

## A RESEARCH ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT BEHAVIOR AND BRAND LOYALTY IN ADOLESCENTS

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to form the consumer profile of both today and the future by examining the relationship between attachment levels of adolescent consumers to their parents and brand loyalty. For this purpose, a survey was given to 414 consumers and Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the findings. The study is based on the computer games sector. The computer games sector is an important sector for understanding brand loyalty of adolescents. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of parental attachment scores on brand loyalty. According to the results, a high negative and significant relationship was found between brand loyalty scores and parental attachment scores. In addition, it was found that approximately 70% of the change in brand loyalty was explained by parental attachment. This study is important to address psychological factors that affect brand loyalty and that are relatively difficult to observe.

**Keywords:** Brand, brand loyalty, adolescence, attachment in adolescence, parental attachment

## **ERGENLERDE BAĞLANMA DAVRANIŞININ MARKA SADAKATI İLE İLİŞKİSİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA**

### **ÖZET**

Bu çalışmada, ergenlik dönemindeki tüketicilerin anne ve babalarına bağlanma düzeyleri ile marka sadakati arasındaki ilişki incelenerek, hem günümüz hem de geleceğin tüketici profilini oluşturmak amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla 414 tüketiciye anket uygulanmış ve elde edilen bulguları incelemek için Pearson korelasyon katsayıları hesaplanmıştır. Çalışma bilgisayar oyunları sektörüne dayanmaktadır. Bilgisayar oyunları sektörü, ergenlerin marka sadakatini anlamak için önemli bir sektördür. Ebeveyne bağlanma puanlarının marka sadakati üzerindeki etkisini belirlemek için ise çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda, marka sadakati puanları ile anne ve babaya bağlanma puanları arasında yüksek düzeyde negatif yönlü ve anlamlı ilişkilerin bulunduğu görülmüştür. Araştırmada ayrıca, marka sadakatindeki değişimin yaklaşık %70'inin anne ve babaya bağlanma tarafından açıklandığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu çalışma, marka sadakatini etkileyen ve gözlemlenmesi nispeten zor olan psikolojik faktörleri ele alması açısından önem taşımaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Marka, marka sadakati, ergenlik, ergen bağlanması, ebeveyne bağlanma

## **INTRODUCTION**

Developments in the field of technology cause socio-economic, psychological and cultural changes. Today's adolescent consumers are living in a period when technological innovations are developing at great speed. These consumers are able to keep pace with innovations at the same speed, and even demand for innovations. Consumers develop trust and loyalty in brands which place importance on the solution of problems they encounter and which have the capacity they want (Lau and Lee, 1999: 343). In this sense, it is thought that in order to make adolescent consumers loyal consumers, they should be known more closely. Factors such as attitude, family, and relationships with the seller and friend groups affect brand loyalty (Bloemer and Lemmink, 1992: 354). When these factors are taken into consideration, it is considered that an interdisciplinary approach is needed to better analyze consumer behavior and thus the brand loyalty of consumers. In this context, attachment level, which is a psychological factor, is thought to affect brand loyalty. Attachment can be defined as building a relationship or a connection. According to attachment theory, an individual shows attachment behavior throughout his life starting from infancy (Deniz, 2006: 22). Bowlby (1969) stated that in essence individuals are focused on attachment to other individuals and that attachment leads to the formation of their relations with other individuals. Considering that consumers interact with the brand as they relate to an individual, it can be said that attachment can be effective in this interaction.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between brand loyalty and parental attachment levels of adolescents who constitute an important consumer profile of today and the future. The study carried out to examine this relationship was based on computer games. Consumers between the ages of 12 and 19 tend towards digital games for features like affecting others, being accepted, having something, social communication, status, desire to consume and emotional peace (Reiss, 2000). Today, it can be said that young consumers constitute an important part of internet users and computer games users. Companies designing computer games have a very important place in the market. Tournaments are organized with the games these companies produce and these games become a sport. Therefore, in this study, computer games, which is an important sector in which adolescents can show brand loyalty, was chosen.

There are many factors that affect brand loyalty. Demographic factors, brand image, brand satisfaction and psychological and psycho-social reasons for the brand are among the factors affecting brand loyalty (Yılmaz, 2005: 258). Psychological factors are for example, the personality traits of consumers (Yaprak and Dursun, 2018), trust (Hess and Story, 2005), self-identity (Jamal and Goode, 2001), identity harmony (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010), self (Lee et al, 2015), psychological process of brand loyalty formation (Kim, Morris and Swait, 2008). It is thought that examining the level of attachment, which is an important determinant of who the consumers are, will contribute to these studies. Therefore, this study has the feature of being the first and up-to-date which examines the relationship between the level of parental attachment and brand loyalty in Turkey.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Brand Loyalty**

The rapid developments in today's market bring challenging competition in many sectors in the market. For this reason, brand loyalty must be established in order for companies to compete with other brands (Aaker, 1992: 56). According to one of the commonly accepted definitions, brand loyalty is the sense of attachment that occurs as a result of a satisfactory interaction between consumers and the acceptance of changes in the brand they use (Ramírez Osuna et al., 2017: 313). It can be said that brand loyalty has a key role in creating and maintaining the relationships of consumers with the brand (Ramírez Osuna et al., 2017: 305-306). In this context, Lam and Burton (2006) stated that the cost of gaining new customers is higher than the cost of loyal customers. The benefits of brand loyalty are as follows (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman, 2001:1238):

- It provides an important barrier to the entry of competitors into the market,
- It creates competence against competitor's strategies,
- It provides more sales and revenue,

- It creates a customer base with a low sensitivity to the marketing activities of competing companies.

It can be seen that brand loyalty is evaluated from two different perspectives as behavioral and attitude. For example, Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) stated that consumers who buy a single brand within a year are loyal consumers. According to this perspective, which deals with brand loyalty with its behavioral dimension, the permanent success of a brand is based on the consumers who buy the brand regularly (Odin et al., 2001). According to attitudinal brand loyalty, which is another approach, behavioral brand loyalty is an outcome of attitudinal brand loyalty and it is necessary to know why a brand is purchased (Demir, 2012: 108). With this perspective, Helgesen, (2006) and Yi and La (2004) stated that brand loyalty is related to satisfaction. Li and Miniard (2006) stated that brand loyalty is related to the feeling of confidence. Fournier (1998) and Sierra and McQuinity (2005) stated that emotions and mood affect brand loyalty. The behavioral approach does not take into account the reason for this behavior when measuring the consistency of consumers' buying behavior, while the attitude approach ignores the behavioral process by taking into account the psychological, emotional or mental reasons behind buying behavior (Demir, 2011: 269). As a matter of fact, attitudinal loyalty mediates its effects on behavioral loyalty (Russel-Benneth et al., 2007: 1253).

Today, there have been various changes in the relationship of consumers with brands. In addition to the functional benefits of the product used, emotions such as gaining pleasure or status created by the brand in the consumer can cause the purchasing motivation of the consumers. This situation that can be described as a sense of brand can be defined as the positive emotional response of the consumer to the use of a particular brand (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001:82). Consumers turn into loyal consumers when they see the brand as a friend or establish an emotional connection with the brand (Aaker, 1991: 40). These consumers who establish emotional ties with the brand behave more stable (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015: 223). This process also demonstrates the importance of strong branding and offers competitive advantages to businesses.

It can be seen that there are many studies on brand loyalty in the literature because of its importance for businesses. This study was designed by considering that brand loyalty has both behavioral and attitudinal dimensions. Of the studies conducted with this perspective, Oliver (1999) stated that brand loyalty has 4 dimensions; and consumers showed cognitive, emotional, desire, and then behavioral loyalty, respectively. Lau and Lee (1999) stated that the feeling of trust has an effect on brand loyalty. Hwang and Kandampully (2012) stated that the factors of self bond, emotional bond and love of brand affect brand loyalty in young people's relationships with luxury brands. According to researchers, the most important factor affecting brand loyalty is emotional bond and it indirectly affects brand loyalty through self-bond, emotional bond and love of brand.

This study used Brand Loyalty Scale developed by Yaprak and Dursun (2018) by making use of the scales developed by Odin et al. (2001) and Lau and Lee (1999). Brand loyalty levels of the participants were evaluated based on computer game brands. Computer game industry was preferred because of the tendency of today's adolescent consumers to the developments in the field of technology and technologies such as computers or smart phones.

### **Adolescence and Attachment**

Adolescence is derived from the Latin word "adolescere", which means to grow and mature (Muuss, 1990). Individuals in adolescence experience various physical, psychological, cognitive and social changes. Individuals in this period develop abstract thinking skills (Steinberg, 2007: 22). It can be said that today's adolescent consumers are the consumers in the Z generation. Individuals in the Z generation consist of those born in the year 2000 and later (DeVaney, 2015: 11). The most prominent characteristics of the Z generation are that they are accustomed to technological innovations, they socialize quickly, they are creative and questioning, they care about entertainment, they are accustomed to speed and they consume quickly.

The basis of attachment is based on the idea that the relationship between the infant and the caregiver shapes the future social life of the infant. Attachment can be defined as a child's physical and

psychological search for communication and intimacy (Sperling and Bermann, 1994:5). Attachment theory was first developed by John Bowlby.

Bowlby (1969) stated that mental representations of people in childhood can change the cognitive processes of adolescence and adulthood. Afterwards, as a result of the experimental studies they conducted, Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) concluded that there are 3 different attachment styles as safe, anxious / unstable and insecure attachment. Individuals with a high level of attachment to their parents are not afraid of abandonment and have positive beliefs in their relationship with their parents as a child; those with anxious / unstable attachment think that they are unpopular and have intense feelings of jealousy; those who have low level of attachment are those who avoid closeness and think that they are not liked.

Adolescents experience a cognitive, emotional and behavioral transformation from being individuals cared by their parents to attachment to their parents (Allen et al., 2002: 59). It can be said that a healthy family environment is necessary for a healthy adaptation process for adolescents. Alonso-Castillo, Yañez-Alonso-Castillo, Yañez-Lozano and Armendáriz-García (2017) stated that problems such as poor bonding, feelings of insecurity and low emotional intimacy between family members are related to family functioning. Ainsworth (1989) stated that attachment relationships with parents affect not only childhood but also relationships built in adolescence and adulthood.

Adolescents with high level of attachment to their parents have higher social emotional competences, they are more calm, more empathic, they have higher ability to cope with stress, and higher self-esteem. Kenny (1987) stated that adolescents see their parents as a representation of confidence. Raja, McGee and Stanton (1992) stated that adolescents with high level of attachment to their parents experience psychological well-being. In their study, Rice, Cunningham and Young (1997) found that social ability is a significant predictor of emotional adjustment. Adolescents with low level of attachment to their parents may be individuals with more anxiety disorders, anxiety symptoms and antisocial behavior patterns.

Mothersead, Kivlighan and Wynkoop (1998) reported that when adolescents were less dependent on their parents and when they experienced more interpersonal distress, family dysfunction increased. In addition, Laible, Carlo and Roesch (2004) stated that attachment to parents has direct effects on self-esteem.

When the relationship between adolescents and brand loyalty is examined, it is seen that young consumers show lower brand loyalty than older consumers (Uncles, Dowling and Hammond, 2003). Moschis, Mooreve and Stanley (1984) reported that brand loyalty began to occur during adolescent adulthood and late adolescence. Today's adolescent consumers who are growing with technological innovations can change their brand preferences because they are open to research. Considering that the ways of attachment to parents can affect all living spaces of adolescents, it is thought that the relationships of consumers of this age with brands and their brand loyalty levels can be affected. Consumers' emotional bonding with the brand leads to brand loyalty by turning recurrent buying behavior into a habit (Doğru and Koçer, 2016: 170). Bidmon (2017) stated that attachment style to parents also affects the lifelong and customer relationships of consumers. The insecure attachment of adolescent consumers to their parents has a positive effect on brand loyalty (Bidmon, 2017: 164). Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the attachment levels of adolescent consumers to their parents and brand loyalty and to contribute to the related literature. For this purpose, Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment developed by Raja et al. (1992) and adapted into Turkish by Günaydın, Selçuk, Sümer and Uysal (2005) was used. This form consists of 12 items and mother-father forms. The 28-item version of this form was developed by Armsden and Greenberg (1987). Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment can be assessed as three dimensions as trust, communication and alienation or "total score of attachment security" and it was found that Turkey sample did not include trust, communication and alienation sub-dimensions (Günaydın et al., 2005: 18). Therefore, in this study, the total score on the attachment security to the mother and father was evaluated. These adolescents, whose levels of attachment to their parents were measured consist of adolescents who play computer games. Griffiths, Davies and Chappell (2003) stated that computer

games are a popular activity in children and adolescents. Therefore, the research was applied based on the computer game sector.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The analysis of adolescent consumers plays an important role in understanding both the present and future consumer profile as well as the next generation consumer profile. It can be said that today's adolescent consumers frequently use and interact with virtual environments and computer games. For this reason, the computer game sector was preferred for the effective evaluation of the parental attachment levels of the consumers in adolescence and their brand loyalty. Factors affecting the brand loyalty of these consumers include data that can enable businesses to develop strong strategies. As a matter of fact, enterprises with loyal customers are thought to be more powerful. In particular, it is important to address psychological factors that affect brand loyalty and that are relatively difficult to observe. In this respect, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between attachment levels of adolescents to their parents and brand loyalty.

### **Hypotheses and Model of the Study**

In their study, Kavak and İbrahimoğlu (2006) stated that behavioral loyalty increases as individuals' self-perception increases, while attitude loyalty is not affected. It can be said that self-perception is a way of defining the individual. Tunç and Tezer (2006) stated that relationships with parents affect children's self-perception.

The hypotheses of the study in this context are as follows;

H1. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' parental attachment and their brand loyalty.

H1a. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' maternal attachment and brand loyalty.

H1b. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' paternal attachment and brand loyalty.

H2. Adolescent consumers' attachment to their parents affects their brand loyalty perceptions.

H2a. Adolescent consumers' maternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.

H2b. Adolescent consumers' paternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.

In their study they examined loyalty to stores and brands in the service sector, Flavian et al. (2001: 86-89) stated that there is a relationship between demographic characteristics and brand loyalty. In their study, Gürbüz and Doğan (2013) concluded that young consumers have lower brand loyalty levels and consumers with low income have higher brand loyalty levels.

The hypotheses of the study in this context are as follows;

H3. There is a significant relationship between demographic characteristics and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.

H3a. There is a significant relationship between gender and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.

H3b. There is a significant relationship between family level of income and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.

In their study, Lapsley et al. (2000) found that there is little relationship between parental attachment and gender. Keklik (2004), on the other hand, determined that the attachment styles and gender of university students were predictors of the personal attachment categories of the students. Kaya (2019) found that alienation to father increased as the income levels of adolescents alienated from their father decreased.

The hypotheses of the study in this context are as follows;

H4. There is a significant relationship between parental attachment of adolescent consumers and their demographic characteristics.

H4a. There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.

H4b. There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.

H4c. There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level.

H4d. There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level.

The study model developed in line with these hypotheses is as in Figure 1.

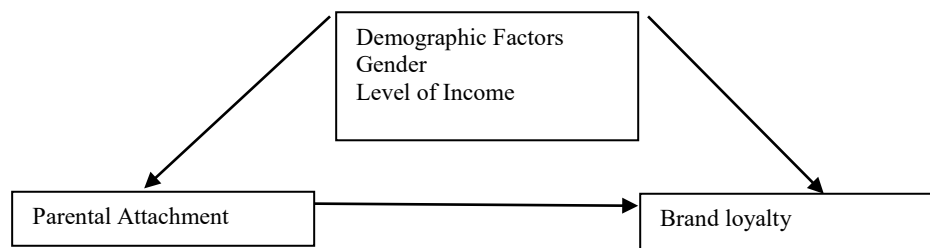


Figure 1: Study model

### **Sample of the Study**

The surveys were conducted between May 10 - October 15, 2019 in Ankara and Samsun. The participants consisted of high school and secondary school students between the ages of 12-19 playing computer games. 457 consumers were reached with easy sampling. 43 questionnaires that were not filled in correctly were eliminated and 414 questionnaires were evaluated.

### **Data Collection Method and Tools**

In addition to face-to-face surveys, the questionnaires were transferred to the digital media and mailed to the students' e-mail addresses and questionnaire links were sent to the groups they formed in various social media environments so that they could fill in the questionnaires. The questionnaire used to collect data consists of 3 parts. In the first part, the 8-item brand loyalty scale developed by Yaprak and Dursun (2018) by making use of the scales created by Odin et al. (2001) and Lau and Lee (1999) was used to measure the brand loyalty levels of consumers. The variables in the scale were asked on 5-point Likert scale. The assessment of Likert scale is as (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) No Idea, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. The second part of the questionnaire consists of 24-item Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment developed by Raja et al. (1992) and adapted into Turkish by Günaydın et al. (2005). The variables in the scale were asked on 5-point Likert scale. The assessment of Likert scale is as (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Occasionally, (4) Often, (5) Always. The third part of the questionnaire consists of information on the gender, age and income level of the participants.

### **Validity and Reliability of Parental Attachment Inventory**

Within the context of the study, construct validity of the Parental Attachment Inventory was examined by using confirmatory factor analysis. In confirmatory factor analysis, the relationships between observed and latent variables are examined simultaneously on a model. As a result of factor analysis, it is possible to understand to what extent the factor structure of the measurement tool is compatible with the data collected (Kline, 2011). Fit values calculated to evaluate the two-factor structure of the Parental Attachment Inventory are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Fit values of two-factor structure of Parental Attachment Inventory

Criterion	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Obtained values	Reference
$(\chi^2/sd)$	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	3,37	Carmines and McIver, 1981; Marsh and Hocevar, 1985
RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	0,08	Browne and Cudeck, 1993
SRMR	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	0,06	
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,90-0,94	0,93	McDonald and Marsh, 1990; Bentler, 1990
TLI	$\geq 0,95$	0,90-0,94	0,92	Bentler and Bonett, 1980
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,85	0,86	Tanaka and Huba, 1985;
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,80	0,83	Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1984

When the table is examined, as a result of confirmatory factor analysis, it is observed that the model tested according to standardized estimation results is significant. The goodness of fit values calculated to test the model met the criteria and the two-factor structure was confirmed. According to the goodness of fit values, the two-factor structure of the Parental Attachment Inventory in general has an acceptable level of fit with the data collected. As a result of factor analysis, factor loadings of the items in the inventory's attachment factors to mother and father were between 0.65-0.86 and 0.67-0.86, respectively. The two-factor model tested is shown in Figure 2. All path coefficients shown in the model were statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

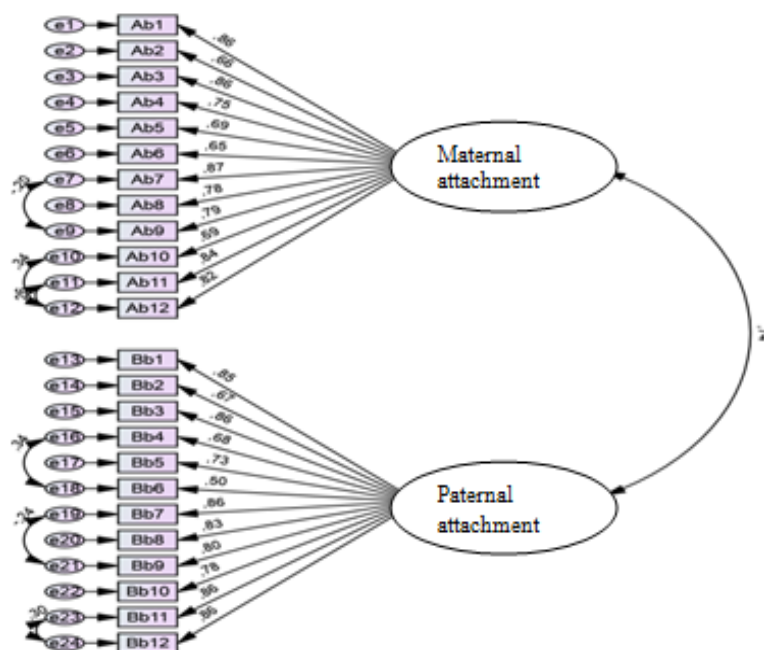


Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Diagram of Parental Attachment Inventory,  $\chi^2=825,81$ ;  $Sd=245$ ;  $p < 0,001$



Reliability of Parental Attachment Inventory was examined by calculating Cronbach Alpha coefficients. The fact that alpha coefficient is close to 1 indicates that internal consistency reliability is high. However, alpha coefficients between 0.60-0.80 indicate that the scale is very reliable and the alpha coefficients between 0.81-1.00 indicate that the scale is highly reliable (Özdamar, 2004). The alpha coefficient calculated for both dimensions of the inventory is 0.95. The coefficients obtained show that the inventory is highly reliable and the scale items are compatible with each other.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Brand Loyalty Scale**

Within the context of the study, the construct validity of the Brand Loyalty Scale was examined by using confirmatory factor analysis. In confirmatory factor analysis, the relationships between observed and latent variables are examined simultaneously on a model. As a result of factor analysis, it is possible to understand to what extent the factor structure of the measurement tool is compatible with the data collected (Kline, 2011). Fit values calculated to evaluate the single-factor structure of the Brand Loyalty Scale are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Fit values of single-factor structure of Brand Loyalty Scale

Criterion	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Obtained values	Reference
$(\chi^2/sd)$	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	2,52	Carmines and McIver, 1981; Marsh and Hocevar, 1985
RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	0,06	Browne and Cudeck, 1993
SRMR	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	0,02	
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,90-0,94	0,99	McDonald and Marsh, 1990; Bentler, 1990
TLI	$\geq 0,95$	0,90-0,94	0,99	Bentler and Bonett, 1980
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,85	0,97	Tanaka and Huba, 1985;
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,80	0,95	Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1984

When the table is examined, as a result of confirmatory factor analysis, it is observed that the model tested according to standardized estimation results is significant. The goodness of fit values calculated to test the model met the criteria and the single-factor structure was confirmed. According to the goodness of fit values, the single-factor structure of the Brand Loyalty Scale in general has a good level of fit with the data collected. As a result of factor analysis, factor loadings of the items in the scale were found to be between 0,71 and 0,91. The single-factor model tested is shown in Figure 3. All path coefficients shown in the model were statistically significant at  $p < 0,001$ .

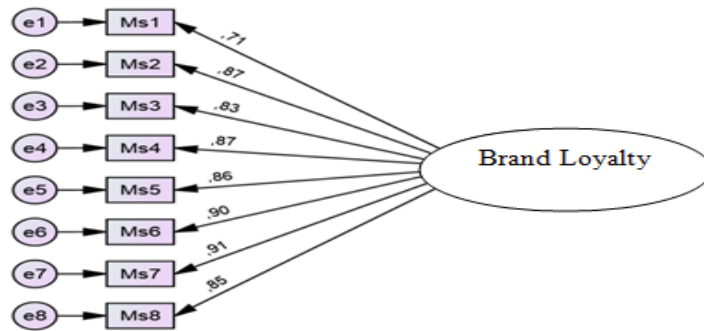


Figure 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Diagram of Brand Loyalty Scale,  $\chi^2=50,44$ ;  $Sd=20$ ;  $p<0,001$

Reliability of Brand Loyalty Scale was examined by calculating Cronbach Alpha coefficients. The fact that alpha coefficient is close to 1 indicates that internal consistency reliability is high. However, alpha coefficients between 0.60-0.80 indicate that the scale is very reliable and the alpha coefficients between 0.81-1.00 indicate that the scale is highly reliable (Özdamar, 2004). The alpha coefficient calculated for the scale in general is 0.96. The coefficient obtained shows that the scale is highly reliable and the scale items are compatible with each other.

### Statistical Analysis of Data

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to investigate the relationship between brand loyalty and parental attachment scores. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of parental attachment scores on brand loyalty. Independent samples t test was used to compare the brand loyalty and parental attachment scores of the participants according to their gender, and one-way analysis of variance was used to compare these according to monthly income.

The distribution of the scores obtained from the measurement tools were examined before statistical analyses were applied. Skewness and kurtosis values within  $\pm 2$  range indicate that the scores show normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2010). It was observed that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients calculated for the scores obtained from the measurement instruments used in this study were within the specified range (Table 3). The results showed that the normal distribution assumption was met.

Table 3: Descriptive Values of Scores Obtained from Measurement Tools

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Value	Std. Error	Value	Std. Error
Brand Loyalty	414	1,00	5,00	3,00	1,46	-0,03	0,12	-1,77	0,24
Maternal attachment	414	1,00	5,00	3,13	1,25	-0,18	0,12	-1,49	0,24
Paternal attachment	414	1,00	5,00	3,13	1,22	-0,15	0,12	-1,30	0,24

VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values were calculated and examined in order to determine whether there was a multiple connection between the independent variables included in the regression analysis. A VIF value of 10 or higher indicates multiple connections between data (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyükötkürk, 2012). The value obtained in this study (VIF = 2.24) showed that there was no multiple connection between the variables. In order to determine whether the relationships between the variables were linear, scattering diagram matrix was formed and examined. It was found

that each of the bilateral relations observed in the diagram was linear. As a result, it was determined that the data used in the study were suitable for regression analysis. The analyses were conducted by using SPSS 25.0.

### Results

Pearson correlation coefficients related to the scores obtained from the Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Pearson correlation coefficients related to the scores obtained from the Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory

Variables		Maternal attachment	Paternal attachment
	r	-,814**	-,728**
Brand Loyalty	p	0,000	0,000
	N	414	414

\*\*p<0,01

When the table is examined, it is understood that there is a high negative and significant relationship between brand loyalty scores and maternal attachment ( $r = -0.814$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and paternal attachment ( $r = -0.728$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It was observed that brand loyalty decreased as adolescents' attachment to parents increased. In this context, H1 (There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' parental attachment and their brand loyalty.), H1a (There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' maternal attachment and brand loyalty.) and H1b (There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' paternal attachment and brand loyalty.) hypotheses were supported. The results of regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of parental attachment on brand loyalty are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression analysis results conducted to determine the effect of parental attachment on brand loyalty

Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	t	p
(Fixed)	6,25	0,12		54,40	0,00
Maternal attachment	-0,71	0,05	-0,61	-15,01	0,00
Paternal attachment	-0,33	0,05	-0,27	-6,71	0,00
R=0,845	R <sup>2</sup> =0,69		F=471,741	1	p<0,00

Dependent variable: Brand loyalty

When the table is examined, it is understood that the regression model developed to determine the effect of parental attachment on brand loyalty is statistically significant  $R=0,845$ ;  $R^2=0,697$ ;  $p < 0,001$ . Approximately 70% of the change in brand loyalty was explained by attachment to parents. Maternal ( $\beta = -0.71$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and paternal ( $\beta = -0.33$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) attachment have a negative effect on brand loyalty perception. In this context, H2 (Adolescent consumers' attachment to their parents affects their brand loyalty perceptions.), H2a (Adolescent consumers' maternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.) and H2b (Adolescent consumers' paternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.) hypotheses were supported.

The comparison of the scores obtained from the Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory according to gender is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: The comparison of the scores obtained from the Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory according to gender

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	t	p
Brand Loyalty	Female	196	2,93	1,43	-0,84	0,40
	Male	218	3,05	1,49		
Maternal attachment	Female	196	3,07	1,27	-0,96	0,34
	Male	218	3,19	1,23		
Paternal attachment	Female	196	3,15	1,24	0,17	0,86
	Male	218	3,13	1,20		

When the table is examined, it is seen that there is no significant difference in the brand loyalty, maternal and paternal attachment scores of the adolescents according to gender ( $p>0,05$ ). There is no significant relationship between gender and brand loyalty and parental attachment. Brand loyalty perception and parental attachment levels of the adolescents who participated in the study were similar. In this context, H3 (There is a significant relationship between demographic characteristics and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.), H3a (There is a significant relationship between gender and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.) and H3b (There is a significant relationship between family level of income and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.) hypotheses were not supported. The comparison of the scores obtained from Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory according to monthly income is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Comparison of the scores obtained from Brand Loyalty Scale and Parental Attachment Inventory according to monthly income

Variable	Monthly income	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	F	p
Brand loyalty	Lower than 2000 TL	55	2,86	1,43	1,32	0,26
	2000-5000 TL	134	2,84	1,52		
	5001-8000 TL	112	3,12	1,41		
	8001-11000 TL	75	3,25	1,44		
	Higher than 11001 TL	38	2,87	1,43		
Maternal attachment	Lower than 2000 TL	55	3,15	1,28	1,27	0,28
	2000-5000 TL	134	3,23	1,29		
	5001-8000 TL	112	3,04	1,25		
	8001-11000 TL	75	2,95	1,24		

	Higher than 11001 TL	38	3,43	1,10		
	Lower than 2000 TL	55	2,87	1,23		
	2000-5000 TL	134	3,18	1,26		
Paternal attachment	5001-8000 TL	112	3,10	1,17	1,44	0,22
	8001-11000 TL	75	3,13	1,22		
	Higher than 11001 TL	38	3,46	1,09		

When the table is examined, it is understood that there is no significant difference in the brand loyalty, maternal and paternal attachment scores of adolescents in terms of monthly income ( $p>0,05$ ). There is no significant relationship between monthly income and brand loyalty and parental attachment. Brand loyalty perceptions and parental attachment levels of adolescents who participated in the study and who had different monthly income were similar. In this context, the hypotheses H4 (There is a significant relationship between parental attachment of adolescent consumers and their demographic characteristics.), H4a (There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.), H4b (There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.), H4c (There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level.) and H4d (There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level) were not supported.

The results of the hypotheses developed in the research are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Research Findings

Hypotheses	Findings
H1. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' parental attachment and their brand loyalty.	Supported
H1a. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' maternal attachment and brand loyalty.	Supported
H1b. There is a significant relationship between adolescent consumers' paternal attachment and brand loyalty.	Supported
H2. Adolescent consumers' attachment to their parents affects their brand loyalty perceptions.	Supported
H2a. Adolescent consumers' maternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.	Supported
H2b. Adolescent consumers' paternal attachment affects their brand loyalty perceptions.	Supported
H3. There is a significant relationship between demographic characteristics and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.	Not supported
H3a. There is a significant relationship between gender and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.	Not supported
H3b. There is a significant relationship between family level of income and brand loyalty of adolescent consumers.	Not supported

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H4. There is a significant relationship between parental attachment of adolescent consumers and their demographic characteristics.	Not supported
H4a. There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.	Not supported
H4b. There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their gender.	Not supported
H4c. There is a significant relationship between maternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level.	Not supported
H4d. There is a significant relationship between paternal attachment of adolescent consumers and their income level.	Not supported

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## **CONCLUSION and SUGGESTIONS**

It is thought that consumer psychology affects the social relations of consumers as well as their relationship with the brand. For example, under high avoidance and high anxiety conditions, consumers show preference for exciting brands; however, under low avoidance and high anxiety conditions, individuals tend to prefer sincere brands (Swaminathan et al., 2009: 985). Indeed, brand loyalty and consumer psychology can be used as an important predictor of consumer behavior by explaining the relationship between brand and consumer (Wu et al., 2017: 1411). Therefore, it is thought that the qualitative differences of the relationships between adolescent consumers and their parents may affect their consumption habits and brand loyalty.

Internet media are the platforms where today's adolescent consumers are active. Young consumers use the internet to meet new people, listen to music and play games (Colwell and Kato, 2003). Computer games constitute an important place among these platforms. Therefore, in this study, adolescents using computer games were preferred. According to the results of the study, it was observed that as the level of attachment to the parents of adolescents using computer games increased, their brand loyalty decreased. In addition, it was found that attachment to parents affected brand loyalty perception negatively.

Nickerson and Nagle (2005) stated that adolescents see their parents as a safe base. Today's adolescent consumers are made up of individuals who have grown up with technology, who are eager to research and who expect speed in every area of life. In this case, it can be thought that these consumers with high levels of attachment to their parents may turn to different brands that will ensure satisfaction by doing research instead of showing brand loyalty. Bidmon (2017) described the establishment of positive emotional ties with brands as a key premise in developing brand loyalty. Therefore, it can be thought that consumers with low level of attachment to their parents may be trying to satisfy these feelings of intimacy and attachment through the brands they are loyal to. As a matter of fact, emotional connection of consumers towards a brand positively affects the frequency of buying behavior (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006).

According to other results obtained from the study, there is no significant relationship between demographic characteristics (gender, income) of adolescent consumers using computer games and their parental attachment and brand loyalty. When studies conducted were examined, it was found that Mubarique (2016), Raja et al. (1992), Sümer and Şendağ (2009) found that parental attachment did not differ according to gender.

Dursun (2019), stated that there is no relationship between income level and parental attachment. These results support the results found in the present study. According to the results of the study, there is no significant relationship between the genders and income levels of the families of adolescent consumers using computer games. It is considered that there is no gender difference about brand loyalty, because of giving importance to general appearance which is a common characteristic of consumers in adolescence. In the relevant literature, Gürbüz and Doğan (2013), stated that there is

no relationship between brand loyalty and gender and income status of consumers. Dursun and Arslan (2017) found that there is a significant relationship between brand loyalty and gender; while there isn't a significant relationship with income status. Shim and Koh (1997) and Hritz, Sidman and D'abundo (2014) found that gender is related to brand loyalty. Accordingly, it can be said that different results have been reached in the literature.

In the light of the results, the following recommendations have been developed for enterprises and practitioners:

- Businesses can create loyal consumers by organizing promotional activities with themes such as feeling safe, being accepted and being special to consumers with low levels of attachment to their parents. It is important for businesses to interact with consumers and to establish emotional ties with them for effective brand management. In addition, it is thought that personalized marketing strategies will be effective.

- In order to develop brand loyalty among adolescent consumers with high level of attachment to their parents, it is thought that businesses may focus on functional benefits such as price, performance and quality rather than psychological contributions of their brands.

- It can be said that adolescent consumers who have low level of attachment to their parents experience fear of losing. For this reason, enterprises that make computer game software can create algorithms that do not have the fear of losing or have functions that can overcome the fear of losing in the game being played.

- The sense of trust, which is the basis of brand loyalty, can be supported by the functional use of customer relations. Therefore, it is thought that creating special web sites designed for the consumers in adolescence and producing fast solutions on this platform will be effective.

- In terms of sample, the fact that the present study includes only two cities in Turkey, the computer game industry and 414 consumers can be expressed as the limitations of this study. Conducting research in different countries and in different sectors may therefore be beneficial for more inclusive results. It is also thought that examining the relationship between parental attachment and different variables such as pretension consumption, purchase intention, ethnocentric tendency or sustainable marketing will be effective.

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