

## The Mediating Role of E-Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Customer Interface Quality and E-Loyalty

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

Online shopping is becoming a big business growing from day to day (Nielsen Report, August, 2014). For example, according to the Global B2C Ecommerce Report 2016 report, the e-commerce revenue rose from \$ 1,895.3 billion in 2014 to \$ 2,272.7 billion in 2015 and the e-commerce revenue increased by 19.9% from the previous year. Because of the great potential of the e-commerce marketplace, many companies have changed their organizational structures over the last decade and internalized their online purchasing practices. In this context, companies have set up a website for selling goods and services and have begun to offer consumers an online shopping experience. As a result of this experience they have achieved high profits. For example, according to the study conducted in 2012, the Amazon company made a profit of \$ 61 billion, the e-Bay company made a profit of \$ 14 billion, and the Wall-Mart company made a profit of \$ 10 billion (Nielsen, 2014). As a result, online loyalty needs to be established between the firm and the customer in order for the firms to be able to maintain and improve long-term profitability relationships with customers (Kim et al., 2009; Ribbink et al., 2004; Kim et al. 2011; Chou et al. 2015). Customer interface quality can be used for customers to have e-satisfaction and e-loyalty (Cyr et al., 2005; Hur et al., 2011; Valvi and West, 2013; Polites et al., 2012; Forgas-Coll et al. 2011, Chou et al., 2015, Li et al., 2015, Chang and Chen, 2008).

In the literature, there are models created by using customer interface quality, e-loyalty and e-satisfaction variables in the same structural equation model. (Hur et al., 2011; Forgas-Coll et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2011; Chou et al., 2015; Elkhani et al., 2014; Li et al., 2015; Chang ve Chen , 2008). All variables are considered together in the structural equation model. so it is not known whether a variable has a direct effect on another variable. For example, in the study conducted by Janita and Miranda through the structural model in 2013, it was concluded that the concept of satisfaction did not directly affect the concept of loyalty. Given this study, the linear relationship between independent variables and dependent variables can be suppressed by other independent variables if all variables are included in the same structural model. Therefore, in the study, the linear relationship between a single independent variable and the dependent variable and the mediating variable effect on this direct relationship were analyzed. Thus, if more variables were included in the same structural model, it was investigated whether the linear relationship between independent and dependent variables would be significant. As a result, it is aimed to add value in literature and to make managerial implications.

### **Methodology**

An online questionnaire was used in the study. The online shopper was selected as the target audience and asked to fill in the questionnaire if the online shopper had experience before the survey. Convenience sampling procedure has adopted. The survey was carried out between 26 April and 18 May 2016 and 325 valid surveys were obtained. Factor analysis, regression analysis and mediation analysis were used in the study.

### **Findings and Conclusions**

According to the factor analysis, customization, convenience and character of the customer interface quality were found to be reliable and used in the analysis. The interaction dimension is not reliable. Some assumptions have to be fulfilled in terms of mediation analysis. The first assumption is the existence of a significant linear relationship between convenience and character of the customer interface quality and e-loyalty. The second assumption is the existence of a significant linear relationship between convenience and character of the customer interface quality and and e-satisfaction. The third assumption is the existence of a significant linear relationship between the e-satisfaction mediator variable and the e-loyalty dependent variable. After these three assumptions are provided, the coefficients of the independent variables should be looked at. After the moderation variable is included in the model, if the coefficients of the customer interface quality decrease, then it can be said that there is an mediator effect. it is also necessary to increase the explained variance ratio (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

When the linear relationship between e-satisfaction and e-loyalty is examined, it is seen that the e-satisfaction variable explains 32% of the e-loyalty concept and the effect ratio is 0,561. According to this situation, e-satisfaction is not enough to explain the concept of e-loyalty. Other variables must be included in the model in order for the e-loyalty to be fully explained. As a result of the study, it was found that the customer interface quality have an impact on the concepts of e-satisfaction and e-loyalty. The customer interface variable that affects the e-satisfaction variable most often is the convenience variable. The customer interface quality that affects the e-satisfaction the

most after the convenience variable is the character variable. Therefore, online sales companies that want to increase the e-satisfaction of their target mass should pay attention to the fact that the web design is suitable for the consumer and the web page has a unique character.

According to the analysis, the most effective customer interface quality on e-loyalty is the character variable. The other customer interface quality variables following the character variable are the customization and convenience variables, respectively. According to this result, the variables that are most influential on e-satisfaction and e-loyalty concepts are different. Therefore, it is recommended that these three variables be considered together while designing the website.

When the VAF value which indicates whether there is a mediation effect is examined, if this value is 0.80 and above, there is a full mediation effect and this value is between 0,20-0,80, there is a partial mediation effect. If this value is 0.20 or less, there is not a mediation effect. As a result of the analysis, the VAF value was 0.32, 0.77 and 0.37 for customization, convenience and character variables, respectively. According to this situation, the partially or full mediation effect values that is recommended by Hair et al. (2013) may exhibit variability in values that close to the limit values. The impact of customization and character variable on e-loyalty are high and these variables try to overcome the partial mediation effect, but they are still partial mediation effect. In other words, the effect of these variables on e-loyalty is strong. The effect of the convenience variable on e-loyalty is weaker because, when the e-satisfaction variable joins the linear relationship, the convenience variable tends to full mediation effect.

In the study conducted by Chang and Chen in 2008, when the e-satisfaction mediator variable effect was examined between the customer interface quality and the e-loyalty concept, a full mediation effect was found for the customization, interaction and character variables, but there was no effect for the convenience variable. It can be considered that this situation is due to the fact that all variables participate together in the same structural equation model. Because Chang and Chen (2008) found that the e-satisfaction mediator variable plays a mediating role between the customer interface variables (customization, convenience and character) and the e-loyalty variable, and there is a full mediation effect on e-loyalty for the convenience variable and there is a partial moderation effect on e-loyalty for the character and customization variable. As a result, in the structural equation modelling in which more than one independent variable is involved, the independent variables can impress each other and can affect the significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. According to these results, the study has been properly structured and served purposefully. When the findings of the study in terms of consumer behavior are evaluated, e-commerce companies must develop customer interface quality together to create e-loyalty. Thus, a more suitable medium is prepared for the customer to shopping.

if we look at the limitations of this study, the study can not be generalized. Because convenience sampling method was used in the study. As a recommendation, the relationships between variables can be examined individually before the structural equation modelling is applied. Then a structural equation modelling can be applied and the significance levels of the variables can be compared. Moreover, because the dimension of interaction is not reliable, it can be said that this dimension can not be

understood sufficiently by the consumers in Turkey. Therefore, new survey development studies reflecting the culture in Turkey can be done.