Literature Review and Discussion on Customer Loyalty and Consciousness

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Abstract
In the marketing and consumer behaviors literature, there is a widely accepted assumption that customer loyalty is conscious. In this study the origin of the view that loyalty is a conscious behavior and/or attitude was tried to be reached and the paradoxical situation was tried to be emphasized by giving place to findings and comments that do not support this view as a result of a broad literature review. In line with the purpose, the basic studies within loyalty literature were examined and discussed deeply and the real reason for this conflict was found to be ignoring the fact that loyalty is a result that contains sensuality.

As a result the effect of this paradoxical assumption for enterprises and customers were assessed and significant detections were given.

Keywords: Customer Loyalty, Inertia, Inertial Loyalty, Consumer Consciousness.
JEL Classification Codes: M30, M31, M39.

1. Introduction
Examining the researches and literature dealing with loyalty a generally accepted view that loyalty is a conscious customer behavior and/or attitude (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978; Huang and Yu, 1999; Solomon et al., 2006; Kotler and Keller, 2006) arises despite different clues and comments on the issue. Although there is no clear information on the origin and consistency of the view, many studies are performed in accordance with this view. Furthermore, loyalty is discussed in the context of consciousness and the fact that the non-loyal customers are unconscious was emphasized and consequently the reason for lack of loyalty was tried to be suggested as customer unconsciousness. This effort may create a serious problem for the management of loyalty because according to this situation the commencement of loyalty is explained with efforts to process, customer unconsciousness is effective in the ending of loyalty or lack of loyalty. This understanding may cause customer loyalty to be discussed as company/brand focused.

The purpose of the study based on those detections is; (1) To examine deeply the basic studies of loyalty literature that dominate marketing literature, (2) To make detections for the problematic situation tried to be explained and (3) for the origin of the problem.

Within this framework, in the study based on theoretical literature review and the assessment of literature the creation of loyalty literature is examined deeply and loyalty and consciousness discussion was made on the basis of consciousness, characteristics attributed to loyal customers, customer satisfaction and the value offered to the customer and inertia. Finally the basic assessments related to the subject and the suggestions were given.
2. Literature Review
2.1. Customer Loyalty
Examining the historical course of the studies with the subject of loyalty it is found that the researches that try to define what loyalty is have significant space. The most basic problem encountered in those studies is the failure to achieve a shared definition of loyalty because although customer loyalty may be a key variable that explains keeping the customer at hand (Wong and Zhou, 2006; Pritchard and Howard, 1997), it has been discussed in time whether loyalty is an attitude or combination of attitude and behavior.

According to the approach based on behavior, loyalty is the behavioral reaction based on prejudice as the function of psychological processes by the decision maker in the existence of one or more alternative in time (Jacoby and Keyner, 1973). Behavioral approach explained loyalty basing on the criteria including the share in consumption, consumption probability, probability to consume the product again, repeated consumption behavior, multidirectional consumption behaviors (Kumar and Shah, 2008).

According to the second approach dealt as the combination of attitude and behavior brand loyalty “is a form of repeat purchasing behavior reflecting a conscious decision to continue buying the same brand, for brand loyalty to exist, a pattern of repeat purchase must be accompanied by an underlying positive attitude towards the brand (Solomon et al., 2006). This approach does not include only the past purchasing behaviors and tendencies but also customer attitude and value systems (Sudharshan, 1995). Consequently according to this approach which was accepted in time, the customer realizes loyalty in time through repeated consumption of any good or service when the customer has a positive attitude toward the good/service or company providing the good/service (Wong and Zhou, 2006).

In addition to the difference in description within the historical course, it is found that the manner of dealing with loyalty has changed as well. In the early time studies, (Cunningham, 1961; Tucker, 1964; Day, 1969; Jacoby and Keyner, 1973) loyalty was used as dimensioning criteria because competition is low in the period and the thought that activity would be more efficient in a market composed of loyal individuals in terms of the effectiveness of marketing activities dominates. The purpose of the studies in this period is to increase the efficiency and profitability of the activities through classification based on loyalty via more loyal customers. According to Szwarc, companies failed to understand that the new customers they obtained after 1980’s particularly through price discounts are those customers existing in the market but in the recession in 1990’s they tended to examine the performance of marketing and sales expenses. This tendency suggested that it was much more costly to gain new customers than to preserve the existing ones because it is quite difficult to detect the expectations and behaviors of new customers and this requires additional costs (Szwarc, 2005). This situation changed the viewpoint toward loyalty and loyalty started to be perceived by the companies and brands as a fact that should be achieved because in the existence of innovative products and increased global competition made customer loyalty a managerial struggle (Dick and Basu, 1994). Consequently not only the measurement of loyalty but also management thereof came to the agenda and the effort to search for the factors behind loyalty and achieve loyalty was based upon. Similarly Fournier and Yao (1997) mentioned about 3 phase evolution:

1. Approaches that take behavior as the basis: Approach that take the random or intended nature of repeated behaviors.
2. Studies for improving brand loyalty: Studies based on behavioral definitions for determining the reasons that could affect brand preference and purchasing and the levels of effect of the reasons. Those studies exposed to the criticism to have definitive aspects.
3. Researches with theoretical and philosophical focus: They are the studies that differ according to psychological and anthropologic/sociologic point of view and emphasize the meaning and hedonic/emotional dimensions of loyalty and concentrate on cognitive processes in order to strengthen loyalty.
The efforts to define and manage loyalty bought the fact that loyalty may arise in different forms depending on its reality to the agenda because the stipulation that every repurchasing may not be loyalty and may not guarantee the future repurchasings was achieved. One of the vanguards of grouping loyalty in this manner is Day. Day discussed loyalty in two groups, namely intentional loyalty and spurious loyalty (1969). Sheth and Park accepted loyalty as three different tendencies (emotive, evaluative and behavioral) (1974). Dick and Basu (1994) discussed loyalty in four dimensions on behavior and attitude basis. They named the situation of attitude and repurchasing behavior being high as loyalty, the situation of attitude being high and purchase repeat being low as latent loyalty, the situation of purchase behavior is being and attitude being low as spurious loyalty and the situation of attitude and repurchasing being low as no loyalty.

According to Oliver (1999) loyalty arises through phases; cognitive, affective, canotive and action. In the cognitive phase customer loyalty is based on the assessment of information including the price to be determined for the product/brand, qualities etc. Affective phase is created in the context of positive emotion toward the brand. In the canotive phase the tendency toward the brand becomes devotion and there is the tendency to stand distant from other brands. In the action which is the last phase inertia based on the tendency to that brand started. While it is cognitive phase which is the easiest phase to reach for the enterprise the most difficult phase is action. According to Oliver, although those phases explain loyalty it fails to define ultimate loyalty that provides purchasing the same brand in all terms and conditions. Although it has a place in the loyalty literature prior to this study of Oliver, the concept of inertia had a broader place and started to be discussed through this study. Despite the concept of inertia was suggested by Oliver as a result of action loyalty achieved, as it shall be discussed in the later sections of the theoretical framework, since the concept of inertia is not based on consciousness it started to be used as a concept that fails to reflect loyalty, that arises only depending on the conditions and that may change according to conditions.

According to Gounaris and Stathakopoulos (2004) there are four types of loyalty on the basis of purchase, social effect and emotional devotion to the brand:

- No Loyalty: They are those who do not purchase and while they have no interest in the brand and social effects failed to orient to the brand.
- Covetous Loyalty: They do not purchase but emotional tie to the brand is high and this tie was created by the social environment.
- Inertia Loyalty: They have a tendency toward the brand for habit, convenience or any other reason without emotional tie with the brand and social effect. The customers having this nature of loyalty can make a systematic selection among other brands but while this selection has low level of emotional involvement and personal investment there is no devotion to the brand.
- Premium Loyalty: If the emotional tie and social effect is high while the customer purchases at high level it is loyalty.

According to Rowley customers may demonstrate their loyalty in any one of a number of ways; they may choose to stay with a provider, whether this continuance is defined as a relationship or not, or they may increase the number of purchases or the frequency of their purchases or even both (Rowley, 2005). According to this approach it is a relation that shapes repurchasing that reveals the existence of loyalty rather than repurchasing itself. Rowley took this framework on the basis of inertial and positive attitudes including the behavioral and attitudinal dimensions, and discussed customer loyalty in 4 groups namely, captive (inertial behavior and attitude), convenience-seeker (positive behavior and inertial attitude), contented (inertial behavior and positive attitude) and committed (positive behavior and attitude) according to behavioral and attitudinal dimension.

Bandyopadhyay and Martell, in their study conducted in 2007 discussed behavioral loyalty of the consumer in three groups namely those who use single brand, those who use multi brands and those who do not use the product and anticipated the attitudinal loyalty may be higher or lower in those three groups. Researchers defined those who have high attitudinal loyalty and use a single brand as brand
loyal and those who use multi brands as difference seekers and those who are not users as potential purchasers and underlined that loyalty may not be toward a single brand.

Despite the differences in the definitions there is a strong conviction that “loyalty is a deep devotion which is created for the purpose of purchase of the preferred good or service in the future and which may not change despite changing effect and marketing effort (Oliver, 1999)”. In this regard the characteristics of loyal customers that they require lower cost, are less sensitive toward price, pass more time with the company and transfer positive views on favorite brands (Reichheld and Teal, 1996), they tend to purchase more and pay more (Wallace et al., 2004; Wright and Sparks, 1999; Zeithaml et al., 1996) which are significant for enterprises provides that the subject of loyalty preserves actuality and increases its significance gradually everyday because loyalty is a significant element in developing a sustainable competition advantage and since this advantage may be created through marketing efforts (Dick and Basu, 1994), many producers try to achieve loyalty (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

As it shall be explained in detail in the future in studies on loyalty, the assumption that loyalty is a conscious behavior and attitude integrity has been recognized. However while in some of those studies clues on what consciousness related to loyalty is, are encountered in others no assessment was made on this assumption. In this regard it shall be useful to emphasize on the concept of customer consciousness that directs marketing literature.

2.2. Customer Consciousness

Consciousness is defined as; subjectivity, awareness, the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness, having a sense of selfhood, and the executive control system of the mind (Farthing, 1992). Consciousness is based on cognitive learning theory where internal mental processes have significance and when the person encounters with any problem or stimulant he/she will react at the end of mental processes (Solomon et al., 2006). As a result the conscious person creates attitude or behavior by making a logical assessment of the data available in any situation encountered.

In the studies dealing with marketing customer consciousness was discussed in the manner to cover the issues including price (e.g. Monroe and Petroshius, 1981; Lichtenstein et.al., 1993; Magi and Julander, 2005; Kukar-Kinney et al., 2007; Yaşin, 2009; Kukar-Kinney et al., 2012), quality (e.g. Zeithaml, 1988; Grewal et al., 1998; Chiu et al., 2005), value (e.g. Lichtenstein et al., 1990; Lichtenstein et al., 1993; Dutta and Biswas, 2005), brand (e.g. Sproles and Kendall, 1986; Yaşin, 2009; Liao and Wang, 2009; Eastman and Eastman, 2011), health (e.g. Kraft and Goodell, 1993; Jaynati and Burn, 1998; Schifferstein and Oude Ophuis, 1998; Gould, 1988; Arvanitoyannis et al., 2003; Michaelidou and Hassan, 2008; Kim and Seock, 2009), environment (e.g. Berkowitz and Daniels, 1964; Hines et al., 1986; McClosekey and Maddock, 1994; Stone et al., 1995), fashion (e.g. Jinhee et al., 2007; Workman and Seung-Hee, 2011; Rathnayake, 2011; Apeagyei, 2011) etc. However no holistic definition which explains customer consciousness was found marketing and consumer behaviors literature. From this view, examining the academic studies directing loyalty literature in detail shall make contribution to determining how loyalty is accepted as conscious and the consciousness of loyalty.

2.3. Loyalty and Consciousness

There is a greater acceptance that consumers may often act not as a result of a conscious choice but rather as the result of unconscious habits or emotions (Campbell, 1991), particularly with regard to a situation encountered newly (Solomon et al., 2006). Consequently one may think that any customer who has problem about behaving consciously may experience a similar problem of consciousness about brand loyalty as well. It shall be useful to seek for the clues that would indicate customer consciousness in the literature dealing with loyalty in order to explain this thought.

Tucker performed his empirical study in 1964 via bread which is a product for which the brand name shall not be very important and gave different brand names to the breads with the same
characteristics and used them in his experiment. According to the result achieved even in bread for which the significance of brand is very small loyalty to certain brands was created despite the fact that there is no difference among products. According to the findings of Tucker, although price change affects the customers differently he detected that some part of the customers did not change brand under any conditions. It becomes debatable that a customer/customer group that does not change brand preference under any conditions despite price discount has conscious loyalty even in the types of product with similar characteristics for which the significance of brand is very small.

One of the rare studies that made the clearest emphasis on the concept of consciousness in the subject of loyalty and drew the framework of this consciousness somewhat is the study of Day in 1969. According to Day the action loyal ones; 1- Are very conscious in making the requirement economical 2-They have self confidence while assessing the brand 3- They are less impulsive 4- They change stores less 5- The customer makes assessment taking price and value as basis and then remain loyal.

Day recognized in this study the assumption of consumer’s homo-economicus as one of consciousness criteria and emphasized that customer assessment is the basis for loyalty and it was anticipated that impulsive consumption which an unconscious attitude may be prevented through loyalty. Whereas the information that those who are loyal consume the same brand more in time (e.g. Wong and Zhou, 2006; Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998), is not in conformity with the framework drawn by Day.

Jacoby and Keyner’s definitions of loyalty in 1973 contains clues on consciousness. Researchers stated the existence of alternatives for loyalty as a precondition and underlined the necessity of comparison and expressed that loyalty included not only selecting but also not selecting.

In the theoretical study by Sheth and Park in 1974 loyalty was accepted as a prejudicial tendency covering three different positive attitudes. The first one of these is the emotive dimension and this is shaped according to the factors including fear, respect, and obedience. And the second dimension is the evaluative dimension based on assessment and assessment of basic usage benefit shapes this dimension. And the third dimension is the behavioral dimension which is relatively easier to create and it is possible to shape it by providing time and place utility. According to the researchers a rational customer is one who exhibits loyalty on the basis of behavior and assessment.

Those studies having a significant share at the beginning of customer loyalty literature were performed with the thesis that correct loyalty may be defined as specified before and the market may be dimensioned via this definition. Consequently what is significant is a correct definition of loyalty and for this reason it is emphasized that the customer is loyal to the brand as a result of a conscious preference. And the emphasis on consciousness in the studies on loyalty after 2000’s are generally based on 2 different significant studies conducted in 1999 by Oliver, and by Huang and Yu.

The study by Oliver in 1999 may be recognized as one of the studies that vanguards modern studies on loyalty. Oliver stated in this study that 3 decision phases are compulsory for the creation of loyalty:

- Beliefs for the characteristics of the brand to be more preferable than the offers of competitors,
- To make up emotional preference or attitude toward the brand,
- Compared to alternatives, the customer having high effort to be oriented toward that brand.

It is seen that this phase is again based on comparative brand preference. In his study Oliver argued that loyalty was created in phases including cognitive, affective, canotive and action. Cognitive loyalty is based on assessment on the basis of performance level, esthetic, functionality and cost. According to Oliver, cognitive loyalty is completely phantom loyalty since it depends on utility and cost rather than band. Affective loyalty is based on the positive feeling toward brand and aims at recession of cognitive loyalty because cognitive loyalty causes dissatisfaction and this causes the elimination of positive attitude toward the brand. Tendency toward the brand becomes devotion to the brand in canotive phase and there is the tendency to stay distant from other brands but promotional efforts may be effective on the customer. In the action which is the last phase inertia based on the
tendency toward that brand started, the brand became superior and preference of the brand was created. The quality perceived for the brand creates the perception that the brand shall provide satisfaction in the future as well. In action loyalty desire of purchase is created in the customer and that brand is always preferred and there is a resistance to the suggestions of other brands. The firm/brand does not need to pay effort for providing the customers in this phase to repurchase because it is now managed by inertial repurchasing. Oliver’s loyalty phases based on comparison and containing cognitive phase may be assessed as consciousness reflection. But the researcher exhibits firm focused approach and underlined that cognitive loyalty became an obstacle for the later phases desired to be reached and in some regard stated that consciousness made up an obstacle for brands.

Huang and Yu (1999) assumed that for soft drink brands the consumers assessed loyalty and made decision on the brands by considering the data set containing information on brands. They recognized the variables that would affect preference as data set and associated considering of data sets by the customers with consciousness. They defined repurchasing depending on high and low data set as brand inertia rather than loyalty and repurchasing behaviors of consumers having medium level data set as brand loyalty. Researchers stated that loyal customers are more vulnerable to the effect of marketing efforts and inert customers are less responding to the effect of marketing variables although they are not vulnerable to brand change. Although Huang and Yu emphasized on consciousness the probability of orientation of marketing in determining the data set that would affect the decision of the consumer was ignored. Furthermore the question that how correct is it to talk about a conscious consumption without considering probable negative effects of sugar and other additives used and that the soft drinks having hedonic benefit rather than usage benefit may be harmful comes to the mind.

In addition to this change in the literature loyal customer characteristics; when one discusses on the basis of satisfaction, value, image and inertia it shall be possible to encounter various contradictions.

3. Loyalty and Consciousness Discussion on the Basis of Characteristics of Loyal Customers

Although characteristics of loyal customers were discussed in different studies the same points are found in many of them. For example when the loyal customers are compared to those with low loyalty, they do not make change among competitors depending on price discounts and they consume more (Wong and Zhou, 2006; Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998); even this may transform customer loyalty into the desire of the customer to pay 20-25% more (Kotler and Keller 2006). According to Oliver (1999), to purchase the same brand under all terms and conditions is an “ultimate loyalty” which is difficult to achieve, and according to Kotler and Keller (2006) those who change their preferences on the basis of criteria including price, value etc. are non-loyal customers, consequently when the loyal customer is oriented to seeking loyalty becomes suspicious. It is possible to make two detections on the basis of those characteristics: 1- Loyal customer characteristics were determined as firm/brand focused. 2- The basic assumption that loyalty is conscious contains question marks due to those characteristics.

Although it is such loyalty desired by enterprises to purchase the brand under any conditions, to consume more and to spend more, one may not claim that this loyalty is always conscious. It is clear that those consumption behaviors listed have impulsive and compulsive characteristics and it is a situation opposite of frugality which is the reflection of consciousness. In this regard it may be useful to remember the thesis that claims that there is a positive relation between price and value consciousness and frugality and frugality that represents the opposite of impulsive and compulsive purchase is a superior human trait (Shohham and Brencic, 2004). For this reason it becomes more

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1 Data Set: They are the variables affecting the decision. This data set for the soft drinks in the study of the researchers was composed of variables including sweetness, low price, wide availability and advertisement.
important how loyalty is created or whether the created loyalty is created for the customer consciously and whether it is a correct loyalty or not.

Although a theoretical framework emphasizing that brand variables are unconscious according to value, price and characters offered on the basis of loyal customer characters, different studies suggest the opposite of this situation. For example, while Noble et al. (2006) fail to find any relation between price comparison and loyalty to store, Wong and Dean (2009) claimed that price consciousness is one of the probable factors that determine customer loyalty. Similarly according to the findings of Kukar-Kinney (2006), the refund scope positively affected store loyalty, with effects being the strongest for price conscious and skeptical consumers. Consequently contrary to the information included in characteristics there is a finding that promotional efforts may increase loyalty. According to other findings of Noble et al. (2006), there is no relation between assortment and convenience browsing, but while social interaction and uniqueness seeking increases, loyalty increases as well, while browsing increases loyalty decreases. And this finding coincides with the view of “loyalty is conscious” as well.

Considering the characteristics attributed to loyal customer one may mention about concrete indicators that the manner of assessing loyalty on consciousness basis in any time and conditions is problematic.

4. Loyalty and Consciousness Discussion on the Basis of Satisfaction, Value and Image

Szwarc emphasizes with reference to Johnson and Gustafsson (2000) on the fact that quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty have no meaning separately (Szwarc, 2005). Dick and Basu (1994) have a similar view and according to researchers after satisfaction reaches up to a certain point loyalty suddenly increases and after it decreases down to a certain point then it decreases suddenly. According to Oliver, although satisfaction is a significant phase for loyalty creation, satisfaction becomes less significant in a loyalty created depending on factors other than satisfaction. In this regard the tendency of repurchasing of satisfied customers may not realize all the time and satisfaction is not always a reliable antecedent for loyalty (Oliver, 1999). And Szmigin has a similar perspective on the effect of satisfaction. According to Szmigin, if companies want to have a relationship with their customers, if they expect loyalty, the passing on of information and repeat purchasing, then they have to operate by the same rules (Szmigin, 2003). It is seen that as a result of this and similar detections on satisfaction different factors including value and image are emphasized.

Lin and Wang (2006) concluded in their research that the perceived value, satisfaction and trust may affect customer loyalty positively. Wong and Zhou (2006) achieved a positive interaction between a relationship quality that could raise the value offered to the customer and customer loyalty. Mokhtar et al. (2000) made an emphasis on the probability that loyalty may be affected by satisfaction depending on image perceived and concluded that the high image perception may increase satisfaction and the increased satisfaction may increase loyalty. Similarly Chang and Tu (2005) made detections verifying the effect of image and satisfaction on loyalty. According to Boohene and Agyapong (2011) the higher service quality and customer satisfaction is the more loyalty increases. According to Solomon et.al., brand loyalty may be initiated by customer preferences based on objective reasons, but after the brand has existed for a long time and is heavily advertised it can also create emotional attachment, either by being incorporated into the consumer’s self-image or became it is associated with prior experiences (2006). And Chen and Tsai (2008) concluded that satisfaction does not have any effect while determining the effect of the value perceived on loyalty.

It is clear that satisfaction created depending on the perception of the consumer, value perception and image makes some sort of effect on customer loyalty because the effect of consumer experiences on satisfaction, value and image perception is known. When one thinks within this framework, may easily conclude that brand devotion may be effected by experiences but according to
Parsons and Maclaran, experiential consumption (2009) emphasizes the primacy of emotions over rationality, experience over cognition, and the subconscious over the conscious.

One of the researchers who suggested clearly while explaining the nature of loyalty that this may be oriented to external effects is Jansson-Boyd. According to Jansson-Boyd, “It is difficult to say for certain why some consumers get so attached to a brand that they keep on buying it time and time again. The simple explanation is that they learn that certain brands satisfy their needs. However, it is much more difficult to understand what needs it is that the brands satisfy. The needs may not necessarily be of a practical nature but may instead be connected to psychological fulfillment. One needs that most have a desire to fulfill is the need for belongingness. Such need may be established through the culture in which we are raised. Additionally, consumers can also become brand loyal by being given incentives to repeatedly use the same product or service. (Jansson-Boyd, 2010)” Similar findings are in the study of Kim et al. According to the finding achieved, the increase in the change costs composed of components including loss cost, attractiveness of alternatives, interpersonal relationship increases loyalty (Kim et al., 2004). Some part of those costs regarding change (e.g. economic cost, differentiated services offers by new applications or properties) may be perceived depending on the consciousness of consumer and some part may be related to the costs created by the brands perceptively (e.g. perception of loss, differentiated services offers by communications, social status or performance, perceived cost of adaptation, care, trust, intimacy and communication). Consequently even the consumer may pay effort to be conscious since this effort is oriented its consciousness aspect may not dominate. The suggestions of Wang et.al conducted in 2006 verify this thesis. Wang et.al. discussed in their studies the effect of neuropsychological processing on loyalty and suggested to establish loyalty through emotional tie which shall be strengthened by means of personalized communication rather than offering the consumers more technical properties or discounts in order to increase loyalty depending on the results obtained because as Fill stated as well communication may encourage loyalty and devotion (Fill, 1999) and in this process consumer is passive rather than active. Even there may be exceptional conscious consumers in general the factor that shapes loyalty creation process through effort to manage loyalty is external powers.

As it is seen although the concepts of value, satisfaction and image are related to loyalty since they arise as a result of perceptional processes affected by the communications of brands and companies may be debatable on consciousness basis and for this reason it may not be realistic to achieve the result that loyalty is a conscious attitude and/or behavior via the concepts listed.

5. Loyalty and Consciousness within the Context of Inertia

One of the shared points achieved in studies on loyalty is that repeated behavior may not always be loyalty. Sheth and Park emphasized in their study performed in 1974 that behavioral loyalty resembles inertia. According to Huang and Yu, repurchasing of the consumer is based on two sources. The first one is brand loyalty and in this case the customer makes decision of purchase in consciously repeated manner for the same brands or small number of brands. And the second one is inertia and in inertia the consumer decides to repurchase passively without thinking much (Huang and Yu, 1999). This and similar detections caused the concept of inertia to have broad place in the literature on loyalty and inertia became acceptable as reflection on unconsciousness in time. For this reason it shall be useful to examine the manner of discussing inertia placed in loyalty literature within historical course.

Campbell (1997) defines inertia as a condition where "repurchases occur on the basis of situational cues rather than on strong partner commitment." In this definition situational effects were emphasized and the lack of positive attitude was featured. While Chintagunta (1998) discusses customers as those who seek for difference and those who avoid from difference he defined those who avoid from difference as inert. Oliver (1999) is one of the researchers who gave place to the concept of inertia. He accepted inertia as an output of action loyalty and emphasized that customers tended toward inertial attitude in brand preference as a result of loyal attitudes and behaviors. According to Oliver
inertia is a reflection of loyalty. Oliver states that inertia is a concept to be defined clearly and brought the following three points into agenda: “What percent of customers are sincerely loyal, indecisive or non-loyal? What are the characteristics defining this situation? Does loyalty of customers differ between good and service categories?”

Huang and Yu (1999) are the researchers who made emphasis on the concept of inertia while discussing the issue loyalty. Researchers conclude that contrary to the content of the literature those with high brand loyalty tend to change brands and open to the effect of marketing variables. According to another interesting conclusion and detection achieved by the researchers; inert customers are open to change by nature but depending on lack of consciousness they are less sensitive to marketing variables. Researchers accepted inertia as an unconscious attitude rather than the output of loyalty contrary to Oliver’s view and led those who take this opinion as basis.

According to Corstjens and Lal (2000) customer inertia is the customer’s acting involuntarily in the previous brand purchase behavior when everything is equal, namely the customer who changes brand when suggestions change is inert. According to the researcher, inertia is quite effective in consumer preference particularly in the case involvement is low and the behavior is a rational one since it assists when satisfactory conclusions that could simplify decision making process of the customer are achieved and decreases the cost of decision making. This view is contrary to unconsciousness assumption of Huang and Yu. Another finding on the basis of this contradiction is revealed in the study of Ranaweera and Neely performed in 2003 because researchers failed to find the relation between inertia and customer loyalty. Ranaweera and Neely in the literature reviews on inertia defined inertia as repurchasing behavior without adopting a positive attitude. But researchers were contented with checking change tendency for measuring inertia and did not think that any examination on the reasons of change was necessary.

Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004) made an emphasis that inertia may arise after a dissatisfaction and the customer may be inert since he/she expects another offer that could provide satisfaction and verified the reality of their detections through their findings.

According to Solomon et al., inertia is a situation opposite of loyalty. According to this view, some people select the same brands because they need less effort to reach those brands, since they do not have sufficient motivation to assess alternatives they make their decisions according to habits. Since those people change their brand preferences when they encounter new brands easier for them to reach they were named as fickle customers. Since this customer group’s not changing brand was based on involvement and lowness in the level of consciousness, the behavior was defined as inertia rather than loyalty. The authors made emphasis on inertia with low involvement and mentioned that the attitude of the consumers to purchase without considering other alternatives is a habit (Solomon et al., 2006). And Solomon et al. have views opposite to the views of Oliver (1999) and accepted inertia as unconscioness as did Huang and Yu (1999). But researchers made emphasis that decision of purchase based on brand loyalty may transform into habit in time and the devotion arising in this case shall be stronger. Similarly although Lin and Wang (2006) have findings that many behaviors became through experience and increase in habit may increase loyalty and behaviors that became habits may lead to deciding without thinking, it is clear that every habit may not have a conscious basis. Both this result and definition of deciding depending on habit in the same book of Solomon et al. as “making decisions that are made with little or no conscious effort (Solomon et al., 2006)” made the assumptions that loyalty conscious inertial is an unconscious situation problematic.

According to Pitta et al. (2006) inertia is spurious loyalty and researchers argued the distinction between inertia and action loyalty is caused by the assessment of changes. While the researchers defined cease of shopping after any change in range or conditions in a store as inertia, they defined continuance of shopping as action loyalty. Furthermore researchers emphasized that inertia may prevent shopping place or brand change as similar to loyal behavior in the manner that it shall help with overcoming time pressure and research difficulties depending on habits.
In time studies that revealed the opposite of the assumption that inertia is an unconscious and made signal of turning to Oliver’s (1999) view started to come to the agenda. There are significant detections in this regard in three different studies of White and Yanamandram. Researchers define inertia as the situation where purchase behavior is realized passively without thinking much (White and Yanamandram, 2004). In another study made in 2006 they suggested that there is a positive relation between inertia and loyalty (Yanamandram and White, 2006). They examined the interaction between the costs that may arise from brand switching and inertia in their researches in 2009. As a result of the research it was determined that the increase in evaluation costs and learning cost that may arise from brand switching increases inertia but loss of benefit cost, uncertainty cost and sunk cost does not have effect on inertia. It was determined that the interaction between calculative commitment which is much closer to loyalty and that contain consciousness more and only sunk cost and the increase in cost perception increases devotion (Yanamandram and White 2009). The findings of those two researchers make the detection on unconsciousness of inertia debatable.

And the study of Noble et.al. performed in 2006 contains results that may be dealt on inertia basis. According to the findings of the research, there is no relation between assortment and convenience seeking and store loyalty but there is a negative relation between browsing and loyalty. Consequently probability of unverified relation between loyalty and convenience and also assortment seeking is mentioned about. Thinking at the dimension of store loyalty even the existence of this sort of a relation may seem surprising but any customer who seeks for assortment and convenience of product which shall add value to him/her is a customer who did not make decision. Mentioning about the loyalty of a customer who did not make decision is paradoxical.

Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) stated that multi brand loyalty may be possible and this sort of loyal customer seeks for difference. One reason for seeking difference may be the failure of a brand to satisfy the customer with all qualities and satisfaction can be provided through aggregate utility that multi brands may provide. So, should being loyal to multi brands as a result of seeking depending on such a probability be accepted as an unconscious behavior and/or attitude?

Messner and Vosgerau (2010) made an emphasis that via the concept of cognitive inertia the strict attitudes of the customers may be a cognitive situation. They further made an emphasis that the effect of cognitive inertia however is high in the equality of alternatives while assessing the alternatives and when there is difference between alternatives cognitive inertia could be overcome. Again the finding of this research rejects that inertia is the reflection of unconsciousness.

Dube et.al. 2010 stated in their study on inertia that inertia arises from two things: Structural state dependence where past purchases affected later purchases directly and spurious state dependence arising when the difference between the previous preference and existing purchase alternatives is not considered. Researchers took this discrimination as basis and browsed for the origin of inertia on the basis of loyalty, customer’s research and learning. According to researchers, discussing inertia under the loyalty model; when the customer purchases any brand he/she accepts the utility acquired from the brand as yield and directs the next preference, this situation is like avoiding brand change cost. When inertia is discussed on the basis of customer’s research; he/she will continue to prefer the same brand when the cost of browsing other brands is high. Thinking as learning based; since insufficient information on the product used shall raise the perceived quality of the product the customer is not directed to other brands, namely he/she deems the brand he/she uses as sufficient due to lack of information. According to researchers’ findings, customers are myopic and they are not aware of the effect of the existing decision on the utility to be gained in the future.

According to the research results of Wu (2011) emotional devotion helps with transformation of inertia into loyalty, thanks to this, inertia named as spurious devotion may be transformed into action loyalty because according to the assessment of the researcher the attractiveness of other alternatives may affect customer inertia negatively exactly as it is the case with loyalty.

Rowley (2005) also made emphasis on the concept of inertia while explaining loyalty but unlike other studies the author assessed inertia in both behavioral and attitudinal dimension and
discussed it in four groups: Captive Loyalty (Inertial Attitude and Inertial Behavior); Contended Loyalty (Positive Attitude and Inertial Behavior); Convenience-seeker Loyalty (Inertial Attitude and Positive Behavior) and Committed Loyalty (Positive Attitude and Positive Behavior). And another different approach of Rowley is that the brand change of each of those four groups determined may be stimulated under different conditions. He argued that the ones in Captive and Convenience-seeker group are in seeking situation, the ones in Contended group seek for the brand offering more value and the committed may change brand when there are factors that could decrease the value in the offering of the brand which they are loyal to or when one competitor makes a more valuable offer (Rowley, 2005). Consequently Rowley made a clear emphasis on the probability of loyal customers to tend to seeking as a result of dissatisfaction or being cheated.

Assessing the concepts of loyalty and consciousness on inertia basis; although inertia was accepted as reflection of unconsciousness, it is clear that this assumption contains significant contradictions.

6. Conclusions and Discussion

It is possible to make the following detections as a result of the comprehensive literature review in this study:

- The assessments on the basis of loyalty and consciousness deviated in time and the conceptual infrastructure of the view that loyalty is a conscious and no loyalty is an unconscious attitude and/or behavior corrupted.
- An understanding that bases the responsibility of loyalty on the company and the responsibility of no loyalty on customer and unconsciousness of the customer is both a glib and problematic understanding focused on the company/brand rather than the customer.
- The most significant indicator that reveals that loyalty and consciousness assessment is problematic and that what the consciousness which shall affect loyalty has not been defined.

The real question to be answered under those detections is: What is the reason for this deviation and contradictions?

It is very clear that loyalty is a reaction (Jacoby and Keyner, 1973) covering behavior and attitude, that the reaction is one that may be directed by the enterprises and shaped by other external effects (Sheth and Park, 1974; Selvi, 2007). As a result loyalty is a consumer reaction that contains emotionality probable to be oriented by external effects namely it is a result shaped and vulnerable to reshaping but not a process. Consequently in a result known to contain emotional attitudes, it is a wrong way to seek for a consciousness that requires logicalness. What is correct is to seek for consciousness in the preference phase before being loyal namely in a phase when logic dominates rather than emotionality namely in the process of creation of loyalty. And the second point where consciousness may be sought is at the point of continuity of a wrong loyalty namely consciousness may be debatable at the point of loyalty that continues to be cheated even it may have been created correctly because consciousness requires assessment and assessment may either be made prior to being loyal or made at the point of continuity of loyalty.

In the study of Theodore Levitt performed in 1983 he likened the management of the relationship between the purchaser and seller to the relation between husband and wife. And Fournier and Yao (1997) likened loyalty to monogamy with reference to Kassarjian (1971) because it is one of the assumptions that the origin of discussing loyalty in social sciences is loyalty to the spouse. In this context, it is possible to explain the situation that is tried to be explained through the metaphor of a correct and happy marriage. Some of the unmarried individuals may clarify what sort of characteristics should be sought for a happy marriage. Then they assess the characteristics sought via the alternatives and is directed to the candidate who could have those characteristics. If the candidate has those
characteristics they fall in love with him/her, marry and may be happy. The most important condition of being happy is responding the expectations and experiencing love in emotional dimension. As long as the expectations are responded namely the spouse is not cheated in terms of expectations and/or the spouse does not think/notice that he/she is cheated, marriage and love continues but if cheating is in question the relation may end. End of relation through cheating particularly depends on noticing of cheating by the cheated. This marriage being correct depends on different factors, as it is seen clearly these are to know oneself and spouse candidate namely responding the expectations through consciousness. So, is not marriage happy when there is no consciousness? It may certainly be but is every happy marriage a correct marriage? It is difficult to claim that a marriage in which there is a cheated party but he/she is not aware of being cheated is a correct marriage even if there may be happiness in that marriage. Can any individual who shall marry without knowing himself/herself and the other party make a correct marriage and be happy? He/she may certainly; he/she sees, is affected without assessing the necessary conditions, falls in love and marries. If the person he/she addresses is a correct and non-cheating person by chance he/she will be happy and correct marriage shall be made. But if the person whom he/she marries cheats him/her he/she thinks to be happy without noticing this situation and that he/she made correct marriage and continues his/her life in cheating thinking that he/she experiences loyalty. In this sort of a marriage the one who made an unconscious selection and be cheated is responsible as much as the one who cheated. As a result a customer consciously what to seek and where to seek, be loyal when he/she finds what was sought for and be loyal unless he/she is cheated. And another customer may reach de loyalty unconsciously with the orientation of external factors but this loyalty is one under the initiative of the firm/brand rather than the customer.

As a result unless the manner of discussing loyalty on consciousness basis is reviewed one shall continue to encounter the following problems:

- While the origin of loyalty is accepted as the enterprise, inertia, no loyalty or the end of loyalty shall be accepted as the fault of the customer and this situation shall lead to failure in the management of loyalty for enterprises.
- The brands having the power of affecting the customer despite it fails to offer the customer the value he/she deserves they will always be before the brands that offer value but have low effecting power and continue to use loyalty to their own advantage.
- When it is anticipated that the customers may be loyal consciously or not loyal consciously or be loyal unconsciously the existing situation analysis of the enterprise and strategic steps may be healthier.

References


64] Selvi, M. S. (2007), Müşteri Sadakati, Detay, Ankara


