Intermediary Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Müşteri Memnuniyeti ve Müşteri Sadakati İlişkisinde Markaya Duyulan Güvenin Aracılık Rolü

Nur Çağlar Çetinkaya* - Tülin Durukan**

Abstract: Customer satisfaction, defined as the adequacy between the expectations of the customers before the purchasing activity and all that is acquired after the purchasing activity, represents a very important concept for businesses. The first step in the formation of customer satisfaction is the correct identification of requests and needs by businesses. Businesses that correctly identify their target audience aim to provide customer satisfaction with the action plan they will develop. Nowadays, the most important problem faced by businesses is the steady decline of loyal customers. Increasing competition and price advantages are the most important factors that trigger this problem. However, customer satisfaction alone is not enough to ensure customer loyalty. Consumers' confidence in the brands that produce the goods and services they demand is of great importance in increasing brand loyalty. This study focused on the intermediary role of trust in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The aim of this study is to provide the perspective that trust in the brand will form a more dominant loyalty when combined with customer satisfaction for the marketing researchers studying customer loyalty. For this reason, the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty was initially examined and then a comparative assessment was made by adding the intermediary role of trust in the brand. According to the results obtained from the participants using the same smart phone in their previous choice, it is observed that trust in the brand plays an intermediary role in the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty. In order to determine the variables used in the study, explanatory and confirmatory factor analyzes were conducted and structural equation model was used to test the hypotheses.

* Dr., Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi Meslek Yüksekokulu, Finans Bankacılık ve Sigortacılık Bölümü
Lec. Dr., Cankiri Karatekin University, Vocational School, Department of Finance Banking and Insurance
ORCID 0000-0002-6047-2718

nurcaglar@karatekin.edu.tr

** Prof. Dr., Kırıkkale Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi İşletme Bölümü
Prof. Dr. Kırıkkale University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Business
ORCID 0000-0001-5228-3274

t-durukan@hotmail.com

Cite as/ Atıf: Çağlar Çetinkaya, N., Durukan, T. (2020). Makale başlığı, *Turkish Studies - Economy*, 15(1), 127-143.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.29228/TurkishStudies.40285>

Received/Geliş: 24 December/Aralık 2019

Accepted/Kabul: 25 March/Mart 2020

Copyright © INTAC LTD, Turkey

Checked by plagiarism software

Published/Yayın: 30 March/Mart 2020

CC BY-NC 4.0

Structured Abstract: Technological developments in the last 20 years have made smartphones an indispensable part of life. There are about 3 billion smartphone users in the world, with about 8 billion people living, according to October 2019 data. This refers to increased smartphone use. The increasing use of smartphones has prompted smartphone manufacturers to make efforts to connect customers to the brand and to prefer their own brands in all situations and conditions.

As in any industry, it is very difficult to be the brand that customers always prefer in the smartphone sector. This is because smartphones require short cycles by businesses and medium-length renewals by users. As with any market, the competition in the smartphone market depends on the manufacturers' ability to keep their existing customers in their hands and convince them to innovate. In this context, ensuring customer satisfaction is the most important way to customer loyalty. However, the view that customer satisfaction alone is sufficient to ensure customer loyalty is quite wrong. Studies explain that many impressive factors, such as product quality, perceived value, cost of replacement, and attractiveness of alternatives, have mediated effects. Trust in the brand does not appear to be among these variables that act as intermediaries. The aim of the study was to determine whether the trust in the brand plays an intermediary role in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, based on the prediction that the trust in the brand will cause the customers to prefer the same brand in repeated purchases.

In this study, the concepts of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and trust in the brand are often encountered in the marketing literature. Customer satisfaction is about whether the customers' expectations are met in return for the goods and services they buy from businesses, and whether they feel good about themselves. Therefore, customer satisfaction, which deals with the extent to which customers' expectations of goods and services are met or not, expresses the feeling that occurs in customers. The concept of customer loyalty is defined as the loyalty that customers feel to the business. The most important indicator of loyalty is the expression of customers who regularly purchase from a business as loyal customers. The prerequisite for acquiring loyal customers under current conditions is that customers have confidence in the brand. Because trust in the brand or business refers to repeated purchases by customers.

The research data was obtained by the survey method applied to 197 people who lived in Çankırı and were chosen as simple coincidences. As a result of the evaluation of the data obtained, 182 usable data were reached. This data was tested with reliability analysis, factor analysis and structural equality model analyses, respectively. The study primarily conducted reliability analysis for questions that were all adapted from the original scales. In the study, Ladhari (2007) scales were used to measure customer satisfaction, Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1996) to measure customer loyalty, and Chaudhuri and Halbrook (2001) to measure trust in the brand. Customer satisfaction 3, customer loyalty 3 and trust in the brand in the questionnaire applied to the participants consists of 4 questions. Secondly, the dimensions of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and trust in the brand were measured by factor analysis. According to the results of the factor analysis, it was observed that each sub dimension was under the specified dimensions and it was concluded that the questions in the survey did not cause any change.

As thirdly, the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty was measured by explanatory factor analysis. As with the literature, it was determined that customer satisfaction directly affects customer loyalty in a positive and high way. In the study, it was observed that χ^2/sd is the perfect fit, RMSEA and SRMR are acceptable fit and GFI, AGFI, NFI and CFI are in the perfect fit ranges when the alignment indices for the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty analyzed in the model established.

In this context, the structural equality model has been re-tested by adding trust in the brand to the model. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis show that trust in the brand plays an intermediary role in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty and affects it to a positive and highly countable degree.

Studies containing the findings that customer satisfaction directly and positively affects customer loyalty are found when the literature is examined. Brand loyalty is one of the criteria that is effective in the formation of brand trust, a criterion that strengthens the bond between the customer and the brand and triggers loyalty. Studies have shown that buying behavior is frequent with trust in the brand or business, and that this situation affects the formation of loyalty.

The study concluded that trust in the brand by smartphone users is effective in repetitive purchases. In this respect, trust in the brand has been observed to increase loyalty by its role as an intermediary. Studies examining the existence of a positive directional relationship between brand loyalty and trust in the brand (Chiu et al. 2010; Albert&Marunka, 2013; Batra et al. 2012) it is observed that the study coincides with these studies. For this reason, it is very important that businesses operating in the smartphone industry follow strategies that will enable them to have confidence in the formation of customer loyalty. The study contributes to the literature by drawing attention to the mediating role of trust in the brand in the transformation of customer satisfaction to customer loyalty. In addition, this study is a guide for other sectors that are still active.

In parallel with the research findings, it is recommended that businesses operating in the smartphone industry develop strategies that enable customers to trust themselves or their brands when they want to build customer loyalty. Trust and confidence in the brand which is also quite effective in repetitive purchases of the negative affect factor of word of mouth marketing through social media and the need to share all kinds of constructive solutions to bring immediate and potential customers about your business should be taken against negative thinking.

Keywords: customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, brand trust

Öz: Müşterilerin satınalma faaliyeti öncesi beklentileri ile satınalma faaliyeti sonrası elde ettikleri arasındaki yeterlilik olarak tanımlanan müşteri memnuniyeti işletmeler için oldukça önemli bir kavramı ifade etmektedir. Müşteri memnuniyetinin oluşmasında birinci aşama istek ve ihtiyaçların işletmeler tarafından doğru tespit edilmesidir. Hedef kitlesini doğru tespit eden işletmeler geliştirecekleri hareket planı ile müşteri memnuniyetini sağlamayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Günümüzde işletmelerin karşılaştıkları en önemli sorun sadık müşterilerin giderek azalmasıdır. Giderek artan rekabet ve fiyat avantajları ise bu sorunu tetikleyen en önemli faktörlerdir. Ancak müşteri sadakatının sağlanabilmesi için yalnızca müşteri memnuniyeti tek başına yeterli değildir. Tüketicilerin talep ettikleri mal ve hizmetleri üreten markalara duydukları güven marka sadakatının artmasında büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışma, müşteri memnuniyeti ve müşteri sadakati arasındaki ilişkide güvenin aracı rolü üzerine odaklanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, markaya olan güvenin, müşteri sadakati okuyan pazarlama araştırmacıları için müşteri memnuniyeti ile birleştirildiğinde daha baskın bir bağlılık oluşturacağı perspektifini sağlamaktır. Bu nedenle başlangıçta müşteri memnuniyetinin müşteri sadakati üzerindeki etkisi incelenmiş ve daha sonra markaya duyulan güvenin aracı rolü eklenerek karşılaştırmalı bir değerlendirme yapılmıştır. Çalışmada bir önceki tercihinde de aynı akıllı telefonu kullanan katılımcılardan elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda markaya duyulan güvenin müşteri memnuniyetinin müşteri sadakatine etkisinde aracılık rolü üstlendiği görülmektedir. Araştırmada kullanılan değişkenleri belirlemek adına açıklayıcı ve doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri yapılmış, hipotezleri test etmek için yapısal eşitlik modeli kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: memnuniyet, sadakat, güven

1. Introduction

Customers, who are becoming more conscious day by day, cause enterprises to have difficulties in competition. Changes in market conditions have made it more important for enterprises to retain the current customers instead of gaining new customers. Regaining a lost customer requires spending 5 times more time, energy and money and thus, only 68% of the lost customers can be regained (Uyar, 2019:43-44). For this reason, it is necessary to offer high quality service and maximize customer satisfaction in order to satisfy customers today. Customer satisfaction, which is the first step of ensuring customer loyalty, is the most important issue that enterprises should focus on. Customer satisfaction, which is related to whether enterprises succeed in making their current customers happy and retaining them, is a determining indicator of consumer purchase intentions and loyalty. Loyal consumers account for the majority of the sales made and profits earned by enterprises. According to many enterprises, while the most loyal customers account for 20% of all customers (Heskett et al, 1994:167), this situation is interpreted with the 80/20 rule or "Pareto Principle" which states that "20% of an enterprise's all customers account for 80% of its total profit or, on the contrary, 80% of all customers account for 20% of its total profit" (Sanders, 1988:38).

According to the data of October 2019, there are 2.7 billion smartphone users in the world where 7.7 billion people live (www.techjury.net, 24/10/2019). It is predicted that this number will increase to 2.87 billion in 2020. This situation indicates the increased use of smartphones. Increased use of smartphones has prompted enterprises and made them to make efforts to establish a strong relationship between their brands and customers and continue to be a preferred brand under all circumstances.

Being a brand preferred by customers is important in the smartphone market. This is because the renewal cycles of smartphones by enterprises are very short. As competition increases in the market and phone models are renewed, enterprises will try to retain their current customers and persuade them for innovation. It is considered that satisfying a customer is not enough to ensure customer loyalty. Factors such as product quality, perceived value, conversion cost and attractiveness of the alternatives are the mediating factors in conversion of satisfaction into loyalty (Deng et al., 2010; Wang, 2010; Lee et al., 2001; Pan et. al., 2012; Yang & Peterson, 2004; Giovanis et al., 2009). It seems that the brand trust is not among these affecting factors that take an intermediary role. The aftersale services offered by an enterprise and satisfaction of the expectations are effective in establishment of brand trust. Brand trust ensures that customers will prefer the same brand in their next purchases. Therefore, it is predicted that brand trust plays an intermediary role in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

This study focused on the intermediary role of trust in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The aim of this study is to provide the perspective that trust in the brand will form a more dominant loyalty when combined with customer satisfaction for the marketing researchers studying customer loyalty. For this reason, the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty was initially examined and then a comparative assessment was made by adding the intermediary role of trust in the brand. Chaudhuri and Halbrook (2001)'s brand trust scale were used to examine the mediating effect of trust in the brand in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the smart phone sector and analyzes were performed with structural equation model.

In the theoretical background of the study, the research model consisting of participants from different age and gender groups will be explained. After the research model is conceptualized and the hypotheses are tested, the study concludes with the results, conclusions and suggestions for future research within the limitations of the research.

2. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The customer, who is the most important element in performing the commercial activities of businesses represents a presence that cannot be ignored, especially in the modern marketing era. According to the modern marketing approach, consumers are expected to shop continuously from a specific store or perpetually prefer a particular brand. In this relationship, the person who establishes long-term relationship with the store or brand is defined as "customer" (Statt, 1997). In the literature, being an end user of a good or service is the most important detail that creates the distinction between the customer and the consumer. In addition, it is not possible for businesses without customers to make sales and make a profit (Neumayer, 1996:38). Therefore, it is seen that the businesses that do not understand the importance and value of the customers that constitute the main source of success don't last for long.

There are five important rules that businesses must abide by for the customers, who are the main factors determining the future of a business. These rules are respectively, to establish a good line of communication with customers, to help customers when needed without bothering them, to smile, to provide fast service - to satisfy the customer and send them off with a smile (Love, 1989). According to the modern marketing approach, businesses should retain their existing customers and have a customer-centered approach regarding new customers. In customer centeredness studies,

which have been extensively published in the literature (Brach et al. 2015, Dean 2007, Bagozzi et al. 2012, Blocker 2011, Homburg et al. 2011, Kennedy et al. 2003) it is observed that manager-employee relations are frequently examined (Kohli & Jaworski 1990, Narver & Slater 1990), but there is a limited number of customer-oriented studies (Dean 2007, Brady & Cronin 2001).

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

The conceptual framework guiding the study is presented in Figure 1. Two hypotheses were developed about the model based on literature review. These hypotheses were designed to examine the direct impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty and the intermediary role of the trust in the brand within this impact.

Customer satisfaction, described as the positive opinions of customers about the goods and services they receive from businesses, is defined as the good feeling or contentment resulting from the customer's getting what s/he expects from the good and the service according to Pizam & Ellis (1999). According to Kotler & Keller (2006), it indicates the response of customers to the difference between the pre-purchase expectation and the perceived performance after the purchase. The relationship established with customers plays an important role in ensuring customer satisfaction, defined as the behavior exhibited by customers after the use of a product or service (Solomon, 1996). It is seen that the customers who are more satisfied with businesses increasingly exhibit more mouth-to-mouth marketing behavior. Customer expectations and needs, quality, competitors and promises are important factors in determining customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction, which occurs in line with the extent to which the customers' expectations from the goods or services are met, is not a behavior but a feeling that emerges as a result of expectations.

Customer loyalty, which has frequently appeared in the marketing literature in recent years is defined as commitment to a brand or enterprise (Oyman, 2002:173). Loyalty, which leads to a change in attitude in customers, refers to the commitment that encourages customers to re-purchase a good or service, despite all the effective factors. A customer who regularly buys from a certain business, purchases more than one product or service from the same business, recommends the business s/he shops from to others and shows his/her loyalty to the business despite all its competitors is called a loyal customer. For success to be achieved in businesses, brands should be personalized, employees should be trained, the focus should be on customer requests and needs and steady products or services should be provided (Davids, 2007: 19-22). Factors such as customer satisfaction, corporate image, customer expectations, cost of change, service quality, trust, customer complaint management and price are the factors that affect customer loyalty.

There are many studies in the literature that aim to explain the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The first group of these studies, which are gathered under three groups, presents studies on the existence of a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty without going into any details. The second group investigated the functional form of the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty, and the last group examined the effects of moderator variables on

two variables (Homburg & Giering, 2001:47). Among the studies conducted aiming at the first group, Bitner (1990) found that satisfaction had an indirect effect on loyalty, regarding which the perceived quality played an intermediary role. Likewise, Rust and Zahorik (1993) and Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham (1995) found a link between satisfaction and loyalty in their studies on the tourism sector. While the studies in the first group tried to measure whether the relationship between the variables was linear or not, the studies in the second group were based on a more complex theoretical background. As an example, Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser and Schlesinger (1994) provide conceptual support for a convex structure of the relationship, that is, increasing marginal returns. Jones and Sasser (1995) argue that such a convex structure is likely to occur mainly in highly competitive environments. The studies in the third group examine the external variables that have a moderator role in the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. As an example of applying moderated regression analysis, Bloemer and co-workers (1995, 1996) find that involvement has a positive moderating effect on the link between satisfaction and loyalty.

When the expectations of the customers are met, their satisfaction usually results in loyalty to the business or brand. Customers whose expectations are met want to reward the business that offers the goods or services they buy with their loyalty. For businesses, the way to maintain their market share is to create customer loyalty. Since dissatisfied customers cannot exhibit a positive attitude regarding a certain business or brand, satisfaction was determined as the most important factor in ensuring loyalty (Jones & Sasser 1995, Oliver 1999). Therefore, considering that satisfied customers have a high loyalty tendency, the following hypothesis was assumed as Model 1:

H₁: Customer satisfaction affects customer loyalty positively.

In today's conditions, the most important purpose of businesses is to obtain loyal customers attached to their brands (Sahin & Gultekin, 2017:998). The most important factor in ensuring customer loyalty to the brand or business is the trust in the brand. The fact that enterprises meet customer expectations with approaches such as quality or after-sales services is effective in building brand trust. Customers who trust the brand or the business choose the same brand or business in their repeating purchases, ignoring the competitors of the business. Trust in the brand or business forms the basis of the relationship to be established with consumers (Elliot & Yannopoulou, 2007). It is observed that the market share of the business increases in line with the increase in the trust of customers in the business or brand, which they prefer more compared to others.

According to Lau and Lee (1999), brand trust is defined as the customer's trust in the brand at the time of a potential risk. In this context, a model has been developed to determine the factors affecting brand trust and five factors have been specified to determine brand trust. These factors are brand predictability, brand competence, brand reputation, brand liking and trust in the company. Similarly, in a study conducted by Delgado-Ballester (2004), brand trust is defined as the trust expectation regarding the intention of the enterprise. In short, it is stated that brand trust will be secured by fulfilling the promises offered to customers, meeting the needs at the expected level and acting in favor of the customer in the case of a potential risk.

Trust, one of the most important criteria to allow for establishment of brand loyalty, refers to a situation strengthening the bond between the customer and the brand or enterprise and triggering loyalty, and it is a leading factor promoting the emergence of brand loyalty (Kalyoncuoğlu, 2017:385-386). In a study conducted by Chiu, Huang and Yen in 2010, it was found that purchasing behavior became more frequent with trust and that this situation led to loyalty. There are also many studies in the literature, which relate the repetitive buying behavior of satisfied loyal customers to the trust in the brand (Ganesan 1994, Delgado-Ballester & Aleman 2001, Chaudhuri & Holbrook 2001, Chiu et al 2010). In addition, there are studies in the literature, which determine that trust in the brand has a strong positive effect on brand loyalty (Mogan & Hunt 1994, Lau & Lee 1999, Tsotsou 2010). As a result of these findings, the following hypothesis was assumed in the study as Model 2:

H₂: Trust in the brand positively affects customer loyalty.

3. Literature Review

The studies in the literature, which were conducted on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, suggest that customer satisfaction has a positive effect on customer loyalty. In their studies, Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996), Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry (1988), Johnson and Fornell (1991), Anderson and Sullivan (1993), Oliver (1999), Hartmann and Ibanez (2007) and Berman and Evans (2010) all state that the customer satisfaction turns into loyalty in time. In a study conducted by Heskett et al. (1994), the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty has been examined to conclude that the lowest level of loyalty is seen when customer satisfaction is low. In the studies conducted by Tabaku and Çerri (2015), Pan et al. (2012) and Giovanis et al. (2009), it is also reported that customer satisfaction is the main determinant of repurchase intention and customer loyalty. A study conducted on GSM operators by Aydın and Özer (2005) refers a significant effect of customer satisfaction and conversion cost on loyalty and emphasizes the necessity of providing high quality products in order to increase customer loyalty.

A study conducted by Harris and Goode (2004) examines the service quality, perceived value, trust, satisfaction and loyalty relationships, and it has been concluded that the trust factor is at the center of the model for perceived value, service quality, satisfaction and loyalty variables and it has a direct effect on loyalty.

Loyal customer acquisition, which is defined as ability of reselling to current customers, is among the primary objectives of enterprises. Loyal customer acquisition is dependent on customer's leaving the enterprise satisfactorily and a decreased loyalty rate means decreased customer satisfaction rate. For the enterprises that experience customer loss, investigating the causes of loss and gaining new customers are more costly than the attempts to retain a current customer. Many enterprises, who have become aware of this situation, have begun to develop strategies to increase customer loyalty. In the literature, customer loyalty is studied in two ways; namely the behavioral approach defined as the repurchase of a service or product by a customer and the attitudinal approach

where products and services are not regularly used but offered to potential customers (Martinez & Bosque, 2013:16).

In the literature, it is stated that trust factor creates customer loyalty, increases customer sensitivity and emotional orientation (Lepojevic & Dukic, 2018:249), is the main element in the relationship with customer loyalty (Selnes, 1998:310), is the primary element in establishing customer relationship (Abratt & Russell, 1999:5-19), has a strong correlation with customer loyalty (Deng, et al. 2010) and has a direct effect on customer loyalty (Bahari, 2016; MutiaSobihah et al. 2015; McIlraith, 2014).

4.1. Method of Research

In the study, Ladhari (2007)'s customer satisfaction scale, Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1996)'s customer loyalty scale and Chaudhuri and Halbrook (2001)'s brand trust scale were used to examine the mediating effect of trust in the brand in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the smart phone sector and analyzes were performed with structural equation model. The aim of the study is to determine whether brand trust plays an intermediary role in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Smart phone sector, which forms the study's area of investigation is a sector that has been developing rapidly for the last 20 years and has users from all generations.

4.2. Measures

In the study, the data sets belonging to the sample consisting of participants who used the same smart phone brand as their previous smart phone were used and the hypotheses were tested accordingly. The sample consists of 182 randomly selected people, who live in Cankiri, which is one of the small settlements of Turkey. The questionnaire used for the participants in the study consists of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire includes demographic questions describing the gender, age, income and educational status of the participants. In the second part of the study, there are 3 questions for measuring customer satisfaction, 3 questions for measuring customer loyalty and 4 questions for measuring brand trust, 10 questions in total adapted from original scales to test the hypotheses of the study. A 5-point Likert scale was used to evaluate the statements prepared to measure customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and trust in the brand.

4.3. Analysis

When the demographic characteristics of the participants are examined, it is seen that the gender of the participants are distributed almost equally with 49.5% being female and 50.5% being male. The age ranges are predominantly concentrated in the 18-37 age range with 54.4%. As for income distributions, they are observed to be concentrated in the range of 1501-3000 TL with 76.9%. When the educational status of the participants is examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants are high school graduates with 57.3%.

Table 1: Factor loadings

Indicators		Loadings	% Variance	Cronbachs alpha	AVE	CR
Customer Trust	CT1-I trust this smartphone brand.	0,819	86,228	0,995	0,645	0,879
	CT2-This smartphone brand is safe.	0,805				
	CT3-I rely on this smartphone brand.	0,803				
	CT4-This smartphone brand is an honest brand.	0,785				
Customer Satisfaction	CS1- I am pleasure with my smartphone.	0,820	5,616	0,982	0,673	0,861
	CS2- I am satisfied with my decision to buy this smartphone.	0,841				
	CS3- I think i did the right thing when i purchased this smartphone.	0,800				
Customer Loyalty	CL1- If i had the chance to make a decision again i would buy this smartphone again.	0,662	4,651	0,958	0,569	0,796
	CL2-I would prefer this brand again if i bought smartphone in the future.	0,741				
	CL3-Pay a higher price to this brand than other smartphone brands.	0,849				
TOTAL			96,495	0,981		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)				0,926		
Bartlett's Test				4038,275		
df				45		
p				0,000		

In the study the intended sub-dimensions of factors before factor analysis give the same results as factor analysis. Determined factors and sub-dimensions of the model are given in Table 1. It was determined that 10 items in the study were gathered under 3 dimensions and 3 factors explained 96.495% of the total variance. At the same time, when the individual and total reliability of the factors were examined, it was found that alpha value was above 0.80 and had high reliability. According to the result of the Bartlett Sphericity Test, which is a prerequisite for the factor analysis, a sufficient relationship was found between the variables ($p < 0.05$; $p = 0.000$). In addition, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value indicating whether the sample size was sufficient was calculated as 0.926. This shows that the sample size is sufficient.

Construct reliability (CR) and mean explained variance values (AVE) were also examined in the study. When the structural reliability and mean explained variance values are examined for each variable in Table 1, it is seen that AVE value is greater than 0.5 value and CR value is greater than 0.7 value for each variable (Hair et al., 2010).

The confirmatory factor analysis, which is frequently applied for the purpose of developing measurement models, tests whether the factors consisting of sub-dimensions determined by explanatory factor analysis are appropriate for the factor structures determined by hypotheses.

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Indicators	Standardized loads	t value	R ²
CS- Customer Satisfaction			
CS1	0,98	18,32	0,96
CS2	0,98	18,20	0,96
CS3	0,96	17,50	0,92
CL- Customer Loyalty			
CL1	0,96	17,45	0,92
CL2	0,96	17,28	0,91
CL3	0,86	14,49	0,74
CT- Customer Trust			
CT1	0,98	18,28	0,96
CT2	0,99	18,63	0,98
CT3	1,00	18,93	1,00
CT4	0,99	18,67	0,98

Table 2 shows the results of the confirmatory factor analysis obtained from the sample. While standardized loads show the influence degree of variables on dimensions, R² value shows how much of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. When the standardized loads of the developed model are examined, it is seen that it significantly affects the dimensions in the model. Besides, when the R² values belonging to the model are examined, it is seen that almost all of the independent variables explain the variance of the dependent variable (except CL3 variable) in the range of 0.91-1.00.

Table 3: Goodness-of-Fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Indices	Perfect Fit	Acceptable Fit	Score of Model 1
χ^2/sd	≤ 3	≤ 5	2,71
RMSEA	$0 < RMSEA < 0,05$	$0,05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,10$	0,097
SRMR	$0 \leq SRMR < 0,05$	$0,05 \leq SRMR \leq 0,10$	0,013
GFI	$0,95 \leq GFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq GFI < 0,95$	0,92
AGFI	$0,90 \leq AGFI \leq 1$	$0,85 \leq AGFI < 0,90$	0,85
NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq NFI < 0,95$	0,99
CFI	$0,95 \leq CFI \leq 1$	$0,90 \leq CFI < 0,95$	0,99

Schermelleh-Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003, p. 52

When Table 3 is examined, it is observed that the RMSEA value of the scale is within the acceptable fit index range; the SRMR value is within the perfect fit index range; the AGFI and GFI values are within the acceptable fit index range, and CFI, NFI and χ^2/sd values are also within the perfect fit index range.

Figure 2. The Effect of Customer Satisfaction to Customer Loyalty- Model 1

Note: $\chi^2/df = 2,016$, RMSEA=0,075, SRMR=0,0097, GFI=0,98, AGFI=0,92, NFI=0,99, CFI=1,00

When the conformity index values of the structural equation model are examined, it is seen that the RMSEA value is within the acceptable conformity index range. As for χ^2/df , SRMR, GFI, AGFI, NFI and CFI values, they are observed to be in perfect fit index range. When the fit indexes of the structural equation model established are examined, it is seen that most of the indexes are within the perfect fit index range.

Table 4: Standardized solutions, t value and hypothesis conclusion of Model 1

Hypothesis	Standardized Solution	t Value	Conclusion
H ₁ : CS→CL	0,86	14,11	Accepted

When Table 4 is examined, it is determined that the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is statistically accepted. According to the established structural equation model, the regression model is calculated as

$$\text{Customer Loyalty} = 0.86 * \text{Customer Satisfaction}$$

According to the regression function, the increase in customer satisfaction increases customer loyalty positively.

Figure 3. Relationship Between Variables – Score of Model 2

Note: $\chi^2/df=2,609$, RMSEA=0,094, SRMR=0,012, GFI=0,92, AGFI=0,85, NFI=0,99, CFI=0,99

As a result of the analysis, it is seen that the path coefficient values of the customer satisfaction value on customer loyalty and brand trust and brand trust variable on customer loyalty variable are significant. The fact that the fit indexes obtained from the path analysis are above the threshold values indicate that the model is compatible with the data and is acceptable. When the fit indexes of the model are examined, it is seen that RMSEA, GFI and AGFI values are within the acceptable fit index range. As for SRMR, χ^2/df , NFI and CFI values, they are observed to be in the perfect fit index range. These results show that brand trust has a mediating effect on the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty variables.

Table 5: Standardized solutions, t value and hypothesis conclusion of Model 2

Hypothesis	Standardized Solution	t Value	Conclusion
H ₂ : CT→CL	0,59	8,94	Accepted

According to the results in Table 5, it is seen that the necessary conditions are provided for determining the existence of mediation effect through structural equation modeling. The result of the regression model belonging to the structural equation model established is calculated as

$$\text{Customer Loyalty} = 059 * \text{Brand Trust}$$

This shows that the increase in the trust in the brand increases customer loyalty positively.

Smart phone sector is an important sector which has developed rapidly in the last 20 years all over the world. As a result of advances in communication technologies, smart phone usage has increased significantly around the world. Smart phones, which are defined as the perfect devices entering the mobile phone market with the features specific to the computers and mobile phones they possess, constitute an indispensable and important part of daily life with users from almost all generations (Cetinkaya, 2019:232). As a result of the satisfaction of the users of smart phone whose product life is determined as 2 years on average, it is known that they tend to repurchase a top model, but more advanced product of the same brand. This behavior, which is defined as loyalty in the literature, is also experienced in the smart phone sector. The loyalty that emerges after the satisfaction of the users is undoubtedly increased with the effect of trust in the brand. In short, the impact of satisfaction on loyalty becomes more effective, being shaped by customers' perception that the brand is trustworthy.

This study supports the idea that users' trust in the brand in the smart phone sector, affects their repurchasing them positively. In addition to the effect of customer satisfaction on loyalty, the mediating role of the brand examined is an incentive that increases loyalty. In the study examining brand trust's mediating effect on the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty, initially the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty was examined and it was concluded that customer satisfaction had a strong positive effect on customer loyalty. Secondly, the mediating role of brand trust on customer loyalty was examined and again, the existence of a positively oriented positive relationship between them was identified.

5. Discussion

The study theoretically examines and shows the intermediary role of brand trust in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Therefore, the study is expected to shed light on future studies to be conducted on the effect of the intermediary variables on the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The study has been conducted in the smartphone sector, but it is also applicable to the other sectors. For this reason, the study can be generalized and improved for other sectors. It seems that the participants are not homogeneously distributed demographically in the study. Therefore, a more comprehensive study can be carried out with homogeneous participant groups and a wider sampling. Since trust is a feeling that can be affected by age, the study can also be examined individually on different generations.

Purpose of this study is to verify that brand trust plays an intermediary role in the interaction between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. It is seen that the results obtained in the analysis part of the study confirm the hypotheses put forward in the study. When examined the studies revealing the existence of a positive relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty and suggesting that brand trust significantly increases brand loyalty (Chiu et al., 2010; Albert & Marunka, 2013; Batra et al., 2012), it is seen that the conclusion of this study is consistent with the aforementioned studies. The fact that customer satisfaction increases customer loyalty by gaining strength through brand trust has constituted the starting point of the study. For this reason, enterprises should follow strategies to increase brand trust as an encouraging factor in maintaining the effect in the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty.

References

- Abratt, R., Russell J. (1999). "Relationship marketing in private banking in South Africa". *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 17(1): 5-19.
- Albert, N., Merunka, D. (2013). "The role of brand love in consumer-brand relationships". *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 30(3): 258-266.

- Anderson, E. W., Sullivan, M. W. (1993). "The antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction for firms", *Marketing Science*, 12(2): 125-143.
- Aydın, S., Özer, G. (2005). "National customer satisfaction indices: an implementation in the Turkish mobile telephone market", *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(5): 486-504.
- Bagozzi, Richard P., Willem J. M. I. Verbeke, Wouter E. Van Den Berg, Wim J. R. Rietdijk, Roeland C. Dietvorst, Loek W. (2012). "Genetic and neurological foundations of customer orientation: field and experimental evidence", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 40(5): 639-658.
- Bahari, C. (2016). "Determinants of customer loyalty: empirical study of semen gresik brand". *International Business Management*, 10(3): 270-276
- Batra, R., Ahuvia, A.C., Bagozzi, R. P. (2012). "Brand love". *Journal of Marketing*, 76(2): 1-16.
- Berman, B. & Evans, J. R., (2010). "Retail management", New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Blocker, Christopher P., Daniel J. Flint, Matthew B. Myers, Stanley F. Slater (2011). "Proactive customer orientation and its role for creating customer value in global markets", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(2): 216-233.
- Bloemer, J. M., & Kasper, H. D. (1995). The complex relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 16, 311–329.
- Bloemer, J. M., Pauwels, K. H., & Kasper, H. D. (1996). There is more to loyalty than just satisfaction: The effects of satisfaction and involvement on brand loyalty and dealer loyalty. Working Paper, Maastricht, The Netherlands: University of Limburg
- Brach, S., Gianfranco, W., Thorsten H.-T., Markus, G. (2015). "A dyadic model of customer orientation: mediation and moderation effects", *British Journal of Management*, 26(2): 292-309.
- Brady, M. K., Cronin, J. J. (2001). "Customer orientation effects on customer service perceptions and outcome behaviors", *Journal of Service Research*, 3(3): 241-251.
- Cetinkaya, C. N., (2019). "A comparative study on the effect of product positioning on the purchase intention of x generation living in Ankara and Cankiri", *Business & Management Studies An International Journal*, 7(1): 224-256, doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v7i1.1062>
- Chaudhuri, A., Holbrook, M. B. (2001). "The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty". *Journal of Marketing*, 65(2): 81-93.
- Chiu, C. M., Huang, H. Y., Yen, C. H. (2010). "Antecedents of trust in online auctions". *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 9(2): 148-159.
- Davids, M. (2007). "Going beyond customer satisfaction to customer loyalty", *Newcomb Marketing Solutions, Debt 3, May/June*: 19-22.
- Dean, A. M. (2007). "The impact of the customer orientation of call center employees on customers' affective commitment and loyalty", *Journal of Service Research*, 10(2): 161-173.
- Delgado-Ballester, E., Alemán, M. J. L. (2001). "Brand trust in the context of consumer loyalty". *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(11/12): 1238-1258.
- Deng, Z., et al., (2010). "Understanding customer satisfaction and loyalty: An empirical study of mobile instant messages in China". *International Journal Of Information Management*, 30(4): 289-300.

- Deng, Z., Lu, Y., Wei, K. K., Zhang, J., (2010). "Understanding customer satisfaction and loyalty: an empirical study of mobile instant messages in China". *International Journal of Information Management*, 30: 289-300.
- Elliott, R., Yannopoulou, N. (2007). "The Nature of Trust in Brands: A psychosocial model." *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(9/10): 988-998.
- Ganesan, S. (1994). Determinants of long-term orientation in buyer-seller relationships. *The Journal of Marketing*, 58(2): 1-19.
- Giovanis, A., Binioris, S., Polychronopoulos, G. (2009). "Developing and testing a model explaining customer conative loyalty formation in the mobile telecommunications services", 2nd International Conference: Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies in the Economic and Administrative Sciences, Greece, Athens, 25-27 May.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Harris, L.C., Goode, M.M.H, (2004). "The four levels of loyalty and pivotal role of trust: a study of online service dynamics", *Journal of Retailing*, 20: 139-158.
- Hartmann, P., Ibanez, V. A., (2007). "Managing customer loyalty in liberalized residential energy markets: the impact of energy branding", *Energy Policy*, 35: 2661-2672.
- Heskett, J. L., Jones, T. O., Loveman, G. W., Sasser, W. E., Schlesinger, J. L. A. (1994). "Putting the service-profit chain to work", *Harvard Business Review*, March-April: 164-170.
- Homburg, C., Giering A, (2001). "Personal characteristics as moderators of the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty- an empirical analysis", *Psychology&Marketing*, 18(1): 43-66.
- Homburg, C., Müller, M., Klarmann, M. (2011). "When does sales people's customer orientation lead to customer loyalty? the differential effects of relational and functional customer orientation", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(6): 795-812.
- Johnson, M.D., Fornell, C. (1991). "A framework for comparing customer satisfaction across individuals and product categories", *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 12(2): 267-286.
- Jones, T. O., Sasser, W. E. (1995). "Why satisfied customers defects", *Harvard Business Review*, November/December: 88-99.
- Kalyoncuoglu, S. (2017). "The mediating role of brand love in the relationship of brand trust and brand loyalty: a research on starbucks as a brand", *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 156: 383-402.
- Kennedy, K. N., Jerry R. G., Eric J. A. (2003). "Implementing a customer orientation: extension of theory and application", *Journal of Marketing*, 67(4): 67-81.
- Kohli, A. K., Jaworski B. J. (1990). "Market orientation: the construct, research propositions, and managerial implications", *Journal of Marketing*, 54(2): 1-18.
- Kotler P., Keller K.L., (2006). *Marketing management*, 12e, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Ladhari, L., (2007). "The effect of consumption emotion on satisfaction and word of mouth communication", *Psychology and Marketing*, 24(12): 1085-1108.
- Lau, G. T., Lee, S. H. (1999). "Consumers' trust in a brand and the link to brand loyalty". *Journal of Market Focused Management*, 4(4): 341-370.
- Lee, J., Lee, J. & Feick, L. (2001). "The impact of switching costs on the customer satisfaction-loyalty link: mobile phone service in France". *Journal of Services Marketing*, 15(1): 35-48.

- Lepojevic, V., Dukic, S., (2018). "Factors affecting customer loyalty in the business market- an empirical study in the Republic of Serbia", *Facta Universitatis, Economics and Organization*, 15(3): 245-256.
- Love, J. F. (1989). Altın kemer efsanesi, McDonald's, Çev. Seçkin Selvi Cılızoğlu, İstanbul.
- Martinez, P., Bosque, I., (2013). "The role of consumer identification on the effects of corporate social responsibility on consumer behaviour in the Spanish hotel industry", *Analisis Turistico* 22, 2nd Semestre 2016: 12-27.
- McIlraith, M., (2014). "Creating customer loyalty through service customization". *American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences (ASRJETS)*, 11 (1).
- Mogan, R. M., Hunt, S. D. (1994). "The commitment trust theory of relationship marketing". *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3): 20-38.
- MutiaSobihah, A. H., NorAzman, M. M., Salim M. A. & Wan Zulqurnain Wan Ismail, (2015). "Relationship between e-commerce service quality, satisfaction, trust and customer loyalty in the hotel industry in the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia". *International Business Management*, 2(5): 25-31.
- Narver, J. C., Slater, S.F. (1990). "The effect of a market orientation on business profitability", *Journal of Marketing*, 54(4): 20-35.
- Neumayer, O. (1996). "Customer satisfaction", *Standart*, 35(413): 38-39.
- Oliver, R. L. (1999). "Whence consumer loyalty", *Journal of Marketing*, 63, *Special Issue*: 33-44.
- Oyman M. (2002). "Musteri sadakati saglamada sadakat programlarının onemi", *Kurgu Dergisi*, Sayı:19: 169-185.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A. & Berry, L.L. (1988). "SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality", *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1): 12-40.
- Pizam, A., Ellis T. (1999). "Customer satisfaction and its measurement in hospitality enterprises", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(7): 326-339.
- Rust, R. T., Zahorik, A. J. (1993). "Customer satisfaction, customer retention, and market share". *Journal of Retailing*, 69: 193 – 215.
- Rust, R. T., Zahorik, A. J., Keiningham, T. L. (1995). "Return on Quality (ROQ): Making service quality financially accountable". *Journal of Marketing*, 59(2),: 58-70.
- Sahin, E., Gültekin, C., (2017). "The effect of brand trust and ethnocentrism on brand loyalty: a trademark example", *Suleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 22(4): 993-1012.
- Sanders, R. (1988). "The pareto principle: its use and abuse", *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 3(2): 37 – 40.
- Schermelleh-Engel M., Moosbrugger, H. (2003). "Evaluating the fit of structural equation models: tests of significance and descriptive goodness-of-fit measures", *Methods of Psychological Research*. 8(2),23-74, web:https://www.dgps.de/fachgruppen/methoden/mpr-online/issue20/art2/mpr130_1_3.pdf
- Selnes, F., (1998). "Antecedents and consequences of trust and satisfaction in buyer-seller relationships". *European journal of marketing*, 32 (3/4): 305-322.
- Solomon M. (1996). Consumer behavior, 2nd. Edition ed. Allyn&Bacon. Boston.

-
- Stat, D. A. (1997). "Understanding the customer", London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
- Tabaku, E., Çerri, S. (2015). "An empirical investigation of consumer loyalty in telecommunication industry in Albania", *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(1): 224-231.
- Tsiotsou, R. (2010). "Brand loyalty through brand attachment and brand trust: a relational perspective". In Proceedings of 6th Thought Leaders International Conference in Brand Management, 18-20.
- Uyar, A. (2019), "An analysis of the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty by the structural equation model: a questionnaire applied on automobile users", *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(69): 41-57.
- Wang, C. (2010). "Service quality, perceived value, corporate image and customer loyalty in the context of varying levels of switching costs". *Psychology &Marketing*, 27(3): 252-262.
- www.techjury.net, 24/10/2019
- Yang, Z., Peterson, R. T. (2004). "Customer perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty: the role of switching costs". *Psychology&Marketing*, 21(10):799-822.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L. (1996). "The behavioral consequences of service quality". *Journal of Marketing*, 60(April): 31-46.