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Hamëz Rama

University for Business and Technology, hamez.rama@ubt-uni.net

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Recommended Citation

Rama, Hamëz, "Changing Consumer Behavior as a Result of Influencer Marketing" (2023). *UBT International Conference*. 6.

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Changing Consumer Behavior as a Result of Influencer Marketing

¹.Hamëz Rama

¹UBT – Higher Education Institution, Lagjja Kalabria, 10000 p.n., Prishtinë, Kosovo
hamez.rama@ubt-uni.net
hamezrama@hotmail.com

Abstract. The third millennium was preceded by rapid technical-technological development, namely information technology and the Internet, through which the factors of the external environment have also changed which have drastically influenced the changes in consumer behavior. The market as such has a very heterogeneous and dispersed character, therefore, the world is dominated by hyper-competition, as products and services are becoming increasingly personalized. The development, transformation and very large use of social networks by the general society has pushed marketers to develop and apply a new concept of marketing which is influencer marketing. The very large use of social networks by individuals, such as: Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, etc., have also changed the way of communication and decision-making for the purchase of products and services. Therefore, influencer marketing has a very essential impact on the market to consumers. Through this paper, we try to understand how consumers perceive how influential marketing has influenced their behavior in their decision-making for purchasing products and services. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of influencer marketing on Kosovar consumer behavior.

Keywords: influencer marketing, consumer behavior, social networks, influencers.

1. Introduction

In the last decade, the use of social media has already become a trend for people, regardless of the reasons for their use, for finding old friends, group communication, following public figures or finding channels for online shopping. These online pursuits are especially becoming increasingly popular as interest in a healthy and luxurious lifestyle is growing[1]. Social media use and focus The public's focus is to look good in appearance, live healthy, take vacations, etc. to show followers to take this inspiration, to influence their behavior as consumers, is an ever-increasing trend[2]. Influencers are characterized by having a public or artistic personality that attracts thousands of followers on social networks, in such a way that he becomes a representative figure of his sector, and everything he says or does is important to those

"followers", who go so far as to imitate him[3]. Social networks such as Facebook and TikTok have changed the way people get information and communicate with each other. Focus groups as users of Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and other applications use them to share photo content, videos and various comments, conversations with families, friends or even with their followers, so these social networks give these opportunities to their users[4]. So having a social media marketing strategy could be as simple as having a company blog, a Twitter or Instagram account, Facebook or attach "Digg This" and "Tweet This"[5]. Social media influencer marketing is the process of marketing through social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. By utilizing the social aspect of the Internet, influencer marketing in social media is able to connect and interact on a much more personalized and direct level with the customer and is more dynamic than through traditional marketing[6]. So influencer marketing, along with SEO and social media advertising, are giving better results and better market[7]. Based on these trends nowadays more and more companies are looking to influencers in order to reach users and get their company, products or services known. Therefore, it is normal and common for companies to start spending their marketing budget on engaging or "employing" these personalities[8]. Positive performances will start when a company has to choose human capacities that are important as influencers for its sector or company. So, the reason for this scientific paper is the analysis of the influence of marketing influences as an impact on the behavior of consumers for making decisions about purchasing products and services. The main purpose of this research is to analyze the impact of influencer marketing on social media, which influence the change of their behavior as consumers in Kosovo. To reach a conclusion of a general overview on influential marketing in social networks, the way of circulation in the market, influencing people for the change in their behavior as a consumer for the decision-making for purchasing a product or service in Kosovo.

1.1. Research questions

In order to carry out this research, we used the panel of data for 100 respondents with gender and age structure in Kosovo.

In the explicit form in this research, we have posed three research questions:

RQ1: Knowledge of influencer marketing in Kosovo.?

RQ2: The impact of influencer marketing on consumer behavior in Kosovo.?

RQ3: Influential marketing of enterprises in Kosovo and the impact on business performance?

2. Literature review

This paper examines the literature on the impact of influencer marketing on their influence on consumer behavior, in terms of deciding to purchase products and services in Kosovo. Consumer behavior as a scientific fact developed around the end of the fifties of the last century when it was realized that by researching the consumer's desires and needs, a greater benefit would be achieved. In general, consumers make a decision to purchase a product or service because they can expect more benefits from it than from another product, clearly performing a cost-benefits relationship for their choices.

2.1. Consumer behavior

Consumer behavior is a process of actions and reactions, i.e. dynamic movement, for decision-making on the purchase of products and services mainly as a result of the environmental impact on an individual, on his own behavior, the connection and interaction of affect and cognition [9].

Influence on consumer behavior is a time intensive process. Consumer behavior is the primary focus of any company's marketing activities, through which activity it is tried to satisfy the needs of consumers as successfully as possible.

Successful companies focus their marketing efforts on meeting customer needs, that match their core competencies, and a key factor for successful marketing is determining the right balance of functional and psychological needs that best satisfy the company's target markets.

2.2. Influencer marketing

The early 20th century featured famous sports figures such as Cy Young & Babe Ruth promoting tobacco products and actress Lilly Langtry endorsing Pears soap. The subsequent growth of influencer marketing is a fact closely related to the sharing phenomenon and to some extent to the liking phenomenon.

Influencer marketing is a collaborative campaign between an influencer and a brand. The influencer uses their reach to increase awareness of a brand or product among their followers, which aligns with the target audience of the sponsoring business. A successful way to reach people and potential customers has always been that "word of mouth". An influencer is an individual with a significant following or followers on social media who is paid by brands to promote their products to said followers, through free products and travel and/or cash payment per promotional post, the purpose of which is to convince followers to buy such products or services.

We will mention some social media that have an impact on the audience or consumer, they are: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube, etc. When done wisely, influencers can reach many followers and start a chain reaction of outreach to influence consumer behavior [10].

2.3. The types of influencers

Influencer marketing is currently one of the most prominent trends in content marketing. For every \$1 spent on influencer marketing, brands earn up to \$5.78 in return. This is why 91% of marketers believe that influencer marketing is an effective form of marketing.

Social media influencers are individuals who have established a social media fan base and are often viewed by their followers as iconic role models and experts in their chosen industry. Since there are so many different types of influencers, it can be scary understand what type of influencer you need to improve your marketing. So, social media influencers are people who have established credibility in a particular field or field and share with the audience through social networks. These influencers have built strong relationships on social channels and respected opinions about the products and services they recommend. The influencers from nano to mega are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Defining influencers by number of followers

Nano-influencer	10-1000
Mikro-influencer	1000-10000
Makro-influencer	10.000-100.000
Mega-influencer	100.000-1 million
Famous-Influencer	1 million and more

Commenting and meaning of influencers according to the table.

Nano influencers are the smallest types of influencers.

The characteristics of nano-influencers are:

1. Number of Followers: 1K to 10K are everyday regular people.
Nano influencers can be fans of a particular brand or product and usually post and mention brands on their channels.
2. Has a close relationship with their fans, and responds to almost every comment and question. This makes their followers more receptive to perceiving their recommendation as an authentic recommendation rather than a brand endorsement.

Micro-influencers are types of influencers with the potential to grow.

The characteristics of micro-influencers are:

1. Number of followers: 10k to 100k, specialize in a niche.
2. They have an extremely high level of engagement with their fans compared to other types of influencers.
3. Highly segmented audience, which will be easy for your brand to tailor ads to them. They are relevant, trustworthy and authentic to followers. Many are also open to other forms of compensation, including gifts and invitations, which leads to more opportunities for companies that don't have enough funds for an impactful marketing campaign.

Macro-influencers: Medium level type of influence.

The characteristics of macro-influencers are:

1. Number of followers: 100 thousand to 500 thousand.
2. Segmented audiences that are easy to reach and engage with. A low number of cooperation with many brands. A relatively high number of faithful followers, on whom your campaign can have a significant impact and have a relatively high price.

Mega influencers are the right influencers for scale.

Characteristics of mega influencers:

1. Number of followers: 500 thousand to 2 million, a large number of social media consumers. High price depending on their profiles. They cooperate with several brands at the same time, very well-known and popular.
2. Contribute to the growth of marketing campaign revenue. They offer a brand the ability to quickly increase its presence to a wide audience. An audience may not be as specific when compared to other types of influencers.

All-star influencers are for brand image development.

Features of All-Star Influencers:

1. Number of followers: over 2 million usually famous. Massive following involving very different audiences (challenging to identify a specific segment).
2. One of their posts can be an instant hit and reach a large number of people. Extremely high cost[11].

3. Methodology

In this scientific paper, the method with the mix principle is used. It means that qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. The development of the theory of the paper was based on an abductive approach, which means that it was a combination outside the deductive and inductive approach. The inductive approach is more focused on defining and explaining a specific topic, while the behavior of the consumer or the influencer on Instagram, is based on a qualitative research method. The deductive approach is a process of empirical observation, in this case, an online survey was conducted. This research paper, that is, the focus of the research has been a small number of companies from different sectors who have provided specific information regarding the research regarding their companies, how they stand on this type of

marketing, therefore the qualitative method was used. On the other side, regarding the state of Influencer Marketing in Kosovo, it was necessary to collect information from a very large number of citizens to generate statistical data, therefore the quantitative approach was used. As the research focuses on two processes which cannot function without each other. To study the flow of influencer marketing in Kosovo, a semi-structured questionnaire was used with 100 respondents/consumers.

3.1. Commenting on the empirical results.

Within the statistical analysis, all the elements of the research questionnaire will be analyzed in order to test the research questions and hypotheses. In the statistical analysis were performed statistical tests of central correlation analysis and comparison of means.

Table 2. Presentation of the general data of the respondents

	Sample	The number of respondents	Total (%)
	Female	64	64 %
<i>Gender</i>	Male	36	36%

	20-25 years	9	9%
	26-35 years	32	32%
<i>Age</i>	36-45 years	20	20%
	46- 60 years	39	39%
	i/e widower	2	2%
<i>Marital status</i>	Married	88	88
	Divorced	2	2%
	Other	10	10%
	Better than average	42	42%
<i>Ec.condition</i>	Average	58	58%
	Village	66	66%
<i>Place</i>	City	34	34%
	Secondary	51	51%
<i>Education</i>	University	41	41%
	Postgraduate	8	8%

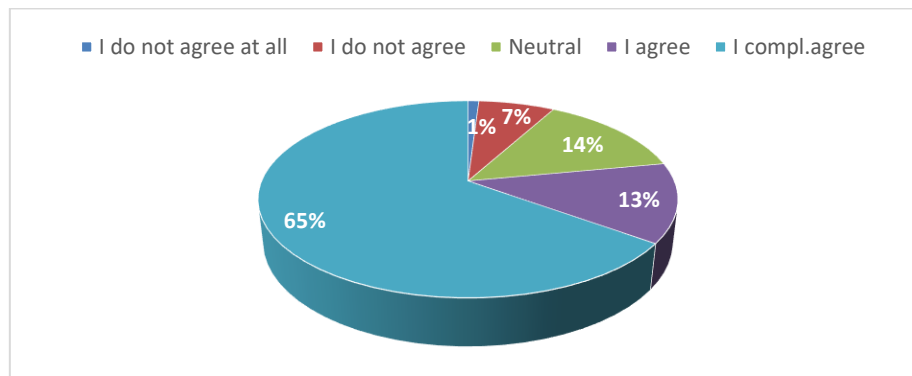


Fig. 1. Respodents konwledge on influencer marketing.

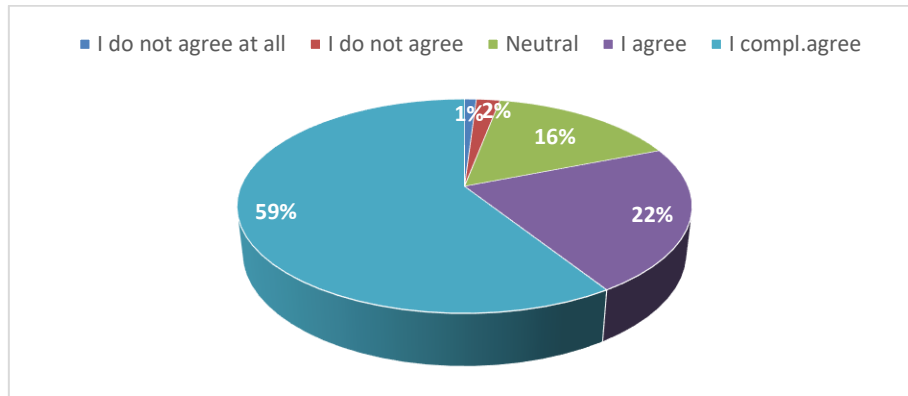


Fig. 2. Knowledge of citizens on influencer marketing.

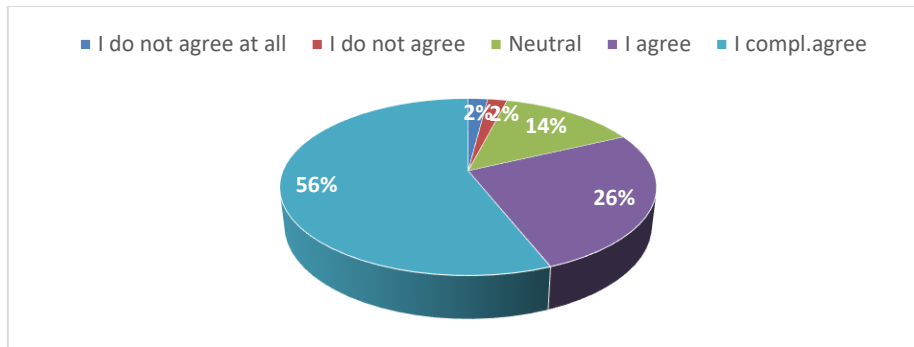


Fig. 3. Knowledge on the importance of influencer marketing in the financial turnover of the company.

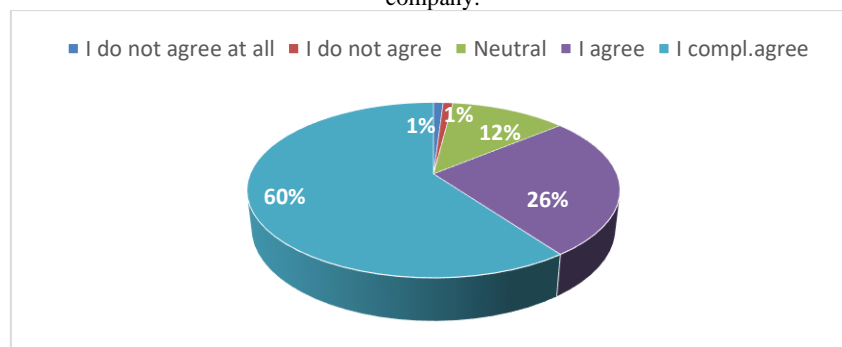


Fig. 4. Knowledge related to their buying influence when they want to make a purchase.

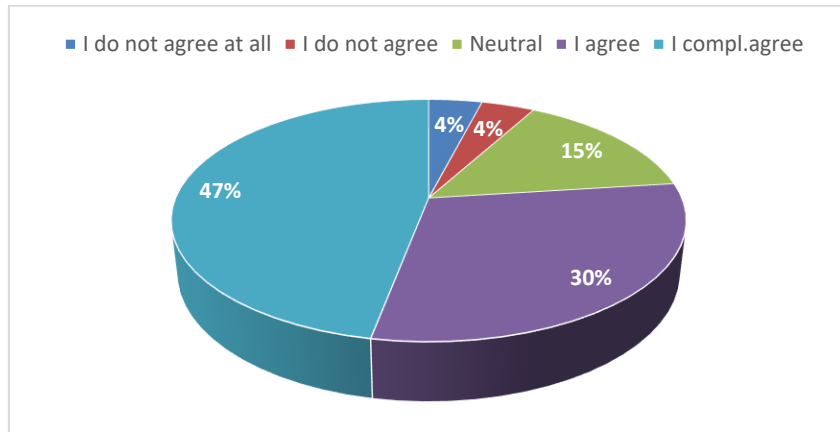


Fig. 5. Knowledge related to their ability to evaluate the quality of marketing before they make a purchase.

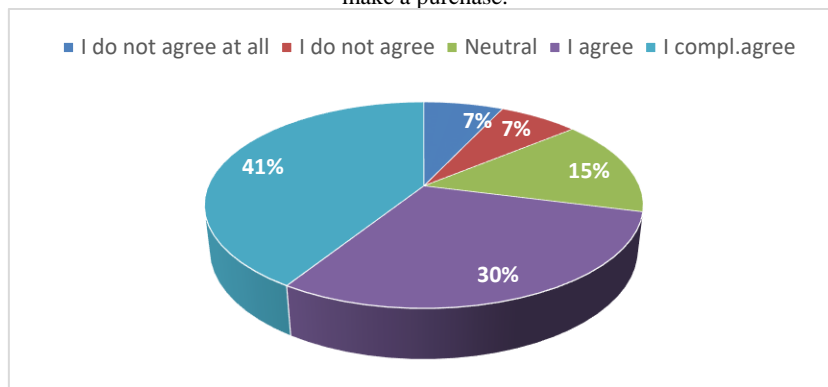


Fig. 6. Knowledge related to the impact of market services on consumer behavior.

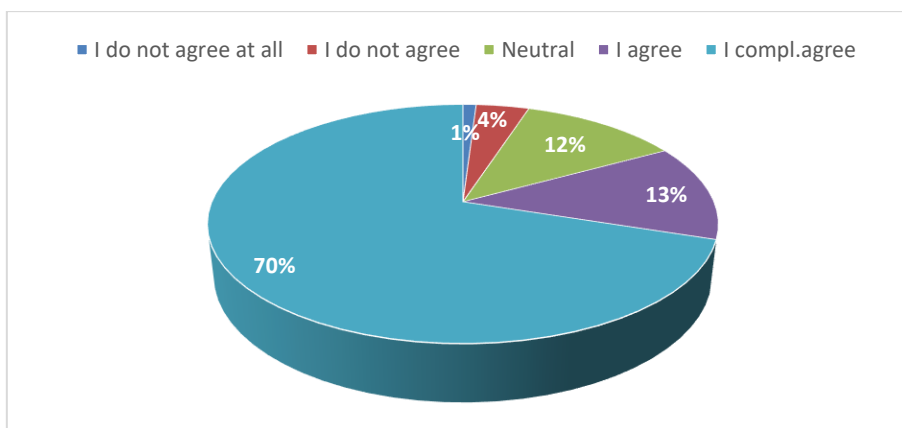


Fig. 7. Knowledge related to the impact of influencer marketing on consumer behavior.

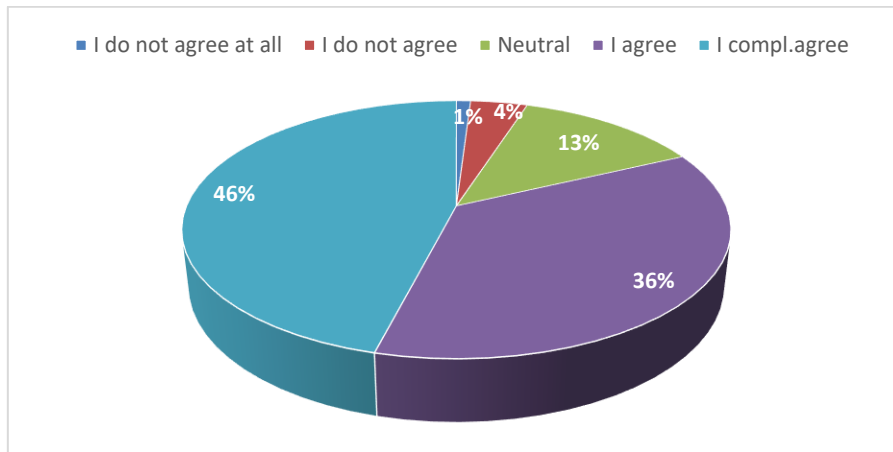


Fig. 8. Knowledge related to the impact of influencer marketing on the formation of the main attributes of consumer behavior.

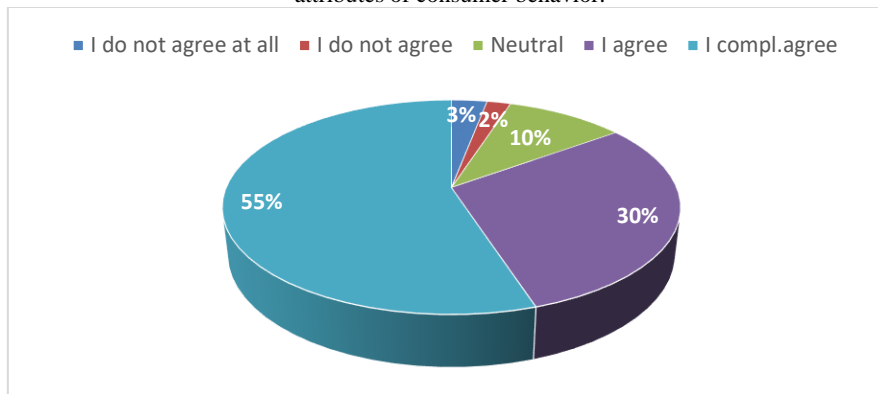


Fig. 9. Knowledge related to the evaluation of consumer behavior by the company.

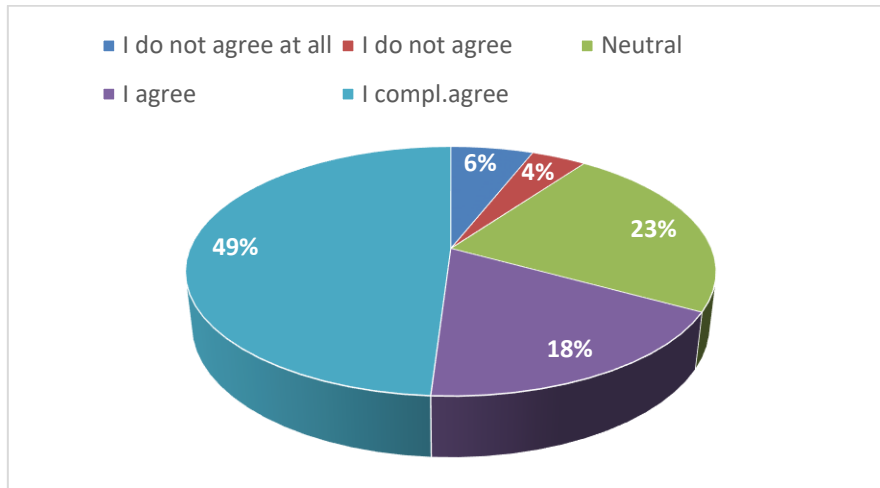


Fig. 10. Knowledge about companies in Kosovo that do not attach great importance to influencer marketing in social media or consumer behavior

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Conclusion

- ❖ From the analysis of the findings, the dominant age in this research is 46-60 years, while the dominant marital status is married. While in economic terms, the respondents estimate that their economic situation is better than the average with dominant reference. While based on the level of education, secondary education dominates, followed by university education.
- ❖ From the analysis on the knowledge of the respondents on influencer marketing, the majority or 88.3% have declared that they have general knowledge on influencer marketing in general, while when it comes to the perceptions of the respondents regarding the knowledge of citizens on influencer marketing, 82.3% therefore declare that Kosovo citizens do not have accurate information on influencer marketing.
- ❖ Regarding the importance of influencer marketing in the company's financial turnover, 56.3% of the total number of respondents have declared that they totally agree that influencer marketing has a great impact on the company's financial turnover.
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- ❖ Regarding the evaluation of consumer behavior by companies within the framework of company development and influencer marketing strategy in particular, 5.2% of them do not agree with this issue, 10.3% are neutral regarding this, 30.6% agree that companies should value consumer behaviors because they are a key element in predicting the company's development, and 54.0% have declared that they fully agree that companies should accept consumer behavior as a key element for the development of the company and the influencer marketing strategy in particular CURES regarding the importance that Companies in Kosovo pay attention to social media marketing yesterday especially on consumer behavior 48.3% have declared that they fully agree that companies in Kosovo do not pay attention to social media marketing yesterday especially on consumer behavior.

4.2. Recommendations

As a result of conducting the survey with the respondents, this research issues the following recommendations:

- Businesses in Kosovo must be as direct and transparent as possible with citizens, when the latter make a complaint/request and are awaiting the procedure.
- Citizens are recommended to delegate it to the appropriate place the first time they encounter any concern.
- Recommend that the company be in operation including all operating capacities in case of defects.
- We recommend that the statements of the managers are correct to the citizens regarding their obligations to the company.
- We recommend that the importance of citizens' complaints be made known in the context of improving services in the company.
- We recommend that managers make a statement regarding the improvement of services to increase the satisfaction of citizens.

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