ARE ALL LOYAL CUSTOMERS CONSCIOUS? AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY DISCUSSIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract:

Although the remark/opinion/assumption that loyalty is conscious is frequently observed in articles dealing with marketing and customer behaviors, there is only a limited number of studies attempting to clarify this matter. This study, which bears an empirical character, has been grounded on the presumption that the opinion that loyalty is always conscious may be paradoxical and conducted to ascertain that loyalty may be unconscious, as well.

Based on the resultant findings reached at the end of the analysis of data obtained through survey, it has been found that customers may be grouped into such categories as conscious loyals, unconscious loyals, conscious disloyals and unconscious loyals. Practical suggestions have been drawn for enterprises based on predictions and projections for the characteristics of consumers to be included in these groups, identified at the conclusion part of the study.

Abstract text,

Introduction

There is a common consensus about loyalty in literature: Loyalty is a conscious behavior and/or attitude of a customer (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978; Huang and Yu, 1999; Solomon et al., 2006, Kotler and Keller, 2006). According to this point of view, customers make a brand choice and they show positive attitude towards that brand, while they keep buying or consuming the same products with identical name despite changing conditions, suggestions of different alternative brands. The same idea assumes people who shift between brand choices frequently or who change a brand after using it for a certain period of time as

unconscious consumers. Despite this assumption, however, neither there exists any clear information as to what consciousness that shapes loyalty and influence preferences might be in the current literature nor had any research been conducted to test this relationship.

Literature Review

1.   Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is a key variable that explains to retain a customer in hand (Wong and Zhou, 2006; Pritchard and Howard, 1997). According to Jacoby and Keyner (1973), loyalty is a function of psychological processes of a decision-maker over time, in presence of one or more alternatives and behavioral response based on prejudice. By another definition, 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). To Oliver (1999), loyalty is a deep commitment created for repeat purchasing behavior or becoming a customer of a preferred good or service, on a continuous basis in future, wherefore it entails to behavioral changes and repeated purchases of the same brand or brand set, despite situational factors that can cause a change of behavior and all marketing efforts.

As such merits of loyal customers like lower cost, long term relation, positive suggestion (Reichheld and Teal 1996), presenting an acquired capital (Szwarc 2005), buying more and paying more (Wallace et al., 2004; Wright and Sparks, 1999; Zeithaml et al., 1996) and etc., bring companies competitive advantages (Dick and Basu, 1994), many manufacturers target reaching at loyalty (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

Despite the fact that the concept of customer loyalty covers both brand loyalty and supplier loyalty, these two were treated separately (Wallace et al., 2004) and even addressed as covering rather different aspects, it is dealth with two different approaches. In the first, which is the behavioral approach, the share in consumption has been explained based on such criteria as possibility of consumption, repeated consumption possibility of a product, recurrent consumption behavior, multi-dimensional consumption behaviors and etc. (Kumar and Shah, 2004). According to the second and more up-to-date approach, which also encompasses attitude, this is a multi-dimensional concept including not only the past purchasing behaviors and trends but also the customer's attitudes and system of values (Sudharshan, 1995; Wong and Zhou, 2006). Although not any particular research has been

conducted, in these two approaches, loyalty was treated as a conscious attitude and/or behavior, while no loyalty is associated with unconsciousness.

2. Customer Consciousness

According to Solomon et. al. (2006), consciousness rests upon the theory of cognitive learning, where inherent mental processes pose significance. They ground this theory on a person's giving response at the end of a number of mental processes, whenever he or she encounters a problem or stimulant. The authors, after making notion of the fact that not all reactions are based upon cognitive processes, highlighted that reactions given especially to newly encountered situations may not be cognitive. Based on the frame drawn by Solomon et. al., consciousness may be defined as "giving reaction as a result of logical evaluation of data available concerning a situation being encountered."

In studies conducted on marketing and especially consumer behaviors, although the consumer's consciousness was addressed as a factor influencing preference, no mention was made as to presence of a consciousness, as a whole. It is equally hard for one to gain access to the existence of a clear and integral definition as to what the concept of customer consciousness may be. This is because that consciousness has always been dealt as comprehensive of such points as price, quality, value, brand, health, environment, style and fashion etc., and were used as criteria for dimensioning, with focus laid upon the effect of consciousness on consumer's preference and the direction of this influence, regarding the elements generally listed in these studies. However, the common stance in dealing with consciousness appears to concentrate around being careful and sensitive about a given matter and the influence of that matter on customer's preference. The attitude and behaviors of conscious customer enumerated by Sziming (2003) as controlling desire, controlling ourselves, learning to share and deconstructing the commercial system. Consequently, to bring up a generic definition of customer consciousness, then it would be "a state of maturity in attitudes and behaviors that steers the decision-making process in the customer, in such a way as not to pose any harm for the consumer, society and environment, but, on the contrary, promising abundant benefits to all".

As the customer consciousness was dealt as comprehensive of price, quality, value, brand, health and environmental consciousness in the study, it would be utile to explore each of these concepts separately.

2.1. Price Consciousness

According to Kukar-Kinney et.al. price serves as an indicator of what buyers must give up to acquire a product. Consequently, the higher the price of a product, ceteris paribus, the less likely would a consumer purchase the product. In this sense there is a negative relationship between price and willingness to buy (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2012). This unwillingness renders consumers sensitive about pricing and this price sensitivity has been transliterated in literature as the concept of price consciousness and it is determined as the degree to which consumers focus exclusively on paying low prices (Lichtenstein et al., 1993), so it is a key consumer trait which influences consumer price perceptions, price search or store purchase behavior (Kukar - Kinney et al., 2007). When considered in this context, price consciousness is also associated with how much a customer would afford to pay for a product at most and price-conscious customers do not show the tendency towards paying for an alternative product with distinguishing features at a higher price (Monroe and Petroshius, 1981). By nature, price-conscious consumers follow sales campaigns and price discounts (Yaşin, 2009) and should be more likely to shop in more stores, read more store advertising, and thereby become more knowledgeable about stores' price levels (Magi and Julander, 2005)

2.2. Quality Consciousness and Value Consciousness

Quality is conformance to requirements (Crosby, 1979), and quality in a product or service is not what the supplier puts in, it is what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for (Drucker, 1985). Therefore, quality is a perceptive state and varies much depending on customer expectations and, customers who always tend to explore the products of highest quality and make their choice of preference over quality, without comprising from quality for price are characterized as quality conscious (Ailawadi et al., 2001).

Value, which is a more comprehensive construct than quality, is an overall assessment of the advantages that a particular product has to offer, with an understanding of what is being bought and what is being paid in return (Zeithaml, 1988) and is another perceptive state of psychological satisfaction or pleasure obtained from taking advantage of the financial terms of the price deal (Grewal et al., 1998). Prior studies have suggested that the customer's value, or derived benefit, plays a significant role in determining his or her long-term relationship with, or loyalty to, the company (Chiu et al., 2005).

With a generalized approach, sensitivity for value in customer preferences can be characterized as value consciousness and it is a concern for price relative to quality received

(Lichtenstein et al. 1993) and reveals payment of lowest price relative to the quality limits and is the state of acquiring a derived benefit for a good or service, based on level of satisfaction achieved (Lichtensteis et al., 1990). In this respect consumers with high value consciousness are more likely to be motivated to enhance their acquisition and transaction values than consumers with low value consciousness (Dutta and Bisas, 2005).

2.3. Brand Consciousness

Brand-conscious consumers are the consumers who pay attention to brand names and are interested in buying well-known brand names (Yaşin, 2009), so brand consciousness is a mental orientation to choose brand-name products that are well known and highly advertised (Sproles and Kendall, 1986). Consumers with high levels of brand consciousness believe that brands are symbols of status and prestige, and thus prefer purchasing expensive and well-known brand-name products (Liao and Wang, 2009), because brand is considered as an indication of quality among brand-conscious customers (Eastman and Eastman, 2011). However, attention should hereby be drawn to the fact that the focal point of interest is the level of trust that the brand provides for the customer. Consequently, even though the direct reflection of brand consciousness would be the preference over products of a certain brand, it should still be borne in mind that this attitude and behavior has its origins from the trust and advantages the brand ensures for the customer.

2.4. Health Consciousness and Environmental Consciousness

Health consciousness is a term used to purport the degree of importance that an individual would chose to attribute to the concept of health, in line with concerns influencing his or her daily activities (Jayanti and Burns, 1998), and consist of health environmental sensitivity, physical fitness, personal health responsibility and nutrition and stress management dimensions (Kraft and Goodell, 1993). Health-conscious customers care to retain their health in top shape, by choosing healthy behavioral conduct, consumer healthy foods, do regular physical exercise in a conscious manner (Jayanti and Burns, 1998; Michaelidou and Hassan, 2008), so they may adjust their consumption patterns because they believe that their actions affect their health (Schifferstein and Oude Ophuis, 1998).

It has been demonstrated that existing attitude against healthy products differs (Michaelidou and Hassan, 2008; Kim and Seock, 2009); that level of consciousness tend to rise concomitant with an increase in the level of income and education (Arvanitoyannis et al.,

2003) and that consciousness may as well be reflected in the individual's healthy life conduct (Jayanti and Burns, 1998) through various studies.

Environmental consciousness can be regarded as a reflection of individual's responsibility against his/her surrounding, which is why, human populations should be dominated by the understanding that mankind may live in harmony with nature and set limitations to his levels of economic growth, for the sake of conserving the environment (Stone et al., 1995). Environmentally conscious consumers should be knowledgeable about environmental concerns (Hines et al., 1986) and they need willingness, ability and stability in attitudes and actions, in addition to knowledge (Berkowitz and Daniels, 1964; Stone et al. 1995).

Consumers' concerns about environmental issues influence their attitudes towards a product and purchase behaviors, especially for ecological or environmentally friendly products (Kim and Seock, 2009). But environmental consciousness may not and should not be expected to retain same levels in every individual and differs by level of education and income (Arvanitoyannis et al., 2003), but many consumers are not yet willing, or perhaps cannot afford, to forego financial and other advantages offered by conventional products to pursue environmental causes (Kim and Seock, 2009). It is predicted that the impact of environmental consciousness differing from this angle on consumer preferences and consumption patterns is in a changing stance.

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). Subsequently it may be thought that a or group of customers suffering a lack about behaving conscious may encounter a problem of unconsciousness in a similar way, at the point of becoming and maintaining loyal to a particular brand/product/point of sale. There is a variety of critics and findings that seem to support this determination. As an example, Trucker (1964) found out that brand is not so important and even bread of a different brand but with same properties as its rivals would still be the choice of preference of a customer group, who never divert from their brand choice, for any reason no matter what, despite price discounts established in competition. The very existence of such a customer group renders it ambiguous to tell loyalty is always conscious.

To Oliver (1999), the topmost and hardest to attain level of loyalty is ultimate loyalty, which never tends under any terms or conditions, but, it would not be realistic to allege that such kind of loyalty may always be conscious. Likewise, the finding of Chiu et al. (2005) that suggests increased hedonic values may result in increased loyalty bears a nature supportive of the idea that loyalty may not always be conscious, for the fact that a majority of hedonic values is not rational.

Loyal customers do not change their choice among competitors and consume more, despite the discounts offered or attributed to them (Wong and Zhou, 2006; Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998), and may pay higher prices and never divert from their preferences based on such criteria as pricing, value and etc. (Kotler and Keller, 2006), as widely stressed traits across literature. With consideration of attributed traits, concrete indicators may be argued to exist for evaluation of loyalty on the basis of consciousness to turn out problematic, ever since, while consumer consciousness is an attitude based on certain sensitivity on certain matters, the attributed traits are in contrast with these sensitivities.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Process

This study designed as a quantitative empirical research deals with tendency for loyalty on the basis of consciousness. There is a variety of reasons for regarding loyalty as a tendency, in the study which also covers consciousness. First of all customer loyalty's potential of being a tendency reflected on many products, with lots of different findings and conclusions that may possibly be found among researches, in support thereof. For example Sheth and Park (1974) defined brand loyalty as a biased attitudinal aptitude and approached it in emotive, evaluative and/or behavioral response dimensions. The question "Do customer loyalties differ between goods and service categories?" proposed by Oliver (1999) as a subject of study is in a nature that supports the likelihood of this prospect. A similar situation applies to the finding of Huang and Yu (1999) that loyalty may be a general phenomenon, independent from brand. The high correlation between store loyalty and specific brand loyalty (Cunningham, 1961), close relation between the system of values and self of the customer on one hand and loyalty on the other (Sudharshan, 1995), strengthens the idea that loyalty can be regarded as a tendency. The second ground is opinions and findings that loyalty is open to psychosocial and personal (Jacoby and Keyner, 1973; Oliver 1999) and cultural (Jansson-Boyd, 2010) influences. Fournier and Yago's study (1997) involved results

covering all major grounds for regarding loyalty as a tendency, and reveals that brand loyalty changes depending on different psychological and social impacts, in the same product category (coffee), as a result of interviews held with customers with different loyalty levels. At this end, customers' loyalty levels may be shaped according to their social interactions, psychological moods, benefits expected from the brand, personal traits, and by past experiences and accumulations. The third ground is that loyalty is a subject that is manageable (e.g. Dick and Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999; Rowley, 2005). The final ground is in fact an important matter that needs focusing and lots of discussion. In all studies performed hitherto, loyalty has been regarded as a customer response is treated as an outcome. Since loyalty involves affective dimesions, accommodation and reviewing together of a response with consciousness may definitely yield misleading outcomes. That is why it was considered appropriate to regard and treat loyalty as a tendency, to enable its association with consciousness.

Due to the grounds and reasons enumerated, customer loyalty is considered to be a general tendency, over which data were collected through anonymous surveys on brand/product/point of sale items, which in turn formed input for further study. Although this margin and basic approach determined in the study is considered the basic limitation of the study as a subject that need to be discussed further, it is presumed that a different point of view would be added to articles on loyalty.

4.2. Sampling Design, Data Collection and Analysing the Data

For this empirical quantitative research questionnaire was employed for obtaining data. The questionnaire was included sections aimed at identifying the demographics, loyalty tendencies and consumer consciousness of the participants. Loyalty tendency and consciousness scale items were utilized from the scales pretested for reliability and validity are given in Table-1.

Table-1 Scales Used

Scales Used	Number of Items	Scales Used	Number of Items
Brand Consciousness:		Loyalty	
Donthu and Gilliland, 1996	2	De Wulf et al.,2001	3
Cited by the Researcher	2	Ganseh, et al., 2000	3
Price Consciousness		Campo, et al., 2000	2
Wells and Tigert, 1971	7	Ailiwadi, et al., 2001	1
Lichtenstein et al., 1988	3	Lichtenstein, et al., 1990	2
Darden and Perreault, 1976	2	Zeithaml, et al., 1996	6
Value Consciousness		Added by the Researcher	1
Lichtenstein et al., 1990	6		
Health Consciousness			
Jayanti and Burns, 1998	5		
Gould 1988	2		
Environmental Consciousness			
Stone, et al., 1995	3		
Ersoy and Nazik, 2006	2		
Cited by the Researcher	1		
Quality Consciousness			
Ailawadi, et al., 2001	3		

The consciousness scale is formed according to 6 different dimensions most commonly dealt with in marketing literature. Preference has been made towards the use and adaptation of a generic expression, rather than individual statements based on specific product or brand name as included in the loyalty scale (see in table-5). One item for environmental consciousness, two items for brand consciousness and one item for loyalty tendency have been added to the scales for the purpose of this study. Arrangements have been made for assuring replies to questions covered in second and third sections with a 5-point Likert type scale (1: Strongly Disagree.... 5: Strongly Agree). The scales was taken to a pretest with convenience sampling on a subject population of 40 individuals and administered only after necessary set of arrangements are made. Since the purpose of the study is to empirically test the conceptual relations rather then reaching at general conclusions for any

universe, snowball sampling (Churchill and Brown, 2004) was found to be an appropriate technique to employ, due to time and cost limitations. While the sampling method chosen is considered to be another limitation of the study, for removing this limitation two distinct methodologies employed for obtaining data to reach socio-demographic and socio-cultural heterogeneity. For the first method data were supplied on through face-to-face surveys and on-line mail lists. The face-to-face survey was administered by 50 voluntary university students selected based on level of income, education of parents and differences among cities where families live. Students were informed and trained on the purpose and manner of application of the survey before it was administered. For on-line administration of the survey, a mail group of 50 individuals with different socio-demographic characteristics (gender, occupation, age, income and education levels) were selected and given the survey through the internet. As a result of the survey 883 feedbacks were retrieved in total, composed of 450 inputs from face-to-face interviews and 433 web inquires, all of which were reviewed to determine 687 as eligible for the conduct of analyses and subsequently the analyses were performed on this dataset.

For conceptual validation of the scales, previously developed scales items were used. Three statistical methods were employed in total for scales to verify the scale dimensions, and to test the statistically reliability and construct validity. Initially, the construct validity was checked employing EFA (exploratory factor analysis) for defining the sub-dimensions of each scale (Terblance and Boshoff, 2008), cronbach alpha values for reliability of scale dimensions, CFA (confirmatory factor analysis) by SEM (Structural Equation Model) to test multi-dimensionality of the construct (Byrne, 2010). Normal distribution of data set, which is the prerequisite for SEM (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996; Swimberghe, 2008), was separately tested.

4.3 Study Findings and Results

The demographics of the sample are listed in Table-2, below.

Table-2 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population

Gender			Education		
	n	Percent		*n*	Percent
Female	315	45.9	Primary School	104	15.1
Male	372	54.1	High School	294	42.8
Total	687	100.0	Under Graduate	214	31.1
Age			Master's Degree	49	7.1
			Phd Degree	26	3.8
	N	Percent	Total	687	100.0
< 20	89	13.0	**Family Income Per Month**		
20-29	292	42.5			
30-39	160	23.3		*n*	Percent
40-49	95	13.8	< 1000 TL[1]	222	32.3
50-59	41	6.0	1001-2000 TL	257	37.4
> 60	10	1.5	2001-3000 TL	102	14.8
Total	687	100.0	3001-4000 TL	42	6.1
			4001-5000 TL	29	4.2
			> 5000 TL	35	5.1
			Total	687	100.0

Based on a review of the demographic characteristics of the sample, it can be said that the desired level of heterogeneity is obtained.

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[1] 1 TL (Turkish Lira) ≈ 0,55 USD (30 May 2012)

4.4. Development of Scales, Reliability and Validity Tests

As mentioned earlier, EFA and SEM in combination with CFA were utilized for verification of scales and dimensioning of scales. Normal data distribution was also checked for SEM. For normal distribution, the Skewness and Kurtosis values should desirably fall in a range of -3 and +3 (Albayrak, 2006). An investigation of Skewness values (between -1,404 and 0,140 for consciousness; -1,025 and 0,298 for loyalty) and Kurtosis values (between -1,161 and 2,577 for consciousness; -1,134 and 0,443 for loyalty) yield a normal distribution of data set.

4.4.1. Development of Consumer Consciousness Dimensions

The EFA results and cronbach alpha values associated with sub dimensions of the consciousness scale are given in Table-3, below.

Table-3 Results of EFA and Reliability Analysis for Consciousness Dimensions

Items	Factors and Loadings				
	Price	Health	Envir.	Value	Brand
M1: In general I purchase products identified as a brand.					,731
M3: Brand is an indication of quality for me.					,837
M4: Well known brands are more reilable.					,769
H1: Paying attention to whether or not foodstuffs contain harmful chemicals.		,689			
H2: Caring about the quality of the water I drink.		,518			
H3: Generally reading ingredients on labels.		,695			
H4: Reading health related articles more frequently than before.		,775			
H5: Effects of various products on health draws attention.		,735			
H6: Generally watching out for feelings about health condition.		,658			
H7: Caring about changes in health conditions.		,632			
P1: When going shopping, examining the prices of even the smallest items.	,607				
P2: Generally watching ads about discounts.	,525				
P4: Even checking out the pricing of inexpensive stuff.	,626				
P5: Not hesitating to walk around for the best price when shopping for anything, be it a piece of cloth, foodstuffs, furniture or tools, hardware and etc.	,669				

P6: Generally purchasing the cheapest.	,701				
P7: Generally buying products sold at discount.	,740				
P8: Buying the cheapest product capable of meeting needs.	,734				
P9: Having the ambition to endeavor extreme efforts for finding the product with the best price.	,774				
P10: The savings obtained by purchasing a product at most advantageous price generally worth all the burden of related efforts.	,748				
P11: A compare the prices of at least 2 or 3 brands, before buying.	,586				
E2: Prefering products generating as less waste as possible.		,626			
E3: Paying attention to buy the "environment-friendly" products.		,664			
E4: When selecting new home utensils, prefering the superior features in terms of water, electrical power and detergent savings.		,556			
E5: Never consuming products with known contributions to environmental pollution.		,711			
E6: Prefering products sold in recyclable packaging.		,757			
E7: Minimal use of packaging is a show of environmental awareness.		,660			
V1: Comparing a variety of brands while shopping, in order to fully retrieve the value of my money.			,690		
V2: Using every effort to obtain products/services at maximum quality in good value and consideration of expenditure whenever buy anything.			,712		
V3: When buying a product, being sure to buy the best that money can buy.			,679		
V4: Looking up for products with lowest price that meet the minimum quality criteria.			,584		
V6: Caring about high quality as much as caring about low price.			,641		
Initial Eigen values	8.368	4.114	2.054	1.725	1.375
% of Variance	26.993	13.272	6.627	5.565	4.437
Cumulative % Variance	26.993	40.265	46.892	52.457	56.894
Cronbach Alpha Per Dimensions	,879	,855	,866	,784	,740
Cronbach Alpha for Whole Scale	,900				

After eliminating the items related with problematic factor distribution/loadings or lowering the level of reliability and the next procedural steps were carried out with 5 dimension including 31 items. Contrary to what was predicted, consciousness consisted of 5, instead of 6 dimensions. As the factor distribution of variables especially included in quality

dimension were problematic, they were not included in the analysis. The presumption that value dimension may include quality help us draw the conclusion that this dimensioning is not too problematic at all. The cronbach alpha values of each dimension are above the requisite threshold of 0,7 (Hair et al., 1998; Gallagher et al., 2008). The cumulative variance of scale 56,894% is at an acceptable level.

The factor loadings and fit indices of CFA for consciousness dimensions are given in Table-4, below.

Table-4 CFA and Fit Indices for Consciousness Dimensions

Items	Brand	Envir.	Health	Value	Price	Fit Indices	Values
P11					,641	$\chi2$ Index (CMIN/DF=1086,89/408)	2,664
P5					,678	RMSEA	,049
P2					,508	GFI	,905
H7			,581			AGFI	,884
H3			,671			CFI	,928
H2			,582			NFI	,890
H1			,658			Hoelter's N (p<0.01)	302
V6				,606		p value	0,001
V4				,590			
P8					,646		
P7					,689		
P6					,584		
M4	,704						
M3	,727						
M1	,667						
E2		,707					
E3		,806					
E4		,682					
E5		,753					
E6		,706					
E7		,558					

Items	Brand	Envir.	Health	Value	Price	Fit Indices	Values
H6			,613				
H5			,744				
H4			,744				
V3				,707			
V2				,719			
V1				,626			
P10					,726		
P9					,729		
P4					,585		
P1					,579		

Not any problems were encountered with distribution of items by factors, factor loadings and significance level after CFA by SEM. Chi-Square/χ^2 value (2,664) falls within the desired range of 2,0-3,0 (Gallagher et al, 2008; Antoncic, 2007). RMSEA (0,049) was calculated lower than the desired upper limit of 0,05 (Browne and Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2010). GFI (,905), CFI (,928) and NFI (,890) values were also calculated to be in acceptance ranges (Schermelleh- Engel et al., 2003; Thompson, 2000; Şimşek, 2007). AGFI (,884) verifies CFA model as an acceptable value (Schermelleh- Engel et al., 2003). Given the Hoelster's N it is obvious that sample size of research (687) is suitable at a significance level of 99% for SEM. Conclusively, the distribution of factor dimensions reached with EFA was verified with CFA and the scale was optimized for the next steps.

4.4.2. Development of Loyalty Tendency Scale

The same procedures were applied to consciousness scales, for verification of sub dimensions of the scale including 18 items that regards loyalty as a tendency and ensuring its construct validity. The construct validity values of factor dimensions and factor loadings of each and all items are given in Table-5, below.

Table-5 Results of CFA and Reliability Analysis for Loyalty Tendency Dimensions

Items	Factors and Loadings		
	1	**2**	**3**
L6: Not changing preference of regular product, brand or store for a price increase.	,832		
L7: Not changing preference in regular product, brand or store even finding a better economic offer from rivals.	,857		
L8: I think that I am loyal to the product, brand or store of which I am a regular customer.	,631		
L9: Not like making changes about the brands, products and stores	,697		
L1: Being a person who liked being a regular customer of the products and brands and stores		,869	
L2: Like to become a permanent customer of the same product, brand and store.		,848	
L3: Not hesitating to travel long distances to reach to the product, brand or point of sale that bought regularly.		,697	
L16: Being happy to hear people bragging about a product, brand or store of which bought regularly.			,794
L17: Encouraging people to get familiar with the product, brand or store of which bought regularly.			,814
L18: Absolutely suggesting the product, brand or store of which bought regularly, to people who ask for guidance.			,826
Initial Eigen values	4.598	1.486	1.012
% of Variance	45.976	14.856	10.115
Cumulative % of variance	45.976	60.832	70.947
Cronbach Alpha per Dimensions	,835	,824	,791
Cronbach Alpha for Whole Scale	,867		

3 factors consisted of 10 items that define loyalty tendency were identified. A review of items in factor dimensions reveals that the first factor is attitudinal; the second is affective, and third is conative in character. In order to verify scale dimensions, CFA was administered by means of SEM and results compiled in Table-6.

Table-6 CFA and Fit Indices for Loyalty Tendency Scale Dimensions

Items	Attitudinal	Affective	Conative	Fit Indices	Values
L9	,690			χ2 Index (CMIN/DF=80,183/30)	2,673
L8	,780			RMSEA	,049
L7	,695			GFI	,976
L6	,650			AGFI	,956
L3		,645		CFI	,984
L2		,854		NFI	,974
L1		,904		Hoelter's N (p<0.01)	436
L18			,808	p value	0,001
L17			,821		
L16			,632		

With a review of the distribution of items by factors, the factor loadings of items and significance and fit indices of SEM, the dimensions of the loyalty tendency dimensioned with EFA are also verified with CFA. In conclusion, the consciousness dimensions scale was developed with loyalty tendency scale tested for reliability and validity.

4.5. Investigation of Relation between Loyalty Tendency Dimensions and Consciousness Dimensions

We have mentioned earlier in the context of this report that this determination was the main subject of research, after stressing that loyalty is a conscious behavior and/or attitude in marketing literature. For this purpose, we have investigated the correlations between customer consciousness dimensions, which were tested for reliability and validity and dimensions of loyalty tendency and compiled our resultant findings in Table-7 below.

Table-7 Correlation between Customer Loyalty Dimensions and Consciousness Dimensions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1- Brand Consciousness	1							
2- Health Consciousness	,231**	1						
3- Price Consciousness	-,017	,254**	1					
4- Environmental Consciousness	,221**	,655**	,248**	1				
5- Value Consciousness	,226**	,463**	,367**	,455**	1			
6- Attitudinal Loyalty	,358**	,193**	-,129**	,183**	,033	1		
7- Affective Loyalty	,338**	,233**	-,051	,177**	,213**	,575**	1	
8- Conative Loyalty	,310**	,268**	,131**	,207**	,261**	,380**	,450**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

With an examination of statistically significant correlation figures, although there are some relations between loyalty dimensions and consciousness dimensions the level of relations are weak to verify the judgment "loyalty is conscious" as commonly conceded in literature. Consequently, this outcome offers critical evidence of the fact that loyalty is not a conscious behavior and/or attitude always and for everyone.

As not a correlation can be observed to exist between consciousness and loyalty tendency at high levels, separation of the sample population in different groups based on these two variables and then examination of the difference between the groups so formed will help testing the idea whether loyalty is totally conscious or not. For grouping the sample, K-means clusters analysis was employed. Bipartite grouping was preferred in both analyses, for functionality of results. The results of clusters analysis can be found in Table-8, below.

Table-8 Results of Cluster Analysis

	Clusters					Clusters			
	High	Low				High	Low		
	Mean	Mean	F	Sig.		Mean	Mean	F	Sig.
Attitudinal Loyalty	3.40	2.08	483.780	,000	Brand Consciousness	3.70	2.88	128.855	,000
Affective Loyalty	4.06	2.41	868.426	,000	Health Consciousness	4.19	3.13	470.099	,000
Conative Loyalty	3.94	2.90	259.332	,000	Price Consciousness	3.53	2.92	95.482	,000
					Environmental Consciousness	4.24	3.11	512.892	,000
					Value Consciousness	4.24	3.50	226.726	,000

At the end of cluster analysis, it is apparent that all three dimensions of loyalty are effective and this effect is valid. Reviews of the mean values of clusters reveal that bipartite grouping is reasonable and the first group's loyalty is high, while the second group's loyalty is low. Similarly, all consciousness dimensions were observed to significantly influence the grouping. By looking at mean values of two groups formed, the first group was identified with high consciousness level and the second group, with low consciousness level. At completion of the analyses, it was found that customers may be gathered under different groups according to consciousness and loyalty dimensions. Cross-tab and chi-square analysis was used to disclose the significance of the difference between these groups. The results of cross-tab and chi-square analyses are found in Table-9, below.

Table-9 Grouping of the Population According to Customer Consciousness and Loyalty Tendency Dimensions

			CONSCIOUSNESS		Total
			HIGH	LOW	
LOYALTY	HIGH	Count	311	143	454
		% of Total	45.3%	20.8%	66.1%
	LOW	Count	126	107	233
		% of Total	18.3%	15.6%	33.9%
Total		Count	437	250	687
		% of Total	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%

Person Chi-square= 13,841   p= 0,001

The cross tabulation and chi-square analysis bring out that there is a significant difference between the four groups according to loyalty and consciousness dimensions; ergo the problematic nature of the proposition that all loyal customers are conscious was verified one more time. If we base on consciousness in this perspective, it is possible to categorize customer in four groups on the basis of loyalty tendency, as shown in Figure-1.
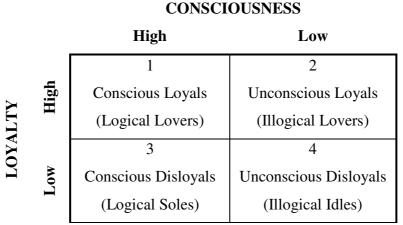
CONSCIOUSNESS

	High	Low
High	1 Conscious Loyals (Logical Lovers)	2 Unconscious Loyals (Illogical Lovers)
Low	3 Conscious Disloyals (Logical Soles)	4 Unconscious Disloyals (Illogical Idles)

LOYALTY (vertical axis label)

Figure-1 Types of Customers in Loyalty and Consiousness Dimensions

If it is tried to to predict the potential characteristics of these groups and what type of brands and enterprises these customers would be fit for, as follows:

1. Conscious Loyals (Logical Lovers): Are consumers who well know how and where to search for which product, with features or functions satisfactory or necessary to them, before becoming loyal customer. They have found what they wanted and are loyal to it. They will stay loyal to the brand, product or store of their choice, for as long as they are cheated or misguided. Furthermore, they will stay closed to external factors and communications unless being cheated or misguided If they are deceived, they will feel so at the instant as being conscious and start a new search and exhibit the traits of conscious disloyals until they find what they seek, once again, and thereafter become loyal and remain as such unless they are cheated or deceived. They can be defined as consumers with high levels of knowledge and involvement, who avoid risks. They are hard-to-deceive people since they are conscious, wherefore they are customers suitable for rather such companies and brands, which are trustworthy, do not hesitate to reveal and share information, have standards applicable to their presentations and which not only preserve but also improve their standards on a continual basis, aiming at offering value in return for what is paid by the customer permanently. Reliance upon loyalties of this type of customers by brands and/or companies that generally claim payment in higher values than what they offer is risky as they may divert the company from its strategic targets.

2. Unconscious Loyals (Illogical Lovers): This term defines the group of customers who have not a single idea or clue about what to look for and about what criteria they should base their decisions on, in respect of any product offered for sale. What they generally seek for is a guess, but in most of the cases, they are unaware of the traits or peculiarities that a product and brand must possess to lead them successfully to such guess. External stimulants,

influences and marketing efforts make these people loyal to a brand or company not because they sound logical but they fed emotions of this kind of customers. They are masses suitable for guidance. They don't even quit being loyal easily when they are fooled, because they can hardy become aware of the fact they were fooled as they don't know what they are looking for and keep consuming the same brand happily ever after, in their own, self-created realm. Consumers of this category present a potential for such brands and companies that are capable of being influential over the customer thanks to good communication and marketing skills, although not being superior to any peer in quality of services and variety of features of goods they have to offer, since, the loyalties of this kind of customers are hard to loose except in cases where the image or reputation of the company is damaged or deleted.

3. Conscious Disloyals (Logical Soles): These have never been able to become and stay loyal to a particular product/brand/store, although knowing quite well what to look for and where to find it. There may be two potential reasons for this: either they can't find what they want in real or they lack the personal traits suitable for behaving loyal. The first group above continues with life as a conscious loyal customer, once they manage to find what they have been seeking for. Yet, the second group will always be in search thinking that more different experiences await for them ahead, even when they find what they seek. The first group of customers is rather suitable for brands/products/stores that have presentations matching the needs of conscious loyals. The second group generally creates no value, in addition to being unsuitable for many companies. However this group is still fit for companies that aim at providing hedonic benefits and different experimental advantages, willing to have short term relationships. It would be a devastatingly big mistake for companies having a portfolio of customers of his type by sector or product ranges, to come up with strategies relying solely on loyalty, without first distinguishing between the two groups.

4. Unconscious Disloyals (Illogical Idles): These consist of people who don't know what to look for and cannot be loyal, either. The reason for maintaining disloyal is two-folded. In the first case, they cannot become loyal because of not being or becoming aware of whether they found what they were looking for, or not. This group wants to be loyal, avoiding uncertainties, but cannot be loyal. In the second case, they are not only unconscious but also disloyal because of their natural traits as people and their lifestyles. They have low levels of knowledge and interest and constitute a group of consumers who lead a life full of risks and adrenaline, because of lacking any value purported to their lives. Unconscious disloyals are the worst among all unreliable customer groups, for brands/products/stores. Setting out plans

with assumption of this category of customers as loyal is the biggest mistake that can ever be made, which potentially yields irretrievable damage. This group may be considered suitable for only such brands/products/stores, which gain access to customers with extraordinary presentations and communication efforts creating a powerful image and which come into interaction with the customer for very short terms really to run business at high prices and profit margins.   Even such kind of companies should avoid including the group of unconscious disloyals in their long term plans.

Results and Discussion:

This study was performed to discuss the general acceptance of the opinion that loyalty is a conscious behavior and/or attitude, in literature written on the subject.

The first point of interest upon which focus is laid during the study is to seek and find an answer as to whether there exists a holistic definition which brings to fore the customer consciousness in articles on loyalty and whether there has been any studies conducted on the matter or not. Due to this lack, customer consciousness has been dealt with variables based on different dimensions (such as brand, value, price, health and environment).

As a result of analysis of data obtained during this study, it was found that a very weak relation was existent between the loyalty dimensions and consciousness dimensions. With this perspective, in order to put forth the fact that loyalty is not always a conscious behavior/attitude, the sample population was divided into 4 different groups on the basis of loyalty and consciousness and the difference in between these groups was demonstrated to be significant. Consequently, the argument that loyalty may not always be a conscious behavior/attitude was further scrutinized. Some suggestions were developed and presented for marketers on the basis of potential traits of different consumer groups, as well as these traits explained.

Holding major discussions on the following questions, bearing in mind the purpose of this study, literature and studies steering the subjects of loyalty and consciousness and results obtained thereafter would prove to be useful:

1- Is loyalty, which also encompasses affective dimension, always a conscious behavior and/or attitude?

2- May customers have a general loyalty tendency which might affect their loyalties against different brands, products or stores?

3- Why is there not a holistic study explaining the concept of customer consciousness and attempting to measure it, in scholarly literature?

4- What kind of advantages can the multidimensional market segmentation to be formed on the basis of loyalty and consciousness bring about?

5- Why not has loyalty's ending been taken as a subject in any study performed on loyalty? Is loyalty a combination of a never-ending behavior and attitude, by nature? Is calling a loyalty which is never abandoned under any circumstances no matter what "conscious", logically coherent?

The results that are accessible within the framework of the questions listed above will entail to review of scientific work hitherto carried out on the basis of loyalty, and more importantly be able to shift the focus of any future studies. Although customer is placed in the focal point of interest of marketing, all studies performed and critics provided hitherto on loyalty unfortunately appear to be enterprise/product/brand focused. Despite the point reached at in marketing, the deviation and/or deficiency this study attempted to put in front prevents ascertaining the difference between those who present more values and those who don't, based on customer expectations.

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