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MASTER’S THESIS

**THE MODERATOR EFFECT OF ADULT
ATTACHMENT STYLES ON CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY
RELATIONSHIP**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as **“The Moderator Effect of Adult Attachment Styles on Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty Relationship”** has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

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ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

The Moderator Effect of Adult Attachment Styles on Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty Relationship

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This thesis examines adult attachment styles' moderator effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Although, the link between satisfaction and loyalty has been investigated by a wide range of perspectives in marketing literature, limited number of studies have been interested in the effects of moderator variables on the relationship between these two phenomenon (Homburg and Giering, 2001). According to attachment theory early relationship experiences of an infant with his/her primary caregiver provide a development of internal working models of the infant which have long-term influences on his/her personality, ability to develop relationships and expressing his/her emotions (Bowlby, 1973). Hence, the fundamental purpose of this thesis is to investigate moderating role of adults' attachment styles that are presented by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) on satisfaction and loyalty relationship. According to a questionnaire that was conducted to 389 respondents, a positive link between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty was found as expected. However, by contrast with our expectation, the moderator effect of adult attachment styles on satisfaction-loyalty link was not found.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Adult attachment styles, Brand Loyalty

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

**Yetişkin Bağlanma Tiplerinin Müşteri Tatmini ve Marka Sadakati İlişkisi
Üzerine Moderatör Etkisi**

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Bu tez müşteri tatmini ve marka sadakati arasındaki ilişki üzerine yetişkin bağlanma tiplerinin moderatör etkisini incelemektedir. Pazarlama literatüründe tatmin ve sadakat ilişkisi çok geniş bir bakış açısı ile incelenmesine karşın sınırlı sayıda çalışma bu iki olgu arasındaki ilişki üzerine moderatör değişkenlerin etkileri ile ilgilenmektedir (Homburg and Giering, 2001). Bağlanma teorisine göre, bebeğin ilk bakıcısı ile olan ilişki tecrübesi onun kişiliği, ilişki geliştirme yeteneği ve duygularını ifade etmesi üzerine uzun süreli etkilere sahip olan içsel çalışma modellerini geliştirmesini sağlar (Bowlby, 1973). Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın temel amacı Bartholomew ve Horowitz (1991) tarafından sunulan yetişkinlerin bağlanma tiplerinin, tatmin ve sadakat ilişkisi üzerindeki moderatör rolünü incelemektir. 389 kişiye uygulanan anketin sonuçlarına göre, literatürü de destekler nitelikte, müşteri tatmini ile marka sadakati arasında pozitif bir bağ olduğu bulunmuştur. Ancak, beklentilerimizin aksine, tatmin –sadakat ilişkisi üzerine yetişkin bağlanma tiplerinin moderatör etkisi bulunmamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müşteri Tatmini, Yetişkin Bağlanma Tipleri, Marka Sadakati

THE MODERATOR EFFECT OF ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY RELATIONSHIP

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ABBREVIATIONS

CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
RSQ	The Relationship Scale Questionnaire
SEM	Structural Equation Model
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CSPEA	Customer-Service Provider Emotional Attachment

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INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive business atmosphere, gaining new customers and keeping existing customers have become more difficult for companies because today's customers have become more price-sensitive (Rundle-Thiele et al., 2005), demanding, sophisticated, well informed and they seek more attention (Khalifa and Shen, 2005) and they want to feel special. Thus, it has become much harder to create and maintain the satisfaction of today's demanding customers and turning them to loyal ones in this competitive environment.

Dube and Schmitt (1991) underlines that satisfaction was interpreted as only a mental process until Oliver (1981) who evaluates satisfaction as a psychological phenomenon. Kotler (1991), on the other part, interprets customer satisfaction as customers' comparison in their mind to particular product/services based on their expectations before buying it and evaluation after buying it. Furthermore, Zineldin (2000) states that customer satisfaction is obtained by having access to goods and services with qualities that meet the customer's desires and needs.

Brand loyalty identifies a situation that a consumer committed his/herself an exact brand and makes repeated buying from this specific brand over time which consists of stochastic and deterministic approaches (Alaei et al., 2014). The stochastic approach emphasizes the repeat purchase in a specific period while the deterministic approach emphasizes to the importance of favourable attitudes towards brand for creating brand loyalty (Jacoby 1971).

In the marketing literature, there are plenty of studies about the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty however, there are limited studies that explain the impacts of moderator variables on this link (Homburg and Giering, 2001). Even though both the direct link between these concepts (e.g. Fornell, 1992; Ulaga, 2002; Choi et al., 2008) and influences of moderator variables in this relationship (e.g. Walsh et al., 2008; Kuo et al., 2009; Olsen et al., 2005) have been studied, there is no research to investigate the moderating effect of adult attachment styles on this link in the existing literature.

Attachment is a psychological theory which underlines early relationships between human infants with their primary caregivers prepare the prototypes of social relations in their later life (Bartholomew, 1990). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991)

prepared an adult attachment model that categorise people into four group in terms of their attachment styles. Secure attachment style simply defines one who has a positive view about self and other, preoccupied people have negative view of self and positive view of other, people with dismissing attachment style have positive view of self, and negative view of other and lastly people who are in fearful attachment have of both negative view other and self.

Attachment has been mainly examined in interpersonal contexts under psychology discipline but, marketing literature shows that consumers can have attachments to product, services, brands and stores (Park et al., 2010). Park and colleagues (2006) identity brand attachment as a strength of the mental and sentimental link connecting the brand with the customers.

Thus, it could be said that, attachment is one of the major psychological theories and marketing scholars have been also interested in this concept but there are limited research that examines this concept under the marketing context so it is still an open area to exploration. Moreover, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty relationship is a focal point in marketing research but the impacts of moderator variables on this relationship has not been heavily examined yet. That is why, it could be said that, investigating the role of moderating variables in satisfaction-loyalty link is still an open area to exploration.

Thus, the major purpose of this thesis is making a contribution to existing literature by being a first research which evaluates adult attachment styles as a moderator variable on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty relationship in smartphone sector. This thesis can provide a new perspective to companies for identifying and understanding existing and potential customers.

This thesis composes of three chapters. The first chapter gives information about attachment theory, attachment in infancy, attachment in adulthood, adult attachment approaches, the association between adult attachment styles and other concepts. This chapter also shed light on applications of attachment concept in marketing field.

The second chapter is about customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and the relationship between these two concepts. In customer satisfaction phase; theoretical framework, antecedents, outcomes, importance and measurements of customer

satisfaction are explained. Similarly, at the next part of the second chapter; general overview, theoretical framework, antecedents, outcomes of brand loyalty and its measurement are explained. In addition to them, the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty is clarified in the third part of the second chapter. Both in the first and second chapters, previous researches in related field have been summarized.

The last chapter is about the research methodology and research findings. Design of the research, sample selection, data collection, questionnaire design, development of the framework, research structures and hypotheses development were all explained. In this part, characteristics of sample were indicated statistically, and the hypotheses of the thesis were analysed and compared. A structured questionnaire was used as a data collecting tool which has 41 questions and concludes four parts. This questionnaire was prepared at Google Forms format and distributed over the Internet by using a convenience sampling method to explore the moderator effect of adult attachment styles on satisfaction- loyalty link. The questionnaire reached 400 respondents but 11 of them were taken out of the data. Thus research analysis was made based on 389 respondents' answers. Research findings were also shared and interpreted in this chapter. After that, the discussion, limitations and suggestions for future studies and conclusion parts were introduced.

CHAPTER ONE

ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES

1.1. ATTACHMENT

Attachment theory underlines that early relationship experiences of an infant with his primary caregiver cause long-term influences on his personality, ability to develop relationships and expressing his emotions by providing the infant creates internal working models about his/herself and other people (Bowlby, 1973). The attachment behavioural system is gradually an outcome of natural selection to adjust closeness to a primary caregiver (Fraley, 2010). According to Slater (2007), Bowlby interpreted childhood attachment as an evolutionary oriented concept by emphasized the effects of biological motives to push infants to seek proximity from their mother, which is an instinctive behaviour derived from a process of natural selection. Fitton (2012) points that two fundamental structures stemmed from Bowlby's explanation: an infant's attachment towards his/her primary caregiver is a biological need and the essential factor in infant psychological development is the mother-infant tie. It could be said in other words as follow; attachment relationships between an infant and his/her primary caregiver is an important force to shape his/her later personality development (Sroufe and Siegel, 2011). In addition to these, Slater (2007) summaries key points of attachment theory with listing its four major strengths as followed:

- Attachment theory is an exhaustive theory which aims to shed light on people's psychological progress and personality development through their life based on their early tie with their primary caregiver.
- Attachment theory aims to understand and explain emotions like sadness, rage, concern, scare and helplessness that are existed when an infant separate from or loss his/her primary caregiver. Also the theory interested in explaining these emotions' negative influence on self-improvement of people because an early tie between an infant and his/her primary caregiver provides a feeling of security that helps an infant to reduce stress.

- Since attachment theory uses academic concepts from ethology, anthropology and different branches of psychology and so on it could be seen as an interdisciplinary theory.
- Attachment theory makes observation based on the mother- child relationship rather than only child-oriented explanation.

Attachment theory, attachment during infancy period, attachment during adulthood and adult attachment styles are explained more deeply at following phases.

1.1.1. Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is a crucial to absorb important threats and protective measures in improvement in people's interpersonal relationship and emotional development (Zeanah, 1996) by combining ethology, personality theories and theories related to regulation of emotion (Fraley, 2010). According to attachment theory, experiences in previous close relationships, starting with the attachment relationships between children and the attachment figure is the reason behind why people have different attachment style (Nofle and Shaver, 2006).

Attachment theory is an extension of Bowlby and Ainsworth's studies that were conducted to explain individual differences in terms of cognitions, feelings, and behaviours. According to Bowlby (1973) a strong sentimental bond of one person to another one is attachment.

The roots of the studies in concept of attachment date back to the 1930s, when Bowlby worked in Tavistock Clinic in London which was a home for maladjusted boys. He realized that young children experienced intense distress during a period of separation from their mothers, and they continued to show signs of disturbance even after they reunited with their mothers (Cassidy and Shaver, 2002). Bowlby revolutionized Freudian dominant view by considering child-mother relation with behaviourist perspective (Fonagy, 2001) which approached to child-mother tie through deprivation, separation and bereavement (Fitton, 2012). As a result of his ongoing observations in this centre, Bowlby (1952) realized that both mother and the child must feel satisfied and take pleasure in this relationship. For example; young children in the clinic needed to feel beloved, be praised by their mothers and; the mothers needed to see spread of their personality on the children's personalities. Based on this ground,

he observed that very early relationship with the mother has enormous importance for the child, disruptions in this relationship could cause to later psychopathological problems (Bowlby, 1988). The attachment bond between an infant and his/her mother is very influential in human beings' life because attachment bond shapes human experiences "from the cradle to the grave" (Bowlby, 73,79). This can be interpreted like that; the attachment bond between an infant and his/her mother serves to protect the infant during a long period of immaturity and vulnerability (Ainsworth et al., 1978) because the child who has a sense of security towards his caregiver has a foundation that provides him with an opportunity to improve (Bowlby, 1988). That's why, the main focus point of Bowlby was to understand the process of normal and abnormal development in infant- mother attachment relationship to explore how it affected emotional development (as stated in Sroufe and Siegel, 2011).

Bowlby objected to the long-standing Freudian perspective of human development, since his observations in the clinic were disjointedness to Freudian approach (Fitton, 2012), and blamed Freudian approach for concentrating on majorly the effects of feeding and gratification of libidinal drives on the infant's motivation to stay close the familiar person (Karen, 1994) and subconscious process rather than the actual relational environment between an infant and his/her mother (Sroufe and Siegel, 2011). Bowlby suggested an alternative, a logical and a sophisticated theoretical approaches to psychoanalytic theories of object relations comes from ethology and evolutionary perspective in biology (as stated in Cassidy and Shaver, 2002). As Bretherton (1985) mentioned, attachment theory was a new kind of point of view to explain object relations instead of psychoanalytic theories by interested in;

- why mere separation should cause anxiety
- the similarities between adult and childhood mourning
- defensive processes

As Slater (2007) points out, even though Bowlby created this theory by using conceptual materials from different branches, he fundamentally used ethology to explain infant-mother tie (Bowlby, 1973). He stated that the tie between infant and mother comes from a biological requirement for a physical closeness (Cassidy and Shaver, 2002). Since human infants' dependency on care is longer than other species, that is more important for human infants than other species (Ainsworth, 1969). In

addition to ethology, Bowlby was also interested in evolutionary theory when conceptualizing attachment theory and stated that human attachment behaviour is constructed for survival in the environment. Hence finding a responsive attachment figure is vital for the child in that kind of environment. Based on this assumption, Bowlby also suggested that people who success to reach a reproductive age are probably had a proximity to their attachment figure in their infancy (Bowlby, 1988).

According to Bowlby (1969) attachment is an image that is developed in the infant's mind stem from his/her relationship between his/her mother that is interiorized as the infant grow up. This interiorized projections of the attachment relationship are called as "internal working models" that involve awareness of the infant about his/herself and his/her perceptions about others that affect individuals' proximity seeking patterns (i.e. primary caregiver) (Simpson et al., 1992). Internal working models depend on very early experiences in the child's first relationships with the his/her mother, and they affect to the infant's perception and behaviour in subsequent situations (Chinitz, 1995).

If the caregiver is available when needed, the infant has positive internal working model (Collins and Feeney, 2000). Fraley (2010) explains what happens in the opposite situation; the child experiences anxiety which continues until the reestablishment of an optimum level of physical or sentimental closeness to the caregiver, or until the child get exhausted that might occur after long-standing separation or loss.

1.1.1.1. Attachment in Infancy

British psychologist John Bowlby was founder of the attachment theory with his fundamental touch of underlining the attachment of the infant to his/her attachment figure is a biological need to survive (Wallin, 2007). Mary Ainsworth who is the second important influencer of the theory because she made Bowlby's views possible to test empirically and gave a help to expand the theory by her innovative measurement methodology (Bretherton, 1992). According to Ainsworth (1969) attachment is an emotional tie that the infant form with the attachment figure across long period and proximity. She created a behavioural assessment procedure that is called as "the

strange situation task” to examine the quality and the organization of mother-child attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Fraley (2010) stated that strange situation task is a one of the major element in attachment literature because of three reasons those are listed below.

- Strange situation task is one of the earliest studies that experimentally observes the what kind of different attachment behaviours are reflected by the infant in both secure and insecure environments.
- Strange situation task is the primary empirical classification of personal distinctness in infant’s attachment towards his/her attachment figure. The consequence of the study, she categorized the children into three different groups in terms of their attachment style. The first group involves securely attached infants, the next group involves infants who attached their mother anxious-resistant pattern and the last group includes anxious-avoidant infants.
- Strange situation task explains the reasons behind the differences in infants’ attachment towards their mothers come from the infant-mother relationship until the infants turn one.

In 1954, Ainsworth researched in Uganda (Fitton, 2012). In this study, reactions of children and caregivers under stressful environmental situations such as separation and reunion were observed by Ainsworth and her team over a year. (Field et al., 1984). Moreover, eight years later than Uganda, Ainsworth conducted a revised version of this previous study in Baltimore. In this study, connections between babies and mothers were documented throughout a year from the birth of babies and the perfect match between attachment behaviours of babies in Baltimore and Uganda had been observed which had great importance to indicate a cross-cultural correlation for universality of attachment, just as Bowlby had thought (Wallin, 2007).

With the findings of those studies, Ainsworth created a laboratory test named as strange situation task to measure infant-attachment figure bond (Ainsworth, 1970). This study can be thought as a short and quick version of Ainsworth’s previous studies which take 20 minutes and involves 8 phases. In this study an infant has been briefly separated from his mother in an experimental context and his/her reactions until and after his/her mother turn back are observed. (Bretherton, 1992). Based on the strange

situation task results, Ainsworth shows that infants can be separated into three different attachment categories which are secure attachment, avoidant attachment and anxious-ambivalent attachment (Colin, 1991). General aspects of each category are briefly explained as follows;

Infants who explore their environment actively when their primary caregivers are accessible and perceive them as a source of security for adventures are labelled as securely attached infants. These infants feel themselves sad when their primary caregivers leave them and seek physical touches and ease when they reunite with their caregivers (Ainsworth et al., 1978). The caregiver of this kind of infant is emotionally available and prefers to cooperate with him/her rather than building a relationship based on controlling (Ainsworth, 1970). The attitudes of this kind of mothers can be explained by attunement which is the ability to successfully read and give a response to the needs of another for establishing safe relationship (Perry, 2002). Thus, if the infant perceives the attachment figure as available when needed, the infant builds a secure attachment and this encourages the infant to explore the environment in her presence (Fonagy, 2001). The infant who is securely attached has constantly experienced that his parent is accessible, supportive and responsive to him. Since he continually receives comfort and support from his attachment figure when he is stressed or upset, he trusts the attachment figure (Kinnari, 2014). Enjoyment of the attachment figure and child experience when they spend time together is also important because this shows proof for high-quality communication between them (De Wolff et al., 1997). Moreover, children with secure attachment have a good sense of justice and they generally have an ability of empathy for others. That's why they are appreciated among their peers (Granot and Mayseless, 2001) so they have a healthy social and cognitive development. Lastly, their good start in life provides securely attached children to give and receive social support and causes lots of positive experiences so they can use them when they face with difficult situations (Howe et al., 1999).

It was observed that nearly 20% of infants in the strange situation task were not seen to be concerned when their caregivers separate them and these infants did not appear to seek contact with their mothers when they had turned back. They preferred to keep their concentration on other materials and stuffs instead of their mothers so the attachment pattern of these kinds of infants was classified as avoidant attachment style

by Ainsworth (1978). Even though this kind of infants seem calm, in fact, their heart rates when their mothers are not in an experiment room are not different from infants who looks concerned (Wallin, 2007). Since their mothers reject to build a connection with them and frequently withdrew from infants when they are sad (Ainsworth et al., 1978), the behaviour set of this kind of infants can be considered as a defense mechanism (Wallin, 2007).

Ainsworth observed that around 20% of the infants were seriously comfortless during the separation period and were rather worried in reunion phases. These kind of infants appeared to desire to hurt their mothers because of separation and exhibited rage when in reunion stage. These infants were named anxious-ambivalent (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Anxious-ambivalent infants display extreme level of sadness in separation period, but the reunion cannot soothe them. They seem, in contrary, to aggravate emotional stimulation to get the attention of their mothers (Fonagy, 2001). Typically, their mothers are not involved and ignores the infant's distress. Thus infants try to catch the interest of their mothers by enhancing his level of attachment behaviour. This pattern can lead to a feeling of uncertainty about being valued and loved (Howe et al., 1999).

In addition to Ainsworth's studies, Mary Main gave an important contribution to the exact field. She realized that behaviours of some children did not match any attachment category that was systematized by Ainsworth. Main started to review two hundred videotapes of strange situation task. After that she realized that the children who cannot be put any group of attachment displayed some weird behaviours within around ten to thirty seconds to their parents (Wallin, 2007). Then, she identified this previously undetected pattern as a disorganized attachment style which appears when the attachment figure is thought both a source of insecurity and a security by the infant (Main and Solomon, 1990). She also observed that the infants with disorganized attachment pattern are prone behaviourally to be very disturbed (Howe et al., 1999), they tried to pursue physical contact with the attachment figure in abnormal ways (Fonagy, 2001).

1.1.1.2. Attachment in Adulthood

According to Bowlby (1973), individual's perception and cognitive evaluation about his/herself and others i.e. internal working models provide prototypes for following bonds by affecting mental and behavioural processes that adhere to the individual's expectations so attachment bonds of infants with their attachment figures also affect their peer selection (Löker, 1999) and romantic relationship (Hazan and Shaver, 1987) in the future. In line with this information, many research show attachment styles that was built in infancy continues during the next phases of the human life and some studies indicated that attachment security is not fluctuate throughout the life if traumatic events and dramatic changes in the family structure, such as a death of a beloved one or divorce are not existed (Waters et al., 2002).

1.1.1.2.1. Adult Attachment Approaches

Three basic approaches are dominant in adult attachment literature; each one has its interpretation about adult attachment and methodology to examine attachment representations. Mary Main devised the first approach and the second one was devised by Hazan and Shaver while Bartholomew is the founder of the third approach (Wallin, 2007).

1.1.1.2.1.1. Mary Main's Approach

The first dominant approach in adult attachment literature was built by Mary Main by preparing and conducting the Adult Attachment Interview which is a test that presents a narrative about childhood by investigating the adults' attachment histories related to their primary caregivers and their attachment bonds with their offspring (Main and Hesse, 1990). While the strange situation task is preverbal and experiential method for observing and examining attachment, adult attachment interview consists of verbal and representational methods to evaluate adult attachment so this technique is interested in people's feelings and thoughts about their childhood memories (Waters et al., 2002).

Main and Hesse (1990) categorises adult people into 4 different group as a result of the adult attachment interview method. George and colleagues (1996) explain briefly each of these 4 adult attachment category as following;

- Autonomous attachment style reflects Ainsworth's secured type; adults who are in this category have high level of cognitive and behavioural coherence about their childhood.
- The second one is dismissing type of attachment which is parallel with anxious/avoidant attachment style. Therefore, even though people who are in this category often deny they have lack of memory about their childhood, they have high scores for disconnected positive depiction of their parents
- The other insecure type of attachment category is preoccupied attachment coincides with the ambivalent/resistant type. Preoccupied adults are related to high level of ragingly preoccupied discourse or incomprehensible speech usages.
- Unresolved type of attachment is the fourth adult attachment category based on adult attachment interview that is characterised by high level of lapses in the controlling of consideration or speech that are existed particularly when they are speaking about potentially traumatic events.

1.1.1.2.1.2. Hazan and Shaver's Approach

In addition to Main's considerable impact on the field, Hazan and Shaver (1987) systemized the second important adult attachment approach. They adapted the three categorization of infant attachment styles prepared by Ainsworth into concepts coherent with romantic relationships in adulthood so they presented three attachment styles namely; secure attachment style, avoidant attachment style and anxious-ambivalent attachment style (Collins and Read, 1990). The frequencies of these attachment types are matched with frequencies of Ainsworth's categorization of infant attachment types (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

General features of adult attachment patterns are explained shortly as below;

- People who securely attached to their romantic partners have positive perception of the self, prone to be stable. They are also trustful, joyful,

companionable, and mindful of the romantic relationship (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

- People who have an avoidant attachment style are disinterested and careless to their intimate partners, and they prefer to away from building a closeness and proximity with other people. That is why this attachment pattern can be described as a fear of being close to others (Hazan and Shaver, 1987). Therefore, as Simpson (1990) declared that there is not a positive relationship between avoidant attachment style and positive emotions in the relationship.
- People who have an anxious-ambivalent attachment style are afraid of not loving absolutely by others so this kind of people have a tendency to frustrate or rage suddenly if their romantic partners do not fulfil attachment requirements of these people (Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

1.1.1.2.1.3. Bartholomew's Approach

In addition to important contributions of two previous studies to the adult attachment literature, the third influential adult attachment approach was developed by Bartholomew (1990). According to Bartholomew's point of view avoidance attachment styles involves two theoretically different attachment styles those are fearful-avoidance and dismissing avoidance (Fraley and Waller, 1998). Thus, Bartholomew (1990) criticized three group model of adult attachment that developed by Hazan and Shaver's (1987) to collect different theoretical branches of avoidance under the same title instead of distinguishing them. Another main approach difference of Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) method is that: internal working models are used as a core element for categorizing adult attachment styles in this method with other words, they categorised individuals' attachment styles based on individuals' cognitive perception about the self and others and as a result of combination of these two major components, four different attachment styles were presented. Those are namely; secure attachment style, preoccupied attachment style, dismissing attachment style and fearful attachment style. Diehl et al. (1998) explain the working principle of the model as; this model classify individuals based on their relationship with themselves and other This dimensional structure comes from Bowlby's (1973) views

because he stated that the child-mother relationship in an early days provide child to develop internal working models which relate with the perception regard to the self and the others. Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) model of adult attachment is indicated in Figure 1

Figure 1: Model of Adult Attachment

MODEL OF SELF (Anxiety)			
		Positive (Low)	Negative (High)
MODEL OF OTHER (Avoidance)	Positive (Low)	SECURE Comfortable with intimacy and autonomy	PREOCCUPIED Preoccupied with relationships
	Negative (High)	DISMISSING Dismissing of intimacy Counter dependent	FEARFUL Fearful of intimacy Socially avoidant

Source: Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: a test of a four-category model. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 61(2), 226.

Figure 1 can be described briefly like this; people who have positive perceptions of the self; have also low level of anxiety so this kind of people do not feel themselves uncomfortable with autonomy and intimacy. In contrast to this, anxiety level of people who have negative assessment of the self is high, this kind of people need for acceptance by others to feel themselves valuable. Thus when they afraid to build close relationship. Moreover, individuals with positive consciousness towards others are prone to trust and seek support from their romantic mates. Thus, this kind of people prefer to be close in their relationship. In opposition, people with negative view of others have strong desire to put and keep distance in their relationship because they feel themselves threatened when their partner too close to them. (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

Each attachment pattern of the four category model is profoundly explained in the following part.

The first category of model of adult attachment is secure attachment which described as having positive self- image, a feeling of trust in interpersonal relationships. Securely attached individuals have favorable cognitive schemas for both self and other so their anxiety and avoidance degrees are low (Griffin and Bartholomew, 1994). Since their earliest relationship with their primary attachment figure was stable and emotional (Pielage et al., 2005), securely attached individuals' self-confident level is high, they feel themselves comfortable and have no fear to not loved by others in a romantic relationship (Collins and Feeney, 2000). Securely attached individuals usually expect to get favorable experiences in a relationship because they have a tendency to believe people have goodwill. Thus they do not hesitate to forgive other people easily (Kachadourian et al., 2004). They also expect their partners to be accessible to them, and can build close intimate links so their intimate relationships are considered as a safe haven for people who are in this category (Bartholomew et al., 2001). Therefore, people with secure attachment are more achievable and have high self-reliance (Cann et. al., 2008).

Secondly, people who have unstable and unemotional based relationship with their primary attachment figure are prone to show preoccupied attachment style (Bartholomew et al., 2001). This kind of people have strong feeling of paltriness and they need to have other people's acceptance and approval to feel themselves valuable (Bartholomew, 1990). Preoccupied individuals have a fear of abandonment and this kind of individual gives extreme importance to reactions of other people about his/her desire to build a close relationship with them (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). Therefore, this kind of person becomes distressed when his/her partner is not readily available (Bookwala, 2002). When preoccupied individuals feel their mates are not available, they can exhibit negative emotions like anger, fear, concern and aggression easily so are showing a tendency to have high level of jealousy and low level of satisfaction with their love partner in their romantic relationships (Mayseless, 1991).

A fearful attachment pattern is the third type of attachment according to the four group model, which is categorized based on unfavorable feeling of self and unfavorable feeling of others (Bartholomew, 1990). In other words, individuals who this attachment style exhibit extreme level of anxiety and extreme levels of avoidance towards their partners in intimate relationships (Griffin and Bartholomew, 1994). Even

though individuals with this attachment style have a desire to close connection and approval by other people, they are showing a tendency to not try to build a close relationship since they have a fear abandonment (Bookwala, 2002). They also do not feel themselves as trustful and comfortable when having a love relationship because they do not believe their partners are consistent, trustful source for assistance and gratification (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

The last attachment category according to the four group model of attachment is dismissing attachment style, which reflects a favorable view of self and unfavorable cognitive schema for others (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). Individuals with dismissing attachment pattern have positive cognitive image in their mind about the self even though their earliest relationship with their primary attachment figure was based on ignoring or denying their signals by the attachment figure (Bartholomew et al., 2001). People who are in this attachment category are mistrustful in their romantic close relationships and care about their autonomy, success and self-reliance (Bookwala, 2002) so this kind of people reject the significance of romantic intimate bonds, refuse other people's assistance and give extreme importance to their autonomy. As a way of self-protection, people with dismissing attachment style tend to accept themselves perfect in wide range of issues (Cassidy, 1988). With this way, this kind of people try to protect to face with frustration by avoiding from intimate romantic relationships (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). They are also prone to evaluate other people with instrumental terms such as gains and losses instead of warm love and care (Mayseless, 1991). In their intimate relations, they exhibit limited emotional proximity and warmth (Lütkenhaus et al., 1985) and they tend to blame their partners for negative relationship events in their relationship (Sümer and Cozzarelli 2004).

All in all, attachment is a permanent and stable concept that started from the very early relationship between infant and mother and this attachment bond is transferred in other kind of relationship in later life (Bowlby, 1969). Internal working models of attachment has also an influence individuals' love relationship (Simpson et al., 1996). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) systemized the adult attachment styles via the conceptualising of internal working models based on the two extents; model of self and model of others, that can be favourable or unfavourable. The positive self-

model indicates a person has a positive sense and thought about his/herself and he/she while the positive other model reflects people believe that if they need they can get support and assistance from others (Bartholomew and Shaver, 1998).

1.1.1.2.2. Relationship of Adult Attachment Styles with Other Concepts

Several studies effort to explain the association between attachment styles and other concepts to make a contribution to showing of attachment styles' influence. Some of them;

- Collins and Read (1990) found out that people with secure attachment have higher self-esteem than people with insecure attachment and insecurely attached people do not believe in the goodwill of other people, they consider other people behaviours stem from malicious intentions.
- Hazan and Shaver (1990) showed that people with insecure attachment styles are less satisfied with work than securely attached people.
- According to Eagle (1995) interprets insecure attachment style can lead to risky situation for people who are in this category and this attachment style is associated with unfavourable personality aspects whereas secure attachment style can be thought as a protective measures and it is correlated with several positive personality features.
- According to Weger and Polcar (2002) good communication skills at work is one of the signal of having a secure attachment style
- Pistole and Arricale (2003) demonstrate that insecurely attached individuals are found to be less satisfied and ease in romantic intimate relationships than people who have secure attachment.
- Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) showed people who place in insecure attachment style have higher risk than people who have secure attachment style to suffer from depression.
- Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) also found that secure attachment style is relevant to higher degree of productive behaviours of organizational commitment.

- Brown and Brown, (2008) examined the interpersonal association between investor and financial consultant loyalty based on attachment styles and they indicated that the clients with a fearful attachment style surprisingly have long-lasting association with the consultants.

As it briefly showed with the examples, even though the attachment was a psychological concept, academic studies about attachment are not limited in the psychology discipline. Academicians in marketing discipline have also been shown an interest in attachment concept and attachment styles. At following phases, this academic interest will be briefly mentioned.

1.2. ATTACHMENT IN MARKETING

As it emphasized at previous headings, the main focal point of attachment theory is to understand the affectionate tie that built between infants and their attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969). The desire to build a strong emotional bond to the attachment figure is a biological instinct of human that started from an infant's emotional bond to his/her attachment figure and maintain in the adulthood stages with intimate and peer relationships (Thomson et al., 2005). Attachment bond does not only contain romantic relationships and friendships but also involves the attachment to possessions, sports teams, stores, business partners and person-brand relations (Park et al., 2017). Studies in the marketing suggests that consumers can also exhibit an emotional warmth (i.e. attachment) to collectables, brands, places or other types of special or favourite objects (Thomson et al., 2005).

People establish an emotional bond towards brands that give confidence to people to fulfil their desires and wishes. Even though, requirements in adulthood is more complicated than the needs in infancy, the way of development of attachments is similar (Tuan et al., 2012). Brand attachment is a psychological state which represents to a sustained and unchangeable affective reaction towards the brand (Assiouras et al., 2015).

Thomson and Johnson (2006) measured attachment styles based on two dimensions. The first dimension was called attachment anxiety that refers to extreme need for acceptance, personal worries, and fears of refusal and separation. The second

dimension was named as attachment avoidance which refers to need for self-esteem, fears to do not maintain autonomy in a relationship with other people, believes relationship mate is malevolent, and effort to far away from partners mentally and sentimentally (Mende and Bolton, 2011). Thomson and Johnson (2006) showed that attachment anxiety and avoidance both negatively influence to participants' opinions about reciprocity. Individuals with high avoidance level have low level of satisfaction, involvement and commitment in commercial based relationships. Since the fundamental motive behind their commercial relationships is money individuals with high avoidance level may hesitate to build interpersonal relationships. Individuals who has high degree of anxiety were found as less satisfied in their commercial relationships. Perceived lack of reciprocity can be the reason behind this result because it leads a type of self-defeating cycle which prohibits to build relationships based on rewarding (Thomson and Johnson, 2006).

After this study, some other scholars have been concerned with the implementation of attachment theory to marketing;

- Paulssen (2009) stated that attachment styles have an effect on customers repurchase intention, brand trust and customer satisfaction.
- Paulssen (2009) showed that consumers with insecure attachment style have low degree of customer satisfaction, customer commitment and brand trust in than customers who have secure attachment.
- Mende and et all (2009) indicated that attachment styles of customers can be used to predict to repurchase intention and tendency to make word-of-mouth communication of customers.
- Mende and Bolton (2011) transformed general attachment styles to firm focused attachment styles and indicated that customers who have low level of anxiety and avoidance are prone to have high degree of emotional commitment, trust and customer satisfaction.
- Customers whose placement in fearful attachment style are prone to have low degree of blame attribute to the brand (Whelan and Dawar, 2016).
- Bidmon (2017) highlighted, some other studies that are interested in the use of attachment/attachment theory in marketing such as Diehl (2009), Mende and colleagues (2013), Beldona and Kher (2014).

Moreover, the moderator role of adult attachment styles has also been studied by a wide variety of scholars in marketing literature.

- Swaminathan and colleagues (2009) found that both anxious and avoidant attachment styles moderates to link between brand personality and brand outcomes.
- Vlachos and colleagues' (2010) results identify that attachment anxiety has a moderating role on the influence of emotional attachment on loyalty and word of mouth attitudes.
- Tuan and co-workers (2012) found that consumer with anxious attachment style feel themselves close to sincere brand personality while consumers who have an avoidant attachment style do not feel themselves close to sincere brand personality so they give reaction to differentiation in brand personality.
- Fearful consumers have both high attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance rates. They perceive consumption as an investment so when such a relationship ends, they think they lost their investment. Under this kind of situation, they tend to delate brands to other entities, seek for getting revenge against brands and get obsessed with damaging the particular brand, and (Thomson et al., 2012).
- Consumers with fearful attachment style make more investment in and depending on relationships with brands than consumers who are in other attachment styles (Thomson et al., 2012).
- Mende and colleagues (2013) remark that attachment styles are more useful tools to estimate the preferences of customers for closeness to brand than focusing on constant forces in marketing like relationship quality between customers and brands.
- David and co-workers (2016) found that consensus claims are more effective advertising tactic for securely attached individuals than people who have anxious attachment styles.
- Moussa and Touzani (2017) showed that consumers' attachment styles moderate to the impacts of trust, quality of services and favourable sentiments. Furthermore, they showed that customers with fearful attachment style have

low level of affectional bond to their service providers than customers with preoccupied attachment style.

- According to the consequences of Kim and colleagues' (2018) study that investigates attachment avoidance's moderating effect on forces influencing behavioural intentions of visitors, they found that the relationship between visitors' motivation and perceived value, value and visitors' behavioural intentions, quality and perceived value and destination image and perceived value are moderated by attachment avoidance of visitors.

As a summary, attachment theory emphasized that when the early relationship experiences between infants and his/her primary attachment figure are interiorized internal working models are developed which affect infants' relationship others in his/her later life (Pietromonaco et al., 2006). As it is shown by a range-wide of examples, in marketing literature also many scholars have been interested in attachment theory. Some of them directly use general attachment styles which are psychological based categorization, and some others attempt to transform this concept to marketing via creating terms called brand attachment and customer attachment styles. Even though there is an academic interest in the attachment in marketing, any academic research has investigated the moderator effects of adult attachment styles on the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. This thesis aims to enucleate this ignored topic because understanding whether the strength of satisfaction and loyalty link significantly changes or not according to adult attachment styles may give new insights to understand customers and identifying the target market for marketing professionals. In line with this fundamental objective, theoretical frameworks of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty are explained deeply in chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY

2.1. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

In very early times, the word satisfaction was used as being some sort of release from wrongdoing (Parker and Mathews, 2001) but its modern meaning is different, it is defined as “fulfilment of one’s wishes, expectations, or needs” in Oxford dictionary (2010).

The concept of customer satisfaction firstly, was introduced to marketing literature by Locke (1976) as follows: the positive emotional situation of a person as a result of his work. According to Campo and Yague, (2009) the roots of academic interest in the field of customer satisfaction could be found at the 60s in the studies of Cardozo (1965) and Howard and Sheth (1969). Research in customer satisfaction have been dramatically enhanced for 50 years (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982) and the concept of satisfaction has been researched by academicians in terms of psychological and sociological perspectives and they were especially interested in its construct and influence on consumer behaviour (Vavra, 2002).

Fornell et al (1996) identified customer satisfaction as a comprehensive examination of customers in terms of their experience that they obtained from buying and consumption of good/service over time. Therefore, it plays a mirror role to reflects positive evaluation of customers about particular product/service (Zeithaml et al., 2006). Thus, customer satisfaction can be seen as a tool for understanding customers’ expectation on how the goods and services facilitate them (Oliver, 1999).

In addition to the prior explanations, some studies make an addition to this perspective to emphasize possible effects of emotions as follows; affective processes may also give a substantial contribution to the clarification and estimation of customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). Very similar to this, Shankar and colleagues (2003) interpret satisfaction as a perception of gratifying fulfilment of a product/service. Oliver (1981) extended this prior definition as follows; satisfaction is the sum-up of the psychological situation appears when consumers’ prior expectations about the product and their evaluation after purchasing are matched (Oliver, 1981). Based on the

prior information, it could be said that customer satisfaction is an assessment about features of product or service, and it enables a positive degree of fulfilment about consumption experience.

As it is understood from previous headings, we come across several different definitions of customer satisfaction and this situation actually reflects how difficult to define concepts. Yi (1990), suggests that, customer satisfaction is identified in two fundamental approaches. More obviously, definitions of customer satisfaction can be based on the assessment process or a reaction to an assessment process (Giese and Cote, 2000). The first approach emphasizes customer satisfaction is a final situation or as an outcome of consumers' experience obtained during consumption while the next approach considers the impacts of cognitive and psychological processes that on satisfaction (Grigoroudis and Siskos, 2009). Satisfaction as a process approach is the most widely used identification of customer satisfaction which focuses on mainly the antecedents of satisfaction instead of satisfaction itself (Oliver, 1977).

Grigoroudis and Siskos' (2009) study illustrates different examples belongs to approaches of satisfaction mentioned to clarify how the construct of the term is changed according to the approaches (Table 1).

Table 1: Definitions of Customer Satisfaction

Approach	Definition	Author
Satisfaction as an outcome	The buyer's cognitive state of being adequately or inadequately rewarded for the sacrifices has undergone	Howard and Sheth (1969)
	A sentimental reaction to the experience that obtained after buying particular product/service	Westbook and Reilly (1983)
	A result of buying and utilise stemming from the customer's evaluation of the pros and cons of the buying particular product in terms of supposed expectations.	Churchill and Suprenant (1982)
Satisfaction as a process	An examination rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be	Hunt (1977)
	An assessment that the purchased product is coherent with pre-purchase expectation about it	Engel and Blackwell (1982)
	Reaction of the customer to the examination of the contradiction between pre-purchase expectations about particular product and its performance after purchasing	Tse and Wilton (1988)

Source: Grigoroudis, E., & Siskos, Y. (2009). Customer satisfaction evaluation: Methods for measuring and implementing service quality (Vol. 139). Springer Science & Business Media.

Based on Table 1, satisfaction as an outcome approach explains customer satisfaction based on customers' pleasure level after purchasing. However, satisfaction as a process approach gives importance to the comparison of particular product's performance and customers' expectations about particular product before they purchased. As Yi (1990) declares there are two basic methods to evaluate customer

satisfaction. The first way to evaluate customer satisfaction is using economics perspective that focuses on the theoretical ground so academicians who imply this perspective ignore the psychological basis of satisfaction judgments (Scitovsky, 1976). On the contrary side, the psychological perspective concerned with the processes and forces that influence to satisfaction and pays no attention to the comparability of satisfaction across people and products (Fornell, 1992).

All in all, it is understood from the information that mentioned thus far, consensus is not exist among marketing researchers about the definition of customer satisfaction but it is seen that there are two fundamental approaches to define the concept. Giese and Cote's (2000) comprehensive review concentrates on customer satisfaction definitions and shows that each of them is ingenerated by three common elements as listed below;

- Satisfaction is a reaction of customers' which can be cognitive or emotional
- the reaction is about to focal points such as customers' repurchase expectations, product itself, customers' experience after consumption and so on
- customers' reaction happens at a pertains moments such as prior period to consumption, during the consumption, after consumption and so on

As a result of their comprehensive meta-analysis, Giese and Cote (2000) defined customer satisfaction as customers' reaction about to a specific points exist at a specific period (Giese and Cote, 2000).

The antecedents, importance and outcomes, measurement and measurement tools of customer satisfaction will be explained respectively on the following pages.

2.1.1 Antecedents of Customer Satisfaction

According to Barsky and Labagh (1992), expectations of customers pertain to particular product before purchasing and their other pre-experience desires, product itself, and forces that have an impact to perception of the customers about the product shape customer satisfaction. Besides this study, Bateson and Hoffman (1999), underline the effects of intangibles and concrete forces to shape customer satisfaction and suggests that trustworthiness, reciprocity, sensitiveness, price, personal and

situational characteristics may influence customer satisfaction. In line with the previous view, Hague and Hague (2016) state that product quality and functions, sales method, trust and customer support services have an impact on determining the customer satisfaction. Parker and Mathews (2001) emphasize that costumers' need has an important factor to shape customer satisfaction while Kenny (1994) underlines the role of consumer value. In addition to them, some other studies about determinants of customer satisfaction are listed below;

- Yi (1990) stated that perceived quality of the product and customer expectations have an impact to determine satisfaction.
- Cronin and Taylor (1992) stated that satisfaction is influenced by service quality.
- Andreassen (1994) found that reputation influences to satisfaction.
- Levesque and McDougal (1996) satisfaction is affected by service quality and features and customer complaint handling.
- According to Hokanson (1995) fair pricing, quality, expertness, closeness and goodwill to support, and quality of the service have influence satisfaction.
- Customer's trust towards brands directly affects customer satisfaction (Chiou and Droge, 2006).
- According to Selvi (2007) customer expectations, perceived value and perceived quality are three main forces that shape customer satisfaction.
- Trust positively affects satisfaction in the long term (Kim et. al., 2009).
- Huang and colleagues (2010) found that customer's mood, expectations and performance evaluation are related to satisfaction.

Along with studies have been shared in this section, Shankar et.al (2003) showed some other selected empirical studies about determinants of customer satisfaction in different contexts as could be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Determinants of Customer Satisfaction

Independent variable	Key references	Context
Ease of obtaining Information	Oliva et al. (1992)	General electric supply
Frequency of use	Bolton and Lemon (1999)	Television entertainment and cellular phone service
Attribute-level Performance	Vredenburg and Wee (1986)	Autos
Attribute-level Performance	Bearden and Teel (1983)	Auto repair service
Attribute-level Performance	Bolton and Drew (1991)	Telephone service
Attribute-level Performance	Mittal et al. (1998)	Health care and automobiles
Attribute-level Performance	Oliva et al. (1992)	General electric supply
Attribute-level Performance	Oliver (1993)	Autos and academic course
Attribute-level Performance	Meuter et al. (2000)	Self-service technologies
Prior experience	Bolton and Drew (1991)	Telephone service
Prior experience	Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins (1987)	Restaurant dining
Prior experience	Vredenburg and Wee (1986)	Autos

Source: Shankar, V., Smith, A. K., & Rangaswamy, A. (2003). Customer satisfaction and loyalty in online and offline environments. *International journal of research in marketing*, 20(2), 153-175.

As it is understood from Table 2, several different academic studies have showed that ease of obtaining, customers' prior experience and frequency of use attribute-level performance are important forces to shape customer satisfaction. In line with this, Luo and Homburg (2007) underlined the importance of performance of service provider, customers' prior experience, regularity of using and ease of obtaining information about the service on building customer satisfaction. Therefore, it is seen that two different studies commonly accept the effect of attributes, ease of getting

information, frequency of use and prior experience are important factors in determining customer satisfaction.

2.1.2. Importance and Outcomes of Customer Satisfaction

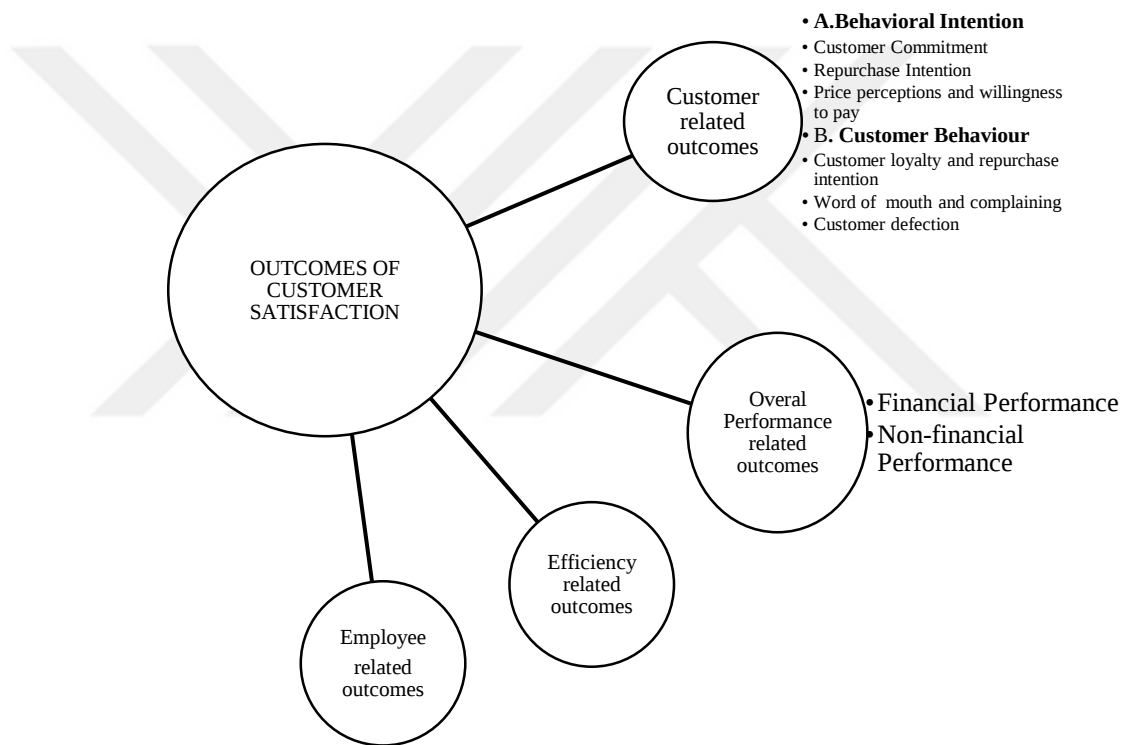
Customer satisfaction is one of the major phenomena that have taken a lot of scholars' interest in marketing literature (Heskett et al., 1994) and very successful business professionals have also identified the value of customer satisfaction (Vavra, 2002).

Maintaining an overall success and gaining customer loyalty has an important parameter for companies to survive in today's highly competitive business context (Jashireh et al., 2016) since there are so many competitors in market and gaining new customers is not easy (Gummesson, 1994). Customer satisfaction is a valuable part of corporate strategy (Whitaker et al., 2006) because it enables advantages to companies like creating brand loyalty, extending the lifetime value of the customer and creating positive word of mouth communication (Tao, 2014) and helps companies for finding the best direction they need to go on (Hayes, 2008). It is also accepted as a primary motive for gaining and increasing market value and long term profitability (Gruca and Rego, 2005). It can be stated in other words like; firms need to satisfy their customers for expanding the business value, market share, and sustainable business, all of these factors cause to increment in firm's profitability (Barsky, 1992). Previous views could be summarized as follow; customer satisfaction has a central position in companies follow to imply customer-oriented approach because customer satisfaction leads to customer behaviour patterns that positively influence to business results (Szymanski and Henard, 2001). Hill and colleagues (2007) delineated customer satisfaction as a barometer because customer satisfaction is an important tool for companies to estimate customer behaviours. Customer satisfaction leads to complaining behaviour and repurchase intentions (Henard, 2001) prevents customers' switching intention (Walsh et al., 2006). Satisfied customers usually rebound and buy more (Hague and Hague 2016) and generally keep faithful to the company even when there is a price increase (Anderson et, al 1994). They also become excellent external marketers for organizations and they are showing a tendency to make favourable word-of-mouth to

others (Gupta et al., 2017) but unsatisfied customers, on the other hand, have a tendency to make unfavourable word-of-mouth (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

In addition to them, categories of satisfaction outcomes that prepared by Luo and Homburg (2007) is shared below. (figure 2.)

Figure 2: Outcomes of Customer Satisfaction



Source: Luo, X., & Homburg, C. (2007). Neglected outcomes of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 71(2), 133-149.

According to Figure 2, satisfaction outcomes can be separated into four main categories those are customer-related outcomes, efficiency-related outcomes, employee-related outcomes and overall performance related outcomes. Customer-related outcomes involve two subcategories which are behavioural intention and customer behaviour and each subgroup includes three separate outcomes. Efficiency-

related and employee-related outcomes do not have any subgroups but overall performance related outcomes are emerged from two fundamental outcomes as financial performance and non-financial performance outcomes.

All in all, in today's business world, there are several problems both for customers and companies. For customers, choosing products is becoming harder since there are very similar products in the market. For companies on the other hand, understanding what customers want and their wishes are too difficult since they may vary in terms of their tastes, choices and expectations about particular product/service (Kotler and Keller, 2006). Under this very tuff conditions, understanding what customer satisfaction is very critical for companies (Deng et al., 2010). Companies are faced with the risk of losing their customers, market share, and investors if they cannot be more successful at satisfying customers than the other actors in the sector (Anderson et al., 1994).

Customer satisfaction is also important for companies because it is accepted that the cost of keeping the old customer is five time more inexpensive than getting the new one (Cook, 2008). Thus, having a sustainable relationship with customers is more profitable than obtaining new customers for the organization. As it underlined at previous pages, customer satisfaction also plays a switching barrier role and satisfied customers are showing a more tendency to suggest the particular product/service to their friends. Eventually, in this stiff business environment which costumers' preferences, wishes, choices and expectations are not stable, customer satisfaction has a potential to help business organizations to grow as it provides them to outshine their competitors. (Shin and Elliott, 2001). Lastly, Fornell (1992) emphasized that customer satisfaction provides seven advantages to companies which are listed below;

- Customer satisfaction provides an increment in customer loyalty
- Customer satisfaction provides a decline in customer switch
- Customer satisfaction provides a decline in price sensitivity
- Customer satisfaction provides a decline in the costs of failed marketing
- Customer satisfaction provides a decline in the costs of new customer creation
- Customer satisfaction provides a decline in the costs of operation because of increased in customer number
- Customer satisfaction provides an improvement in business reputation

2.1.3. Customer Satisfaction Measurement

Measurement of customer satisfaction is the major criteria for performance evaluation in business world (Hill et al., 2007). As stated in the previous headings maintaining customer satisfaction has vital importance for companies to survive in the market. Furthermore, companies should have a continuous measurement system of customer satisfaction since satisfaction is a moving target. Even though several studies about satisfaction measurement have been conducted in the field, the term was explored by total quality management perspective which takes satisfaction as a quality element (Grigoroudis and Siskos, 2009).

Hill et al. (2007) stated that, detecting a particular way that will be used for ongoing business development is the fundamental goal of measuring customer satisfaction. According to Hackl and Westlund (2000), companies need to measure customer satisfaction because of two reasons The first reason is to provide scientific information to investors about the value of their investments and possible future position of them and the second reason is to give information to managers to get an advantage to beat their competitors in the sector. In addition to this information, Gerson (1993) suggests that there are seven reasons to measure customer satisfaction as follow;

- To understand customers' perceptions
- To define the wishes, needs and expectations of customers
- To prevent customer switches
- To improve customer satisfaction
- To increase the profit by maximizing the performance
- To define and make plans
- To have sustainable improvement

2.1.3.1. Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tools

Satisfaction is not a directly measurable concept; it can be indirectly or proximally measurable via multiple indicators approaches (Simon, 1974). As a result of his meta-analysis, Hausknecht (1990) showed that, more than 30 methods have been

used to measure satisfaction in former studies. It shows that there is no consensus on how to measure customer satisfaction in the literature. Personal differences in post-purchase judgment and difficulties to compare satisfaction across product categories or industries can be the reason behind this situation (Johnson and Fornell, 1991).

According to Baytekin (2005) focus group discussions, questionnaires, benchmarking, critical incident techniques, advisory panels, customer churn analysis and mystery shopper are some of the tools that are using to measure customer satisfaction. Each of these techniques will be explained briefly below.

2.1.3.1.1. Focus Group

In qualitative studies, researchers prefer to use focus groups to access customers' thoughts, experiences faiths about particular product/service. The aim of focus is to stimulate a discussion in groups which made by 6 to 12 individuals. The unique atmosphere of this technique allows researchers to gather more specifiable information than individual interview (Greenbaum, 2003) because focus groups provide more sophisticated thoughts and opinions than can be obtained via personal interviews (Krueger and Casey, 2015).

2.1.3.1.2. Customer Satisfaction Questionnaires

Questionnaires are one of the most using primary research techniques. Thanks questionnaires, information about customers' attitudes, behaviours, socioeconomic status, demographic features can be gathered (Baytekin, 2005).

2.1.3.1.3. Benchmarking

Several definitions of benchmarking are available in the academic world. Camp's (1989) defines benchmarking as the investigating the practices of successful actors in the field by relatively unsuccessful firms to understand what techniques caused this performance enlargement to implement them to their business settings.

According to Watson (1993), companies need to use benchmarking to analysis their competitors to update themselves and keep themselves in the competition.

2.1.3.1.4. Customer Advisory Groups

Customer advisory group technique is the name of regular meetings that are organized by companies to gain insightful feedback from formal groups of customers about existing or prospect marketing plans, strategies and implementations (Gombeski Jr et al., 2010).

2.1.3.1.5. Critical Incident Technique

Flanagan (1954) identifies the critical incident technique as a technique which involves several direct observation phases to detect people's psychological states. And their ability in solving practical problems.

2.1.3.1.6. Mystery Shopping

Mystery shopping is suitable for application in evaluation of the procedure of service delivery based on anonymous customer (Wilson, 1998). In this marketing survey technique, the mystery shopper prepares various detailed reports about the organization based on its' service delivery procedures, performance, receiving overall good value, and possible problems (Su and Tsai, 2004).

2.1.3.1.7. Customer Churn Analysis

The term customer churn was firstly defined by Berson et al. (1999) as a process of subscribers switching from a brand and customer churn analysis can also be identified as a technique that gives a help to determining expectative churners in advance (Umayaparvathi and Iyakutti, 2012).

Types of customer churn are generally separated into two subgroups those are voluntary or non-voluntary churn. Voluntary churn generally exists when customer

thinks switching from the existing brand to other one gives advantages to them while involuntary churn usually happened because of changes in environmental conditions rather than personal choices of customers (Seker, 2016).

In conclusion, Hill and colleagues (2007) remark that companies cannot sustain their position in the sector if they do not transfer their effort to right place to improve their business position in the sector. Thus it could be said that measurement of customer satisfaction is necessary to recognize and meet the customers' expectations and needs.

2.2. BRAND LOYALTY

Improvement and sustainability of loyalty are the core points for business organizations to determine future marketing plans very competitive stiff business environment (Fournier and Yao, 1997). Strong brand loyalty helps companies to keep their existing customer by providing many critical advantages such as creating switching barriers, giving the company time to react on competitors' innovation and making it possible to charge higher prices (Aaker and Jacobson, 2001).

Despite the acknowledgement of brand management consultants and academicians' interests on the significance of brand loyalty, the concept is not clearly defined so far because of its a very complex construct (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). Early academic studies in brand loyalty literature especially focused on sales rate and buying habituations of consumers (Brown, 1953), customers' repeat purchase behaviour (Cunningham, 1956), customers' behavioural intentions towards the brand (Banks, 1968). Thus, it could be said that early researchers were mainly interested in consumers' buying behaviour and sales when so identified brand loyalty. On the contrary side, Newman and Werbel's (1973) study focused on a different issues and they stated that, only repurchase behaviour cannot be sufficient to understand brand loyalty so customers' reluctance for switching brands should be considered under brand loyalty. According to Lutz and Winn (1974) loyalty is a syntheses of attitudinal and behavioural measures. In addition to them, according to Oliver and colleagues (1997) brand loyalty is a commitment of customers for constant buying of a particular product/service.

Rundle-Thiele and colleagues' (2005) study which examines the evolution of using loyalty concept in the marketing field by beginning from Copeland's (1923) research that created a term named as brand insistence which is the first phenomena related to brand loyalty. Their study presents the existence of five distinct brand loyalty eras. This study can give an important contribution for understanding the changes that have happened in customers' attitudes towards brands and companies' attitudes towards customers in so far. They explain the main characteristics and atmosphere of these five eras as follows;

- During the first era termed as the birth of brand loyalty, brands were identified as a tool for supporting customers to differentiate the products available in the market. Brand was also a tool for transformation of branded products from homemade unbranded products at this period.
- During the second era is also labelled as the golden era, customers were pleased for the increased product/service quality. Many consumers showed loyalty to a single brand of product. During this period, consumers had a chance to get more brands and this new situation caused rise in familiarity with the brands. Consumers, however, became more questionable towards advertising the end of this era.
- During the third era, reflection of the results of Great Depression and World War II were seen. Even though, there was a brand scarcity in manufacture sectors, customers' loyalty towards brands were increased at the same time. That's why it can be said that the dominant characteristic of this era was latent brand loyalty which shows high levels of brand preference of customers even they could not purchase them. After the war, new products exploded, discount retailers emerged, variety-seeking behaviour and multi-brand loyalty were encouraged during this period.
- The fourth era can be interpreted as the starting of multi-brand loyalty which was a result of a rise in product quality, more consistent brands, a decline in the level of differentiation and as a result of all of those aspects competing brands became more substitutable. Further, the baby boomers began to influence loyalty at the end of this period. Their desire for immediate

satisfaction directed them to switch brands when the short-term advantages of having particular product/service disappear.

- The declining loyalty era is the last era of the evolution of loyalty in marketing context. In this era, high product quality, low differentiation, and price-sensitivity of customer are major determinants in the market. Today also the similarity between competing brands are increasing and this affects negatively to customers' loyalty towards brands.

2.2.1. Theoretical Framework of Brand Loyalty

As mentioned in the previous headings, loyalty researches in marketing literature have been conducted since the mid of the 50s. In the beginning, academicians generally concentrated on repurchasing activity to identify the concept but by time passed, new researchers brought different perspectives to define the concept (Rundle-Thiele et al., 2005).

The conceptual nature of loyalty is not so clear due to divergence of identifying loyalty concept, (Odin et al., 2001). Different researchers described the concept either as a behavioural fact or attitudinal fact (Rundle-Thiele 2005). In marketing literature, the concept of loyalty is investigated under two major streams of researches namely; a stochastic approach and deterministic approach. Researchers within the stochastic approach accept and evaluate loyalty basically as a behaviour. According to this approach, the purchase of one brand regularly explains brand loyalty (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). In other words, customer who repeatedly purchase particular product is seen as loyal to a particular brand. According to this approach loyalty is an incomprehensible concept. The fundamental disadvantage of such an approach is that it does not bring any information to explain customers' behaviour so companies cannot get any knowledge about the actual reason of loyalty when using this approach (Odin et al., 2001). On the contrary side, deterministic approach claims that assessing loyalty based on only continuous purchasing pattern of customer is not enough to understand the concept, loyalty should contain the combination of positive attitudes related with the particular product/service (Amine, 1998). Researchers within the deterministic

approach accept loyalty as a kind of manner, they mainly focus on customer's psychological bond with the brand (Jacoby and Olson, 1970).

Jacoby (1971) suggests make a definition of loyalty based on integration of stochastic and deterministic approaches which is seen as the third approach in brand loyalty definition, namely composite approach (Rundle-Thiele, 2006).

After the fundamental loyalty approaches was listed, the theoretical framework of the concept will be explained in this phase in consideration of Jacoby and Kyner's (1973) six requirements, Aaker's (1991) loyalty pyramid, Dick and Basu's (1994) loyalty categories and Oliver's (1997) loyalty stages.

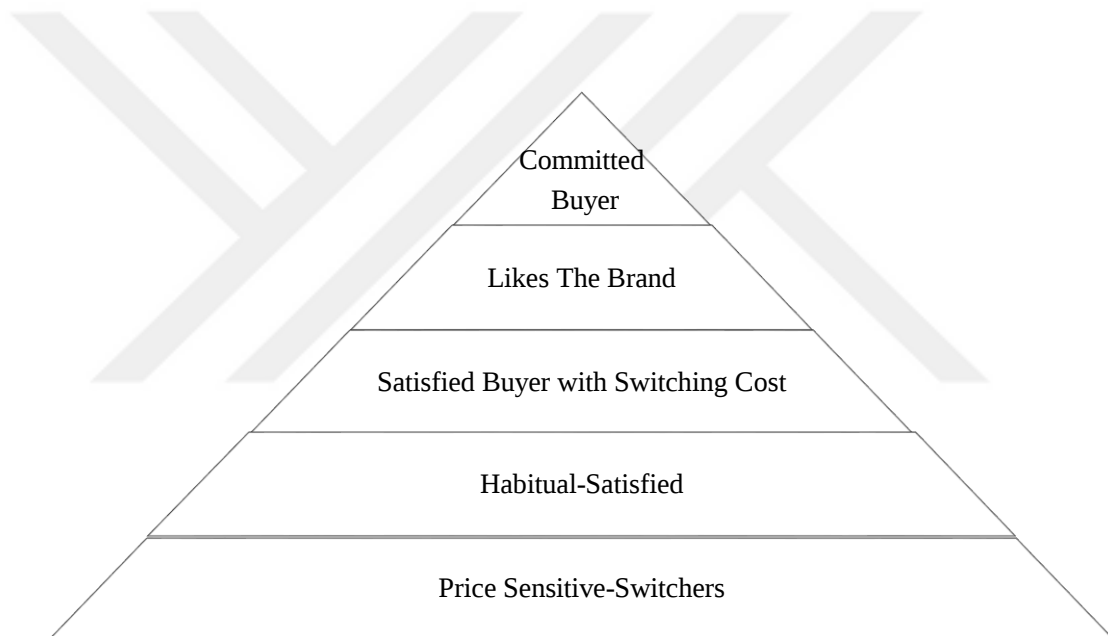
The first scholar who will be mentioned in this part is Jacoby, his study in 1971 and his collaborative study with Kyner in 1973 will be briefly shared. Jacoby (1971) loyalty is a multidimensional concept including attitudinal parts and systematic continuous buying behaviour and has six requirements. Therefore, the focus on analysing of purchase behaviour may not be sufficient to conceptualize of loyalty dynamics. According to Jacoby and Kyner (1973) "brand loyalty is the biased, behavioural response, expressed over time, by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and is a function of psychological processes". They explained these six requirements briefly as follow:

- The first characteristic of loyalty is it is a biased response. This refers that a constant desire to purchase a particular product/service should exist.
- The second characteristic of loyalty is that brand loyalty also requires the actual purchases of a brand so verbal expression of preference towards a brand is not sufficient to provide brand loyalty.
- The third requirement of brand loyalty is sustainable expression. Since loyalty has an active structure, sustainability should exist to build loyalty. In brief, this requirement gives importance to purchase pattern over a given period.
- Fourthly, the purchase pattern of a decision-making unit is used to define brand loyalty. Since it does not have to be the actual buyer, a customer, a family members or a firm may become a purchase unit.
- The fifth requirement to brand loyalty is preference among alternatives which refers that consumers might be multi-loyal.

- The last and the primary characteristic of loyalty is that loyalty is a result of psychological state. Consumers' buying decisions are shaped by their psychological closeness related to the particular product/service.

Besides Jacoby and Kyner's (1973) study, Aaker (1991) is an important figure in conceptualization of the concept. Based on his view, loyalty refers to the customer's attachment towards a brand and their tendency to switch another one. He also underlines that there are various levels of loyalty; each rank related to distinct problems and opportunities to conduct and utilize. Figure 3 illustrates brand loyalty levels.

Figure 3: Loyalty Pyramid



Source: Aaker, D. A., & Equity, M. B. (1991). Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name. New York, 28, 35-37.

Layer of the pyramid may not be always look in the constant shape and a specific product class or market may not represent all of them. Characteristics of each level are briefly explained by Aaker (1991) as follow;

- The consumers who stay at the bottom level are named as non-loyal buyers or might alternatively be termed as a switcher because they are completely

indifferent to the brand and prefers to purchase whatever is on sale or appropriate and price hugely affects their purchase decision.

- Habitual customers place in the second layer of the pyramid. They are satisfied or at least not dissatisfied customers with no dimension of dissatisfaction that is sufficient for triggering a switching. Thus, they are showing a tendency to switch brands which can offer extra advantages for switching.
- Customers who have switching costs like time, money, performance and so on place in the third layer of the pyramid. In order to keep them loyal, companies need to solve their switching risk by providing more advantageous opportunities.
- The fourth level includes people who truly like to the brand. The reason behind their strong interest and warmth to particular brand can be consumers' positive prior experience with particular brand and quality of the brand. Even though this kind of positive association between customers and brand exist, this strong preference is usually related with general sensation rather than specific interest. People may not define reasons to like the particular brand every time, if they have a continuous relationship with the brand. Sometimes only having a sustainable bond with the brand can lead to a strong impact.
- Committed customers stay at the top of the pyramid; they feel themselves privileged to explore and use to the particular brand. Hence, particular brand has a very crucial meaning for them or they see the brand as a tool to express who they are. They have the confidence to recommend the brand to others.

At that point, sharing Brown's (1953) very early study could be interesting because almost 40 years before than Aaker's (1991) study, Brown realized that there are different types of buyers in each market and categorized buyers into four groups in terms of brand loyalty status. The first category is called as hard-core loyal customers and refer to ones who always buy one brand. The second group is called split loyal customers and refers to ones who are loyal to two or three brands. The third one is known as shifting loyal customers and refers to ones who shift from one brand to

another. The last category is identified as switchers and they refer to ones who show no loyalty to any brand. With the light of this short explanation, when we compare those two classifications it is seen that, Brown's hard-core loyal customers (1953) and Aaker's committed buyers of Aaker (1991) and Brown's switchers and Aaker's price sensitive buyers are reflecting to similar consumer behaviour patterns.

Dick and Basu's (1994) research is the third academic research which will be mentioned in this part. They have a significant place in brand loyalty literature by their perspective that put power of the association between the associated attitude towards a brand and patronage behaviour in the center for identifying customer satisfaction. They claim that relative attitude towards a brand is taken into account since people's differentiation in terms of evaluation and psychological state towards particular brands have an important effect to shape their loyalty to brands. (Quester and Lim, 2003).

Dick and Basu (1994) emphasise when consumers have repeated buying and a positive attitude related to the brand continuous relationship between customers and the brand can be built.

They also argue that the relationship between customers and brand in terms of repeat purchasing and attitudes of customer about particular brand shapes four different types of loyalty. The mentioned relationship and the loyalty types are showed in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Relative Attitude-Behaviour Relationship

Repeat Patronage			
Relative Attitude		High	Low
	High	True Loyalty	Latent Loyalty
	Low	Spurious	No Loyalty

Source: Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 22(2), 99-113.

Dick and Basu (1994) explain these categories briefly as follow:

- No loyalty signals to the absence of loyalty and it is a combination of a low level of attitude and low degree in repeat purchasing.

- Spurious loyalty occurred as a result of the combination of a low degree in customers' relative attitude towards the brand and high degree in regular buying. Situational forces like habituations and ease of access to the brand and social factors nurture regular buying of people who are in this category. They can perceive little differentiation among low involvement category brands.
- The third category is called as latent loyalty which is a combination of high degree of customers' relative attitude towards the brand and low degree in regular buying (Dick and Basu, 1994). This situation may exist because of customers' limited resources to raise their purchasing or the price, availability, or communication style of the brand (Baloglu, 2002).
- The fourth category is the most preferred one termed as loyalty that refers a positive correspondence between relative attitude and repeats patronage.

Oliver is another important figure in the literature by his studies about conceptualizing and explaining loyalty construct and he is the last academician whose study will be shared in this part. According to Oliver (1999) loyalty is customers' strong emotional bond to regular and continuous buying of a particular brand.

As demonstrated in Table 3, he also divided the term loyalty into four stages; cognition, affective, conation and action stages.

Table 3: Loyalty Phases with Corresponding Vulnerabilities

Phases	Characteristics	Disadvantages
Cognitive	Being a loyal based cognitive fact about particular product/service: Price of the product/service Characteristics of the product/service	This kind of customers have a potential to switch when alternatives have existing or potential better offers in terms of quality and price of the product/service. This kind of people have a tendency to look and try alternatives.
Affective	Being a loyal based on emotions towards particular product/service: Preference to purchase the brand because of emotional reasons	This kind of customers may have low level of satisfaction based on mental reasoning This kind of customers may show similar emotional warmth to alternatives too This kind of customers have a tendency to look and try alternatives. Perception of the performance of the brand for customers may decrease.

Conative	Loyalty to an intention	This kind of customers are open to convince alternative brands' communication campaigns This kind of customers have a tendency to look and try alternatives. Perception of the performance of the brand for customers may decrease.
Action	Loyalty to a behaviour	Low level of accessibility Increased obstacles generally. Perception of the performance of the brand for customers may decrease.

Source: Oliver, Richard L. (1997), Satisfaction: A Behavioural Perspective on the Consumer. New York: Irwin/McGraw-Hill.

Loyalty phases are shortly explained as follows;

- The first stage is cognitive loyalty which is shaped by cognitive facts related to particular product/service. Consumers get this information set from their prior or vicarious knowledge about the brand or their recent experience with it.
- The second stage is affective loyalty which is shaped by pleasurable fulfilment and positive emotions stemming from cumulatively satisfying usage experiences. Consumers encode commitment as a synthesis of cognition and affection. Affective loyalty also prevents subjects from switching to other brands.
- The conative stage reflects brand-specific commitment regarding the desire to repurchase. However, even though consumers have a desire to rebuy a particular product, this is not a guarantee for purchasing in every cases.
- At the fourth and the last phases, the motivation to purchase turns to action. Customers who are in this stage exert extra effort to purchase particular product/services so they push themselves to overcome existing and/or possible obstacles that may restrain them to have particular product/service.

As a summary, Oliver systematized brand loyalty as a process that involves four phases. Cognitive phase is related to performance, effective phase implies the brand's likeableness, conative phase reflects to desire for repurchasing, and lastly action phases means commitment to repurchasing behaviour.

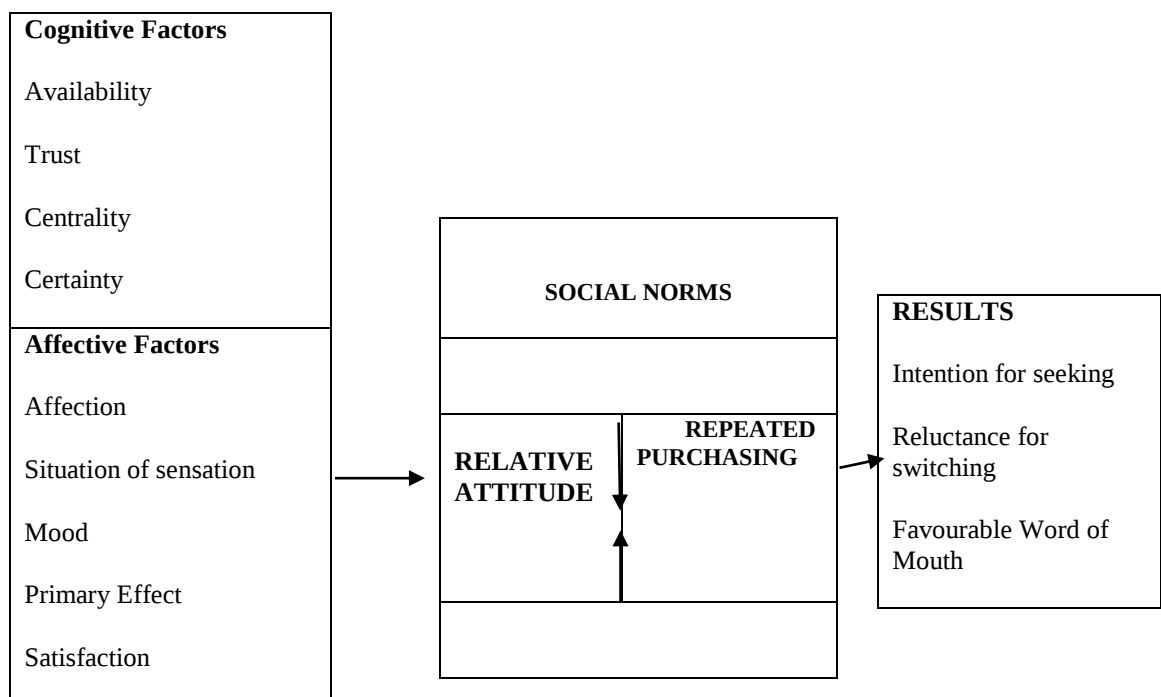
2.2.2. Antecedents of Brand Loyalty

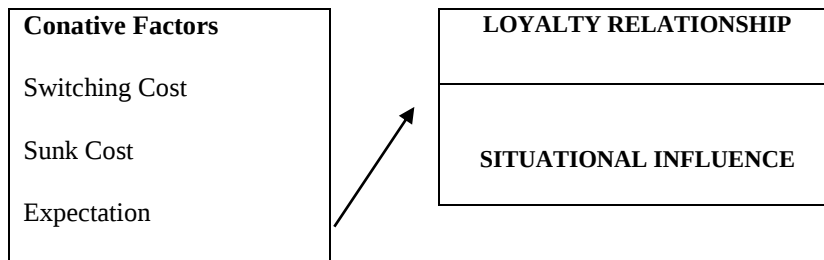
Along with, to the conceptualization of brand loyalty, several researches have been aimed to understand forces has an impact on determination of loyalty.

Customer satisfaction (Bloemer and Lemmink, 1992; Jorgensen et al., 2016), brand commitment (Maheshwari et al., 2014), recognition, image and reputation of the brand (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001), perceived quality, personality and associations of the brand (Gounaris and Stathakopoulos, 2004), brand preference (Fatma et al. 2016), brand engagement, brand involvement, brand experience (Gupta et al., 2017), brand name, price, store environment and promotional activities (Yee and Sidek, 2008), brand prestige (Mao, 2010) and corporate social responsibility (Bowen and McCain, 2015) are some of the factor that found as antecedents of loyalty.

Dick and Basu (1994) show three main factor categories of loyalty which are stated as cognitive, affective and conative factors. Cognitive factors involve availability, trust, centrality and certainty the particular product. Affective factors are customers' affection, situation of sensation, mood and satisfaction and the primary effect of a particular product on the customer. Lastly, conative factors are customers' expectation towards the product, switching costs and sunk costs of particular product.

Figure 5: Loyalty Framework





Source: Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 22(2), 99-113

In addition to Dick and Basu's (1994) study, Amine (1998) shows that loyalty is shaped by two main forces; the first one is indirect forces, that affect loyalty via mediator factors like customer satisfaction and involvement. The second category that influence loyalty is direct forces, which are customers' perceptions about differences and risk among competitive products/services and their emotional closeness and bond towards products/services. Moreover, Gupta and colleagues (2017) collected the factors that determine to loyalty under five categories which are factors related to customers, brand, society, business organisation and the customer-brand relationship.

2.2.3. Outcomes of Brand Loyalty

Outcomes of brand loyalty have been taken the interest of many academicians in the literature in order to conceptualize the structure of the concept.

According to Tepeci (1999) companies can survive in the intense competition environment by virtue of brand loyalty. As Lau and Lee (1999) indicated brand loyalty provides regular buying, increment in revenue, financial gain and a stronger position in the sector. (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

Brand loyalty decreases the time for consumers to spend for doing an extensive search among all alternatives and purchasing decision of consumers with high loyalty can transform into a habit in time (Rundle-Thiele and Mackay, 2001). Moreover, loyal customers also frequently suggest the subjected brand to others in their social circle which means that brand loyalty positively influences to word of mouth behaviour (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001).

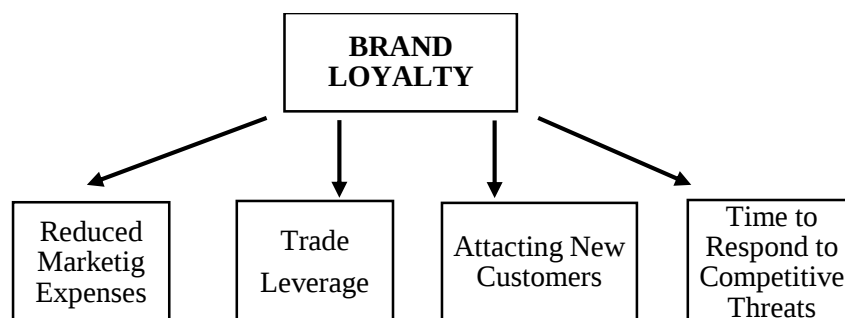
Gathering all these together, Fournier and Yao (1997) emphasize that brand loyalty strengthen the firm's hand in competition as well as providing superior sales and revenue. Giddens (2010) summaries the results of brand loyalty as follows;

- Companies can reach into much higher sales volumes via brand loyalty.
- It is seen that customers become less sensitive to price changes via the increase in brand loyalty so this situation makes it possible for companies to implement premium pricing.
- Brand loyalty decrease to sensitiveness of customers towards the promotions of rival brands is less. This situation leads to less advertising, marketing and distribution costs.

In addition to studies about the determinants and results of loyalty, it is a strategically important phenomenon for companies since it helps to decline in companies' promotional budget, increment in sales, expanding in number of customers and gain extra time for counter-attack against rivals' competitive threats (Aaker, 1991).

Mentioned functions are demonstrated in Figure 6 and explained at below.

Figure 6: The Value of Brand Loyalty



Source: Aaker, David A. (1991), Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing On the Value of a Brand Name, New York: The Free Pres.

- Getting a new customer is much expensive than keeping the existing one. First of all, potential customers generally have a low level degree of intention to

switch the brand they have been used. It means that potential customers usually do not seek for other choices. On the contrary side, keeping existing customers happy and fulfil their wishes generally make them loyalty a brand so keeping existing customer usually less costly than getting a new one.

- Having loyal customers give chance to brands to get a better shelf position in retailer stores because retailers follow their customers' brand preferences and have to organize a comfortable shopping environment for them.
- Having large number of loyal customers produces a message about the particular brand: this is a successful one. Loyal customers also serve as a voluntary advertising ambassador for brands because they exhibit what they use to their friends.
- When better or improved alternatives produced by other actors in the sector loyal customers will allow their favourite brand time needed to develop to a product to matched or neutralized with a competitor.

2.2.4. Measurement of Brand Loyalty

There is not an accepted common method to how measure loyalty among academicians and business professionals. Brand loyalty measurement methods are used to understand the loyalty levels of the customers. In the literature, the behavioural approach, attitudinal approach and combined approach are three fundamental ways to measure loyalty (Rundle-Thiele and Bennett, 2001).

Behavioural measures are interested in evaluating loyalty based on the actual observable behavioural buying within a specific period (Mellens et al., 1996). Measuring actual purchases, actions that are repeated over a period of time and collecting data are the advantages of behavioural measures (Jacoby and Kyner, 1973). Behavioural-based measures, in contrast, are problematic to differentiate loyalty and regular purchasing so this kind of measures may involve spurious loyalty (Day, 1970). Moreover, behavioural based observation cannot give guarantee to estimate future customer behaviour even though it is the fundamental way to collect an information about customer behaviours in the past. (Day et al., 1979) because they are interested

in only behaviours and ignore to examine why consumers have developed brand loyalty (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002).

Attitudinal measures, in the contrary side, are interest in the effect of cognitive factors in loyalty (Kumar and Shah, 2004). They give an opportunity to get information from decision-maker directly by using surveys and it is better to get data from purchaser. These kind measures can distinguish brand loyalty from repeat purchases and provides information about customers' personal choices, emotional closeness or desire for purchasing. However, since they are not based on actual buying, they may be insufficient to reflect dynamics of actual situation (Mellens et al., 1996).

According to Jacoby and Chestnut's (1978) perspective loyalty is a complex structure that concludes behavioural and attitudinal characteristics at the same time. Combined measurement methods aim to solve the problems caused by the use of behavioural and attitudinal brand loyalty scales alone (Lam, 2007). As a result of their meta-analysis Mellens and colleagues (1996) presented nine different methods that have been used to measure loyalty based on combined perspective. Table 4 demonstrates their studies.

Table 4: Main Categories of Brand Loyalty Measurement

	Attitudinal measures	Behavioural measures
Brand-oriented measures	A1: Stated purchase intentions/ preference measures A2: Commitment measures	C1: Measures based on aggregated data C1a: Measures based on aggregated switching matrices C1b: Measures based on market shares C2: Measures based on individual-level data.
Individual-oriented measures	B1: Measures on product category level B2: general measures	D1: Proportion of purchase measure D2: Sequence of purchase measure

Source: Mellens, M., Dekimpe, M., & Steenkamp, J. B. E. M. (1996). A review of brand loyalty measures in marketing. *Tijdschrift voor economie en management*, 41(4), 507-533.

Mellens and colleagues (1996) define those measurement methods with the following statements;

- Stated purchase intentions/ preference measures started with Guest's (1942) study which was interested in customers' brand preferences. The main disadvantage of this kind of measures is representing only the customers' actions of purchasing. That's why they are not a powerful tool to reflect real action and loyalty.
- Level of commitment towards a brand can be used to predict loyalty since commitment and behaviour are related concepts.
- Product category level approach measure loyalty based on two side spectrum- acceptance and rejection- strong loyalty means that there is huge distant between acceptance and rejection according to this method.
- General individual-oriented attitudinal measures use personal characteristics to evaluate loyalty.
- Aggregated switching matrices indicates number of customers stick to particular product/service or switch to alternatives on five successive buying experiences. They are easily interpretable and analysable but this assumption is very restrictive because consumer population is supposed to be homogeneous.
- Measures based on market shares comes from the idea that the value and effectiveness of marketing mix variables determine brand loyalty.
- Measures based on individual-level data provides vast opportunities but they are not used by marketing managers since they are not clear enough to predict loyalty. Collecting the data by this method is also another problem because the individual purchase data over long period are needed to implement this method.
- The proportion of purchase measures are so easy for both using and implementing but they oversimplify the issue so they are not a sufficient to get better consumer insight.
- According to sequence-of-purchase measures, customers are considered as a loyal if they purchase a specific good/services on three successive buying

experiences. Similar to the previous method, this method also misses other possible important cues that are important to get consumer insight.

As a summary, individual-oriented measures provide an opportunity to compare brands, general information about individuals' characteristics. However, brand-oriented measures care importance of brands, undervalue to individual differences, and prefer to collect data among customers. Therefore, brand-oriented measures are more useful technique to evaluate rival companies instead of individual-oriented measures (Mellens et al., 1996).

2.3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY

According to Jones and Sasser, (1995) studies that examine the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty generally are shaped by a presupposition of a linear link between them. In line with this view, a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty were found by numerous researchers (Fornell, 1992; Sasser and colleagues, 1997, Clarke, 2001; Eggert and Ulaga, 2002; Sui and Baloglu, 2003; Choi et., al 2008).

Besides studies that are directly interested in the structure of this relationship, as Homburg and Giering (2001) showed limited number of studies focus on the influences of moderator variables on this mentioned relationship. Parallel with this detection, Walsh and colleagues (2008) also underlined the need for investigating this relationship via effects of moderator forces to gain new insights. Therefore, it could be said that the role of moderator factors in this research point has been largely neglected in previous academic studies.

Some of the studies that aim to show the influences of moderating factors on the association between these two concepts are listed below;

- Homburg and Giering (2001) showed that customers' age, monthly income level and tendency to search alternatives moderates the strength of this link.
- Yang and Peterson (2004), showed that switching cost positively moderates this link only in a situation that customers have good level of satisfaction.
- Suh and Youjae (2006) found that product involvement decreases the direct effects of satisfaction on and loyalty.

- Based on Matzler and colleagues' (2007) point of view, customers' lifestyle, skiing skills and consumer spending moderate to satisfaction and loyalty association.
- Walsh and colleagues (2008) found that monthly financial gain of customers and critical incidents moderate this link.
- Chang and colleagues (2009) revealed that perceived value has a moderator impact on this relationship in the electronic marketing environment.
- Kuo and colleagues (2009) showed to moderator role of perceived value in this relationship in service industry environment.
- According to Tuu and colleagues' (2011) finding, perceived risk adversely moderates the satisfaction-loyalty link while objective knowledge and certainty about particular brand positively moderate this link.
- Gonçalves and Sampaio (2012) showed that customers' age and sex moderate this link when customer repurchase intention is utilized.
- Helm and colleagues (2010) found that reputation cannot be considered as a moderating variable on satisfaction-loyalty link.
- As a consequence of Olsen and colleagues' (2005) study, ambivalence has not a moderator impact on satisfaction-loyalty link.

Personal differences might moderate the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty (Homburg and Giering, 2001). This thesis can help companies to gain competitive advantages since the results of this study may give an insight about personal differences among exact/prospect customers by showing the possible moderating effects of adult attachment styles on satisfaction-loyalty link in smartphone industry. This thesis is also the first study in the literature that focus on the mentioned research topic so it can be another importance of it.

Adult attachment styles are investigated as a moderator variable in this thesis. Bartholomew and Horowitz' (1991) classification of attachment which present four different adult attachment styles was selected to imply in this thesis. They are secure attachment style, preoccupied attachment style, dismissing attachment style and fearful attachment style. Main characteristics of each of these attachment styles were listed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) as follows;

- People with secure attachment style feel themselves valuable and expect to approval by other people.
- People with preoccupied attachment style do not find themselves valuable and worth but they need to accessibility and dependableness of others.
- People with dismissing attachment style have a favourable schema in their mind about themselves but they do not think they accepted and loved by other people it means that they have an unfavourable mental schema about others.
- People with fearful attachment style lastly, have a negative perception about themselves and other. Thus they do not find themselves valuable and expect to accepted and supported by other people.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

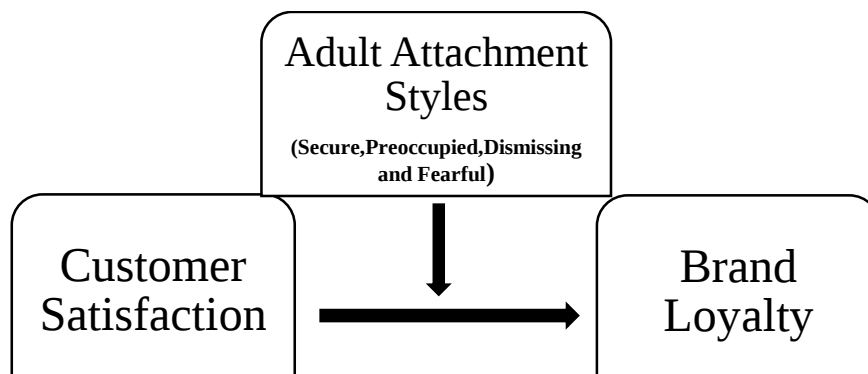
3.1. METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter includes two sub phases. The purpose and hypothesis of the thesis is located in the first sub phase while research methodology, sampling and findings are in the second sub phase.

3.1.1. The Purpose and Importance of the Thesis

Examining adult attachment styles as a moderator variable in satisfaction-loyalty relationship is the purpose of this research. Numerous academic research has been conducted over time in order to hypothesise and empirically validate satisfaction-loyalty link (Back and Parks, 2003). Linear relationship between these two concepts has been generally claimed (Martensen, 2007). However, there is no prior study regarding the moderating impact of adult attachment styles on this relationship. Thus, main aim of this thesis is filling this open research area by tapping on the question of “Do adult attachment styles affect the strength of the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty?” Figure 7 proposes to the theoretical framework of the study.

Figure 7: Theoretical Framework of the Research Conducted



It is expected that each adult attachment style moderates the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

3.1.2. Hypotheses of the Study

As pointed out in chapter two, many researchers have showed that there is a linear relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in different sectors (e.g., Oliver, 1999; Szymanski and Henard, 2001; Homburg et al., 2009; Belaid and Temessek, 2011; Chandio et.,2015). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is asserted as follows:

H1: There is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty

According to Mende and Bolton (2011) people with secure attachment style have superior degree of reliability, emotional closeness and satisfaction than other people. Pistole and Arricale's (2003) showed that people with secure attachment have higher level of satisfaction and ease than other people in relationship. Hence based on mentioned academic findings, hypothesis 2 is proposed as follows:

H2: Secure attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

As it was discussed and explained in chapter one, preoccupied attachment style composes of unfavourable mental schema about the self and favourable perception regard with other people (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). According Pietromonaco and Barrett (1997) people who have this style need to intimacy in their romantic relationship, expect to approval from others, idealize their romantic mate and leave the impression of value to intimacy over their own independence. Moussa and Touzani (2017) studied moderator effects of attachment styles on marketing context and their results showed that preoccupied individuals have more sentimental tie to their hair dresser than other people. In the light of such information, hypothesis 3 is proposed as follows:

H3. Preoccupied attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

As explained in chapter one, individuals with dismissing attachment pattern find themselves valuable and do not want to close with other people (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). Dismissingly attached people ignore the need for help and overemphasize their independence (Bookwala, 2002). They are also prone to evaluate other people with effective terms such as gains and losses instead of warm love and care (Mayseless, 1991). Therefore, hypothesis 4 is proposed as follows:

H4. Dismissing attachment style has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Brown and Brown, (2008) examined how people's attachment styles influence their loyalty in financial contexts. Thus, they investigated the investor's loyalty towards financial advisors based on his/her attachment styles. They indicated that the client with a fearful attachment style surprisingly tend to build a continuous relationship with his/her financial advisor (Whelan and Dawar, 2016). As supportively with these findings, Johnson and his colleagues (2012) found that people with fearful attachment style make more investment in and have more dependency on brand relationships than other people. In the view of such information, hypothesis 5 is proposed as follows:

H5. Fearful attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

3.1.3. Research Methodology

The type of techniques and approaches which are used to collect data and analysis of the research questions are named as research design (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). In this thesis questionnaire technique has been preferred for collecting the relevant data. The unit of analysis of the study is individual level.

3.1.3.1. The Questionnaire Design

Data were collected by using a structured questionnaire which, involves 40 questions and 4 parts. In the first part, Relationship Scale Questionnaire (RSQ) was used in order to describe their attachment styles namely; secure attachment style, preoccupied attachment style, dismissing attachment style and fearful attachment style. In RSQ, participants were requested to evaluate their close relationships with others and their relationship with themselves on a 7-point Likert scale range between 1 (not at all like me) and 7 (very much like me).

RSQ is a 30 question survey was created by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) as a result of combination of Attachment Measure Paragraphs, Relationship Questionnaire

and Adult Attachment Scale (as cited in Sümer and Güngör, 1999). In addition to this, Sümer and Güngör (1999) have adapted RSQ to the Turkish language.

Second and third parts of the questionnaire composed of scales that measure satisfaction and loyalty. Respondents' satisfaction and loyalty values were measured by asking them to answer the related questions by considering their existing smart phones. Smartphones were chosen because they have become an indispensable component of life and the use of smartphones has expanded worldwide in recent years (Lee et al., 2017). In line with this, the number of adults who have smart phone in United States is 64 per cent of the population and 46 per cent of smart phone owners stated that "I cannot imagine a life without smartphone" (Smith and Page, 2015). Turkish Statistical Institute (2017) reveal that mobile or smartphones are presented in 97.8% of the houses in Turkey as April 2016. This means that smartphone is really a common device in Turkey. Moreover, the emotional linkages between the smartphones and their users are becoming stronger as the smartphone industry is growing at a high rate (Ting et al., 2011). Because of these characteristics of the smartphones, and its prevalence in Turkish society, it was preferred to measure respondents' satisfaction and loyalty level through their smart phones in the thesis.

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to identify respondents' satisfaction level towards their smartphones which involves three questions adopted from a customer satisfaction scale that was used in Bettencourt's (1997) study. In this part, participants are requested to give answer to three questions on a 7-point Likert scale range between 1 (totally disagree) and 7 (totally agree).

The third part of the questionnaire is related to brand loyalty. In this part participants were requested to give answers to four questions on a 7-point Likert scale range between 1 (totally disagree) and 7 (totally agree). While the first three questions of brand loyalty scale were adapted from Nam and colleagues' (2011) study to understand to attitudes of respondents, the last question of this part was adopted from Matzler and colleagues' (2011) study for understanding to price's influence on loyalty.

The last part of the questionnaire was prepared to identify the demographic features of participant. This part consisted of 5 questions regarding, age, gender, education level and household income questions.

3.1.3.2. Sampling

The focal point of the thesis is to investigate adult attachment styles' moderating effect on satisfaction-loyalty relationship in smart phone context. Therefore, the population of the thesis involves all smartphone owners who live in Turkey and over 18.

Moreover, convenience sampling method which is a non-probability sampling method where by the sample is collected from a group of people easy to contact or to reach was used in this thesis. The main criteria for applying this method is the availability and willingness of participants (Saunders et al., 2012). This method is the quickest, easiest and most inexpensive technique (Bornstein et al., 2013).

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), at least 384 samples are enough to represent a population that includes 100,000 and more people. Based on this calculation, the questionnaire was distributed totally to 400 people over the internet via Google Forms. All the 400 questionnaires were filled however, some of the forms were eliminated after a pre check for missing or misleading answers. Thus, the usable number of questionnaires were reduced to 389.

3.2.DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The data are analysed by using SPSS Statistic program (Version 24.0, IBM Corp.) and structural equation modelling (SEM) technique the lavaan package (version 0.6-5, Rosseel, 2012) in R. Furthermore, descriptive statistics, reliability tests and confirmatory factor analyses were implemented.

3.2.1. Demographical Findings

Since some of respondents leave blank or selected two different choices in some questions, the total number of participants was reduced to 389 from 400 because. Thus this thesis included 389 individuals, of which 212 were female (54.5 %) and 177 were male (45.5 %).

In terms of distribution of respondents' age, 47.8% of respondents were between 25 and 35 years old. Also, 39.3 % of respondents were between 18 and 24,

6.9 % were between 36 and 45, and 5.9 % were between 46 and 60. According to data related to education level, the most significant number of respondents were found to have Bachelor's degrees (44.2 %), followed by the respondents who were in undergraduate studies (33.9 %). In terms of household income, the largest percentage (33.9 %) was composed of respondents who have 2500 TL-5000 TL household income. The respondents with high levels of household income (above 10000 TL) only constituted 18.5 % of the sample as could be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of the Demographic Variables

	Categories	N	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	177	45.5
	Female	212	54.5
Age	18 – 24	153	39.4
	25 – 35	186	47.8
	36 – 45	27	6.9
	46 – 60	23	5.9
Education	Secondary School	2	0.5
	High School	27	6.9
	Undergraduate Studies	132	33.9
	Bachelor's Degree	172	44.3
	Master's Studies	19	4.9
	Master's Degree	25	6.4
	PhD	12	3.1
Income	Below 2500 TL	57	14.7
	2501 - 5000 TL	132	33.9
	5001 - 7500 TL	81	20.8
	7501 - 10000 TL	47	12.1
	10001 - 12500 TL	26	6.7
	Above 12500	46	11.8

3.2.2. Reliability Analyses of the Constructs

RSQ contains 30 questions and 4 subscales. RSQ evaluates secure attachment style, preoccupied attachment style, dismissing attachment style, and fearful attachment style. RSQ scores for each of the subscales are gathered via computing the results of the questions of each attachment styles and dividing the total score of the attachment styles by the number of questions that used to measure for each of them (Bartholomew and Griffin, 1994). More precisely, possible total score ranges from 5-35 for secure people and dismissing people, 4-28 for preoccupied people and fearful people. Then, mentioned scores are divided the number of question that are asked to measure specific subscale. Thus scores of each subscales range from 1 to 7.

The internal consistency of each construct in the initial and reduced measurement models was assessed based on Cronbach alpha and composite reliability values. Cronbach alpha values of the constructs in the initial model ranged from 0.12 to 0.89. Also, composite reliabilities of factors in the reduced model ranged between 0.40 and 0.89. Cronbach alpha estimates for the constructs in the reduced versions of the scales were found to be relatively higher than the initial model varying between 0.38 and 0.89. Likewise, composite reliabilities of factors ranged from 0.39 to 0.89.

Cronbach alpha results of this thesis are consistent with the literature. Cronbach's alpha values of the subscales in Griffin and Bartholomew's (1994) study ranged between 0.41 to 0.71. In Sümer's (2006) study, the Cronbach's alphas result of the subscales ranged from 0.27 to 0.61. Similar findings related with the internal consistency reliability of the scale were reported in other Turkish studies (Çelik, 2004). For example;

- Cronbach alpha values were between 0.12 and 0.41 in Saya's (2006) study.
- In Ulu's (2007) study Cronbach's alpha coefficients were between 0.23 and 0.63.
- In Irkörüçü's (2012) study each of the attachment styles' Cronbach's alpha values were greater than 0.60.

Similar results were also founded in other studies. In Wells and Hansen's (2003) study Cronbach alpha values of the subscales ranged between 0.68 and 0.70. In Gross and Hansen's (2010) study Cronbach alpha values of the subscales ranged

between 0.49 and 0.75. In Andersen and his colleagues' study (2017) the internal consistency coefficients were between 0.34 and 0.70.

As it seen from previous research, despite its relatively low internal consistency values, test-retest reliability scores of RSQ are satisfactory (Scharfe and Bartholomew, 1994). This result was also supported by Sümer and Güngör (1999). Their test-retest reliability coefficients of the scale ranged from 0.54 to 0.78 and they found correlation coefficients of the scale to be between 0.49 and 0.61 (Sümer and Güngör, 1999). The reasons behind low Cronbach alpha values of adult attachment styles are not the number of questions using for assessing each styles or statistical weakness. This situation stems from the dynamics of the questionnaire that assess people's perception about themselves and other people together (Griffin and Bartholomew, 1994).

Sümer and Güngör (1999) also made the cross-cultural comparison of Turkish adaptation of RSQ with the American sample and findings revealed that RSQ had satisfactory levels of reliability, stability and convergent validity.

3.2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

3.2.3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to quantify the fit between observed variable and 6 latent variables. CFA is a structural equation modelling (SEM) technique that allows for the evaluation of the relationship between the observed indicator data and previously conceptualised model (Mueller and Hancock, 2001). CFA, utilising the maximum likelihood estimation method, was performed using the lavaan package (version 0.6-5, Rosseel, 2012) in R.

The proposed model comprising 6 latent variables and 24 items failed to achieve an acceptable fit to the observed data (χ^2 (237) = 1069.60; CFI = 0.69; TLI=0.63; RMSE=0.10; SMR= 0.10). Following the detailed inspection of the proposed model utilising exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and CFA, 9 items from the relationship scales questionnaire and 1 item from the brand loyalty construct were found to be largely cross-correlated, and, thus, were excluded from the model.

The application of CFA using the reduced model consisting of a total number of 14 items showed that the goodness-of-fit of the reduced model was satisfactory (χ^2

(62) = 181.50, CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.90, RMSE = 0.07, SRMR = 0.06). Table 6 present that the standardised factor loadings of the observed variables ranged between 0.30 and 0.964, and only two variables' factor loading estimates below 0.40.

Table 6: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Reliability Results

Constructs	Items	SL	α	CR	AVE	MS	SD
Fearful	I find it difficult to trust others completely.	0.41	0.38	0.39	0.25	4.77	1.73
	I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.	0.58				2.99	1.69
Secure	I worry about being alone.	0.31	0.41	0.52	0.37	4.54	1.99
	I worry about having others not accept me.	0.84				5.11	1.81
Preoccupied	I worry that others do not value me as much as I value them.	0.45	0.51	0.54	0.38	4.61	1.74
	I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.	0.76				3.04	1.70
Dismissive	I prefer not to have other people depend on me.	0.66	0.55	0.56	0.39	3.49	1.81
	I prefer not to depend on others.	0.58				4.05	1.84
Brand Loyalty	I will recommend this brand to someone who seeks my advice.	0.96	0.70	0.75	0.45	5.65	1.45
	I keep prefer to this brand at next time.	0.71				5.65	1.49
	I would pay extra price to have this brand.	0.38				5.43	1.60
Customer Satisfaction	All in all, I am very satisfied with this brand.	0.80	0.89	0.89	0.74	5.69	1.59
	This brand meets my expectations of ideal product.	0.91				5.41	1.84
	The performance of this brand has fulfilled my expectations.	0.87				4.55	2.14

Goodness-of-fit statistics for the measurement model: χ^2 (62) = 181.50, CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.90, RMSE = 0.07, SRMR = 0.06, SL=Standardized Loadings, CR = Composite Reliability, AVE = Average Variance Explained, MS=Mean Score, SD = Standard Deviation

3.2.3.2. Harman's Single Factor Test

According to Podsakoff and colleagues (1986) when data were collected through the same survey, the variations in responses may be determined by the measurement instrument, rather than the constructs of interest, which can result in a common method bias.

Harman's single factor test is a common method to analyse the common method bias. In this method, briefly, all items used in the measurement instrument are loaded on a single factor, and the corresponding estimates are computed. According to Harman's single factor test, poor fit means that common method bias is not existed. Regarding the result, the measurement model with a single factor failed to yield a satisfactory fit between the single factor and observed variables in this thesis. χ^2 (91) = 980.32, CFI = 0.48, TLI = 0.39, RMSE = 0.17, SRMR = 0.19).

3.2.3.3. Hypothesis Testing

Both the respondents' attachment styles and scores of brand loyalty and customer satisfaction were calculated via averaging the scores of the corresponding scale items. Since the main aim of this thesis is assessing the moderating effect of adult attachment style on satisfaction-loyalty link, the respondents' attachment styles were firstly identified by computing average index scores for each attachment style and selecting the one with the highest score. Kirkpack and Davis (1994) stated that people who were not falling into an attachment category precisely should be excluded from the data so 71 respondents who had the same highest score in multiple styles, were excluded from the data and this left a sample of 318 for hypothesis testing.

In addition to this, the percentage of different adult attachment styles of the participants were presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequency distributions and percentages of adult attachment styles

Attachment Style	Number	Percentage
Fearful	26	8.2
Secure	188	59.1
Preoccupied	63	19.8
Dismissive	41	12.9
Total	318	100.0

As it is revealed at Table 7, a great portion of the respondents (59.1 %) were found to have secure attachment style which is followed by preoccupied attachment style (19.8%), dismissive attachment style (12.9%) and fearful attachment style (8.2%). This results are statistically consistent with the distribution of adult attachment styles were examined by Sümer and Güngör (1999) and Kaya (2010).

In addition to this, mean and standard deviation of loyalty and satisfaction in terms of adult attachment styles are indicated in Table 8.

Table 8: Mean and Standard Deviation of Customer Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty by Adult Attachment Styles.

	Fearful (n = 26)		Secure (n = 188)		Preoccupied (n = 63)		Dismissive (n = 41)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Customer Satisfaction	5.22	1.54	5.67	1.33	4.88	1.50	5.30	1.26
Brand Loyalty	4.97	1.69	5.37	1.43	5.74	1.40	5.29	1.40

As it indicated in Table 8, mean scores of adult attachment styles for customer satisfaction ranged between 4.88 and 5.67. Standard deviation scores of attachment styles for customer satisfaction ranged between 1.26 and 1.54. On the other hand, mean

scores of adult attachment style for brand loyalty was found as 4.97 for fearful attachment style, 5.37 for secure attachment style, 5.74 for preoccupied attachment style and 5.29 for dismissive attachment style. Besides, standard deviation scores of attachment styles for brand loyalty were between 1.40 and 1.69.

Satisfaction-loyalty relationship and adult attachment styles' moderator effect on this relationship was tested by using Hayes' PROCESS macros (Hayes, 2017) for SPSS. The PROCESS is a regression-based moderation and mediation analysis, which has been extensively used in social science. Specifically, we conducted a moderation analysis using PROCESS bootstrapping with 10,000 samples (Model 1). In this analysis, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and attachment style were included as independent variable, dependent variable and multi-categorical moderator respectively. Table 9 indicates moderator analysis of customer satisfaction and adult attachment styles.

Table 9: Moderator Analysis: Customer Satisfaction and Adult Attachment Styles

Effect	Estimate	SE	T	95 % CI		P
				LL	UL	
Intercept	1.87	0.92	2.04	0.06	3.67	0.04*
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	0.60	0.17	3.54	0.26	0.93	0.00**
Customer Satisfaction x Secure	-0.08	0.18	-0.42	-0.44	0.28	0.67
Customer Satisfaction x Preoccupied	-0.13	0.21	-0.61	-0.53	0.28	0.54
Customer Satisfaction x Dismissive	0.01	0.23	0.05	-0.45	0.47	0.96

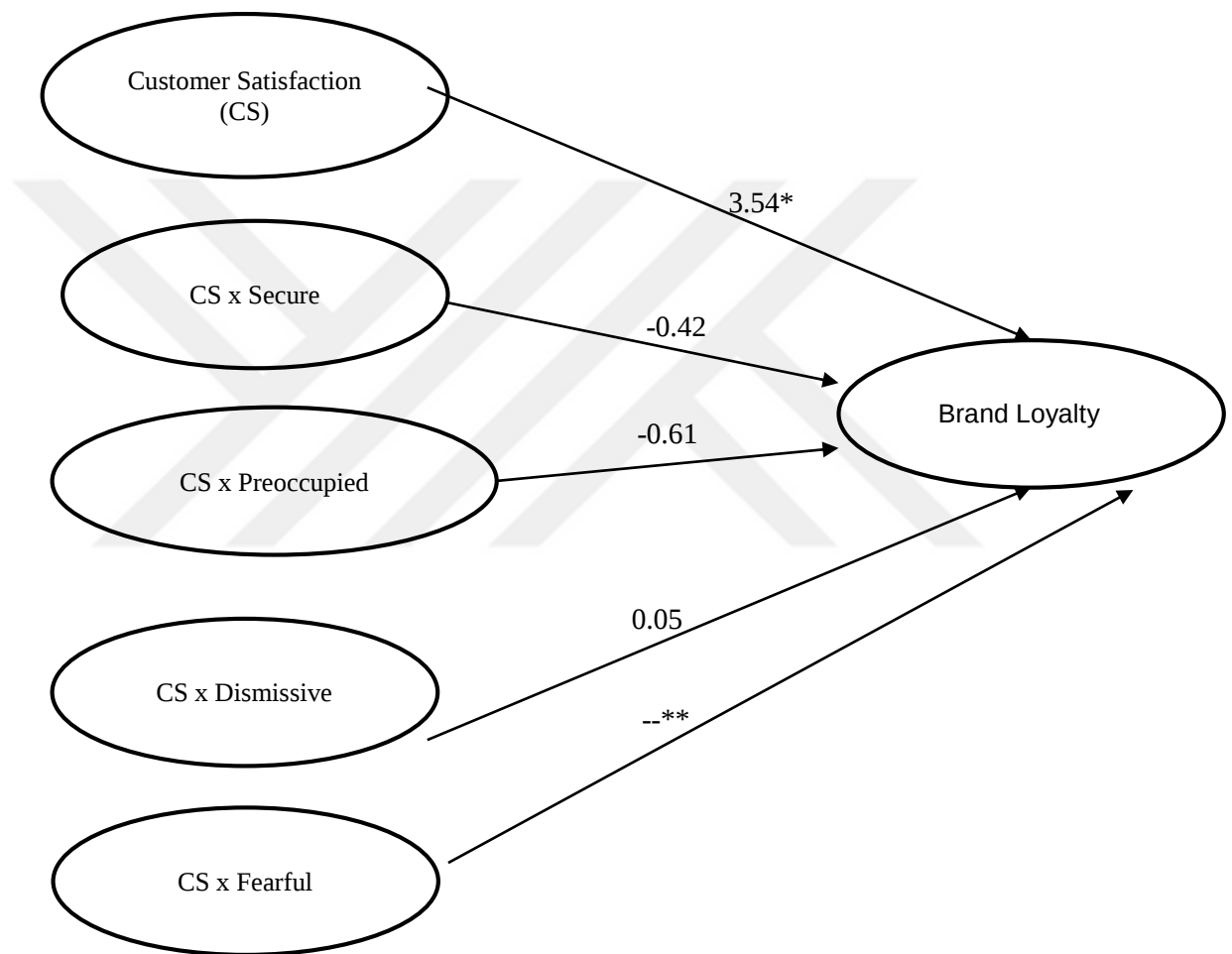
Note: Fearful style was coded as 0. $N = 318$; SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval, LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.248$.

Consistent with our expectation, customer satisfaction showed a positive main effect ($\beta = 0.60$, $SE = 0.16$, $t = 3.54$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. However, any significant interaction between customer satisfaction and adult attachment style was

not found ($R^2_{change} = 0.00, p = 0.88$); i.e., individuals' attachment styles have no effect on the relationship. In terms of the overall model performance, 24.84% of the variance in brand loyalty was explained by the model.

Furthermore, Figure 8 shows customer satisfaction-adult attachment styles relationship based on t values.

Figure 8 : Moderation Analysis Results



* ($p < 0.01$) **Fearful style was coded as 0.

As it is revealed in Figure 8, consistent with our expectation customer satisfaction positively affect to brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.60, SE = 0.16, t = 3.54, p < 0.01$).

However, any significant interaction between customer satisfaction and adult attachment style was not found ($R^2_{change} = 0.00, p = 0.88$).

Table 10 indicates that only first hypothesis of the thesis was supported by the results and others are not supported.

Table 10: Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Result
H1: There is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.	Supported
H2: Secure attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.	Not Supported
H3: Preoccupied attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty	Not Supported
H4: Dismissing attachment style has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.	Not Supported
H5: Fearful attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.	Not Supported

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this thesis three main concepts namely; customer satisfaction, attachment theory, and brand loyalty were introduced and discussed.

Attachment theory attempts to understand the affectionate bonds built between infants and their primary caregivers (Bowlby, 1969). The early relationship between infants and caregivers can give an assistance to a child for developing internal working models about themselves and others which continue to develop according to attachment basis across the lifespan in terms of cognition, emotion and behavior (Ainsworth, 1978). Regarding four categories of adult attachment styles; people who have secure attachment style have favourable mental schema about themselves and others and they feel themselves comfortable for closeness and they rely on others. People with preoccupied attachment style have unfavourable mental schema about themselves and favourable mental schema about others. Preoccupied people find themselves invaluable and have strong trust towards others. People with dismissing attachment style have favourable mental schema about themselves and unfavourable mental schema about other people so they trust themselves but do not believe other people come to help them when they need help. Lastly, people with fearful attachment style have favourable mental schema for both themselves and other people so this kind of people see themselves invaluable and distrust to other people (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).

Customer satisfaction has been studied in several disciplines. The main function of customer satisfaction in marketing studies is comparing to rival products/services. On the other side, economists prefer to use customer satisfaction as tool to compare product categories and sectors (as cited in Andreassen, 1994). Customer satisfaction is a significant barometer for companies for financial success and status in market since satisfied customers are showing a tendency to long-term consumption relation or make more level of consumption than non-loyal customers (Andreassen, 1994). Fornell (1992).

Even though Gul et al. (2012) approach brand loyalty from behavioural perspective by emphasising systematic repeated buying, Oliver (1997) highlighted the importance of customers' psychological state for loyalty and he also emphasized the absence of consensus for defining the term. In addition to this, there is consensus

among scholars that brand loyalty has a multidimensional construct which is identified and computed by stochastic and/or deterministic approaches (Jacoby and Chestnut 1978; Dick and Basu, 1994; Rundle-Thiele and Bennett 2001; Back and Parks 2003).

Even though the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is one of the popular research point in the marketing literature (Back and Parks, 2003), Walsh and colleagues (2008) emphasise that moderator variables' role in this mentioned link is largely ignored. There are limited number of studies related with this issue (Homburg and Giering, 2001). It has been indicated that; customers' involvement toward particular brand (Suh and Youjae, 2006), customers' lifestyle, skiing skills and consumer spending (Matzler et al., 2007), perceived value (Chang et al., 2009), age, tendency to search for alternative and income level (Homburg and Giering, 2001), gender and age of client (Gonçalves and Sampaio ,2012) moderate satisfaction- loyalty association.

However, as a result of literature review, any study that assesses adult attachment styles as a moderator variable on the link between satisfaction and loyalty in smartphone context was not found so there is a gap in the literature about this issue. Hence, the main aim of the thesis was to fill this absence in the literature. Another aim of this thesis was examining satisfaction-loyalty relationship. A wide range of prior research has showed there is a positive link between satisfaction and loyalty (Fornell, 1992; Clarke, 2001; Sui and Baloglu, 2003; Choi et., al 2008).

In this thesis, respondents' satisfaction and loyalty level towards their smartphone were measured because it is the quickest expanding market in the telecommunication sector (Cecere et al., 2015). Today's consumers have become highly dependent on smartphones (Ting et al, 2001). GFK (2018) reported that the average smartphones sold 1 million units each month at Turkey market and according to Statista's (2016) estimation there will be 61.34 million smartphone user in Turkey in 2022.

Although there are wide range of studies about to customer satisfaction and brand loyalty relationship in smartphone context in marketing literature, (e.g. Aydın et al., 2005; Lee et al., 2010; Nath et al., 2015; Muhammad et al., 2016; Kalyoncuoğlu and Faiz, 2017; Redda and Shezi, 2019), moderator variables on this relationship still is an open area to study because there are limited studies in the field. For example; Aydın and colleagues (2005) revealed that perceived switching cost moderates to

mentioned relationship. Deng et al (2010) found that smartphone users' gender, age and their usage time of their smartphones moderate the mentioned relationship. However, there is no study in the literature that investigate adult attachment styles' moderating effect on this mentioned relationship.

The first hypothesis of the thesis was that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. After hypothesis testing, it has been supported (24.84%). This finding is parallel to the extend literature. For example; Çiftyıldız and Sütütemiz (2007) indicated satisfaction has a positive impact on loyalty (35%). Another study revealed that satisfaction is the strongest factor on loyalty (Kim et al., 2016). Wilson and Makmud (2019) found that satisfaction positively influence loyalty (29%).

In the second stage of this thesis, first of all, frequency distributions and percentages of adult attachment styles were examined (see at Table 8). According to results, 59.1% of respondents were found to have secure attachment style, 19.8 % of them were found to have preoccupied, 12.9% of them had dismissive attachment style and 8.2% of them had fearful attachment style. The mentioned result is statistically consistent with the distribution of adult attachment styles were examined by Sümer and Güngör (1999) and Çuhadaroğlu et al (2010).

Then, the moderator role of adult attachment styles in the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty in smartphone sector was controlled. This point differentiates the thesis from the rest of the studies in the literature because it has not been analysed before. Hypothesis about this relation are listed below;

- **H2:** Secure attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.
- **H3:** Preoccupied attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty
- **H4:** Dismissing attachment style has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.
- **H5:** Fearful attachment style has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

The moderating effect of adult attachment styles on the link between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty was tested by using Hayes' PROCESS macros (Hayes,

2017) for SPSS which is a regression-based moderation and mediation analysis, and it has been extensively used in social science. In this analysis; customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and attachment style were included as independent variable, dependent variable, and multi-categorical moderator, respectively. Inconsistent with our expectation, any significant interaction between customer satisfaction and adult attachment styles was not found. In other words, individuals' attachment styles have zero effect on this relationship. Thus the hypothesis listed above were not supported by the results.

Even though hypothesis related to moderator effect of adult attachment styles on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in smartphone context was not supported, the reason behind this situation can be stemmed from the characteristics of attachment style concept and dynamics of smartphone industry respectively.

First of all, people's relations are more reflected than people's personal interests via adult attachment styles. Thus, direct and moderator effect of attachment styles can be found or stronger in interpersonal related contexts (Gore et al., 2010). The mentioned inference is shown by different research in the literature which will be shared as follow:

Gore and colleagues (2010) assessed the moderator effect of attachment styles on relationally autonomous reasons and personal reasons to motivate people to study for classes. They found that the moderator effect of relationally autonomous reasons was stronger than that personal reasons. The authors explained this result by referring to main aspect of attachment style that focuses mainly on a person's relationships rather than people's personal interests and declared that the moderator impact of relationally autonomous reasons were high since it is an interpersonal related content.

While Ulu and Tezer (2010) could not find an association between any attachment styles and adaptive perfectionism, they found that there is a positive association between adult attachment styles maladaptive perfectionism. The authors' explanation about this results was like that; the term adaptive perfectionism is naturally related with the self, however; maladaptive perfectionism is naturally an interpersonal concept. Based on this explanation, Ulu and Tezer (2010) explained the results in the

same line with Gore et al (2010) by underling main aspect of attachment style that mainly focuses on personal relationship rather than personal interests.

In addition to previous studies, Moussa and Touzani's (2017) study which examines the moderator effect of adult attachment styles on satisfaction and customer-service provider emotional attachment (CSPEA) relationship showed similar results. The authors investigate this research frame in two different contexts which are hairdresser and grocery retailer contexts. The authors showed that the adult attachment styles have zero correlation with this association in the retailing context while the adult attachment styles moderate satisfaction-CSPEA association in hairdressing context. They explained the result with following sentence "*the attachment figure in grocery retailer case is an abstract while the attachment figure in hairdresser case is a concrete*". This explanation can also be interpreted like that since consumers' relations with retailer is self-related, the moderator effect of adult attachment styles was not found. Whereas, since the consumers' relationship with hairdresser is more interpersonal relate entity, the moderator effect of adult attachment styles was found.

After all, since the variables of the thesis were examined in a self-related context i.e. smartphone context, the hypothesis related to moderator role of adult attachment styles might not be supported. As the studies that shared above showed that moderator effect of attachment styles can be found or stronger in interpersonal related contexts than self-related contexts because adult attachment style identifies an individual's relationships more than their personal preferences.

The reason behind why the hypothesis related to moderator role of adult attachment styles were not supported in this thesis can also be explained in relation to the dynamics of smartphone industry. As Szymanski and Henard (2001) emphasised that the form and the degree of the satisfaction-loyalty association might be different across different sectors. From this point of view, it could be deduced that the strength of moderator variables' impacts on satisfaction- loyalty link may differ from sector to sector. Therefore, it could be expected that the dynamics of smartphone industry caused rejecting of the hypothesis. Thus if this study is undertaken for different kind of products or services the findings also might differ.

Apart from these, Nemati and his colleagues (2010), showed that people prone to purchase smartphones which provide more features in an economical package in

Pakistan because of the economic conditions of the country. Similar findings have been found in a research that was conducted in Turkish sample of 877 by Kalyoncuoğlu and Faiz (2017) which showed that the good quality of the smartphones compared to its price and the reasonable price corresponding to the quality of the smartphone affect the tendency of Turkish customers to be loyal to their smartphones. Moreover, even though Samsung has a higher sales rate in Turkey than Apple, Turkish customers have higher loyalty level towards Apple (Kalyoncuoğlu and Faiz, 2017). In addition to them, according to Deloitte Global Mobile User Research (2019), the frequency of changing a smartphone has been declining in the world because of the low level of differentiation among smartphone models due to rapid innovation and high level of competition in smartphone industry. However, the frequency of changing a smartphone has been declining in Turkey since 2017 mainly because of the exchange rate fluctuations and the reorganized instalment plan in smartphone buying.

Therefore, all those factors might have influenced this thesis unexpected findings regarding the moderation effect since Turkish customer's purchasing decision of smartphone might be mainly shaped by price concerns rather than loyalty. After all, if Turkish customers purchase their smartphone based on price, it could be said that main factor in smartphone industry is economic conditions. This situation may cause to not find moderator role of adult attachment styles on the relationship satisfaction-loyalty relationship in smartphone because people may not reflect their individual differences (adult attachment styles) when money is the main factor.

In conclusion, this thesis might be the first one that is interested in particular research topic. According to the findings, as expected hypothesis one was supported. This insight is not new but supported by the existing marketing literature that show satisfaction positively affects loyalty. However, not consistent with prior expectation, adult attachment styles have no moderator impact on the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

This situation can be explained by two main reasons. First of all, attachment styles' moderator effect can be found or be stronger in interpersonal related context rather than self-related context. Smartphone context can be thought as a self-related context so this situation can explain the rejection of the hypotheses. Along with this, it could be thought that Turkish customers' smartphone preference based on economic

reasons and it can be deduced that If money is the fundamental motive behind purchasing behaviour, people's personal characteristics i.e. adult attachment styles lost its impacts.

Last but not least, although the hypothesis of this thesis about moderator impacts of adult attachment styles on satisfaction-loyalty relationship was not supported, it is expected that research about the role of moderator variables on the mentioned relationship have a potential to be a focal point for future studies.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The thesis has some limitations worth mentioning. As a beginning, since convenience sampling method was applied, the sample group consisted of only volunteers that accepted to join to answer the online questionnaire. Therefore, it is not possible to make a generalization about all smartphone users.

The second limitation of this thesis is that self-assessment method was used in this thesis which assesses the explicit level of internal representations of an individual and is vulnerable to response bias. However, adult attachment styles are shaped based on people's prior experiences and consists of subconscious process which may not be reported in the study. In addition to this, under what conditions the respondents completed the survey cannot be known since the data was distributed over the Internet. Thus, the reliability of the answers may be in question.

The third limitation of the thesis is that, respondents' satisfaction and loyalty levels may change in terms of the duration they have been using their smartphones. Thus, in order to see if any changes might happen in time, further studies may prefer to conduct longitudinal research.

The last limitation of the thesis is that, the sample of this thesis is Turkish customers so this study might be context-specific because of the demographical backgrounds, cultural differences on shopping habits/ preferences of Turkish consumers and existing economic conditions in Turkey. Therefore, the generalizability of the results might be limited and the results may change if this research is undertaken in different contexts.

Along with limitations, it might be suggested to pose questions to respondents related to their smartphone such as its price, model, brand and so on for future research. It can also be suggested to future researchers to concentrate more on interpersonal concepts rather than self-related concept to examine moderator effect of adult attachment styles.



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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire

Değerli katılımcı,

Merhabalar, ismim Salih KURAL, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İngilizce İşletme Yönetimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programında eğitimime devam ediyorum. Tezimin amacı yetişkin bağlanma tiplerinin müşteri tatmini ve marka sadakati arasındaki ilişkiye olan aracı etkisini incelemek. Bu amaçla, 18 yaşını doldurmuş akıllı telefon sahibi kişilere ulaşmam gerekiyor. Sizden ricam akıllı telefon sahibi ve 18 yaşından büyük iseniz sonraki sayfalarda yöneltilen 40 soruyu yanıtlamanız. Araştırma kapsamında bağlanma tipinizi saptamak amacıyla 30, kullandığınız akıllı telefonun markasına karşı gösterdiğiniz tatmin seviyenizi saptamak için 3 ve sadakat seviyenizi saptamak için ise 4 soruyu yanıtlamanız gerekiyor. Bu sorulardan sonra ise anketin son kısmında demografik özellikleriniz ile alakalı 5 soru ile karşılaşacaksınız. Bu sorular dışında kimlik bilgilerinizle ilgili herhangi bir soru size asla yöneltilmeyecektir.

İçeriğine değindiğim bu soruları yanıtlamak için 10-15 dakika yeterli olacaktır. Cevaplarınız hiçbir şekilde bilimsel araştırma amaçları dışında kullanılmayacak ve hakkınızdaki herhangi bir bilgi başka şahıslarla asla paylaşılmayacaktır. Ayrıca anketi tamamlamak istemezseniz dilediğiniz an ayrılabilirsiniz.

Bu şartlar doğrultusunda çalışmamda bana yardımcı olmayı kabul ediyorsanız, gelen sayfalardaki soruları lütfen yalnızca kendi başınıza yanıtlayınız. Araştırmama katılarak tez çalışmamda bana sağladığınız destekten dolayı teşekkür ederim

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Burcu İLTER(e-posta: burcu.ilter@deu.edu.tr)

Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İşletme Fakültesi /Üretim Yönetimi ve Pazarlama Anabilim Dalı

1'inci KISIM: İLİŞKİ ÖLÇEKLERİ ANKETİ

Aşağıdaki sorular ile amaçlanan yakın duygusal ilişkilerinizden hareketle bağlanma tipinizi saptamaktır. Lütfen aşağıdaki soruları yanıtlarken arkadaşlık, dostluk, romantik ilişkileriniz ve benzeri yakın duygusal ilişkilerinizi gözönünde bulundurunuz ve 7'li ölçeğe göre size en iyi yansıtan kutucuğu işaretleyiniz.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

Beni hiç tanımlamıyor

Beni kısmen tanımlıyor

Beni tamamen tanımlıyor

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Başkalarına kolaylıkla güvenemem.							
2. Kendimi bağımsız hissetmem benim için çok önemli.							
3. Başkalarıyla kolaylıkla duygusal yakınlık kurarım.							
4. Bir başka kişiyle tam anlamıyla kaynaşıp bütünleşmek isterim.							
5. Başkalarıyla çok yakınlaşırsam incitileceğimden korkuyorum.							
6. Başkalarıyla yakın duygusal ilişkilerim olmadığı sürece oldukça rahatım.							
7. İhtiyacım olduğunda yardıma koşacakları konusunda başkalarına her zaman güvenebileceğimden emin değilim.							
8. Başkalarıyla tam anlamıyla duygusal yakınlık kurmak istiyorum.							
9. Yalnız kalmaktan korkarım.							
10. Başkalarına rahatlıkla güvenip bağlanabilirim.							
11. Çoğu zaman, romantik ilişkide olduğum insanların beni gerçekten sevmediği konusunda endişelenirim.							
12. Başkalarına tamamiyle güvenmekte zorlanırım.							
13. Başkalarının bana çok yaklaşması beni endişelendirir.							
14. Duygusal yönden yakın ilişkilerim olsun isterim.							
15. Başkalarının bana dayanıp bel bağlaması konusunda oldukça rahatımdır.							
16. Başkalarının bana, benim onlara verdiğim kadar değer vermediğinden kaygılanırım.							

17. İhtiyacınız olduğunda hiç kimseyi yanınızda bulamazsınız.									
18. Başkalarıyla tam olarak kaynaşıp bütünleşme arzum bazen onları ürkütüp benden uzaklaştırıyor.									
19. Kendi kendime yettiğimi hissetmem benim için çok önemli.									
20. Birisi bana çok fazla yakınlaştığında rahatsızlık duyarım.									
21. Romantik ilişkide olduğum insanların benimle kalmak istemeyeceklerinden korkarım.									
22. Başkalarının bana bağlanmamalarını tercih ederim.									
23. Terk edilmekten korkarım.									
24. Başkalarıyla yakın olmak beni rahatsız eder.									
25. Başkalarının bana, benim istediğim kadar yakınlaşmakta gönülsüz olduklarını düşünüyorum.									
26. Başkalarına bağlanmamayı tercih ederim.									
27. İhtiyacım olduğunda insanları yanımda bulacağımı biliyorum.									
28. Başkaları beni kabul etmeyecek diye korkarım.									
29. Romantik ilişkide olduğum insanlar, genellikle onlarla, benim kendimi rahat hissettiğimden daha yakın olmamı isterler.									
30. Başkalarıyla yakınlaşmayı nispeten kolay bulurum.									

Lütfen **İKİNCİ** ve **ÜÇÜNCÜ KISIMLARDAKİ** soruları mevcut cep telefonunuzu göz önünde bulundurarak okuyunuz ve 7’li ölçeği gözönünde bulundurarak aşağıdaki soruları yanıtlayınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Biraz katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum ne de katılmıyorum	Çok az katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum

2’NCİ KISIM: MÜŞTERİ TATMİNİ ANKETİ

1. Mevcut cep telefonumu kullanmak genel olarak beni çok tatmin ediyor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mevcut cep telefonum benim ideal bir üründen olabilecek tüm beklentilerimi karşılıyor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Mevcut cep telefonumun performansı beklentilerimi tam anlamda karşılıyor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3’ÜNCÜ KISIM: MARKA SADAKATİ ANKETİ

1. Tavsiyemi isteyen kişilere kullandığım akıllı telefonu markasını öneririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Bir dahaki akıllı telefon alışımında da şuan kullandığım markayı tercih edeceğim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Akıllı telefonumla ilgili bir sorun yaşarsam, başka marka kullanmaya başlarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Kullandığım akıllı telefonu markası için diğer markalara nazaran biraz daha fazla ücret ödeyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4'ÜNCÜ KISIM: DEMOGRAFİK ÖZELLİKLERE İLİŞKİN SORULAR

Sizi yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

Cinsiyetiniz	Yaşınızı yazınız	Eğitim seviyenizi belirtiniz	Ailenizin Aylık Toplam Geliri
Kadın ()		İlkokul mezunu ()	2500 TL ve altı ()
Erkek ()		Ortaokul mezunu ()	2501 TL-5000 ()
		Lise mezunu ()	5001 TL – 7500 ()
		Yüksek okul mezunu ()	7501 TL- 10000 ()
		Lisans öğrenci ()	10001 TL-12500 ()
		Lisans mezunu ()	12500 TL üstü ()
		Yüksek lisan öğrenci	
		Yüksek lisans mezunu	
		Doktora	

SORULARI YANITLADIĞINIZ İÇİN TEŞEKKÜR EDERİM