

DETERMINING BUYING AND SELLING MOTIVATIONS OF COLLECTORS: A COLLECTOR TYPOLOGY^(*)

NİŞ SEGMENT OLARAK KOLEKSİYONERLERİN ALIM VE SATIM MOTİVASYONLARININ BELİRLENMESİ: BİR KOLEKSİYONER TİPOLOJİSİ

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Abstract: Collecting, which is a niche area of consumer behavior, has been given little research attention by marketing scholars. Based on an extensive literature review and primary data collection through in-depth interviews, conducted in Turkey, the present study intends to understand collectors' motivations and emotional outputs of the process. Additionally, it also aims at classifying collector typologies based on their starting point of collecting and revealing the differentiated motives and emotional outcomes of each typology. The findings indicate that all of the participants in all groups stated that they are addicted to collecting. Within groups, Family collectors differentiate with passion for research and childhood collectors with nostalgia whereas leaving a heritage to the future and self-expression are the main motives of adulthood collectors. On the output side, the pleasure/satisfaction derived from collecting has been the common point of all collector groups. Besides, the percentage of pleasure takers in the A.C. is slightly lower than in other groups. Other positive outputs of collectors are listed as socializing, differentiation, and self-confidence. This typology will bring in more clarity and further insights that will help scholars; expand the research domain and it helps sellers of collectibles.

Keywords: Collecting, Collector Typology, Motivations, Outputs

JEL: M30, M31, M39

Öz: Tüketici davranışının niş bir alanı olan koleksiyonculuk, pazarlama uzmanları tarafından çok az araştırma konusu olmuştur. Kapsamlı bir literatür taraması ve Türkiye'de gerçekleştirilen derinlemesine görüşmeler yoluyla birincil veri toplamaya dayanan bu çalışma, koleksiyonerlerin motivasyonlarını ve sürecin duygusal çıktılarını anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, koleksiyoncu tipolojilerini, toplama çıkış noktalarına göre sınıflandırmayı ve her bir tipolojinin farklılaşan güdülerini ve duygusal sonuçlarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bulgular, tüm gruplardaki katılımcıların tamamının koleksiyonculuk bağımlısı olduğunu belirttiklerini göstermektedir. Gruplar içinde Aile koleksiyoncuları araştırma tutkusu ile farklılaşırken, çocukluk koleksiyoncuları nostalji ile geleceğe bir miras bırakmak ve kendini ifade etmek yetişkinlik koleksiyonerlerinin temel motivasyonlarıdır. Çıktı tarafında ise koleksiyonculuğun verdiği haz/memnuniyet tüm koleksiyoncu gruplarının ortak noktası olmuştur. Ayrıca, Aile koleksiyoncularının da zevk alanlarının yüzdesi diğer gruplara göre biraz daha düşüktür. Koleksiyonerlerin diğer olumlu çıktıları ise sosyalleşme, farklılaşma ve özgüven olarak sıralanıyor. Bu tipoloji, bilim adamlarına yardımcı olacak daha fazla netlik ve daha fazla iç görü getirecek; koleksiyon satıcılarına yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplama, Toplayıcı Tipolojisi, Motivasyonlar, Çıktılar

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1. Introduction

Representing a minority consumer group, collecting constitutes a small but not thoroughly studied part of consumer behavior studies, with the process of valuing, purchasing, bargaining, and disposing of the goods. Before 1980s, there was only a little academic research on collecting. After 1980, there has been a spurt of publications on collectors in several academic disciplines (e.g. Belk, 1982; Belk, Wallendorf, Sherry, Holbrook, and Roberts, 1988). Especially after 2010, research has increased by 70%, collecting became a promising trend and academic interest in the area (Lee et al, 2021). Although the motivation behind collecting has been subjected in some studies the findings are controversial. The materialistic/anti-materialistic, social/solitary, and rational/irrational nature of collecting has been discussed by several authors (Carey, 2008; Long and Schiffmann, 1997; Spaid, 2018). According to Belk (1995a), collecting, and possessing scarce items is a high-level indicator of materialism. Not to be satisfied with the pleasure of sighting the antiques, paintings, and objects in antique malls, galleries, or museums but possessing them on their own, and the pleasure taken from this ownership points to materialism. Nevertheless, collectors might be thought of as saviors of objects who are passionately engaged with these objects as well.

At this point, the reason for the collecting behavior might be the answer to this materialism paradox. The social side of collecting derives from hunting, bargaining, and networking (Long and Schiffmann, 1997), whereas its solitary side includes researching, planning, and cataloging (Hughes and Hogg, 2006).

Indeed, the collecting process begins with social interaction in the hunting stage (Mardon and Belk, 2018), then goes on with a self-motivated stage like cataloging, and many times ends with social activities including sharing the collection with friends or publishing or presenting them in public. In addition, collectors exhibit both rational and irrational behaviors as well as all customers. Irrationally, they spent huge budgets only for their passion for straightforward objects such as Coke bottles (Long and Schiffmann, 1997). On the contrary, paying for a painting may be considered a rational long-term investment.

Following the academic call for investigating the interplay between identity, motivations, and behaviors of collecting (Le Fur, 2021; Spaid, 2018; Bishop, 2018), the study aims to enrich the discussion and intent to categorize motivational drivers and emotional outcomes of collecting according to the collector types. The comprehensive Literature Review by Lee et al. (2021) pointed out that research on collecting for different geographies, cultures, and age groups is still limited. Existing studies focus on either children or adults, and current studies have not compared motivations between the two groups (Lee-et al., 2021).

From this point of view, in this study, we examined motivations for different groups, taking into account the time of the first initiation to collecting. In addition, although the motivations that cause collecting have been discussed in the literature, the positive and negative outcomes of this process on people have not been discussed. Therefore, we classified the collectors according to their collecting stories into three groups as family collectors (F.C.), childhood collectors (C.C.), and adulthood collectors (A.C.) and then we compared their motivations to start and maintain the collecting and their emotional outputs at the end of the process as well.

This article is organized into three main parts. First, the theoretical framework and previous studies are discussed by identifying the theoretical gap that this study tries to provide insights.

In addition to hypotheses derived from prior literature, we present a preliminary qualitative study that we used to enhance the understanding of collectors in behavior and attitude. Finally, we discuss the implications of our findings, their limitations, and additional research suggestions in this field.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Defining Collecting

Collecting has been defined as the “process of actively, selectively, and passionately acquiring and possessing things removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set of non-identical objects or experiences” (Belk, 1995a). The borders of collecting are quite broad; anything as ideas, jokes, tales, and even ex-wives and ex-husbands might be a subject for collectors as tangible assets are (Spaid, 2018). To be accepted as a collection, there are three necessities (Belk, 1995b). First, the collecting items must be interrelated each other. Items need to be serialized or have similarities in shape, usage, design, etc. They must belong to a superordinate category (Danet and Katriel, 1986). Besides, the process should be selective, which means the collected items should have systematic discrimination. Moreover, the items have to be purified from their main purpose of use. Mainly, collectors obtain these items for their sacredness, not for their true context (Belk et al, 1998).

Danet and Katriel (1994) added one more rule: the discrimination rule of collecting; each item must be different from all others in some way discernible to the collector and called it the "Principle of No-Two-Alike". According to Durost (1932:10), one of the pioneer researchers on this theme, a collection is determined by the value assigned to the objects. It is not a collection, if the primary value of an object to the person it possesses is intrinsic, primarily valued for use or purpose, or aesthetically pleasing.

If the dominant value of the object is its representation, then it is the subject of a collection. It is useful to clarify the concept of collecting by revealing the differences among collectors, antique dealer and accumulators. Under the US Customs Service rules, antiques are defined as objects that are older than 100 years (US Customs and Border Protection, 2020). Therefore, collections may or may not contain antique items. The collector deals with certain types of objects because of their inherently symbolic value. On the other hand, accumulators buy many types of objects in large quantities (Baekeland, 1994).

2.2. Theoretical Background

The explanation of collecting motivations is based on Freud's biological drive model (1963). Here, there is the view that "personality traits acquired in adulthood are a reflection of the statements experienced with parents in infancy and childhood periods" (psychosexual stages, anal stage).

Indeed, this view associates collecting with anal period sexuality and argued the root of collecting is stinginess mainly. Freud argued that there were two drives such as libido and aggression, and collecting has been from the aggressive drive.

During the last two decades of post-Freudian, “relational model” theories began to dominate psychoanalytic thought. According to Mitchell (1988), although the theories

differ from each other, people develop behavior within a relationship matrix with other people, not with sexual and/or aggressive impulses (Formanek, 1994). Psychology of the "self," one of the relational model theories, contributes to our understanding of collectors' motivations. This theory is concerned with the development of a healthy, consistent, stable sense of self. According to Kohut (1984), self-psychology couldn't explained by two innate drives, as Freud suggested. Therefore, sexuality is no longer the central motivation of behavior. Rather Wolf (1980) added that the motivation to collect may be arising out of the impulse to explore and seek contact with others.

He stated that the desire for collecting might derive from childhood in which the child was given material things rather than love so possessing objects becomes a way of self-assurance for the child.

Lee et al, (2021), in their literature review, reported that 67% of articles on this domain didn't explicitly cite a specific theoretical lens, and Spaid (2018) mentioned research on collecting lacks a "focused, theory-driven manner". To overcome the theoretical lens deficiency, Lee et al. (2021) proposed the application of the self-determination theory to explain consumer collecting behavior.

Collectors' motivations can be explained with either social identity theory or self-determination theory. Social identity theory concerns social groups and their interrelations (Stets and Burke, 2000). These social groups are sets of "individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category" (Stets and Burke, 2000: 225). An identity activates in a situation upon the groups (Stets and Burke, 2000). The collector acts as a social entity within a group that has similar characteristics to it. Therefore, the motivations underlying collecting may come up with a social identity, especially for adulthood collectors. The influence of social factors like environment, peers, and role models is obvious in people who start collecting in their adulthood time. On the other hand, the collector may be collecting just for his pleasure. Self-determination theory concerns the motivation behind the choices individuals make without external influence (Ryan, 1993). Its effects are constructive in that an individual's goals, values, and behaviors become central to one's self-concept.

It is expected that people who have developed the habit of saving since childhood have self-oriented motivation. The final group, family collectors can be positioned between these two groups as they start collecting both for social and self-oriented motivations. Their close relatives may influence them to begin collecting, it also requires self-motivation to sustain this habit for life.

2.3. Motivational Drivers and Emotional Outputs of Collecting Behavior

When the motivators affecting the collecting behavior are examined from different perspectives, it is seen that the motivations are listed in seven headings; Goal Achievement, social membership, cooperation and competition, societal and personal memories, legacy, addictive and financial. The constructs and variables examined under each heading were summarized below. Next, the emotions that arose as a result of collecting were investigated under the heading of emotional outputs.

2.3.1. Financial Security/Investing

According to Anderson (1974), collecting is just a form of investment essentially from an economic point of view.

Even a collection does not have any financial value at the market; like a butterfly collection, it has an accumulation value derived from its originality and scarcity for some specific target groups.

Kopytoff (2010) suggested that what defines its value is the lifetime of the object. "Biographies of things can make clear what might otherwise be obscure" (2010: 67).

Although Diaconu (2021) proposed that this value doesn't provide any financial security and isn't accepted as an investment anymore, Baltas and Giakoumaki (2021) pointed out the existence of "Professional" collectors, who are focused more on financial returns and opportunistic speculations. Within these controversial debates, no studies focused on what type of consumer characteristic exhibits higher financial motivation than other groups.

2.3.2. Addiction

Collecting is claimed to be a form of addiction by many authors (Rigby and Rigby, 1949; Olmsted, 1987; Holbrook, 1987a). The accumulation, which usually starts by chance, turns into a dominant goal over time. For the collector, recognizing the collection as "valuable" by others justifies what would otherwise be seen as anomalous acquisition (Baekeland, 1994) and legitimize the act.

2.4. Achievement Through Collecting Goals

2.4.1. Extended Self

William James (1892) particularly, argued the concept of the self and applied it to a collection. According to him, possessions are extensions of the self.

Storr (1983) argued that lack of success and recognition divert people to collect. According to Belk et al (1991), collecting provides a sense of mastery, and expertise that is lacking in the workplace. In this line, Belk (1988) argued that the extended self is the most powerful fact of collectors. In this context, collectors see objects as a part of them; they consider objects a reflective part of the "self." As Clammer (1992) points out, shopping is not just a purchase; the purchase of the identity. According to Gregson and Crewe (1997b), collectibles may be deemed desirable because of their unique, unusual, or authentic character, which expresses the purchaser's individuality. For instance, a collection of Tschevoklavian porcelain plates inherited from the grandmother indicates the importance of the family name, wealth, and social position. Similarly, collecting magnets around the World from each place visited points that the itinerant personality of the collector.

Besides, according to Baekeland (1994), collections are not only used to express one's existence; they are also used to express fantasies about themselves. For example, anyone who has always wanted to be an actor collects movie posters.

2.4.2. Finding the Missing Piece

As Csikszentmihalyi (1990) observed, people, become bored and disinterested when they are in a non-compulsive situation. Many collectors reached the end of a series and seek for one particular piece to end up in the collection.

In time, many collectors reach the end of a series and seek for one particular piece to end up in the collection. This fact keeps them engaged with their current collection.

2.4.3. Aesthetic Value / Desire for Beauty

As Baekeland (1994) put it, according to traditional gender roles, women can express their aesthetic aspects in clothing, decorating their homes, and shaping their gardens - in other words, in feminine professions. On the other hand, men can express both their aesthetic and aggressive, competitive aspects through their art collection.

Art collections are a way of both competing with their spouses and demonstrating their aesthetic taste. This might be the reason why men collect more than women men (Codignola and Mariani, 2021; Belk, 1995; Lippa, 2005).

2.5. Cooperation and Competition

2.5.1. Treasure Hunting

Treasure hunting is both hedonical and recreational motivation that consumers experience while shopping. Guiot and Roux (2010) stated that the process of searching and finding something valuable, rare, and original is a consumer hunting treasure behavior satisfied by unearthing buried riches. For a collector, the challenge of wandering for the object, finding a good deal, negotiating a price, and purchasing it is often considered by collectors to be the most enjoyable aspect of the process (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Belk, 1991).

2.5.2. Need for Uniqueness

The need for uniqueness has its roots in Snyder and Fromkin (1977), who claim that abnormal behavior might be the reason for the desire of being different from others. The need for uniqueness is threefold; first, creative choice, second, unpopular choice, and third avoidance of similarity (Tian et al., 2001). Besides, rarity is a fine argument to be unique (Apostolou, 2011). As collections, especially rare objects, keep the collectors unique from others, the need for uniqueness counted as one motivator. A collection can also provide tangible evidence that one is unique and autonomous (Danet and Katriel, 1989).

2.5.3. Need for Status

Purchasing goods is a way of communicating identity (Belk, 1988) and bridging the gap between the real self and the ideal self (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987). Consumers' interest in a product is characterized by a combination of different elements, primarily the reputation or prestige they can provide from it. This consumer interest is derived from "an inner wish to enhance oneself, which can be achieved thanks to the social meanings intrinsic in the image of the products" (Keim and Wagner, 2018).

2.6. Societal and Personal Memories

2.6.1. Nostalgia

Schindler and Holbrook (2003) define nostalgia as a positive affection for objects that recall a memory from the early years. It can also evoke historical feelings felt even by people who did not live in that period (Stern, 1992). Since used items have a history, soul, and authenticity, Guiot and Roux (2010) described them as memorabilia that can attract customers by arousing memories. Nostalgia plays a key role for lovers of old objects (Marcoux, 2017; Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf, 1988). Therefore, it was also employed by second-hand shopping literature commonly (Catalani and Chung, 2005; Palmer and Clark, 2005).

2.7. Legacy

2.7.1. Immortality/Historical Preservation

Immortality is a continuity motivation to maintain a sense of connection across time and situations. McIntosh and Schmeichel (2004) argued that collecting is a sequence of multifaceted behaviors that revolve around the self, from achieving goals to offering hope of immortality. Collectors must face the fact that they will not be able to take care of the collection indefinitely and make the collection immortal by passing it on from generation to generation to maintain a sense of the past into the future. According to Formanek (1994), collectors desire to maintain a sense of the past into the future. Similarly, Belk (1995:486) argued that collectors consider themselves the “savior of society by preserving old stuff for future generations”.

2.8. Types of Collectors

First, Herrmann and Soffer (1984:410-412) discriminate garage-sales shoppers into 10 groups, and they identified "collectors" as one part of these shoppers groups. According to them, apart from other groups, collectors are looking for currently popular collectibles such as Avon jars and bottles, Jim Beam decanters, or baseball cards. Belk et al. (1991) identified two types of collectors. The first type is taxonomic collectors who contribute to knowledge or science, the second type is aesthetic collectors who legitimize their collections of art.

Another identification of collectors defined by Unity Marketing (Saari,1997) is as follows; (1) Passionate collectors who are obsessed, emotional and willing to pay any price. (2) Curious collectors who see collecting as an investment. (3) Hobbyist who collects for pleasure only. (4) Expressionist collectors who collect to express themselves. In addition, Palmer and Forsyth (2011:177-180) classified antique mall customers into 4 categories. Casual shoppers buy if the item catches their fancy and seek for discount, knowledgeable buyers have an idea of the worth of the items, and they compare the prices and bargain easily, repeat customers visit the dealers routinely and check if the dealer has a new item for him, dealer customers buy for reselling, value shoppers are the customers who are not collectors, buy the items with the expectation of worthing over time.

As suggested by Lee et al (2021), to reveal explanations for different motivations based on differing collector profiles and to deepen the research on this subject a typology has been created based on the time of starting collecting.

Therefore, it will be the purpose of this study to categorize the collectors according to their first collecting triggers and then investigate the motivations of each class. In light of the discussion of Freudian and post-Freudian approaches, apart from the previous classifications, we offer a classification of collectors according to their starting time to a collection. Many aforementioned motives and emotional outcomes of collecting behavior might be varied up to this classification. Therefore, we define three types of collectors; family collectors, childhood collectors, and adulthood collectors. Family collectors are the people who were born in a family consisting of one collector at least, and collecting habits are a family heritage. The second type, childhood collectors began to collect whatever they were interested in randomly when they were children, and they turn to collectors from accumulators over time. The last cluster is adulthood collectors who begin to collect in their adult years because they are influenced by their peers.

3. Methodology

Given the sparse research devoted to this particular focus, an exploratory, qualitative research design is explored for this research. Since the population is limited, by criterion sampling technique, 19 collectors were selected and, semi-structured online in-depth interviews were conducted.

To reveal how the motivational drivers and emotional outcomes of collecting occur for different types of collectors whose first collecting triggers differentiate, the sample was selected from three categories as childhood-collectors, family collectors, and adulthood collectors. Individual semi-structured interviews allowed us to investigate participants' practices and hidden motives securely, and collectors had not to disclose them in the crowd.

Specifically, semi-structured interviews allow probing informants on their consumption practices by asking for clarifications even that were not included in the interview guide. To capture the heterogeneity of the phenomenon, informants varied in terms of gender, age, occupation, economic background, and type of collecting items (Table 1).

Table 1. Depth Interview Tag

NAME	AGE	GENDER	OCCUPATION	INCOME	TOTAL COLLECTION	COLLECTION TYPES	COLLECTORS TYPES
H. L.	53	MALE	RETIRED	MIDDLE	2	BICYCLE - INDUSTRIAL & FLAMING TOOL	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
H. C.	65	MALE	BUSINESS PERSON	HIGH	2	ART - SCULPTURE	ADULTHOOD-COLLECTOR
M. G.	66	MALE	BUSINESS PERSON	HIGH	1	HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS	FAMILY-COLLECTOR
Ş. A.	72	MALE	PUBLISHER	HIGH	3	PHOTOGRAPH - VINYL RECORDS - SPOON	FAMILY-COLLECTOR
T. G.	66	MALE	DOCTOR	HIGH	3	CLASSICAL AUTOMOBILE - CINEMA TOOLS - OLD BOOKS	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
S. Y.	45	FEMALE	ARTIST	MIDDLE	2	PEN - BOTTLE	ADULTHOOD-COLLECTOR
H. Z.	40	MALE	BUSINESS PERSON	MIDDLE-HIGH	2	VINYL RECORD - MINIATURE OBJECTS	ADULTHOOD-COLLECTOR
A. K.	76	MALE	DOCTOR	MIDDLE-HIGH	2	HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS ABOUT DERMATOLOGY - CARDS	ADULTHOOD-COLLECTOR
B. D.	34	MALE	ARTIST	LOW	1	TOY	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
N. Ş.	57	FEMALE	ARTIST	MEDIUM	2	QURAN - OPALIN OTTOMAN EDICT	FAMILY-COLLECTOR
A. A.	49	FEMALE	MUSEUM OWNER	HIGH	1	CLASSICAL AUTOMOBILE	FAMILY-COLLECTOR
D. K.	60	MALE	BUSINESS PERSON	HIGH	1	TRACTOR	ADULTHOOD-COLLECTOR
D. H.	88	MALE	WRITER	MEDIUM	1	STYLOGRAPHIC PEN	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
F. L.	40	FEMALE	BUSINESS PERSON	MEDIUM	1	NAPKIN	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
R. K.	59	MALE	BUSINESS PERSON	HIGH	1	VINYL RECORD	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
S. K.	60	FEMALE	SOCIOLOGIST	MEDIUM	1	SILVER OBJECTS	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
F. İ.	55	FEMALE	MUSEUM OWNER	HIGH	1	ARCHEOLOGICAL GLASS WORKS	FAMILY-COLLECTOR
E.B	80	MALE	ENGINEER	MEDIUM	1	MINES	CHILDHOOD-COLLECTOR
D.E	38	MALE	ENTREPRENEUR	MEDIUM	1	STAMP	FAMILY-COLLECTOR

The interview guide consists of three main sections. The first section investigates collectors' demographics, general information on their collections, and their story of collecting. In the second part, the underlying motives of collecting are explored in light of the literature.

Existing and potential motives of collecting behavior were examined by direct and indirect questions (e.g. Why do you collect, how do you feel yourself when collecting, do you feel addicted, why collecting not only visiting museums, how the collectors seen in society, in which circumstances do you dispose of your objects?). These questions allow the informants to express their causes of collecting in their own words.

The third section aims to explore the outcomes of collecting from their perspectives. To do that, the informants were asked to list the advantages and disadvantages of being a collector and the personal and social benefits of collecting.

Each interview took 1-hour approximately, and all of them were recorded. The verbatim transcribed data were analyzed following the coding procedures of grounded theory (Strauss and Gorbun, 1998).

Following a constant comparative analysis, data collection, data analysis, and theories were related reciprocally. Initially, the researchers analyzed each interview independently and then collectively to identify categories used for the development of themes.

3.1. Findings

The collectors, classified as of the date they started collecting, consist of a total of 19 people. 5 of them are classified as adulthood collectors, 8 as childhood collectors, and 6 as family collectors. The sample includes 6 females and 13 males. The average age of the group is 58. The income level is middle to high and half of them have got at least two different collections.

In beginning, most of the collectors stated that they do not like to be confused with hoards and do not like them because they prevent the completion of the collections by holding the objects that should belong to the real collections one by one. The type of collections they have varies from bicycles to stamps, cars to silver objects, and tractors to EPHEMERAs (collectible items that were originally expected to have only short-term usefulness or popularity). When asked how they chose the object they made their collection, the participants gave quite similar answers. Regardless of the typology, most of the participants reported that they made collections of objects that were remembered or influenced by them in childhood. The first triggers are American cars that were admired in childhood, a tractor that was driven in childhood on the farm, and sometimes a stylish pencil seen in the hands of an elementary school teacher.

In general, addiction, passion for research, and self-expression seemed to be the common motives of all groups. The desire to find the missing piece and have status was stated by mostly family collectors. Hunting was mainly mentioned by childhood collectors. None of these group members define their collections as an investment tool.

Based on the research findings, the study asserted that the previous three collector typologies (family collectors, childhood collectors, and adulthood collectors) show differentiated motives.

Frequencies and percentages of all the motives and outputs defined by participants are calculated under each category, and they will be explained in detail in the following sections.

3.2. Collecting Motives of the Groups

3.2.1. Family Collectors

There are six participants in the group of family collectors. These people have at least one collector either in their nuclear or extended family. While some of them took over the collection from the family, some of them turned to a different type of collection over time.

Within this group, addiction and passion for research are the main motives. All of the participants who have a former collector in their family stated that they are addicted to collecting.

“No matter how much it cost, I buy it when I put it on my head.” M.G. (Male, 66, family collector)

“Picking up is an urge from inside that I can't resist.” Ş.A. (Male, 72, family collector)

“Collecting is like a disease, it takes a lot of money, time, and effort to buy cars, make them work, keep them running at regular intervals, and maintain them, but I cannot help but do it.” A.A. (Female,49, family collector)

Besides, they feel passionate about searching historical objects, learning more about their background, and classifying them.

“I increase my knowledge and strengthen my academic side by researching the history of objects” N.Ş. (Female, 57, family collector)

“The most enjoyable part of collecting is to research and learn, and then write a book or article on what I have learned” F.İ. (Female,52, family collector).

After then, self-expression was mentioned by this group heavily.

The time I spend with my collection is the most precious moment of my life. Telling someone about my collection and presenting it makes me feel that I express myself most sincerely. D.E. (Male, 38, family collector),

Saving the objects and leaving a heritage to the future was their next motivator. Ş.A. (Male, 72, family collector) expresses his emotions about leaving a heritage to the future as follows;

“Love, respect for history, and preserving history for future generations are my main motivations.”

Finding the missing piece of a puzzle, nostalgia, having status and aesthetic desires were mentioned only by half of the participants in this group. M.G. (Male, 66, family collector) stated;

“First you target a piece, then seek for it. It is so exciting, keep your mind always busy till find this missing piece.”

N.Ş. (Female, 57, family collector) interrelates her ‘hat sanatı’ collection with nostalgia and explained;

“I am in love with ‘hat sanatı’ and ancient Turkish culture has an enormous effect on it. I love that period, ancient Turkish states and their arts.” A. A. (Female, 49, family collector) has a classical car collection and she said “ I want to go back to my childhood. When I was a child American cars were an idol and I always remember these years with these cars. Therefore, American cars take the largest part of my collection.”

Ş.A. (Male, 72, family collector) stated that depending on the quality, a collection might be a symbol of the statue and he expressed;

“A collection can be seen as garbage from the outside, but if it consists of valuable objects or rare objects then it becomes a status symbol”

D.E. (Male, 38, family collector) has a post-collection including envelopes and stamps and he expressed the importance of aesthetics;

“I am very excited by aesthetic factors such as graphics, calligraphy, and design of an envelope.”

3.2.2. Childhood Collectors

This group consists of 8 participants. They started collecting unsystematically by collecting the materials of their interest frequently when they were 7-8 years old. The first materials they accumulated were toys, magazines, postcards, or primary school transcripts. This group has no one in their family as a role model for collecting. They act on an impulse from within. Accumulating behaviors have turned into collecting in the form of systematic and detailed information about a certain object over time.

Addiction is the most frequently repeated variable in this group as well as in other groups.

H.L. (Male, 53, childhood collector) described his addiction as follows:

“I spent nearly 80% of my income on buying for my collection. Even I cut my home budget to save for collection.”

Similarly, T.G. (Male, 66, childhood collector) states his opinions about addiction as follows;

“Every collector is addicted. Although he will get a lot of money, he can not sell it. Sometimes collector acts irrationally. For example, a wealthy collector of paintings buys expensive paintings at auctions, but like any collector, he feels a sense of regret after the purchase, even if it is brief. Even buying that he will regret it is a sign of his addiction.”

S.K. (Female, 60, childhood collector) admitted that she sold his child’s savings to be able to add new pieces to her collection.

It is seen that nostalgia is the main motive after addiction in this group. All the participants highlighted that they are deeply nostalgic. They express their feelings as follows.

“Collecting toys makes me feel like I’m reborn. It is a very nice feeling to buy a toy that was in my childhood. The nostalgia part is too much. When I collect, I feel like I bought time.” (B.D., male, 34, childhood-collector)

“The feeling of someone touched this object 100s years ago is fantastic.” (H.L., male, 53, family collector)

“Sometimes I watch my napkin collection through hours and let me bring my childhood and the old memories.” (F.L., female, 40, childhood collector)

Right after, self-expression and the desire to leave a heritage to the future come respectively. E.B. (Male, 80, childhood collector), a mining engineer, reported that his mine collection allows him to express himself by presenting his professional experience and knowledge accumulated over the years. H.L. (Male, 53, childhood collector) reveals that;

“The source of social development is collectors. The first forager is the farmer who accumulates good seeds and sows them next year. Collectors’ contributions to the future are great.”

T.G. (Male, 66, childhood collector) has a car collection, and he stated one of his memories as follows:

“When I visited the 2nd oldest automotive factory, I noticed that the managerial staff do not know the history of this factory.

However, I had historical documents and photographs in my book on automotive collections. That time, I remarked on the contribution of collectors to historical recording.”

Passion for research, aesthetic feelings, and desire to find the missing piece of a puzzle are the other motivations nearly mentioned by half of the participants. Indeed, finding the missing piece was primarily mentioned by this group compared to others. S.K. (Female, 60, childhood collector) expressed her passion for research in her own words:

“Once, I was so caught up in finding the piece I was looking for that I forgot my child who came back from school in the evening at the door.”

D.H. (male, 88, childhood collector) began to collect pens impressed with her primary school teacher. His main motivation to buy a pen is its esthetical design. H.L. (Male, 53, family collector) expresses it as follows:

“The old pieces are made with more aesthetic concerns than today, so the old pieces always look more aesthetic, so I can say that this situation has a great effect on my collection.”

T.G. (Male, 66, childhood collector) expressed his deep feelings about finding the missing piece of the puzzle as follows:

“I define myself as “collectopat” because searching for the final piece makes me exhilarated.”

About status, this group mainly stated that they don’t feel a status derived from their collections. T.G. (Male, 66, childhood collector) expresses it as follows:

“You may feel that it is admiring for people around you who appreciate collections. However, the same collection doesn’t make sense to unconscious people and even makes fun of it.”

All of the childhood collectors clearly express that they don’t see their collections as an investment tools. H.L. (Male, 53, childhood collector) highlighted this subject with the following words:

“I never see my collection as an investment, I never buy an object intending to resell, just like buying shoes. You never buy your shoes to resell.”

3.2.3. Adulthood Collectors

Adulthood collectors begin to collect in their adulthood times mostly middle of their 30s by inspiring other collectors or collections. This group consists of 5 participants.

Herein addition, nostalgia, and leaving a heritage to the future were mentioned by all participants. H.Z. (Male, 40, adulthood collector) stated;

“My nostalgic feelings take a big role in collecting. When I am collecting the gramophone record I imagine the era of this music, who listened to this plaque before, and what did he feel.”

A.K. (Male, 76, adulthood collector) expresses his opinions as follows,

“Today, the traces of the past disappear quickly. Each piece of the collection also carries traces of history.

The desire to protect history while collecting is an important factor for me. I maintain, record, and store each collection item. I try to exhibit it in a way that enables others to witness this history. Collectors carry past values into the future.”

Self-expression was also a dominant motive among this group.

“I can communicate and socialize beyond shallow conversations. It makes it easier for me to express myself to the other side by displaying my personality and aesthetic perception.” S.Y. (Female, 45, adulthood collector)

H.C. (Male, 65, adulthood collector) collects several sculptures of Turkish artists, and he stated related to the self-expression side of collections.

“I identify the sculptures with my state of mind”.

Next, passion for research, desire to find the missing piece of a puzzle and status were moderately mentioned by adulthood collectors. D.K. (Male, 60, adulthood-collectors) has a tractor collection.

He stated that if the tractor is in a bad situation, he is searching its parts everywhere even abroad to maintain it. A.K. (Male, 76, adulthood collector) stated that he likes to research as he was a medical doctor in the meantime.

“Being a collector satisfies my researching and learning passions”.

“Collecting is a grade jump for me. Certain abilities, awareness, and financial abilities are needed to make a collection. This situation allows me to have a different status in society.” H.C. (Male, 65, adulthood collector)

S.Y. (Female, 45, adulthood collector) added her opinions with the following sentence;

“Sometimes we are defined as a source of status and sometimes as qualified garbage collectors.”

In the same vein, H.Z. (Male, 40, adulthood collector) added,

“Collecting can make people see you as a status holder or as a madman, entirely depending on the nature of the collection.”

One predominant finding is here; investment motives were mentioned by only this group. The other two groups stated that they never see their collections as investment tools. H.Z. (Male, 40, adulthood collector) stated that;

“ I can hardly say that I am collecting in terms of financial investment, but I take care that some pieces can make money, especially if I sell them in the future. “

H.C. (Male, 65, adulthood collector) collects paintings and sculptures, and he said;

“I can sell similar pieces to able to buy more original ones.”

Table 2. Classification of Collectors

	COLLECTORS		
	Family- collectors	Adulthood- collectors	Childhood- collectors
Number of collectors	6	5	8
MOTIVES			
Investment	0	14%	0%
Find the missing piece	50%	43%	38%
Addiction	100%	100%	88%
Self expression	75%	71%	75%
Status	50%	29%	25%
Hunting	25%	29%	38%
Aesthetic	50%	0%	50%
Nostalgia	50%	100%	100%
Heritage to the future	75%	100%	75%
Respect to work	0	0%	25%
Passion for research	100%	86%	88%
RESULTS			
Satisfaction	100%	86%	100%
Socializing	75%	43%	38%
Differentiation	25%	57%	63%
Positive Family Relati	38%	29%	25%
Self confidence	25%	29%	38%
Disposal	25%	29%	0%

4. Conclusion, Limitations, and Suggestions

This study reveals three collector typologies (family collectors, childhood collectors, and adulthood collectors) based on the beginning of collecting time and exhibits common and differentiated motives concerning the collecting behavior of these groups.

According to the findings, overall, the collecting motives of all groups can be listed as; addiction and passion, self-expression, heritage to the future, nostalgia, having status, aesthetic desires, and finding the missing piece. All of the participants in all groups stated that they are addicted to collecting. This addictive quality was supported by previous experimental research (Gao et al.,2014; Belk,1995b). Besides, self-expression is a dominant motive in all groups.

Regardless of the typology collections let the owner express the purchaser's individuality freely as the previous findings supported (Clammer,1992; Bakeland,1994).

Although nostalgia is the other main motive after addiction for childhood collectors and adulthood collectors groups, only half of the family collectors group mentioned that nostalgia is a dominant motive for them. Interviews reveal that the objects reminded of childhood might be the first collectible item for many collectors.

One possible argument is that childhood and adulthood collectors started to collect with their interest and their nostalgic tendencies but, collecting might be a mission or a family tradition for family collectors rather than a nostalgic figure. Nostalgic value for collectors was justified in several studies as well (e.g McIntosh and Schmeichel, 2004; Shanaev et al., 2020)

Half of the family collectors and childhood collectors mentioned that finding the missing piece is an essential motive for them. Especially, childhood collectors stated that finding the missing piece is their main motive. Previous studies also support that set completion collecting is a common habit among children (Thyne et al,2019;

Aramendia-Muneta, 2020). On the other hand, these motives are moderately mentioned by adulthood collectors. As Csikszentmihalyi (1990) observed, people, become bored and disinterested when they are in the same situation for a long time. Therefore, a possible reason for this difference between groups might be the intensity of consuming the time for collecting. Adulthood collectors started to collect later, and they are new in this area and spent limited time, so they have lots to do about the collection.

However, other groups, probably have most of the parts in their collection as they spent more time with their collections and try to find the missing piece for a long time.

Although half of the family collectors derived status from their collection, childhood collectors don't feel status derived from their collector identity. On the other hand, the status motive is moderately mentioned by adulthood collectors. In our opinion, this difference consists of experience. Family collectors own the collection for generations, so they experienced the status that comes from the collection, but participants in other groups are new as a collector compared to family collectors, so they don't have experience with status yet.

In particular, children never begin to collect to gain status as their motivations are based on self-determinants rather than getting a social identity.

Investment isn't seen as a motive in the childhood-collectors group and family-collectors group, but it is a predominant motive for adulthood collectors.

It is predicted that due to adulthood collectors spending less time with their collections, they do not develop engagement with their collections as much as those in the other groups. This makes them freer to dispose of collectibles.

Overall, this paper contributes to marketing academia in the domain of consumer collecting behavior, specifically in understanding the differentiated motivations of each collector typologies that are classified as their starting time to collect.

If the preliminary results of this qualitative study will be checked with a quantitative field study with higher sample sizes, more generalizable findings of collector types will be obtained.

If collectors can be understood concerning their motivations for collecting, then brands, sellers of collectibles, collecting service providers, and other businesses can better target collectors.

The findings of the study should be read with the following limitations in mind. First, being qualitative and exploratory, the findings are context-specific and should not be generalized. One other limitation is that the research was conducted only in one country. Thus, cultural differences may affect the results.

Finally, suggestions for subsequent studies may be expanded to add more motives and outputs of these three groups. To understand "childhood collectors" motives, a qualitative inquiry can be executed only with the child collectors.

One more exciting subject can be added to affiliate the collecting behavior with replica consumption and draw attention to a special population who collects replica products.

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