutes, but their usage is distinctive and telling, since it reveals the preferences and prejudices of particular social groups. They are crude ways of assigning value to things, but their validity derives only from the power and prestige of the social group that uses them. Most often, the value is not inherent in the object itself, but in the intention of its consumer. If good taste means anything, it is pleasing your peers; bad taste is offending them (Bayley, 1991: 71).

According to McCracken (1988), each culture establishes its own set of rules which is invalid for the other cultures. He declares that culture makes up the world with two sets of meaning types; cultural categories and cultural principles. By cultural categories, he emphasizes the importance of class differences in the distinction of groups. He clarifies cultural categories and cultural principles as follows: "If cultural categories are the result of culture's segmentation of the world into discrete parcels, cultural principles are the ideas with which this segmentation is preferred" (McCracken, 1988: 76).

To give a brief definition of culture; Clark (et.al) (1976 qtd. in Thompson, 1996) commented as such:

The culture of a group or class, is the peculiar and distinctive way of life of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life.... Culture is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped; but it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted (31).

The social determinants may vary from demographic inputs to the aesthetic inputs of the society including the cultural ones. These inputs change from one culture to another, even within the same culture, from one social group to another.

.... consumption choices can tell us what 'social type' a person is and what 'social types(s)' he or she is not. These choices act as social signals that can identify reference groups the individual is motivated to emulate or to avoid (Englis and Solomon, 1995: 15).

Even though it is evident that the taste of any user is dependent of the culture in which he lives, Blouch (1995) makes an important comment on this issue: "People vary in their tastes even within a culture. Some of the potential causes of these variations are design acumen, prior experience and personality" (12). According to him, design acumen is something with which the individual is born. He claims that people with design acumen have more sophisticated preferences. Osborne (qtd. in Blouch, 1995) states that design appreciation is dependent on experience, which is obtained by education, exposure to beautiful things and motivation. Blouch (1995) exemplifies the importance of experience as follows:

For example, a person may develop design skills in the area of home decor by reading shelter magazines and browsing in furniture stores. Through such experience, a person learns what to look for in a product design and what the important determinants of attractiveness are (27).

Last but not least, Blouch (1995) remarks the importance of personality variables in the constitution of design taste and preferences. Within those, he emphasizes the need for uniqueness, as the uniqueness of the product helps to consumer to differentiate herself/himself from the others.

One of the major outcomes of taste could be claimed as the choice of the individual. When this choice is made for furniture, one can conclude the importance of status as one of the main determinants. Living room furniture acts as a status symbol both for the guests and for the user who is after the representation of his/her identity. On the other hand, the taste and the lifestyle of the consumer have a direct relationship. Taste is the representation of the lifestyle of the consumer, whereas lifestyle acts as the determining factor of taste. Thus, to analyze how taste is influenced by class structures and power and, clarify the relationship between taste and lifestyle when it is declared as a status symbol may contribute to the discussion on taste.

3.3 Taste and Lifestyle

Weber (1925 qtd. in Thompson, 1996) stated that more than the classes, status groups are involved in the declaration of a lifestyle and he continues:

With some over simplification, one might thus say that 'classes' are stratified according to their relations to the production and acquisition of goods; whereas 'status groups' that are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods are represented by special 'style of life' (197).

Within a society, there are several social groups, which can be observed through several lifestyles. For each lifestyle, there is a specific taste which is not valid for other lifestyles. Englis and Solomon (1995) claim that differences in consumption pattern are generally used by consumers to represent the social values of groups with different lifestyle.

According to Bourdieu (1984), taste classifies objects and practices within a society and acts as a generative formula of lifestyle. This is to say that lifestyle which is the system of matching properties is organized by taste.

... a unitary set of distinctive preferences which express the same expressive intention in the specific logic of the symbolic sub-spaces, furniture, clothing, language or body hexis. Each dimension of lifestyle 'symbolizes with' the others... (Bourdieu, 1984: 173).

On the other hand, it is believed that the lifestyle of a social group is influential on the consumption behavior of that group. From the point of view of Englis and Solomon (1995) consumption choices of an individual can give clues about which social group a person belongs to. The choices are the representations of social groups which the individual identifies with himself/herself and the social meaning of different lifestyles as well. As the lifestyle has an intimate relationship with taste (Bourdieu, 1984 and Stevens, 1995), a brief definition of lifestyle follows.

Lifestyle is considered to be a comprehensive concept comprising several issues. Eke (1980) considers the items constituting lifestyle to be sheltering, education, health, entertainment, communication and the relation between the members of the mentioned social group. In addition, Englis and Solomon (1995) explain that lifestyle can include tangible possessions, leisure activities and aesthetic preferences.

Caroux (1975 qtd. in Bilgin, 1991) describes lifestyle as factual considerations of normative, practical and informative values while Engell, Blackwell and Miniard (1990) establish an explanation of lifestyle as a consumption and an evaluation pattern of life, time and money. In addition to these, Bilgin (1991) notes that lifestyle is a way of expressing the patterns of life, the differing factors of self from the others, symbolic meanings put upon objects, attitudes and opinions, ethic and moral values, ideas on different aspects of social life as well as what and how people

consume. Comprising the socio-demographical differences, lifestyle also focuses on the way people live and the profile of their daily lives and consumption.

Family, as a social unit, has a lifestyle of its own determined by the social group which it belongs to. Family values are the main representatives of a definite lifestyle. Eke (1980) notes that while considering the lifestyle of a family, both qualitative and quantitative issues are meant, in addition to the way these issues are experienced within the group. In the family, being a closed group compared to others and having more intimate relations among the members, there are various qualitative and quantitative issues constituting a common life. In other words, the family tries to fulfill both functional and psychological needs of its members. Accordingly, the family acting as a determinant of lifestyle is one of the major components in the development of taste. The knowledge, habits and cultural heritage which are learned from family have an impact on the formation of the taste.

Douglas (1996) points out the importance of desires and dislikes about commodities which are the result of different lifestyles. She tries to standardize dislikes and assumes that there are four different lifestyles which are in conflict with others:

1. Individualist - an individual lifestyle which rejects the other three styles.
2. Hierarchical - more formal lifestyle which favors established traditions and institutions.

3. Enclave - a lifestyle which is against formality, artifice, authoritarian institutions, preferring simplicity and frankness.
4. Isolate - a kind of eclectic lifestyle.

She also claims that cultural situations influence all types of behaviors, such as shopping because individuals actualize their cultural knowledge or philosophies through them.

The question has been about why people want what they buy... people do not know what they want, but they are very clear about what they do not want... To understand shopping practices we need to trace standardized tastes, which are much more constant and more revealing than desires (Douglas, 1996: 83).

Similarly, Bourdieu (1984) claims the negation in taste as such:

Tastes are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. It is no accident that, when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes. In matters of taste, more than anywhere else, all determination is negation (Bourdieu, 1984: 56).

Solomon and Assael (1987 qtd. in Englis and Solomon, 1995) state that consumption is an approach of constituting a group. These groups consist of symbolically related consumption activities which are typical for the considered lifestyle. According to Englis and Solomon (1995), lifestyle categories are established either with the help of

purchase behavior of consumers or, with the help of psychographic information, such as opinions, attitudes and personality. McCracken (1988) puts the problem in another way:

We observe that there are bundle of attitudes, activities, consumer goods, and family patterns, and we are prepared to label and describe these bundles as styles of life. But we have no systematic way of understanding why the contents of these bundles go together... (123).

On the other hand, status is considered as an important indicator of lifestyle. McCracken (1988), Blouch (1995), Bayley (1991) and Arias (1993) agree that consumer goods communicate some cultural meanings in addition to their functional character and commercial value. Thus, when making a choice, the taste of the user may not be the reason for the purchase but taste, as an expression of a choice, claims some meanings. According to McCracken (1988), designers use some codes in their designs which are derived from the culture. Thus, it is expected that the users purchase or prefer the objects which communicate meaning within the subculture. Hence, one of the major meanings ascribed to a furniture is being a status symbol. Accordingly Sparke (1994) points out the importance of design in the establishment of both public taste and social status and he claims the importance of status in the determination of taste.

Moreover, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) mention that status symbols are used to obtain social order by claiming hierarchical differences among individuals within a society. Thus status acts as a form of power as Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) add: “ ..., a thing with status also acts as a template embodying these goals because it will cause people who believe in its status to act accordingly toward it and its owner who possesses the status” (29).

One can have a status with the help of wealth or political power. Also, one can gain status by manipulating the symbols of that status for his/her own purposes. Thus, at that point, the importance of things as status symbols can be discussed. Rarity, being expensive, attracting the attention of people could be the reason for those objects to be referred to as symbols of status (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981).

As taste acts as a status symbol, designers are after the symbols of privilege and symbols of social status. Today's status symbols vary from Rolex watches to individually obtained pieces of furniture. Even though the Rolex watch acts as a unique piece, the problem occurs when purchasing power of individual increases. A better example could be Swatch watches which were highly regarded in fashion in 1980's (Bayley, 1991). They satisfy the need of uniqueness of individuals with a limited amount of money providing them with a social status valued by the society.

3.4 Taste and Power Structure

Bourdieu (1984) works on class structures and analyzes the concept of capital where he puts forward that there are three forms of capital in each society: economic, cultural and social. He explains these as; “..... the set of actually usable resources and powers.....” (114). Belonging to a group define the social capital of an individual. In an introduction written by Johnson (qtd. in Bourdieu, 1995), he interprets the social and cultural capital as such:

Symbolic capital refers to degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honor and is found on a dialectic of knowledge and recognition. Cultural capital concerns forms of cultural knowledge competence or dispositions... Bourdieu defines cultural capital as a form of knowledge, an internalized code or a cognitive acquisition which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts (Johnson qtd. in Bourdieu, 1995: 5).

Bourdieu also argues that some groups are dominating, along with some others as subordinate in each society. He classifies them into subordinate and dominating classes.

1. Subordinate class- Subordinate class is formed by those with little of either economic and cultural capital.
2. Dominating class- is explained by Bourdieu (1984) as such:

... the dominating class constitutes a relatively autonomous space whose structure is defined by the distribution of economic and cultural capital among its members, each class fraction being characterized by a certain configuration of this distribution to which there corresponds a certain lifestyle, through the mediation of the habitus;... (Bourdieu, 1984: 260).

Stevens (1995) comments on the theory of Bourdieu and claims that dominating class may consist of two categories;

2.1. Dominating fraction of the dominating class- It consists of people with mostly the economic capital. Thus, they are generally concerned with material reproduction.

2.2. Subordinate fraction of the dominating class - It embodies people with more cultural capital. Thus, they are generally concerned with the legitimization of material reproduction through the application of symbolic power (Stevens, 1995).

Also Johnson (qtd. in Bourdieu, 1995) interprets the subordinate fraction of the dominating class as such:

The cultural field exists in a subordinate or dominated position within the field of power, whose principle of legitimacy is based on possession of economic or political capital. It is situated within the field of power because of its possession of a high degree of symbolic forms of capital.(ex. academic capital, cultural capital), but in a dominated position because of its relatively low degree of economic capital (when compared with the dominating fractions of the dominating classes). It is for this reason that Bourdieu refers to intellectuals as pertaining to the dominated fraction of the dominating class (Bourdieu, 1995:15).

The establishment of power is an important factor in constituting the relation between dominating class and subordinate class. The control of the resources requires and gives power to a specific group in the society. Accordingly, Bourdieu (1984) analyzes the power of the dominating class as physical force, economic power and symbolic power.

The first type of power which is represented by physical force is not a preferred tool in the representation of power. Even though physical power is not the focus of this study, the importance of economic power cannot be underestimated. Throughout the years, economic power is mentioned as the only determining factor of the hierarchy within the society. Bourdieu (1984) claims the importance of symbolic power which could be much more important than the economic power for the determination of taste. Symbolic power uses symbols and concepts, ideas and beliefs to be projected on the subordinate class in the society. Stevens (1995) comments on Bourdieu's theories and states as the following: "Dominating groups dominate because they wield some sort of symbolic power over subordinate ones, who misperceive the power as legitimate and are thereby co-opted into their own subordination" (107).

Stevens (1995) emphasizes naturality, misrecognition and arbitrariness as the most important aspects of symbolic power. Within the limits of symbolic power, the natural order of things seems to be normal but then, it is understood that this perception of naturality is a misrecognition. Individuals move within the society with

the presupposition of symbolic order of things. This symbolic order does not seem to structure anything in the society. In fact, it structures so precisely that it seems not to. Accordingly, the misrecognition of symbolic power as natural makes symbolic power more effective than physical and economic power. Then comes the arbitrariness of symbolic power, because only the ones who are not embodied in a particular social order are able to recognize that symbolic power is not natural. "The essential arbitrariness of symbols, of cultural goods, is what allows them to be the object of struggles, where groups try to convince others to value their own capital more than of their rivals" (Stevens, 1995: 107).

Thus, people declare their own preferences as universal and they try to convince the others to appreciate their preferences. On the other hand, the symbolic power of the dominating class has an impact on the determination of the taste of the whole society. Choices and preferences of the dominating class are generally imitated or become the ambition of the subordinate class (Bayley, 1991 and Stevens, 1995). So, the choice of the dominating class can be achieved by the other groups in the society.

"According to the theory of emulsion, the envious lower strata keep copying the upper-strata styles, and the upper keep trying to distinguish themselves, so the style for luxuries seeps down" (Douglas, 1996: 56). Blouch (1995) and Pratt (1982) agree that in addition to dominating class determining the preferences of others, the possession of taste has a characteristic property in each social class. In subcultures,

members of that group prefer particular styles but not the others' styles (Blouch, 1995). Thus within each group of people, there is the lifestyle of the group which is also influential in the constitution of taste.

To conclude, a juxtaposition of these considerations which are claimed to be in relation with each other are illustrated in Figure 3.2. Within those relations the focus of the study is to explore the relation between dominating class and taste and to figure out the factors constituting taste which ends up in the choice of the consumer.

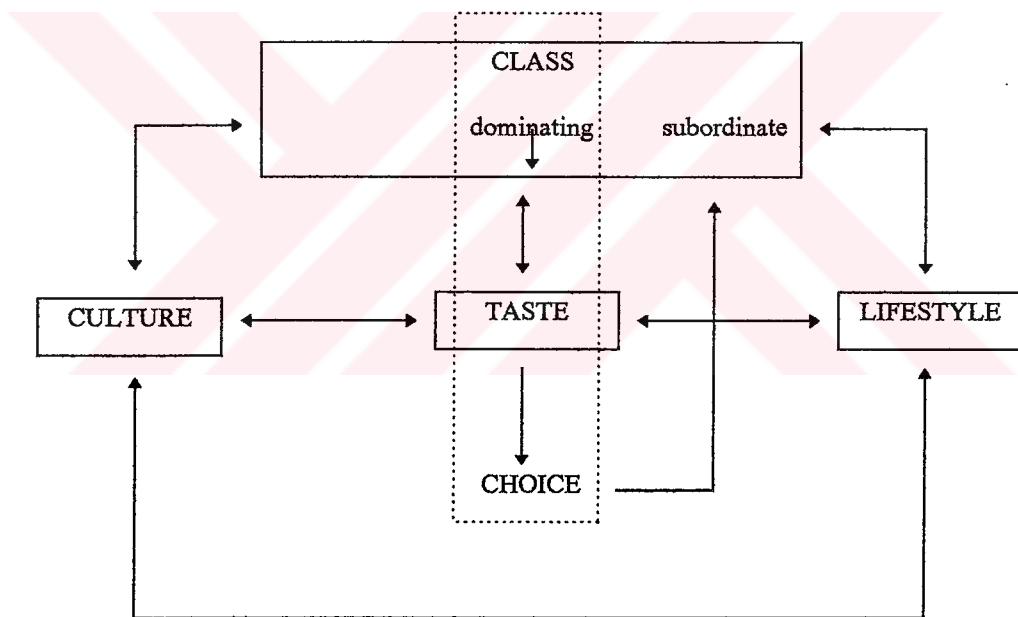


Figure 3.2 A framework for the formation of taste

One can conclude from the Figure 3.2 that there is a hierarchical link between class, culture, lifestyle and taste. Within this framework, with the use of symbolic power, the dominating class manifests its taste which results in the choice of the consumer. This choice is then applied by subordinate class in the society.

From another point of view, Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) state that there are mainly five factors which influences the choice behavior of the consumer. They name these as functional value, conditional value, social value, emotional value and epistemic value (see Figure 3.3 below).

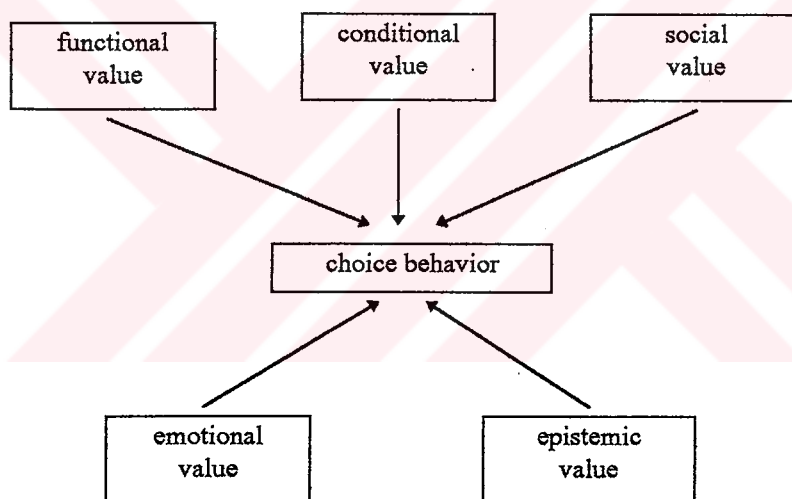


Figure 3.3 Five values influencing market choice behavior

(Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991: 7)

By functional value, they refer to a product performing its utilitarian physical purposes, as well as its price compared to other alternatives. With social value, they emphasize the social image and norms that the user is after. If an individual is willing to belong to a group, he/she reflects this desire while choosing the product with the consideration of social value (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991).

Many products suggest desired emotions defined by likes and dislikes of the consumer which constitute the emotional value influencing the choice. If the choice is based on curiosity, novelty-seeking and knowledge seeking motivations; then it is referred as epistemic value of choice behavior. On the other hand, a product may have conditional value which signifies the value for specific occasions (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991). This does not mean that in each activity of choice, all these factors take place. On the contrary, different values can take place for different products. In the case of living room furniture, functional, social, emotional and epistemic values can be stated to be influential. Thus taste, as a consumer preference, is the result of the social, emotional and epistemic values. Except the functional value, all others are the means for the demonstration of taste.

Thus looking to the problem from the point of view of the consumer, a juxtaposition of these two figures can be mentioned in which social value of the consumer behavior is seemed to be analyzed in detail in the Figure 3.2.

In addition to mentioned discussions, it has been observed that throughout the years, the issue of how taste values are formed and acquired has been a vague issue. Some researches have been conducted only by collecting opinions about consumption choices and preferences and analyzing them (Sparke, 1994). The present study, however, identifies the variables that have an impact on taste and searches for the relationship between them.

3.5 Taste and Social Determinants

To conclude what has been discussed till now, one can claim the importance of determining social factors in the constitution of taste. It has been explained that the social data, psychological factor, economic and cultural capital in addition to aesthetic preferences constitute the taste of the user as a consumer preference. Accordingly, these factors will be explained in detail and the relationship between them will be illustrated in the following sections.

3.5.1 Social data

Within a specific culture, social data of the consumer gives us clues about his/her taste. In a research carried out by Guiliani, Bove and Rullo (1993) it is concluded that the number and age of children play an important role in the furnishing of rooms. So, the number and age of children in the household, should be included in the social

data of the consumer. On the other hand, Engell, Blackwell and Miniard (1990) mention that demographics provide information on the social data of the user and they list demographic criteria as the following;

1. Age
2. Education
3. Income
4. Occupation
5. Household size
6. Dwelling size
7. Geographic size
8. Stage in the life-cycle

Household size, the size of the dwelling and the family's stage in the life-cycle lead us to the understanding of the overall organization within the house. By geographic size, the size of the city in which the consumer inhabits is meant. Furthermore, even though it is not on the above list, the habitation span in the city can also be used as a factor, because the time spent in the city may lead to changes in consumer attitudes. Within the same income group, there should be differences in the definition or representation of tastes according to the duration of their inhabitation in the city. Therefore, it is relevant to add habitation span in the city in the social data.

3.5.2 Economic capital

What is referred as economic factors are nothing different than Bourdieu's concept of economic capital (see section 3.4). According to Bourdieu (1984) income plays an

important role in determining distance from necessity while he adds that; “...(there are) cases in which the same income is associated with totally different consumption patterns” (177).

... aesthetic standards and taste are taught in our society both by the home and the school. Thus a person’s educational achievement and the kind of school he or she attended will probably predict better than any other single index that person’s cultural choices. Since both of these are closely related to an individual’s (and his or her parent’s) socioeconomic level... (Gans, 1974: 70-71).

The importance of the income level can not be underestimated both in the determination of the lifestyle and the way of consumption. Becker (1996) claims that economic factors also change preferences of an individual by changing personal and social capital. Eke (1980) points out that the relationship between income and lifestyle lies both in consumption and in the economic resources of an individual. There may be personal preferences for lifestyles, yet the similarities in lifestyle are widely influenced by similar budget constrains. Additionally, an increase in income results in the distinctive expression of personality through consumption or extravagant consumption and the concern for differentiation from others. Accordingly, the furnishing of the upper income group is expected to be more symbolic than functional (Eriç, et.al., 1986). Thus, it is undeniable that, in the selection of furniture, the upper income group can reflect its personal as well as social preferences since its members are after symbolic connotations.

Still, there should be variables other than income like occupation and profession which may lead to the understanding of different consumption patterns in the same income level where income serves as one of the ingredients for both social and economic factors.

3.5.3 Aesthetic preferences

Due to the discussions held by Sparke (1994) there is a direct relationship between taste and style. She explains style as the visual language of an object that establishes a communication with the taste values of the consumer. As mentioned earlier, she explains taste as an aesthetic discrimination, that is influenced from social, economic and anthropological factors. She adds that; “Through the objects and styles which represent it, taste communicates complex messages about our values, our aspirations, our beliefs and our identities” (Sparke, 1995: 1).

Bayley (1991) makes an unconventional comment when mentioning that taste is both an odd and an interesting concept, similar to style. At the same time, he points out that taste is both a myth and a reality; thus taste is much more passive when compared with the style’s suggestion of activity. When a consumer claims a stylistic choice he/she claims his/her style of living (Sparke, 1994). Thus, it does not matter whether the consumer has practiced that style of living or not, because the preferences of the consumer claim his/her stylistic approach. Sparke (1994) and

Blouch (1995) agree that the role of mass media can not be underestimated as it is the source for communication of different social groups and alternative stylistic approaches. Blouch (1995) explains the influence of culture through the mechanism of style for design preferences and he describes the link among design and community, marketers and mass media with taste as follows: “If the design community, marketers, and mass media together promote a particular style, it can become a significant shaper of individual tastes” (Blouch, 1995:26).

Bayley (1991) emphasizes a similar approach. He points out the impact of mass market on our judgments and domination of mass market to homogenize preferences. He also claims that people who have a distinguished style try to break from this rigid homogeneity; this is the reason why taste is understood both as a totem and a taboo. Swales exemplifies this approach as:

The reification of styles of living is widely assumed to reinforce stereotypes, but such messages may be read negatively as well as positively, as in the case of the householder who avoided pine in the kitchen because she did not want to be associated with that type of women (Swales, 1988 qtd. in Putnam, 1990: 16).

Furthermore there are various influences on popular taste and on styles as well. Nowadays, all of the styles blend with each other as people buy their furniture within a period of time. Thus, the styles are turned out to be hybrid by itself (Madigan and Munro, 1996).

Bayley (1991) believes that design quality could be objectively defined but this is valid neither for 'good' nor for 'bad taste'. As a matter of fact, when the subjective approach of the user is to be determined, taste is more clearly understood by negative judgments (Douglas, 1996). People easily describe what they do not like but they hesitate to pronounce what they like.

According to Kant (cited in Hofstadler and Kuhns, 1964) the judgment of taste is not something logical, but aesthetic. In the same manner, Hofstadler and Kuhns (1964) claim that; "taste is the faculty of judging of an object or a method of representing it by an entirely disinterested satisfaction. The object of that satisfaction is called beautiful" (286).

Regarding the judgment of aesthetic, Palmer (1996 a) also claims that it is in the attitude in which we approach to the objects. On the other hand, aesthetics has its own rules.

But when we judge an object aesthetically we do not judge it in relation to some individual objective, but in terms of its appropriateness to our whole identity; such a judgment is based on value, and value is something that acts as a focus for decisions about the future without our necessarily realizing what it is we are committing ourselves to in any clear detail (Palmer, 1996 (a): 6).

He adds that beauty could not be independent of meaning and continues that aesthetic value of an object derives from the judgments of a group of people. Accordingly, the objects referred as beautiful by the users demonstrate the taste of all consumers within a particular group. Thus, the user's attitude towards the objects and labeling them as beautiful give some clues about their aesthetic preferences and satisfaction.

3.5.4 Psychological factors

According to Dittmar, Beattie and Friese (1995) products are usually bought impulsively and they reflect self-identity. So, the psychology of the consumer while purchasing should have an impact on the determination of taste. Yet, as the mode of purchasing furniture is not something temporary, it is difficult to talk about impulsive purchase. Conversely, it is a long - term decision. Therefore, rather than the psychology of the impulsive consumption, one can claim that a more rational decision is expected for furniture purchase surrounded with more symbolic connotations.

3.5.5 Cultural capital

Relating the concept of culture with design, Sparke (1994) explains that culture is something that embodies in the ideas and values which are declared in the society. For each generation, social groups and classes inherit a historically given structure of

knowledge from the preceding generations (Garnham and Williams, 1996). It consists of social and cultural donation, which is transformed into capital by the individuals. Bourdieu (1984) referred the cultural inputs of an individual as cultural capital and he prefers to name that cultural capital as 'habitus', which includes both psychological and social constructs. In fact, it is the product of a personal history. He believes that all forms of education teach some forms of habitus, knowledge and skills.

The habitus is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification of these practices. It is in the relationship between the two capacities which define the habitus, the capacity to produce a classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e., the space of lifestyles is constituted (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).

Habitus generates perceptions, attitudes and practices. It is a kind of tool that individuals use to understand the social world and other people's practices. Hence, it acts as a device which controls our actions and practices. It has the power to structure our life which is the result of 'habit and habituation' from which the habitus generates. On the other hand, habitus is the product of a personal history, that an individual embodies from his/her family within a social system (Stevens, 1995).

According to Garnham and Williams (1996), Bourdieu's definition of class is based on habitus and several consumption patterns, including furniture, are the indicators of

the habitus of classes and class fractions. Bourdieu's habitus operates depending on the 'logic of practice'. As Garnham and Williams (1996) comments:

This logic is shaped primarily in early childhood within the family... latter experience will alter the structure of the habitus's logic of practice, these alterations from school or work will be appropriated according to the structural logic of the existing habitus (49).

As mentioned in section 3.4, cultural capital differs from economic capital from the point of its arbitrariness. Stevens (1995) claims that if an individual has the economic capital similar to somebody else, then they may be claimed to be similar in the opportunities of consumption. But, cultural capital can not be judged in the same manner; the cultural capital of an individual cannot be identical with anybody else. Thus, cultural capital is one of the major concepts which explains the differences within a society.

Cultural and economic capital are quite distinct forms although interconvertible in different ways at different rates of exchange. For example, the educational system allows cultural capital to be converted to economic capital by providing access to high-paying sectors of the labor market... (Stevens, 1995: 109).

As previously explained, symbolic power is generally employed by the dominating class of the society (see Figure 3.2). Stevens (1995) affirms the relation between symbolic power and cultural capital as follows:

At the highest level, that of society as a whole, we call the field in which symbolic power operates 'culture'. As economic power flows from the possession of economical capital, so symbolic power flows from the possession of symbolic or cultural capital (107).

Bourdieu (1984) makes a classification of cultural capital. He claims that there are three basic forms that can be distinguished:

1. Institutionalized cultural capital- Academic qualifications and educational qualifications are referred as institutionalized cultural capital. The educational system plays an important role in Bourdieu's theory. He mentions that there is a market of educational capital which is used to certificate. Thus, educational capital serves as a medium of exchange between cultural capitals. Accordingly, with the help of that educational capital, an individual has a chance to have an occupation. As it has a value in the cultural capital, it is accepted by the economical capital. Stevens (1995) emphasize this relation as follows:

...the higher education system as a whole not only reproduces the producers of the dominating culture, it ... produces consumers of that culture... All forms of education transmit knowledge and skills, and all forms of education also inculcate some form of habitus (Stevens, 1995: 112).

Similarly, Gans (1974) claims the importance of education both in institutions and at home. Thus, one's cultural choices may be predicted by means of the education he/she had together with the educational achievement that one has gained.

2. Social cultural capital - Durable networks of people on whom one can rely on are claimed as social cultural capital. Briefly, social cultural capital manifests itself within the society. It deals with not the social status, but the social position of the individual, his/her relationship with the other members of the society and; the knowledge that they gathered in addition to the positive and negative effects of those relationships.

3. Embodied cultural capital - All different ways in which taste and attitudes are manifested are the presentation of embodied cultural capital. By 'embodied' Bourdieu (1984) means that it exists within individuals, as attitudes, tastes, preferences and behaviors. It is obtained from the society and the family as a cultural heritage.

Within the context of this study, significant issues which are mentioned as social data, economic capital, aesthetic preferences, psychological factors and cultural capital constitute the framework for the field survey This framework can be seen in the Figure 3.4.

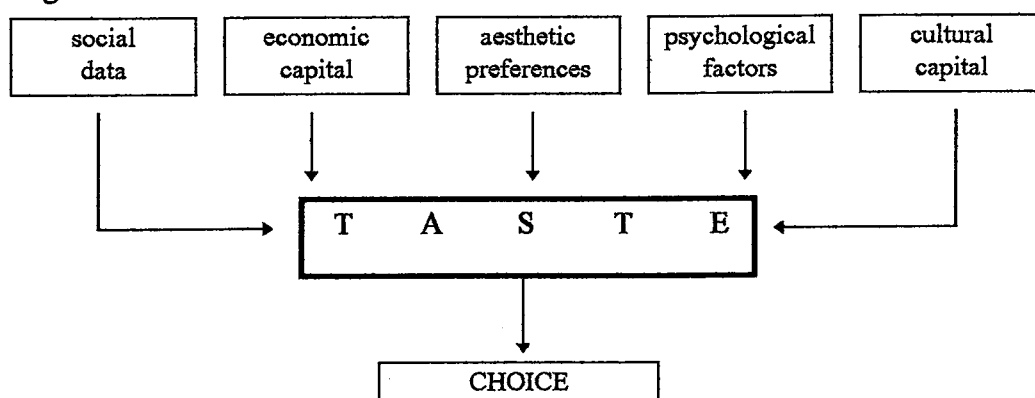


Figure 3.4 Determinants of taste

Accordingly, the structure in Figure 3.4 is proposed for the determination of taste of the user which is declared by the choices that the consumer make. It attempts to define criteria used for the selection of furniture, as well as the other choices of consumers in a society. Thus, the following chapter exemplifies this framework for furniture selection for a specific society and, for a specific social group so that the framework can be tested through factors forming the taste of a definite group.



4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: TASTE FACTORS INFLUENCING FURNITURE CHOICE OF THE UPPER INCOME GROUP IN İSTANBUL

4.1 Components of the Framework

There are several components which set the general framework of this dissertation. Living room furniture is selected as the case to be studied as it has different meanings when compared with the other furniture used in the rest of the house. The sample group is selected as the upper income group and the city in which this study is conducted is selected as İstanbul. The following sections concentrate on how these choices have been determined.

4.1.1 Determination of the living room furniture

The significance of the living room lies in its being a place of both individual relaxation and social interaction, in addition to symbolizing certain values (Low and Chambers, 1989), by representing the dream, the imagination and the scheme of the

spaces that the owners want to have (Alfrey and Cooper, 1990). It has been claimed that dining rooms and the living rooms generally act as the stages where individuals project their own taste (Bayley, 1991). As mentioned earlier in the second chapter, the furniture in the living room is more significant than the furniture used in other rooms. As different from other rooms, furniture used in the living room not only acts as a symbol for the representation of self, but at the same time, it acts as a symbol for the relationship with others.

For the Turkish society, there are various places which are used for daily activities. Guest room differs itself from a family room in the way that furniture is selected with care for that specific room (see section 2.1 for this discussion). Even in that condition, guest room still becomes a symbol of representation of the self and the relationship with the others. Within the same culture and even within the same social group, some users have both 'guest room' and 'family room', while others prefers to have only one 'living room' in which they spend most of their times and entertain their guests. Accordingly, within the limits of this study, the 'living room' is used to denote both the 'guest room' and the 'living room' exceeding the 'family room' functions. The living room may consist of both the dining place and the resting/sitting place. As the dining place can be somewhere else in the house, the main concern of this study is the furniture used in the resting/sitting place.

4.1.2 Determination of the sample group

In the literature, the income level in the society is generally used to constitute three main groups: upper, middle and lower income groups (Porteous, 1977). Within the framework of the present study which searches the relationship between the components of taste and furniture choice, it is assumed that the choice of the lower income group is based essentially on the price of the furniture, especially in the present situation of Turkey. Eriç, et.al. (1986) point out that the main concern of the lower income group when furnishing the residential space is to satisfy their basic and functional needs. In addition, Bilgin (1991) notes that in the houses of the lower income group, the distinction of bathroom, kitchen, living room and bedroom is not always observed. Thus, the furniture of the living room may not be specified.

Although some personal preferences can be depicted for the middle income group, income is still considered to be a dominating factor. Furthermore, the variety in the living patterns of the upper income group can not be detected in the middle income group, as it is expected to be a more limited group in terms of life-style choices.

Eriç, et.al. (1986) indicate that, especially in the upper income group in Turkey, there is a tendency in the selection of household furnishing away from formal and functional rationality, based on the sense of being a member of an exclusive group as the literature suggested. On the other side, Eke (1980) points out that the group

having a rapid increase in annual income consumes more, compared to the people having almost no or slow increase. In this respect, there are several factors along income, such as occupation, education, habitation span in the city etc., which affect the preference of furniture of the mentioned group. As a result, the choice of the upper income group may provide the opportunity to evaluate a broader range of factors that are effective in furniture choice.

Stevens (1995), Douglas (1996) and Bayley (1991) claim that the dominating group in society (which is the upper income group) influences the whole society with their consumption preferences. Thus, the rest of the society accepts the evaluation of the dominating class about valuation of some consumer goods (see section 3.4). Şenesen and Selim (1995) note that furniture is a luxury item so that only the upper income group has the chance to decide upon or stating their preferences in its consumption. In a survey conducted by Bruce and Whitehead (1988) it was figured out that design of any household object was much more important than the price of it. Thus, within the framework of this dissertation, the price could be disregarded as a determining factor for furniture consumption.

Besides, Bourdieu (1984) indicates that pretentious consumption is generally preferred in families with a rapid change in their economical status. Socio-cultural transformations which has occurred in the 80's in the Turkish society that resulted in a quick shift of social classes and also in income levels seem to support this view.

Therefore, today's upper income group has several varieties which correspond to different tendencies in the selection of furniture. Since this study focuses on the taste determining factors other than income, it is expected to cover these groups through its sampling procedure involving in the highest income level.

4.1.3 Determination of the city

İstanbul, being the biggest city of Turkey as well as a cosmopolitan city, has been extremely affected by the cultural transformations that Turkey experienced, which started as a migration trend around 1960's. As a result of these changes in the society, a variety of cultural levels in the upper income group has emerged which is not the focus of this thesis as it requires a different kind of analysis. On the other hand, being the city of industry, trade and commerce, İstanbul embodies the upper income group of Turkey as they are settled or recently moved to that city. Thus, the upper income group of İstanbul has the highest opportunity to represent its taste in the furniture selection.

The upper income group both reflects and inspires the other consumers in other cities as well as the global trends of consumption. Tokatlı and Erkip (1998) claim that the economic dominance of İstanbul over other cities of the country has been a continuous trend. Thus, İstanbul may give us clues in this respect for the other cities of Turkey as well. Şenesen and Selim (1995) note that: "The consumer behavior is

more or less the same for urban and rural households for all other (including furniture) expenditure” (218); and they add that İstanbul is a stage for all cultural levels in Turkey. Also, educational level is fairly high in İstanbul. The percentage of university graduates in İstanbul is 10.2 whereas, the percentage for the whole country is 5.2 (Tokatlı and Erkip, 1998). Thus, this information supports the selection of İstanbul as the case for this study.

4.2 The Methodology of the Research

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the general framework of the study consists of social data, economic capital, aesthetic preferences, psychological factors and cultural capital as the determinants of taste. As the city and the target group of this study are determined as mentioned in previous sections, they can be considered as given. Within social factors, the dwelling size as a component is neglected. As the focus of the study is furniture selection of the upper income group, the size of the dwelling is expected to be big enough to exhibit their taste. Geographic size is controlled as the city has been chosen as İstanbul beforehand. The income factor in the social factors and the economic factors are controlled as it was previously stated as the target group is upper income group. The psychological factors are disregarded as psychology is claimed to be effective in the impulsive purchase only. Accordingly, within the framework of the present study, the relevant components of taste are shown in Figure 4.1.

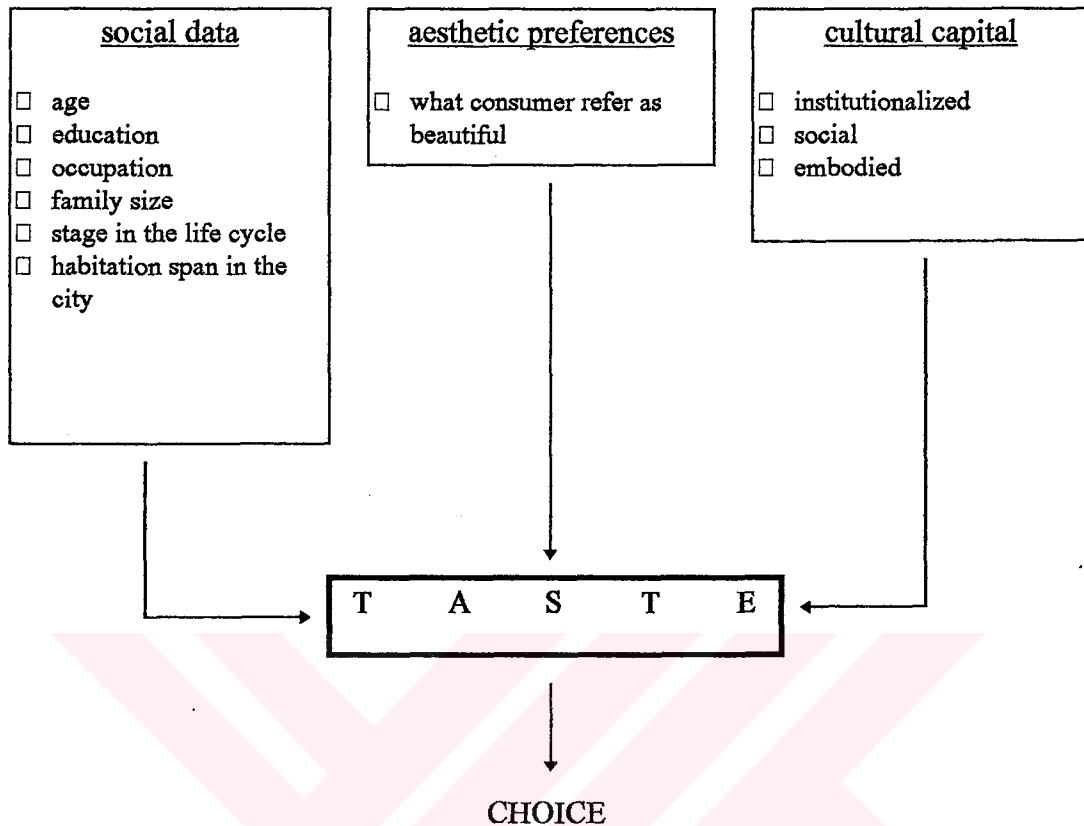


Figure 4.1 Framework of the empirical research

Even though the framework mainly consists of social data, aesthetic preferences and cultural capital, the empirical research was concentrated on the impact of cultural capital as it has a dominating effect on the other two variables.

4.2.1 Hypotheses

The main hypothesis of this framework can be claimed as the importance of cultural capital and its impact on the constitution of taste. How the consumers name tasteful furniture and which meanings that they give to the living room and several other responses are expected to give clues about the impact of cultural capital on the constitution of taste. The hypotheses can be grouped into three main headings;

- the impact of institutionalized cultural capital
- the impact of embodied cultural capital
- the impact of social cultural capital

The first sub-hypothesis, institutional cultural capital is expected to be observed through different responses. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Blouch (1995) claimed the impact of design acumen in the development of taste. Thus, the impact of design acumen is tested through some interview questions. The different declarations of the users are expected among the ones who has a design education in comparison with the uneducated or educated people in different fields. Accordingly, the snowballing technique is selected as the most appropriate technique, and the first interviewee is selected from the group who had a design education. The evaluation is done through the responses that different groups had given to specific questions. (for Q13, Q14, Q23, Q27, Q28 see Appendix B.)

As the second sub-hypothesis, the importance of embodied cultural capital is tested. It has been expected that most of the users declare the importance of having a family and importance of education and knowledge learned from family. Thus, to start with, it is expected that the ones who share the house (with a family) and the ones who consult to the other inhabitants of the house will have a different consideration on different issues. To clarify these differences questions 13 and 14 are asked (see Appendix B). On the other hand, some questions are utilized to clarify whether there is an important impact of family or not. (for Q16, Q17, Q23 see Appendix B).

The third sub-hypothesis is the significance of social cultural capital on the formation of taste. By social cultural capital, the relationship among the users is meant, how they are influenced from the friends, from the society and also from the fashion. Accordingly, it is expected that the responses to the question mentioning from where the users are influenced is expected to be concentrated on the fashion/hobbies and friends (Q14, see Appendix B). On the other hand, it is expected that the users are going to claim a kind of similarity between their clothing preferences and furniture preferences which may imply the impact on fashion in the formation of taste (Q16, see Appendix B).

To explore the relationship between the social cultural capital and the formation of taste, the relation between the ones who declare the importance of fashion, hobbies and friends, through several questions is analyzed (Q14, Q27, Q28 in Appendix B).

The same analysis is held for the ones who claimed that the social influences and fashion are the most important influences in the constitution of their taste (Q20 in Appendix B).

4.2.2 Sampling procedure

The study is designed as a qualitative research which is more relevant for the discussion of taste. Hakim (1992) claims the significant role of qualitative research as follows:

...the fundamental difference between case studies and qualitative research is that qualitative research is concerned with obtaining people's own accounts of situations and events, with reporting their perspectives and feelings... (Hakim, 1992: 8).

As the major concern of this dissertation is the perception of users about the determining factors for the development of their tastes, it is clear that qualitative research is the most relevant method to be used.

Hakim (1992) claimed that "...non-random sampling may be used to select people for qualitative research." (47). The snowballing technique is found relevant for this research, because in this technique, new respondents are found with the help of the

previous respondents; that is to say that each respondent proposes another one. Singleton et. al (1988) claim that the snowballing technique may start with the person that the interviewer found appropriate, which is also valid for this research. Even though it is difficult to figure out how many people could be stated as being the member of the relevant group, fifty people were decided to be sufficient to represent the overall group, for the purpose of analysis in this study.

The survey was carried out as face to face interviews. Although it was claimed to be the most time consuming way of survey type (Singleton, et.al 1988), it is also the most beneficial to obtain information in such a research. Semi-structured interviews preferred, consisting of open ended questions in order to obtain information about the user and his/her appreciation of taste (Appendix B). Interviews were preferably conducted with the person who claimed to be the most influential member of the house in the selection of furniture.

For this specific survey, the target population is selected as the upper income group. The geographical sample of the research is based on the survey which was conducted in İstanbul (Güvenç and Işık, 1996). According to them, there are four main categories of occupational status in İstanbul; employees, employers, the self-employed and others. By others, they refer to the people who are retired, unemployed, students or rent owners. Within each group, they distinguish four categories as:

1. Being the owner of the house that they settled and owning at least one more house.
2. Being a tenant, but owning another house.
3. Being a tenant.
4. Owning no house.

Güvenç and Işık (1996) claim that within those four occupation categories people having much more income compared to the others (which is the first category; being the owner of the house that they live in and owning at least one more house) prefer to settle in a district in the city that correspond to their status. Accordingly, it is concluded that the districts in which people of the first category prefer to settle are listed as the following;

Erenköy
Fenerbahçe
Feneryolu
Ataköy
Yeşilyurt
Yeşilköy
Etiler
Ulus

Akatlar (Güvenç and Işık, 1997) (see also Appendix A for the map showing these districts)

It could be claimed that if a survey is conducted in one of those districts, it would give the information about the other similar districts. Even though these districts could be suitable as the starting point, in today's İstanbul, the preference of the upper income group for settlement has shifted to other places as well (Güvenç, 1997). This

comment has been observed during the conduction of this research. The snowballing technique as a method of sampling allowed the respondents to lead to different districts than stated above (see Appendix A, translucent, for the districts of the sample group).

4.3 Results of the Survey

The semi-structured interview (Appendix B) consists of questions which test the relationship between taste and the defining variables (see Figure 4.1) and also the hypotheses which are listed in the previous section. Accordingly, there are two types of questions pointing out demographic properties and the variables of taste. Table 4.1 illustrates the demographic properties of the respondents.

50 respondents were covered through the semi-structured interviews. Among these, 9 are male and the rest female. As mentioned in section 4.2, the selected respondents were the dominating members of the family in the selection of furniture. Thus, it has been observed that more than males, females take the responsibility of choosing furniture. In fact, among those 9 male respondents, 4 were living alone which may be claimed as the reason of their being influential in selecting furniture. Among all the respondents, 42 of them share the house and 8 of them live alone (see Table 4.1). Among the ones living alone, 4 of them are male and 3 of them are female; and among the 42 of the respondents who are sharing the house, 5 of them are male and

the rest female. Thus, marriage appeared as a dominant lifestyle in the selected group, which is the upper income group.

Table 4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

		AGE				total
		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	
SEX	female	3	15	16	7	41
	male		2	6	1	9
SHARING THE DWELLING	not sharing		3	4	1	8
	sharing	3	14	18	7	42
EDUCATION	secondary				1	1
	high school		4	6	2	12
	university	2	10	12	3	27
	post-graduate	1	3	4	2	10
PROFESSION	no profession		4	4	3	11
	related with design	2	3	6	2	13
	others	1	10	12	3	26
PRESENT OCCUPATION	not working	1	9	8	4	22
	related with design	1	2	4	2	9
	others	1	6	10	2	19
LIVING IN THE CITY	5 & below	3	7	4	1	15
	6 to 15		3	4	2	9
	16 to 25		4	3	1	8
	by birth		3	11	4	18
LIVING IN THAT DISTRICT	less than 5	3	13	9	3	28
	5 to 10		2	4	2	8
	more than 10		2	9	3	14

Also, it is found out that out of 42 people, only two of them are sharing the house with her children, while 17 of them are sharing the house with his/her husband/wife and 23 of them sharing the house with both his/her partner and children.

As mentioned in section 4.2, the interviews were started with a person whom the researcher found representative for this group of people; who is in the age group of 29 and below. It is figured out that people from all age groups suggest the ones from an upper age group. Even though this research was started with the age group 29 and below, that group has been represented with the lowest percentage (see Table 4.1 for age distribution). Only for the group of 50 to 59, it is observed that they no longer suggest samples from the upper age group but lower. As a result, the age group 40 to 49 appears to cover the biggest portion of the sample with a percentage of 44.

In the educational distribution of the sample group 27 of them have a university degree, while 12 of them graduated from high school and only 1 of them is from secondary school. 10 of them have a post-graduate degree in different fields (see Table 4.1). On the other hand, when the professional distribution of the sample group is concerned, 11 of them do not have any profession --mostly housewife--, 13 of them have a profession related with design; and 26 of them have different professions other than design related issues. Within the sub-group of design, architects, graphic designers, ceramic artists and interior architects exist. On the other hand, when the present occupation of the respondents are considered, it has been observed that the ones having jobs related with design is not more than 9, which illustrates that some of the respondents are not working and some of them are doing different jobs.

Habitation span in the city is also illustrated in Table 4.1. The people who claim themselves as living in that city by birth is the biggest group in the sample, while the newcomers constitutes the second group. In fact, the ones who claim that they are in İstanbul by birth are not homogeneous in terms of strata. The districts which are claimed as the places where all upper income groups of all social status groups settled (Güvenç and Işık, 1997) (see Appendix A) are selected for the research, and it is observed that the newcomers in that districts are dominant over the sample group. Thus, it could be claimed that once those places are started to be seen as places of status symbols, the people from the upper income group move to that districts.

They have been asked how many years they have been choosing their furniture. It is observed that the majority is in the group covering 16 to 20 years time span. This condensation could be explained with the age distribution of the sample group in which concentration could be seen in the 40 to 49 age group (see Table C.1.1). As 80% of the respondents claim that they have started to select their furniture due to marriage, it could be claimed that mainly the age group of 40 to 49 started to choose their furniture with marriage (Table C.1.2). In fact, this could be explained with the customs of Turkish society as there is a tendency to buy furniture of a young couple which is considered as one of the duties of the families. Question 17, which concentrates on the place of purchase, may also give clues about the consumption tendencies of the upper income group. 36 percent of the respondents prefer to buy their furniture from antique and authentic shops. Within that group, fleemarkets,

antique dealers, auction houses are mentioned. It is followed by the imported furniture shops with a percentage of 28 (see Figure C.1). Respondents are also asked from where they prefer to buy if they would choose their furniture today, and 48% of them claimed no change in their preference (see Figure C.2). Due to their high income, they seem to be happy with their preferences and they practically do not have any need to change the place of purchase. In Figure C.1, the local furniture is represented with a percentage of 24. The group of local furniture consists of both shops which sell products of Turkish producers and also custom made furniture. In the preference diagram, (Figure C.2) the percentage of the local furniture is reduced to 8%, antique and authentic to 12% and imported furniture to 16%. The only preference which slightly increased is to buy furniture from abroad. It increased from 12% to 16%.

Figure C.3 illustrates the frequency of change in furniture. It is observed that concentration is in the group who changed them two or three times, with the percentage of 35. They are expected to change their furniture more frequently because of limitless financial potential. But, they generally buy furniture one at a time, not changing the whole furniture as a whole. Thus, their responses should be evaluated as the frequency of change of the whole furniture in the living room. Again, due to financial conditions, the percentage of 18 which represents the ones who changed their furniture 4 to 10 times, and the percentage of 2 who changed the furniture more than 10 do not appear something extraordinary.

The survey mainly constructed to test the hypotheses which were claimed in section 4.2. The main hypothesis declares the importance of cultural capital in the constitution of taste. Thus, this hypotheses was divided into 3 sub-hypothesis. As the first hypothesis suggests the importance of institutionalized cultural capital, respondents with different institutionalized cultural capital are expected to respond differently to some questions which are supposed to indicate clues of differing taste preferences.

Respondents were asked if there is any difference in the treatment of furniture between the living rooms and the other rooms (Q11). The second part of the question tries to put forward whether such kind of consideration exists or not. According to the results, 37 of the respondents claimed their disturbance with the difference of the treatment of the furniture within the house in which respondents with a design related profession were not dominant (Table C.2.1).

The meaning of a living room was asked and it has been observed that significant portion of the respondents claim that it is the space which represents the personality of the user (see Table C.2.2).

Table C.2.3 illustrates the relationship between profession and the respondents' answers to the influencing factors in the constitution of taste (question 21). Different than the others, respondents with a profession related with design mostly accentuated

the importance of education and profession. On the other hand, others (respondents from other professions or having no profession) mostly claim the importance of lifestyle and society. The respondents are also asked to name the style of their furniture (Q25, see Appendix B). The analysis of this question does not propose objectivity in the naming of style. What the respondents perceive as their style of furniture is much more important than whether it fits with the accepted definition or not. The main emphasis is on what they perceive as their style of furniture. As expected, the respondents with a design education named their furniture styles as modern and contemporary. Even though some of the remaining respondents claimed their furniture as classic, the dominance is in the group who named their furniture style as modern and antique (see Table C.2.4).

Respondents are also asked to define tasteful furniture. Respondents were free to claim what they want, and afterwards the researcher has grouped them as each respondent had the chance to state several issues. Within the answers, the expected result is that the answers of respondents with a design education would differ. The analysis clarifies that the answers of the respondents having a profession related with design differ in the way that they define tasteful furniture in relation to the functionality and comfort (Table C.2.5). Other qualities like being harmonious with the house (Table C.2.6), and having and accentuating design qualities (Table C.2.7) were also stated. 35 of the respondents declare that if the piece of furniture is

beautiful then they name it as tasteful furniture (see Table C.2.8). However, the dominance of this answer is similar for all professional groups.

As it was mentioned in section 3.3, respondents are generally more clear about what they do not like. So what they meant by tasteless furniture was also asked to the respondents (Q 28, see Appendix B). The analysis clarifies that the dominance of the respondents with a profession related with design is on the answers defining tasteless furniture as inharmonious furniture with the other furniture (see Table C.2.9) and furniture which consists of several styles (see Table C.2.10). Additionally, it has been observed that only the 13 % of people declared the importance of uncomfortable furniture in the definition of tasteless furniture in which the dominance of respondents having a design related profession cannot be observed (see Table C.2.11). A similar tendency can also be traced in the definition of tasteless furniture as the extremes of classic and modern furniture. Only 29% of the total respondents claimed the extremes of modern and classic furniture as tasteless furniture in which the dominance of the groups of no profession and other profession has been observed (see Table C.2.12). While 11 of the respondents with a design related profession stated tasteless furniture as consisting of several styles, only one person with different profession and no profession mentioned the same issue.

The second sub-hypothesis which declares the importance of embodied cultural capital, can be illustrated with the impact of family in the formation of taste. So, it is

expected that the respondents who share the house with the others (being a family) and who mention that they consult other inhabitants of the house when choosing furniture, show different tendencies in their responses.

35 people out of all respondents who share the house with others stated that there was difference in the treatment of furniture within the house, but on the contrary the ones who do not share the house mostly claimed no difference in the treatment. This finding can be interpreted as the family dictates different kinds of furnishing within the house (see Table C.2.13). On the other hand, most of the respondents claimed their unhappiness with this difference in the treatment of house furnishing (see Table C.2.14).

The ones who share the house with others, who live with a family, defined the meaning of the living room, as a place representing their personality first and second as the space for the themselves. Differently, the ones who do not share the house defined the living room as the space for the guests and as the space representing their personality of with an equal distribution (see Table C.2.15). Also, it has been observed that, beauty is the first consideration in choosing furniture for most of the respondents, so no significant difference is observed between the ones who share the house and the ones do not (Table C.2.16). Most of the respondents (80%) claim that if they find a piece of beautiful furniture, they do not hesitate to buy. As no factors such as the price and functionality are dominantly important, it is clear that the

aesthetic evaluation of the furniture --what they perceive as beautiful-- has a vital role in the constitution of their taste. Comfort and harmony are represented with a percentage of 42. By harmony, respondents generally refer to the unity with the other furniture within the house and the living room.

Table C.2.17 illustrates the relationship between the ones who consult the other inhabitants of the house when selecting furniture and their reaction to the difference of treatment. 50% of the respondents do not consult other inhabitants of the house; either using it as a privilege given to them by their partners or claiming it as their duty. It has been observed that there is no difference between the ones who consult the other inhabitants and those do not, whereas most of the respondents claim that there is a difference in the treatment of furniture within the house (Table C.2.17). The similar approach was also observed in being disturbed by the change in treatment (Table C.2.18), and most of the respondents claimed that they were disturbed by the change of treatment of furniture. When the same group was asked to describe the meaning that they ascribed to the living room, the concentration is on the group that claimed that the living room represents the personality of the user (see Table C.2.19). As a second significant observation, the respondents who consult the other inhabitants claimed the living room as a space for the guest and a space where the comfort is equally important. On the contrary, the respondents who do not consult the other inhabitants claimed the living room as a space for the user.

Table C.2.20 shows the relationship between the respondents consulting the other inhabitants in the house and their first consideration in choosing furniture. It has been observed that for most of the respondents beauty is the first consideration (58%). In the second place, a difference is observed between the respondents who consult the other inhabitants and the ones who do not. For the respondents who consult the other inhabitants, comfort is at the second place while harmony takes place at the second place for the respondents who do not consult the others.

Another set of analysis were held which searches for the answers of the respondents who claimed the influence of family in the formation of their taste. Table C.2.21 illustrates the relationship between the most influential factor of taste and the definitions given to the living rooms. It has been observed that the respondents who claimed family as the most influential factor in the constitution of their taste mostly defined the living room as the space for the guests and representing the personality with an equal distribution. For the respondents who claimed lifestyle and society as the most influential factors in the formation of their taste, the dominant definition of living room is to represent their personality.

In the definitions of tasteful furniture, it has been detected that the respondents who claimed the impact of family as, the most influential factor in the constitution of their taste, defined tasteful furniture as being harmonious with the house and the furniture (Table C.2.22) and plain and modern (Table C.2.23). The same analysis was also

held for the components of tasteless furniture. It has been observed that the groups who claimed lifestyle and society, and family as the influential factors in the constitution of their taste defined tasteless furniture as exaggerated furniture (Table C.2.24). The only impact of the family was detected in the response which defines tasteless furniture as inharmonious (see Table C.2.25).

The third sub-hypothesis points out the impact of social cultural capital in the constitution of taste. The respondents were asked if they wanted to change any furniture and the reason of it (Q10, see Appendix B). Table C.2.26 illustrates the answers of the respondents who claimed that they wanted to change any one of their furniture and the reason for that change. 53.8% of the respondents claimed the reason as either because they are bored, they don't like the style anymore or their taste has changed. All these issues are somehow related with the influence of society in which they live. In Table C.2.27, the distribution of the responses on how the user was influenced while selecting furniture is illustrated (Q14). It has been observed that 72% of the respondents claimed fashion and media (written or visual), where 16% claimed no influence and 12% of them claimed family and friends. The ones who cannot perceive any influence as the influential factor may not be able to differentiate impacts to his/her taste. Table C.2.27 also depicts the meaning of a living room depending on the social influences. 20 of the respondents who claimed fashion and media as the influential factors also claimed the meaning of the living room as representing the personality of the user. But, such differentiation in the definitions of

the name of the styles of the furniture can not be observed (see Table C.2.28). 40% of the all respondents claimed modern and plain while 36% of the all respondents claimed modern and antique as the styles of their furniture. The analysis was also held for the descriptions of tasteful and tasteless furniture. The dominant response was concentrated in the definition of tasteful furniture as representing personality (see Table C.2.29). On the other hand, for the definitions of tasteless furniture, no clear preference was observed in the answers which defines tasteless furniture as inharmonious (see Table C.2.30) and, furniture which has a style of extremes of classic or modern (see Table C.2.31) with a clear impact of fashion and media.

Respondents were also asked if their taste has changed in time (Q20). It has been observed that 37 respondents claimed that their taste has changed in time. The group claimed a change has also asked what could be the influencing factor for the change of their taste. 51.4 % of the respondents claimed the influence of social factors while 27% of them claimed the influence of fashion and 21.6 % of them age. So, one can conclude the important impact of social factors in the constitution of taste. Even though fashion was given as a separate answer, it could also be evaluated in relation with social aspects (see Table C.2.32).

It has been emphasized that clothing, similar to furniture is used as a sign of social status. Also, clothing (similar to furniture) symbolizes the lifestyle of the respondents. Thus, a question was asked to determine the relationship between

clothing and furniture (Q16, see Appendix B). 82% of them claim that there is a harmony between the style of the clothing and their furniture.

Figure C.4 and Figure C.5 illustrate the results considering the role of an interior architect in their choice. Only 18% (6 respondents) of the sample group consulted an interior architect when selecting their furniture. Within those, most of the people are satisfied with the consultancy. They are also asked whether they prefer to consult an interior architect or not; 60% of them claimed that they would not. Even though there seems to be a demand for an interior architect, it appears that the selection of furniture is not still interpreted as one of the duties of an interior architect.

The results of the semi-structured interview was used to analyze the hypotheses and the discussion and the evaluation of the results take place in the following section 4.4.

4.4 Discussion and Evaluation

In the survey conducted to test the hypothesis concerning the validity and importance of cultural capital it is expected that individuals with different cultural capitals shows different tendencies in the definition and the related factors of taste. Thus three sub-hypotheses were claimed related to institutionalized cultural capital, embodied cultural capital and social cultural capital and they are all tested separately.

To illustrate the importance of institutionalized cultural capital the respondents with a design education are compared with other respondents having other profession or no profession. It has been expected that the respondents with a design would have shown different tendencies for taste related questions. First of all, most of the respondents with a design education claimed that there was a difference in the treatment of furniture in different rooms of the house but they seemed to be disturbed by the difference. As a matter of fact, it has been observed that almost all of the respondents have a consideration of the unity of furniture in the house. So, it could be concluded that most of the respondents are aware of the differences in the treatment of furniture within the house and; the domination of respondents with a design education cannot be observed.

On the other hand, the focus and the differing remarks of the respondents with a design education were observed in some questions, such as the influential factor in the constitution of taste. Respondents who had a design education are the ones who mostly claimed the importance of education and profession in the constitution of their taste which illustrates their consciousness of the impacts of institutionalized cultural capital. They have also stressed being modern and contemporary as the style of their furniture which is again considerably different than the rest of the respondents. Respondents with a design education exhibit a concentration in the definitions of both tasteful and tasteless furniture. Thus, it could be concluded that the impact of institutionalized cultural capital is valid for several components of taste except the

declaration of the meaning of the living room and for the disturbance from the difference of furniture in other rooms of the house.

The importance of embodied cultural capital is tried to be evaluated with the respondents' claim about family's influence in the constitution of their taste. Embodied cultural capital is also evaluated according to have a family and the other members' opinion when selecting furniture.

The role of living with a family is evaluated in the difference in the treatment of the house. As they are a member of a family, they require difference in treatment of different rooms of the house, but no domination was observed in the disturbance created by that difference. Another accentuation is evaluated in the meanings ascribed to the living room by claiming that the living room is the space where the personality of the user is represented. Additionally, except the concentration on the meaning of the living room no accentuation was observed in the group who consult the other inhabitants of the house when choosing furniture.

Moreover, concentration of the respondents who claimed the influence of family in the constitution of their taste could only be observed in the definitions that they give for tasteful furniture, such as claiming tasteful furniture as being harmonious and being plain and modern and similarly; claiming tasteless furniture as being inharmonious. As a result, one can conclude that neither the impact of being a

member of a family nor consulting the other inhabitants are that much influential as the impact of being influenced from the family.

Besides, the impact of social cultural capital is observed in addition to the two other cultural capitals. The respondents who claimed the influence of fashion and media in ascribing a meaning to the living room were observed as the representative of the user while no such accentuation was depicted in the naming of a style. A similar accentuation was also depicted in their definition of tasteful furniture as representing the personality of the user and tasteless furniture as being inharmonious and consisting of extremes of styles. Another striking observation is that the respondents' claim about the reason of their change of taste in time, as the result of social factors.

Thus, the impact of cultural capital was thoroughly depicted in the constitution of taste. Last, but not the least, most of the respondents claimed the importance of perceiving a furniture as beautiful for defining that furniture as tasteful. Thus, even though the hypotheses are not directly involved in aesthetic factors, one can conclude the impact of aesthetic satisfaction for the constitution of an individuals' taste.

5 CONCLUSION

This study focuses on building a general framework of the components of taste which are effective in furniture selection. It is expected to clarify how the taste of individuals occurs and develops and it is reflected in their choices. People do purchase things according to some clues and when they are asked what are they, they claim their taste as their reason of choosing particular objects. The main question of this dissertation is to clarify the variables influencing the constitution of that 'taste'.

As discussed in Chapter 1, residential spaces influence the way an individual establishes him/herself. The residence is the space where one wants to be different from the others, having a special quality expressing his/her personality in addition to other characteristics. It has been concluded that within the house, the living room serves as a place where both relaxation and social interaction take place thus, demanding a special kind of treatment in furniture. Therefore, it is the space where an individual represents his/her taste both for himself/herself and for the others.

As a matter of fact, there are several factors for the selection of furniture for living rooms such as ergonomics, functional satisfaction, quality of the furniture in addition to many others (see Chapter 2). On the other hand, there are symbolic and aesthetic requirements of the user. It has been observed that people are trying to emphasize and demonstrate their social status whereas they are also after achieving an aesthetic satisfaction with the furnishings of the living rooms. Considering the point of view of the consumer, it has been concluded that the underlying factor representing the symbolic and aesthetic requirements of the user is the taste of the consumer. The taste of the consumer has a vital role, thus there is a need to clarify the components of 'taste' and how it could be analyzed when the furniture selection is considered.

With the help of the discussions on the definition of taste and the constituting variables of it, it has been observed that there is an intimate relationship between lifestyle, culture, class and taste (see Chapter 3). For this reason, it has been claimed that the taste of the dominating class is reflected through the choices by which the subordinate class is influenced with the help of the symbolic power. In the discussion of taste, it has been claimed that to comment on taste is difficult as its subject changes through time. Therefore, this thesis focused not on the judgment, but the variables of taste. As a matter of fact, as a consumer property, taste is claimed to be the soul of the consumer. Even though taste is an expression of personal values, it also identifies an individual with a certain group.

The methodology of this study includes a literature survey to build up a theoretical framework in order to figure out the determinants of taste. Accordingly, in Chapter 3, it has been figured out that social determinants of taste can be claimed as the social data of the consumer, the economic capital that he/she has, his/her aesthetic preferences, psychological factors and the cultural capital of the consumer. It has been observed that first of all, social data consist of the information about the consumer such as, age, education, income, occupation, household size, dwelling size, geographic size and stage in the life-cycle. Secondly, the economic capital is the resources of an individual by which he/she has the chance to consume. Thirdly, aesthetic preferences mainly point out the aesthetic satisfaction of the consumers and it has been claimed that if a consumer finds a piece of furniture beautiful, this means that it satisfies his/her aesthetic requirements. On the other hand, psychological factors are also claimed to be influential in the constitution of taste, as the psychology of the consumer could have an important impact on his/her consumption behavior.

Last, but not the least, cultural capital of the consumer has a dominant role on the constitution of taste. Cultural capital mainly refers to the cultural heritage, knowledge and education which one embodies through his/he life. Cultural capital can be analyzed in three branches; institutionalized, social and embodied cultural capital. Institutionalized cultural capital gives us clues about the impact of the education on the consumer preferences while social cultural capital illustrates the influence of the society in which the consumer lives and the influence of his/her friends and;

embodied cultural capital points out the influence of an individuals' background, which exists as attitudes, tastes, preferences and behaviors of an individual. Also it is the education that he/she obtained from the family or society which was carried out as a cultural heritage. These factors can be stated as the factors which are influential in the constitution of taste.

When the mentioned framework is applied to the selection of furniture, then it is observed that only social data, aesthetic preferences and cultural capital play a vital role (see Chapter 4). Among those variables, it has been claimed that economic capital of the consumer could be detected through social data. Additionally, psychological factors could not be observed in a purchase like furniture selection, as it is the result of a long term decision process. The hypotheses of this study claim the importance of cultural capital in the constitution of taste as it was assumed to be effective on the aesthetic and social variables as well. Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 4, a survey which is expected to indicate and search for the validity of the suggested theoretical framework was conducted to test the mentioned hypotheses for a specific group, namely the upper income group, in İstanbul.

As a conclusion drawn from the empirical study, it has been observed that all components of cultural capital (institutionalized, social and embodied) have different roles in the constitution of taste. More than the other two, social cultural capital; the impact of the society and friends in addition to media and fashion are observed as the

most influential factors differentiating the individuals. On the other hand, it has been noticed that the people are not very clear about their values related to the embodied cultural capital. This can be concluded since no differentiation of the respondents who share the house with others and the ones who consult the others could be observed. Thus, it could be claimed that all of these variables (institutionalized, social and embodied) have a vital role in the constitution of taste with different impacts. Yet, the information about the influence of embodied cultural capital was based only on the statements of the sample group about the impact of their own family, which is only one of the components in embodied cultural capital. Thus, the impact of embodied cultural capital in the constitution of taste could be studied further with a research which concentrates on the impact of other components and indicators of embodied cultural capital. The importance of institutionalized cultural capital was tried to be illustrated with the impact of profession, which in this case is searched through design related professions. It has been observed that respondents with a design related profession differ in answers to certain questions related with taste. So, this tendency can also be depicted for different professions.

As previously mentioned, this research is carried out in İstanbul with the upper income group, as İstanbul was claimed to be the representative of the groups targeted. But, as it was limited within a certain group, the analysis may not be sufficient to give clues about Turkish society. Cultural variety within the selected group is not

analyzed within the limits of this study. So, the impact of culture on the formation of taste can further be analyzed even for the upper income group.

For further studies, a comparative analysis of different income groups could be suggested, as it could give the information about the differences in the variables in the constitution of taste. On the other hand, a comparative study could be carried out for different cultures as well, pointing out the cultural differences in the constitution of taste.

In an increasingly global world, fashion and media (both visual and written) are the channels to transfer the values of the society, making people aware of what the others do, either within the country or out of the boundaries of the country. As a matter of fact, there is another channel, the internet which also influences and informs us while setting its own boundaries and rules. Lastly, the impact of these channels and the impact of cyber culture in the constitution of taste could be explored to understand and cope with their increasing dominance.

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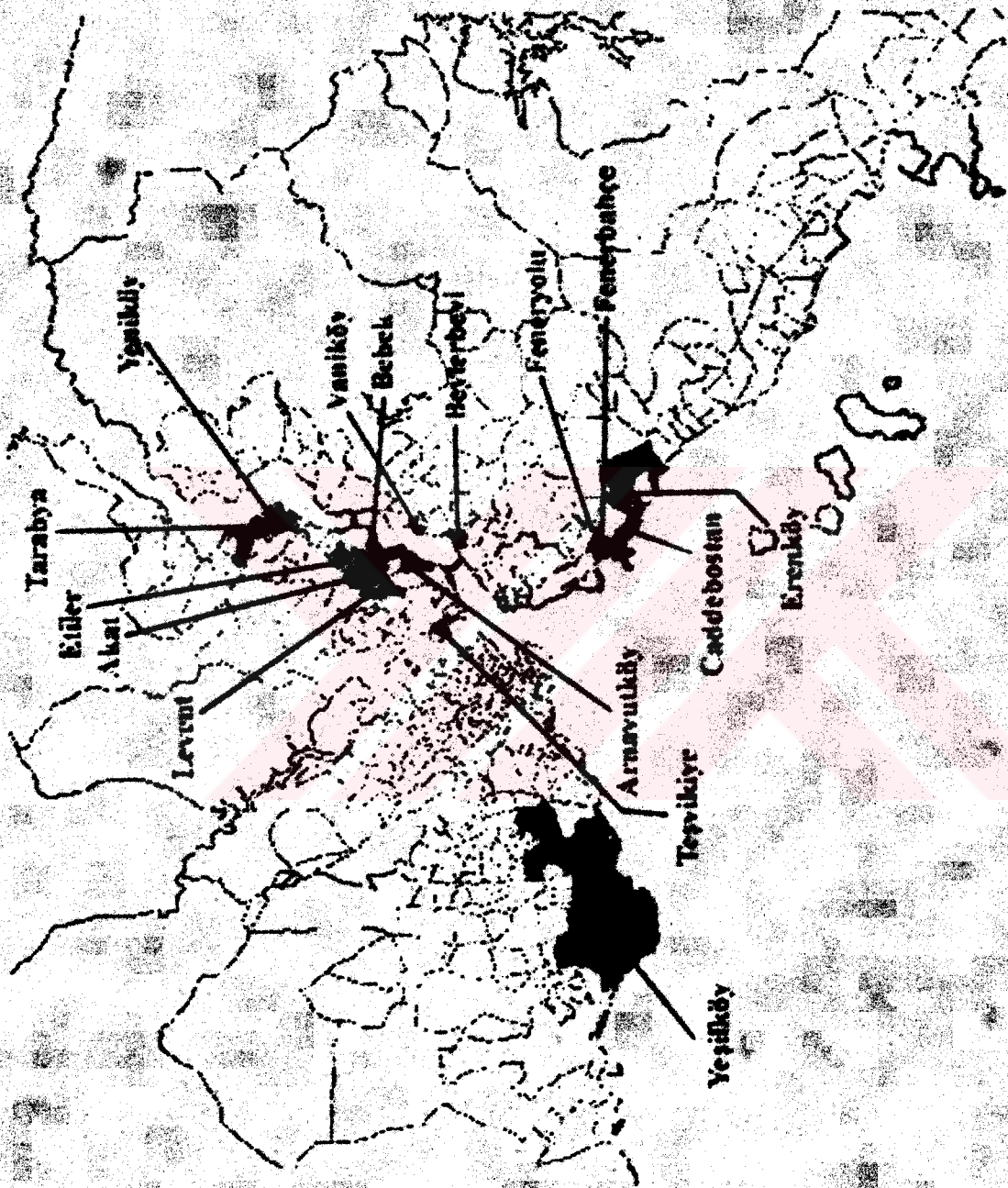
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APPENDIX A

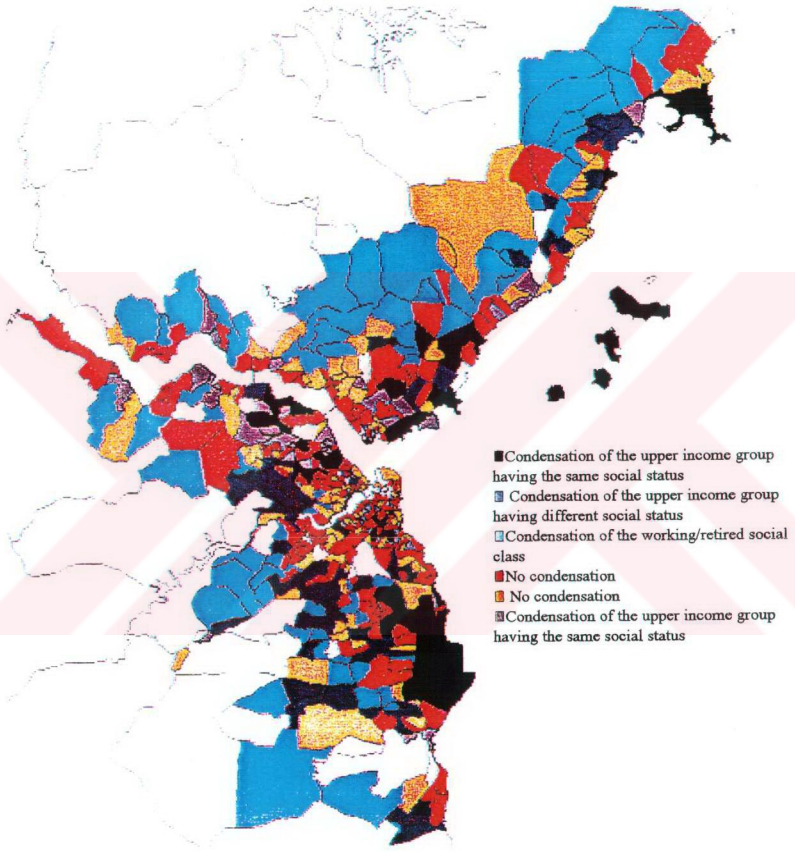


Figure A.1 Condensation map of İstanbul. (Güvenç and Işık, 1997)

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name, Surname:

Date:

Address:

Tel:

1. Sex: M F

2. Age:

18-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 and above

3. Do you share your house with somebody else?

Y

N

4. If yes;

with;

children

partner

friend

how many:

their ages:

5. How long have you been living in this city?

Less than 5 years

6-15 years

16 and above

Since birth

6. How long have you been living in this district?

Less than 5 years

5-10 years

More than 10 years

7. How long have been live in a house where you can choose your own furniture?
With what reason you started choosing ?

8. Education:

9. Profession and job:

10. Do you have any furniture that you want to change today? If yes, which one for what reason?

11. According to you, is there any difference in the treatment of furniture in your living room and the other rooms? If not, would it bother you to have such kind of a difference?

12. What is the main meaning of a living room? What would it imply?

13. Do you consult the other inhabitants of the house when selecting the furniture? If yes, to whom and how?

14. From where are you influenced or inspired when choosing your furniture?

15. What is your first consideration when choosing your furniture?

16. Is there any relationship between your clothing preferences and your choice of furniture?

17. How and from where do you usually obtain your furniture?

18. If you have the chance to change the way you obtain it what would you prefer?
19. How many times did you change your furniture in your living room? Why?
20. Do you think that your taste has changed in time? If yes, what could be the influencing factors?
21. Until today, you have seemed to determined your taste. According to you, what could be most influential in the formation of your taste?
22. Have you ever consulted an interior architect while choosing your furniture?
23. If yes, could his/her approach satisfy your demands? What were the points that you agreed and disagreed with the interior architect?
24. If you have the chance to change your furniture, would you consult an interior architect?
25. How could you name the style of your furniture?
26. If you have the chance to change this style, what would you prefer?
27. Could you define “the tasteful furniture”? What qualities should a furniture consist to be named as tasteful furniture?
28. Could you define “tasteless furniture”? What qualities should a furniture consist to be named as tasteless furniture?

APPENDIX C

List of Variables

Variable 02: Age

- 1: 18-29
- 2: 30-39
- 3: 40-49
- 4: 50-59
- 5: 60 and above

Variable 03: Sharing the house

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 09: Years of selecting furniture

- 1: less than 5 years
- 2: 5-10 years
- 3: more than 10 years

Variable 10: Reason of starting choosing furniture

- 1: living alone
- 2: marriage

Variable 12: Profession

- 1: no profession
- 2: related with design
- 3: others

Variable 14: Desire to change any furniture today

0: no

1: yes

Variable 15: Reason of such desire

1: do not like style any more, bored, taste changed

2: worn out

3: uncomfortable, unfunctional

4: inharmonious

Variable 16: Difference in treatment of furniture with other rooms

0: no

1: yes

Variable 17: Disturbance of difference in treatment with other rooms

0: no

1: yes

Variable 18: Main meaning of a living room

1: space for the guests

2: space for the user

3: comfort

4: representing the personality of the user

Variable 22: Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture

0: no

1: yes

Variable 24: Influencing factor when selecting furniture;

1: perceived nothing

2: fashion, hobbies, visual experience

3: family, friends

Variable 29: First consideration in choosing furniture

1: harmony

2: comfort

3: beauty

Variable 46: Most influential factor in the change of your taste

- 1: social factors
- 2: fashion
- 3: age

Variable 49: Most influential factor in the constitution of your taste

- 1: lifestyle and society
- 2: family
- 3: product supply
- 4: education and profession

Variable 56: Name your style of furniture

- 1: modern and plain
- 2: modern and antique
- 3: classic
- 4: contemporary

Variable 58: Labeling tasteful furniture if perceived as beautiful

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 59: Labeling tasteful if furniture is functional and/or comfortable

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 60: Labeling tasteful if furniture represents personality

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 61: Labeling tasteful if furniture is harmonious with the house and furniture

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 62: Labeling tasteful if furniture is plain and/or modern

- 0: no
- 1: yes

Variable 63: Labeling tasteful if furniture emphasize design qualities

0: no

1: yes

Variable 64: Labeling tasteless if furniture is exaggerated

0: no

1: yes

Variable 65: Labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture

0: no

1: yes

Variable 66: Labeling tasteless if furniture is uncomfortable

0: no

1: yes

Variable 67: Labeling tasteless if furniture consists of several styles

0: no

1: yes

Variable 69: Labeling tasteless if the style of furniture is on the extremes of modern or classic

0: no

1: yes

C.1 General Evaluations (Cross-tab Analysis)

Table C.1.1 Years of selecting furniture vs. age

VAR00002 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row				Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
VAR00009	1.00	2	4	-		6 12.0
	2.00	1	9	1		11 22.0
	3.00		2	1		3 6.0
	4.00		2	11	1	14 28.0
	5.00			9	7	16 32.0
Column	3	17	22	8	50	
Total	6.0	34.0	44.0	16.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.1.2 Reason of starting choosing furniture vs. age

VAR00002 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row				Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
VAR00010	1.00	2	2	6		10 20.0
	2.00	1	15	16	8	40 80.0
Column	3	17	22	8	50	
Total	6.0	34.0	44.0	16.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

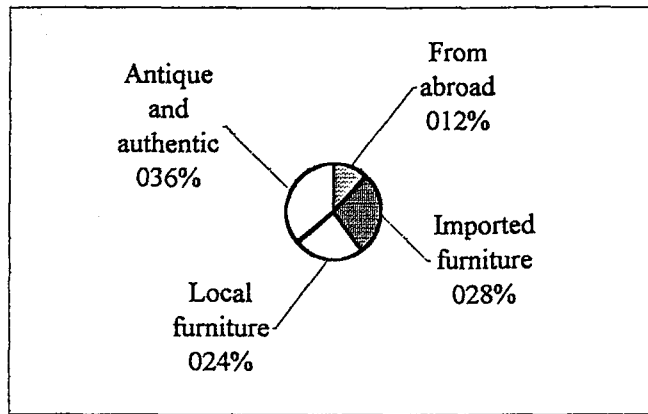


Figure C.1 Place of purchase

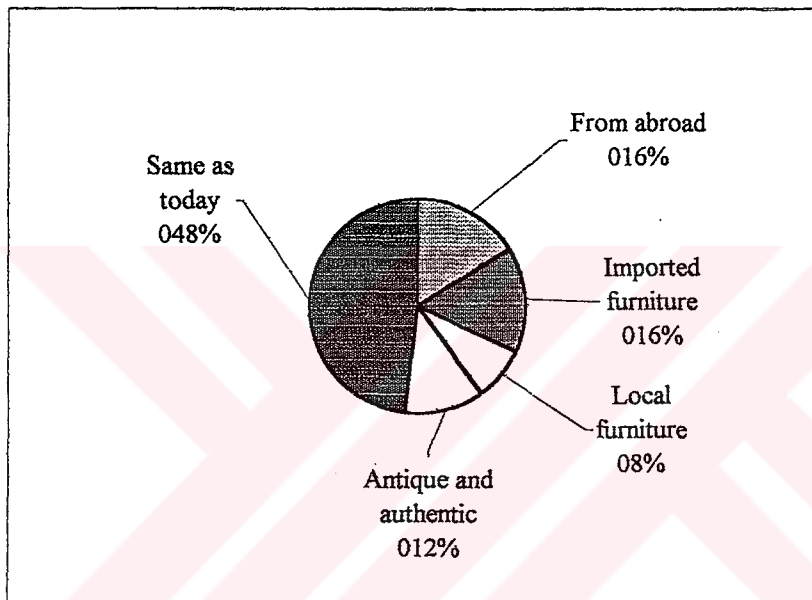


Figure C.2 Preference for the place of purchase

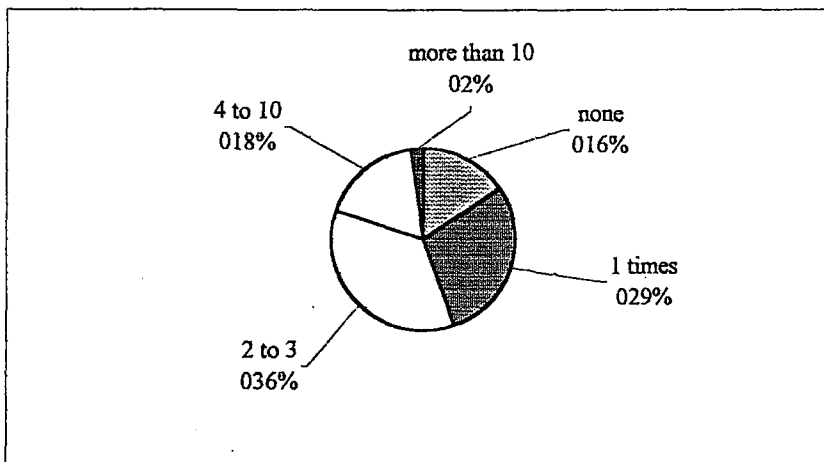


Figure C.3 Frequency of change

C.2 Analysis on the Hypotheses of the Survey (Cross-tab Analysis)

Table C.2.1 Profession vs. disturbance of difference in treatment of furniture

VAR00017 Page 1 of 1

Count	VAR00017		Total
	.00	Row 1.00	
VAR00012 1.00	4	7	11 22.0
2.00	2	11	13 26.0
3.00	7	19	26 52.0

Column 13 37 50
Total 26.0 74.0 100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.2 Profession vs. main meaning of a living room

VAR00018 Page 1 of 1

Count	VAR00018				Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	Row 4.00	
VAR00012 1.00	2	3	2	4	11 22.0
2.00	4	3		6	13 26.0
3.00	5	4	6	11	26 52.0

Column 11 10 8 21 50
Total 22.0 20.0 16.0 42.0 100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.3 Profession vs. the most influential factor in the constitution of the taste

VAR00049 Page 1 of 1

Count						
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Row 4.00	Total
VAR00012	1.00	5	2	3	1	11 22.0
	2.00	2	3	1	7	13 26.0
	3.00	16	3	6	1	26 52.0
Column		23	8	10	9	50
Total		46.0	16.0	20.0	18.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.4 Profession vs. naming the style of furniture

VAR00056 Page 1 of 1

Count					
		1.00	2.00	Row 3.00	Total
VAR00012	1.00	3	4	4	11 22.0
	2.00	10	2	1	13 26.0
	3.00	7	12	7	26 52.0
Column		20	18	12	50
Total		40.0	36.0	24.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.5 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is functional and/or comfortable

VAR00059 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	6	5	11 22.0
2.00	3	10	13 26.0
3.00	15	11	26 52.0
Column	24	26	50
Total	48.0	52.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.6 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture is harmonious with the house and furniture

VAR00061 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	6	5	11 22.0
2.00	6	7	13 26.0
3.00	14	12	26 52.0
Column	26	24	50
Total	52.0	48.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.7 Profession vs. labeling tasteful if furniture emphasize design qualities

VAR00063 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	9	2	11 22.0
2.00	1	12	13 26.0
3.00	22	4	26 52.0
Column	32	18	50
Total	64.0	36.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.8 Profession vs. labeling tasteful furniture if perceived as beautiful

VAR00058 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	2	9	11 22.0
2.00	4	9	13 26.0
3.00	9	17	26 52.0
Column	15	35	50
Total	30.0	70.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.9 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture

VAR00065 Page 1 of 1

Count	.00	Row 1.00	Total
VAR00012 1.00	6	5	11 22.0
2.00	5	8	13 26.0
3.00	18	8	26 52.0
Column	29	21	50
Total	58.0	42.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.10 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture consists of several styles

VAR00067 Page 1 of 1

Count	.00	Row 1.00	Total
VAR00012 1.00	10	1	11 22.0
2.00	2	11	13 26.0
3.00	25	1	26 52.0
Column	37	13	50
Total	74.0	26.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.11 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is uncomfortable

VAR00066 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	9	2	11 22.0
2.00	9	4	13 26.0
3.00	19	7	26 52.0
Column	37	13	50
Total	74.0	26.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.12 Profession vs. labeling tasteless if the style of furniture is on the extremes of modern or classic

VAR00069 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00012			
1.00	3	8	11 22.0
2.00	8	5	13 26.0
3.00	10	16	26 52.0
Column	21	29	50
Total	42.0	58.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.13 Sharing the house vs. difference in treatment of furniture
with other rooms

VAR00016 Page 1 of 1

Count			Total
	.00	Row 1.00	
VAR00003			
.00	5	3	8 16.0
1.00	10	32	42 84.0
Column	15	35	50
Total	30.0	70.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.14 Sharing the house vs. disturbance of difference in treatment
with other rooms

VAR00017 Page 1 of 1

Count			Total
	.00	Row 1.00	
VAR00003			
.00	2	6	8 16.0
1.00	11	31	42 84.0
Column	13	37	50
Total	26.0	74.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.15 Sharing the house vs. main meaning of a living room

VAR00018 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row				Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
VAR00003 .00	3	1	1	3	8 16.0
1.00	8	9	7	18	42 84.0
Column	11	10	8	21	50
Total	22.0	20.0	16.0	42.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.16 Sharing the house vs. first consideration in choosing furniture

VAR00029 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row			Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	
VAR00003 .00		2	6	8 16.0
1.00	9	10	23	42 84.0
Column	9	12	29	50
Total	18.0	24.0	58.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.17 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. difference in treatment of furniture with other rooms

VAR00016 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row		Total
		.00	1.00	
VAR00022	.00	12	13	25 50.0
	1.00	3	22	25 50.0
Column		15	35	50
Total		30.0	70.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.18 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs. disturbance of difference in treatment with other rooms

VAR00017 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row		Total
		.00	1.00	
VAR00022	.00	4	21	25 50.0
	1.00	9	16	25 50.0
Column		13	37	50
Total		26.0	74.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.19 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs.
main meaning of a living room

Page 1 of 1

VAR00018 Count		Row				Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
VAR00022	.00	5	8	2	10	25 50.0
	1.00	6	2	6	11	25 50.0
Column	11	10	8	21	50	
Total	22.0	20.0	16.0	42.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.20 Consulting other inhabitants when selecting furniture vs.
first consideration in choosing furniture

Page 1 of 1

VAR00029 Count		Row			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
VAR00022	.00	5	4	16	25 50.0
	1.00	4	8	13	25 50.0
Column	9	12	29	50	
Total	18.0	24.0	58.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.21 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs.
main meaning of a living room

VAR00018 Page 1 of 1

Count	1.00	2.00	3.00	Row 4.00	Total
VAR00049					
1.00	5	5	5	8	23 46.0
2.00	3	2		3	8 16.0
3.00		2	1	7	10 20.0
4.00	3	1	2	3	9 18.0
Column	11	10	8	21	50
Total	22.0	20.0	16.0	42.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.22 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs.
labeling tasteful if furniture is harmonious with the house and furniture

VAR00061 Page 1 of 1

Count	.00	Row 1.00	Total
VAR00049			
1.00	13	10	23 46.0
2.00		8	8 16.0
3.00	7	3	10 20.0
4.00	6	3	9 18.0
Column	26	24	50
Total	52.0	48.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.23 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs.
labeling tasteful if furniture is plain and/or modern

VAR00062 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00049			
1.00	21	2	23 46.0
2.00	2	6	8 16.0
3.00	9	1	10 20.0
4.00	5	4	9 18.0
Column	37	13	50
Total	74.0	26.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.24 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs.
labeling tasteless if furniture is exaggerated.

VAR00064 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00049			
1.00	8	15	23 46.0
2.00	2	6	8 16.0
3.00	6	4	10 20.0
4.00	5	4	9 18.0
Column	21	29	50
Total	42.0	58.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.25 The most influential factor in the constitution of the taste vs. labeling tasteless if furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture

VAR00065 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00049			
1.00	14	9	23 46.0
2.00	3	5	8 16.0
3.00	7	3	10 20.0
4.00	5	4	9 18.0
Column	29	21	50
Total	58.0	42.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.26 Desire to change any furniture today vs. reason of such desire

VAR00015 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row				Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
VAR00014					
1.00	14	4	4	4	26 100.0
Column	14	4	4	4	26
Total	53.8	15.4	15.4	15.4	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 24

Table C.2.27 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs.
main meaning of a living room

VAR00018 Page 1 of 1

Count	1.00	2.00	3.00	Row 4.00	Total
VAR00024					
1.00	7	1			8 16.0
2.00	2	9	5	20	36 72.0
3.00	2		3	1	6 12.0
Column	11	10	8	21	50
Total	22.0	20.0	16.0	42.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.28 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs.
naming the style of furniture

VAR00056 Page 1 of 1

Count	1.00	2.00	Row 3.00	Total
VAR00024				
1.00	3	4	1	8 16.0
2.00	14	12	10	36 72.0
3.00	3	2	1	6 12.0
Column	20	18	12	50
Total	40.0	36.0	24.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.29 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteful if furniture represents personality

VAR00060 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row		Total
		.00	1.00	
VAR00024	1.00	4	4	8 16.0
	2.00	9	27	36 72.0
	3.00	5	1	6 12.0
Column	18	32	50	
Total	36.0	64.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.30 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteless if the furniture is inharmonious with the house and/or other furniture

VAR00065 Page 1 of 1

Count		Row		Total
		.00	1.00	
VAR00024	1.00	7	1	8 16.0
	2.00	19	17	36 72.0
	3.00	3	3	6 12.0
Column	29	21	50	
Total	58.0	42.0	100.0	

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.31 Influencing factor when selecting furniture vs. labeling tasteless if the style of furniture is on the extremes of modern or classic

VAR00069 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row		Total
	.00	1.00	
VAR00024			
1.00	6	2	8 16.0
2.00	9	27	36 72.0
3.00	6		6 12.0
Column	21	29	50
Total	42.0	58.0	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

Table C.2.32 The change of taste vs. the most influential factor in the change

VAR00046 Page 1 of 1

Count	Row			Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	
VAR00045				
1.00	19	10	8	37 100.0
Column	19	10	8	37
Total	51.4	27.0	21.6	100.0

Number of Missing Observations: 0

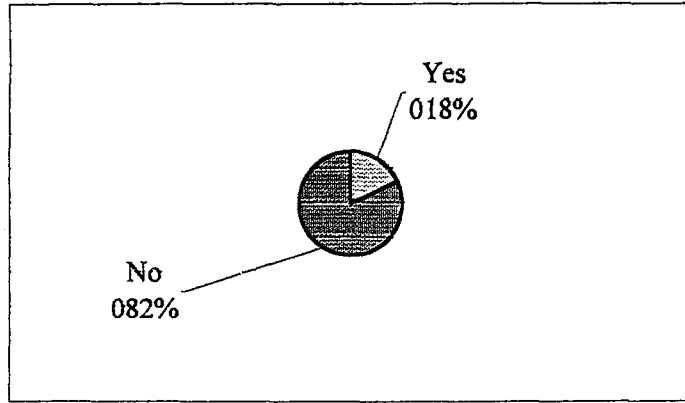


Figure C.4 Rate of consultancy aid demand

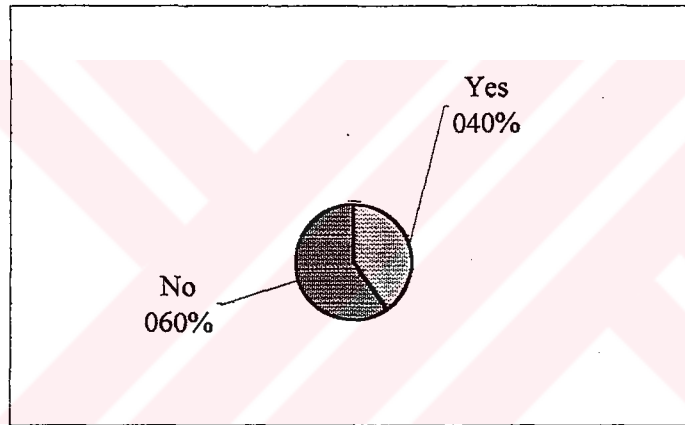


Figure C.5 Consultancy aid demand preference